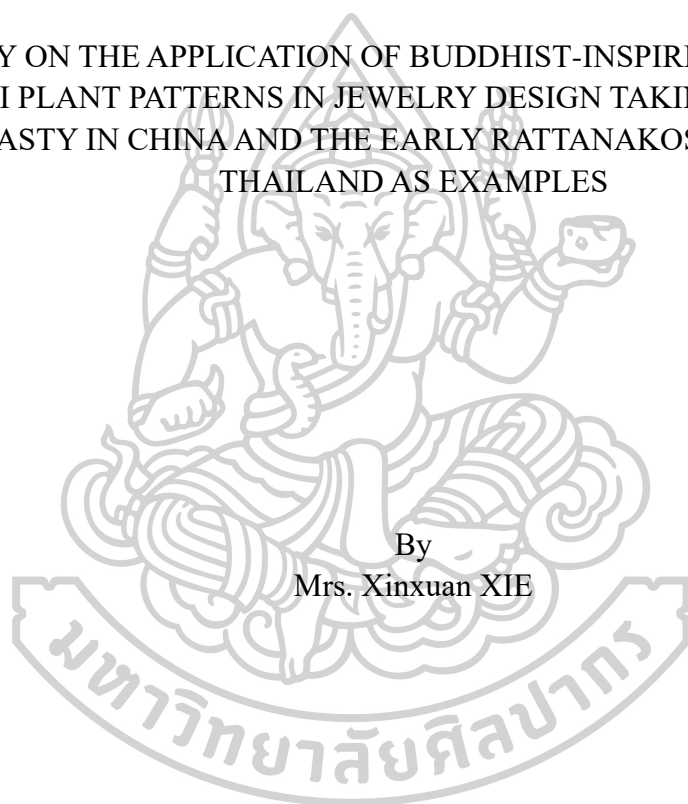




A STUDY ON THE APPLICATION OF BUDDHIST-INSPIRED CHINESE AND
THAI PLANT PATTERNS IN JEWELRY DESIGN TAKING THE TANG
DYNASTY IN CHINA AND THE EARLY RATTANAKOSIN PERIOD IN
THAILAND AS EXAMPLES



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for Doctor of Philosophy Design
Silpakorn University
Academic Year 2024
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แนวทางการศึกษาการประยุกต์ใช้ลวดลายพีชจีนและไทยที่ได้รับแรงบันดาลใจจาก
พุทธศาสนาในการออกแบบเครื่องประดับ
โดยใช้ราชวงศ์ถังของจีนและสมัยต้นกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์ของไทยเป็นกรณีศึกษา



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปรัชญาดุษฎีบัณฑิต

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ลิขสิทธิ์ของมหาวิทยาลัยศิลปากร



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By
Mrs. Xinxuan XIE

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Title A STUDY ON THE APPLICATION OF BUDDHIST-INSPIRED
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Keyword : Buddhist plant motifs, Tang Dynasty, Rattanakosin period, jewelry design, cross-cultural design, symbolic transformation, emotional resonance

Mrs. Xinxuan XIE : A STUDY ON THE APPLICATION OF BUDDHIST-INSPIRED CHINESE AND THAI PLANT PATTERNS IN JEWELRY DESIGN TAKING THE TANG DYNASTY IN CHINA AND THE EARLY RATTANAKOSIN PERIOD IN THAILAND AS EXAMPLES Thesis advisor : Associate Professor Supavee Sirinkraporn, Ph.D.

This research explores the cultural symbolism and religious connotations of Buddhist-inspired plant motifs from the Tang Dynasty in China and the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand, examining their transformation and integration into contemporary jewelry design. By employing a comprehensive methodology that includes literature review, historical and semiotic analysis, comparative cultural study, and empirical user research, the study proposes a symbolic-to-design transformation framework: *“Symbolic Interpretation → Emotional Abstraction → Structural Construction → Formal Language.”*

The study first investigates the philosophical differences between Chinese Mahayana and Thai Theravāda Buddhism, and how these differences are reflected in plant motifs such as the lotus, peony, camellia, and vine. Through visual and semantic comparison, the research highlights how these motifs evolved under their respective religious and cultural systems. The practical part involves transforming these historical symbols into wearable forms through 3D modeling and prototype production, integrating material interaction, spiritual expression, and emotional resonance.

Findings demonstrate that Buddhist plant motifs from China and Thailand are not merely decorative patterns but carriers of profound cultural and spiritual values. When reinterpreted through contemporary design language, they can evoke emotional responses and foster cultural identity among modern users. This study contributes theoretical and methodological insights into cross-cultural symbolic design and offers a practical model for integrating intangible heritage into contemporary wearable art.

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I am truly grateful for the academic freedom and trust she extended to me throughout the process. Her thoughtful advice allowed me to explore deeply while always staying grounded in academic integrity. During moments of cultural ambiguity and expressive difficulty, she encouraged me to persist in articulating Eastern spiritual ideas through a design language that resonates across cultures.

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Xinxuan XIE

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

1.1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Vegetation motifs in Buddhist art possess profound cultural and religious significance, serving as symbols that convey the core tenets and beliefs of Buddhist philosophy. As a key element in Buddhist artistic expression, vegetation motifs such as lotuses, vines, and flowers hold significant meaning, symbolizing enlightenment, purification, prosperity, and the cycle of life and rebirth (Jialu, 2019; Jiakuan, 2009a).

In China, particularly during the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), Buddhist art reached a pinnacle of sophistication. Vegetation motifs appeared extensively in temple architecture, Buddha sculptures, and decorative artifacts, reflecting the integration of Buddhist culture with indigenous Chinese traditions. Similarly, in the early Rattanakosin period of Thailand (approximately the 18th century), Buddhist art also incorporated an abundance of vegetation motifs. Influenced by Indian and Chinese Buddhism, the temple decorations and artworks of this period frequently featured lotus flowers, chrysanthemums, and vines. These motifs played a vital role in Thai Buddhist decorations, especially in temple ornamentation, symbolizing purification, enlightenment, and the expression of Thailand's unique cultural and artistic identity (Leksukhum; SHUWEN, 2022; Yingying, 2011).

These Buddhist vegetation motifs are not only religious symbols but also represent deep cultural heritage, forming an essential part of the transmission of Buddhist culture. However, with the rapid pace of globalization, traditional Buddhist vegetation motifs face significant challenges. Over time, many traditional crafts and cultural elements have gradually lost their vitality and market relevance. Consequently, the protection and inheritance of traditional culture have become increasingly critical issues. As a form of art rich in historical and cultural value, Buddhist vegetation motifs must find ways to achieve effective preservation and continuity amid modernization.

In modern jewelry design, integrating these traditional elements with contemporary design principles remains a pressing challenge. Traditional jewelry design often struggles to accurately represent the intricate and symbolic nature of these motifs. Meanwhile, the market demand for innovative, refined, and personalized jewelry continues to grow, particularly for custom jewelry with cultural symbolism. Thus, in an era of increasing global cultural exchange, exploring how Buddhist vegetation motifs can be successfully integrated into modern jewelry design through cross-cultural design approaches has become a crucial and challenging topic.

1.1.2 RESEARCH RATIONALE

1.Revealing the cross-cultural Influence and Religious Symbolism of Buddhist Vegetation motifs: Vegetations and flowers carry profound religious symbolism in Buddhism, serving as important visual expressions of Buddhist philosophical thought. Buddhist art has a long history of cultural exchange in China and Southeast Asia, including Thailand, especially demonstrating significant interaction across different historical periods. Studying Buddhist vegetation motifs can deeply reveal the shared and adaptive processes of these artistic symbols in different cultural contexts, exploring their cross-cultural influence and how they manifest visual representations of Buddhist teachings in various societies. By analyzing the symbolic meanings and religious connotations of these motifs, this study aims to further clarify their role and value in the dissemination of Buddhist beliefs and culture in both China and Thailand.

2.Analyzing the Cultural Dynamics and Artistic Evolution of Historical Periods: Different historical periods and dynasties in China and Thailand have left distinctive marks on Buddhist art, with vegetation motifs being an important element that reflects unique historical and cultural backgrounds. Studying these motifs not only helps identify the era and historical context of artworks but also allows for an in-depth exploration of the social, political, and cultural dynamics of each historical phase through their formal styles, thematic content, and creative techniques. Through the analysis of Buddhist vegetation motifs from the Tang Dynasty and the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand, this study seeks to interpret how these motifs reflect and record the religious concepts and cultural spirit of different times.

3.Revealing Regional Characteristics and Cultural Diversity: Due to geographical differences, Buddhist art in China and Thailand exhibits distinct local characteristics. The natural environment, vegetation resources, and aesthetic traditions of different regions have all influenced the creation and development of vegetation motifs. Studying these motifs can reveal how local vegetations and artistic preferences are integrated into Buddhist art, demonstrating the creative reinterpretation of Buddhist vegetation motifs during the localization process. This analysis not only highlights the diversity of Buddhist art in the two countries but also provides inspiration for modern design, offering creation ideas with regional identity and cultural depth.

4.

5. Contemporary Interpretation of Traditional Culture

To effectively transform the historical findings of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs into contemporary design expressions, this study proposes a design transformation pathway of “Symbol Interpretation → Emotional Abstraction → Structural Construction → Formal Language” First, key motif elements and their religious and cultural connotations are extracted from historical texts and material artifacts. Next, their spiritual essence is analyzed through semiotic theory and emotional perception frameworks. This is then translated into a formal language of

sensory experience and bodily interaction. Finally, through experimentation with materials, colors, and structural forms, the motifs are integrated into jewelry design in a dynamic and contemporary manner. This pathway not only responds to the spiritual and symbolic nature of Buddhist motifs but also aligns with modern aesthetic values and practical wearability, establishing a sustainable mechanism that merges historical depth with design innovation.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Historical Evolution and Cultural Context: How were Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs influenced by social, religious, and artistic exchanges, and how did they evolve and develop within the specific cultural contexts of the Tang Dynasty and the early Rattanakosin period?

2. Formal and Semiotic Analysis: What are the main differences between Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in terms of visual form, symbolic representation, and cultural context? How do these differences reflect the uniqueness of their respective Buddhist beliefs and aesthetic traditions?

3. Innovative Application in Modern Design: How can traditional elements of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs be integrated with modern jewelry design concepts, exploring their innovative application in materials, craftsmanship, and form?

4. Cultural Identity and Aesthetic Influence: How does the application of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry design influence consumers' cultural identity, aesthetic concepts, and consumption psychology?

1.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. How did Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs evolve and develop in the cultural context of the Tang Dynasty and the early Bangkok Dynasty?

Research Methods: Literature Analysis, Semiotic Case Study

Hypothesis 1: The evolution and development of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs during the Tang Dynasty and the early Rattanakosin period were influenced by the unique cultural, religious, and political contexts of the two countries. These motifs reflect the social values and religious philosophies of their respective eras. Vegetation motifs in the Tang Dynasty emphasized intricate designs and symbolic meanings, while those in the early Rattanakosin period prioritized simplicity and religious symbolism.

2. What are the main differences in form and semiotics of Buddhist vegetation motifs between China and Thailand?

Research Methods: Literature Analysis, Semiotic Visual Analysis

Hypothesis 2: Significant differences exist between Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in terms of form and semiotics. Tang Dynasty vegetation motifs in China leaned toward complex details, luxurious and rounded shapes, while

early Rattanakosin period motifs in Thailand emphasized decorative effects and ritualistic symbolism. These differences stem from distinct aesthetic philosophies, religious needs, and sociocultural contexts in the two countries.

3. How to realize innovative application of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in modern jewelry design?

Research Methods: Experimental Research, Design Practice

Hypothesis 3: The innovative application of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in modern jewelry design can combine traditional cultural symbols with contemporary design concepts. This approach not only preserves traditional cultural meanings but also satisfies the aesthetic demands and commercial values of the modern market. Innovation can be achieved through diversified materials, modernized craftsmanship, and the reinterpretation of semiotics.

4. How does the application of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design affect the cultural identity and aesthetic concept of modern consumers?

Research Methods: Questionnaire Survey, Consumer Behavior Analysis

Hypothesis 4: The integration of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design can enhance modern consumers' understanding of Buddhist culture and recognition of traditional heritage. This application evokes cultural resonance among consumers while guiding them to appreciate and embrace Buddhist culture and jewelry designs imbued with deep cultural significance.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Interpretation of the Cultural and Religious Significance of Chinese and Thai Buddhist Vegetation Symbols: Through jewelry design, this study transforms the vegetation and floral symbols from the Buddhist cultures of the Tang Dynasty in China and the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand into a visual language with contemporary expressiveness, providing an in-depth interpretation of these symbols' religious symbolism and cultural meanings. The design aims to integrate traditional aesthetics with modern design concepts, conveying the core doctrines and cultural values of Chinese and Thai Buddhism.

2. Exploring the Contemporary Expression of Vegetation Aesthetics and Philosophy in Chinese and Thai Cultural Integration: Based on vegetation aesthetics, Buddhist philosophy, and their semiotic implications, this study designs a series of jewelry pieces to showcase the artistic achievements of Chinese and Thai cultural interaction and regional integration. The design focuses on the deep fusion of vegetation science and philosophy throughout different historical periods, exploring the distinctive characteristics of Buddhist art in both countries, offering new methodologies and cultural perspectives for modern jewelry design.

3. Promoting the Dissemination of Cultural Heritage and Public Education: This jewelry series, guided by cultural education, aims to promote the cultural value and historical significance of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs through

exhibitions, interactive projects, or digital media. The goal is to enhance public awareness of Buddhist vegetation motifs and their cultural heritage, inspire conservation consciousness, and explore the innovative potential of jewelry as a medium for cultural dissemination.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

1.Theoretical Significance: Enriching the Academic Framework of Chinese and Thai Buddhist Motif Studies

This study takes Buddhist vegetation motifs as a starting point to systematically review and summarize the evolution of Buddhist motifs in the Tang Dynasty of China and the early Rattanakosin period of Thailand, analyzing their form characteristics and symbolic meanings. Through a method of induction and comparison, it explores the developmental motifs of these motifs in terms of artistic forms and cultural connotations, providing a new theoretical perspective for cross-cultural Buddhist art studies and further enriching the academic research framework of Chinese and Thai Buddhist decorative arts.

2.Practical Significance: Promoting the Innovative Application of Buddhist Motifs in Modern Design

By studying the structural forms, artistic characteristics, and color representations of Buddhist decorative motifs, this research aims to uncover their design potential and provide unique creative materials and cultural inspiration for modern jewelry design. The study seeks to combine the cultural value of traditional Buddhist vegetation motifs with contemporary design concepts, offering actionable guidance for innovative practices in jewelry design and exploring new pathways for the fusion of traditional motifs with contemporary artistic design.

3.Social Significance: Promoting the Inheritance and Dissemination of Traditional Culture

Currently, Buddhist vegetation motifs, as an important component of Chinese and Thai traditional culture, are facing challenges from the impact of modern popular culture. This study, through incorporating Buddhist motifs into jewelry design, provides a new practical model for their transmission and revival in contemporary society, helping to enhance public recognition and awareness of cultural heritage protection. Additionally, the research opens new possibilities for the application of traditional motifs in commercial design, promoting the modernization and dissemination of cultural heritage.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

This study focuses on the cultural connotations of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs and the Buddhist philosophical ideas they reflect. Based on the meanings and form characteristics of Buddhist vegetation motifs in both countries, the study explores their cross-cultural integration and innovation. Through the design of

new Buddhist vegetation motifs and their incorporation into jewelry design, the study aims to promote cultural dissemination and heritage protection. The scope of the research includes the following areas:

1. Core Buddhist Ideas and Philosophical Systems in China and Thailand

This section delves into the key Buddhist philosophies in both China and Thailand, including the similarities and differences in beliefs, values, and artistic expression, providing cultural and philosophical support for motif design.

2. Development History of Chinese and Thai Buddhist Decorative Motifs

A systematic review of the historical evolution of Chinese and Thai Buddhist decorative motifs, analyzing their development context and influencing factors from the perspective of religious art.

3. Comparative Study of Tang Dynasty Buddhist Vegetation motifs in China and Buddhist Vegetation motifs in Thailand During the Rattanakosin Period

Focusing on the aesthetic characteristics and symbolic meanings of Buddhist vegetation motifs in the Tang Dynasty of China and the early Rattanakosin period of Thailand, this section analyzes the similarities and differences in visual language and the logical formation of these motifs in their cultural contexts.

4. The Influence of Chinese Culture on the Development of Thai Buddhist Vegetation motifs

Exploring the interactive mechanisms between China and Thailand in their historical and cultural exchanges, this part analyzes how Chinese culture has influenced the form, content, and design style of Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs.

5. The Role of Cultural Exchange in Promoting Artistic Development

Using case studies of Chinese and Thai Buddhist art, this section reveals how cross-cultural exchanges have fostered innovation and diversity in the art and design fields, providing theoretical support for cultural integration in modern design.

6. Cultural Dissemination and Artistic Value in Jewelry Design

This part examines the application of Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design, exploring their cultural communicative, decorative, and interactive aspects. It investigates how these motifs are expressed and their potential influence in contemporary society, offering innovative design solutions for cultural heritage protection and dissemination.

1.7 RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

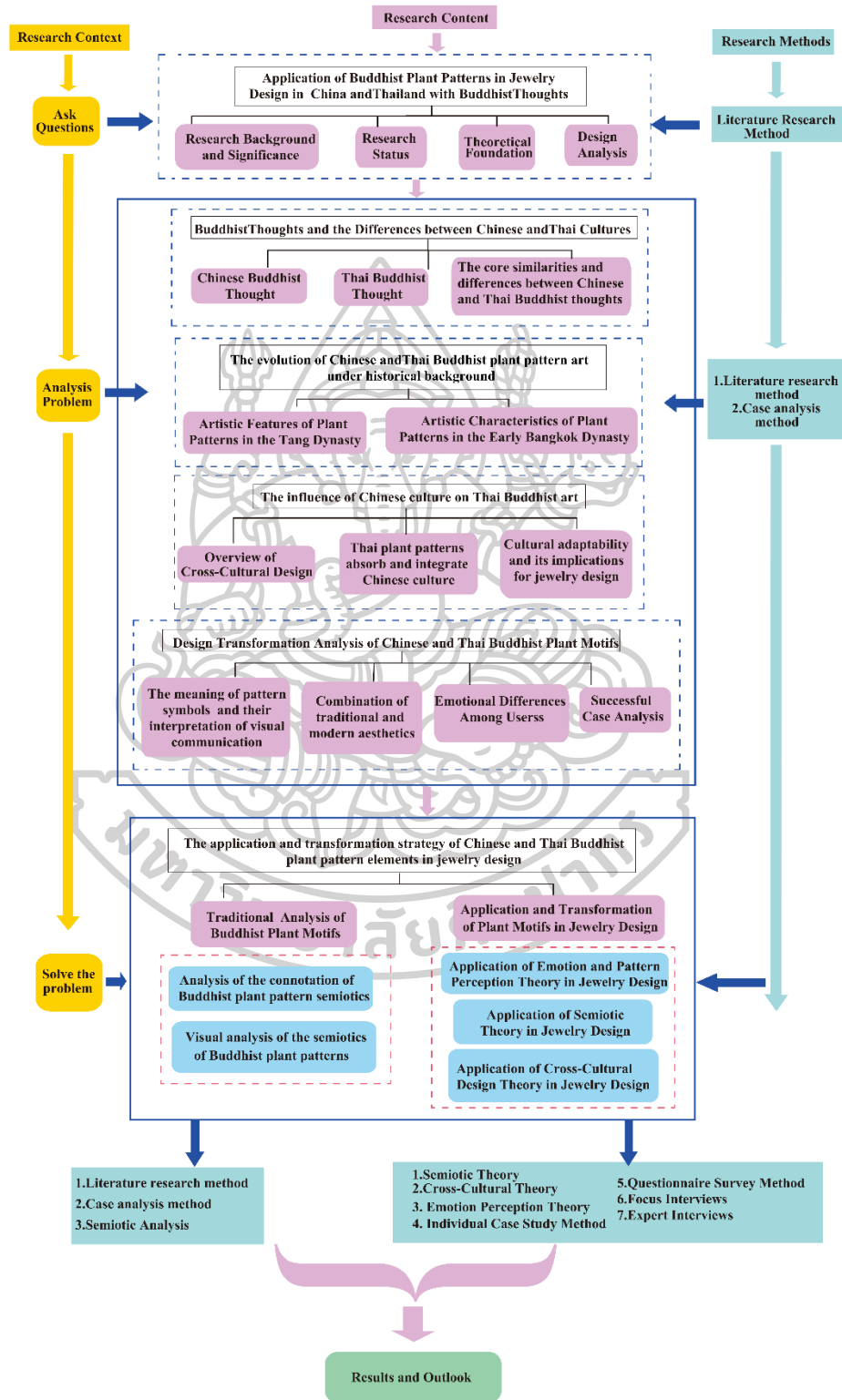


Figure 1 *Research conceptual framework*

Note. Researcher's research diagram, 2024

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a comprehensive methodology that integrates both theoretical and empirical research approaches to explore the symbolic meaning, visual features, and design transformation of Buddhist vegetation motifs in Chinese and Thai cultures.

On the theoretical level, the research employs literature review, historical analysis, semiotic analysis, cross-cultural comparison, and emotion-motif perception theory to investigate the religious, cultural, and aesthetic functions of Buddhist vegetation motifs. In particular, the integration of emotion and motif perception theory provides a foundation for analyzing how visual motifs evoke emotional responses and perceptual differences among users, supporting a deeper understanding of user-motif interaction in jewelry design.

On the empirical level, the study utilizes case studies, field research, questionnaire surveys, and SPSS data analysis to assess the emotional perception, aesthetic preferences, and cultural acceptance of Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design among contemporary users. These empirical methods help examine the influence of motif application on user response and cultural resonance.

By combining qualitative and quantitative strategies, this research ensures both the cultural depth and practical effectiveness of integrating Buddhist vegetation symbolism into contemporary jewelry design, offering innovative pathways and methodological support for cross-cultural creative practice.

1.9 Definition of Terms

This section clarifies the key terms and core Buddhist philosophical concepts applied throughout the study. These definitions not only serve as foundational knowledge but also establish the symbolic vocabulary used in the design transformation process.

1. Buddhist Vegetation motifs

Refers to decorative vegetation elements—such as lotus, peony, camellia, bodhi leaves, and vines—commonly found in Buddhist art. These motifs carry symbolic meanings such as purity, enlightenment, and impermanence, and are frequently seen in temple murals, sculptures, and artifacts in both China and Thailand.

2. Lai Kranok (ลายกระหนก)

A traditional Thai ornamental motif often seen in Buddhist architecture and sculpture. It typically resembles flames or curling foliage, symbolizing divine protection and sacred energy.

3. Time Motif (ลายประจำยาม)

A culturally significant Thai motif based on cosmological time and spatial order, often applied to temple architecture. It combines geometric symmetry with vegetation-like forms and expresses a worldview grounded in Buddhist cosmology.

4. Symbolic Transformation

The process of translating cultural and spiritual symbols into modern design language. In this study, symbolic transformation involves interpreting historical motifs through semiotic, emotional, and material analysis to create wearable jewelry.

5. Emotional Resonance

Refers to the affective response evoked in users when interacting with symbolic forms. This term evaluates how well a design communicates meaning, emotion, and cultural depth.

6. Embodied Interaction

A concept emphasizing the role of the body in design experience. In this context, it refers to the user's sensory and emotional engagement with the jewelry when wearing it, highlighting physical interaction and cultural interpretation.

7. Cross-Cultural Design

A methodological approach that incorporates elements from different cultural systems and adapts them to diverse audiences. The study applies this approach to interpret Buddhist vegetation motifs from Chinese and Thai contexts into globally resonant jewelry forms.

8. Awakening (Bodhi)

A central Buddhist concept referring to enlightenment and spiritual realization. In the design, this theme is translated into upward, radiant forms that symbolize sudden insight and inner clarity.

9. Emptiness (Śūnyatā)

A Mahāyāna Buddhist principle that all phenomena are devoid of intrinsic self-nature. It is visualized through hollow structures, transparent materials, and minimal forms to reflect impermanence and non-attachment.

10. Stillness (Dhyāna)

Represents meditative tranquility and inner peace. The jewelry design interprets this through symmetrical, smooth, and inward-focused forms that evoke calmness and mental balance.

11. Wholeness (Pūrṇa)

Symbolizes the complete integration of wisdom and compassion, the ideal state of spiritual fulfillment. In design, it is expressed via circular motifs, balanced compositions, and harmonious materials.

12. Reincarnation (Saṃsāra)

The cycle of birth, death, and rebirth as defined in Buddhist cosmology. The design uses spirals, loops, and modular systems to reflect continuous transformation and karmic flow.

13. Generosity (Dāna)

One of the Six Pāramitās (perfections) in Buddhism, signifying selfless giving. Jewelry under this theme employs openable, shareable forms to evoke ideas of offering, detachment, and compassion.

14. The Four Noble Truths (Cattāri Ariyasaccāni)

A foundational teaching in all schools of Buddhism, the Four Noble Truths outline the Buddhist perspective on human suffering and its cessation. They consist of: (1) the truth of suffering (dukkha), (2) the origin of suffering (samudaya), (3) the cessation of suffering (nirodha), and (4) the path leading to cessation (magga). These truths guide both individual liberation in Theravāda Buddhism and the universal compassion emphasized in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

15. The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination (Dvādasā Nidānāni)

Known as the Twelve Nidānas, this doctrine explains the cyclical nature of existence (saṃsāra) through twelve interconnected stages, such as ignorance (avidyā), formations (saṃskāra), consciousness (vijñāna), and so on, ultimately leading to old age and death. It demonstrates how suffering arises from ignorance and how liberation is possible through breaking this chain.

16. Mahāyāna Buddhism (Great Vehicle)

One of the major schools of Buddhism, primarily practiced in East Asia, including China. Mahāyāna emphasizes universal salvation, the bodhisattva ideal, compassion, and the notion of emptiness (śūnyatā). It often integrates local cultural elements and encourages lay participation alongside monastic practice.

17. Theravāda Buddhism (School of the Elders / Hinayāna)

Often referred to as the "Teaching of the Elders," Theravāda is the oldest surviving school of Buddhism, dominant in Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia. It focuses on individual enlightenment, monastic discipline, and strict adherence to the original teachings of the Buddha as preserved in the Pāli Canon. Note: While historically called Hinayāna ("Lesser Vehicle"), this term is considered pejorative and is avoided in academic writing.

18. Karma and Rebirth (Cause and Effect)

The Buddhist law of karma asserts that all intentional actions (mental, verbal, or physical) generate consequences that shape one's future experiences. Rebirth is viewed not as transmigration of a soul but as a continuation of karmic momentum. This concept is central to both Mahāyāna and Theravāda traditions and underpins the cyclical nature of saṃsāra as well as ethical behavior.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter systematically reviews the research outcomes in related fields, establishing the theoretical foundation and academic context for the present study. The integration of jewelry design with Buddhist vegetation motifs not only reflects the blending of ideas in cross-cultural communication but also demonstrates the specific ways in which artistic characteristics are presented. Therefore, the literature review is structured around five key aspects: Buddhist philosophy, characteristics of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs, basic attributes of jewelry, design theories and techniques, and case studies.

First, by comparing the similarities and differences between the Buddhist philosophies of China and Thailand and their reflection in vegetation motifs, the chapter analyzes the artistic similarities and differences in Buddhist culture. Second, using the Tang Dynasty and the early Rattanakosin period as historical entry points, it explores the artistic characteristics of Buddhist vegetation motifs and delves into the influence of Chinese culture on the design of related motifs in Thailand. Next, the review focuses on the basic attributes of jewelry, analyzing its religious, cultural transmission functions, and decorative values, which provide theoretical support for the integration of Chinese and Thai motifs in design. Then, it summarizes the relevant theories and techniques of jewelry design, including cross-cultural design methods, semiotic design methods, and the application of 3D printing technology in jewelry design, serving as a technical reference for subsequent research. Finally, through case studies, it analyzes existing design methods and practical pathways for jewelry with vegetation motifs, offering direct insights for the design proposal in this study.

Through this multilayered literature review, the chapter lays the theoretical and methodological foundation for the innovation and practicality of the research.

This literature review is organized into five sections: (2.1) Buddhist philosophy comparison, (2.2) Artistic characteristics of vegetation motifs, (2.3) Attributes of jewelry, (2.4) Design methods, and (2.5) Case studies.

2.1 COMPARISON OF BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY IN CHINA AND THAILAND

Since the introduction of Buddhism to China in the first century CE, it has undergone centuries of development and localization. Over time, Buddhism merged with Chinese Confucianism and Daoism, resulting in the formation of a distinctive Mahayana Buddhist system in China. In contrast, Buddhism in Thailand mainly spread through Theravada Buddhism from the South, becoming the dominant religion and deeply rooted in the social and cultural structure of the country. Despite sharing the same origin in Indian Buddhist teachings, the development of Buddhism in China

and Thailand has led to distinct differences in their philosophical systems, doctrinal understandings, spiritual practices, and societal impact. These differences not only reflect the unique historical and cultural backgrounds of the two countries but also illustrate the diverse evolution of Buddhism across different global regions.

This section compares the Buddhist philosophical systems of China and Thailand during the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE) and the early Rattanakosin period (18th–19th century), which correspond to periods of flourishing Buddhist art and vegetation motif development in each culture.

2.1.1 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN BUDDHIST THOUGHT BETWEEN CHINA AND THAILAND

Buddhism, as a central philosophical system in the histories and cultures of both China and Thailand, has undergone unique developmental processes in each country. After Buddhism was introduced to China during the Eastern Han Dynasty, it gradually integrated with Confucianism and Daoism, forming a religious system primarily based on Mahayana Buddhism. In contrast, Theravada Buddhism (Small Vehicle Buddhism), which spread from India to Thailand, became the dominant religious thought in the country and continues to influence all aspects of Thai society. Although both countries share the same Buddhist origins, there are significant differences in their philosophical systems, core doctrines, and spiritual goals. These differences not only affect religious practice but are also deeply reflected in the social culture, art, and daily life of each nation.

Chinese Buddhist thought, especially during the Tang Dynasty, emphasized the Mahayana philosophy of universal salvation, the Bodhisattva path, and the concept of non self (anatta). It integrated with Daoist and Confucian thought, forming a more inclusive and expansive religious system that focused on relationships between individuals, others, and all sentient beings. This philosophy advocates for the practice of the "Six Perfections" (paramitas) in the pursuit of Buddhahood, ultimately achieving nirvana.

In contrast, Thai Buddhist thought is more focused on individual practice and self-liberation. Theravada Buddhism advocates for strict adherence to the monastic code (Vinaya) and emphasizes the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path as methods for personal enlightenment and escape from the suffering of samsara (rebirth cycle), culminating in nirvana. This emphasis on individual liberation has made Thai Buddhism more personalized in practice, and it has fostered a unique set of moral norms within Thai society.

The differences in Buddhist thought between China and Thailand stem from varying historical, geographical, and cultural backgrounds, which have led to distinct characteristics in their religious beliefs, practices, and social impact. The following comparative table (Table 1) summarizes the major doctrinal differences between Chinese Mahayana Buddhism and Thai Theravada Buddhism, offering further insight into the uniqueness of their respective Buddhist philosophies, as well as the life

lessons derived from each tradition (Table 2).

Table 1 *Comparative Analysis of Buddhist Thought between China and Thailand*

Aspect	Chinese Mahayana Buddhism	Thai Theravada Buddhism
Core Philosophy	Universal salvation, Bodhisattva path, no self (anatta), compassion	Individual liberation, Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, self-realization
Primary Focus	Collective enlightenment and compassion for all beings	Personal enlightenment and self-liberation
Spiritual Goal	Achieving Buddhahood and nirvana through compassion and wisdom	Achieving enlightenment and nirvana through personal awakening
Role of Ritual	Important for communal and individual spiritual progress	Primarily personal, emphasizing monastic discipline and meditation.
Integration with Local Culture	Integrated with Confucianism and Daoism, fostering syncretic practices.	Focus on monastic life and personal discipline, with little cultural syncretism.
Similarities	<p>Origin: Both Chinese and Thai Buddhism originated from Indian Buddhism. As Buddhism spread to different cultural and historical contexts, it gradually evolved into religious forms with distinct local characteristics in each country.</p> <hr/> <p>Core Doctrines: Both Chinese Buddhism and Thai Buddhism adhere to the fundamental Buddhist teachings, such as the Four Noble Truths (suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering), the Eightfold Path, the law of cause and effect (karma), and the cycle of rebirth (samsara).</p> <hr/> <p>Spiritual Goal: The goal of spiritual practice in both traditions is the same—attaining nirvana, escaping the cycle of suffering, and achieving liberation from samsara. Through</p>	

diligent practice, one seeks to reach the state of enlightenment and ultimate freedom.

Differences

Sectarian System:

1. Chinese Buddhism: Over the centuries, Chinese Buddhism developed multiple sects, such as Chan (Zen) Buddhism, Pure Land Buddhism, Esoteric Buddhism, and Tiantai Buddhism. Each sect has its own unique practices and theoretical frameworks (Han, 2002).
 2. Thai Buddhism: Thai Buddhism is predominantly Theravada Buddhism, which emphasizes the preservation of original Buddhist teachings and the importance of individual practice.
-

Focus of Practice:

1. Chinese Buddhism: The practice methods are diverse, including Chan meditation, reciting the Buddha's name, and mantra chanting. The focus is on inner cultivation and the development of wisdom (Han, 2020).
 2. Thai Buddhism: The focus is on strict adherence to precepts, meditation, and chanting scriptures. Emphasis is placed on the monastic lifestyle and the rigorous observance of ethical codes by monks and nuns. Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, in contrast to the more austere Theravada, does not entirely prohibit desires or pleasures in the pursuit of spiritual practice.
-

Differences

Purpose of Worship:

In Chinese Buddhism, faith is often not solely aimed at spiritual liberation, but rather carries a more utilitarian nature. Worship is frequently oriented toward personal desires, such as seeking peace, averting disasters, or achieving fame and fortune. For instance, Chinese Buddhism reflects cultural phenomena such as “no visit to the Three Jewels without a reason” and “seeking Buddha's help in times of crisis,” which contrasts sharply with the more ascetic nature of Thai Buddhist devotion (Zhang, 2014).

Understanding of Doctrine:

1. Chinese Buddhism: Mahayana Buddhism in China emphasizes the idea of "saving all sentient beings." Through the Bodhisattva path and the Six Perfections (Paramitas), it
-

aims to help all beings transition from the suffering of samsara to the bliss of nirvana. It advocates compassion and universal salvation, often elevating the Buddha and other enlightened figures to divine status. This makes Chinese Mahayana Buddhism more akin to a traditional religion with idealistic and idealized features (Fang, 1993).

2. Thai Buddhism: Theravada Buddhism in Thailand adheres to the original teachings of the Buddha, focusing on personal liberation. Its practice is centered around the Four Noble Truths and the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination, emphasizing self-discipline and adherence to precepts. Theravada followers view Buddhism as an ethical and philosophical system, focusing on self-perfection and self-liberation without reverence for Bodhisattvas (Fang, 2013; Anonymous, 2008).

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024

Table 2 *Buddhist Life Lessons in China and Thailand*

Life Lesson in China	Life Lesson in Thailand
Focus on compassion, altruism, and universal salvation (Han, 2020).	Focus on individual responsibility and self-liberation.
Serve all beings, attain Buddhahood for the benefit of others	Seek personal enlightenment and escape from suffering
Overcome attachment to self, cultivate wisdom and compassion.	Attain personal freedom by overcoming desires and attachments.
A state of ultimate peace and liberation achieved through collective effort.	A state of ultimate peace and liberation achieved through personal insight and practice (Zhang, 2014).
Meditation and Inner Peace: Chinese Buddhism cultivates inner peace through meditation and mindfulness practices, helping individuals maintain tranquility in the face of external changes and challenges,	Observing Precepts: Thai Buddhists place great importance on following the Five Precepts (not to kill, not to steal, not to engage in sexual misconduct, not to lie, and not to

while gaining wisdom and insight (Fang, 2002).	consume intoxicants), believing that these are the foundation for purifying the mind and accumulating merit (Zhang, 2014).
Emotional Coping: Chinese Buddhism advocates for responding to oneself and others with compassion, joy, and equanimity. It encourages the development of positive emotions to foster harmonious relationships and enhance one's ability to navigate difficulties (Fang, 2002).	Meditation and Mindfulness: Thai Buddhism emphasizes meditation to purify the mind, understand one's inner world, and enhance mental strength and self-control (Anonymous, 2008).
Karma and Responsibility: Buddhism emphasizes the law of cause and effect, where good actions lead to positive outcomes and bad actions result in negative consequences. It teaches individuals to take responsibility for their actions and to achieve positive results through virtuous deeds (Fang, 2002).	Wisdom and Compassion: Thai Buddhism seeks the growth of wisdom through the understanding of Buddhist teachings, seeing through the impermanence and suffering of the world, while cultivating compassion to help and care for others (Li, 1989).
Life, Death, and Reincarnation: Chinese Buddhism highlights the concepts of reincarnation and karma, urging individuals to reflect on their actions and seek spiritual practice to attain better conditions in future lives. This encourages people to value life and strive for liberation (Han, 2020).	Impermanence of Life: Thai Buddhism emphasizes the impermanence of all things, encouraging people to cherish the present moment, view life and death correctly, and reduce attachment and suffering (Li, 1989).

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024

2.1.2 REFLECTION OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN BUDDHIST THOUGHT IN BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS OF CHINA AND THAILAND

The differences and similarities in Buddhist thought between China and Thailand, as discussed above, are also reflected in the use of Buddhist vegetation motifs in both

countries, as illustrated in Table 3, with examples drawn from the Tang Dynasty in China and the Rattanakosin period in Thailand.

Table 3 *Reflection of Similarities and Differences in Buddhist Thought in Buddhist Vegetation Motifs of China and Thailand*

Vegetation Element	Similarities	Differences
<p>Lotus</p>  <p>Chinese</p>	<p>Symbolizes purity, wisdom, and Nirvana. Commonly used in the bases of statues and temple decorations.</p>	<p>China (Tang Dynasty): The lotus symbolizes detachment from the mundane world and is frequently seen in Buddha statue bases and murals, representing the purity and wisdom of the Buddha. It aligns with Mahayana Buddhism's emphasis on saving all sentient beings, with the lotus symbolizing the Buddha's purity and wisdom.</p>
 <p>Thai</p>		<p>Thailand (Rattanakosin Period): The lotus represents the purity of the individual practitioner's mind. The design is simple and widely used in temple murals and sculptures. This aligns with the Theravada Buddhism's focus on individual practice and wisdom, with the lotus symbolizing the emphasis on monastic discipline and personal cultivation.</p>
<p>Peony</p>  <p>Chinese</p>	<p>The peony is commonly used in Chinese Buddhist contexts and, during the Rattanakosin period, began to be incorporated into Thai temple decorations under the influence of Chinese culture.</p>	<p>China (Tang Dynasty): The peony symbolizes wealth and prosperity and is used in Buddhist temple murals to express the aspiration for a Pure Land and the pursuit of a beautiful life. This reflects the presence of more secular elements in Chinese Buddhism, where the peony represents worldly happiness and the pursuit of wealth.</p>



Thai

Thailand (Rattanakosin Period): Initially, the peony was rarely used in Thai Buddhist art. However, after being influenced by Chinese culture, it started to appear in temple decorations, gradually adopting a similar symbolic meaning. This corresponds with Theravada Buddhism's focus on individual practice and monastic discipline, rather than on worldly wealth and prosperity.

Camellia



Chinese

There is no widespread usage of the camellia in Thai Buddhist art.

China (Tang Dynasty): The camellia symbolizes purity, elegance, and simplicity, expressing an inner tranquility and a life of modesty. This aligns with the Zen Buddhism emphasis on inner cultivation and purity, where the camellia represents the ideals of this practice.

Vines



Chinese

Symbolize vitality, continuity, and the endless cycle of life, often combined with other elements.

China (Tang Dynasty): Vines symbolize the continuation and prosperity of Buddhist teachings, aligning with the Mahayana Buddhism's emphasis on the broad salvation of all beings and the ideal of Pure Land. They reflect the expansive nature of the Mahayana path.

Thailand (Rattanakosin period): Vines symbolize prosperity and the endless cycle of life, reflecting the Theravada Buddhism's focus on individual self-liberation. This highlights the personal, inward

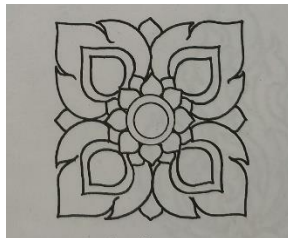


Thai

focused practice of self-discipline and meditation in pursuit of enlightenment.

Night blooming Jasmine

No widespread use in China.



Thai

Thailand (Rattanakosin period): Symbolizes protection and spiritual guardianship, representing the harmonious order of the universe. This corresponds to the Theravada Buddhism's focus on moral purification and the cultivation of inner wisdom, reflecting the emphasis on personal enlightenment and spiritual discipline in the Thai Buddhist tradition.

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024

2.1.3 SUMMARY

This section analyzes the similarities and differences between Chinese and Thai Buddhist philosophies by comparing their historical contexts, sectarian systems, practices, and social cultural influences. The study found that Chinese Buddhism is primarily based on Mahayana Buddhism, emphasizing the idea of "universally saving all beings," focusing on the relationship between the individual and others, and presenting a more inclusive religious characteristic with diverse methods of practice. In contrast, Thai Buddhism is centered around Theravada Buddhism, which places emphasis on personal cultivation, aiming for liberation through strict precepts and self-discipline, reflecting a more individualized religious practice. These philosophical differences directly affect the artistic expression and cultural permeation of Buddhism in both countries. Further analysis shows that these differences are also reflected in the design and application of Buddhist vegetation

motifs. This provides a theoretical foundation for exploring the symbolic meanings of Buddhist vegetation motifs in the cultural contexts of both countries.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS IN CHINA AND THAILAND

By analyzing the vegetation motifs of the Tang Dynasty in China and the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand, this section reveals the symbolic meanings of these artistic elements in both religious and cultural contexts. These motifs are not only decorative design elements but also serve as important carriers for expressing the characteristics of their respective eras and religious beliefs. In the Tang Dynasty, the flourishing of Buddhism influenced artistic creation, with vegetation motifs incorporating the aesthetic features of Central Plains culture, resulting in a unique style that blended Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist philosophies. In the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand, influenced by both Indian culture and indigenous beliefs, vegetation motifs reflected reverence for nature and sacred symbolism. These motifs, through their form and content, recorded the religious ideas and cultural spirit of their respective periods.

2.2.1 EVOLUTION OF VEGETATION MOTIF STYLES IN THE TANG DYNASTY

During the Tang Dynasty, vegetation motifs underwent significant evolution, reflecting the sociocultural and religious influences of the time. The spread of Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty facilitated the development of vegetation motifs in Chinese art, giving rise to a Buddhist vegetation decoration style with unique artistic characteristics. As the peak period of China's feudal society, the Tang Dynasty witnessed widespread cultural exchange and a religiously inclusive policy, which led to the flourishing of Buddhist culture across various societal domains, including vegetation themed decorative arts. These vegetation motifs gradually became enriched through the integration of foreign and local traditions, resulting in the distinct artistic features of Tang Buddhist vegetation motifs (Jiaxuan, 2009b; Jiwen, 2006). The decorative art styles of the Tang period can be divided into four stages: Early Tang, High Tang, Mid Tang, and Late Tang. The beauty represented in these stages varies, with the Early Tang characterized by elegant and ethereal designs, the High Tang by opulent and dignified forms, the Mid Tang by delicate and graceful motifs, and the Late Tang by simple and sincere aesthetics. This study will analyze the style evolution by focusing on representative motifs of lotus, peony, camellia, and vine elements from the Tang Dynasty (Ying, 2023).

2.2.1.1 EVOLUTION OF BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIF STYLES IN THE TANG DYNASTY

Early Tang Dynasty (618–683 AD): The vegetation motifs of the Early Tang period exhibit vitality and diversity. Representative motifs include pomegranate and grape motifs, which are characterized by freeform, multifaceted designs that reflect an open cultural atmosphere (as shown in Figure 2).



Figure 2 *Early Tang Lotus Motif*
Note.(Yang Dongmiao, 2010), p. 54

High Tang Dynasty (684–755 AD): The vegetation motifs of the High Tang period are splendid and diverse, primarily featuring lotus and scroll grass motifs, and present a luxurious artistic effect. These motifs were commonly found in places like the Dunhuang caves and the ceiling of the caves, where the complex motif structures, symmetrical layouts, and harmonious color combinations became typical features of Tang Buddhist decorations (as shown in Figure 3)(Xuewei, 2019).



Figure 3 *High Tang Lotus Motif*
 Note.(Shana, 2004), p. 43

Mid Tang Dynasty (756–874 AD): The vegetation motifs of the Mid Tang period reflected the social unrest of the time, characterized by a minimalist and realistic style that emphasized freshness and elegance. This period saw widespread use of camellia motifs in decoration, symbolizing people's longing for nature and stability (as shown in Figure 4)(Jialu, 2019).



Figure 4 *Mid Tang Lotus Motif*
 Note.(Yang Dongmiao, 2010), p. 76

Late Tang Dynasty (875–907 AD): The motifs of the Late Tang period trended towards formulaic and simplified styles, reflecting a conservative tendency to emulate the designs of previous periods amidst societal upheaval.

2.2.1.2 THE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS IN THE TANG DYNASTY

1. Buddhist Elements in Vegetation Motifs

During the Tang Dynasty, lotus motifs were extensively used in Buddhist art, heavily influenced by Buddhist doctrines and symbolism. The lotus, representing purity and spiritual transcendence, was closely associated with enlightenment and nirvana. As an essential carrier of Buddhist aesthetics, the lotus frequently adorned temples, scriptures, and artifacts, serving to convey religious significance. Additionally, the combination of the lotus and the dharma wheel further enhanced the sacredness of religious motifs, symbolizing the universal compassion of Buddhist teachings. Peony motifs were employed to express the nobility and sanctity of Buddhist principles while symbolizing the moral cultivation and spiritual purity of

practitioners. Similarly, camellia motifs symbolized the practitioners' dedication to spiritual practice and inner serenity. Early Tang scrolls motifs often inherited honeysuckle motifs, which implied longevity and the enduring nature of Buddhist teachings.

2. Secular Elements in Vegetation Motifs

Buddhist vegetation motifs in the Tang Dynasty not only reflected religious beliefs but also exhibited strong secular characteristics. The luxurious style of peony motifs symbolized prosperity and wealth, epitomizing the pursuit of an ideal life during the flourishing Tang period. During the midrange era, camellia motifs gained popularity, reflecting the people's longing for peace amidst the chaos of war. As a result, camellias carried auspicious and peaceful connotations in their secular interpretations.

3. Philosophical Concepts in Vegetation Motifs

Buddhist vegetation motifs also embodied the philosophical ideologies of the Tang Dynasty. The harmonious composition of the motifs, emphasizing symmetry and balance, reflected the Daoist and Buddhist understanding of the universe's holistic nature. For instance, the continuity and interweaving of branches in entwined motifs symbolized the cycles of life and the Buddhist concept of *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination). Furthermore, the design principle of "beauty in roundness" demonstrated the Tang people's pursuit of perfection and harmony, a concept pervasive in Buddhist art.

2.2.2 THE STYLISTIC EVOLUTION OF EARLY RATTANAKOSIN PERIOD VEGETATION MOTIFS

The artistic characteristics of vegetation motifs during the early Rattanakosin period were products of the inheritance of Thai traditional culture and the integration of foreign influences. Building upon the traditional styles of the preceding Ayutthaya Kingdom, the art of vegetation motifs absorbed elements from various cultures, including Indian and Chinese, thereby enriching its expressive forms and meanings. The attitudes of rulers from King Rama I to King Rama IV toward artistic forms and cultural exchanges significantly shaped the development of these motifs, reflecting the different historical stages' understandings of religion, culture, and aesthetics. The influence of rulers on the direction of vegetation motif development during different periods resulted in a style that gradually evolved to exhibit harmony, symbolism, and diversity.

2.2.2.1 THE EVOLUTION OF BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS DURING THE EARLY RATTANAKOSIN PERIOD

King Rama I Era (1782–1809): Continuity of Tradition and Initial Cultural Integration

The artistic works of the Rama I period exhibit stylistic similarities to those of the Ayutthaya era. Buddhist vegetation motifs were characterized by a pronounced geometric symmetry, reflecting the Thai artistic pursuit of harmony and balance. King Rama, I upheld traditional Thai art styles while assimilating influences from China and India, particularly in the design of vegetation motifs. Indian Buddhist art significantly impacted Thailand's vegetation symbolism and motif design, blending Indian Buddhist elements into a distinctive Thai aesthetic.

King Rama II Era (1809–1824): Extensive Absorption and Integration of Chinese Art

During the reign of King Rama II, Chinese cultural and artistic influences on Thai vegetation motifs reached unprecedented levels. Chinese inspired vegetation motifs, such as peonies, plum blossoms, orchids, bamboo, and chrysanthemums (as illustrated in Figure 5), became widely popular in architecture, decoration, and literature. These intricate and ornate Chinese motifs contrasted with and blended into the minimalist and symmetrical styles inherited from the Ayutthaya period. This artistic synthesis exemplified the achievements of Chinese and Thai cultural exchange. By incorporating symbolic elements from Chinese art into indigenous Thai beliefs, this era enriched the forms of Buddhist vegetation motifs in the Rattanakosin period. (Lei, 2012; Prayur, 2017)

King Rama III Era (1824–1851): Artistic Flourishing and the Zenith of Traditional Styles

Thai decorative arts reached a new peak during the Rama III period. The construction of numerous temples across Thailand fostered the preservation and proliferation of traditional Thai motif art. This era marked the emergence of the flamelike gold motifs, also known as "Dragon Tail Motifs" (ลายกนกเปลว), as depicted in Figure 6, which heralded a golden age of artistic motifs in the Rattanakosin period (Lei, 2012).

King Rama IV Era (1851–1868): Introduction of Western Artistic Elements

Under King Rama IV, Thailand began incorporating European cultural and artistic ideas extensively, influencing Buddhist vegetation motifs. Motifs featuring vines, floral shapes, and leaf designs in a naturalistic style became the hallmark of this period. Compared to earlier designs, these motifs were more robust and somewhat monotone, laying a foundation for subsequent innovation and evolution (Lei, 2012).



Figure 5 *Motifs Reflecting Tang Dynasty Artistic Forms During King Rama II's Era*
Note.(Prayur, 2017), p. 212



Figure 6 *Flame Motifs from King Rama III's Era*
Note.(Prayur, 2017) 7, p. 218

2.2.2.2 RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS DURING THE EARLY RATTANAKOSIN PERIOD

Buddhist Elements in Vegetation Motifs: Buddhist vegetation motifs from the Rattanakosin period, such as flame motifs (lai kanok pleo) and lotus designs, were profoundly influenced by Indian Buddhist art and carried significant religious symbolism. The flame motif, characterized by its flowing lines and dynamic shapes, symbolized the radiant wisdom of the Buddha and the transformative power of enlightenment. Widely used in temple decorations, its vibrant design not only embodied aesthetic appeal but also conveyed the deep philosophical themes of impermanence and eternity central to Buddhist teachings. The lotus, a key Buddhist symbol of purity and spiritual elevation, served as a vital bridge between the secular and the sacred. During the early Rattanakosin period, lotus motifs often appeared in

geometrically symmetrical forms, reflecting the Thai Buddhist cultural emphasis on purity and harmony. This religious symbolism reinforced the prominence of vegetation motifs in temple art and rituals.

Royal Ritualistic Significance in Vegetation Motifs: Beyond their religious roles, vegetation motifs also held critical symbolic meaning in royal ceremonies. For instance, the Champaka flower, regarded as a symbol of auspiciousness, was frequently used in significant royal rituals. The use of Champaka flowers reflects the integration of Buddhist and Brahmanical traditions within Thai court culture. Their fragrant and elegant appearance was seen as a harbinger of good fortune, symbolizing the sanctity of kingship and the perpetuation of royal blessings. By incorporating Champaka and similar floral motifs into court culture, the Rattanakosin period's art further solidified Buddhism's status as the state religion while emphasizing the close connection between religion and monarchy.

Cultural Adaptability in Vegetation Motifs: The Buddhist vegetation motifs of the Rattanakosin period also demonstrated Thailand's openness to assimilating and indigenizing foreign cultural elements. Amid growing Chinese artistic influence, motifs such as peonies, plum blossoms, and chrysanthemums were widely adopted and integrated with traditional Thai geometric and flame motifs. This cultural adaptability not only enriched the visual language of Thai art but also showcased the Rattanakosin Kingdom's receptiveness to external aesthetic influences. Despite the prominence of foreign elements, Thai art retained its indigenous cultural essence. The foreign motifs were reinterpreted through localized artistic expressions, resulting in a distinctively Thai style of religious and decorative art. This cultural adaptability highlights Thai art's ability to balance tradition and innovation, ensuring continuity while embracing diversity.

2.2.3 THE INFLUENCE OF CHINESE CULTURE ON THAI BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS

This section conducts a comparative analysis between China's Tang Dynasty and Thailand's Sukhothai Kingdom, as well as China's Qing Dynasty and Thailand's Rattanakosin Kingdom, to reveal the transmission paths and modes of evolution of Buddhist vegetation motifs within the context of Chinese and Thai cultural exchange. Although the historical timelines of China and Thailand are not entirely symmetrical, the influence of Chinese Buddhist art continuously permeated Thai local culture through tributary relations, trade, and artisan exchange. This influence has been preserved and reinterpreted within Thai Buddhist motifs. (See Figure 6: Timeline Comparison)

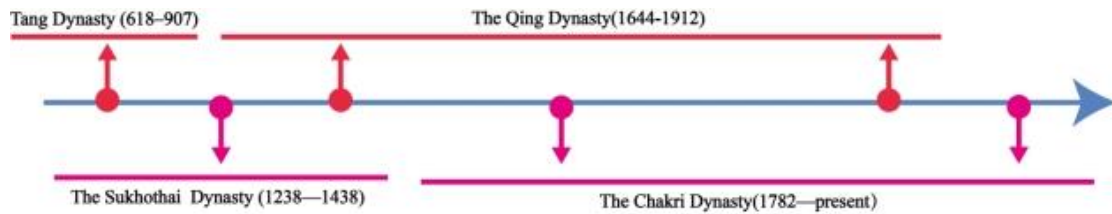


Figure 7 *Timeline of Chinese and Thai Cultural Exchange*

Note. Researcher's research Diagram, 2024

2.2.3.1 THE INTRODUCTION OF CHINESE ART SYMBOLS

Tang Dynasty – Sukhothai Period: Initial Influence and Motif Transmission

During the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), China's Buddhist art system reached maturity, with vegetation motifs such as peonies, lotuses, and scroll motifs (entwined branches) widely used in temple decorations. Although Thailand had not yet formed a unified state during this period, Tang cultural influence gradually spread to the later Sukhothai Kingdom (13th century) through trade and religious exchanges across the Indochinese Peninsula. After the establishment of diplomatic relations between Sukhothai and the Yuan Dynasty, Chinese and Thai cultural exchange intensified, providing opportunities for the introduction of Chinese motifs into Thailand.

Chinese motifs were imitated and reinterpreted in various forms of Sukhothai Buddhist art, including stupas, temples, ceramics, and stone inscriptions. For example:

The floral cluster decorations at the base of the Wat Si Sawai stupa were modeled after the jackfruit flower stems found in Chinese ornamentation.

The murals of Wat Si Chum feature vegetation imagery such as peonies and lotuses, depicted in a naturalistic and realistic style like Tang and Song dynasty aesthetics.

The leaf and branch motifs within glass lattice windows also reflect the compositional logic of Song dynasty scroll motifs (see Figures 8, 9, and 10).

These examples demonstrate how the forms, lines, and compositional styles of Chinese vegetation motifs were adopted and localized by Thai artisans during the Sukhothai period, marking the early stage of cross-cultural integration in Buddhist decorative art.

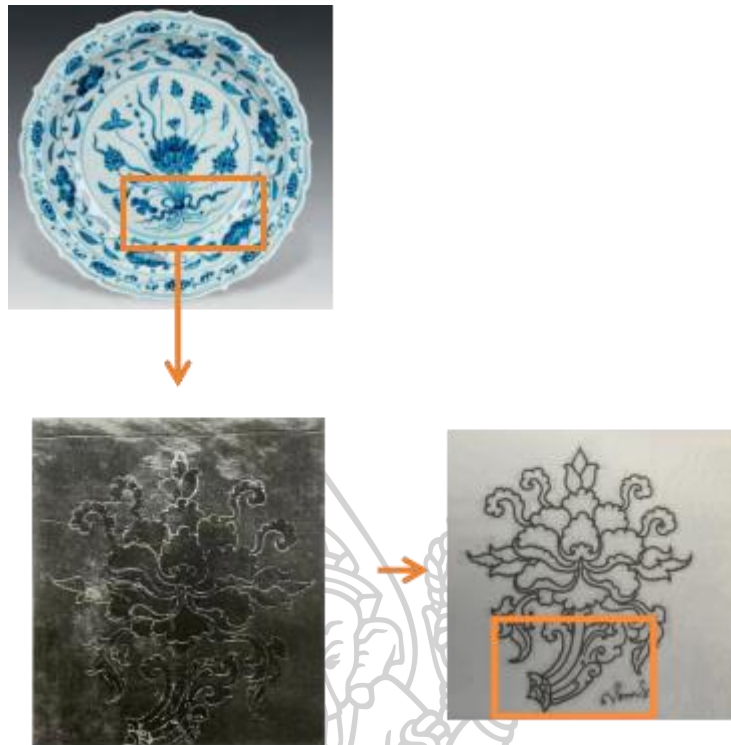


Figure 8 *Yuan Dynasty Lotus Bundled Motif and Peony Motif at Wat Si Chum*
 Note. Researcher's research Compilation, 2024



Figure 9 *Chinese Scroll Motif and Lotus Flower Motif at Wat Si Chum*

Note. Researcher's research Compilation

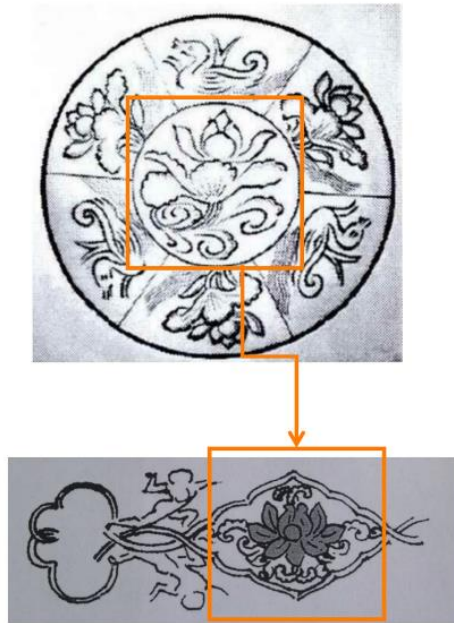


Figure 10 *Chinese Song Dynasty Lotus Motif and Sukhothai Lotus Motif*
Note. Researcher's research Compilation,2024

Qing Dynasty – Rattanakosin Period: Deep Integration and Stylistic Transformation

During the Rattanakosin period (1737–present), China and Thailand maintained close diplomatic and cultural relations. A significant influx of Chinese cultural elements into Thailand led to a heightened integration of Buddhist vegetation motifs. Especially during the reigns of Rama, I to Rama III, Chinese architectural craftsmanship and porcelain decoration had a profound impact on Thai religious architecture.

Key manifestations include:

The peony motif, symbolizing “prosperity and wealth” in Chinese culture, was widely adopted in temple decorations in Rattanakosin , notably in Wat Pho (the Temple of the Reclining Buddha).

Chrysanthemum motifs, representing “nobility and purity,” were used in borders and backgrounds, showcasing a blend of Chinese linear elegance and Thai symmetrical aesthetics.

The art of ceramic mosaic decoration, which became a hallmark of Rattanakosin ornamentation, frequently featured peonies and chrysanthemums (see table 4, table 5 and Figure 11).

The glazed tile decorations of Wat Chom Thong reflect the adaptation of auspicious Chinese motifs such as the “Four Seasons Floral Scroll” (see table 6).

In terms of formal language, Thai motifs during this period absorbed the delicacy, fullness, and dynamic characteristics of Chinese motifs. These were harmoniously combined with local geometric compositions and Buddhist doctrines such as purity and auspiciousness, giving rise to a distinctly localized new visual style.

Table 4 *Chrysanthemum Motifs in Chinese Art vs. Wat Pho Chrysanthemum Motifs*

Chrysanthemum Motifs in Chinese Art	Wat Pho Chrysanthemum Motifs
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Note.(Juanjuan, 1988), p. 640



Note. Author's Photograph (Wat Pho), 2024

Table 5 *Peony Motifs in Chinese Art vs. Wat Pho Peony Motifs*

Peony Motifs in Chinese Art	Wat Pho Peony Motifs
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Note.(Juanjuan, 1988), p. 629



Note. Author's Photograph (Wat Pho), 2024



Figure 11 *Ceramic Mosaic Art at Wat Arun*
 Note. Author's Photograph, 2024

Table 6 *Chinese Auspicious Motifs vs. Wat Chom Thong Motifs*

Chinese Auspicious Motifs	Wat Chom Thong Motifs
<p>Note. (Qunshan, 2022), p. 88</p>	<p>Note. Author's Photograph (Wat Chom Thong), 2024</p>

2.2.3.2 IMPACT OF CHINESE AND THAI CULTURAL EXCHANGE ON THAI BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS

The ongoing cultural interaction between China and Thailand is reflected not only in the formal borrowing of motifs but also in the deeper levels of religious philosophy, structural organization of vegetation motifs, and artistic expression styles. These exchanges have profoundly influenced the development of Buddhist vegetation motifs in Thailand.

1. Religious Ideology: Transmission and Integration

Chinese vegetation motifs often embody the spiritual connotations of Confucianism and Mahāyāna Buddhism—for example, the peony as a symbol of prosperity, and the chrysanthemum representing nobility and purity. As these motifs entered Thailand through cultural exchange, they were reinterpreted with local religious meanings and became part of the Thai Buddhist visual language. This process was not merely a formal imitation but reflected Thai society's understanding and acceptance of Chinese religious philosophy, turning the motifs into visual carriers of Buddhist philosophical thought.

2. Transformation of Motif Types and Compositional Strategies

Influenced by tributary trade and artisan exchanges, Thai Buddhist architecture incorporated symbolic Chinese vegetation motifs—especially peonies and chrysanthemums (see Figure 12: Wat Chom Thong), demonstrating a fusion and innovation of artistic styles from both cultures.

(1) Introduction of New Vegetation Types:

Traditional Chinese vegetation motifs such as peonies and chrysanthemums were widely adopted in Thai architectural decorations. Their inclusion not only enriched the visual layers but also expanded the symbolic dimensions of local religious art.

(2) Adaptation of Compositional Methods:

Thai artisans absorbed the organizational logic of branches and leaves found in Chinese vegetation motifs, often arranging diverse floral elements in symmetrical or gradient-based structures. This resulted in new compositional motifs and enhanced visual tension. The layout reflects both the linear rhythm of Chinese design and the repetitive symbolic and decorative rhythm characteristic of Thai ornamentation.

3. Integration of Artistic Techniques

Chinese ink painting, which emphasizes realistic detail and the expression of poetic ambiance, had a significant influence on the stylistic representation of Thai vegetation motifs (see Figures 13, 14, and 15).

In painting and sculpture, Thai artisans adopted the soft brushwork and layered rendering techniques of Chinese painting to express the natural vitality of vegetations.

In woodcarving and mural decorations, the treatment of stems and leaves gradually shifted away from geometric abstraction toward freehand representations of natural forms (see Figure 15 Wood Carving at Wat Molilokayaram Ratchaworawihan).

This fusion exemplifies a shift from “structural to atmospheric expression” in motif design. Vegetation motifs thus became more than just ornamental elements for spatial decoration; they evolved into symbolic vehicles that convey the spiritual ambiance of Buddhist spaces.



Figure 12 *Vegetation motifs at Wat Chom Thong*
 Note. Researcher's research Photograph, 2024



Figure 13 *Vegetation motifs on the Gate of Wat Molilokayaram Ratchaworawihan*
 Note. Prayur Uluchada, 2017, p. 219



Figure 14 *Chinese Ink Painting of Trees*

Note. <https://www.meishu5.com>



Figure 15 *Wood Carving at Wat Molilokayaram Ratchaworawihan*

Note. Prayur Uluchada, 1987, p. 125

Chinese and Thai cultural exchange not only enriched the formal language of Thai vegetation motifs but also facilitated their transition from symbolic totemic expressions to deeper spiritual representation. Chinese elements provided paradigms of structure, imagery, and artistic technique, while Thai artisans, through the process of adaptation, developed a localized and cross-cultural Buddhist motif system. This integration transcended visual aesthetics, representing a profound interaction of cultural identity and aesthetic philosophy.

2.2.4 COMPARATIVE SUMMARY

The vegetation motifs of the Tang Dynasty and the early Rattanakosin period not only showcase the aesthetic characteristics of their respective artistic forms but also reveal profound religious, cultural, and societal values. These motifs highlight the following themes:

1. Religious Syncretism

The vegetation motifs of both periods demonstrate a deep integration of religious ideologies with local philosophical traditions.

Tang Dynasty:

During the Tang era, Buddhism gradually localized from the Han Dynasty

onwards. Vegetation motifs such as the lotus embodied the Buddhist ideal of purity, while also integrating Taoist and Confucian values of nature worship and harmony between heaven and earth.

Rattanakosin Period:

Buddhist vegetation motifs, including lotus and flame motifs, combined Indian Buddhist artistic symbolism with Thai indigenous beliefs, offering a more nuanced expression in religious rituals. This integration reflected the adaptability and coexistence of Buddhism across diverse cultural contexts.

2. Cultural Openness

Both periods exhibit an openness to external aesthetic elements, leading to the absorption and innovation of foreign influences.

Tang Dynasty:

The prosperity and openness of the Tang era allowed for the incorporation of artistic elements from Central Asia, India, and even the Middle East. Exotic floral motifs and geometric motifs reflected the inclusive spirit and cosmopolitan nature of Tang society.

Rattanakosin Period:

The Rattanakosin era saw significant absorption of Chinese artistic styles. Motifs such as peonies and chrysanthemums were integrated into Thai Buddhist decor and combined with Thailand's traditional geometric symmetry. This openness illustrated the Thai culture's ability to adopt external influences while preserving its cultural core.

3. Reflection of Social Values

Vegetation motifs visually represented the societal values and aspirations of their respective eras.

Tang Dynasty:

Floral motifs like peonies symbolized wealth, prosperity, and stability, reflecting the Tang people's pursuit of economic flourishing and societal harmony.

Rattanakosin Period:

In temple decorations, vegetation motifs emphasized the sanctity of the royal family and the central role of religion. For instance, auspicious vegetations like the Champaka flower used in royal ceremonies symbolized blessings and highlighted the close relationship between monarchy and religion.

4. Artistic Innovation

Both periods witnessed significant artistic innovation, advancing beyond traditional styles to develop new aesthetic expressions.

Tang Dynasty:

Vegetation motifs evolved beyond the minimalist style of the Sui Dynasty, adopting intricate details and a sense of three dimensionality. These innovations laid the groundwork for subsequent developments in Chinese art.

Rattanakosin Period:

Thai artisans employed new techniques such as ceramic mosaics in their

vegetation designs, creatively blending foreign artistic elements with native traditions to produce the distinctive decorative arts of the Rattanakosin era.

5. cross-cultural Influence and Artistic Documentation

Vegetation motifs from both periods illustrate the dynamic interplay between tradition, innovation, and cross-cultural influences, serving as visual records of societal and cultural evolution.

Tang Dynasty:

The motifs documented the integration and dissemination of Central Plains culture within a multiethnic context while reflecting the flourishing cultural exchanges along the Silk Road.

Rattanakosin Period:

The motifs showcased Thailand's interactions with China, India, and Europe. These influences were transformed into unique Thai religious and social symbols through artistic mediums.

Conclusion

The vegetation motifs of the Tang Dynasty and the early Rattanakosin period are profound expressions of religious beliefs, cultural ethos, and social values. By fusing tradition with innovation and embracing external influences, these motifs not only documented societal developments but also visualized the dynamic processes of cultural openness and integration across different times and spaces. Through an analysis of these themes, one gains insight into how two pivotal historical periods articulated their cultural identities and cross-cultural interactions through art.

2.2.5 MODERN TRANSFORMATION OF HISTORICAL MOTIFS

Although this section focuses on the formal characteristics, symbolic meanings, and historical evolution of Buddhist vegetation motifs during China's Tang Dynasty and Thailand's Rattanakosin period, the ultimate aim of this research goes beyond the categorization and analysis of historical images. Rather, it seeks to explore how these historical motifs can be transformed into contemporary expressions as spiritual resources and design languages. Through cross-cultural comparison, structural analysis, and the extraction of spiritual cores, this study repositions historical motifs from two-dimensional decorative elements into "cultural archetypes" and "sensory carriers" within wearable art. The following aspects illustrate how motifs are "revitalized" from their historical contexts and applied to contemporary jewelry design practices:

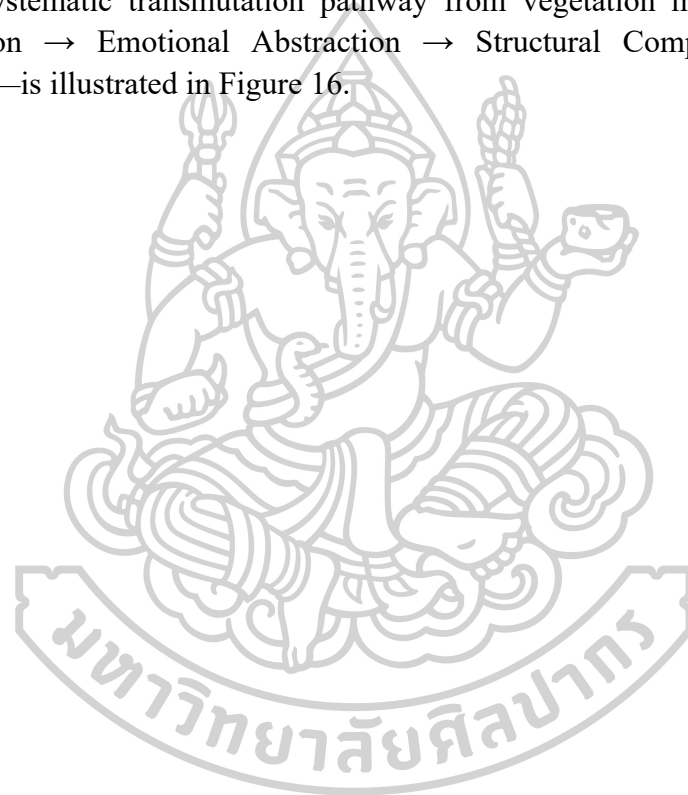
1. Contemporary Expression of Symbolic Meanings

Historical motifs are not only sources of visual forms but also visual extensions of philosophical concepts and religious values. For example, lotus motifs in the Tang Dynasty symbolized enlightenment and purity, while vine motifs represented continuity and samsara (cyclical existence). These vegetations embodied not only natural forms but also symbols of spiritual order. In contrast, flame motifs and floral

clusters in the Rattanakosin period conveyed the light of inner compassion, the spread of blessings, and sacred ritual presence.

In contemporary jewelry design, these symbolic meanings are abstracted from specific forms and reinterpreted as core conceptual themes through a new design language. For instance, enlightenment is expressed through a central, spiral, ascending structure; samsara is visualized through circular repetition and continuous curved surfaces; while emptiness (*śūnyatā*) is conveyed through translucent, flowing forms that communicate the Buddhist concept of “non-self-essence.” The design is no longer confined to the original appearance of the motifs, but instead begins with symbolic content and proceeds toward visual abstraction and spiritual reconstruction.

The systematic transmutation pathway from vegetation motifs— “Symbolic Interpretation → Emotional Abstraction → Structural Composition → Formal Language”—is illustrated in Figure 16.



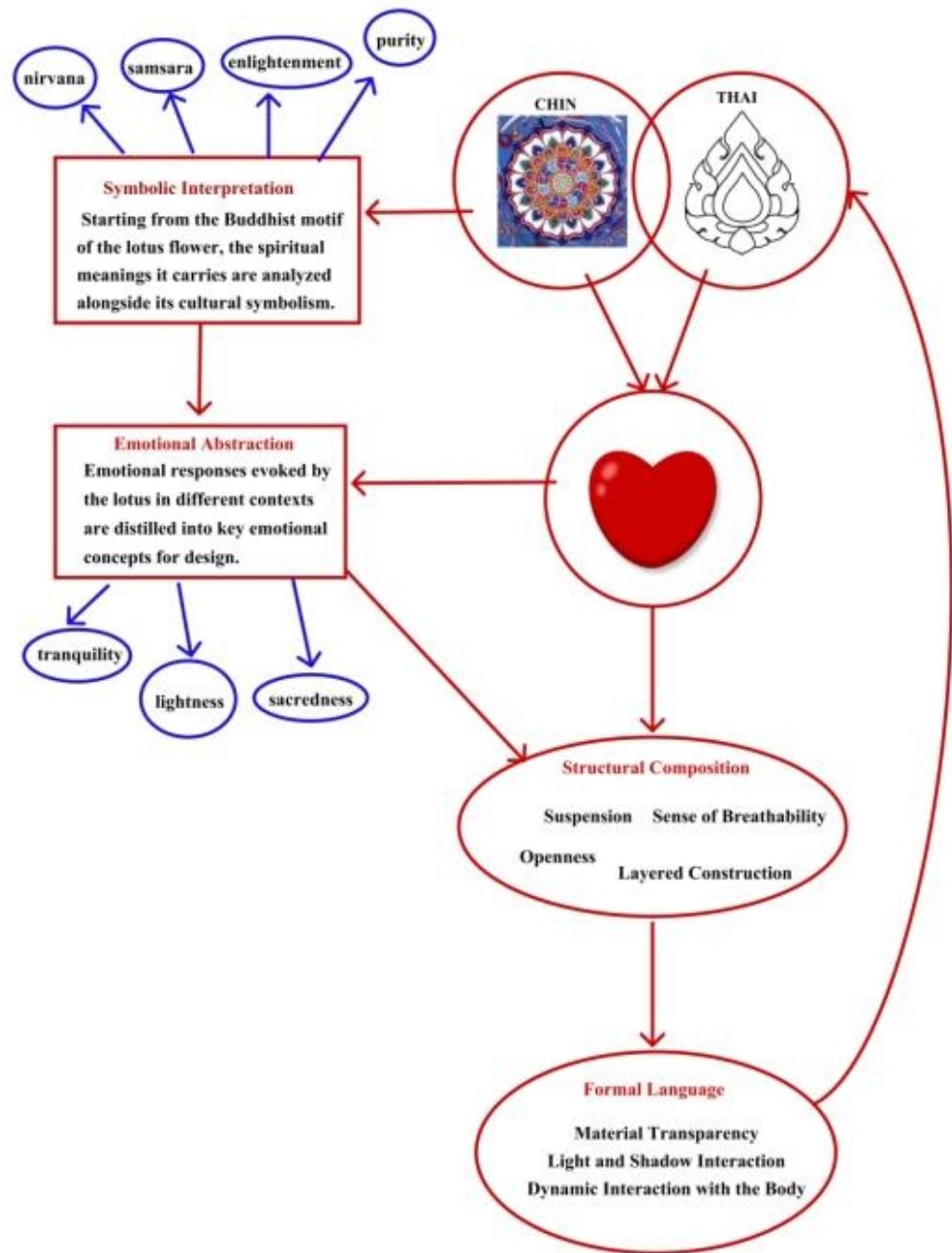


Figure 16 *The systematic transmutation pathway from vegetation motifs*
 Note. Researcher's research Diagram,2024

2. Design Transformation of Formal Language

The “compositional logic” and “structural rhythm” embedded in historical motifs provide insights for form-building in contemporary jewelry.

Early Tang motifs with axial symmetry and static composition offer references for basic balance and hierarchy in modern jewelry design.

Late Tang and Rama III period motifs exhibit increasing dynamism, with flowing and swirling lines inspiring “spatial fluidity” in the design of necklaces, earrings, and brooches;

For example, a traditionally symmetrical lotus can be transformed into a chest ornament with a gradient radial structure, while flame motifs can be reconfigured into hanging earrings with vertical momentum and undulating linear tension, creating a contemporary visual language that unifies form and energy.

Additionally, techniques such as line overlapping and progressive layering in historical motifs are reinterpreted into modular design strategies that reinforce structural rhythm and spatial depth in jewelry pieces.

3. Embodied Experience of Spiritual Meaning

This study emphasizes that motifs should go beyond visual presentation and achieve spiritual transmission through bodily interaction. The Buddhist ideas embodied in vegetation motifs—such as emptiness, enlightenment, and reincarnation—should not merely be “viewed” in motifs, but “perceived” through the act of wearing.

To achieve this, the following sensory-level design strategies are introduced (see Chapter 4 for details):

Material language: Utilizing 3D-printable translucent resin with a glass-like finish, hollow metal structures, and micro-crack textures to convey philosophical images such as fractured wholeness, flow of light, and depth of emptiness.

Dynamic structure: Incorporating movable, swingable, and magnetically reconfigurable structures that respond subtly to the wearer’s movement, creating an experience of emergent awareness.

Tactile strategies: Contrasts in material textures (e.g., smooth vs. matte, rigid vs. soft) activate the bodily perception of emptiness and reality, stillness and motion, forming a “resonance path” between the wearer and Buddhist symbolism.

This implies that jewelry is not merely a wearable object, but a spiritual experience activator, completing the transformation process from motif → body → consciousness.

4. Theoretical Mapping and Design Methodology

The results of the historical motif analysis in this section have been further translated into a “Design Methodology Mapping Diagram” (see Chapter 4 for details), which deconstructs and reconstructs Buddhist motifs through four levels: symbol - emotion - sensation - structure.

This mapping functions not only as a design tool but also as a conceptual model for building a culturally grounded visual language system. Through this model,

historical motifs become a bridge linking “traditional visual experience” and “contemporary spiritual expression,” offering both methodological and cultural inspiration for cross-cultural contemporary jewelry design.

Summary

Historical motif research thus offers more than just a repository of visual resources—it injects spiritual dimension and philosophical depth into contemporary design practice. Through a holistic design strategy of symbolic extraction – visual transformation – structural language – sensory guidance, this study facilitates the transition of Buddhist vegetation motifs from static cultural totems to dynamic embodied experiences, enabling a transformation from visual culture to experiential culture.

This also opens up a design pathway for the contemporary expression of Sino-Thai Buddhist motifs, grounded in spiritual reinterpretation and cross-cultural reconstruction, ultimately achieving a closed-loop design cycle of motif – emotion – experience – spirit.

2.3 BASIC ATTRIBUTES OF JEWELRY

In the previous section, the artistic characteristics of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs and their cultural exchange were analyzed. To further explore the application of these vegetation motifs in jewelry design, this section will focus on the fundamental attributes of jewelry, examining its dual nature of functionality and artistry.

Jewelry, as a unique form of art, has long been seen as more than just decorative. It carries profound cultural, religious, and social significance. Whether in historical contexts or modern society, the function and symbolic meaning of jewelry transcend its physical attributes, becoming an important medium for expressing individual identity, beliefs, and cultural affiliation. This section will delve into the fundamental attributes of jewelry, analyzing its multiple roles, including its function in religious practices, its role as a cultural carrier, and its aesthetic expression and visual impact. A detailed analysis of these attributes will provide a deeper understanding of jewelry’s multifaceted role in society and culture.

2.3.1 THE ROLE OF JEWELRY

Jewelry products have several key characteristics in their relationship with humans:

1. **Social Purpose:** Jewelry design is created to meet specific human needs and objectives, reflecting certain social purposes. These designs are not random but are made to serve both functional and symbolic roles.

2. **Natural Structure and Principles:** Jewelry designs are realized according to certain structural arrangements and natural principles, adhering to aesthetic and functional considerations.

3.Creative Labor: Jewelry is a product of human labor, embodying the creativity and wisdom of designers and craftsmen. It represents a tangible manifestation of human emotions, intentions, and desires, which is at the core of its aesthetic value(Xiaomo, 2010).

Jewelry exists across all periods as a visual medium. Through this material medium, people can perceive the distinct cultures and regional characteristics of different countries. Its existence is a beautiful gift from nature, and although jewelry design may seem like an aesthetic issue, it is profoundly influenced by religious and cultural values in the process of design, creation, and wearing. Therefore, jewelry is inextricably linked to religious culture(Nana, 2014).

From a literature review, jewelry and gemstones can serve several functions:

- 1.Expression of Religious Beliefs: Jewelry often symbolizes religious faith.
- 2.Amulet or Talisman: Jewelry can act as a protective charm.
- 3.Cultural Transmission Medium: Jewelry functions as a vehicle for spreading cultural ideas.
- 4.Symbol of Status and Identity: Jewelry can signify an individual's social standing or identity (Cifarelli, 2010; Thaowongsa, 2012; Xinyi, 2019).

2.3.2 THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF JEWELRY

Jewelry design is not only meant to be beautiful and decorative; designers can imbue each piece with specific meanings, offering the wearer a spiritual experience. This transforms jewelry into an integral part of an individual's spiritual life(Fei, 2008). Jewelry often reflects the religious beliefs of the wearer. For instance, Christians may wear crosses, and Buddhists may wear pendants featuring images of the Buddha. Jewelry helps to foster cohesion among followers and supports the development of religious communities.

Because jewelry interacts so closely with the human body, it often offers the most frequent form of physical engagement. The visual and tactile communication that occurs between the wearer and the jewelry can subtly enhance the religious experience, contributing to a more profound spiritual connection(Zijian, 2017).

In ancient Chinese gold and silver jewelry, religious, philosophical, and faith-based concepts were deeply embedded. For example, in Han Dynasty jewelry, motifs like mythical creatures, auspicious animals, and divine figures frequently appeared, reflecting beliefs in good fortune, blessings, and spiritual protection(Shijian, 2024). In ancient Egypt, jewelry served as an embodiment of the people's spiritual faith, imbuing each piece with religious significance. The connection between design and spiritual belief has always been integral and inseparable. Jewelry design displays the spiritual aspirations of the designer or the desires of the intended wearer. Expressing inner emotions and spiritual pursuits in a material form is an essential part of the design process. Art carries faith, and jewelry design, as a form of artistic creation, aims to convey spiritual beliefs in modern ways, awakening deep-seated

senses of belonging and aesthetic awareness among individuals, while expressing the spiritual faith of the designer or the wearer(Xinyi, 2019).

Moreover, as a visual art form, jewelry offers direct aesthetic experiences to consumers. Through daily interactions with jewelry, the wearer's visual and tactile engagement with it can reinforce their religious or cultural experience(Zijian, 2017).

In this context, jewelry becomes a carrier of cultural symbols and religious beliefs, functioning as a personal, cultural, and spiritual statement. The integration of Chinese anther Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design is not just a matter of aesthetic choice but also involves deep engagement with religious, cultural, and social values. The next section will explore how these cultural and religious attributes can be effectively incorporated into jewelry design to reflect the fusion of cultural symbolism and modern aesthetic sensibilities.

2.3.3 CULTURAL TRANSMISSION AND CULTURAL CARRIER

FUNCTION OF JEWELRY

Jewelry has long held the potential for communication and information transmission. Like stories, it serves as a carrier of time and culture. Through jewelry, we can clearly identify the development of science, philosophy, and cultural practices in different periods and regions, gaining insight into the cultural information of various places(Fei, 2008). In modern society, the design concepts of jewelry continue to evolve under changing aesthetic demands, and jewelry no longer serves solely to satisfy decorative needs or reflect the wearer's social status. It increasingly becomes a material medium for expressing the creator's and wearer's ideas(Mingying, 2023).

Jewelry is one of the key carriers of traditional culture. There exists a harmonious relationship between them—high-quality and distinctive cultures inspire jewelry design. By integrating cultural symbols into jewelry creation, traditional cultures are promoted and passed down. The combination of traditional culture and jewelry design provides more creative inspiration and facilitates the inheritance and development of cultural heritage. Compared to traditional jewelry products, culturally integrated jewelry design is not only more accessible to a broader audience but also has higher sales potential, which can further drive the growth of the jewelry industry(Zhang Weixiao, 2022).

Jewelry design is a product of both the spiritual and material lives of individuals, representing the best expression of rich cultural connotations and wealth values. In addition to being rare and precious, jewelry also holds unique humanistic attributes that reflect the history of human civilization. Jewelry carries profound spiritual and cultural meaning, encompassing aspects such as personality, spirituality, values, beliefs, and customs. It functions not only as a symbol of identity but also as an expression of distinct individuality, symbolic meaning, and romantic sentiment(Xiaomo, 2010). As a medium, jewelry conveys the creator's spiritual aspirations. Interpreting the imagery within jewelry holds positive significance for

both the viewer and the designer. The imagery within jewelry often possesses symbolic (representational), narrative, and conceptual qualities, and its narrative aspect is frequently employed as a medium for reflecting religious, mythical, or folkloric themes(Wendi, 2013).

2.3.4 THE DECORATIVE NATURE OF JEWELRY

The decorative features of jewelry primarily include the following:

1.Material and Color: Human vision is naturally drawn to colors, and the design content highlighted by color is more expressive and impactful in its decorative effect.

2.Texture: Texture refers to the visual sensation of a material, such as the cold sharpness of metal or the warmth and softness of fabric. In jewelry design, considering the contrast between the different textures of materials or between various finishes of the same material can enhance the visual appeal of the piece and underscore its decorative function.

3.Shape Creation: A piece of decorative jewelry requires not only color expression but also a lively or meaningful shape. By employing techniques such as repetition, gradient, deconstruction, and recombination, the design can transform monotonous shapes into rich and artistic expressions, creating a fresh visual experience.

4.Overall Composition: Composition generally applies to two-dimensional visual arts, such as painting. Some jewelry designs approach the form and principles of two-dimensional visual arts, where composition plays an important role in enhancing the decorative nature of the jewelry(Zhe, 2023).

Decoration is a universal cultural behavior where humans seek beautiful things to enhance their appearance. Jewelry serves as a tool within this behavior, allowing humans to beautify themselves. Jewelry is wearable art; its combination with the body not only alters the outward appearance but also impacts the inner experience. The decorative nature of jewelry can be categorized based on the psychological and social functions it serves, including:

1.Wealth Display: Jewelry serves as a symbol of wealth, identity, and status.

2.Social Class Symbol: Jewelry reflects social class and societal roles.

3.SelfEsteem Expression: Jewelry can demonstrate a sense of personal superiority or attract attention from others.

4.Religious or Ethnic Identity: Jewelry can symbolize religious or ethnic beliefs and affiliations.

5.Protection or Amulet: Jewelry can also serve a protective function, such as warding off evil(Xiaomo, 2010).

In conclusion, jewelry's decorative characteristics are deeply tied to its cultural, social, and psychological roles. Whether for personal adornment, religious expression, or cultural identity, jewelry serves as both a material and symbolic object. The integration of cultural and religious motifs, such as Buddhist vegetation motifs, into

jewelry design not only enhances its aesthetic value but also imbues it with deeper cultural meanings. This dynamic relationship between decoration, culture, and identity is central to the design process and can be further explored in the application of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in modern jewelry design.

2.3.5 INTERNATIONAL THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND PRACTICES OF SPIRITUAL DESIGN

Contemporary jewelry design has increasingly moved beyond the realms of decoration and material experimentation, evolving toward deeper explorations of emotional expression and spiritual narratives. Over the past two decades, several influential international designers have embraced jewelry as a medium to construct perceptual pathways between the body, emotion, culture, and belief. Their creative philosophies provide important theoretical guidance for this research's symbolic reinterpretation of Buddhist vegetation motifs.

1. Ruudt Peters: Bodily Spirituality and Symbolic Material Experimentation

Dutch artist Ruudt Peters is widely recognized as a pioneer in the field of spiritual jewelry. He emphasizes jewelry as a materialized process of self-awareness, using symbolic materials such as glass, salt, iron, and bone to convey spiritual insight. His representative series—Lingam, Anima, Corpus—draw inspiration from Eastern mysticism, Western alchemy, and esoteric philosophy, transforming jewelry into a sensory-spiritual installation medium.

His design approach emphasizes:

- (1) Translating metaphysical concepts into sensory forms.
- (2) Symbolic abstraction of material properties.
- (3) An internal dialogue between the wearer and the piece.

Peters' practice offers crucial inspiration for this study on how form can embody and transmit spiritual meaning.

2. Lin Cheung: Spiritual Refinement in Subtle Everydayness

British-Chinese designer Lin Cheung redefines the spiritual dimension of ordinary objects. She views design as a way of questioning humanistic values in contemporary daily life. In her series Medals for Everyday Heroes, she transforms the form of medals into a tribute to small, mindful acts, presenting a unique intersection of soft aesthetics and moral meaning.

Her design features include:

- (1) Lightweight emotional narratives.
- (2) Embedding abstract meanings into everyday forms.
- (3) Wearable transformation of "invisible goodness."

Cheung's design philosophy reinforces the feasibility of this research's goal to merge spiritual expression with everyday wearability.

3. Sissi Westerberg: The Body, Emotional Trauma, and Social Tension

Swedish designer Sissi Westerberg focuses on the materialization of trauma, emotional conflict, and social repression. Her works often incorporate skin, stitching, and internal organ forms, exploring the psychological boundaries of the self and social control. In series such as *Body & Soul* and *Inside Outside*, emotional resonance is activated through bodily interaction, forming a visual narrative of perception–trauma–healing.

Her method emphasizes:

- (1) Symbolic representation of social trauma.
- (2) Metaphorical transformation of bodily structures.
- (3) Jewelry as a “psychological record” with functional attributes.

Westerberg’s work offers a contrasting reference for this research regarding how spiritual perception can be evoked through structured form.

Summary and Research Implication

Ruudt Peters, Lin Cheung, and Sissi Westerberg represent three key dimensions in contemporary spiritual jewelry design: mysticism → everydayness → psychological embodiment. While all three highlight jewelry as an extension of perception, their cultural positions, emotional expressions, and formal strategies differ significantly.

Building on these precedents, the present research proposes an Eastern spiritual design pathway rooted in Buddhist aesthetics, beginning with vegetation motifs and incorporating Buddhist philosophy and bodily perception. This aims to construct a three-layered narrative framework—form, symbolism, and perception—to achieve a cross-cultural transformation from motif to spiritual experience.

2.3.6 SUMMARY

Based on the above analysis, jewelry is not only an aesthetic manifestation but also a significant symbol of social culture, religious beliefs, and identity. By synthesizing previous research, this study draws the following key conclusions:

1. Functionality of Jewelry: Beyond Decorative Purposes

Jewelry design extends beyond aesthetics, reflecting deep considerations of human needs, cultural imagery, and social purposes. Its functions include religious expression, amuletic significance, cultural transmission, and identity representation, carrying cultural meanings that surpass its material form.

2. Religious Nature of Jewelry: Symbol of Faith and Spiritual Experience

In religious contexts, jewelry serves as a tangible representation of faith, while the act of wearing it enhances the wearer’s sense of belonging and spiritual connection. Thus, jewelry functions as a crucial medium for the dissemination of religious culture.

3. Cultural Transmission of Jewelry: A Transhistorical and Transregional Symbol

As a cultural symbol that transcends time and space, jewelry not only reflects the individual identity of the wearer but also documents the cultural transformations

across different historical periods and regions, acting as a tangible medium for cultural exchange and heritage.

4. Aesthetic Expressiveness of Jewelry: The Artistic Integration of Materials, Colors, and Composition

The visual impact of jewelry is derived from its selection of materials, color combinations, morphological shaping, and compositional design. These artistic elements collectively endow jewelry with unique aesthetic value, making it both visually appealing and culturally significant.

Based on this analysis, jewelry, as a cultural carrier, plays a crucial role in deepening the exploration of the cultural connotations of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs and their application in jewelry design. Through design practice, it not only facilitates the dissemination of these traditional cultural elements within contemporary artistic contexts but also fosters their innovative development, thereby imbuing them with new aesthetic and cultural significance.

2.4 RELEVANT THEORETICAL STUDIES

In the preceding research, we systematically reviewed the similarities and differences between Chinese and Thai Buddhist philosophies, the historical evolution of Buddhist vegetation motifs, and their role in cultural exchange. This analysis revealed the symbolic significance of these motifs across different historical periods and their cross-cultural influences. However, historical and semiotic analyses alone are insufficient to support the practical application of these motifs in contemporary jewelry design. Therefore, it is necessary to further explore relevant design theories and methodologies to establish a more comprehensive academic framework.

This chapter will focus on key theoretical perspectives, including cross-cultural design, semiotics, and emotional response to motifs, and will explore their practical applications in jewelry design. Cross-cultural design theory will help us understand how Buddhist vegetation motifs adapt and evolve within different cultural contexts, providing methodological support for their reinterpretation in contemporary jewelry. Semiotic theory will facilitate an in-depth analysis of the symbolic characteristics of Buddhist vegetation motifs in visual communication, ensuring that they effectively convey cultural meanings in jewelry design. Additionally, the theory of emotional response to motifs will examine consumers' emotional experiences with Buddhist vegetation motifs, exploring how design can enhance wearers' cultural identity and aesthetic resonance.

By integrating these theoretical perspectives, this chapter aims to establish a solid foundation for the subsequent jewelry design practice. It seeks to enable the innovative application of traditional Buddhist vegetation motifs in modern jewelry while maintaining a balance between cultural value and market acceptance.

2.4.1 CROSS-CULTURAL DESIGN THEORY

With the acceleration of globalization and the increasing frequency of cultural exchanges, cross-cultural design has become an essential method in contemporary design. In jewelry design, cross-cultural design not only involves the integration and innovation of elements from different cultures but also focuses on how to present the unique charm and values of diverse cultures through design. By borrowing and merging aesthetic features and craftsmanship from various cultures, cross-cultural design promotes diversity and innovation in jewelry design. This subsection first provides an overview of the basic principles of cross-cultural design and its wide application in global design, then explores the critical role of cultural adaptability in cross-cultural design, and finally examines the specific application of cross-cultural design in jewelry design, showcasing how it influences the style, form, and symbolic meanings of contemporary jewelry.

2.4.1.1 OVERVIEW OF CROSSCULTURAL DESIGN

Cross-cultural design refers to the process of creating products or artistic works that can be effectively communicated and accepted across diverse cultural backgrounds. With the increasing frequency of cultural exchanges driven by globalization, cross-cultural design has become a crucial field within design studies. Its core objective is to balance the preservation of cultural identity with the demands of target cultural markets through cultural adaptation, cultural integration, and cultural heritage.

The study of cross-cultural design involves multiple theoretical models, among which the following two frameworks provide significant guidance for understanding cross-cultural adaptability in jewelry design:

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory includes key dimensions such as Individualism vs. Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Masculinity vs. Femininity. These cultural factors shape aesthetic preferences and consumer perceptions across different societies. For instance, Chinese culture, which emphasizes collectivism, often incorporates Buddhist vegetation motifs with strong communal and religious symbolism. In contrast, while Thai culture is also deeply influenced by Buddhism, its jewelry design tends to prioritize ornamental appeal and personal expression.

Schwartz's Basic Values Theory

Schwartz's Basic Values Theory highlights the role of cultural values in shaping consumer decision-making and aesthetic preferences. According to this framework, values such as Tradition, Self-Transcendence, and Openness vary in importance across cultures, directly influencing consumer acceptance of jewelry design. For example, the Thai market exhibits a stronger preference for lotus motifs, symbolizing spiritual purification, whereas the Chinese market tends to favor peony motifs, which

are associated with wealth and auspiciousness.

By applying these theoretical models, cross-cultural design can facilitate a deeper understanding of consumer expectations in different cultural contexts, thereby informing the adaptation and innovation of Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry design.

2.4.1.2 THE ROLE OF CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY IN CROSSCULTURAL DESIGN

Cultural adaptation refers to the process of adjusting design elements—such as symbols, forms, materials, and craftsmanship—within cross-cultural design to ensure acceptance by consumers in the target market while aligning with their cultural aesthetics. This approach enables designs to maintain their original cultural essence while resonating with the aesthetic values and preferences of different cultural contexts.

Cultural adaptability is a critical mechanism facilitating the blending of diverse design elements in cross-cultural design. By leveraging cultural adaptability, design elements can be revitalized in new cultural contexts, simultaneously conveying the essence of the source culture and aligning with the aesthetic preferences of the target culture. The following highlights the significance of cultural adaptability in cross-cultural design:

1. Enhancing Global Market Acceptance

Cultural adaptability enables harmony among the design languages of various nations, thus increasing product acceptance in global markets. It allows design products to resonate with audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering cross-cultural understanding through symbolic reinterpretation (Shao, 2016; Song).

2. Strengthening Cultural Symbolism

Cultural adaptability is pivotal in sustaining the longevity of design elements in a globalized context. It facilitates the visual integration of motifs and symbols in cross-cultural design, amplifying their cultural significance. Adaptable visual elements gain new symbolic meanings within diverse cultural frameworks, ensuring their relevance in modern contexts. For example: Traditional elements find renewed vitality in contemporary settings. Symbols adapt to reflect the cultural nuances of the target audience, enriching their representation. (Zhang & Wang, 2024; Zou et al., 2024) (Chen et al., 2024) (Jiang, 2024)

3. Achieving Innovative Fusion

Cultural adaptability fosters a seamless fusion of symbols and aesthetics in cross-cultural design. This process promotes innovation by balancing localization and globalization, offering designs that resonate both globally and locally. (Yang & Hong, 2021)

4. Conveying Diverse Cultural Values

From symbols and colors to techniques and communication strategies, cultural

adaptability empowers designs to convey diverse cultural values in a globalized world. It preserves the unique features of indigenous cultures while ensuring resonance within new cultural contexts. This dual process of adaptation and innovation provides a theoretical foundation and practical guidance for design research.

5.The Adaptation of Chinese Motifs in Thai Art and Design: A Case Study of the Peony Motif

In the evolution of Thai art and design, Chinese motifs were not merely adopted passively but were actively transformed by local artisans to align with Thailand's aesthetic system and cultural needs. The adaptation of the Chinese peony motif serves as a compelling example of how Thailand reinterpreted external artistic influences while preserving its own cultural identity.

According to Leksukhum (2007), who discussed the Chinese and-Thai artistic relationship and the evolution of decorative motifs through cultural exchange, and Thongthammachart (2014), who analyzed the adaptation of the Chinese peony motif in Thai art, the incorporation of Chinese peonies into Thai artistic traditions resulted in a distinctive visual language. The adaptation process involved several key strategies:

(1) Color Adaptation: Integrating with the Thai Color System

Characteristics of Peony Colors in Chinese Art

In traditional Chinese art, peonies are commonly depicted in red, pink, gold, and white, symbolizing wealth and prosperity. This color palette is evident in Tang Dynasty murals and Ming-Qing porcelain.

Thai Modification of Peony Colors

When incorporating the peony motif, Thai artisans adapted its color palette to brighter, more saturated hues, such as gold, orange, deep red, and blue, which are widely used in Thai royal architecture and Buddhist art. Examples: In the murals of the Grand Palace in Rattanakosin, peonies are adorned with brilliant gold embellishments, harmonizing with traditional Thai decorative elements. In the ceramic mosaics of Wat Pho, peony colors are adjusted to resonate with Thai "Lai Kanok" (flame-like floral scrolls), ensuring a cohesive visual effect.

(2) Structural Transformation: Integrating with Thai Traditional Decorative Motifs

Structural Features of the Peony in Chinese Art

In Chinese art, peonies are often depicted with a realistic and symmetrical appearance, emphasizing detailed layering, as seen in gong painting (fine-brush painting) and relief carving.

Thai Modification of Peony Structures

Thai artisans reduced realism, increased decorative stylization, and integrated peony motifs with Thai traditional motifs such as "Lai Kranuok" (flame-like scrolls). Examples: In the murals of the Grand Palace and Wat Pho, peonies are depicted with curled, flowing leaves, merging with the flame-like decorations in Thai Buddhist art.

(3) Motif Integration: Incorporating Thai Mythological and Buddhist Symbols

Symbolic Meaning of the Peony in Chinese Culture

In Chinese culture, peonies symbolize prosperity and auspiciousness and are often paired with phoenixes, auspicious clouds, and other traditional Chinese motifs.

Thai Integration Approach

In Thailand, peonies are frequently combined with local mythological creatures and Buddhist symbols, including Garuda (half-human, half-bird divine creature) and Naga (serpent deity): Peonies are often intertwined with these figures in royal temple murals and sculptures, adding deeper Thai religious symbolism. Lotus and Thai native flowers (e.g., hibiscus, orchids): Peonies are integrated into Buddhist temple decorations alongside lotus motifs, reinforcing their spiritual significance.

(4) Craft Adaptation: Incorporating Traditional Thai Techniques

Chinese Peony Craft Techniques

In Chinese traditional craftsmanship, peony motifs are frequently applied in porcelain, wood carving, metal engraving, and embroidery, emphasizing fine detailing.

Thai Craft Modification

Thai artisans adapted peony motifs into local craftsmanship techniques, such as:

Rian Poa Chang (ceramic mosaic work): In Wat Pho and Wat Arun, Chinese porcelain fragments were reassembled into peony motifs, blended with Thai flame-like scrolls, creating a distinctive Thai Chinese aesthetic.

Thai metal carving and lacquer work (Lai Rot Nam): Peonies appear in royal metalwork and lacquerware, often adorned with gold leaf to enhance their luxurious appeal.

Tee Jok weaving technique: During the Rama V era, Chinese peony motifs were introduced into Thai silk brocade, but artisans adapted them using the Tee Jok (intricate brocade weaving) method, making them distinctively Thai.

(5) Layout Adaptation: From Symmetry to Dynamic Composition

Structural Features of Peony Arrangements in Chinese Art

In Chinese art, peony motifs are typically arranged in symmetrical compositions, following bi-directional or four-directional continuous motifs, emphasizing balance and harmony.

Thai Modification of Peony Layout

Thai artisans favored more fluid, asymmetrical compositions, enhancing movement and dynamism in their designs.

Examples:

In Thai temple murals, peony motifs are arranged in spiral or radiating formations, creating a sense of movement that aligns with Thai Buddhist artistic principles.

In traditional Thai textiles, peonies are often positioned in border decorations rather than as the central motif, ensuring they complement rather than dominate the overall design.

Conclusion

Thailand's adaptation of the Chinese peony motif was not a mere replication but a sophisticated process of cultural reinterpretation, ensuring the design retained its Thai identity. Key adaptations included:

(1)Color Transformation - Incorporating gold, deep red, and blue to align with Thai aesthetics.

(2)Structural Modification - Reducing realism, increasing decorative stylization, and merging with Lai Kranuok (flame-like scrolls).

(3)Motif Integration - Pairing peonies with Garuda, Naga, and lotus motifs, enhancing their religious symbolism.

(4)Craft Innovation - Incorporating mosaic work, metal engraving, lacquer techniques, and Thai weaving traditions.

(5)Layout Adjustment - Shifting from symmetrical compositions to more fluid, dynamic arrangements in murals and textiles.

This transformation highlights how Thai artisans navigated external cultural influences while maintaining a strong national identity. The case of the peony motif exemplifies Thailand's strategic approach to cross-cultural adaptation, demonstrating how foreign artistic elements can be reimagined through local cultural lenses to create authentic yet innovative artistic expressions.

2.4.1.3 APPLICATION OF CROSSCULTURAL DESIGN IN JEWELRY DESIGN

Cross-cultural design methods are widely applied in contemporary jewelry design. In the context of globalization, designers are increasingly drawing inspiration from different cultures to create jewelry that features diverse cultural characteristics. Cross-cultural design not only meets the varied demands of the global market but also reflects the mutual influence and fusion between cultures. The application of cross-cultural design in jewelry design can be illustrated in several ways:

Cultural Exchange and Innovation in Jewelry Design: One of the primary roles of cross-cultural design is to foster understanding and communication between different cultures. Through artistic thinking, cross-cultural design helps designers integrate traditional elements from various cultures into their products, thereby promoting innovation. In jewelry design, designers merge visual symbols, materials, and techniques from multiple cultures to create jewelry pieces rich in cultural meaning (Gumulya & Meilani, 2023).

For example, scholars Devanny Gumulya and Fenny Meilani explored the tradition of elongated earlobes in Indonesian culture, innovating designs that convey respect for the value of time and perseverance. By deeply reflecting on and recreating the Dayak tradition, they brought a fresh, modern jewelry design language to the tradition. In this process, they drew inspiration from both material culture and behavioral culture, designing jewelry that embodies cultural exchange and innovation (see Figure 17).



Figure 17 *Indonesian elongated earinspired earrings.*
Note. (Gumulya & Meilani, 2023)

2. Cultural Adaptability and Global Marketization

Cultural adaptability is one of the core elements in cross-cultural design. Designers must gain a deep understanding of the cultural characteristics and aesthetic preferences of the target market to ensure that their designs are widely accepted and recognized in diverse cultural contexts. This requires designers to balance symbols and meanings from different cultures within a globalized market, striving to find harmony between the universality and locality of design. For instance, traditional Chinese motifs such as the "lotus" or "dragon" can serve as bridges for cultural exchange in Western markets, while these symbols carry deeper cultural significance in Asian markets (Chen, W., 2018).

For example, Liu Mingyue from Nanjing University of the Arts combined Suzhou embroidery with silver jewelry to design a modern necklace that is both elegant and structurally sound (see Figure 18). The Suzhou embroidery pendant and the plum blossom motif on the tassel reflect the designer's respect for traditional culture while also demonstrating the cultural adaptability of the jewelry design and its potential in the global market.



Figure 18 Liu Mingyue's Necklace with Suzhou Embroidery
Note. (Chen, W, 2018)

3. Cross Cultural Design in Education and Practice

With the spread of cross-cultural design concepts, more and more design institutions are incorporating cross-cultural perspectives into jewelry design curricula. This approach cultivates designers with a global vision and multicultural awareness. Such an educational model not only helps students broaden their design thinking but also enhances their adaptability in multicultural environments, enabling them to create works that resonate across different cultural contexts (Jiang, 2015).

4. Semiotics and Narrative Design in Cross Cultural Design

In cross-cultural design, semiotics and narrative design play crucial roles. By examining the application of semiotics in Chinese jewelry design, it is evident that the transformation of cultural symbols is not merely a reproduction of motifs but involves the designer's recreation and adaptation of the symbol's meaning. This allows these symbols to resonate more widely across global contexts. For example, designers can integrate deep cultural meanings into jewelry designs by narrating a cultural story or legend, thus imbuing the design with additional emotional and cultural value (Lyu et al., 2024).

For instance, scholars such as Yanru Lyu and others have utilized AI technology to enhance the details and compositional aspects of jewelry design, allowing for a more accurate conveyance of cultural stories and metaphorical concepts (see Figure 19). This approach makes it easier to reach the emotional level of the audience, achieving the goal of cross-cultural communication through semiotics and narrative design.



Figure 19 *AI Jewelry Design*
Note.(Lyu et al., 2024)

5. Challenges and Opportunities of Cultural Differences

One of the challenges faced by cross-cultural design is overcoming the design obstacles posed by cultural differences. Cultural differences may lead to misunderstandings when designers handle elements from different cultures. Therefore, designers must possess a high level of cultural sensitivity. On the other hand, these cultural differences provide designers with opportunities for innovation, enabling them to create unique works that blend diverse cultural characteristics (Rau, 2022).

Through these various applications, cross-cultural design not only drives innovation in jewelry design but also provides designers with a broader creative perspective. It fosters mutual understanding and fusion between different cultures, promoting both cultural exchange and artistic advancement. By employing cross-cultural design methods, jewelry designers can tap into diverse cultural inspirations, creating pieces that are not only aesthetically rich but also carry deeper meanings. This approach enhances both the artistic expression and the cultural significance of jewelry designs, further facilitating the integration of vegetation motifs with contemporary jewelry.

2.4.1.4 SUMMARY

Research Gap and Contribution in Cross-Cultural Jewelry Design

Existing studies on cross-cultural design have extensively explored key issues such as cultural adaptation, cultural integration, and cultural heritage, with broad applications in architecture, fashion, and UI design. However, in the field of jewelry design, particularly regarding the cross-cultural adaptation of Buddhist vegetation motifs, research remains relatively limited. Current studies primarily focus on semiotic analysis within a single cultural context, with less attention given to how symbols evolve and transform in cross-cultural environments.

Building upon existing theories, this study integrates semiotics, emotional perception theory, and user experience research to systematically examine how

Buddhist vegetation motifs undergo adaptive modifications in cross-cultural design contexts. The key contributions of this research include:

Semiotic analysis to identify the core differences between Buddhist vegetation motifs from the Tang Dynasty (China) and the Rattanakosin period (Thailand).

Consumer behavior research to explore how individuals from different cultural backgrounds emotionally respond to Buddhist vegetation motifs.

3D modeling and user testing to investigate how the three-dimensional morphology of motifs influences their acceptance in cross-cultural markets.

Through these investigations, this study not only advances the application of cross-cultural design theories in jewelry design but also provides theoretical support and practical guidance for the modernization of Buddhist vegetation motifs. By fostering their cultural dissemination and innovative application in the global market, this research contributes to the broader field of cultural sustainability in contemporary design.

2.4.2 SEMIOTIC

In the previous section, the role of cross-cultural design in promoting cultural integration and innovation in jewelry design was explored, emphasizing the ability of design elements to be reconstructed within a multicultural context. Building upon this foundation, this section will examine how semiotics, through the construction and interpretation of symbolic language, imbues jewelry designs with deeper cultural significance and emotional expression.

Semiotics, as the study of signs and their meanings, plays a crucial role in the field of design, particularly in jewelry design. The application of semiotics in jewelry design ensures that the design goes beyond mere decoration, transforming the piece into a cultural carrier with profound meaning. This section will first provide a brief overview of semiotic theory, followed by an exploration of its specific application in jewelry design, analyzing how semiotic transmission enhances the emotional expression and cultural significance of jewelry pieces. This will lay the theoretical groundwork for the subsequent study of the symbolic application of vegetation motifs in jewelry design.

2.4.2.1 OVERVIEW OF SEMIOTICS

Semiotics, as the study of signs and their meanings, is concerned with how signs are created, transmitted, and interpreted in different social and cultural contexts. Semiotics encompasses not only linguistic symbols but also images, sounds, gestures, and other forms of signs. Therefore, its scope is broad, spanning multiple disciplines, including linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and philosophy. Roland Barthes and Charles Morris are prominent theorists in semiotics, and their respective theories offer distinct perspectives on how signs and meaning are constructed.

Barthes' semiotics focuses on the interpretation of cultural texts and the role of the reader in the creation of meaning. In contrast, Morris provides a systematic framework for analyzing and classifying signs, emphasizing the functional role and contextual use of signs. Building on Pierce's triadic model of signs, Morris proposed a division of semiotic theory into three categories: signifier (Sign), users (Users), and world (World), each corresponding to the form, meaning, and use of signs, respectively. Morris extended semiotics beyond linguistics, developing it into an interdisciplinary field with practical applications. His theory has been widely applied in the fields of aesthetics, art theory, and cultural design as a tool to analyze meaning, emphasizing a systematic approach to understanding artistic symbols.

Morris' semiotic triad includes semantics (the study of signification), syntax (the analysis of the structure of signs), and pragmatics (the study of the use of signs). Semantics focuses on the meaning of signs and how they are interpreted in texts. Syntax examines the structural relationships between signs, while pragmatics explores how signs are employed by users in specific contexts. This triadic framework has been instrumental in expanding the scope of semiotics, allowing for its application in diverse fields, including cultural design (Wang Yisheng & Lan Fang, 2023; Liu Huichao & Zhang Yi, 2024).

Roland Barthes, building on Saussure's structuralist semiotics, extended the concept of the "signifier" and "signified" into a two-layer system of meaning: denotation (the literal, surface meaning of a sign) and connotation (the implied, deeper meaning). Denotative meaning corresponds to the direct, visible elements that are perceptible in daily life, often linked to the material aspect of culture. Connotative meaning, on the other hand, reflects the emotional or cultural connections between the product and its user, often encompassing metaphoric, behavioral, and narrative layers.

The metaphoric layer of connotation reflects the material aspects of culture, such as the symbolic representation of human spirit or emotion. The behavioral layer corresponds to the behavioral aspects of culture, such as customs, lifestyle, and psychological states, which influence human actions. The narrative layer pertains to the spiritual and historical dimensions of culture, subtly reflecting cultural memory through nature, history, or tradition (Zhao Minting & Wang Sinan, 2023; Liu Yuanxia & Yin Jun, 2022).

These two theories complement each other and provide a foundation for understanding symbols in language, culture, and daily life. They form the theoretical basis for the application of semiotics in design and offer systematic approaches for incorporating traditional cultural elements into modern product design.

This translation maintains the academic tone and professional language suited for a research-oriented setting. It also ensures clarity in discussing the theoretical aspects of semiotics, making it suitable for an audience familiar with semiotic theories and their application in design.

2.4.2.2 APPLICATION OF SEMIOTICS IN JEWELRY DESIGN

Jewelry, as a unique form of ornamentation in human life, carries a reinforced concept of "product." It is closely connected to the human body and endowed with specific meanings. By applying semiotic principles to interpret and summarize the "meanings" inherent in jewelry, pieces with symbolic representation generate new significance. This, in turn, forms a set of motifs that can guide jewelry design. Contemporary jewelry design places a strong emphasis on a "human-centered" approach, where designers are tasked with creating diversified pieces under the guidance of semiotic theory. Different symbolic elements, such as material selection, color matching, form representation, craftsmanship, and symbolic meaning, can be employed to elucidate the underlying meaning of various jewelry designs (Cui Xiaoxiao, 2024). The following outlines several ways in which semiotics is applied in jewelry design:

1. **Conveying the Cultural Significance of Jewelry:** In jewelry design, the application of semiotics helps in understanding the function of jewelry as a cultural symbol. Through a semiotic perspective, visual symbols in modern jewelry can be interpreted. These symbols are not merely decorative motifs; they also represent specific cultural values and social identities. By analyzing these symbols, designers can delve into the cultural implications of jewelry and recreate them based on semiotic theory, thereby imbuing the designs with cross-cultural communicative power and symbolic meaning (Chitsaz et al., 2019).

2. **Jewelry as a Medium for the Transmission of Cultural Symbols:** In today's globalized world, jewelry design is no longer confined to a singular cultural context but transcends cultural boundaries to become a medium for cultural exchange. Through jewelry as a vehicle for transmitting cultural symbols, consumer identity and social status can be reflected. Linking jewelry to specific social identities and cultural symbols enhances the symbolic significance and market value of the product (Bernabei, 2017).

3. **Semiotics and Emotional Expression in Jewelry Design:** Semiotics does not only focus on the visual presentation of symbols but also considers the emotional and psychological impact that these symbols carry. In jewelry design, symbols are not just superficial decorations; they encapsulate the emotional needs and identity recognition of the consumer. By selecting and combining elements with specific cultural backgrounds and emotional meanings, designers can imbue jewelry with greater emotional depth and personalized expression, making it a symbol of individual emotions and social roles (Koskinen, 2005).

4. **Semiotics and Brand Construction in Jewelry:** The construction of a jewelry brand is closely related to semiotics, where brand symbols are not only used for identifying the brand but also carry the brand's culture, history, and consumer emotional recognition. Jewelry brands can use semiotic analysis to build a brand story and cultural transmission. By conveying the core values, historical background, and

social responsibility of the brand, designers can enhance the cultural depth and market recognition of the brand (Brandão et al., 2021).

In conclusion, through semiotic analysis, designers can gain a deeper understanding of the multifaceted significance of jewelry as a cultural symbol. This understanding enables them to enhance both the emotional and cultural value of jewelry, resulting in designs that resonate with consumers on a deeper level.

2.4.2.3 SUMMARY

According to Eco's (1976) theory of visual semiotics, motifs in design are not merely decorative elements but function as a symbolic system that carries cultural meaning. In the context of this jewelry design study, the semiotic significance of Buddhist vegetation motifs is manifested through:

- 1) Signifier: The specific visual form of motifs, such as lotus, vines, and peonies.
- 2) Signified: The cultural meanings associated with these motifs, such as the lotus symbolizing purity, the peony representing wealth, and vines signifying the cycle of life and rebirth.
- 3) Cultural Context: The same motif can hold different symbolic meanings across cultures. Thus, symbols must be reinterpreted in design to adapt to cross-cultural markets.

Building upon the theoretical framework, this study proposes the following design strategies for the cross-cultural adaptation of Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry:

- 1) Sign Transformation: Reinterpreting traditional Buddhist vegetation motifs to align with contemporary jewelry market aesthetics while maintaining their symbolic essence.
- 2) Visual Synthesis: Integrating Tang Dynasty and Rattanakosin-era decorative styles to create a unique visual language that resonates across cultures.
- 3) Cultural Transmission: Utilizing platforms such as museum exhibitions and social media to position the jewelry not only as commercial products but also as vehicles for cultural dissemination.

The application of semiotic theory in jewelry design enhances the expressive power of visual symbols while imbuing Buddhist vegetation motifs with deeper cultural significance. The following sections summarize the role of semiotics in cultural transmission, emotional expression, and cross-cultural design.

1. Semiotic Interpretation of Buddhist Vegetation motifs

Buddhist vegetation motifs, as symbols, embody profound religious and philosophical meanings.

The lotus symbolizes nirvana and enlightenment.

Vines represent the Buddhist concept of karma and the cycle of life and rebirth.

The peony, in Chinese culture, is associated with wealth and prosperity, while in Thai Buddhist art, it carries a more spiritual connotation.

The interpretation of these motifs across different cultural backgrounds exemplifies the relationship between the signifier (visual form) and the signified (cultural meaning) in semiotic analysis.

2. Cross-Cultural Transmission and Reinterpretation of Symbols

Semiotics emphasizes that the meaning of symbols is not static but continuously evolves in different cultural contexts.

For instance, Thailand's adaptation of the Chinese peony motif demonstrates cross-cultural transformation:

Thai artisans modified the shape, color, and decorative style of the peony to align with local Buddhist artistic traditions rather than directly replicating the Chinese version.

This adaptation aligns with Charles Morris' (1946) "expression-design-use" framework, which highlights how symbols evolve through reinterpretation, design adjustments, and cultural appropriation.

3. Application of Semiotics in Contemporary Jewelry Design

Modern jewelry design extends beyond aesthetics, incorporating cultural narratives and emotional expression. Semiotic theory provides a theoretical foundation for integrating Buddhist vegetation motifs into contemporary jewelry by:

Parametric Design and 3D Printing: Maintaining the traditional symbolic essence of motifs while enhancing their modern appeal and market acceptance.

Semiotic Branding Strategies: Strengthening cultural identity in jewelry marketing, allowing consumers to experience deeper spiritual resonance when wearing the jewelry.

Conclusion and Future Research Directions

By analyzing the semiotic attributes of Buddhist vegetation motifs, this study provides a theoretical basis for their application in jewelry design and explores their cross-cultural significance.

Future research could further integrate consumer behavior studies to analyze how different cultural markets emotionally perceive Buddhist vegetation motifs. This would help refine symbolic design strategies, enabling broader cultural dissemination and commercial application of these motifs in the modern jewelry industry.

2.4.3 EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO MOTIFS THEORY

2.4.3.1 OVERVIEW OF EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO MOTIFS

The Emotional Response to Motifs Theory is an interdisciplinary research domain encompassing psychology, design studies, visual neuroscience, and cultural studies. This theory examines how visual motifs evoke emotional responses, shaping aesthetic experiences, cognitive load, and cultural interpretations.

The core concepts of this theory are influenced by various scholars and theoretical frameworks, including:

Gestalt Psychology (Wertheimer, 1923) – Emphasizing the perceptual

organization of motifs and how humans instinctively recognize whole structures rather than isolated elements.

Emotional Design (Fishwick, 2004) – Investigating how aesthetics and design evoke emotional responses, enhancing user engagement.

Visual Neuroscience(Makin et al., 2016) – Exploring how the human brain processes visual motifs and their emotional impact.

Color-Motif Interaction (Van Gorp & Adams, 2012) – Examining how color and motif combinations influence emotional perception.

Cultural and Emotional Perception of Motifs(Niedderer & Townsend, 2014) – Studying how cultural backgrounds shape emotional responses to visual motifs.

2.4.3.2 THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO MOTIFS IN MOTIF DESIGN

The Emotional Response to Motifs Theory focuses on how visual motifs trigger emotional reactions, shaping individuals' perceptions of design, products, and environments. In recent years, this theory has been widely applied across various fields, including branding, user experience (UX), fashion, product packaging, and artistic creation.

Building upon existing research, this review explores the influence of emotional response to motifs on motif design, providing relevant academic references to support further discussions in cross-cultural jewelry design.

1. Gestalt Psychology and Motif Perception

Gestalt Psychology is one of the most influential theories in visual cognition. Wertheimer (1923) proposed that human perception processes visual information following certain organizational principles, forming structured wholes rather than perceiving individual elements in isolation. This holistic cognitive mechanism influences not only how motifs are perceived but also how they emotionally impact individuals.

Key Gestalt principles relevant to motif perception and emotional response include:

Symmetry: Symmetrical motifs are often perceived as stable, harmonious, and aesthetically pleasing(Palmer & Hemenway, 1978). Research suggests that humans have a natural preference for symmetry as it reduces cognitive load, making visual processing more efficient (Tyler, 2003).

Continuity: When visual elements are arranged in a continuous direction, the brain perceives them as cohesive structures, enhancing cognitive fluency and contributing to a pleasant emotional experience(Wagemans et al., 2012).

Closure: When a motif contains incomplete elements, the brain automatically fills in the gaps to form a complete shape. This cognitive process fosters a sense of satisfaction and aesthetic pleasure(Kanizsa et al., 1979).

2. Visual Symmetry and Emotional Perception

The emotional effects of symmetry have been further validated by neuroscientific studies. Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), Makin et al. (2012) examined the brain's response to visual motifs and found that:

Symmetrical motifs reduce cognitive load and enhance positive emotions. This suggests that symmetry mitigates cognitive conflicts, making individuals more likely to experience positive emotions when viewing symmetrical designs (Jacobsen & Höfel, 2003).

Complex or irregular motifs increase cognitive load and anxiety. Research indicates that higher visual complexity leads to increased activity in the parietal cortex and prefrontal cortex, areas associated with cognitive resource allocation. This suggests that irregular motifs demand more cognitive effort, potentially causing discomfort or tension (Höfel & Jacobsen, 2007).

3. Color, Line Quality, and Emotional Perception

Different visual attributes—including color, line quality, and shape—play a critical role in emotional experiences.

Color and Emotion: Warm colors (red, orange, yellow) are associated with excitement, energy, and pleasure, activating the sympathetic nervous system, which increases heart rate and blood circulation (Elliot & Maier, 2014).

Cool colors (blue, green) are linked to calmness and relaxation, lowering blood pressure and stimulating the parasympathetic nervous system, inducing a tranquil state (Kaya & Epps, 2004).

Line and Shape Preferences: Humans have a natural preference for curved shapes, as they evoke feelings of safety, softness, and pleasure (Bar & Neta, 2006)

Sharp and angular motifs may trigger threat perception, an evolutionary response linked to survival instincts. Neuroscientific studies suggest that sharp edges are processed as threat stimuli in the brain, activating the amygdala and increasing alertness and tension (Bar et al., 2006).

4. Visual Motifs and Emotional Perception

In recent years, neuroscientific methods have been widely applied to study how visual motifs influence emotional responses. Bradley & Lang (2000) found that both visual and auditory stimuli can elicit emotional reactions, with symmetry and soft forms being associated with positive emotions, while high-contrast or irregular shapes may trigger anxiety or excitement.

Furthermore, Desmet (2018) developed an emotion measurement tool to analyze people's emotional responses to different products. The results indicated that:

Organic and streamlined motifs are more likely to induce feelings of relaxation and safety.

Complex geometric motifs can enhance a sense of mystery or luxury, but excessive complexity may lead to cognitive overload, causing negative emotions such as anxiety.

5. Cross-Cultural Emotional Perception of Motifs

People from different cultural backgrounds may exhibit varying emotional

responses to the same visual motifs. Townsend & Niedderer (2014) discovered that:

Eastern cultures prefer symmetry and natural elements (e.g., lotus, auspicious clouds), emphasizing harmony and spiritual symbolism.

Western cultures tend to favor geometric shapes and abstract art, highlighting modernity and individuality.

These cultural differences may stem from distinct visual aesthetic traditions and religious backgrounds (Bao et al., 2016). For example:

In China and Japan, symmetrical motifs are commonly used in gardens, architecture, and clothing, symbolizing stability and order.

In Western countries, abstract designs and deconstructivism styles are more prevalent, reflecting individualism and freedom of expression.

To further illustrate the cultural differences in emotional responses to motifs, this study introduces two contemporary jewelry brands as observational case studies. By analyzing their similar visual language structures, it explores how such designs manifest different emotional and symbolic tendencies across cultural markets.

Case 1: TASAKI “Balance” Collection

TASAKI is a high-end Japanese jewelry brand. Its “Balance” collection (see Figure 20) features a harmonious combination of pearls and linear metal elements, reflecting the Japanese design philosophy rooted in aesthetics of stillness, harmony, and order. This series is prominently featured in Tokyo-based exhibitions, brand advertisements, and Asian fashion media. The visual symbols are often interpreted as representing calmness, elegance, and spiritual richness, which aligns with East Asian aesthetic preferences for symmetry and nature-inspired motifs.

Although the collection does not directly incorporate user emotional studies, its long-standing presence as a visual identity of the brand demonstrates how design structure can resonate with cultural emotions. It exemplifies how a brand can establish emotional identification with an Eastern spiritual aesthetic in cross-cultural communication by aligning motif structure with regional cultural sensibilities.

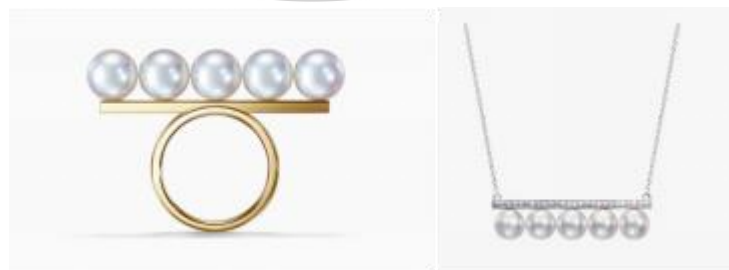


Figure 20 *TASAKI “Balance” Collection*

Note. <https://www.tasaki.co.uk/p-16043-18kgw.html>

Case 2: Tiffany “T” Collection

Tiffany & Co. is a long-established American luxury jewelry brand. Its “T” collection (see Figure 21) is based on the brand’s initial letter and features geometric compositions of horizontal and vertical lines, forming a highly recognizable modern visual language. Widely used in promotional campaigns, celebrity styling, and window displays across Western markets, the series symbolizes strength, confidence, and self-expression, reflecting Western cultural appreciation for minimalism, abstraction, and structural beauty.

The motif design of the “T” collection is clean, bold, and visually dynamic. It emphasizes non-decorative, minimalist forms and is commonly interpreted in the West as a symbol of rationality, avant-garde spirit, and urban identity. In its official narratives and visual branding, Tiffany reinforces the symbolic meaning of “modern urban femininity,” which is well received by mainstream Western consumers.

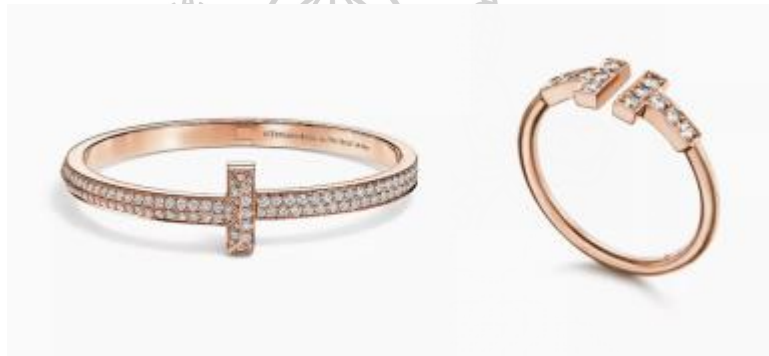


Figure 21 *Tiffany “T” Collection*

Note. <https://www.tiffany.cn/jewelry/rings/tiffany-t-diamond-wire-ring-GRP07761/>

These two cases reflect how similar motif forms can trigger completely different emotional perceptions and symbolic interpretations depending on the cultural context. This phenomenon aligns with Townsend & Niedderer’s (2014) concept of the “cultural modulation mechanism of emotional motif responses,” and further supports Mizokami’s (2014) theory on the “connection pathway between visual motifs and cultural experience.” For cross-cultural jewelry design, understanding such emotional and perceptual differences has significant theoretical and practical value.

2.4.3.3 CONCLUSION

The Emotional Response to Motifs Theory provides a scientific foundation for applying Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design, with key contributions in the following areas:

1. Gestalt Psychology establishes the principles of visual organization, highlighting how symmetry, continuity, and closure influence overall motif perception and enhance aesthetic pleasure.
2. Emotional Design Theory explains how jewelry form and interactive experience affect consumer emotions, emphasizing that design should consider not

only visual aesthetics but also psychological responses and user experience.

3. Visual Neuroscience confirms the impact of symmetry and complexity on emotional experiences. Studies suggest that symmetrical motifs reduce cognitive load and increase pleasure, whereas excessively complex or irregular designs may induce anxiety.

4. Color-Motif Interaction demonstrates that color choices influence emotional responses to jewelry. Warm colors (e.g., red, orange) evoke excitement and energy, while cool colors (e.g., blue, green) promote calmness and tranquility.

5. Cultural Studies indicate that emotional responses to motifs vary across cultural contexts. For example, Eastern cultures favor symmetrical and natural motifs (e.g., lotus, auspicious clouds), emphasizing harmony and spiritual symbolism, while Western cultures prefer geometric and abstract designs, reflecting modernity and individuality.

Research Gaps and Future Directions

Despite these advancements, there are still limitations in the application of emotional response theory in jewelry design:

Most studies focus on 2D design, with limited research on how emotional perception applies to 3D jewelry forms.

The emotional transmission mechanism of Buddhist vegetation motifs remains underexplored—current studies primarily address aesthetic style rather than examining how these motifs influence consumer psychology through emotional perception.

Cross-cultural differences in emotional responses to Buddhist vegetation motifs have not been sufficiently investigated. There is a lack of research on how different cultural consumer groups perceive and interpret these motifs emotionally, and how modern jewelry design can optimize emotional engagement in a global market.

Building upon existing theories, this study integrates semiotics, emotional design theory, and user experience research to systematically explore how Buddhist vegetation motifs influence the emotional perception of jewelry wearers. By addressing these research gaps, this study aims to enhance the emotional and cultural value of Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry design while fostering their cross-cultural adaptation in the global market.

2.5 RESEARCH ON VEGETATION MOTIFS AND JEWELRY DESIGN

In the previous literature review, this study explored the relationship and application background of Buddhist culture and vegetation motifs in jewelry design from multiple perspectives, including the similarities and differences between Chinese and Thai Buddhist thoughts, the artistic characteristics of Buddhist vegetation motifs, and the theories and methods of jewelry design. This section will further focus on the specific connections between vegetation motifs and jewelry design by examining the cultural heritage, emotional value, and design methods of vegetation motifs in jewelry,

providing a theoretical foundation and practical reference for subsequent research.

2.5.1 THE APPLICATION OF VEGETATION MOTIFS IN MODERN JEWELRY DESIGN

With the passage of time and advancements in technology, the application of vegetation motifs in modern jewelry design has become increasingly diversified. This section will discuss how vegetation motifs infuse new vitality into contemporary jewelry design from aspects such as style evolution, material innovation, and technological integration.

2.5.1.1 THE APPLICATION OF VEGETATION MOTIFS IN MODERN CHINESE JEWELRY DESIGN

Case 1: Scroll Grass Bracelet

As shown in Table 7 and Figure 22, this design directly applies the scroll grass motif, with the designer drawing inspiration from the scroll grass motifs in Tang Dynasty murals. The continuous and intertwining scroll grass motif is slightly simplified and incorporated into the bracelet design, highlighting its decorative function while adding cultural depth with a classical Chinese touch.

While maintaining the basic form of the scroll grass, the designer simplified it and applied modern techniques, refining the complex lines into smoother, lighter shapes. This results in a design that combines both classical and fashionable qualities, appealing to a wide consumer base. This simplification not only facilitates the integration of the scroll grass motif into modern jewelry design but also enhances the practicality and comfort of wearing the piece. Furthermore, it retains the symbolic meaning of "endless continuity," representing vitality and harmonious coexistence.

Table 7 Design Method Mapping Table

Traditional Motif Form	Transformation Logic	Material & Craft Strategies	Contemporary Expression Form
Scroll Grass Motif (characterized by entanglement, strong continuity, intricate details)	<p>→ Simplification of motif structure: extracting the main contour lines and minimizing distracting details</p> <p>→ Retention of decorative function, with softened forms adapted to bracelet design</p>	<p>→ Use of precious metals (e.g., K-gold) combined with hollowed structures to enhance delicacy and lightness</p> <p>→ Gemstones, colored glaze, or enamel inlays in</p>	<p>→ Streamlined minimalist bracelet design</p> <p>→ Central gemstone inlay to create a visual focal point</p> <p>→ Motif wraps around the wrist, symbolizing "protective</p>

→ Preserving the symbolism of “endless intertwining,” representing the continuity of life and harmonious coexistence	selected areas → Adapted for CNC engraving, laser cutting, or 3D printing	continuity” → Combines cultural significance with fashionable aesthetics
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Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

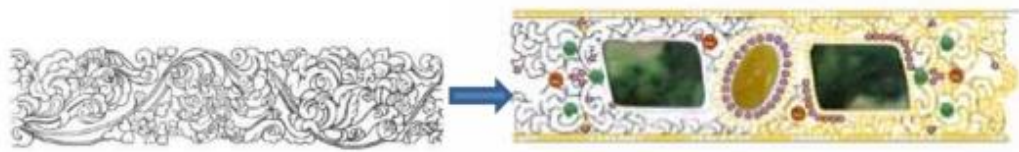


Figure 22 *Scrolling Grass Bracelet*
Note.(Nan, 2015), p33

Case 2: Scroll Grass Necklace

As shown in Table 8 and Figure 23, this necklace design uses an abstract transformation of the scroll grass motif. The designer retains the basic form of the scroll grass motif and makes simple modifications, embedding small diamonds into the motif. This infusion of diamonds gives the scroll grass a light and lively appearance, while the addition of large gemstones enhances the color palette, creating an elegant overall effect.

The designer simplifies and abstracts the scroll grass motif by removing intricate details, making it more in line with modern minimalist aesthetics. This approach reduces the sense of excessive decoration while preserving the flowing lines, lending the necklace an airy and dynamic feel. The fundamental serpentine shape of the scroll grass remains, maintaining its "endless continuity" symbolism. The small diamonds embedded within the scroll grass enhance the delicate luster, giving the design a contemporary feel. This design expresses the Chinese cultural pursuit of vitality, harmony, and prosperity, imbuing the necklace with rich cultural significance while meeting modern design needs.

Table 8 Design Method Mapping Table

Traditional Motif Form	Transformation Logic	Material & Craft Strategies	Contemporary Expression Form
Scroll Grass	→ Abstract	→ Base	→ Flowing necklace

Motif (characterized by meandering curves and rhythmic continuity)	simplification of the motif: retaining the streamlined structure while removing fine twigs and filler details → Refinement of curves to enhance a sense of lightness and dynamism → Curved scroll lines transformed into a “diamond-set track”	structure in white gold or platinum, with pavé-set small diamonds → Central visual focus created with sapphire or blue crystal as the main stone	composition as the primary design → Sapphire pendant symbolizes the image of “dew condensation” on vegetations → Fusion of classical motifs and modern light-play to create a visual style of “Eastern elegance”
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Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024



Figure 23 Cartier 2011 High Jewelry Scroll Grass Necklace
Note.(Jialu, 2019), p. 31

Case 3: Baoxianghua Pendant

As shown in Table 9 and Figure 24, the Baoxianghua pendant design successfully blends traditional motifs with contemporary aesthetics through simplification and geometric treatment. The designer extracts the core framework of the Baoxianghua motif and reinterprets it geometrically, retaining the curvature of the petals and the overall outline, thus staying true to the motif's symbolism of

"perfection and harmony" while imbuing the piece with deep cultural meaning. This design language simplifies complex details while making the pendant's lines neat and the style minimalist, aligning with the "minimalism" trend in modern jewelry design and presenting a fresh and versatile character.

The pendant's round outer outline enhances its wearability, and the center features jade as the main stone, reflecting the Eastern tradition of favoring noble materials in jewelry. Diamonds are added between the petals, enhancing the luster and layering, showcasing luxury and elegance. This combination of traditional and modern materials not only elevates the artistic value of the jewelry but also satisfies the consumer's desire for both fashion and meaning. With its lightweight design and adaptability to various occasions, this pendant exudes a unique elegance, making it a piece of jewelry that integrates cultural depth with modern aesthetics.

Table 9 *Design Method Mapping Table*

Traditional Motif Form	Transformation Logic	Material & Craft Strategies	Contemporary Expression Form
Baoxiang Flower Motif (Symmetrical six- or eight-petal composition symbolizing completeness, auspiciousness, and nobility)	<p>→ Extract the structural framework for geometric simplification</p> <p>→ Retain petal curves and the "floral center – radiating" configuration</p> <p>→ Regularize motif lines and remove complex secondary motifs to enhance rhythm and recognizability</p>	<p>→ Use gold as the primary material to emphasize the image of Eastern luxury</p> <p>→ Center stone is jadeite, embodying strong cultural symbolism</p> <p>→ Accented with diamonds to enhance brilliance and layering</p>	<p>→ Circular framing reinforces structural stability and wearability</p> <p>→ Pendant design is minimalist yet elegant, suitable for various occasions</p> <p>→ The traditional symbol is reinterpreted through a modern visual language, offering both cultural depth and aesthetic appeal</p>

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024



Figure 24 *Baoxianghua Pendant*
 Note.(Jian, 2021), p. 41

These examples reflect how vegetation motifs in modern Chinese jewelry design bridge the gap between tradition and contemporary aesthetics. Designers incorporate cultural heritage through classic motifs while using modern technologies and materials to create jewelry that is both meaningful and commercially appealing.

2.5.1.2 THE APPLICATION OF VEGETATION MOTIFS IN MODERN THAI JEWELRY DESIGN

Case 1: Time Motif (ลายประจํา ยาม) Earrings

As shown in Table 10 and Figure 25, the design of these Time Motif (ลายประจํา ยาม) earrings draws inspiration from the traditional Thai Time Motif (ลายประจํา ยาม), successfully balancing traditional symbolism with contemporary aesthetics. The designer retains the overall shape of the Time Motif (ลายประจํา ยาม) motif while incorporating the complexity and delicacy of Rattanakosin period gold craftsmanship, allowing the earrings to embody the essence of Thai traditional art while showcasing exquisite details. The use of various gemstones not only adds rich color layers and visual impact to the design but also enhances the earrings' opulence and uniqueness, further elevating their artistic value. Through the modernization of traditional elements, this design offers wearers a unique experience that connects history with the present and blends tradition with fashion. This design language is faithful to cultural roots while meeting modern consumers' desires for individuality and beauty, perfectly illustrating the harmonious coexistence of tradition and contemporary aesthetics.

Table 10 *Design Method Mapping Table*

Traditional Motif Form	Transformation Logic	Material & Craft Strategies	Contemporary Expression Form
Time-Marking Flower Motif (Lai Prachayam) Originating from traditional Thai architectural ornamentation, this motif features symmetrical structure and a central focus, symbolizing light, time, and protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Maintain the symmetrical, center-focused structure → Preserve the petal arrangement and the rotational rhythm around the center → Transform the motif from relief-style decoration into a lightweight, wearable structure → Incorporate gemstone settings to enhance visual focus and cultural symbolism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Apply traditional Thai goldsmith techniques (engraving + casting) → Inset red, green, and yellow gemstones at the center and edges, inspired by the Rama I–III royal court aesthetic → Surface finished with high polishing and selective engraving for added depth and detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Symmetrical pendant-style earrings → Lower dangling elements enhance movement and rhythmic dynamism → Represents a contemporary design embodying Thai spiritual identity and ornamental elegance

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024



Figure 25 *Time Motif (ลายประจำยาม) Earrings*

Note.

<https://shop.line.me/@juf0560m/product/319312269>(<https://shop.line.me/@juf0560m/product/319312269>)

Case 2: Kranok Earrings

As shown in Table 11 and Figure 26, the Thai company YT GEMS has creatively simplified and modernized the traditional Kranok motif to meet contemporary aesthetic standards and fashion needs. The design retains the flowing lines and symmetrical structure of the Kranok motif, highlighting the traditional beauty of this classic motif, while simplifying the details and optimizing the form to imbue it with a refreshing modern feel and light visual effect. For the material choice, the designer uses a combination of silver and agate, with the noble texture of silver contrasting with the deep colors of agate, further enhancing the jewelry's quality and artistic expression. This design continues the cultural symbolism of the traditional Thai motif while infusing it with new vitality through modern craftsmanship and material innovation. It perfectly balances traditional aesthetics with contemporary fashion, offering a piece of jewelry that is both culturally rich and full of individuality for modern wearers.

Table 11 *Design Method Mapping Table*

Traditional Motif Form	Transformation Logic	Material & Craft Strategies	Contemporary Expression Form
Kranok Motif (Lai Kranok) A traditional Thai flame-like scroll motif characterized by dynamic flow and symbolic meaning, commonly used in temple and Buddha image decorations.	<p>→ Retain the flowing curves and symmetrical composition of the Kranok motif</p> <p>→ Simplify inner layers and fine details to emphasize the main upward, dynamic structure</p> <p>→ Transform the motif from flat surface decoration into a three-dimensional jewelry component to enhance motion and spatial depth</p>	<p>→ Primary material: silver, symbolizing nobility and purity.</p> <p>→ Accented with dark agate to create visual contrast between light and shadow</p> <p>→ Components crafted through wax carving and casting, with hand-set stones for refined detailing</p>	<p>→ Central motif features a double-winged flame-like Kranok form, evoking a protective and soaring gesture</p> <p>→ Paired with dark bead chains to highlight brightness and structural contrast</p> <p>→ Presents a minimalist yet symbolically rich contemporary expression, merging Buddhist imagery with fashionable wearability</p>

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024



Figure 26 *Kranok Jewelry Set*

Source. <https://www.ytgems.com/product/12253/>
<https://www.ytgems.com/product/12253/>

2.5.2 PRIMARY DESIGN METHODS FOR VEGETATION MOTIFS IN JEWELRY DESIGN

The presentation of vegetation motifs in jewelry design is closely linked to the diversity of design methodologies. This section analyzes several common design approaches, illustrating how these methods inspire creativity and achieve unique artistic expression. Based on an examination of relevant designs, the use of Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry can be categorized into four primary approaches:

1. **Direct Application:** Direct application refers to incorporating Buddhist vegetation motifs in their original, unaltered forms into jewelry design, preserving their inherent shapes and details. This method emphasizes respect for and continuation of traditional motifs, often used to create jewelry pieces imbued with religious significance and cultural depth. For instance, necklaces or bracelets featuring lotus flower motifs faithfully replicate the flower's structure and texture. The intricate craftsmanship highlights the sacred and pure qualities of the lotus, reinforcing its cultural and symbolic significance. By maintaining the integrity of the motifs, this approach maximizes their ability to convey meaning, enhancing both the cultural and artistic value of the jewelry.

2. **Abstract Transformation:** Abstract transformation involves artistically abstracting Buddhist vegetation motifs, simplifying their forms for a more contemporary and minimalist aesthetic. This method is commonly employed in modern jewelry design to align with the tastes of contemporary consumers. For example, the shape of the Bodhi tree leaf can be abstracted into geometric shapes or linear elements, and these simplified forms can be incorporated into the design of earrings or rings. Abstract transformation revitalizes traditional motifs by infusing

them with modernity, breaking free from conventional constraints and unlocking new creative possibilities.

3.Simplification and Refinement: Simplification and refinement involve distilling Buddhist vegetation motifs to their most representative elements while eliminating intricate details. This approach emphasizes a modern, minimalist style that retains the essence of the traditional motifs. For example, the petals and leaves of the lotus flower can be simplified to their most recognizable components and used in pendants or bracelets. By balancing traditional essence with modern aesthetics, this method ensures practicality and broad market acceptance, making it both functional and stylish.

4.Deconstruction and Reconstruction: Deconstruction and reconstruction entail breaking down Buddhist vegetation motifs into their constituent elements and reorganizing them into new designs. This innovative approach reimagines traditional motifs by reconfiguring their elements, infusing them with new meaning and life. For instance, elements from lotus flowers, Bodhi trees, and peonies can be deconstructed and reassembled into a novel motif for a brooch or necklace. This method enhances the creative and distinctive aspects of the design, while the restructured motifs offer fresh interpretations and cultural connotations.

5.In terms of color application: According to case analysis and observation of vegetation motif jewelry on the market, most modern designs use gold and silver as the basic tones and add other colored gemstones or accessories appropriately according to the design effect to enhance the overall visual hierarchy. sense and decorative effect.

2.5.3 THE VALUE OF VEGETATION MOTIFS IN JEWELRY DESIGN

Vegetation motifs in jewelry design not only exemplify exceptional decorative beauty but also encapsulate profound cultural symbolism and emotional resonance, offering multifaceted value. This section systematically explores their comprehensive significance from three perspectives—artistic value, cultural heritage value, and economic benefits—to provide theoretical support for related research. The analysis is detailed as follows:

1.Artistic Value: Jewelry, as an artistic medium, evolves alongside cultural dissemination and must align with public aesthetic preferences to enhance acceptance. Motifs, structures, and colors—fundamental elements of jewelry design—are at the core of creating aesthetic experiences. Modern jewelry design emphasizes the integration of art and life, encapsulated in the concepts of “art in everyday life” and “everyday life as art.” Incorporating traditional Buddhist vegetation motifs into contemporary designs bridges functional utility with cultural expression, elevating the artistic and aesthetic value of jewelry. Such designs not only reflect the wearer's lifestyle and personal taste but also fulfill the aesthetic pursuit of life's artistic expression. For example, a modern bracelet or necklace that integrates lotus flower

motifs can simultaneously celebrate traditional culture and appeal to modern sensibilities, showcasing the harmony between timeless art and practical beauty.

2. Cultural Heritage Value: Buddhist vegetation motifs, as significant symbols of cultural exchange between China and Thailand, possess unique artistic characteristics and immense potential for exploration and innovation. Designers must deeply understand the intrinsic meanings and historical value of traditional decorative motifs, using them as a foundation for integrating contemporary design concepts. Achieving a balance between tradition and modernity is crucial. While avoiding overreliance on imitation, designers must retain the cultural essence of traditional motifs. This approach ensures that the resulting jewelry not only meets modern aesthetic demands but also carries forward and innovatively expresses traditional cultural narratives. Such designs contribute to preserving and evolving cultural heritage, creating jewelry that embodies rich cultural connotations while adapting to the tastes of contemporary audiences.

3. Economic Benefits: Modern consumers increasingly value the cultural significance and emotional resonance of jewelry, moving beyond mere external beauty and material worth. Buddhist vegetation motifs, with their elegant forms and profound religious and cultural symbolism, transform jewelry from a decorative accessory into a medium for conveying spiritual values. In commercial applications, successfully incorporating Buddhist vegetation motifs into jewelry design requires an organic fusion of culture and art. While the intricate appearance captures consumers' attention, the use of distinctive cultural symbols evokes deeper emotional connections, creating a lasting impression and increasing purchase intent. This approach enhances the commercial competitiveness of jewelry by differentiating products in a crowded market. The result is a dual achievement of cultural preservation and economic success, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between cultural storytelling and consumer appeal.

The application of vegetation motifs in jewelry design offers multidimensional value: Artistic value emphasizes aesthetic enrichment and the integration of art with daily life. Cultural heritage value fosters the preservation and innovative expression of traditional motifs. Economic benefits enhance market competitiveness by combining cultural depth with consumer appeal. Through these dimensions, vegetation motifs in jewelry design provide a unique platform for the intersection of tradition, innovation, and commercial success, ensuring that the field continues to grow and evolve while honoring its cultural roots.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a multilevel methodological framework that integrates theoretical research and empirical research to ensure the depth of semiotic analysis and the effectiveness of design applications.

Theoretical Research Methods: The theoretical research employs literature review, historical analysis, semiotic analysis, and comparative analysis to interpret the cultural symbolism and semiotic value of Buddhist vegetation motifs from multiple perspectives. This phase establishes the theoretical foundation of the study, providing cultural and artistic support for the semiotic transformation in the design practice.

Empirical Research Methods: The empirical research includes case studies, field research, surveys, and data analysis. By collecting and analyzing specific design cases, field observations, and target user feedback, this study examines the application and reception of these motifs in contemporary jewelry design.

Research Phases

The research is conducted in three main phases:

Phase 1: Study of Chinese and Thai Buddhist Vegetation motifs

1. Predesign Preparation

The researcher conducts literature reviews and aesthetic analyses of Tang Dynasty Buddhist vegetation motifs in China and early Rattanakosin Buddhist vegetation motifs in Thailand.

Data is collected from academic literature and relevant studies to establish a theoretical foundation.

2. Consumer Demand Analysis to Define the Design Scope

The researcher collects data through closed ended questionnaires targeting young consumers (18-30 years old) in China and Thailand who have an interest in traditional culture.

The survey explores target users' preferences for jewelry design and their cultural resonance with Buddhist vegetation motifs.

Phase 2: Sketch Design and Prototype Development

1. Design Process

Motif Innovation: Based on the findings from Phase 1, Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs are integrated and innovatively adapted. Two types of motifs are developed based on consumer insights from the questionnaire:

(1) Traditional inspired motifs

(2) Applied design motifs

Sketching: Jewelry product sketches are created, aligning with consumer design preferences identified in Phase 1.

2. Sketch Evaluation

A five-point Likert scale is used to assess the appropriateness of the sketches (5 =

Highly suitable, 4 = Suitable, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Not very suitable, 1 = Not suitable at all).

3. Prototype Development

The researcher develops prototypes based on the sketches selected through expert evaluation.

The final prototypes will be utilized in Phase 3 of the study.

Phase 3: Consumer Satisfaction Assessment and Dissemination of Research Findings

(1) Consumer Satisfaction Evaluation

A closed ended questionnaire is used to assess consumer satisfaction with the jewelry products incorporating Buddhist vegetation motifs.

A five-point Likert scale is used for evaluation (5 = Very satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Dissatisfied, 1 = Very dissatisfied).

Consumer satisfaction data is analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of the design.

(2) Dissemination of Research Findings

The findings are shared through exhibitions and commercial sales, contributing to the promotion and application of Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry design.

3.1 THEORETICAL RESEARCH METHODS

Theoretical research serves as a fundamental pillar of this study. By employing literature review, historical analysis, semiotic analysis, and comparative analysis, this study explores the cultural symbolism and semiotic value of Buddhist vegetation motifs from multiple perspectives.

3.1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW METHOD

The literature review method is a systematic approach to collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing existing research findings, providing a theoretical foundation, methodological guidance, and data support for new research. By critically reviewing and summarizing previous studies, the literature review not only identifies gaps and limitations in existing scholarship but also helps researchers construct a clear research framework and identify innovative directions.

In this study, the literature review method plays a crucial role in:

Providing historical context for the cultural significance and cross-cultural transmission of Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design.

Establishing a theoretical basis for design innovation.

The application of the literature review method in this study follows these systematic steps:

1. Literature Retrieval and Selection

Utilizing multiple academic databases (Google Scholar, CNKI, JSTOR) to conduct high precision searches using keywords such as "Buddhist vegetation motifs," "cultural heritage," "jewelry design," and "cross cultural design theory."

To ensure academic depth and relevance, priority is given to peer reviewed journal articles, academic monographs, and doctoral dissertations published in the past ten years in internationally and domestically high impact journals.

Citation analysis and impact factor evaluations are used to screen and select literature with significant academic value.

2. Thematic Classification and Framework Construction

Literature is categorized based on research themes into the following three core modules:

Origins and Historical Evolution of Vegetation motifs: Examining the artistic characteristics, cultural background, and symbolic meanings of Buddhist vegetation motifs in the Tang Dynasty and Rattanakosin period.

Cultural Heritage and Design Innovation: Investigating how vegetation motifs, as cultural symbols, have been translated and transformed throughout different historical periods and their potential applications in design theory.

Application and Challenges of cross-cultural Design: Reviewing literature on Chinese and Thai cultural exchanges and integration, revealing how vegetation motifs adapt to modern jewelry design in a cross-cultural context.

3. Critical Analysis and Comparison

Conducting comparative analyses of Buddhist vegetation motifs from the Tang Dynasty and Rattanakosin period, drawing from historical texts, artistic works, and archaeological research.

Examining how religious beliefs, political environments, and social values influenced the evolution of motif styles.

Analyzing the impact of the cultural environment in shaping the formal and semiotic value of vegetation motifs in China and Thailand, providing multidimensional support for hypothesis validation.

3.1.2 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS METHOD

The historical analysis method relies on historical documents, archaeological findings, and artistic works to reconstruct the temporal evolution and contextual background of a cultural phenomenon. In cultural and design research, this method helps researchers understand how symbols, motifs, and artistic forms have been transformed and transmitted across different historical periods and cultural conditions. It emphasizes the historical accumulation and cultural roots embedded in artistic changes.

In this study, the historical analysis method is applied to examine the evolution of Buddhist vegetation motifs in China and Thailand, as well as their cultural adaptation and transformation over time. This approach helps reveal:

The artistic characteristics of Buddhist vegetation motifs from the Tang Dynasty to the early Rattanakosin period.

The role of Buddhist vegetation motifs in religion, cultural transmission, and jewelry design.

The historical trajectory of cross-cultural transmission of these motifs.

The historical analysis in this study follows these key steps:

1. Analysis of Cultural Backgrounds

Examining the formation and development of Buddhist ideologies in China and Thailand, with a focus on their influence on religious art and design.

Investigating how Buddhist vegetation motifs evolved artistically through different historical and religious contexts.

2. Chronological Analysis

The historical analysis method emphasizes chronological sequences. In this study, the evolution of vegetation motifs is traced from the Tang Dynasty in China to the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand, analyzing shifts in artistic styles and symbolic meanings.

For example:

Tang Dynasty Buddhist vegetation motifs were influenced by the Silk Road, incorporating Indian and Central Asian cultural elements.

Rattanakosin Buddhist vegetation motifs were shaped by local Thai aesthetics and Indianized Buddhist influences.

Through a comparative historical analysis, this study identifies the distinct artistic characteristics and cultural transmission pathways of Buddhist vegetation motifs in these two periods.

3. Comparative Analysis

To better understand the cultural adaptability and historical transformation of Buddhist vegetation motifs, this study compares the differences and similarities between Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs.

By examining design elements, symbolic meanings, and religious influences in different cultural contexts, this study uncovers how these motifs adapted and evolved in cross cultural transmission.

By integrating literature review and historical analysis, this study constructs a comprehensive theoretical foundation, allowing for a deeper semiotic and cross-cultural exploration of Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry design.

3.1.2 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS METHOD

The historical analysis method primarily relies on historical documents, archaeological findings, and artistic works to reconstruct the temporal evolution and contextual background of a cultural phenomenon. In cultural and design research, this method assists researchers in understanding how symbols, motifs, and artistic forms

undergo transformation and transmission across different historical periods and cultural contexts. It emphasizes historical accumulation and the cultural roots embedded in artistic changes.

In this study, the historical analysis method is applied to explore the evolution of Buddhist vegetation motifs in China and Thailand and their cultural adaptation and transformation throughout history. This approach helps uncover the artistic characteristics of vegetation motifs from the Tang Dynasty to the early Rattanakosin period, analyzing their significance in religious practices, cultural dissemination, and jewelry design, as well as tracing their cross-cultural transmission over time. By adopting a chronological perspective, this study examines the historical development of Buddhist vegetation motifs in the Tang and Rattanakosin periods, tracing their sociocultural backgrounds and artistic features to interpret how historical contexts influenced their design.

The application of the historical analysis method in this study follows the steps outlined below:

1. Analysis of Cultural Backgrounds

This step focuses on examining the formation and evolution of Buddhist thought in China and Thailand, particularly its influence on the religious and artistic design of vegetation motifs.

By investigating the historical transmission of Buddhist ideologies in both nations, this study seeks to reveal the artistic transformation of Buddhist vegetation motifs across different historical periods.

2. Chronological Analysis

The historical analysis method emphasizes sequential order in historical developments.

In this study, the evolution of Buddhist vegetation motifs is traced from the Tang Dynasty in China to the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand, examining shifts in artistic styles and symbolic meanings.

For example:

Tang Dynasty Buddhist vegetation motifs were influenced by the Silk Road, incorporating artistic elements from Indian and Central Asian cultures.

Rattanakosin Buddhist vegetation motifs were shaped by local Thai aesthetics alongside Indianized Buddhist influences.

Through a comparative chronological analysis, this study highlights the distinct artistic characteristics and cultural continuity of Buddhist vegetation motifs in these two periods.

3. Comparative Analysis

To better understand the cultural adaptability and historical transformation of Buddhist vegetation motifs, this study compares the similarities and differences between Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs.

By analyzing design elements, symbolic meanings, and religious influences within different cultural contexts, this study unveils how these motifs adapted and

evolved through cross-cultural transmission.

By integrating historical analysis, comparative studies, and chronological frameworks, this study systematically examines the cross-cultural evolution of Buddhist vegetation motifs, providing a deeper understanding of their artistic transformation and cultural significance in contemporary jewelry design.

3.1.3 SEMIOTICS

As a discipline that studies sign systems and the generation of meaning, semiotics plays a crucial role in analyzing symbolic meanings in culture, art, and design. In this study, semiotics is applied to interpret the symbolic significance, visual sign functions, and cross-cultural adaptability of Buddhist vegetation motifs, aiming to establish a theoretical connection between semiotics and design.

Core Concepts of Semiotics

Semiotic theory posits that a sign consists of a Signifier (the physical form) and a Signified (the meaning it conveys). The Signifier refers to the material representation of a sign, such as motifs, shapes, and colors, while the Signified embodies the cultural, historical, or religious significance behind it. The meaning of a sign is not fixed but is shaped by social, cultural, and historical contexts.

In Buddhist art, vegetation motifs function as cultural symbols, and their meanings are deeply influenced by religious philosophy and sociocultural ideologies. From a semiotic perspective, this study examines the symbolic meanings of Buddhist vegetation motifs in Chinese and Thai cultures and their application in contemporary jewelry design through the following three dimensions:

1. Semiotic Interpretation of Buddhist Vegetation motifs

Buddhist vegetation motifs are not merely visual elements but also carriers of cultural and religious spirituality. For instance, the lotus flower in Buddhism symbolizes nirvana, purity, and enlightenment, embodying core religious philosophies.

According to Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, the symbolic meaning of the lotus is constructed within a specific historical and religious context. Its visual features, such as symmetrical petals and upward facing form, not only represent Buddhism's pursuit of purification and transcendence but also reflect social and religious ideologies.

In this study, a comparative analysis of motifs such as lotus, vines, and peonies is conducted to explore how Chinese and Thai Buddhist cultures encode different spiritual meanings through vegetation motifs.

2. Application of Semiotics in Cross Cultural Design

In cross cultural design, vegetation motifs function as transcultural symbols that require cultural adaptation and reinterpretation. Barthes' semiotic framework offers insights into how vegetation motifs undergo ideological transformation and translation across different cultural contexts.

For example:

In China, the peony symbolizes wealth and prosperity.

In Thailand, the peony's symbolic meaning is more closely associated with Buddhist Pure Land ideology.

By applying Charles Morris' semiotic perspective, this study further explores the "expression" and "usage" functions of vegetation motifs in different design contexts. The reconstruction of symbols in cross cultural design must respect their cultural origins while also meeting modern functional and aesthetic requirements, providing a theoretical foundation for cross cultural jewelry design.

3. Semiotic Approach to Innovation in Jewelry Design

In contemporary jewelry design, vegetation motifs serve a dual function as both decorative elements and cultural symbols, helping to convey cultural values and enhance aesthetic experiences.

Through Barthes' semiotic analysis, this study examines how vegetation motifs express their symbolic meanings through shape, color, and motif. Meanwhile, Morris' functional semiotics is applied to analyze the practical and commercial usage of these motifs in the jewelry market.

Additionally, this research focuses on integrating traditional cultural connotations with modern design languages within a semiotic framework to develop jewelry designs that balance cultural depth with market adaptability. This process is not merely a continuation of traditional culture but also an innovative reinterpretation of cultural symbols in contemporary design.

3.1.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS METHOD

The comparative analysis method is a research approach that involves contrasting two or more subjects to identify their similarities, differences, and interconnections, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of their essence and underlying motifs. In art and design research, this method is particularly useful for comparing artistic works from different cultural backgrounds, exploring the historical, social, and cultural contexts that shape their differences.

In this study, the comparative analysis method is applied to examine the similarities and differences between Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs in terms of artistic form, symbolic meanings, and cultural background. This comparison helps to uncover how these motifs are interpreted within different cultural systems and how they reflect distinct Buddhist ideologies and religious beliefs. Additionally, this approach provides valuable insights into the cross-cultural adaptability of vegetation motifs and their transformation in contemporary jewelry design.

Application of the Comparative Analysis Method in This Study

1. Comparison of Artistic Forms in Buddhist Vegetation motifs

Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs exhibit distinct artistic differences, particularly in composition, line quality, and color usage.

By comparing their artistic forms, this study aims to uncover the differences in aesthetic principles between Chinese and Thai cultures, further explaining how Buddhist vegetation motifs visually express religious philosophies in different cultural contexts.

2. Comparison of Symbolic Meanings in Buddhist Vegetation motifs

While Buddhist vegetation motifs carry rich symbolic meanings in both China and Thailand, the specific connotations and cultural interpretations differ.

Through comparative analysis, this study explores how vegetation motifs function as symbols in Buddhist art in both cultures and how they convey distinct religious and philosophical ideas within their respective traditions.

3. Comparison of Cultural Backgrounds Influencing Buddhist Vegetation motifs

The differences in Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs are deeply influenced by historical and cultural backgrounds.

Chinese Buddhist art has undergone extensive cultural integration and innovation, shaped by Confucianism and Daoism, which emphasize ritual propriety and natural harmony, respectively.

Thai Buddhist art, on the other hand, is heavily influenced by Hinduism, resulting in motifs that emphasize divinity and mysticism, with vegetation motifs reflecting sacredness and Buddhist dharma transmission.

By analyzing these cultural backgrounds, this study reveals the historical transitions and cultural adaptations of vegetation motifs, deepening the understanding of their cultural significance.

3.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODS

Empirical research aims to validate theoretical findings through real-world observations and data collection, ensuring the practical applicability of the study in design practice.

3.2.1 CASE STUDY METHOD

The case study method is a qualitative research approach widely used in social sciences, cultural studies, and art & design research. It focuses on conducting in depth, detailed analyses of specific cases to uncover complex factors and dynamic processes influencing them. In art and design research, case studies provide comprehensive insights into specific design projects, analyzing aspects such as design concepts, execution, and market reception.

In this study, the case study method is employed to analyze real-world jewelry design cases featuring Buddhist vegetation motifs, exploring their cultural transmission, emotional value, and cross-cultural adaptability. The research follows these steps:

1. Case Selection

Representative vegetation motifs, such as lotus, vines, and leaf motifs, are

selected from Chinese and Thai Buddhist traditions.

The study focuses on contemporary jewelry designs that incorporate these motifs, including works from renowned jewelry brands, independent designers, and artisanal projects.

2. Background Analysis

A detailed examination of the historical and cultural origins of each selected vegetation motif.

Investigation into the symbolic meaning of the motif in Buddhist art and its transformation in contemporary jewelry design.

3. Design Analysis

Analyzing how vegetation motifs are integrated into jewelry design, including elements such as color combinations, form development, and texture treatments.

Exploring how these design elements reflect cultural significance and align with contemporary aesthetic trends.

4. Comparative Case Study

By comparing multiple design case studies, this study identifies cross-cultural adaptability and different approaches to cultural heritage representation in contemporary jewelry.

Through historical and contemporary jewelry case comparisons, this study summarizes the formal expressions and innovative strategies used in integrating Buddhist vegetation motifs into jewelry design.

3.2.2 FIELD STUDY METHOD

The field study method involves direct observation and interaction in real-world settings, allowing researchers to collect firsthand data from specific social, cultural, or physical environments. This method is particularly valuable in art and design research, as design is not merely a theoretical concept but is deeply connected to cultural contexts, design practices, and user experiences.

In this study, the field study method is applied to analyze and understand the cultural significance, artistic styles, and cross-cultural adaptability of Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design in China and Thailand. By conducting onsite investigations in museums, galleries, and jewelry workshops, this study gathers primary data through participant observation, interviews, and documentation.

Implementation of the Field Study Method in This Study

1. Onsite Investigation in China and Thailand

Field studies are conducted in Chinese and Thai Buddhist cultural sites, including temples, museums, and traditional craft workshops.

Research is conducted on the use of Buddhist vegetation motifs in religious spaces, traditional artifacts, and contemporary jewelry design.

2. Observation and Data Collection

Researchers observe the application of Buddhist vegetation motifs in local

jewelry workshops, exhibitions, and design studios.

Data is collected through photography, sketches, and material documentation, analyzing the design process and craftsmanship techniques used in Buddhist jewelry production.

3. Interviews with Artisans and Designers

Interviews with jewelry designers, goldsmiths, and Buddhist art specialists are conducted to gain insights into their design philosophies and cultural interpretations.

Experts are consulted to validate findings from theoretical research, ensuring that semiotic and artistic analyses align with real-world applications.

4. Cultural Contextualization

The findings from field observations and interviews are analyzed to understand how Buddhist vegetation motifs function in local culture and how they adapt to modern jewelry design.

This contextualization deepens the understanding of vegetation motifs' artistic, religious, and commercial applications in China and Thailand.

By integrating case studies and field research, this study bridges theoretical analysis with empirical observations, ensuring that Buddhist vegetation motifs are examined holistically from historical, cultural, artistic, and commercial perspectives.

3.2.3 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Objectives and Significance

The focus group interviews aimed to collect in-depth qualitative data on participants' cultural associations, emotional responses, and symbolic interpretations of Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design. Utilizing a semi-structured dialogue format, this method provided critical insights into how specific design elements are perceived and interpreted within cross-cultural contexts. It proved particularly valuable for studies on the spiritual transference of figurative motifs, aiding in the identification of resonant design directions and informing refinements in thematic expression.

2. Participant Selection

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure participants possessed a certain level of perceptual sensitivity to Buddhist imagery and bodily adornment practices. A total of ten participants were selected, five from China and five from Thailand. Two distinct demographic groups were targeted:

(1) Young consumers (aged 18–30), characterized by a strong interest in fashion and personalization, often intrigued by cultural symbols though not necessarily well-versed in their meanings.

(2) Traditional culture enthusiasts, who have a deeper understanding of the historical and symbolic contexts of Buddhist vegetation motifs and are more attuned to the spiritual meanings conveyed through jewelry.

3. Interview Instruments and Structure

To accommodate cross-cultural communication, bilingual (Chinese Thai) interview guides were developed. Core questions included the following (excerpted):

Q1: Do these vegetation motifs remind you of specific Buddhist values or concepts? Why?

Q2: What symbolic meanings or spiritual impressions do you think these motifs convey?

Q3: Do you perceive a connection between the motifs and actual natural vegetations? Does this enhance emotional resonance? (5-point Likert scale)

Q4: In your opinion, do these designs effectively communicate the spiritual essence of Buddhist vegetation imagery? Why or why not?

Q5: For each spiritual theme, 5–10 different design variations will be presented. Which design do you think best embodies its spiritual vitality?

Q6: How could these designs be improved to more clearly convey their intended meanings?

Participants also engaged in interactive tasks such as preference ranking and keyword association using coded image cards, enhancing the precision and depth of feedback.

4. Data Collection and Analytical Methods

All interviews were audio-recorded and supplemented with field notes. The content was transcribed and organized into a thematic coding framework. Data were analyzed using thematic categorization, with a focus on the following dimensions:

- (1) Frequency of symbolic interpretation
- (2) Degree of emotional resonance and semantic orientation
- (3) Strength of associations with natural vegetation forms
- (4) Distribution trends in stylistic preferences

5. Application and Feedback Integration

Findings from the focus group interviews directly informed the subsequent stages of prototype selection and design iteration. Designs with strong interpretive alignment were retained, while those with low cross-cultural clarity were adjusted. These results served not only as empirical evidence for design refinement but also as a theoretical foundation for further research development.

3.2.4 EXPERT INTERVIEW METHOD

To further validate the cultural accuracy, symbolic effectiveness, and academic relevance of the design outcomes in this study, expert interviews were conducted after the completion of the physical prototypes. The expert interview is a qualitative research method that involves in-depth engagement with scholars and practitioners from relevant fields to obtain insightful professional feedback. This method is commonly employed in design research to evaluate aspects such as cultural interpretation accuracy, symbolic clarity, and academic credibility.

1. Research Objectives

This study invited experts from China and Thailand in the fields of art and design, jewelry design, semiotics, and cultural studies to evaluate the cultural translation and symbolic expression of Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry design. The objectives were to:

- (1) Verify the cultural authenticity and symbolic accuracy of the jewelry pieces;
- (2) Collect professional feedback on innovation in terms of structure, aesthetics, and contemporary interpretation.
- (3) Gather expert suggestions for future refinement and enhancement of the designs.

2. Implementation Process

The expert interview was conducted in the form of a structured questionnaire combined with open-ended commentary. The content was divided into three major components:

- (1) **Basic Information Collection:** including the expert's field and institutional affiliation to ensure professional representation.
- (2) **Quantitative Evaluation Dimensions:** using a 1–5 scale to assess the designs across key criteria such as cultural authenticity, innovation, academic alignment, and consistency of symbolic interpretation.
- (3) **Overall Qualitative Feedback:** experts were invited to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the transformation from "traditional culture → contemporary expression," covering aspects such as symbolic communication, structural design, and material selection.

All interviews were conducted after the completion of the design prototypes. Experts responded independently after viewing the physical pieces and their design rationale to ensure objectivity and unbiased feedback. The questionnaire was presented in both Chinese and Thai to respect the linguistic backgrounds of the participants and to facilitate clear communication.

3.2.5 QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY METHOD

The Questionnaire Survey Method is a widely adopted quantitative data collection tool in social science research. Through standardized questionnaire design, researchers systematically gather information regarding the opinions, attitudes, behaviors, and cognitive motifs of target groups, thereby providing an objective and quantifiable foundation for analysis.

In this study, the questionnaire method is employed in conjunction with User Experience Research, Cultural Adaptation Theory, and Consumer Behavior Analysis to examine how consumers from different cultural backgrounds perceive, aesthetically evaluate, and accept Buddhist vegetation motifs in jewelry design. The findings aim to provide empirical data to support cross-cultural jewelry design practices.

Target Consumer Groups

The study targets two main consumer groups:

1. Young Consumers (18–30 years old): Interested in fashion and personalization. May have limited knowledge of cultural symbols but are attracted to unique designs.

2. Traditional Culture Enthusiasts: Possess a deeper understanding of the history and cultural significance of Buddhist vegetation motifs. Value the symbolism and heritage embedded in jewelry designs.

By analyzing the perceptions and preferences of these diverse consumer groups, the study aims to provide data-driven insights for designing Buddhist vegetation motif jewelry that balances cultural authenticity with contemporary market appeal.

Survey Objectives

The questionnaire survey aims to explore the following key questions:

1. Understanding of Buddhist Culture and Symbolism

Investigating the awareness and interest levels of the target audience regarding Buddhist culture and its symbols (e.g., vegetation motifs).

2. Perception of Buddhist Vegetation motifs in Jewelry Design

Examining user preferences regarding the cultural heritage, aesthetic appeal, and functional needs of Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry.

3. Market Demand and Purchase Intentions

Assessing consumer willingness to purchase jewelry products featuring Buddhist vegetation motifs and evaluating market demand.

4. Target users' perception of emotional or spiritual resonance in response to the thematic design.

Survey Design and Implementation

To ensure scientific validity and applicability, this study's questionnaire is designed in two stages:

(1) Pre-design user survey

(2) Post-design evaluation

Both stages use a 5-point Likert scale to comprehensively assess consumer needs and design effectiveness.

Post Design Evaluation

1. Objectives

To validate the cultural symbolism, consumer acceptance, aesthetic value, and market feasibility of the jewelry designs.

To gather feedback from target users and cultural experts after prototype completion.

2. Questionnaire Evaluation Metrics

To ensure that the research findings are measurable in terms of cultural preservation, market acceptance, and design effectiveness, this study adopts a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods for evaluation. The assessment will be conducted through questionnaire surveys, scoring systems, expert reviews, and pilot testing. The following table outlines the evaluation criteria, including success benchmarks (KPI targets).

(1) Cultural Preservation Evaluation

Objective: To ensure that the modernization of jewelry design maintains the cultural authenticity of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs, while promoting cultural dissemination

These tables were developed by the researcher to systematically measure the design's impact across cultural authenticity, symbolic interpretation, and user emotional response.

Table 12 *Cultural Preservation Metrics*

Evaluation Dimension	Assessment Method	Indicator Standard	Success Benchmark (KPI Target)
Authenticity	Expert panel review (<i>art, culture, and semiotics specialists</i>)	5-point Likert scale (<i>1 = Very Low Authenticity, 5 = Very High Authenticity</i>)	≥ 4.0 (At least 80% of experts consider the design faithful to the original culture)
Innovation	Design review panel (<i>art scholars + jewelry designers</i>)	5-point Likert scale (<i>1 = No Innovation, 5 = Highly Innovative</i>)	≥ 3.5 (At least 60% of reviewers consider the design adequately innovative)
Cultural Dissemination	Consumer survey (<i>target group: 18-30 years old</i>)	"Does this jewelry help you understand Buddhist culture?" (<i>1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree</i>)	$\geq 70\%$ of respondents rate ≥ 4 .
Academic Recognition	Expert interviews	"Does this design align with academic research on Buddhist vegetation motifs?" (<i>1 = Not Aligned, 5 = Highly Aligned</i>)	≥ 4.0 (At least 80% of academic experts recognize its scholarly value)

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024

(2) Market Acceptance Evaluation

Objective: To assess the commercial feasibility of the design, including consumer purchase intent, wearing experience, and market appeal.

Table 13 *Market Acceptance Metrics*

Evaluation Dimension	Assessment Method	Indicator Standard	Success Benchmark (KPI Target)
Consumer Purchase Intent	Questionnaire survey (<i>sample: 100 participants from the target group</i>)	"Would you consider purchasing this jewelry?" (1 = <i>Definitely Not</i> , 5 = <i>Definitely Yes</i>)	$\geq 60\%$ of respondents rate ≥ 3.5 .
Wearing Experience	Wearability test (<i>sample: 30 participants</i>)	5-point Likert scale evaluation (<i>comfort, weight, and fit</i>)	Average score ≥ 3.5
Emotional Resonance	Questionnaire Survey (Target Group: 100 participants)	"When viewing or wearing this jewelry series, do you experience reflection and emotional resonance?" (1 = <i>Not at all</i> , 5 = <i>Very much so</i>)	$\geq 60\%$ of respondents score ≥ 3.5 .

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024

(3) Cultural Adaptation and Cross-Cultural Communication Evaluation

Objective: To assess the acceptance of the jewelry design across different cultural backgrounds and evaluate its potential to foster cultural exchange between China and Thailand.

Table 14 *Cultural Adaptation and Cross-Cultural Communication Metrics*

Evaluation Dimension	Assessment Method	Indicator Standard	Success Benchmark (KPI Target)
Cross-Cultural	Consumer survey	5-point Likert scale	$\geq 60\%$ of

Acceptance	in China and Thailand (50 participants from each country)	(1 = <i>Strongly Disagree</i> , 5 = <i>Strongly Agree</i>)	respondents rate \geq 3.5.
Symbolic Interpretation Consistency	Expert interviews	"Can the Buddhist vegetation motifs be correctly interpreted?"	\geq 80% of scholars accurately interpret the motifs' meanings.

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024

3. Implementation Plan

Sample Selection: Includes young consumers from China and Thailand and industry experts (e.g., designers, cultural researchers).

Survey Channels:

Online feedback via virtual exhibitions and focus groups.

In person evaluations at design showcases.

Data Analysis: Using mixed method analysis, combining quantitative statistics with qualitative insights.

3.2.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a crucial phase in the research process wherein diverse data collected through various methods are systematically organized, processed, and interpreted. Its primary objective is to uncover underlying motifs and trends, offering empirical support for the research questions and generating academically valuable conclusions. In this study, data analysis serves not only to examine the interests and attitudes of young individuals in China and Thailand toward Buddhist vegetation motif jewelry but also to provide theoretical and practical guidance for cross-cultural design development.

By combining quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches, this study adopts a multi-layered analytical framework to identify user needs, cultural identification, and aesthetic preferences, thereby offering data-driven support for design optimization.

Objectives and Tools of Data Analysis

The study employs SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) as the primary tool for quantitative statistical analysis, processing data collected from questionnaires and field investigations. Quantitative analysis involves frequency statistics, factor analysis, and cross-tabulation to uncover trends and correlations. In parallel, qualitative analysis is conducted through thematic coding and interpretation to explore participants' deeper understanding of design elements.

By integrating these two methods, the study aims to synthesize user preferences,

symbolic comprehension, and levels of acceptance regarding Buddhist vegetation motif jewelry. The findings contribute to evidence-based guidance in design direction, cultural communication strategy, and market positioning.

Procedures of Data Analysis

1. Data Collection and Cleaning

Data Sources:

Three main channels were employed for data collection:

(1) Focus group interviews: Used to identify the most culturally resonant design proposals based on participant preferences.

(2) Questionnaire survey: Designed to explore themes such as religious attitudes and cultural identification, targeting young individuals aged 18–30 from both China and Thailand. Data were collected via online platforms such as Enjoining and Google Forms, ensuring sample diversity and representativeness.

(3) Literature review: Academic literature from relevant fields was analyzed to enhance the theoretical depth of the study's data foundation.

Data Cleaning:

Prior to analysis, the questionnaire data were rigorously cleaned. Invalid responses—such as incomplete entries or those with apparent bias—were excluded to ensure the quality and reliability of the dataset.

2. Quantitative Analysis

Using SPSS, descriptive statistics and frequency analysis were applied to gauge overall interest and acceptance of Buddhist vegetation motif jewelry among Chinese and Thai participants. Factor analysis was conducted to extract key influencing variables such as religious symbolism, aesthetic appeal, and cultural identification. Cross-tabulation was used to examine the influence of demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, educational background) on user preferences, identifying statistically significant group differences.

3. Qualitative Analysis

Responses to open-ended questionnaire items were analyzed using thematic analysis and coding methods. Tools such as NVivo were employed to categorize textual responses into key themes (e.g., “sense of cultural identity,” “appeal of traditional-modern fusion”) to uncover users’ latent emotional and perceptual needs related to Buddhist motifs in jewelry design.

4. Industry Report Analysis

Complementary to user data, this study also draws from industry trend reports to analyze the market application and design innovation of Buddhist vegetation motifs. The findings highlight growth trajectories and creative inspirations in the global jewelry market. Comparative analysis across market contexts reveals differing levels of acceptance of cultural symbols, thus grounding the research conclusions in real-world evidence.

Applications of the Analytical Findings

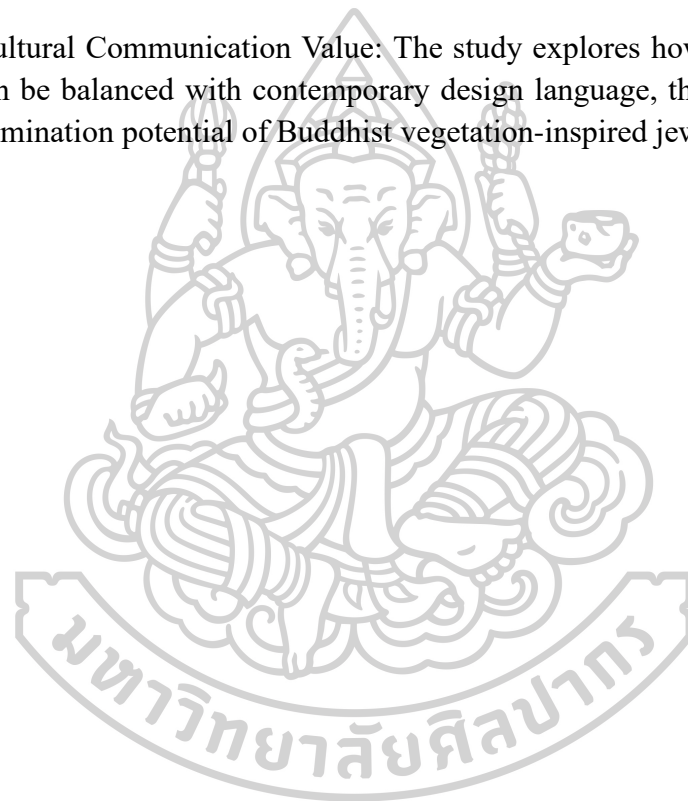
Based on the above analyses, the following applications are proposed:

(1) Design Optimization: The results provide targeted recommendations for refining design elements (e.g., motif selection, color schemes, material use) to align with consumer preferences across different cultural contexts.

(2) Marketing Strategy: By identifying key differences in preferences between young consumers in China and Thailand, the findings inform precise market positioning and promotional strategies for jewelry brands.

(3) Cross-cultural Design Theory Validation: The empirical data further validate the adaptability of Buddhist vegetation motifs within cross-cultural design discourse, offering theoretical contributions to the field of cultural heritage and design innovation.

(4) Cultural Communication Value: The study explores how traditional cultural symbols can be balanced with contemporary design language, thereby enhancing the global dissemination potential of Buddhist vegetation-inspired jewelry.



CHAPTER 4

DESIGN ANALYSIS

In contemporary jewelry design, the inheritance and innovation of traditional cultural symbols represent a critical research topic. This chapter focuses on the symbolic significance of Buddhist vegetation motifs in Chinese and Thai Buddhist cultures and their transformation in modern design. By exploring the semiotic value, cultural adaptability, modern reinterpretation, and user experience of Buddhist vegetation motifs, this study seeks to develop design strategies that preserve their deep religious and cultural meanings while also catering to the aesthetic preferences and emotional resonance of contemporary young consumers.

First, this chapter analyzes the religious symbolism of Buddhist vegetation motifs from a semiotic perspective, examining their different cultural interpretations in Chinese and Thai Buddhism. This analysis establishes the cultural and symbolic foundation for design practice.

Next, based on cross-cultural design theory, this chapter proposes integration strategies for blending Chinese and Thai cultural elements in jewelry design, exploring how to create innovative motifs that reflect both cultural identities.

Finally, through user experience surveys and market feedback analysis, this chapter investigates emotional responses, cultural identification, and consumer preferences regarding Buddhist vegetation motif jewelry. The collected data not only aids in optimizing design solutions but also provides a foundation for the market promotion and cultural dissemination of Buddhist vegetation motifs in contemporary jewelry design.

The design analysis in this chapter can be seen through Figure 27 is theoretically grounded and datadriven, integrating design strategies and user feedback to propose effective symbol transformation pathways and market application methods (see Figure 27: Research Design Roadmap).



Figure 27 *Research Design Roadmap*

Note. Researcher's research diagram, 2024

4.1 THEMATIC EXTRACTION BASED ON SYMBOLIC MEANING

4.1.1 CULTURAL SEMANTIC COMPARISON OF CHINESE AND THAI BUDDHIST VEGETATION MOTIFS

This study systematically categorizes and conducts an in-depth analysis of typical motifs from the Tang Dynasty in China and the Rattanakosin period in Thailand, focusing on their characteristics and cultural connotations. The aim is to provide a theoretical foundation and practical guidance for motif creation in jewelry design. By deconstructing and comparing these historical motifs, this study highlights their unique roles in visual communication and cultural symbolism, offering academic support for cultural integration and innovation in the design process.

According to relevant literature and academic sources, the most frequently used Buddhist vegetation motifs in the Tang Dynasty include:

- Lotus motif
- Baoxianghua (Treasure Floral) motif
- Peony motif
- Camellia motif
- Intertwined vine motif
- Scroll grass motif.
- Combinations of the above motifs

Meanwhile, common Buddhist vegetation motifs in the Rattanakosin period of Thailand include:

- Lotus motif
- Timeflower motif (ลายประจํายาม)
- Rice ear flower motif
- Kranuak motif (ลายกระหนก)
- Leaf motif
- Sugarcane eye motif

In the comparative analysis of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs, this study integrates Semiotics, Cultural Adaptation Theory, and Visual Perception Theory to explore these motifs from three key aspects: form, color, and symbolic meaning. Special emphasis is placed on their cultural significance within Chinese and Thai contexts, as well as their transformation and innovation in contemporary jewelry design. This approach facilitates an understanding of how these symbols undergo cultural reinterpretation and transmission in modern jewelry design. The study is further supported by the visual element selection process based on Roland Barthes' semiotic framework (see Figure28).

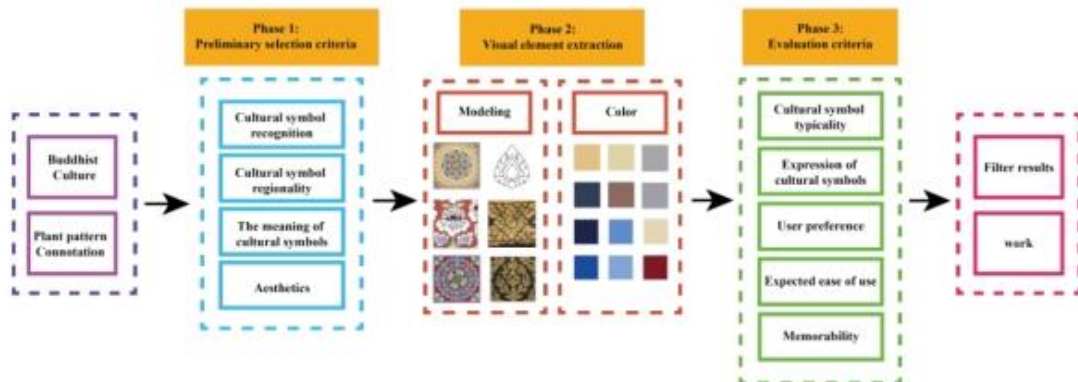


Figure 28 *Visual Element Selection Process*
 Note. *Researcher's research diagram, 2024*

4.1.1.1 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHINESE AND THAI LOTUS MOTIFS

1. In Terms of Shape and Structure

(1) Chinese Lotus Motif: The representation of lotus motifs in China places greater emphasis on the overall shape of the design, with each petal being thick and the center of the flower intricately detailed, reflecting a deep sense of layering and carving. The lotus is typically depicted as circular, with symmetrical repetition in forms such as the "X" shape or "米" (rice grain) motif. The composition is full and rich, featuring a sense of depth and complex contours, which conveys a balance and precision (as shown in Table 4).

(2) Thai Lotus Motif: The Thai approach to lotus design focuses more on the individual form of the petals, often shaped like flames or sharp points. The edges of the lotus are streamlined, creating an upward, dynamic feeling. The form of the lotus is more abstract and simplified, with the petals elongated and pointed. Thai lotus designs often incorporate traditional flame motifs, giving them a sense of movement and religious symbolism (as shown in Table 15).

2. In Terms of Color Expression

(1) Chinese Motif Color: The color palette in Chinese lotus designs is relatively rich, often using soft tones of blue, green, and white, reflecting the traditional styles of ceramics and mural art. The color transitions are natural, and the overall effect conveys elegance. Each color carries its own specific meaning (as shown in Table 16).

(2) Thai Lotus Motif Color: Thai lotus designs predominantly use bright tones, such as gold and red, to express the solemnity and sacredness found in Buddhist architecture and decoration (as shown in Table 16).



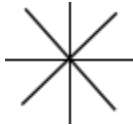



3. In Terms of Symbolic Meaning and Cultural Connotations

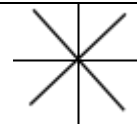
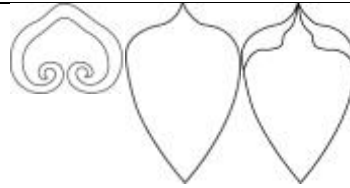
(1) Lotus in Chinese Culture: In Chinese culture, the lotus motif is not only a

religious symbol but is also closely connected to secular ideals. It is often associated with wealth, completeness, and other worldly aspirations, symbolizing the pursuit of a prosperous and fulfilling life. Specifically, Chinese lotus designs emphasize symmetry and circular forms, symbolizing harmony and the achievement of life goals (as shown in Table 17).

(2) Lotus in Thai Culture: In Thai culture, the lotus primarily represents spiritual awakening and wisdom. Thai culture places greater emphasis on the process of spiritual cultivation and the elevation of the soul. The flamelike shape and golden tones of the lotus symbolize the brilliance and enlightenment of Buddhist teachings. In contrast to the Chinese association with wealth and worldly ideals, the Thai lotus is more focused on the wisdom and spiritual prosperity inherent in Buddhist philosophy (as shown in Table 17).

Table 15 Structural Comparison of Chinese and Thai Lotus Motifs

				
Chinese Lotus	Cloud Curved Petals	Round Leaves	Multilobed Round Leaves	"米" (Rice Grain) Structure
				
Thai Lotus	Thai Lotus Petals	Elliptical Symmetry		



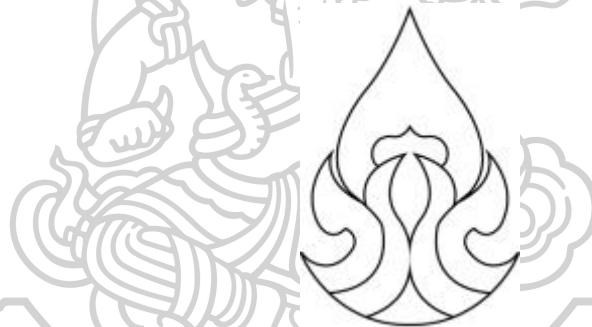
Chinese Lotus

Peach shaped Side Curved Petals

Peach shaped.

Inward Curved Petals with Hooklike Design

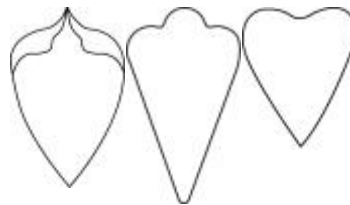
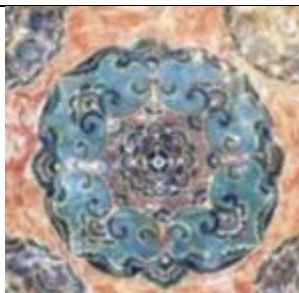
"米" (Rice Grain) Structure



Thai Lotus

Thai Lotus Petals

Elliptical Symmetry



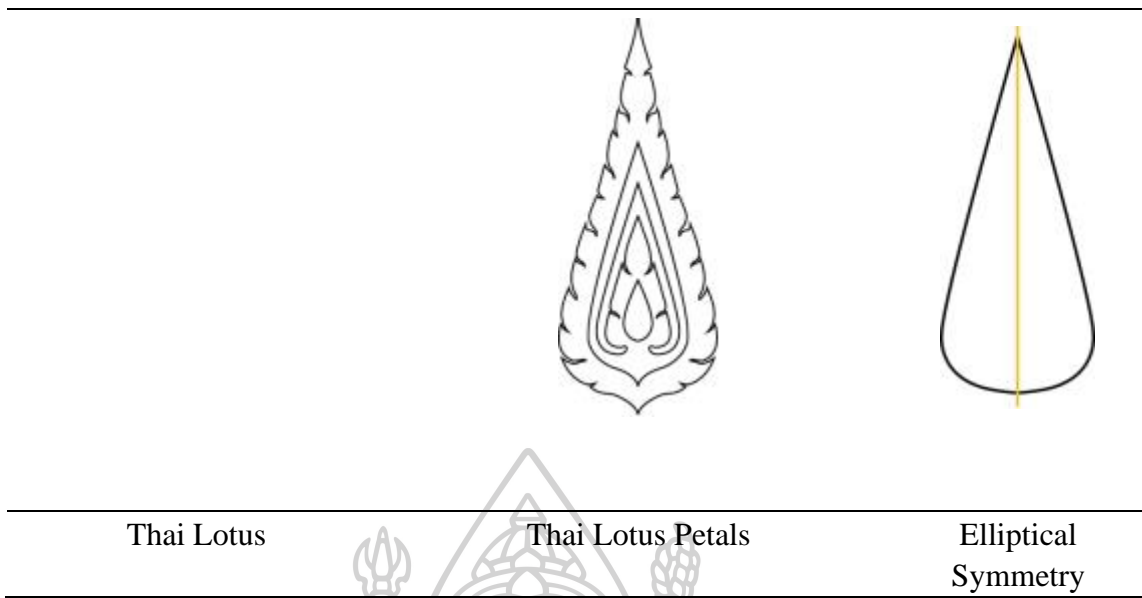
Chinese Lotus

Peach shaped Side Curved Petals

Multilobed Round Leaves

















Peach shaped.

"米" (Rice Grain) Structure



Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024



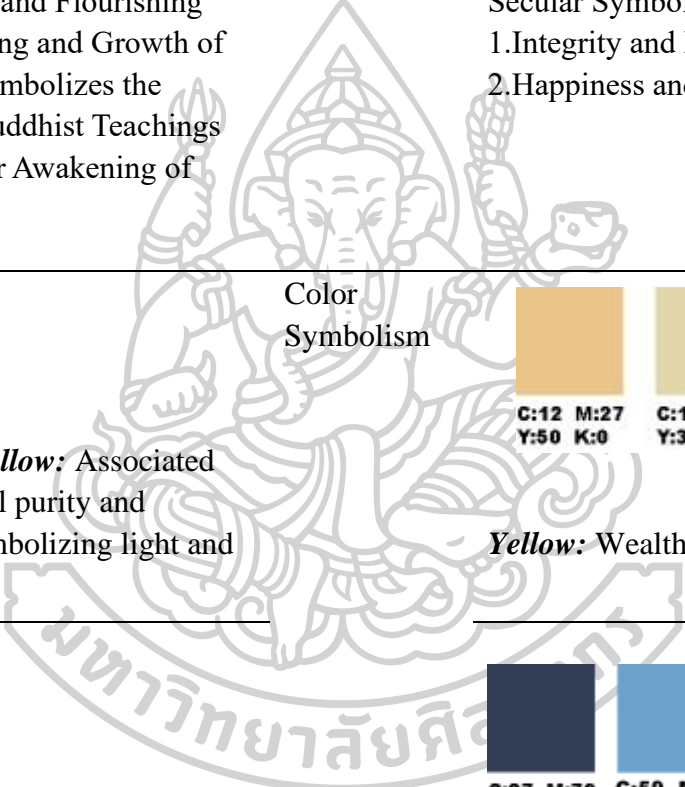


Table 16 *Color Comparison Table*

Common Colors in Thai Lotus Motifs	Common Colors in Chinese Lotus Motifs				
 C:16 M:29 Y: 57 K:0	 C:12 M:27 Y:50 K:0	 C:15 M:16 Y:38 K:0	 C:15 M:16 Y:38 K:0	 C:55 M:57 Y:59 K:2	 C:39 M:29 Y:52 K:0
	 C:77 M:77 Y:74 K:52	 C:17 M:19 Y:25 K:0	 C:76 M:62 Y:56 K:10	 C:66 M:43 Y:58 K:0	 C:51 M:30 Y:49 K:0
	 C:87 M:79 Y:52 K:18	 C:49 M:64 Y:59 K:2	 C:43 M:36 Y:26 K:0	 C:75 M:78 Y:59 K:25	 C:59 M:25 Y:9 K:0

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

The color data were directly sampled from the vegetatio motifs illustrated in this section.

Table 17 *Comparative Analysis of Symbolic Meaning*

Symbolic Meaning in Thai Culture	Levels of Symbolic Meaning	Symbolic Meaning in Chinese Culture
<p>Lotus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Purity, Wisdom, and Spiritual Enlightenment 2.The Concept of Reincarnation 3.Prosperty and Flourishing 4.The Opening and Growth of the Lotus Symbolizes the Spread of Buddhist Teachings and the Inner Awakening of Practitioners 	<p>Motif Element Symbolism</p>	<p>Buddhist Symbolism of the Lotus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Sacred Light 2.Rebirth <p>Secular Symbolism of the Lotus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Integrity and Purity 2.Happiness and Love
<p>Color Symbolism</p>		
 <p>C:16 M:29 Y: 57 K:0</p> <p>Gold and Yellow: Associated with spiritual purity and wisdom, symbolizing light and truth.</p>		 <p>C:12 M:27 Y:50 K:0 C:15 M:16 Y:38 K:0</p> <p>Yellow: Wealth and Brightness</p>
		
 <p>C:87 M:79 Y:52 K:18 C:59 M:25 Y:9 K:0</p> <p>Blue: Growth of all things</p>		
 <p>C:39 M:29 Y:52 K:0 C:66 M:43 Y:58 K:0 C:51 M:30 Y:49 K:0</p> <p>Green: Growth of all things, Auspiciousness</p>		

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

The color data were directly sampled from the vegetatio motifs illustrated in this section.

4.1.1.2 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF OTHER FLORAL MOTIFS

1. In Terms of Shape and Structure

(1) Chinese Floral Motifs: Floral motifs from the Tang Dynasty in China (such as peonies and camellias) often adopted a realistic style, emphasizing the delicate representation of natural forms. This included features such as multilayered petals, cloud curved petals, and flowers depicted from the front, side, or half profile. The realistic style reflected a faithful reproduction of natural forms (as shown in Table 7).

(2) Thai Floral Motifs: Floral motifs from the Rattanakosin period in Thailand, such as the time flower motif, placed more emphasis on geometric symmetry and decoration. These designs typically feature circular or square compositions with a high degree of symmetry and regularity. The flower design style is more abstract and ornamental, reflecting Buddhist philosophical thoughts on time and the cyclical nature of life (as shown in Table 18).

(3) Similarities: Both Chinese and Thai floral motifs emphasize symmetry and layering in their structure, highlighting the aesthetic beauty and symbolic significance of the flowers.

2. In Terms of Color Expression

(1) Chinese Floral Motifs: Floral designs in the Tang Dynasty often used a rich color palette, including yellow, blue, and green, representing wealth, light, and auspiciousness, respectively. The choice of colors carried clear symbolic meanings, aligning with the flowers' intended symbolism (as shown in Table 19).

(2) Thai Floral Motifs: Thai floral motifs predominantly feature gold and yellow tones, which symbolize purity, light, and wisdom in Thai culture. Especially in Buddhist decorations, the use of gold and yellow conveys sacred and lofty spiritual meanings (as shown in Table 19).

(3) Similarities: Both Chinese and Thai floral motifs use color to express aspirations for prosperity and a beautiful life, with the use of color carrying explicit symbolic meanings.

3. In Terms of Symbolic Meaning and Cultural Connotations


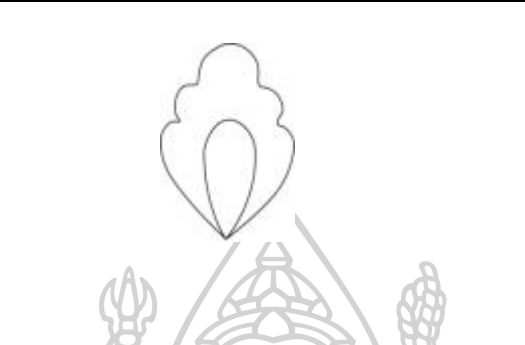


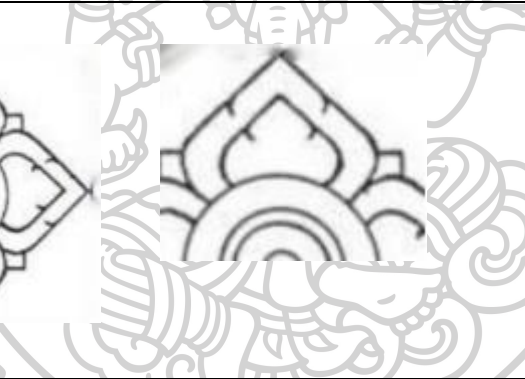
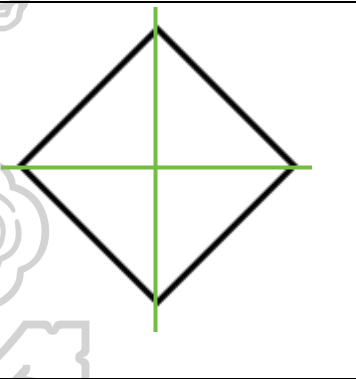


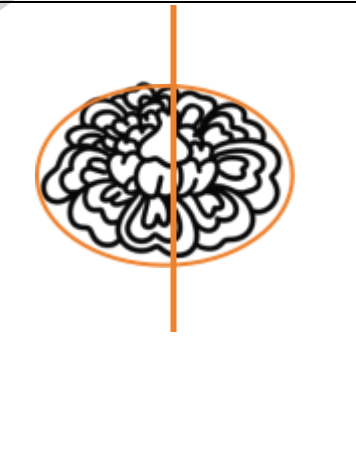
(1) Chinese Floral Motifs: Peonies symbolize wealth and prosperity and are regarded as the "king of flowers," while camellias represent elegance and resilience. Floral motifs in China are not only used for decoration but also integrate into cultural forms such as literature and poetry, expressing the pursuit of happiness and a harmonious life (as shown in Table 20).

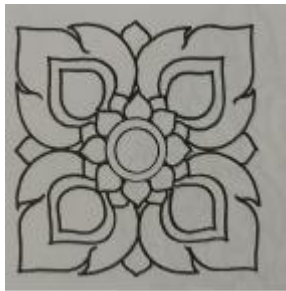
(2) Thai Floral Motifs: Rice ear motifs express hopes for abundance and harvest, while the time flower symbolizes the cyclical nature and eternity of time. Thai floral motifs often integrate Buddhist teachings, conveying reverence for the sacred and harmonious, serving as a visual narrative of nature and religious faith (as shown in Table 20).

(3) Similarities: Both Chinese and Thai floral motifs carry deep symbolic

meanings, using the form and color of flowers to express cultural, religious, and personal emotions. They reflect people's aspirations and reverence for a prosperous and harmonious life.

Table 18 *Structural Comparison of Chinese and Thai Floral Motifs*

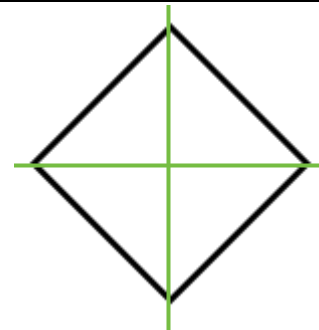
		
<p>Chinese Peony</p>	<p>Cloud Curved Petals</p>	<p>Symmetrical Design, Left Right Mirrored</p>
		
<p>Thai Time Flower</p>	<p>Petals</p>	<p>"十" (X) Symmetrical Square Shape</p>
		
<p>Chinese Peony</p>	<p>Peachshaped Cloud Curved Petals</p>	<p>Symmetrical Circular Shape</p>



Thai Time Flower



Petals



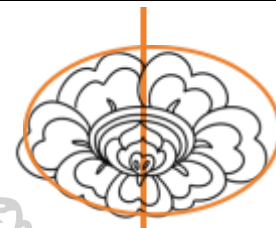
"十" (X) Symmetrical Square Shape



Chinese Camellia



Peach shaped Cloud Curved Petals



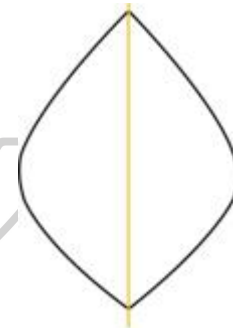
Symmetrical Circular Shape



Thai Rice Ear Flower



Petals



Half Circular Symmetry



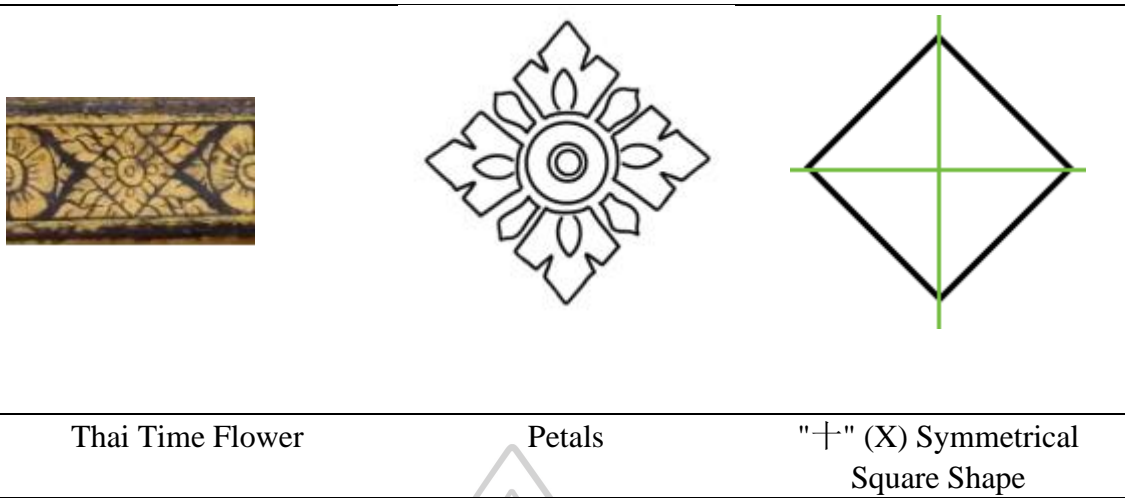
Chinese Camellia



Peach shaped Cloud Curved Petals





































Symmetrical Circular Shape



Thai Time Flower Petals "十" (X) Symmetrical Square Shape

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

Table 19 *Comparative Analysis of Colors in Chinese and Thai Floral Motifs*

Thai Floral Colors	Chinese Floral Colors															
 C:16 M:29 Y: 57 K:0	<table border="0"> <tr> <td> C:99 M:100 Y:81 K:17</td> <td> C:65 M:37 Y:0 K:0</td> <td> C:12 M:16 Y:31 K:0</td> <td> C:25 M:66 Y:79 K:0</td> <td> C:51 M:26 Y:100 K:0</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td> C:49 M:100 Y:92 K:23</td> <td> C:22 M:0 Y:33 K:0</td> <td> C:77 M:46 Y:79 K:5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td> C:0 M:0 Y:0 K:0</td> <td> C:47 M:21 Y:10 K:0</td> <td> C:33 M:0 Y:29 K:0</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	 C:99 M:100 Y:81 K:17	 C:65 M:37 Y:0 K:0	 C:12 M:16 Y:31 K:0	 C:25 M:66 Y:79 K:0	 C:51 M:26 Y:100 K:0		 C:49 M:100 Y:92 K:23	 C:22 M:0 Y:33 K:0	 C:77 M:46 Y:79 K:5			 C:0 M:0 Y:0 K:0	 C:47 M:21 Y:10 K:0	 C:33 M:0 Y:29 K:0	
 C:99 M:100 Y:81 K:17	 C:65 M:37 Y:0 K:0	 C:12 M:16 Y:31 K:0	 C:25 M:66 Y:79 K:0	 C:51 M:26 Y:100 K:0												
	 C:49 M:100 Y:92 K:23	 C:22 M:0 Y:33 K:0	 C:77 M:46 Y:79 K:5													
	 C:0 M:0 Y:0 K:0	 C:47 M:21 Y:10 K:0	 C:33 M:0 Y:29 K:0													

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

The color data were directly sampled from the vegetatio motifs illustrated in this section.

Table 20 *Comparative Analysis of Symbolic Meaning in Chinese and Thai Floral Motifs*

Symbolic Meaning in Thai Culture	Levels of Symbolic Meaning	Symbolic Meaning in Chinese Culture
Time Flower:		Peony Buddhist Symbolism:
1.Reincarnation	Motif Element	1.Emptiness, Detachment 2.Tranquility and Peace 3.Perfection and Completion

2.Eternity

Symbolism

Peony Secular Symbolism:

1.Wealth and Prosperity

3.Continuous Life

Rice Ear Flower Buddhist

Symbolism:

1. Compassion

2.Giving

Rice Ear Flower Secular

Symbolism:

1.Harvest, Abundance

2. Prosperity

Camellia:

1.Elegance and Purity

2.Resilience in the Face of Adversity

3.Auspiciousness, Buddha's Light Shining



C:16 M:29
Y: 67 K:0

Gold: Associated with spiritual purity and wisdom, symbolizing light and truth.

Color Symbolism



C:99 M:100
Y:61 K:17



C:65 M:37
Y:0 K:0



C:47 M:21
Y:10 K:0



C:33 M:0
Y:25 K:0

Blue: Represents nature, life, and peace.



C:81 M:26
Y:100 K:0



C:22 M:0
Y:35 K:0



C:77 M:46
Y:79 K:5

Green: Represents nature, life, and peace.



C:81 M:80
Y:86 K:68

Black: Symbolizes the hidden potential and nurturing of life; mystery.



C:0 M:0
Y:0 K:0

White: Purity, sacredness, a place of purity, and elegance.



C:49 M:100
Y:92 K:23

Red: Power, auspiciousness, and religious nobility.

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2024

The color data were directly sampled from the vegetatio motifs illustrated in this section.

4.1.1.3 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TREE LEAF AND VINE MOTIFS IN CHINESE AND THAI CULTURES

1. In Terms of Shape and Structure

(1) China: Tree leaf and vine motifs from the Tang Dynasty (such as the scroll grass motif and intertwined vine motif) primarily feature curling lines, forming flowing, elegant Shaped or Shaped curves. These motifs emphasize symmetry and fluidity, reflecting the growth forms of vines and vegetation leaves in nature. The designs are relatively complex and convey a vivid sense of vitality.

(2) Thailand: Thai tree leaf and vine motifs (such as ลายใบเทศ, ลายกระหนก, ลายกระจังดาอ้อย) are characterized by flame shapes, symmetrical leaves, and combinations of vines. They emphasize dynamism and three dimensionality. These designs often feature sharp rotations and extensions, conveying a unique sense of energy and vitality, closely associated with the Buddhist symbol of light.

(3) Similarities: Both Chinese and Thai tree leaf and vine motifs emphasize symmetry and flow to depict the vitality of vegetations and the harmonious beauty of nature (see Table 21) .

2. In Terms of Color Expression

(1) China: Tree leaf and vine motifs in the Tang Dynasty often use traditional colors such as red, yellow, and green, symbolizing power, wealth, life, and nature, respectively. The use of color in religious settings conveys solemnity, sanctity, and auspiciousness.

(2) Thailand: Thai tree leaf and vine motifs predominantly use gold and yellow, which symbolize wisdom, light, and prosperity in Buddhist culture. The use of gold is particularly common in temple decorations, enhancing the sacredness and visual impact of the motifs.

(3) Similarities: Both cultures focus on the use of symbolic colors to convey religious and cultural meanings, with colors often tied to religious beliefs (see Table 22) .

3. In Terms of Symbolic Meaning and Cultural Connotations

(1) China: The scroll grass and intertwined vine motifs from the Tang Dynasty symbolize the natural cycle of life and the endless continuity of existence, reflecting the philosophical concepts of yin yang balance and the natural cycle in Chinese tradition. These motifs are used in Buddhist and Taoist architecture to symbolize sanctity, prosperity, and longevity, while also expressing the pursuit of a harmonious life.

(2) Thailand: Thai tree leaf and vine motifs, such as ลายใบเทศ and ลายกระหนก, not only symbolize the vitality of nature but also incorporate Buddhist symbols of light and wisdom. These motifs are commonly used in temple decorations to convey reverence for Buddhism and the pursuit of sacred light. They reflect the fusion of nature worship and religious beliefs in Thai culture.

(3) Similarities: Both Chinese and Thai tree leaf and vine motifs emphasize the vitality of nature, expressing reverence and pursuit of nature and religious beliefs through these decorations. They reflect a shared aspiration for a harmonious and beautiful life (see Table 23).

Table 21 *Structural Comparison of Tree Leaf and Vine Motifs in Chinese and Thai Cultures*



Chinese Scroll Grass Motif



Structure of Chinese Scroll Grass Motif



Leaf Shape of Chinese Scroll Grass Motif



Kranok Triangle Structure

Leaf Shape of Kranok

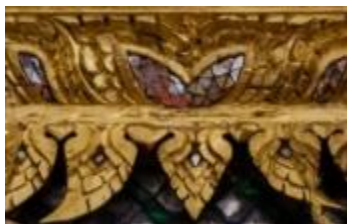
(ลายกระหนก)



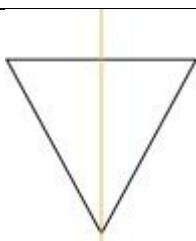
Chinese Scroll Grass Motif

Chinese Scroll Grass
Structure

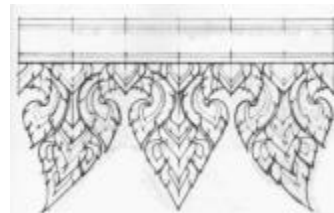
Leaf Shape of Chinese
Scroll Grass Motif



Thai Leaf Motif



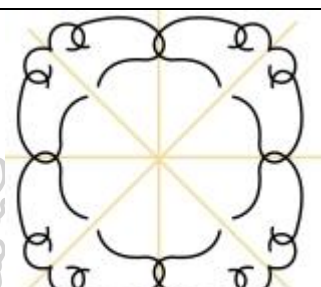
Thai Leaf Symmetrical Triangle Structure



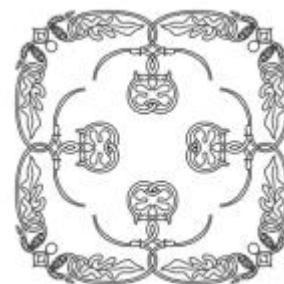
Shape of Thai Leaf Motif



Chinese Intertwined Vine Motif



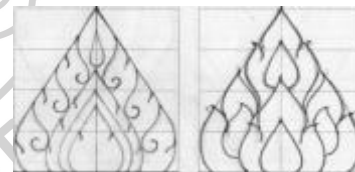
Structure of Chinese Intertwined Vine Motif: Intertwining, Rectangular, “米” Shape



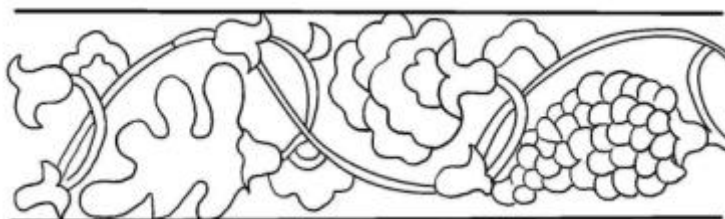
Shape of Chinese Intertwined Vine Motif



Thai Cane Motif Triangular Symmetrical Knot



Shape of Thai Cane Motif











































Shape of Chinese Intertwined Vine Motif



Structure of Chinese Intertwined Vine Motif

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024







Table 22 *Comparative Analysis of Colors in Chinese and Thai Tree Leaf and Vine Motifs*




Thai Motif Colors	Chinese Motif Colors																
 <p>C:16 M:29 Y: 67 K:0</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="906 853 1011 1003">  <p>C:4 M:55 Y:84 K:0</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1027 853 1133 1003">  <p>C:100 M:88 Y:27 K:0</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1149 853 1254 1003">  <p>C:29 M:100 Y:100 K:0</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1270 853 1385 1003">  <p>C:80 M:58 Y:79 K:23</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="906 1025 1011 1176">  <p>C:50 M:76 Y:71 K:11</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1027 1025 1133 1176">  <p>C:70 M:57 Y:38 K:0</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1149 1025 1254 1176">  <p>C:46 M:31 Y:67 K:0</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1270 1025 1385 1176">  <p>C:9 M:17 Y:29 K:0</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="906 1198 1011 1348">  <p>C:39 M:4 Y:28 K:0</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1027 1198 1133 1348">  <p>C:93 M:88 Y:89 K:80</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1149 1198 1254 1348">  <p>C:3 M:0 Y:19 K:0</p> </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="906 1370 1011 1516">  <p>C:64 M:78 Y:82 K:45</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1027 1370 1133 1516">  <p>C:75 M:36 Y:67 K:0</p> </td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	 <p>C:4 M:55 Y:84 K:0</p>	 <p>C:100 M:88 Y:27 K:0</p>	 <p>C:29 M:100 Y:100 K:0</p>	 <p>C:80 M:58 Y:79 K:23</p>	 <p>C:50 M:76 Y:71 K:11</p>	 <p>C:70 M:57 Y:38 K:0</p>	 <p>C:46 M:31 Y:67 K:0</p>	 <p>C:9 M:17 Y:29 K:0</p>	 <p>C:39 M:4 Y:28 K:0</p>	 <p>C:93 M:88 Y:89 K:80</p>	 <p>C:3 M:0 Y:19 K:0</p>		 <p>C:64 M:78 Y:82 K:45</p>	 <p>C:75 M:36 Y:67 K:0</p>		
 <p>C:4 M:55 Y:84 K:0</p>	 <p>C:100 M:88 Y:27 K:0</p>	 <p>C:29 M:100 Y:100 K:0</p>	 <p>C:80 M:58 Y:79 K:23</p>														
 <p>C:50 M:76 Y:71 K:11</p>	 <p>C:70 M:57 Y:38 K:0</p>	 <p>C:46 M:31 Y:67 K:0</p>	 <p>C:9 M:17 Y:29 K:0</p>														
 <p>C:39 M:4 Y:28 K:0</p>	 <p>C:93 M:88 Y:89 K:80</p>	 <p>C:3 M:0 Y:19 K:0</p>															
 <p>C:64 M:78 Y:82 K:45</p>	 <p>C:75 M:36 Y:67 K:0</p>																

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

Table 23 *Comparative Analysis of Symbolic Meanings in Chinese and Thai Tree Leaf and Vine Motifs*

Symbolic Meaning in Thai Culture	Levels of Symbolic Meaning	Symbolic Meaning in Chinese Culture

Symbolic Meaning in Thai Culture	Levels of Symbolic Meaning	Symbolic Meaning in Chinese Culture
<p>Thai Kranok Motif:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Vitality of Nature 2.Wisdom 3.Prosperity and Abundance 	<p>Motif Element Symbolism</p>	<p>Chinese Scroll Grass Buddhist Symbolism:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Reincarnation 2.Tree of Life 3.Different thematic combinations also carry varied cultural meanings
<p>Thai Leaf Motif:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Vitality of Nature 2.Wisdom 3.Prosperity and Abundance 		<p>Chinese Intertwined Vine Buddhist Symbolism:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Auspiciousness and Good Luck 2.Happiness and Longevity <p>Chinese Intertwined Vine Secular Symbolism:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family Prosperity 2.Eternal Lineage
<p>Thai Cane Motif:</p> <p>Prosperity and Harvest Sweet Life</p>		
 <p>C:16 M:29 Y: 67 K:0</p> <p>Gold and Yellow: Associated with spiritual purity and wisdom, symbolizing light and truth.</p>		 <p>C:50 M:76 Y:71 K:11</p>  <p>C:29 M:100 Y:100 K:0</p> <p>Red: Represents power, auspiciousness, and religious nobility.</p>
	<p>Color Symbolism</p>	 <p>C:39 M:4 Y:28 K:0</p>  <p>C:70 M:57 Y:38 K:0</p>  <p>C:100 M:88 Y:27 K:0</p> <p>Blue: Symbolizes nature, life, and peace.</p>

Symbolic Meaning in Thai Culture	Levels of Symbolic Meaning	Symbolic Meaning in Chinese Culture
		 <p data-bbox="954 555 1294 595">C:46 M:31 Y:67 K:0 C:80 M:58 Y:79 K:23 C:75 M:36 Y:67 K:0</p> <p data-bbox="954 633 1353 707">Green: Symbolizes nature, life, and peace.</p>
		 <p data-bbox="954 869 1054 909">C:93 M:88 Y:89 K:80</p> <p data-bbox="954 925 1342 1043">Black: Represents the hidden potential and nurturing of life; mystery.</p>
		 <p data-bbox="954 1205 1166 1245">C:3 M:0 Y:19 K:0 C:4 M:55 Y:84 K:0</p> <p data-bbox="954 1261 1362 1335">Yellow: Symbolizes wealth and prosperity, as well as light.</p>

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

4.1.1.4 SUMMARY

This section applies semiotic analysis to systematically classify and structurally examine Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs. Building upon this foundation, the study employs comparative analysis to explore significant differences in artistic representation and symbolic meaning between the two cultures, followed by a structural synthesis of these motifs.

By integrating Semiotics, Cultural Adaptation Theory, and Visual Perception Theory, this section conducts a comparative analysis of Buddhist vegetation motifs from three key perspectives: form, color, and symbolic meaning. The findings indicate that:

While the forms of Buddhist vegetation motifs are similar, their symbolic meanings vary across cultural contexts.

Cultural Adaptation Theory explains the transformation of vegetation motifs

during cross-cultural transmission, providing theoretical support for contemporary jewelry design.

Visual Perception Theory highlights differences in consumer acceptance across cultures, offering insights into the optimization of Buddhist vegetation motifs in modern jewelry applications.

These findings contribute to cross-cultural jewelry design, ensuring that jewelry products align with both the cultural and aesthetic expectations of the target market.

1. Differences in Chinese and Thai Vegetation Motifs

(1) Form and Structure: Chinese vegetation motifs tend to focus on the delicate reproduction of natural forms, typically using circular or "米" (rice grain) structures, which convey a sense of harmony and balance. In contrast, Thai vegetation motifs emphasize abstract, dynamic expressions, often featuring geometric symmetry. These motifs are simplified and decorative, highlighting the flow of lines and the vitality of nature.

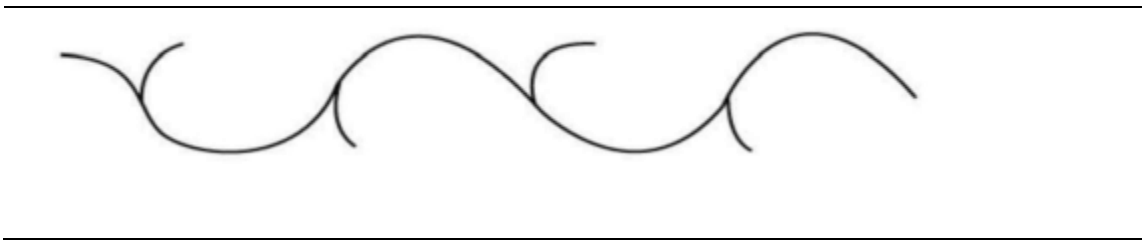
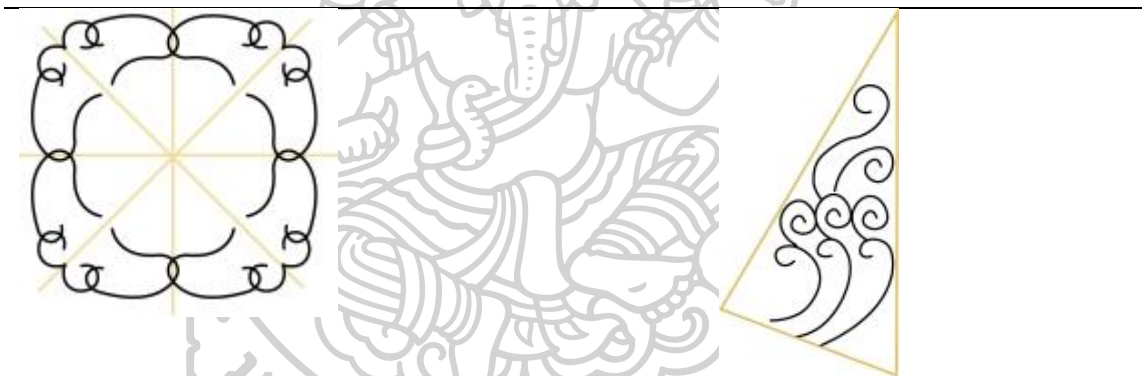
(2) Color Expression: Chinese vegetation motifs exhibit a rich variety of colors with distinct symbolic meanings. Different colors represent various cultural connotations, such as wealth, auspiciousness, and harmony. Thai vegetation motifs, on the other hand, predominantly use gold and yellow tones, which in Buddhist culture symbolize solemnity, sanctity, and wisdom, reflecting the noble and sacred qualities of Buddhist art.

(3) Symbolic Meaning and Cultural Connotations: Chinese vegetation motifs not only contain Buddhist symbolism but also incorporate rich secular ideals, representing the pursuit of wealth, fulfillment, and a harmonious life. In contrast, Thai vegetation motifs place greater emphasis on religious symbolism, expressing reverence for Buddhist teachings and spiritual enlightenment, highlighting the pursuit of wisdom and awakening.

2. Summary of Motif Structures

This section will systematically summarize and analyze the structural characteristics of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs, providing a theoretical foundation and design guidance for the motifs used in subsequent jewelry design.

Table 24 *Summary of Motif Structures*





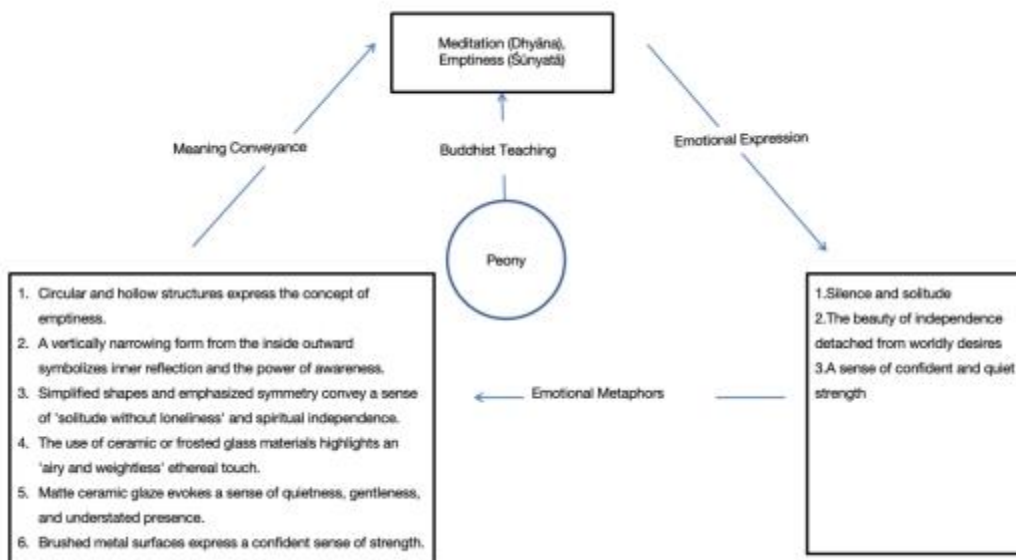
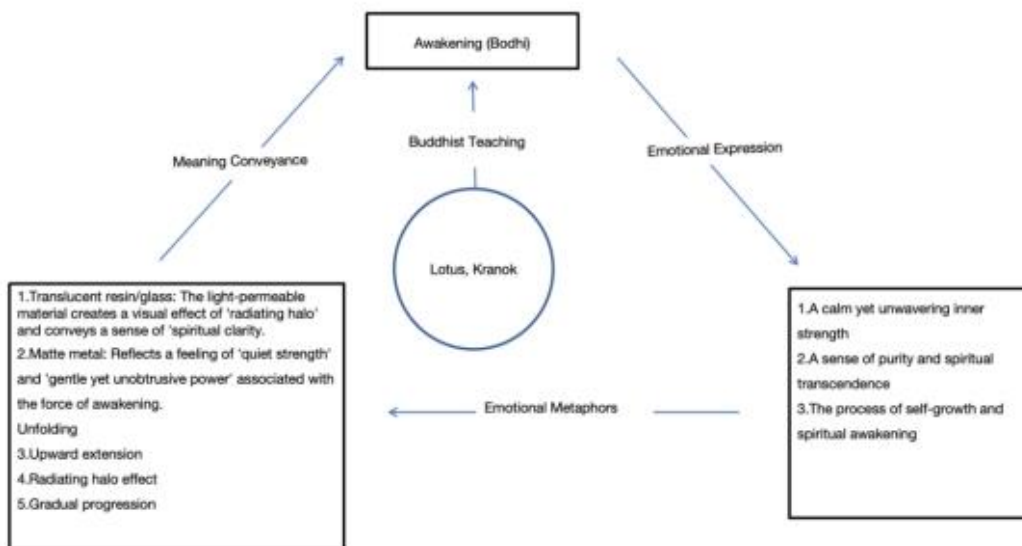
Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2024

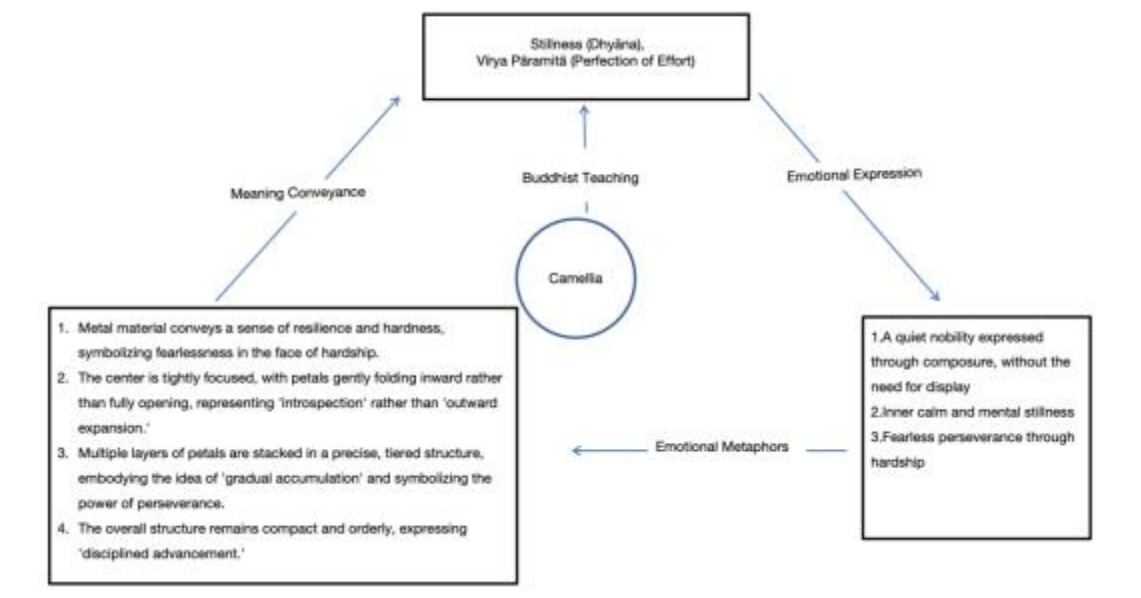
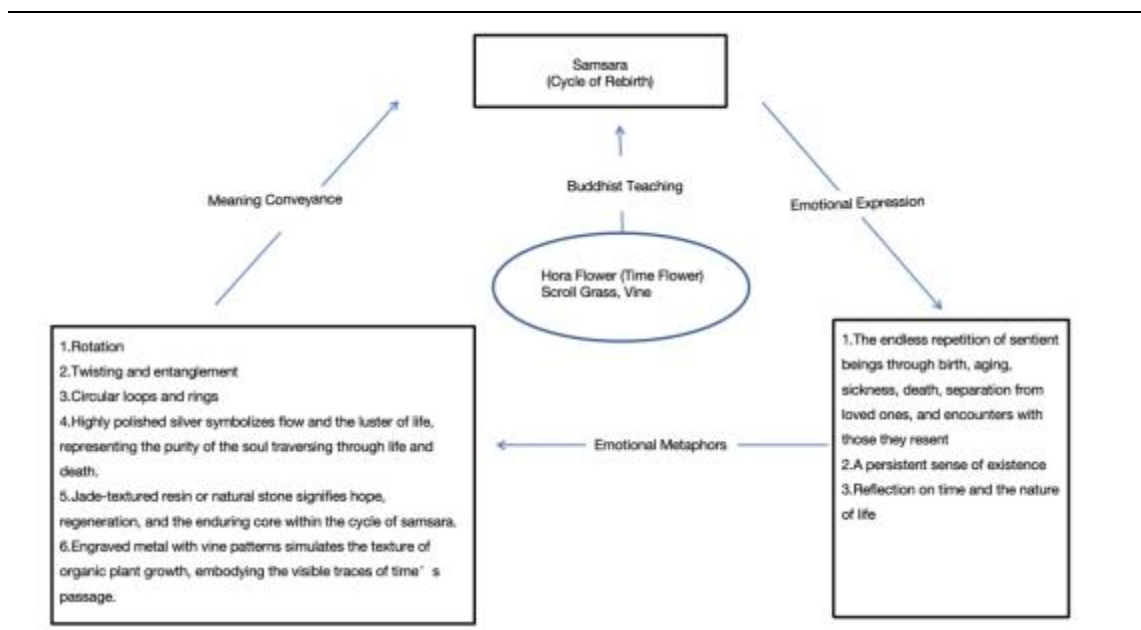
4.1.2 SYMBOLIC TRANSFORMATION OF CORE BUDDHIST CONCEPTS

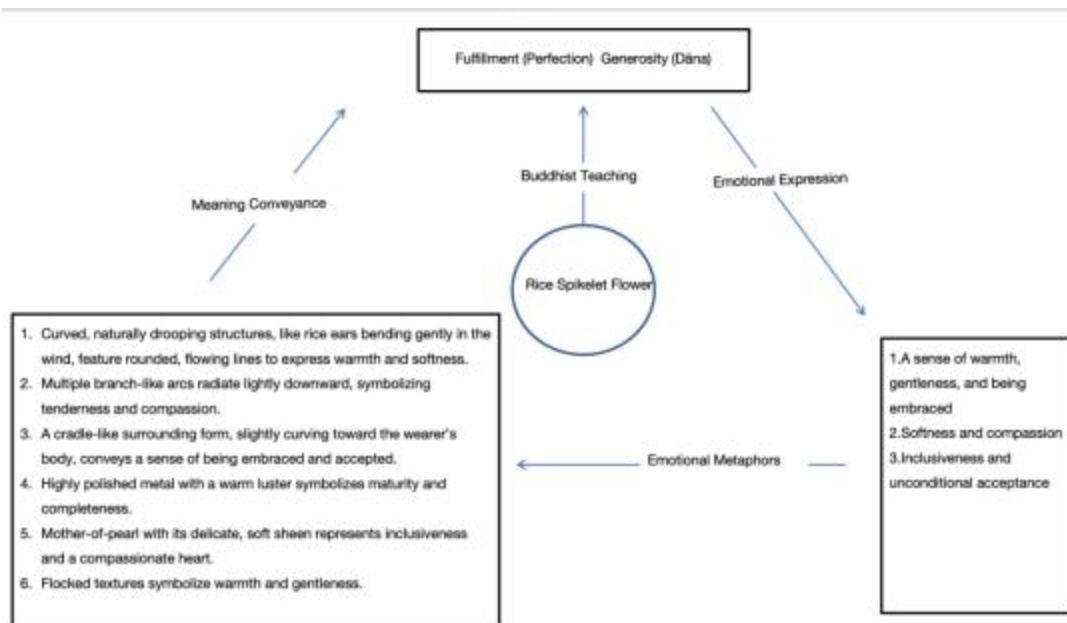
In this study, the design approach moves beyond the literal reproduction of traditional Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs. Instead, it centers on the philosophical ideas and spiritual symbolism embedded within these motifs—such as Śūnyatā (emptiness), Bodhi (awakening), Anitya (impermanence), and Karuṇā (compassion). As Kandinsky (1912) proposed in *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, truly powerful artistic forms do not originate from external imitation but stem from the artist's inner spiritual necessity and “inner need.” Inspired by this notion, this study abstractly transforms Buddhist symbolic meanings into dynamic structural forms and rhythmic visual languages, rather than simply replicating natural shapes of flowers, leaves, or vines (see Table 25) (as shown in Figure X, the systematic transformation pathway of “Symbolic Interpretation → Emotional Abstraction → Structural Composition → Formal Language”).

For example, the lotus, which symbolizes enlightenment, is translated into a spiral structure that unfolds outward from the center—mirroring its nature of remaining untainted by the mud from which it emerges. The concept of Śūnyatā (emptiness) is expressed through hollowed-out central axes, translucent materials, or deliberate spatial voids—conveying a pursuit of immaterial spiritual ideals. Such symbolic transformations not only align with the logic of spiritual aesthetics but also provide a philosophical foundation for the formal development of the design (see Sections 4.3 and 4.4 for specific applications).

Table 25 *Diagram of Design Logic*







Soure. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

The construction of a three-dimensional design matrix not only assists designers in maintaining a focused spiritual orientation throughout the creative process, but also enables each jewelry piece to carry an independent thread of cultural narrative. The thematic focus is not a literal reproduction of traditional motifs; rather, it is the construction of a design language that conveys a spiritual experience. This allows the wearer to move from visual appreciation to inner perception through interaction with the piece.

In this research framework, the establishment of design direction is not merely the starting point for developing visual language—it is also the crucial process through which Buddhist vegetation motifs are transformed from graphical symbols into spiritual carriers. By defining the conceptual core of each design, the designer breathes new life into traditional motifs, allowing them to transcend decorative function and instead serve as media for emotional expression, intellectual engagement, and cultural dialogue.

Simultaneously, Yuriko Saito (2007), in her exploration of Everyday Aesthetics, argues that profound aesthetic experience does not solely emerge from extraordinary occasions or high art, but is deeply rooted in daily interactions between individuals and objects. Following this principle, the symbolic transformation in this study emphasizes the connection between meaning and everyday use. The aim is not only cultural recognizability but also the capacity to evoke inner awareness during acts of wearing, touching, and interacting.

Furthermore, Donald Norman's (2004) theory of Emotional Design—particularly his concept of the three levels of emotional experience (visceral, behavioral, and reflective)—offers a valuable framework for interpreting the experiential impact of

symbolic transformation. At the visceral level, the transformed motifs evoke intuitive aesthetic attraction through rhythm and form (see Sections 4.3.2 and 4.4.2); at the behavioral level, the structural and material choices facilitate ease and pleasure in wearing (also detailed in Sections 4.3.2 and 4.4.2); and at the reflective level, the conveyed Buddhist philosophical meanings encourage deep contemplation on the relationship between self, culture, and life.

Thus, within the design logic of this research, the symbolic transformation of motifs is not solely a reconstruction of visual form—it is a spiritual reconfiguration of cultural semantics. With the theoretical support of Kandinsky’s spiritual aesthetics, Saito’s everyday aesthetics, and Norman’s emotional design, Buddhist vegetation motifs are elevated beyond decorative symbols to become mediators between inner philosophical reflection and contemporary design expression.

4.2 MATERIAL AND SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION

In conveying the spiritual essence of Buddhist vegetation motifs, this design departs from traditional dependence on color, shifting focus instead to the intrinsic perceptual qualities of materials—including visual texture, light-shadow interaction, and tactile response. Through a conceptual pathway of “material–structure–perception,” the project constructs a spiritually oriented wearable experience, wherein material is not merely a physical substance, but a symbolic signifier, emotional medium, and cultural metaphor.

Different materials carry distinct symbolic implications within the Buddhist context. For instance, highly polished metals such as silver or titanium, with their intense reflectivity and smooth luster, are used to express the fluidity of samsara and a sense of luminous order. In contrast, matte ceramics, with their soft, subdued surfaces, evoke the tranquility of meditative stillness and the unobtrusive calmness associated with the concept of *sūnyatā* (emptiness). Translucent resins, by allowing light to pass through, visually simulate the Buddhist philosophical notion of “appearance without attachment,” aligning with core ideas such as *anātman* (no-self), *animitta* (signlessness), and *apratisthita* (non-abiding).

The visual palette of the design employs white, gray, silver, metallic sheens, and semi-transparent materials to minimize cultural misinterpretation of color, positioning materiality itself as a conduit for emotional and spiritual experience. This approach resonates with Yuriko Saito’s theory in *Everyday Aesthetics* (2007), where she argues that material does not merely shape visual form but also communicates ethical awareness, emotional tone, and an individual’s attitude toward life. Within this framework, matte ceramics symbolize a life ethos of humility and silence, while translucent synthetic resins reflect a pursuit of spiritual values such as lightness, non-possession, and intentional emptiness. As Saito emphasizes, the selection of materials embodies an aesthetic judgment in itself—a reflection of one’s chosen mode of existence.

More critically, material serves as a tactile interface between the body and the inner self. When worn, the jewelry engages the skin through contrasts in temperature, surface resistance, and subtle pressure marks. These tactile stimuli become extensions of Buddhist behavioral meaning. For example, some embedded structures may leave temporary impressions on the skin; in the cycle of “noticing the mark—observing its disappearance,” the wearer experiences the principle of *anicca* (impermanence). Similarly, the gentle texture of matte surfaces, when felt through fingertips, elicits a sense of care and compassion, echoing the values of *karuṇā* (compassion) and *viśuddhi* (purity) in Buddhist practice.

In summary, materials in this design do more than constitute visual elements; they perform a tripartite role of symbolic, ethical, and emotional resonance. Through the interplay of light and surface, they intensify spiritual imagery; through tactile interaction, they activate moral awareness; and ultimately, they enable wearers to physically engage with Buddhist philosophical thought. This “material-to-spirit” pathway enables the design to articulate a contemporary strategy of form as awareness and wearing as practice.

Based on the correspondences between physical material properties and their cultural-religious meanings, this study establishes a Material–Texture–Symbolic Meaning Matrix (see Table 26), which guides the symbolic encoding of material selection throughout the design process.

This material-symbolic mapping complements the motif pattern symbolism previously established through visual and color analysis, providing a holistic pathway from surface to meaning.

Table 26 *Material and symbolic expression*

Material Type	Textural Characteristics	Spiritual and Cultural Connotations (Based on Yuriko Saito’s Perspective)
Gold	Strong luster, warm tone, high sense of value	Symbolizes sacredness, eternity, and nobility; associated with religious rituals and spiritual radiance
Silver	Cool luster, soft texture, calm and elegant	Symbolizes purity, tranquility, and untainted clarity; carries meditative and introspective qualities
Pearl	Semi-translucent, soft luster, naturally rounded	Symbolizes inner wisdom, feminine spirit, and soft aesthetics; emphasizes spiritual nourishment “from within”
Jade	Stable, delicate, warm and smooth like water	In both Chinese and Thai cultures, symbolizes virtue, vitality, and spirituality; offers dual protection for body and soul
Glazed Glass	Transparent, temperature-flexible, strongly	One of Buddhism’s seven treasures; symbolizes purity, clarity, spiritual

Material Type	Textural Characteristics	Spiritual and Cultural Connotations (Based on Yuriko Saito's Perspective)
	symbolic in religion	elevation, and karmic harmony
Wood	Warm, natural grain, highly absorptive	Symbolizes vitality, reincarnation, impermanence; carries a sense of naturalness and folk culture
Ceramic	Moldable surface, fragile yet resilient, rustic texture	Symbolizes emptiness and causality; carries traces of handcraft and the flow of
Glass	Clear, lightweight, highly moldable	Transparency symbolizes inner clarity; fragility reflects life's impermanence and purity
Silk / Textile	Soft, weavable, skin-friendly texture	Embodies flexibility, compassion, continuity, and the spiritual qualities of everyday life

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

This material system serves not only aesthetic and formal construction purposes but also imbues the jewelry pieces with deeper emotional and symbolic contexts through tactile interaction and cultural association. The integrated logic of “material–symbol–emotion” transforms these works from conventional decorative objects into hybrid artifacts that function as both aesthetic experiences and spiritual carriers within the wearer's everyday life. In doing so, the jewelry transcends its ornamental role and emerges as an embodiment of both everyday aesthetics and embodied spiritual expression.

(For detailed material expression outcomes, see Section 4.4.2: Physical Prototypes.)

4.3 DESIGN INTERPRETATION AND FORM GENERATION

Following the identification of the spiritual themes embodied in Buddhist vegetation motifs, the core challenge of the design process lies in translating these abstract spiritual ideas into contemporary forms that possess both visual tension and cultural recognizability. To move beyond the conventional replication of traditional motifs as mere visual symbols, this study seeks to extract the perceptual essence of key Buddhist principles—such as awakening (bodhi), impermanence (anicca), emptiness (śūnyatā), and reincarnation (saṃsāra)—and transform them into a sensory-based design language.

By following a conceptual path of “Buddhist philosophy → emotional resonance → sensory experience → material and formal strategies,” the research reanimates traditional Buddhist vegetation motifs with new experiential vitality and contemporary expression. This approach not only enhances symbolic depth but also

establishes a multi-sensory and culturally embedded design framework suited for cross-cultural jewelry innovation.

4.3.1 GLOBAL POSITIONING OF CONTEMPORARY EXPRESSION

In today's international context of contemporary jewelry design, the focus has expanded beyond decoration and aesthetic updates toward deeper explorations of spiritual expression, cultural identity, bodily engagement, and philosophical inquiry. Jewelry is no longer merely an adornment attached to the body—it has evolved into a medium for intellectual communication and emotional activation.

This research draws upon Buddhist vegetation motifs as the visual foundation and Buddhist philosophy as the spiritual core, translating concepts such as “awakening,” “emptiness,” “generosity,” and “samsara” through material, form, and wearability. It aims to establish a path of contemporary expression that transcends mere ornamentation and enables immersive spiritual and cultural resonance.

In the global landscape of contemporary jewelry art, many artists have approached jewelry through conceptual, identity-based, or corporeal perspectives. For instance, Ruudt Peters explores the tensions between body and soul; Manon van Kouswijk investigates repetition and de-smartification in structural language; Lin Cheung reflects on emotional projection and cultural identity through everyday objects. Compared with these Western-centric approaches grounded in philosophy and social identity, the Eastern Buddhist worldview—where emotion, spirit, and action are deeply integrated—remains underrepresented in the discourse of contemporary jewelry.

Therefore, this section analyzes three key aspects:

1. The similarities and differences in philosophy, structural language, and material strategies between this research and representative figures in contemporary jewelry.

2. How this research addresses the current absence of “Eastern spiritual jewelry” in contemporary design vocabularies.

3. The design positioning and cultural value contribution proposed by this research.

Through this positioning analysis, it will become clear that the design outcomes of this research not only possess an independent visual system and logic of wearability but also offer a culturally rooted, spiritually rich, and contemporarily adaptive mode of expression—one that introduces Eastern philosophical contemplation and bodily reflection into the global landscape of contemporary jewelry.

1. Theoretical Linkages with Leading Contemporary Figures

In the international discourse of contemporary jewelry, the object has evolved into a medium that embodies emotion, spirituality, and ideology. This study's conceptual approach aligns with, yet remains distinct from, several influential artists.

One shared aspect is the attempt to explore the transformation between inner

consciousness and the body through jewelry. For example, Ruudt Peters, deeply influenced by religious rituals and alchemical symbolism, constructs spiritual pathways through wearable structures based on axiality, breath-like openness, and rotational dynamics. In his *Corpus* series (see Figure 29), a centrally split object symbolizes the internal energy flow of the body, where the act of wearing becomes a trigger for self-awareness. Correspondingly, the “Awakening” theme in this research incorporates a spiral structure encircling a vertical axis to symbolize spiritual elevation from confusion to clarity. A rotating bead element enhances the wearer’s bodily perception, embodying the dynamic emergence of “awakening.”



Figure 29 *Ruudt Peters, RENIBUS, 2011*

Source. <https://artjewelryforum.org/articles/ruudt-peters-corpus/>

Similarly, Lin Cheung’s “emotional object” theory posits that jewelry is more than an object—it is a vessel for emotional memory and human values. Her series *Medals for Everyday Heroes* (see Figure 30) transforms the traditional medal into a symbol of moral affirmation for subtle, mindful acts. Inspired by this emotional abstraction logic, the “Emptiness” theme in this research utilizes fading materials, fractured structures, and open forms to interpret Buddhist notions of “non-self” and “non-attachment.” The goal is to evoke perception of “form in emptiness” and inspire wearer introspection through minimalist design.



Figure 30 *Lin Cheung, Medals for Everyday Heroes*

Source. <https://imlarsen.com/projekter/medals-for-everyday-heroes>

In contrast, Sissi Westerberg focuses on the bodily expression of complex emotional states such as grief, trauma, and social constraint. Using meltable, fragmenting, or time-sensitive materials (see Figure 31), she conveys the temporality and fluidity of emotion. Influenced by her approach, this research incorporates floating inner structures into the Samsara Bracelet, signifying the gradual accumulation of karmic causes and effects. Sliding beads represent the micro-transformations of spiritual cultivation and the cyclical nature of life, enhancing the work's sense of time and interaction.

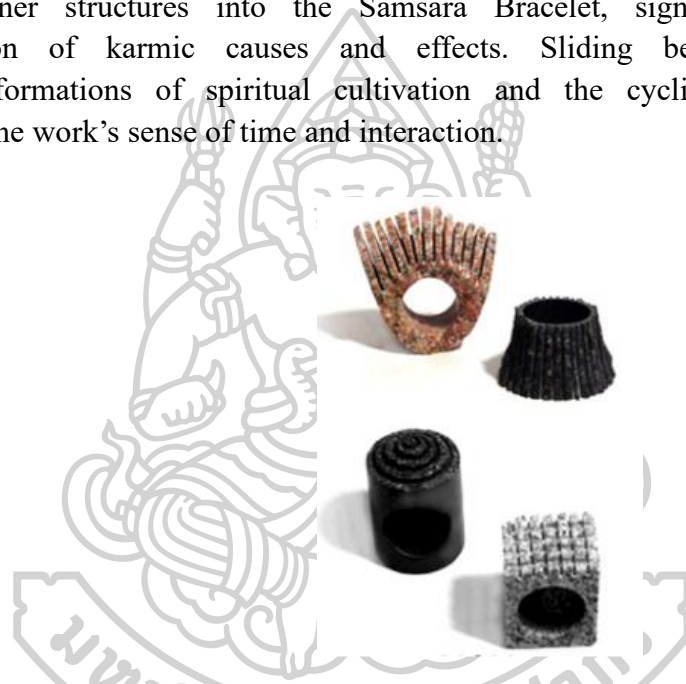


Figure 31 *Sissi Westerberg, representative work*

Source. <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/34269647139533538/>

In conclusion, this study aims to move beyond the conventional replication of decorative motifs in contemporary jewelry by establishing a multidimensional expressive method that emphasizes spiritual structure, bodily interaction, and emotional activation. Drawing upon global paradigms of spiritual jewelry, this research translates the cultural meanings of Buddhist vegetation motifs into a contemporary language with global communicability.

Through structural metaphor, material transformation, and wearability design, the works go beyond form to construct a symbolic–perceptual–spiritual pathway. This serves as a reference model for reinterpreting Eastern religious visual symbols within the international context of contemporary jewelry design.

To clearly demonstrate the relationship between this research and the field of contemporary expressive jewelry design, the following comparative table (see Table X) has been created. It highlights the similarities and differences between selected

representative designers and this study in terms of core themes, modes of expression, material strategies, bodily interaction, and spiritual positioning.

Table 27 *Positional Analysis within the Context of International Spiritual Jewelry Design*

Designer / Researcher	Core Theme	Mode of Expression	Material Strategy	Bodily Interaction	Spiritual Positioning	Relation to This Research
Ruudt Peters	Mysticism / Religious Transformation	Metaphor + Ritualistic Structure	Metal, lacquer, video media	Ritualized bodily behavior	Western alchemy	Emphasizes abstract spiritual expression; culturally distinct foundations; form strategies are referential
Lin Cheung	Emotional philosophy / Everyday objects	Minimal forms + emotional metaphors	Silver, wood, leather	Psychological evocation	Introspective thought	Offers insight into object philosophy and everydayness; useful for enhancing affective dimensions
Lisa Walker	Posthumanism / Anti-jewelry discourse	Collage, stacking, anti-logical	Recycled and industrial materials	Non-systematic wearability	Non-bodily-centric	Differs in conceptual logic, but valuable

Designer / Researcher	Core Theme	Mode of Expression	Material Strategy	Bodily Interaction	Spiritual Positioning	Relation to This Research
		construction				for its experimental and critical approach
This Research	Buddhist spirituality / Embodied awareness	Symbolic structure + material translation	Translucent materials, curled components, light-responsive combinations	Wearability + emotional arousal	Eastern religious philosophy	Fills the gap of expressing "Eastern spiritual imagery through wearable structures" in the global jewelry discourse

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

1. Visual Note:

This study draws from Buddhist vegetation motifs of China and Thailand as symbolic sources and emphasizes a translational design pathway of "spiritual morphemes – formal construction – embodied perception."

Compared to works by Ruudt Peters and Lin Cheung, this research focuses more explicitly on expressing non-Western philosophical systems, particularly Buddhist thought.

In terms of wearability and material strategy, the work emphasizes bodily-emotional resonance and the reconstruction of cultural imagery, forming a contemporary expression grounded in regional spirituality and cultural identity.

This comparative table not only clarifies the academic positioning of this research within the global design discourse, but also highlights its theoretical and methodological contribution to the articulation of Eastern spiritual jewelry in contemporary design practice.

2. How This Design Addresses the Absence of "Eastern Spiritual Jewelry" in Contemporary Expression

In the current international discourse of contemporary jewelry, although conceptual jewelry widely addresses themes of society, identity, and the body, very few designs systematically translate Eastern religious philosophy into symbolic, emotional, and interactively wearable forms of contemporary expression. This research attempts to fill that gap.

By analyzing the symbolic systems of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs, this study establishes a transformation mechanism that links spiritual meaning → visual form → material language → bodily wearability. It further integrates dimensions such as dynamic interaction, temporal residue, and light-shadow perception into the wearing experience, proposing a new approach to spiritual jewelry that is meditative, introspective, and structurally ordered.

This pathway differs both from the Western tradition of intense personal narrative and experimental materialism, and from the decorative appropriation of cultural symbols. Instead, it aims to build a cross-cultural symbolic visual language system grounded in spiritual depth and bodily perception.

3. Design Proposition of This Research: Spirituality / Wearable Rituality / Cross-Cultural Symbol Construction

This research is founded upon three key propositions:

(1) Spirituality: Jewelry design is not merely aesthetic adornment but serves as a medium to evoke spiritual experiences such as awakening, emptiness, compassion, and diligence through material, form, and structure—transforming wearing into a personalized ritual of cultivation.

(2) Wearable Rituality: This study incorporates breath-responsive structures, pressure-induced impressions, and tactile interaction, embedding temporal awareness, bodily mindfulness, and behavioral consciousness into the act of wearing. It creates a path of emotional resonance between wearer and object.

(3) Cross-Cultural Symbol Construction: By redesigning Buddhist vegetation motifs from the Chinese Tang Dynasty and Thailand's Rattanakosin period, this research develops a visual language system that is both historically rooted and culturally accessible to diverse contemporary audiences. This transformation—from traditional to spiritual to embodied—responds to and reconstructs the absence of Eastern spiritual expression in current jewelry practices.

4.3.2 EXPLORATION OF ABSTRACT VISUAL FORMS

After clarifying the doctrinal meanings and emotional intentions of various Buddhist vegetation motifs, this section systematically investigates how these motifs can be transformed into contemporary visual forms. The primary focus is to construct a design pathway that moves from symbolic concept to visual morphology. To transcend the limitations of traditional representational forms, this study adopts the concept of “abstract morphemes”—visual units distilled from spiritual vocabulary—to develop a formal language grounded in spiritual essence rather than surface imagery.

These are validated through iterative sketching to examine their rhythm, spatial dynamics, and bodily relevance.

1. Construction of Abstract Morphemes: From Doctrine to Structural Language

Based on the symbolic–emotional analysis presented in the previous section, five core abstract morphemes are proposed to support form generation across the spiritual themes:

Table 28 *Construction of Abstract Morphemes*

Abstract Morpheme	Spiritual Symbolism	Formal Strategy Description
Unfolding	Represents the awakening of consciousness (bodhi)	Radiating, spiral, outward-expanding layered structures
Enveloping	Embodies the feeling of giving and being accepted (dāna)	Curved, embracing arc-shaped forms
Spiraling	Symbolizes reincarnation and life cycles (saṃsāra)	Twisting, circular, fluid, and progressive structures
Rhythm	Expresses perseverance and disciplined practice (vīrya)	Multi-layered growth, density gradients, repetitive segments
Symmetry	Reflects balance and equanimity in emptiness (śūnyatā)	Hollow-centered, bilateral balance, axial expansion

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

2. Rapid Sketching and Form Evolution Pathways

To test the viability of these abstract morphemes, this study conducted a series of sketching experiments using both hand-drawn and digital tools. Selected visual studies are described below (see Figure 32) :

Figure 33–34 Awakening Theme (Bodhi)

Wearing location: chest

Symbolism: In Buddhist philosophy, awakening begins in the “heart.” The chest, corresponding to the Anāhata Chakra, is the center of compassion, wisdom, and awareness. Wearing this theme on the chest signifies placing the “light of wisdom” at one’s core, serving as a constant reminder of mindfulness and introspection.

Figure 35: Meditation and Emptiness Themes (Dhyāna & Śūnyatā)

Wearing location: fingers

Symbolism: The Buddha once said, “When the hand moves, thoughts arise; when the hand is still, the mind is still.” Wearing the theme of emptiness on the fingertips serves as a bodily reminder of “letting go.”

Figure 36: Reincarnation Theme (Saṃsāra)

Wearing location: wrist

Symbolism: The wrist, frequently in motion, symbolizes the flow of life. Each

arm movement echoes the passage of time and existence. The circular bracelet forms a natural loop, becoming the most intuitive metaphor for cyclical rebirth.

Figure 37: Silence and Diligence Themes (Dhyāna & Vīrya-pāramitā)

Wearing location: ears

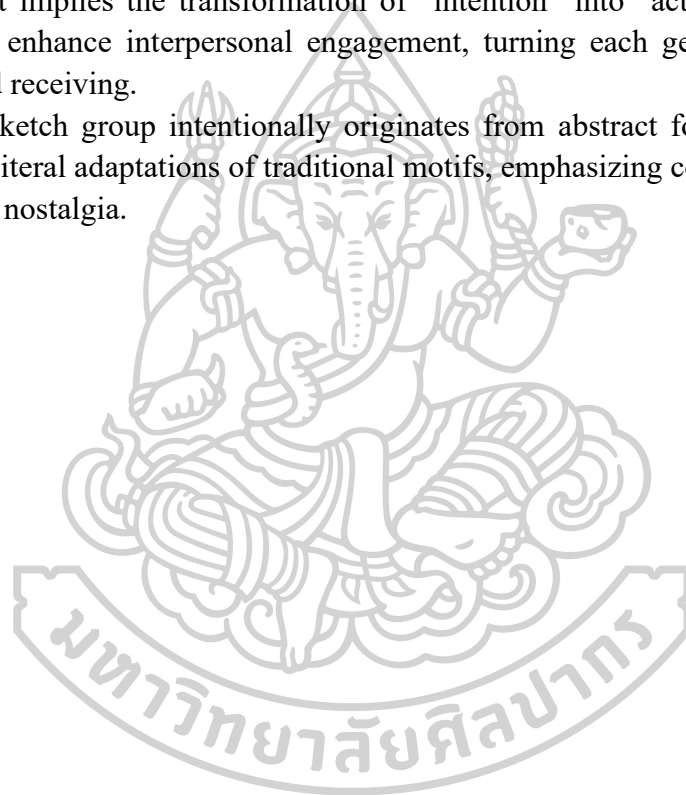
Symbolism: The ears do not speak but receive. They symbolize “observing without judgment, knowing without disturbance”—a perfect match for the stillness of meditation and introspective cultivation.

Figure 38: Wholeness and Generosity Themes (Pūrṇa & Dāna)

Wearing location: wrist

Symbolism: The hand is the physical site of giving. Placing the generosity theme on the wrist implies the transformation of “intention” into “action.” Frequent hand movements enhance interpersonal engagement, turning each gesture into an act of offering and receiving.

Each sketch group intentionally originates from abstract formal interpretations rather than literal adaptations of traditional motifs, emphasizing concept-driven design over formal nostalgia.



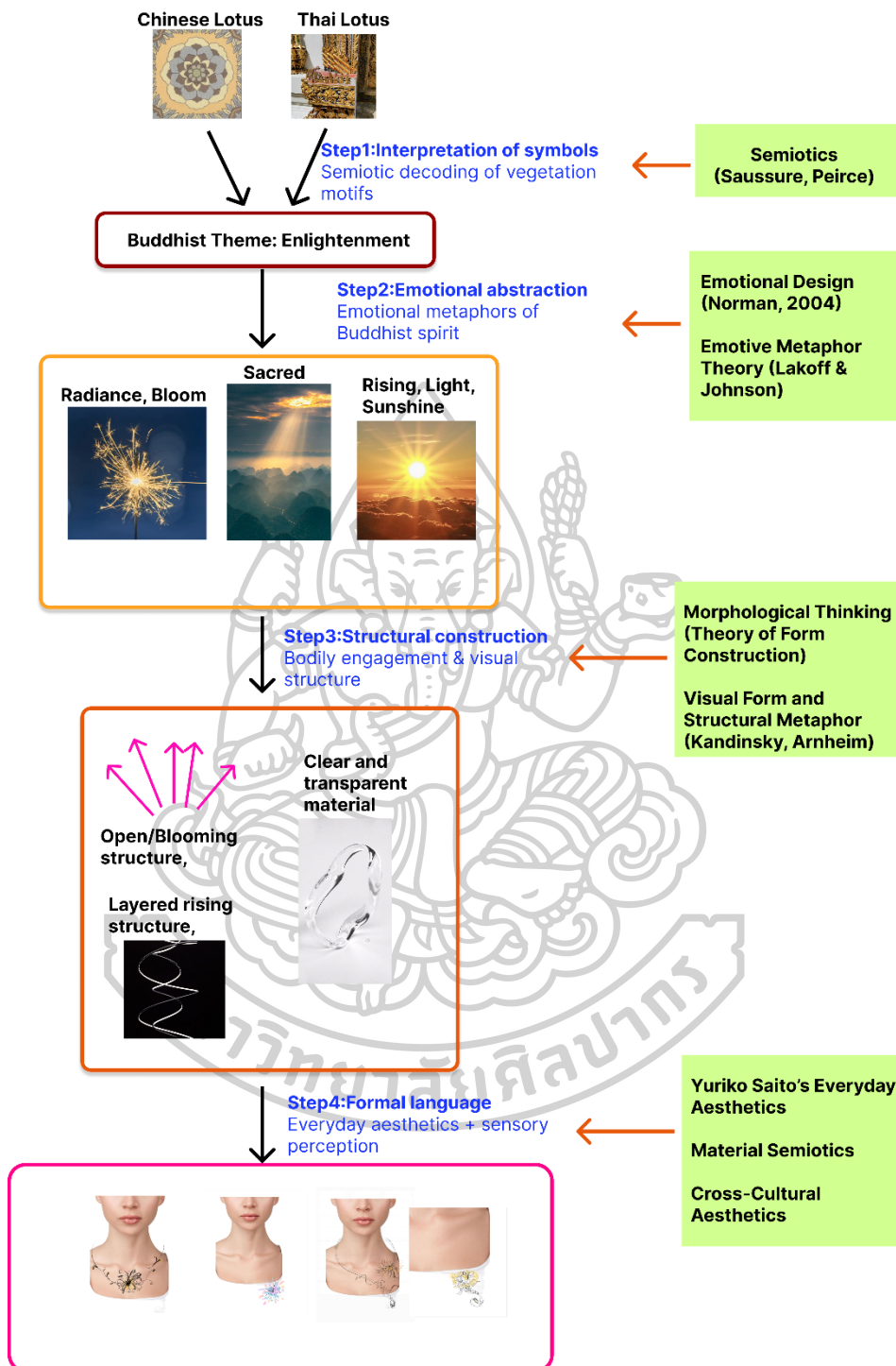


Figure 32 The symbolic transformation of the “Awakening” theme into concrete form, as illustrated.

Note. Researcher's research diagram, 2025



Figure 33 *Form development sketch for the Awakening theme*
Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research,2025.



Figure 34 *Formal variation of the Awakening theme, front-wear configuration*
Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research,2025.



Figure 35 *Form exploration for the Emptiness and Meditative Stillness themes (finger-wear)*

Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research,2025.



Figure 36 *Circular structure for the Reincarnation theme (wrist-wear)*

Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research,2025.



Figure 37 *Formal articulation of Silence and Diligence themes (ear-wear)*
 Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research,2025.

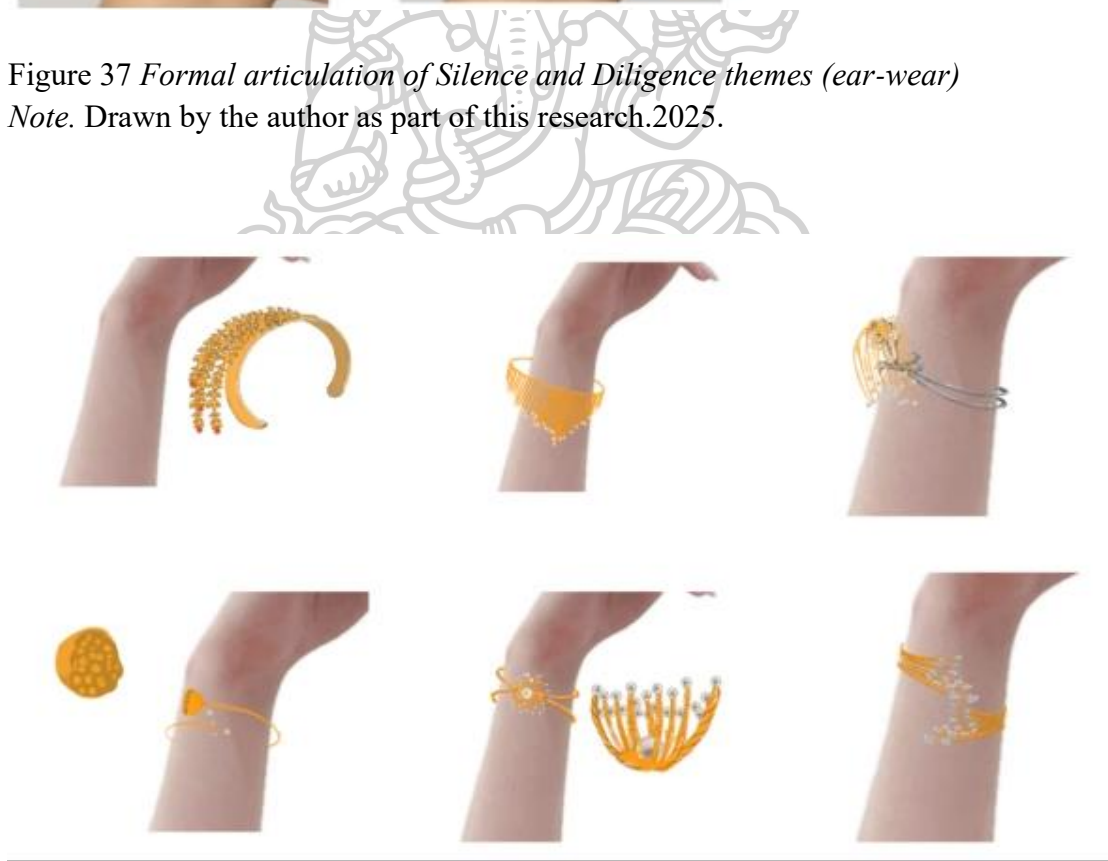


Figure 38 *Wearable structure for Wholeness and Generosity themes (wrist-wear)*
 Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research,2025.

This section establishes a visual translation framework that moves from Buddhist doctrine through emotional abstraction and formal morpheme construction, culminating in sketch-based validation. This “motif-to-form” pathway departs from the conventional decorative replication of traditional motifs, instead emphasizing the importance of constructing a visual language grounded in spiritual meaning. The resulting methodology provides a solid formal foundation for subsequent material experimentation and wearability studies, reinforcing the integration of symbolic intent with contemporary design expression.

4.3.3 PROTOTYPE TESTING AND PERCEPTUAL INTERVIEWS

This section investigates how Buddhist motifs are activated through bodily engagement as sensory and emotional mediators by producing physical prototypes and conducting wearability tests. Design, in this context, is not limited to formal construction but requires interaction with the body, completing the transformation of motifs from visual language to embodied experience.

To explore this, the research team carried out a series of prototype tests including material-structure evaluations and stability trials, followed by focus group interviews with ten participants from China and Thailand. These interviews centered on participants' real-time experiences of wearing the prototypes, focusing on symbolic interpretation, emotional perception, and bodily interaction.

Key topics in the interview included:

- Whether the motif evokes core Buddhist concepts (e.g., emptiness, awakening, reincarnation).
- Whether the material, structure, and wearing position enhanced the emotional expression of the motif.
- Whether tactile sensation, breath rhythm, or motion feedback created a sense of bodily resonance.
- Which design participants most resonated with, and their perceptual rationale.

This integrative methodology elevated prototype testing from functional validation to an experiential inquiry into spiritual resonance. By mapping emotional keywords from interviews against the intended conceptual morphemes, the study constructs a closed-loop design logic:

“Symbolic Language → Formal Construction → Bodily Perception → User Feedback”, providing a clear foundation for iterative design refinement.

4.3.3.1 PROTOTYPE TESTING

1. Theme: Awakening

Table 29 *Theme: Awakening*

Design Sketch



A-1

A-1

 Prototype
 Testing


Flower dimensions: approx. 7 cm in diameter

Outer petals: ~4.5 cm; Inner petals: ~3 cm

Seed pod: 1.7 × 1.3 cm

Leaf 1: 14 cm × 1–1.5 cm; Leaf 2: 6 cm × 0.3–1 cm

Necklace width: 1 cm

Bodily

configuration:

Interaction &
Observation

This piece is worn as a necklace, with the main floral form resting slightly below the right clavicle, unfolding across the shoulder and neck. Branches extend leftward around the neck, forming a visually balanced, flowing structure. This arrangement not only enhances aesthetic appeal but symbolically implies that awakening arises from the heart and radiates through the body.

Bodily dynamics:

The design responds to natural shoulder and neck

movements; the branching elements subtly sway with breath and motion, infusing the piece with vitality. When the wearer lowers or tilts the head, petals shift with the skin, creating a rhythm that metaphorically reflects the fluid process of awakening, emphasizing it as a dynamic journey rather than a static state.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The flower opens sunward, symbolizing the emergence of wisdom and consciousness. The flowing vines echo mental exploration, extending toward the body's edges to represent a spiritual path from the self to the greater world. Golden gradients imply light and clarity, while interwoven hollow structures suggest non-attachment and the emptiness of ego.

Tactile experience:

Made from transparent or semi-transparent resin, the piece offers a slightly flexible texture. The fluid edge of the petals produces a gentle, semi-enveloping sensation against the skin, evoking the feeling of being “softly surrounded by awareness.”

A-2

Design Sketch



A-2

Prototype
Testing



Dimensions: Overall height: 10 cm
 Inner petals: 2.4 cm; Outer petals: ~4 cm
 Flower diameter: ~9 cm
 Structural thickness: 0.7–1 cm

Bodily Interaction & Observation Wearing configuration:
 Designed as a brooch, this piece is worn on the right side of the chest, close to the heart, symbolizing awakening emerging from within. The layout follows a slightly asymmetrical composition leaning rightward, creating visual extension aligned with the wearer's posture.

Bodily dynamics:

Located near the shoulder, the piece gently sways with arm and torso movements, introducing a lively visual element. The spiral at the branch tip introduces a subtle rhythm, reinforcing the sense of living awareness through motion.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The central motif—a blooming lotus—represents wisdom and enlightenment. Spiraling branches imply reflection and return, while the interplay of golden hues and inner-to-outer growth reflects a vivid spiritual blossoming. The radiating form of the flower's core evokes a flash of sudden realization, linking visual form to spiritual cognition.

Tactile experience:

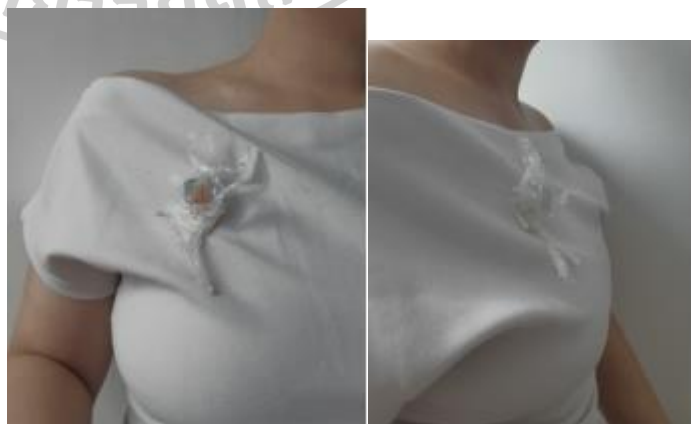
Textured surfaces on petals and stems retain vegetation-like striations, enhancing the feeling of organic life. When touched, subtle ridges evoke associations with growth and blooming, grounding spiritual symbolism in embodied sensation.

A-3 Design Sketch



A-3

Prototype
Testing



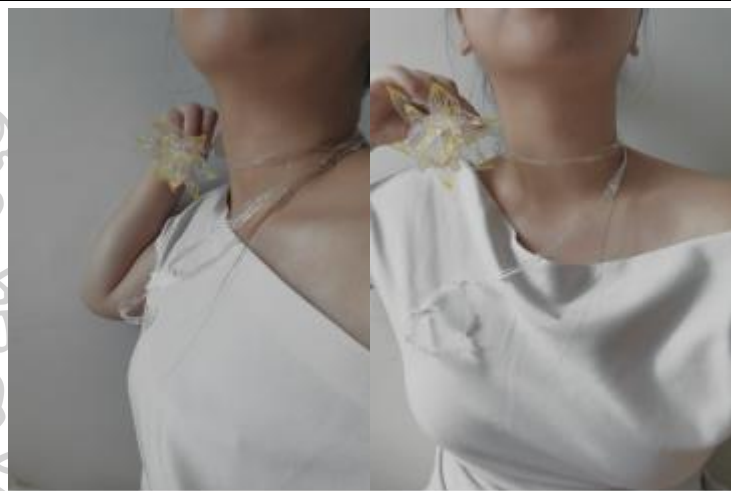
Overall height: 11 cm

Bud: 2 cm high × 1.6 cm wide

	Seed: 1 cm high × 0.5 cm wide Leaves: 7–4 cm long × 1–0.5 cm wide Branch 1: approx. 3 cm high × 0.4 cm wide Branch 2: 5 cm long × 0.6 cm wide
Bodily Interaction & Observation	<p>Wearing configuration: This piece is designed as a brooch affixed to the right chest, lying flush against the clothing and mimicking a partially opened flower bud. The vertically extending branches mirror the natural downward flow of garments at the chest, forming a visual focal point that resonates with the wearer's breathing and emotional rhythm.</p> <p>Bodily dynamics: Due to the lightweight material, the piece moves subtly with arm and shoulder activity, reinforcing the symbolism of awakening from within. However, its compact structure and limited spatial reach result in relatively low kinetic response, making its interaction with the body more restrained than previous prototypes.</p> <p>Visual-symbolic transformation: The central flame-shaped structure, rendered in gradient orange, visually conveys the theme of awakening, symbolizing the inner fire rising from the heart-lotus. The outer petals remain in a wrapped state, implying unopened potential and an awareness not yet fully manifested. The overall visual character leans toward meditative stillness rather than expressive expansion, resulting in a more introverted and contemplative symbolic translation.</p> <p>Tactile experience: Textural details on the petals and stems preserve vegetation-like surface features, reinforcing a sense of organic vitality. When touched, the wearer perceives gentle ridges and flowing contours, evoking somatic associations with growth and blooming. This tactile quality supports the experiential interpretation of the motif.</p>

A-4 Design Sketch


A-4

Prototype
Testing


Flower diameter: 9 cm
Outer petals: 4 cm long \times 2 cm wide
Middle petals: 3 cm long \times 1.5 cm wide
Inner petals: 3 cm long \times 1.5 cm wide
Pearl center: 1 cm diameter
Necklace width: 0.8 cm

Bodily Interaction & Observation	<p>Wearing configuration:</p> <p>This piece is worn in an asymmetrical layout, encircling the neck and descending onto the shoulder-neck junction. The primary flower form is positioned slightly above the right clavicle. Using flexible materials, the structure adheres closely to the skin, resembling a vegetation that organically climbs and settles upon the body.</p> <p>Bodily dynamics:</p> <p>As the wearer subtly moves the head or shoulders, the flower shifts slightly, producing a gentle sway or</p>
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momentary misalignment—mimicking the fluctuation of consciousness. The piece's main visual line follows the body's natural growth axis, so head turns, and upper body movements dynamically animate the composition, reinforcing the symbolism of ongoing awakening.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The flower unfolds in concentric layers, radiating outward from the center to symbolize the progressive revelation of inner awareness. The central pearl and stamen are subtly extended in a spiral shape, evoking the continued growth of insight following meditative stillness. The upward turning, slightly twisting petal tips convey a sense of sudden realization (satori), visually encapsulating the explosive transformation associated with bodhi, or enlightenment.

A-5

Design Sketch



A-5

Prototype
Testing



Flower diameter: 5 cm

Outer petals: 2.2 cm long × 1 cm wide

Inner petals: 2.2 cm long × 1 cm wide

Stamen height: 3.5–1.5 cm; diameter: 0.3 cm

Necklace thickness: 0.3 cm	
Bodily Interaction & Observation	<p>Wearing configuration:</p> <p>This piece is worn as a necklace, with the central motif positioned along the chest's vertical axis. The side vines follow the collarbone contours, naturally unfolding along the female neck-shoulder line. This layout enhances both stability and aesthetic fluidity, while also emphasizing the Anāhata Chakra (heart center), symbolizing awakening as an emergence from within.</p> <p>Bodily dynamics:</p> <p>When placed over the clavicle and chest area, the central flower subtly trembles in response to breathing, leaning, or head turning, creating gentle shimmer effects that intensify bodily engagement. The flexible vine endings also sway with motion, emphasizing the idea that awakening flows like breath—rhythmic and spontaneous.</p> <p>Visual-symbolic transformation:</p> <p>The central radiating petal structure represents the blossoming of awareness and spiritual expansion from the heart. Its outwardly spreading growth form metaphorically expresses the unfolding of inner consciousness. The arched, elliptical vines on either side draw the eye toward the center or symbolize the gathering of karmic conditions (pratītyasamutpāda) leading to perceptual awakening.</p> <p>Tactile experience:</p> <p>The petals and vines retain natural vegetation textures, enhancing the sense of organic vitality. When touched, the wearer can feel slight ridges and surface undulations, evoking a somatic connection to the processes of vegetation growth and blooming—a metaphor for spiritual unfolding.</p>

A-6 Design Sketch


A-6

Prototype
Testing


Dimensions: 14 cm (height × width)

Bodily Interaction & Observation **Wearing configuration:**
The piece is worn just below the clavicle, near the heart center, and is secured either by lightweight magnetic fixtures or as an integrated garment accessory. The design conforms naturally to the wearer's chest contour, creating a seamless fusion with the body.

Bodily dynamics:

Responding to chest movements and shoulder motion, the piece exhibits a subtle rhythm in sync with the body's micro-movements. Its mirror-finished, laser-engraved surface refracts multicolored halos that shift with light source and viewing angle, dynamically reinforcing the idea of “consciousness in motion” and “sudden illumination”. This enables a form of visual interaction between the wearer and the surrounding spatial environment.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

Structurally inspired by a mandala-like radial form, the design expands outward from the center, symbolizing the awakening of inner awareness. The laser-activated iridescent glow, which emerges as the wearer moves, mirrors the unfolding layers of insight and spiritual clarity. This corresponds with Buddhist conceptions of awakening (bodhi) as a non-linear, non-static process—a multidimensional awareness shaped by intersecting layers of perception, time, and space.

A-7 Design Sketch

Prototype
Testing

Overall height: 14 cm
 Flower height: 3.5 cm; inner diameter: 2 cm
 Stamen height: 7–2.5 cm; diameter: 0.3 cm
 Stem height: 7 cm; diameter: 0.7 cm
 Vine thickness: 0.3 cm

Bodily Interaction & Observation Wearing configuration:
 This piece is worn on the right side of the chest, below the clavicle, and is attached to clothing via a clip or lightweight magnetic fixture. The position—close to the

heart—symbolizes awakening born from within, a spiritual emergence that originates in the center of emotion and consciousness.

Bodily dynamics:

Situated at the junction of the shoulder and chest, the ornament responds to subtle bodily movements—turning the head, breathing, walking, or rhythmic gestures. The gentle rise and fall of the chest and fabric animates the flower tip, creating a delicate sway akin to a vegetation awakening in the wind, visually stimulating the gradual emergence of bodhi during everyday life.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The floral form unfolds from a centered and inward configuration, gradually expanding into outwardly extending and upward-curving tendrils. These spiraling lines introduce a vertical visual rhythm that symbolizes the progressive unfolding of awareness. The overall form—between flower and radiating light—reflects the Buddhist metaphor of awakening as both lotus bloom and light illuminating the heart.

Tactile experience:

The petals and stems preserve a vegetation surface texture, enhancing the sense of organic vitality. When touched, gently raised ridges and fluid contours can be felt, evoking tactile associations with vegetation growth and blossoming, and reinforcing a somatic connection to the spiritual imagery.

A-8

Design Sketch



A-8

Prototype
Testing



Overall height: 14 cm
Vine thickness: 0.3 cm

Bodily
Interaction &
Observation

Wearing configuration:

This piece is worn above the right clavicle, in a symbolically significant location between the heart and throat, resonating with the Buddhist idea that awakening emerges from within. Its positioning metaphorically bridges emotional awareness and verbal expression.

Bodily dynamics:

Due to its lightweight and delicate structure, the fine, feather-like tendrils exhibit subtle movement in response to breathing, neck motion, or shoulder shifts. Though not highly dynamic, this gentle trembling evokes the sensation of “awareness stirring”, much like grass brushing in the wind. However, the structure’s visual dynamism is somewhat limited, and its kinetic translation is relatively mild.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The overall form rises upward from a curled base, branching and unfolding progressively, echoing the imagery of spiritual energy ascending through the self. The black structural line signifies the root of consciousness, while the golden accent at the tip symbolizes the emergence of wisdom. Nevertheless, the piece adopts a highly abstract form, and while open to interpretation, it lacks explicit visual cues. Its symbolic power relies on the viewer’s active participation in

meaning-making, offering a more introspective and interpretive engagement with the concept of bodhi (awakening).

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025

2. Meditation and Emptiness Themes

Table 30 *Meditation and Emptiness Themes*

Design Sketch



B-1

B-1

Prototype Testing



Petal height: approx. 4 cm
 Leaf size: 5 cm long × 2.5 cm wide
 Ring band width: 0.5 cm

Bodily

Interaction & Observation

Bodily dynamics:

The piece exhibits limited responsiveness to hand movement, as its structure is relatively thick and constructed from rigid materials. While the petal and leaf components display subtle curvature, they do not dynamically adapt to gestures during wear. As such, the ring's expressive potential lies more in its static visual presence than in its kinetic interaction with the body.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The bud-like form symbolizes the “unopened heart,” resonating with the meditative state of Dhyāna—centered stillness and unwavering focus. The surrounding leaves, reminiscent of drifting clouds, embody the metaphysical abstraction of emptiness (śūnyatā). The color palette—ranging from pale white to soft orange-red gradients—visually reinforces the cyclical notion of “emerging from emptiness and returning to it.” However, the overall massiveness of the structure slightly compromises the intended sense of ethereal transparency associated with emptiness.

Tactile experience:

The surface mimics frosted glass, offering a fine-grained tactile quality that enhances the piece’s contemplative tone.

B-2

Design Sketch



B-2

Prototype
Testing



Overall height: approx. 3 cm

Flower height: 2.5 cm

Leaf length: 2.5–3 cm
 Ring band width: 1 cm
 Pearl diameters: 0.4 cm and 0.6 cm

Bodily Interaction & Observation	<p>Bodily dynamics:</p> <p>The three-dimensional structure of the petals and floral center generates a subtle rhythmic visual effect during hand movements such as turning, lifting, or clenching. Especially notable is the beaded antenna-like extension between the fingers, which exhibits gentle swaying due to its length and flexibility. This creates a responsive dialogue between movement and form, evoking a meditative experience rooted in breath and awareness. Through mindful observation, the wearer is invited into a direct perception of emptiness (śūnyatā) and the transience of arising and fading.</p> <p>Visual-symbolic transformation:</p> <p>The inward-folding and interlaced petal forms suggest the ebb and containment of thoughts during meditative concentration (dhyāna). The use of semi-transparent materials conveys the concept of emptiness—non-substantial yet visually present. At the center, a pearl-like spherical element represents the “seed of prajñā” (wisdom), echoing the Buddhist notion of inner insight (vipassanā) and the mind’s latent luminosity.</p>
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B-3

Design Sketch



B-3

Prototype
Testing



Flower diameter: 3 cm

Petal length: 2 cm

Pearl diameter: 0.4 cm

Leaf size: 3–2 cm long × 2–1.5 cm wide

Ring band width: 0.8 cm

Bodily

Wearing configuration:

Interaction &
Observation

This piece is designed as a ring, featuring a wrap-around band worn on the middle or index finger. The top structure consists of a large, hollow, transparent flower bud, extending vertically with noticeable height, creating a strong presence on the hand.

Bodily dynamics:

The PLA-based structure gently sways in response to hand movement, producing subtle kinetic interaction. However, due to the voluminous and rigid form, its movement remains relatively restrained, lacking the delicacy typically associated with meditative responsiveness.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

Although the transparent material and blooming petal form attempt to convey emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and the unfolding of awareness, the overall weight and thickness of the design diminish the intended sense of lightness and void.

Several participants in the user study reported that the piece felt “too heavy” or conveyed a “sense of blossoming rather than stillness”, suggesting a mismatch between the original conceptual intent (meditative emptiness) and the perceived experience.

B-4 Design Sketch



B-4

Prototype
Testing



Flower height: 2.5 cm; diameter: 1.5 cm

Leaf height: 4–3 cm

Overall diameter: 4–3 cm

Bodily

Interaction &
Observation

Wearing configuration:

This piece is worn as a ring on the index or middle finger, featuring a slender, skin-hugging band. The primary structure rests atop the hand, composed of a closed lotus bud at the center, surrounded by a spiraling vine-like form that expands outward. The form establishes a visual tension that radiates externally in direction but remains internally contained in energy, creating a dynamic stillness.

Bodily dynamics:

With subtle finger movement, the spiral curves tremble lightly, producing a visual effect akin to ripples on a still water surface. This quality introduces a delicate rhythm within stillness, enhancing the meditative character of the piece.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The unopened lotus bud symbolizes latent wisdom, while the entwining outer lines represent worldly entanglements and mental disturbances. Yet, the open gaps between the spirals avoid complete enclosure, metaphorically expressing the Buddhist concept that emptiness is the Middle Way—not a negation of the world, but a clarity that perceives through illusion.

The overall form emphasizes a spiritual journey of “inner observation outward” and “returning to stillness from chaos”, embodying meditative awareness as an active yet quiet force.

B-5 Design Sketch



B-5

Prototype
Testing





Flower height: 4 cm; diameter: 2 cm

Petal width: 2 cm

Leaf size: 6 cm long \times 0.7 cm wide

Ring band width: 0.8 cm

Bodily Interaction & Observation **Wearing configuration:**
 Designed as a ring worn on the base of the index finger, this piece features a three-dimensional spiral structure on the top. The main form interweaves in a wrapping motion, remaining stable while allowing a small degree of movement—creating a visual focus of restrained energy.

Bodily dynamics:

During natural finger bending and extension, the arched petal-vine forms shift subtly in response, with some smaller elements swaying gently under gravity. This creates a meditative experience of motion within stillness and change within calm. The dynamic effect becomes most apparent during transitions between stillness and motion, metaphorically echoing the flow of mental activity.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The dominant spiral motif—combining expansion and contraction—represents a meditative journey from the external to the internal, from motion to stillness. The lotus-core structure at the center signifies a “flower revealed in emptiness,” while the surrounding tendrils reference liberation from entanglement after the arising of conditioned phenomena (pratītyasamutpāda).

The visual composition guides the wearer toward contemplation of a core Buddhist insight: emptiness is not nihilism, but the interdependent arising of all things.

B-6 Design Sketch



B-6

Prototype Testing



Flower diameter: 3.5 cm

Petal size: 3.5 cm long \times 2 cm wide

Leaf size: 3 cm long \times 1 cm wide

Vine thickness (ring band): 0.3 cm

Bodily Interaction & Observation Material simulation:
 Transparent PLA simulates a glass-like texture.
 Gray PLA model simulates a metallic aesthetic.

Wearing configuration:

This piece is designed as a ring worn at the base of the index finger. The flower structure rises slightly above the hand, serving as a visual focal point, while the overall construction remains structurally stable.

Bodily dynamics:

Due to the use of lightweight transparent material, the flower responds with subtle swaying when the finger moves, caused by gravity and inertia. The petals are opened at a wide angle, and during upward hand motion, the center structure tilts gently, producing a perceptual effect akin to “a flower breathing”—a soft, embodied rhythm.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The flower is portrayed in the process of blossoming from a bud, accompanied by upward-spiraling vine lines that represent the gradual unfolding of awareness during meditation, and the progressive realization of emptiness. The transparent material reinforces the Buddhist notions of *anattā* (non-self) and non-attachment, while the partially unopened central petal deliberately leaves visual “space,” suggesting emptiness through absence, or the yet-to-be-manifested.

Tactile and perceptual experience:

The 3D-printed transparent resin is smooth to the touch, though the edges retain subtle ridges. As the finger moves, occasional friction introduces a sensation of “form without substance.” Many users described the ring as “light as air” or “barely perceptible,” which aligns well with the non-material essence of emptiness conveyed by the theme.

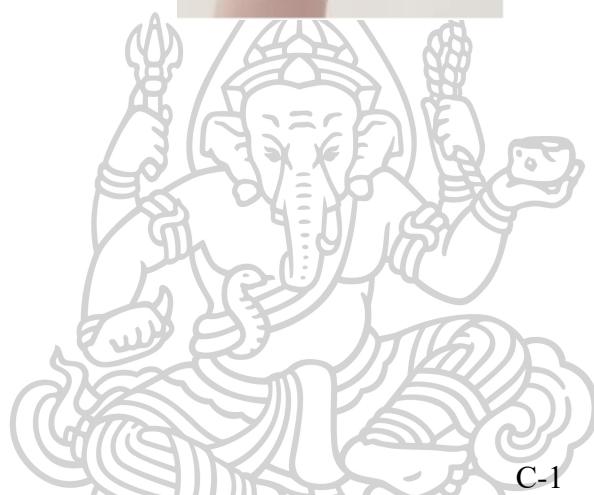
3. Reincarnation Theme (Saṃsāra)

Table 31 *Reincarnation Theme (Saṃsāra)*

Design Sketch



C-1



C-1

Prototype Testing



Bracelet width: 1.5 cm
Bracelet diameter: 7 cm

Bodily Interaction & Observation	<p>Wearing configuration:</p> <p>This piece is a closed circular bangle, designed to encircle and conform to the wrist like a continuous track. Crafted in polished metal, the structure features an inner concave groove that allows a central jade bead to roll freely along its path. The bracelet includes a slight adjustability for a secure and ergonomic fit.</p> <p>Bodily dynamics:</p> <p>Subtle wrist movements—such as lifting, rotation, or swinging—cause the jade bead to roll along the inner track. This interaction metaphorically enacts the Buddhist view of karmic causality and the continual migration of consciousness (saṃsāra). The speed and rhythm of the bead's motion change with each gesture, forming a responsive pathway from body → track → core, illustrating an integrated somatic and symbolic flow.</p> <p>Visual-symbolic transformation:</p> <p>The circular, looping track represents the infinite cycle of rebirth, while the rolling jade bead signifies the individual consciousness traversing the six realms. Its unanchored, mobile presence underscores the Buddhist concepts of impermanence (anicca) and dependent origination (praṭītyasamutpāda). Visually, the bead's unfixed and ever-shifting position emphasizes a processual narrative, where the journey is central—not the destination.</p>
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C-2

Design Sketch



C-2

Prototype
Testing



Bracelet width: 1.2 cm
Flower diameter: 1.5 cm

Bodily

Wearing configuration:

Interaction &
Observation

This piece adopts a spiral wraparound structure, extending from the wrist to the mid-forearm, and creates a visually upward-flowing form when worn. At the upper end, a transparent flower element serves as a focal ornament, enhancing the vertical visual axis and drawing attention to the piece's apex.

Bodily dynamics:

The spiral construction responds with subtle elastic movement during arm lifting or rotation, creating a sense of flowing lines that evoke the cyclical movement of life's path. The flower component, positioned at the top, exhibits slight gliding motion as the wearer moves, bringing symbolic meaning into active visual articulation.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The spiral form embodies the repetitive cycle of life and rebirth, directly reflecting the Buddhist concept of saṃsāra. The flower, situated at the peak of the spiral, symbolizes awakening or karmic fruition within each cycle. The flower petals feature slightly deformed shapes, alluding to the unpredictability and variance of states across lifetimes, and reinforcing the core Buddhist doctrine of impermanence (anicca) within cyclical existence.

C-3 Design Sketch



Prototype
Testing



Bracelet width: 2 cm
Pearl diameter: 0.4 cm

Bodily
Interaction &
Observation

Wearing configuration:
This bracelet adopts an open wraparound design with moderate elasticity, allowing it to accommodate various wrist sizes. The metal structure is flexible, and pearls are embedded along the outer circumference, enhancing its visual rhythm. On the inner surface, embossed vine motifs come into direct contact with the skin, adding both tactile and symbolic layers.

Bodily dynamics:

As the wrist engages in daily motions—rotation, flexion, or extension—the external pearls reflect light softly, producing a sense of gentle luminous flow. Meanwhile, the internal embossed vine motif presses lightly into the skin with each movement, creating temporary impressions that appear and fade with pressure changes. This produces a cyclical “emerge–disappear” rhythm, mirroring bodily and temporal flow.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The repetitive pearl arrangement symbolizes the cyclical nature of the six realms of rebirth, along with moments of awareness that surface intermittently. The vine relief on the inner band, which leaves ephemeral imprints on the skin, reinforces the Buddhist idea that all phenomena arise through conditions (pratīyasamutpāda) and ultimately dissolve through impermanence (anicca). The oscillation between appearance and disappearance directly embodies the core principle of saṃsāra.

Tactile and perceptual experience:

The metal surface provides an initial cool and weighty sensation, while the pearls introduce a smooth, almost ceremonial texture. The inner vine motif creates intermittent pressure that some interviewees described as “a felt reminder”—a physical trace that fades over time. The transition from presence to disappearance contributes to a profound ritual-like experience, intensifying the conceptual depth of the design.

C-4

Design Sketch



C-4

Prototype
Testing



Leaf height: 3–1.5 cm

Bodily
Interaction &
Observation

Wearing configuration:

This bracelet features an open-ended structure, allowing it to be easily slipped onto the wrist with a snug and secure fit. The wearing position extends toward the back of the hand, shifting the visual focal point outward and enhancing spatial interaction with the body.

Bodily dynamics:

The design incorporates spiral forms and wave-like folds, which respond subtly to natural hand movements such as bending or rotation. These gestures activate soft undulating motion, creating a fluid interaction between body and ornament.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The form language of contracting leaves transitioning into renewal visually expresses the continuous cycle of blooming, withering, and rebirth, echoing the Buddhist notions of impermanence, cessation, and transformation within saṃsāra. The spiral structure further reinforces the metaphor of life's undulating, ever-returning flow, prompting the wearer to reflect on time, change, and the transient nature of existence.

Tactile and perceptual experience:

Made from 3D-printed thermoplastic material, the bracelet has mild elasticity, offering a gentle yet perceptible enveloping sensation. The surface texture, consisting of folds and micropores, mimics natural weathering, providing a slightly coarse but non-abrasive

feel that enhances the embodied metaphor of temporal erosion and regeneration.

C-5 Design Sketch



c-5

Prototype
Testing



Flower height: 1.5 cm

Flower diameter: 3 cm

Vine width: 1.5 cm

Bodily Interaction & Wearing configuration: This bracelet adopts a dual-flower-headed vine

Observation	<p>structure, wrapping from both ends of the wrist toward the center with a partial opening for flexible fit. The overall form mimics natural vegetation growth, closely conforming to the skin. The asymmetrical tension creates a perceptual experience of “uncertainty within growth”, engaging the wearer’s bodily awareness.</p> <p>Bodily dynamics:</p> <p>During wrist movement, the flower heads exhibit slight vertical motion, while the tendril-like forms demonstrate gentle elasticity. Several participants described the sensation as “young sprouts brushing the skin,” evoking a sense of vitality. The green vines reveal layered structural variations depending on the viewing angle, producing a subtle sense of flow, though the overall kinetic interaction is somewhat constrained due to the concentrated visual mass.</p> <p>Visual-symbolic transformation:</p> <p>The bidirectional vine configuration visually conveys a symbolic cycle of alternate growth and return, reflecting the Buddhist idea of simultaneous arising and cessation. The two flower buds at either end represent beginning and return, reinforcing the cyclical nature of rebirth. The green material enhances associations with natural vitality, though some participants noted a slightly cartoonish aesthetic, which may weaken symbolic depth.</p> <p>Tactile and perceptual experience:</p> <p>The prototype uses flexible materials to simulate vine texture, with slightly raised surfaces that resemble soft rubber or low-temperature filament. The overall hand feel is lightweight, though it lacks a strong sense of material gravity, leading to impressions of “high decoration, low spiritual weight.” The tendril tips occasionally brush against the skin, creating a sensory experience akin to “being touched by a vegetation,” though some interpreted it as “loosely attached” or unstable.</p>
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C-6 Design Sketch



c-6

Prototype
Testing



Leaf height: 2 cm

Flower diameter: 0.6 cm

Bodily

Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

The prototype was crafted using heat-shrinkable film for the base form and gold foil overlay to simulate a metallic aesthetic.

Wearing configuration:

This is a wave-shaped open bracelet, with a spatial configuration that alternates between upward and downward curves, creating a sensation of floating movement. The crests of the waves are slightly raised, and a controlled gap between the piece and the skin further enhances the airy quality.

Bodily dynamics:

During wrist rotations and vertical gestures, the wave form generates a flow of light and rhythm, producing a

dynamic visual effect. The edge is embellished with floral motifs transitioning from buds to withering blossoms. These details respond to motion with subtle flashes of light, evoking impressions of lightness and continuity of life.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The wave form metaphorically expresses the endless rise and fall of saṃsāra, embodying an internal rhythm of life and death. With no clear beginning or end, the form illustrates the Buddhist concept of cyclical rebirth. The vertical contrast between wave crests and troughs symbolizes the highs and lows of human existence, while the progression from bloom to decay along the edge conveys the natural process of life.

Tactile feedback:

The wave-shaped structure closely follows the wrist's curvature, producing a "hugging" sensation—smooth and secure. The floral ornaments provide rich micro-level texture, ranging from tight buds to decaying petals. When the wearer unintentionally brushes a fingertip across these forms, they encounter a rhythmic sequence of tactile elevations, offering a somatic experience of life's transformations.

C-7

Design Sketch



C-7

Prototype
Testing



Inner ring diameter: 6.5 cm; thickness: 0.3 cm
 Outer structure height: 10 cm; width: 6.5 cm; thickness:
 0.3 cm
 Flower diameter: 4 cm
 Pearl diameter: 1 cm

Bodily
Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

Silver-colored fine wire was used to simulate a metallic structure, offering both flexibility and form.

Bodily dynamics:

The dual concentric ring structure responds visibly to wrist movements, swinging subtly left and right, while the central flower rotates in synchrony. This produces a rhythmic unfolding effect in motion, which directly reflects the samsāric principle of cyclical continuity.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

Visually, the design features eight radiating petal-like arms, spiraling outward from the center in a continuous curve. This formal strategy aligns with Buddhist notions of saṃsāra as a formless, beginningless, and endless cycle. Each petal tip curves slightly upward, symbolizing the potential for elevation and awakening within the cycle—conveying a layered metaphor of “attachment within hope” and “rebirth within suffering.”

At the core, a central faux pearl is embedded, representing the spiritual essence or innate awareness (buddha-nature). It visually anchors the composition, creating a symbolic tension between the stability of the

center and the impermanence of outer motion.

Tactile and perceptual experience:

The twisted, polished wire simulates vine-like vegetation textures, offering a mildly frictional yet soft tactile sensation. This surface treatment enhances the organic aesthetic and supports a multisensory interpretation of transience and flow.

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

3. Themes of Stillness (Dhyāna) and Energetic Perfection (Vīrya-pāramitā)

Table 32 *Themes of Stillness (Dhyāna) and Energetic Perfection (Vīrya-pāramitā)*

Design Sketch

D-1



D-1

Prototype
Testing



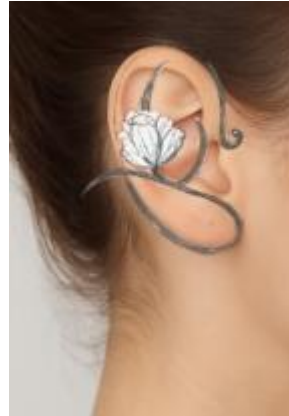
Flower diameter: 4.5 cm

Flower height: 3 cm

Stamen height: 6–5 cm

Pearl diameter: 0.4 cm

	<p>Ear hook thickness: 0.5 cm Leaf length: 3–1.5 cm</p>
Bodily Interaction & Observation	<p>Material simulation: The prototype is crafted from transparent PLA to simulate a semi-translucent ceramic texture.</p> <p>Wearing configuration and structural stability: Designed as an ear-worn piece, the structure fits closely to the ear rim and facial contour, ensuring high stability for static or low-movement contexts. A subtle gap between the petal form and the skin introduces a “breathing space”, evoking a gentle hovering sensation.</p> <p>Bodily interaction: Participants frequently described the experience as “a bloom in stillness.” The structure conforms softly to the curves of the auricle and temporal bone, producing an interaction that feels whisper-like or intimately resonant, consistent with the introspective tone of meditative states.</p> <p>Visual-symbolic transformation: This prototype centers around the imagery of an unopened bud, rendered in minimal contours and folded petal forms to convey a sense of latent strength. Positioned near the temporal bone, the bud alludes to the Buddhist concept of inner contemplation without suppression. The non-blooming state symbolizes a practitioner who has not yet spoken or expressed but remains in a phase of spiritual inwardness and perceptual concentration. The visual contraction of the form becomes a direct embodiment of Dhyāna—still but not stagnant, concentrated yet alive.</p>

D-2 Design Sketch


D-2

Prototype
Testing


Flower height: 1.5 cm
Flower diameter: 2 cm
Stem height: 1.7 cm
Leaf 1: 2 cm long × 0.4 cm wide
Leaf 2: 2.5 cm long × 0.5 cm wide

Bodily

Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

Constructed using heat-shrinkable film to simulate a matte ceramic surface.

Wearing configuration and structural fit:

This prototype adopts a hook-over-ear design, requiring no piercings and allowing it to nestle naturally along the auricle. A 2–5 mm distance between the piece and the facial contour creates a “close-yet-untouching” visual relationship, emphasizing a contemplative spatial void that reflects introspective awareness.

Bodily dynamics:

During gentle head movements—such as turning or lowering the head—the floral component slightly trembles but remains firmly cradled by the ear. The curved stem visually mirrors the “flow of consciousness”, softly tracing the head’s natural silhouette without drawing overt attention.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The unopened flower bud symbolizes awareness in progress, a stage of consciousness not yet revealed. The bending vine forming a loop represents the cyclical return within disciplined effort, aligning with the Buddhist understanding of *vīrya* as not heroic outward force, but enduring presence on the path.

According to interview feedback, users felt the piece “embodied an inward posture rather than spoken intent.”

Material texture and psychological response:

The matte black-silver surface avoids reflection, maintaining a discreet appearance consistent with the concept of stillness. The semi-translucent bud gently diffuses natural light, described by one participant as “a moon not yet in bloom resting at the ear.”

The structure exerts no physical pressure, providing the wearer with a sense of calm, containment, and psychological safety—an appropriate sensory expression of meditative silence.

D-3

Design Sketch



D-3

Prototype
Testing



Flower height: 2.5 cm; diameter: 1.5 cm
 Large leaf: 2.5 cm long × 1.5 cm wide
 Small leaf: 2 cm long × 0.9 cm wide

Bodily
Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

Crafted with heat-shrink film to simulate a frosted glass texture, with metallic edging applied selectively to accentuate structural layers. The material palette is chosen to emphasize a “quiet and unassuming” tactility, enhancing visual associations with clarity in meditative states.

Wearing configuration and ergonomic fit:

A hook-style earring, this piece is lightweight and securely conforms to the auricle without slippage, making it suitable for extended wear. The central floral structure is slightly elevated from the ear, creating a hovering presence that symbolizes “spiritual elevation.”

Bodily dynamics:

The petals remain firmly in place, ensuring visual stability during subtle head movements. Only the rear vine structures respond to changes in angle, producing delicate shifts in light and shadow. This contributes to a restrained kinetic presence that aligns with the theme of still awareness.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The closed flower bud signifies an unawakened heart, aligning with the Dhyāna state of “cessation of mental activity” and interior stillness. The arched vine extending outward and returning inward illustrates that vīrya (energy or effort) is not an outward surge, but an

internally cultivated and rhythmic emergence—a quiet, self-generated unfolding of intention and attention.

Light texture and perceptual feedback:

The surface is softly diffusive rather than mirror-polished, producing low-glare reflections that do not distract from its contemplative quality. In natural lighting, this creates a sensory atmosphere of restraint and tranquility, aligning the tactile experience with the spiritual focus of the theme.

D-4 Design Sketch



D-4

Prototype
Testing



Outer flower: 4 cm high × 4 cm diameter

Inner flower: 2 cm high × 4 cm diameter

Pearl diameter: 1 cm

Leaf: 4 cm long × 2 cm wide

Ear hook thickness: 0.5 cm

Bodily Interaction & Material simulation:
Fabricated with PLA, this prototype simulates a glossy

Observation ceramic texture, emphasizing a visual quality of smoothness, coolness, and restraint.

Wearing configuration and bodily fit:

The piece is designed with a rear-hook ear structure, projecting slightly outward when worn, which increases visibility and mobility but reduces structural stability during motion.

Bodily dynamics:

The pendant-like lower structure swings noticeably during gentle head movement or walking, offering a degree of kinetic responsiveness, yet some users noted limited wearing security. The motion was perceived as both graceful and distractible, reflecting a trade-off between fluidity and control.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The closed flower form symbolizes inwardness and latent awareness, expressing the spiritual posture of “quiet perseverance” in the path of *vīrya-pāramitā*. However, interview feedback revealed that while the piece is visually appealing, its thematic connection to stillness and effort was not immediately evident to all wearers, suggesting the need for stronger semiotic anchoring.

Tactile and perceptual experience:

The glazed ceramic-like surface offers a cool and smooth tactile contact with the skin. This was interpreted by participants as embodying a sense of discipline, quietude, and the spatial serenity of meditation. The cold touch, though minimal, was metaphorically linked to the introspective calmness associated with focused self-cultivation.

D-5 Design Sketch


D-5

Prototype
Testing


Flower height: 2.5 cm; diameter: 1.5 cm
 Leaf length: 3–1 cm

Bodily

Material simulation:

Interaction &
Observation

This prototype is made from heat-shrinkable film, simulating a semi-translucent frosted glass texture. The finish is designed to convey a mood of quiet reflection and meditative stillness.

Wearing configuration and anatomical fit:

The structure extends along the outer rim of the ear, reaching from the upper helix to the temple and lower lobe, forming a fluid composition of petal-like plates and a shell-shaped bud element. It conforms closely to the ear's natural curvature, allowing for subtle anatomical integration.

Bodily dynamics:

Positioned near the auriculo-temporal junction, the piece exhibits gentle motion in response to slight head turns or nods. This encourages a heightened awareness of stillness and motion, facilitating contemplative interaction with the body.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The layered leaf structures and partially enclosed ovary-shaped bud simulate tension within restraint and awareness within stillness. The leaf segments subtly gesture upward, visually reinforcing the intention of *vīrya* (effort) toward growth. Simultaneously, the structure's curvature gently recedes behind the ear, expressing a rhythmic return inward—a visual metaphor for self-regulating, sustained spiritual practice.

Tactile and perceptual experience:

The matte-frosted surface feels smooth without being slippery, producing a calm, steadying sensation. Several wearers noted that, while it does not aggressively stimulate the skin, its occasional unnoticed contact prompts subtle attentiveness—aligning with the Buddhist training in vigilant awareness and steady effort (*sati* and *vīrya*).

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025



4. Themes of Fulfillment (Pūrṇa) and Generosity (Dāna)

Table 33 Themes of Fulfillment (Pūrṇa) and Generosity (Dāna)

Design Sketch



E-1

E-1

Prototype
Testing

Bracelet main stem diameter: approx. 5 mm

Petal length: 2 cm

Flower diameter: 3 cm

Pearl diameter: main branch: 6 mm; secondary
branches: approx. 4.5 mm

Bodily

Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

The prototype uses yarn-wrapped elements to simulate a flocked (velvet-like) surface, aiming to evoke tactile warmth and softness commonly associated with compassionate touch.

Bodily dynamics and motion sensitivity:

The bracelet exhibits slight swinging motion during wrist rotation, producing a subtle brushing sensation. This kinetic quality was associated by users with the gesture of giving, reinforcing the embodied metaphor of dāna.

Several participants described the experience as “an extension of movement”, heightening awareness of the hand as a site of offering and exchange.

Light interaction and visual symbolism:

The flocked surface reflects soft, diffused light, creating a gentle luminosity described as “warm but not dazzling.”

The central flower structure rises slightly above the wristline, casting soft shadows under illumination and visually reinforcing the moment of blossoming—a metaphor for giving as an act of inner opening.

Tactile perception and emotional projection:

The touch of the yarn material was widely described as “soft, yielding, and comforting”, with participants associating it with feelings of “being cared for” or “understood.”

Occasional contact with the pearl beads produced a rhythmic tactile signal, which some likened to “touchable counts”—a subtle allusion to prayer beads or the cyclic rhythm of repeated acts of generosity.

E-2

Design Sketch



E-2

Prototype
Testing



Bracelet width: 2 cm

Rice ear length: 10–12 cm
 Individual grain (petal) size: 0.5 cm long × 0.7 cm
 diameter

Bodily Interaction & Observation	<p>Material simulation:</p> <p>Gold foil paper is used to simulate an electroplated metallic surface, creating a visual impression of delicacy and sacred value often associated with ritual offerings.</p> <p>Wearing configuration and stability: This is an open-ended bracelet, allowing for easy adjustment to various wrist sizes. A balanced weight distribution ensures downward drape without rotation, enhancing stability during wear.</p> <p>Bodily interaction and motion response: During gentle wrist movements or natural arm swings, the rice-ear-inspired metallic leaves swing lightly and brush against the forearm. This dynamic brushing sensation metaphorically evokes the act of offering in Buddhist practice—marked by gestures of humility, softness, and downward extension.</p> <p>Visual symbolism and spiritual transformation: The dangling composition naturally follows gravity, mimicking the bowed posture of ripened rice, a form that symbolizes humility through fullness. This aesthetic logic aligns with the Buddhist virtue of <i>dāna</i>—“giving with a lowered posture.”</p> <p>Visually, the bracelet’s motion extends from the bracelet surface outward and downward across the back of the hand, reinforcing the gesture of giving from within.</p> <p>Under natural lighting, the reflective surfaces of the leaves and beads shimmer gently, enhancing the symbolic reading of giving as radiant, continuous action.</p>
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 E-3 Design Sketch



E-3

 Prototype
 Testing


Bracelet thickness: 0.3 cm

Tassel thickness: 0.1 cm; length: 6–5.4 cm

Pearl diameter: 0.4 cm

Bodily

Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

Polished metal wire was used to simulate fine metallic filaments, providing a high-reflective surface and precise linear structure.

Wearing configuration and stability:

An open-ended form allows easy adjustment to different wrist sizes. The pendant tassels naturally conform to the arm's curve and do not entangle, maintaining clear separation even during movement.

Dynamic interaction and behavioral extension:

With subtle hand motion, the staggered-length metal strands swing at varying speeds, producing a layered, wave-like oscillation—described by some participants

as a “conscious flow.” The pearl-tipped ends occasionally touch the back of the hand, subtly prompting awareness of gestures associated with offering and reciprocity.

Light and shadow relationship:

Under natural light, the high-polish metallic strands create a series of shifting reflections across the wrist. In soft or indoor lighting, fine overlapping shadows emerge on the skin, forming a delicate “shadow in motion” effect, amplifying the poetic subtlety of the design.

Tactile sensation and psychological resonance:

The frequent but gentle contact of the small pearls with the skin was described as “like morning breeze across the back of the hand”, with a calming and focusing effect. Interviewees noted that “though it touches often, it never distracts—it’s more like a rhythmic reminder.”

Emotional and symbolic experience:

The overall form references the drooping posture of ripened rice, a symbol of humility following fulfillment. The multiple descending strands further convey the imagery of “continuous giving” and “unspoken response”, reinforcing the quiet, cyclical generosity central to dāna.

E-4

Design Sketch



E-4

Prototype
Testing



Flower height: 1.5 cm; diameter: 1.5 cm

Stamen length: 6–3.5 cm

Pearl diameter: 0.4 cm

Bracelet strand thickness: 0.4 cm

Bodily
Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

This prototype integrates silver foil and wire to simulate metallic silver texture, paired with heat-shrinkable film for a matte ceramic appearance. Small decorative pearls made of white plastic or faux pearl complete the composition.

Wearing configuration and kinetic behavior:

The piece is designed as a coiled bracelet worn on the outer wrist, with petals and bead strings suspended from the surface. Due to the soft and lightweight materials, the elements swing frequently with movement, and some users noted a slight slipping sensation during wear.

Motion interaction analysis:

The filament-like petals oscillate easily during subtle arm motions such as lifting or swinging, making the piece visibly dynamic. However, the movement was not consistently interpreted as meaningful by participants.

Visual symbolism and interpretive dissonance:

Although the intent was to simulate “giving” or “flowing” gestures through the downward-hanging stamens, participants often struggled to connect the form with a coherent symbolic message. The visual center was perceived as aesthetic but semantically ambiguous, leading to a weakened translation of the intended spiritual themes.

Emotional response and structural refinement suggestions:

While the prototype was recognized for its expressive movement and structural flexibility, many interviewees described the overall concept as lacking focus. The form was seen as ornamentally appealing, but the link between visual rhythm and the spiritual narrative of *dāna* was not sufficiently articulated.

Future iterations may benefit from reinforcing the symbolic hierarchy, clarifying the directionality and intentionality of flow, and improving the stability of form-to-meaning alignment.

E-5

Design Sketch



Prototype
Testing



Central structure height: 3 cm; diameter: 4 cm
Main pearl diameter: 4 cm
Inner central pearl diameter: 1 cm
Bracelet wire thickness: 0.4 cm

Bodily
Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

The prototype employs flexible metal wire wrapped in gold foil paper to simulate a soft metallic texture, in combination with faux pearl elements for visual contrast and material symbolism.

Wearing configuration:

This piece features an open-ended bangle structure, allowing easy adjustment and firm contact with the wrist. The central radiating form sits slightly elevated above the back of the hand, producing a subtle three-dimensional effect and allowing elastic movement during wear.

Dynamic behavior and somatic perception:

With minor wrist movements, the radial lines surrounding the central pearl respond with delicate motion, revealing the tensional relationship between the outer structure and the core. Wearers described the motion as “a sensation of awareness or compassion expanding outward”.

Participants emphasized how this configuration enhanced their bodily perception of the Buddhist idea that ‘fulfillment is realized through giving.’

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The centered, pearl-like core represents the source of wholeness, while the outward-reaching radial elements enact a gestural metaphor for generosity, visually translating the movement of dāna as an emanation from within. The tensioned balance between inner stillness and outer motion reinforces the interplay between pūrṇa (completeness) and dāna (offering), making the spiritual symbolism physically perceptible through wear.

E-6 Design Sketch



Prototype Testing



Bracelet wire thickness: 0.3 cm

Pearl diameter: 0.6 cm

Bodily

Interaction &
Observation

Material simulation:

Crafted from gold-colored iron wire to simulate a metallic finish, combined with pearl accents to enhance symbolic and visual refinement.

Wearing configuration and visual behavior:

This bracelet features a multi-loop spiral wrap design, enhancing the sense of enclosure and flow. The open-ended form allows for wrist size adjustment, while the tail end flares outward, creating a flowing, directional visual gesture. From different viewing angles, the structure exhibits a dynamic, spiraling rhythm.

Motion response and bodily awareness:

The prototype responds sensitively to wrist movement—lifting, rotation, or natural arm drop—initiating subtle fluctuations in the trailing wires and pearls. This interaction evokes a kinetic awareness of gesture and extension in relation to the body.

Visual-symbolic transformation:

The layered coiling and elastic outward movement express an emotional rhythm of “inner containment and outward dispersion”, which metaphorically aligns with the Buddhist concept that “fulfillment is not closure, but continuous externalization” (pūrṇa through dāna). The bracelet performs generosity as a visual and spatial expansion from a centered form.

Tactile experience and perceptual feedback:

The metal wire closely hugs the wrist, providing both comfort and clarity of boundary. The small pearls offer intermittent, rhythmic taps against the skin, producing subtle sensory pulses—often interpreted by users as “a physical rhythm of giving.”

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

4.3.3.2 PERCEPTUAL INTERVIEW RECORDS

To scientifically evaluate cross-cultural user experiences with jewelry prototypes inspired by Buddhist vegetation motifs, this research employed a multi-dimensional User Experience Evaluation Method, integrating quantitative rating scales with qualitative interviews (see Figure 39). Firstly, at the quantitative level, participants rated each jewelry prototype using a five-point Likert scale across four dimensions: visual appeal, symbolic clarity, wearing comfort, and emotional resonance. These ratings collectively formed a "User Resonance Index," a key parameter for assessing emotional acceptance. Scores ranged from 1 to 5, where:

1 = Very Low Resonance: No emotional connection; detached from the intended theme.

3 = Moderate Resonance: Motifs identifiable but lacking deeper connection.

5 = High Resonance: Strong emotional response, clear symbolic meaning, and enriched wearing experience.

Detailed scoring results are presented in Tables 34, 35,36,37, and 38, and visual representations in Figures 40, 41, 42, 43, and 44.

Secondly, qualitative evaluations were conducted via semi-structured interviews to explore participants' associative feelings, symbolic interpretations, and cultural identifications elicited by the jewelry during wearing. Keywords and emotional descriptors were extracted to identify underlying mechanisms in perceptual reactions and cultural variations.

Moreover, drawing upon Donald Norman's three-level theory of emotional experience, the collected user feedback was systematically analyzed at the visceral level (sensory stimulation), behavioral level (interactive usability), and reflective level (symbolic meaning). Emotional perception theory for visual motifs and cross-cultural design frameworks were also applied to explain preference variations among Chinese and Thai users.

Through this comprehensive evaluative approach, the research effectively established systematic connections among symbolic design elements, bodily interactions, and emotional responses, thereby providing robust user-centered support for subsequent optimization.





Figure 39 *Focus Group Interview on Design Prototypes*
Note. Photographed by the author, 2025.

Table 34 *Interview Record Table for Prototype A ("Awakening")*

Prototype ID	User Preference Count (out of 10)	Wearer Resonance Index (Resonance with the theme conveyed by the jewelry) (1–5)	Emotional Keywords (from interview)	Optimization Suggestions (based on feedback)
A-1	1	4.2	Expansion,	Slightly rigid; suggest

Prototype ID	User Preference Count (out of 10)	Wearer Resonance Index (Resonance with the theme conveyed by the jewelry) (1-5)	Emotional Keywords (from interview)	Optimization Suggestions (based on feedback)
			upward motion, generative	switching to semi-flexible material and reducing flower size to better express the transition from seed to bloom
A-2	1	3.2	Blooming	Consider reducing size for daily wear; emphasize outward unfolding of petals
A-3	0	1.8	Restrained	Differentiate inner and outer colors; emphasize central rhythm
A-4	1	3.4	Compact, forceful	Add more flowers; enhance tactile quality of branches
A-5	5	4.8	Halo effect, breathing rhythm	Strong perceptual impact
A-6	1	4.0	Sparkling, diamond-like	None
A-7	1	3.6	Blooming	Slightly reduce size for more practical daily use
A-8	0	2.2	None	Reduce repetitive structures; enhance sense of rhythm

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

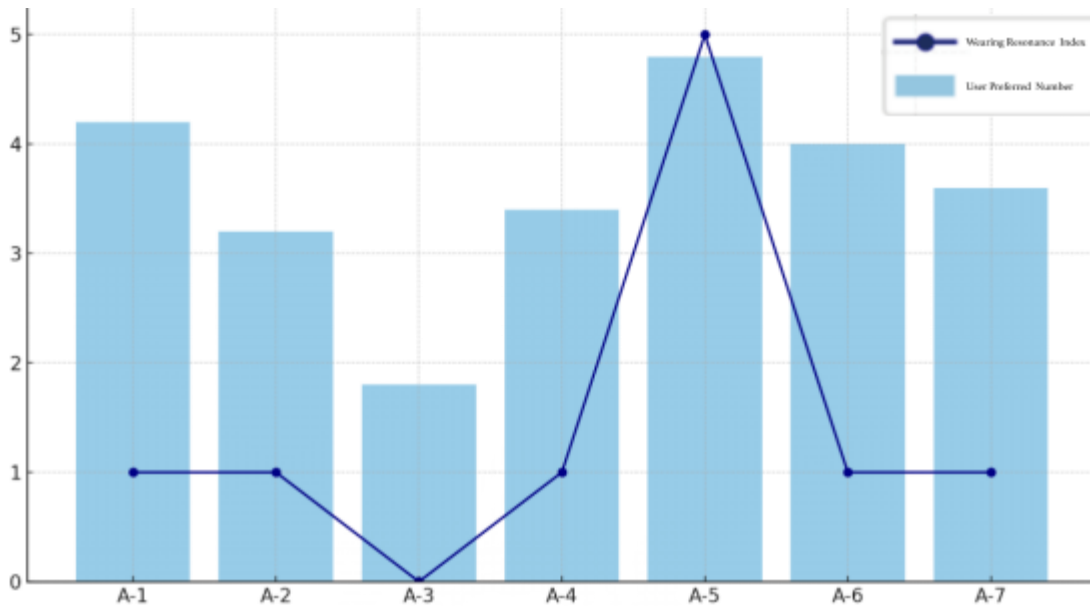


Figure 40 Comparison of Wearing Resonance Index (Blue Bars) and User Preference Count (Line Chart)

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

Table 35 Interview Record Table for Prototype B ("Meditation, Emptiness")

Prototype ID	User Preference Count (out of 10)	Wearer Resonance Index (Resonance with the theme conveyed by the jewelry) (1–5)	Emotional Keywords (from interview)	Optimization Suggestions (based on feedback)
B-1	0	2.2	Blank	Reduce size for everyday wear
B-2	5	5.0	Ethereal, tranquil, glass-like	Soften visual dominance of pearls
B-3	1	0.0	None	Aesthetically fine, but lacks thematic clarity
B-4	2	3.2	Gentle	Shorten the ring's branch structure

B-5	1	3.2	None	Structurally stable, but lacks expressive power
B-6	0	2.8	None	Visually interesting, but thematically weak

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025

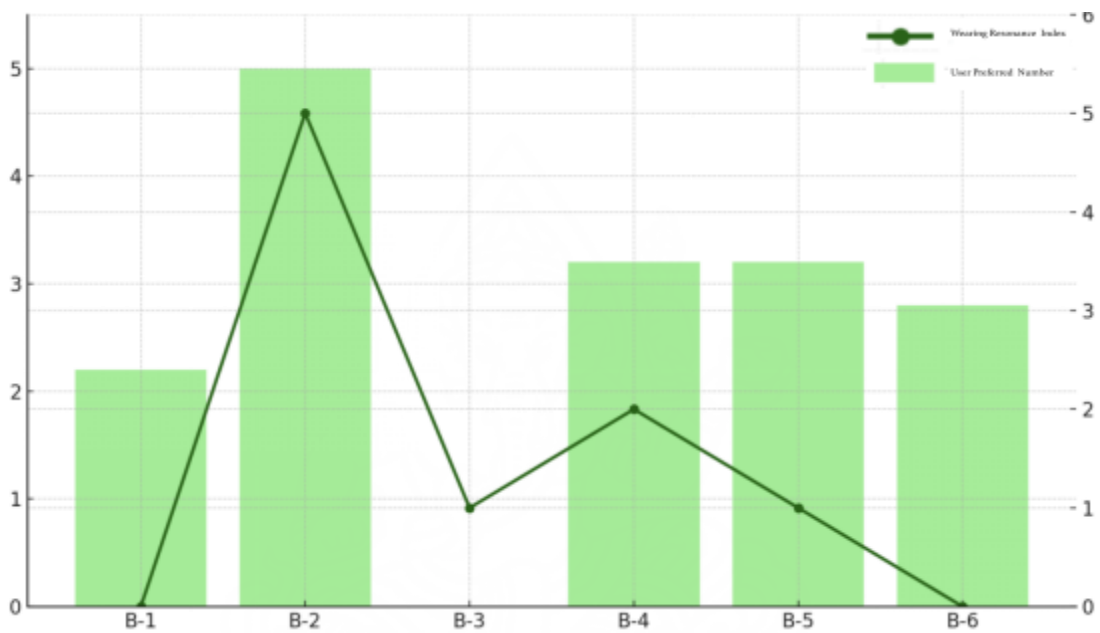


Figure 41 Comparison of Wearing Resonance Index (Green Bars) and User Preference Count (Line Chart)

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025

Table 36 Interview Record Table for Prototype C ("Reincarnation")

Prototype ID	User Preference Count (out of 10)	Wearer Resonance Index (Resonance with the theme conveyed by the jewelry) (1–5)	Emotional Keywords (from interview)	Optimization Suggestions (based on feedback)
C-1	6	5.0	Spiral, flow, cyclic sense	Strong visual resonance: structure could be simplified
C-2	0	2.2	None	Fashionable but lacks clear thematic conveyance
C-3	1	3.2	Stability	Meaningful concept, but exterior needs refinement; suggest adding localized tension for vitality
C-4	0	3.8	Balance, flow	A fully closed bracelet may better express the reincarnation theme
C-5	0	2.8	None	Reinforce spiral motion and directional guidance
C-6	1	3.2	None	Reverse color scheme: metallic flower with silver bracelet
C-7	2	4.0	Repetition, continuity, tactile comfort	Silver color more favored by users

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

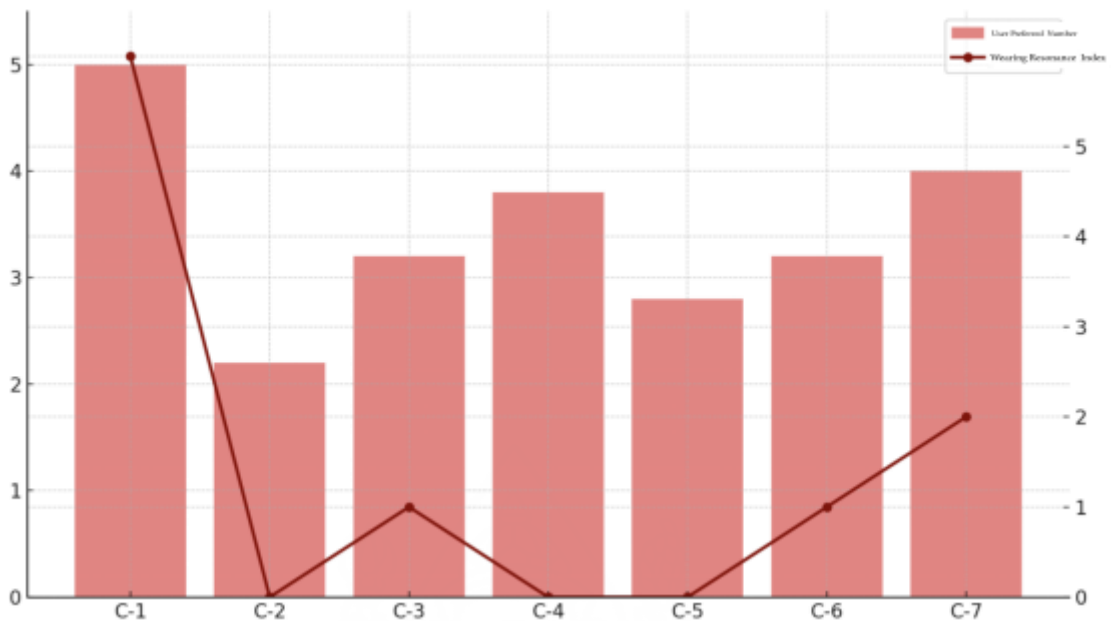


Figure 42 Comparison of Wearing Resonance Index (Red Bars) and User Preference Count (Line Chart)

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

Table 37 Interview Record Table for Prototype D ("Tranquility")

Prototype ID	User Preference Count (out of 10)	Wearer Resonance Index (Resonance with the theme conveyed by the jewelry) (1-5)	Emotional Keywords (from interview)	Optimization Suggestions (based on feedback)
D-1	1	3.4	Stillness	Simplify support structure to enhance lightness
D-2	4	4.0	Inward focus, moonlight	None
D-3	1	3.4	None	None
D-4	1	2.0	Ceramic	Orient flower outward
D-5	1	3.6	None	None

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

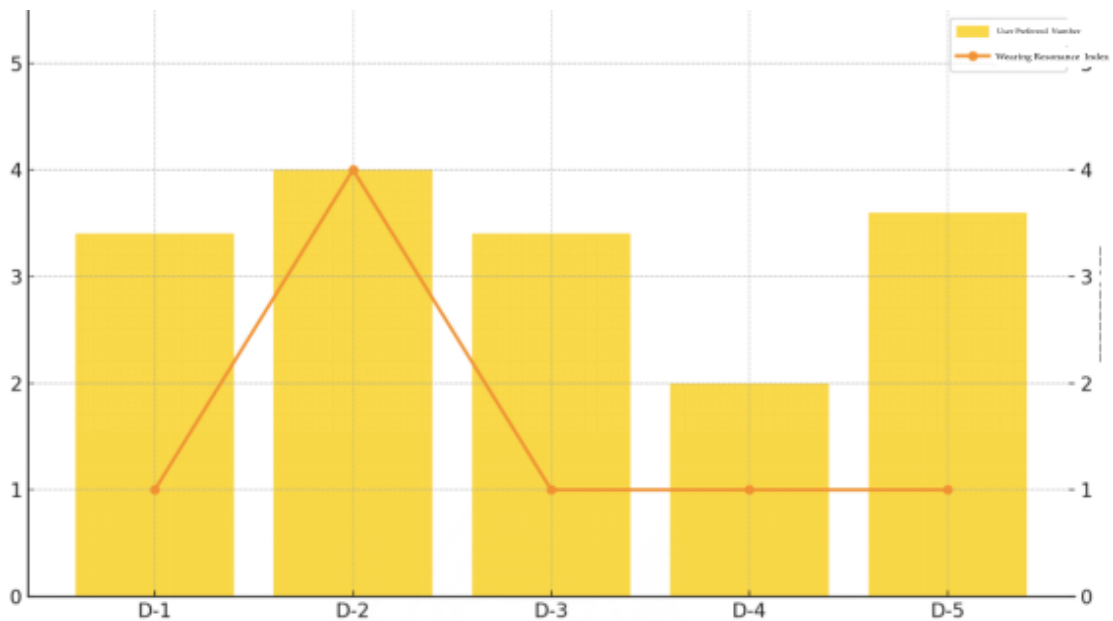


Figure 43 Comparison of Wearing Resonance Index (Yellow Bars) and User Preference Count (Line Chart)

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

Table 38 Interview Record Table for Prototype E ("Perfection")

Prototype ID	User Preference Count (out of 10)	Wearer Resonance Index (Resonance with the theme conveyed by the jewelry) (1–5)	Emotional Keywords (from interview)	Optimization Suggestions (based on feedback)
E-1	0	3.4	Envelopment	None
E-2	5	4.4	Floating, rice ear	None
E-3	1	4.2	Rice ear	None
E-4	0	2.2	None	Visually attractive, but weak thematic connection
E-5	1	3.8	Fulfillment	Central form could be more compact

Prototype ID	User Preference Count (out of 10)	Wearer Resonance Index (Resonance with the theme conveyed by the jewelry) (1–5)	Emotional Keywords (from interview)	Optimization Suggestions (based on feedback)
E-6	2	4.4	Rice ear, envelopment	None

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025

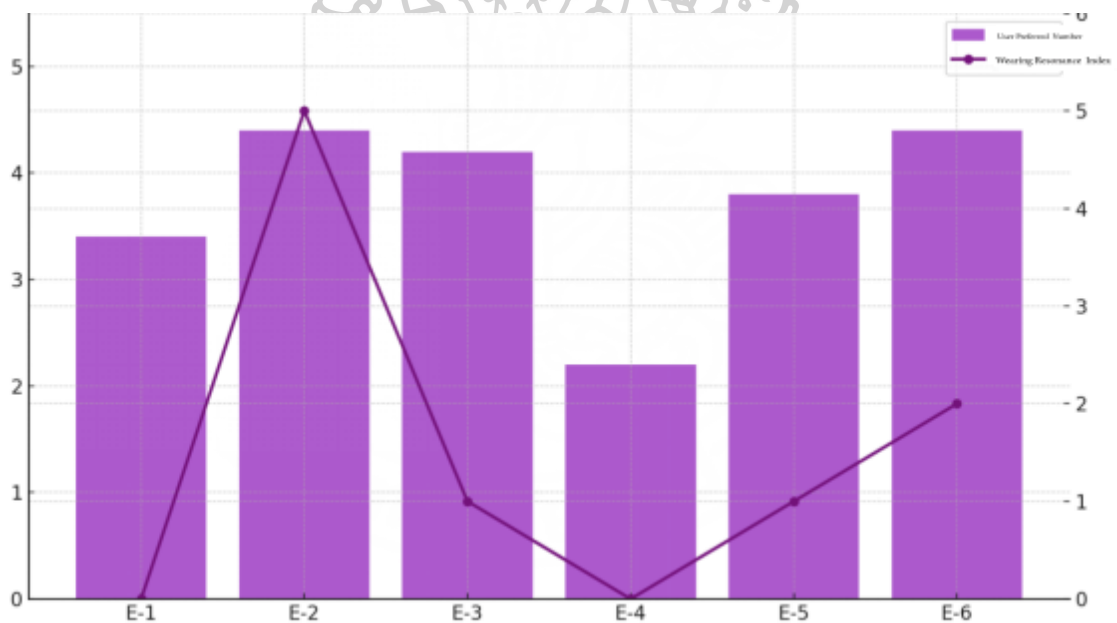


Figure 44 Comparison Chart of Wearer Resonance Index (Purple Bar) and Number of User Preferences (Line Graph)

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025

The scoring was conducted through self-evaluation by the participants. After wearing each piece and listening to the explanation of its design concept, respondents independently assigned a score based on their immediate emotional response. The researcher was only responsible for recording and statistically analyzing the scores.

1. Interview Results

(1) User's top design preference

Based on the number of user selections and the resonance index, prototypes A-5 (Awakening), B-2 (Emptiness), C-1 (Reincarnation), D-2 (Stillness), and E-2 (Fulfillment) emerged as the most favored design concepts, each achieving a resonance score ≥ 4.0 . These prototypes were considered successful in conveying their intended thematic meanings.

In contrast, certain low-scoring prototypes—such as A-3, B-3, and E-4—were associated with issues like “emotional dilution,” “ambiguous imagery,” or “structural complexity,” indicating a failure to translate conceptual intention into perceptible symbolic language. Although these designs may have achieved visual appeal, they lacked resonance with the deeper thematic content, reflecting either blurred visual intent or excessive cognitive load on the user.

From the perspective of resonance scores, most highly rated prototypes (e.g., E-6, D-2) exhibited clear rhythmic articulation and strong bodily interaction, underscoring that users are highly sensitive to the relationship between design and bodily behavior—particularly when engaging with action-oriented themes such as *dāna* (giving) and *bodhi* (awakening). (see Figure 45)

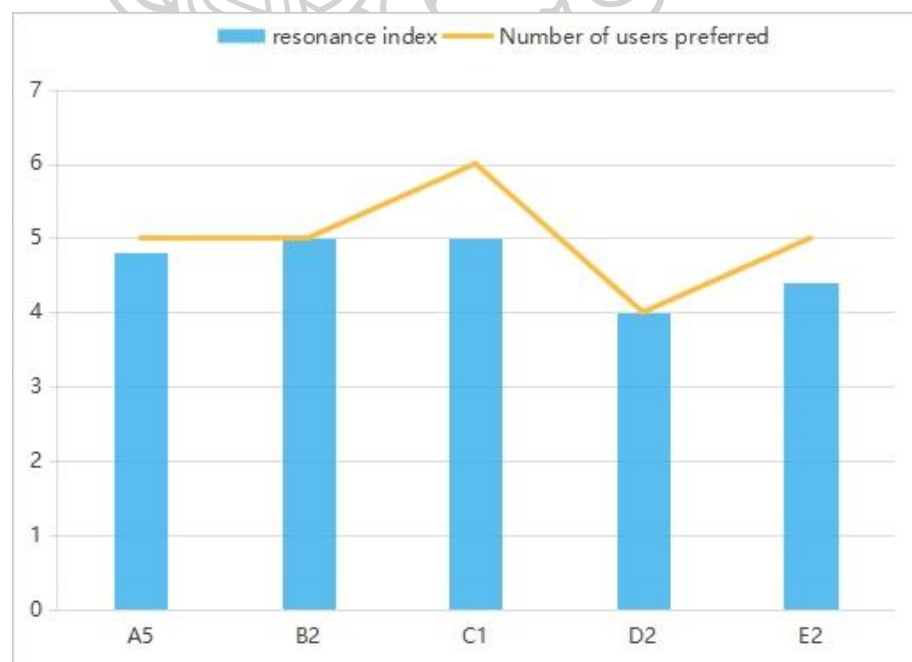


Figure 45 *User's top design preference*

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

(2) Cross-Cultural User Feedback Analysis

In this study, through organizing and analyzing prototype wearing tests and focus group interview feedback from Chinese and Thai participants, significant cultural differences were identified in users' understanding and preferences regarding Buddhist vegetation motif jewelry design. These differences are reflected not only in interpretations of Buddhist philosophy but also in preferences related to symbolic motifs, wearing habits, material choices, and aesthetic forms.

(3) Differences in Understanding Design Concepts

Chinese Users: Generally, interpret the design themes (awakening, emptiness, stillness, samsara, and fulfillment) as philosophical reflections, emphasizing abstraction and internal meaning. They prefer expressing these ideas through minimalist design and metaphorical motifs.

Thai Users: Tend to relate the design themes more closely to daily life and religious practice. They favor explicit Buddhist symbols and motifs such as lotuses and dharma wheels, highlighting visualization and symbolic clarity.

(4) Differences in Emotional Resonance with Motifs

Chinese Users: Resonate with moderation, restraint, and the beauty of balance. They favor reserved compositions and appreciate the sense of tranquility and awareness evoked by "partially blooming flowers" and implicit growth.

Thai Users: Prefer visually dynamic and outwardly expressive motifs, such as radial structures or multilayered leaf veins. They believe these forms more directly convey the power of faith and spiritual solemnity.

(5) Preferences for Materials and Colors

Chinese Users: Prefer traditional materials like jade and silver, which reflect a "gentle" and "restrained" cultural texture. Their color choices lean toward elegant and versatile tones such as white, gray, silver, and light green, suitable for both daily and ceremonial use.

Thai Users: Favor gold and gemstones, with preferences for high-saturation colors like gold, red, and sapphire blue, which they believe symbolize merit, honor, and religious dignity.

(6) Preferences for Design Form and Wearing Style

Chinese Users: Favor smaller-sized, structurally simple designs for everyday wear, emphasizing comfort and the "low-key spirituality" of symbolic meaning. They pay attention to how well the jewelry matches their personal temperament.

Thai Users: Prefer larger, more complex, and expressive designs. For them, wearing jewelry is closely linked to expressing faith, often carrying a strong sense of ritual.

(7) Perception of Weight and Wearing Comfort

Many users (especially Chinese female respondents) expressed a preference for lightweight jewelry, stating that heavier pieces negatively affect wearing experience and duration. Material choice and structural lightness became key evaluation criteria.

"If it were lighter, it would be more suitable for daily outings and could be

worn for longer periods.” — Chinese user, self-rated resonance score: 4

In contrast, Thai users showed higher tolerance for larger structures, with some indicating that jewelry need not be light but should instead emphasize visual presence and religious symbolism.

(8) Durability and Daily Wear Adaptability

During the interviews, Chinese users showed a clear preference for structurally stable, easy-to-store jewelry styles, with a strong emphasis on compatibility with daily outfits.

Thai users, however, focused more on the jewelry’s appearance in special occasions, showing high acceptance of more ceremonial and decorative pieces. This highlights a practical difference between the two groups in prioritizing "everyday usability" versus "ritual significance."

(9) Fragility and Material Expectations

Users commonly expressed concerns about the strength of 3D-printed transparent materials, especially in prototypes with intricate petal details. They noted the need for enhanced flexibility and toughness for long-term wear. Some suggested future iterations could incorporate partial metal reinforcements or use flexible TPU materials to improve everyday adaptability.

In conclusion, user feedback validates the study’s proposed three-tiered expressive logic: spiritual morpheme → morphological construction → perceptual experience. Furthermore, the data offers concrete direction for the next design iteration: retain high-consistency prototypes with strong perceptual and semantic clarity, while reconfiguring low-scoring pieces by enhancing rhythmic modulation, visual focal clarity, and material tactility.

2.Summary

The prototype testing and perceptual interviews conducted in Section 4.3.2 successfully validated the emotional, cultural, and spiritual resonance of the jewelry designs across cultures. Within a bilingual (Chinese Thai), cross-cultural interview framework, ten participants provided in-depth feedback on each jewelry prototype, focusing on symbolic interpretation, material expression, and emotional impact. By combining thematic coding with resonance scores, the study uncovered both convergences and divergences in user perception. While the symbolic forms received generally positive responses, suggestions such as “enhancing tactile resonance” and “simplifying overly figurative expressions” offered valuable directions for further design refinement. Notably, a more detailed articulation of cross-cultural perceptual differences would contribute to deepening the study’s intercultural insights. Overall, this user-centered evaluation confirmed the viability of the collection as a form of "contemporary spiritual jewelry" and supported the core proposition that "Buddhist symbolic imagery can be meaningfully reinterpreted through contemporary wearable forms."

4.3.3.3 CROSS-CULTURAL PROTOTYPE FEEDBACK SUMMARY: THAILAND VS. CHINA PARTICIPANTS

In table 39 summarizes the resonance ratings and qualitative feedback from users during the user-centered testing phase (Section 4.3.2):

Table 39 *Cross-cultural prototype feedback summary*

Prototype	Average Resonance Score (Thai/Chinese)	Dominant Thai Emotions	Dominant Chinese Emotions	Suggested Design Optimization
Awakening Necklace (A5)	4.4 / 4.7	Halo effect, calmness, sacredness	Breathing space, tranquility, clarity	Strong perception; use softer, lighter materials in production
Emptiness Ring (B2)	4.8 / 5	Ethereal, comfort	Ethereal, serenity	Reduce visual heaviness of pearls
Reincarnation Bracelet (C1)	4.8 / 5	Mystery, sense of time flow	Sense of time flow, reincarnation	High visual acceptance; simplify structure
Tranquility Earrings (D2)	4.3 / 4	Quietness, growth	Ethereal, moonlight feeling	None
Perfection Bracelet (E2)	4.4 / 4.4	Growth, sacredness	Thai cultural feeling, fluidity	None

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

Interview Summary

Thai users generally favored more representational, detailed natural motifs (e.g., peonies, lotus flowers), closely aligning with traditional Thai decorative styles and religious symbolism. In contrast, Chinese users preferred abstract and minimalist imagery (e.g., scrolling grass motifs, flowing designs), reflecting Zen aesthetics and introspective philosophical traditions.

Certain designs resonated strongly with one cultural group but were perceived by the other as "overly explicit" or "sensorially intense," necessitating adjustments in form, curvature, and materials according to cultural preferences.

This comparison highlights nuanced cultural perceptual differences in spiritually

themed jewelry design and confirms the importance and necessity of refining designs based on end-user emotional feedback.

4.4 DIGITAL MODELING AND FINAL PRESENTATION

4.4.1 3 D MODELING AND RENDERINGS (VISUAL FORM DEVELOPMENT)

Based on the completed prototype testing and user feedback collection, this section further presents the contemporary visual interpretations of Buddhist vegetation motifs through digital 3D modeling, focusing on the themes of “Awakening” (Figure 46), “Emptiness” (Figure 47), “Stillness” (Figure 48), “Samsara” (Figure 49), and “Fulfillment” (Figure 50).

3D modeling in this context is not merely a technical tool for form generation, but a critical process in transforming abstract spiritual meanings into spatial and structural language. It also serves as a foundation for subsequent 3D printing and physical fabrication of the designs.

The model outcomes presented in this section demonstrate not only a reinterpretation of motifs through structural rhythm and formal language but also reinforce the visual coherence of each piece through precise configuration of material qualities, light-shadow relationships, and component proportions. The rendered visualizations offer observers a multi-perspective understanding of design intentions, facilitating emotional engagement and aesthetic evaluation.

The renderings were produced using the NOMAD modeling tool, integrating parametric settings and manual configuration to systematically realize the multi-layered translation from “spiritual imagery → visual symbols → spatial structures.”

The following subsections will present the modeling results and key design highlights of each thematic series.

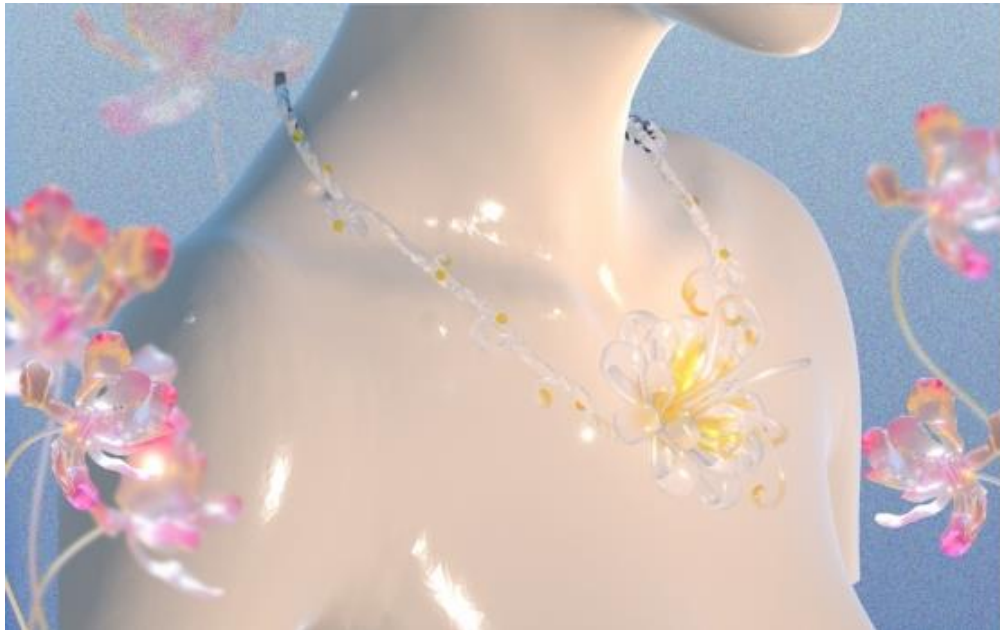


Figure 46 *Modeling Presentation: Theme of Awakening*
Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research.2025.



Figure 47 *Modeling Presentation: Theme of Emptiness*
Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research.2025.



Figure 48 *Modeling Presentation: Theme of Stillness*
Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research.2025.



Figure 49 *Modeling Presentation: Theme of Samsara*
Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research.2025.






Figure 50 *Modeling Presentation: Theme of Fulfillment*
Note. Drawn by the author as part of this research.2025.



4.4.2 PHYSICAL JEWELRY PROTOTYPES AND WEARING CONFIGURATIONS



Based on the completed digital modeling and rendering designs and incorporating optimization adjustments derived from focus group prototype testing results, this study further developed five sets of Buddhist vegetation-themed jewelry into three-dimensional physical prototypes, producing tangible design outcomes (see Table 40).

Table 40 *Physical Jewelry Prototypes*

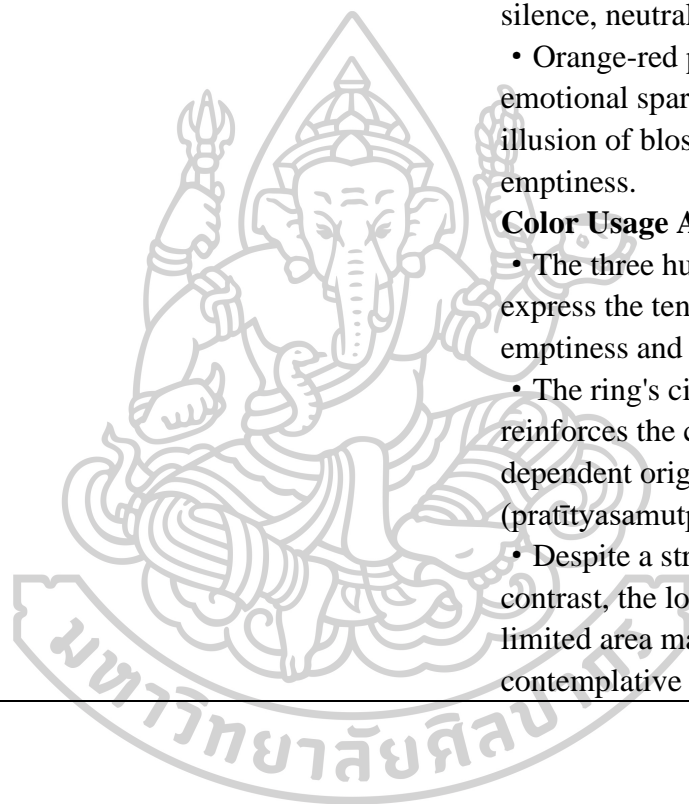
Jewelry Series	Initial Prototype Testing Feedback	Final Physical Product
Awakening Necklace		
	<p>User Feedback: Most users were satisfied with the overall design; however, they suggested reducing the weight of the final product to improve comfort for long-term wear. Optimization: High-transparency lightweight resin was selected to preserve the symbolic “glass-like clarity” while significantly reducing weight, improving wearability in daily use.</p>	<p>Dimensions: Flower diameter: 5 cm</p> <p>Material Effect: Transparent resin simulating glass texture.</p> <p>Color Characteristics: Translucent amber yellow with clear transparency</p> <p>Symbolic Meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow/Amber: Represents the “Light of Enlightenment” and “Flame of Wisdom” in Buddhism, echoing the image of awakening beneath the Bodhi tree. • Transparency: Simulates the clarity of glass or crystal, signifying the pursuit of śūnyatā (emptiness) and spiritual purification. • Light refraction effects: Emphasize the spiritual radiance and awakening aura. <p>Color Usage Analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gradient from pale yellow to transparent enhances the sense of purification rather than vibrancy.

Jewelry Series	Initial Prototype Testing Feedback	Final Physical Product
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall tone is soft and gentle, avoiding saturation or ostentation—mirroring the process of gradual realization and sudden awakening inherent in the spiritual path of enlightenment.
Stillness Earrings		
	<p>User Feedback: Some users noted that the black color of the earring hook blended too closely with dark hair and appeared too dull overall. They also suggested that the flower element could tilt slightly outward for better spatial dynamics.</p> <p>Optimization: The earring color was changed to light gray to enhance visual contrast and clarity. The flower structure was refined to tilt outward slightly, increasing dimensionality and wearability dynamics.</p>	<p>Dimensions: Flower diameter: 2 cm; Total height: 8 cm</p> <p>Material Effect: Resin simulating ceramic texture</p> <p>Color Characteristics: Gradient from purple to cyan to turquoise</p> <p>Symbolic Meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purple: Associated with meditation, mysticism, and compassion. • Turquoise: Alludes to a “cool and calm mental state” and detachment from desires. • The entire gradient represents the process of spiritual settling and transition from movement to stillness.

Jewelry Series	Initial Prototype Testing Feedback	Final Physical Product
		<p>Color Usage Analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft, cool tones visually guide the viewer toward introspection and calmness. • The gradient layers resemble ink wash painting, resonating with the Buddhist idea of emptiness. • The use of low-saturation hues evokes a quiet tension—a silent emotional resonance.
<p>Wholeness & Dana Bracelet</p>		
	<p>User Feedback: Users expressed overall satisfaction with the design and did not suggest any modifications.</p>	<p>Dimensions: Flower diameter: 0.7 cm; Bracelet diameter: 7 cm</p> <p>Material Effect: Resin electroplated gold finish to simulate a gold texture.</p> <p>Color Characteristics: High-gloss gold with reflective bead-like structure</p> <p>Symbolic Meaning: • Gold: In Buddhism, gold signifies the merits of generosity (dāna), offerings, and the fulfillment of spiritual joy.</p>

Jewelry Series	Initial Prototype Testing Feedback	Final Physical Product
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beaded structure: Symbolizes śarīra (relics) and the idea of continuous virtue and blessings. <p>Color Usage Analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved through metallic electroplating, the saturated gold highlights formality and ritualistic solemnity. • Visually echoes golden pagodas and gilded Buddha statues in Buddhist iconography. • The dynamic shine and repetitive structure metaphorically enhance the theme of “giving and transmission” inherent in dāna.
Emptiness Ring		
	<p>User Feedback: In focus group discussions, some users felt that the pearl element was too visually dominant, detracting from the expression of the “emptiness” concept in the overall composition.</p> <p>Optimization: The pearl size was moderately reduced in the final design to decrease visual weight, allowing the central flower</p>	<p>Dimensions: Flower: 2.5 cm diameter × 2.5 cm height; Ring band diameter: 2.3 cm</p> <p>Material Effect: Ring band: resin electroplated silver finish to simulate metal; Flower: transparent resin simulating glass; Leaves: colored resin simulating ceramic texture.</p> <p>Color Characteristics: Light yellow petals + orange-red pistil +</p>

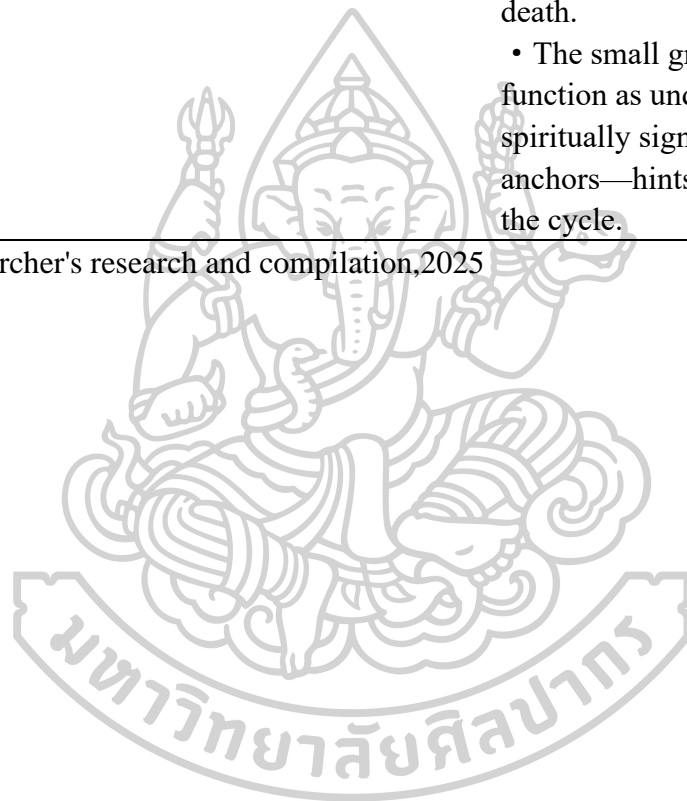
Jewelry Series	Initial Prototype Testing Feedback	Final Physical Product
	<p>element to regain symbolic focus.</p>	<p>silver-grey ring band</p> <p>Symbolic Meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petals: Continue the yellow tone of awakening but focus more on the illusion of “flower of emptiness”—an illusion without essence. • Silver-grey band: Represents silence, neutrality, and detachment. • Orange-red pistil: Acts as an emotional spark, symbolizing the illusion of blossoms arising from emptiness. <p>Color Usage Analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three hues collectively express the tension between emptiness and perceived form. • The ring's circular form reinforces the cyclical concept of dependent origination (prāṭīyasamutpāda). • Despite a strong reflective contrast, the low saturation and limited area maintain a calm and contemplative visual tone.



Jewelry Series	Initial Prototype Testing Feedback	Final Physical Product
Samsara Bracelet		
	<p>User Feedback: Some users felt the outer structure of the bracelet was relatively plain and lacked visual complexity.</p> <p>Optimization: Vine-like textures were added to the outer layer of the final product to enhance decorative richness and visual depth, while symbolically reinforcing the vegetation growth metaphor inherent to the theme.</p>	<p>Dimensions: Width: 1.5 cm. Bracelet diameter: 7 cm</p> <p>Material Effect: Bracelet: resin electroplated silver to simulate metal; Beads: transparent resin simulating jade</p> <p>Color Characteristics: Transparent base + silver metal spiral + dark green gemstone accents</p> <p>Symbolic Meaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency: Symbolizes the essence of anattā (non-self) and the formless nature of the cycle of rebirth. • Silver spiral: Represents the “flow of life” and the continuity of samsaric cycles. • Green accents: Serve as metaphors for “hope” and the potential for transformation.

Jewelry Series	Initial Prototype Testing Feedback	Final Physical Product
		<p>Color Usage Analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dominated by a clear, colorless base to emphasize the impermanence and fluidity of all phenomena. • Highly reflective materials create a shifting optical rhythm, evoking the unpredictability of life and death. • The small green gemstones function as understated yet spiritually significant anchors—hints of liberation within the cycle.

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025



Chapter 5

Design Exhibition

This chapter presents the final stage of the research: the public exhibition of the design outcomes. Positioned as a bridge between theoretical inquiry and practical validation, the exhibition functions not only as a platform to showcase the contemporary jewelry collections inspired by Buddhist vegetation motifs but also as an empirical testing ground for assessing their cultural communicability, aesthetic acceptance, and user interaction in real-world contexts. Through curated spatial planning, symbolic storytelling, and audience engagement strategies, the exhibition demonstrates how traditional visual languages can be transformed into wearable objects of contemporary significance.

The chapter is organized into five sections. It begins by outlining the objectives and curatorial concept of the exhibition, followed by a description of target audience groups and spatial layout. It then details the user interaction and survey methodology designed to gather cross-cultural feedback. Finally, the chapter presents an analysis of user responses and expert evaluations, offering key insights into the cultural, symbolic, and practical efficacy of the jewelry designs.

5.1 Exhibition Objectives and Planning

The exhibition component of this study is not only a public presentation of design outcomes but also a critical stage for testing their theoretical logic, cultural translation pathways, and user resonance in practice. This section systematically outlines the goals, curatorial approach, audience positioning, and spatial planning of the exhibition.

5.1.1 Exhibition Objectives

The purpose of this exhibition is to showcase five jewelry collections themed around the symbolic meanings of Buddhist vegetation motifs: Awakening, Emptiness, Tranquility, Reincarnation, and Perfection. The exhibition presents the entire design journey—from traditional motif extraction and symbolic reinterpretation to the reconstruction of contemporary jewelry forms. It places the works within real-life wearing and interactive scenarios to validate the following research objectives:

1. To examine the capability of jewelry design in visually translating and spiritually expressing Buddhist philosophy across cultural contexts.
2. To explore the mechanisms by which form, material, and structure evoke emotional responses through wearing behavior.
3. To evaluate the degree and differences of cultural understanding and emotional resonance among Chinese and Thai audiences.
4. To assess the communicative effectiveness and market potential of the jewelry

pieces.

Furthermore, the exhibition functions as an experimental site for the study of design as a medium, investigating the interactive relationship between audience, jewelry, and culture, and exploring the role of design in cross-cultural communication.

5.1.2 Curatorial Concept

The curatorial concept of this exhibition centers on the theme "Wearing as Practice", reframing jewelry from a static display into a trigger for spiritual perception. Each piece is not only a visual object but also a medium that guides viewers into a process of meditation, comprehension, and resonance.

The curatorial design emphasizes the following principles:

1. **The Body as a Medium of Understanding:** Interactive zones that allow tactile engagement and on-site wearing encourage the audience to perceive the connection between the formal structure of the motifs and their spiritual implications through bodily experience.

2. **Cultural Bridging and Balance:** The visual language adopts symbolic expressions intelligible to both Chinese and Thai audiences. The forms balance decorative appeal with spiritual depth, making cross-cultural transmission the foundational tone of the exhibition.

Rather than being driven by commercial marketing, the exhibition aims to serve as a sensory-based validation of design research, enabling viewers to access the underlying logic of the works through immersive interaction.

5.1.3 Target Audience Groups

Based on the cultural context and communicative focus of this research, the exhibition is primarily targeted at the following three groups:

1. **Art and Design Professionals and Students:** Viewers with an interest in design methodology, visual language, and material techniques, who can appreciate the works from a perspective of design logic and experimental practice.

2. **Cultural Researchers and Buddhist Art Enthusiasts:** Individuals with backgrounds in cross-cultural studies, semiotics, religious studies, or art history, who can contribute theoretical evaluations and cultural critiques.

3. **General Young Audience (China and Thailand):** Potential wearers aged 18–30, whose participation based on wearing experience and aesthetic preferences provides the core feedback for user resonance analysis.

This diversity in audience structure enables the study to collect feedback from multiple dimensions, helping to construct a comprehensive evaluation model of the jewelry's cultural communicative power and user experience value.

5.1.4 Exhibition Spatial Layout

The exhibition space is divided into three thematic zones, each focusing on a core concept from Buddhist philosophy. Within each zone, the following functional areas are established:

1. Motif Origin Display Area: Presents the Buddhist cultural roots of each theme through images and explanatory texts.

2. Jewelry Display Area: Exhibits the works using a combination of 3D-printed physical prototypes and rendered visualizations.

3. User Feedback Interaction Wall: Allows visitors to place dot stickers on their favorite pieces and fill out comment cards for further feedback.

The detailed exhibition execution and interactive mechanisms are summarized in Table 41.

Table 41 *Exhibition Execution and User Interaction Overview*



Introducing the works to the audience

Audience voting and questionnaire feedback



Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

5.2 User Interaction and Questionnaire Design

To further verify the cultural effectiveness, aesthetic acceptance, and market feasibility of the design outcomes, this study conducted an on-site user survey and try-on feedback collection during the exhibition. Through direct bodily interaction and emotional responses between the audience and the jewelry, the survey aimed to analyze symbolic interpretation of Buddhist vegetation motifs, wearing experience, and purchase tendencies. These data provide empirical support for subsequent design optimization and strategies for cultural dissemination.

5.2.1 Research Objectives

The user study was structured around three core objectives:

1. Validation of Cultural Authenticity and Communicative Power:

To assess whether the modernized forms and contemporary expressions of the jewelry still effectively convey the symbolic essence and spiritual meanings of Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs, thereby fulfilling their cultural transmission function.

2. Assessment of Commercial Feasibility:

To explore users' willingness to wear the jewelry in real-life settings, their price sensitivity, and their purchasing inclinations, to evaluate the market appeal and productization potential of the designs.

3. Cross-Cultural Acceptance Analysis:

To compare the responses of Chinese and Thai audiences toward the same designs and assess the intensity of resonance and the likelihood of cultural transmission across different cultural contexts—thus verifying the function of jewelry design as a cross-cultural bridge.

5.2.2 Research Methods

To accommodate various user contexts and linguistic preferences, a mixed-method strategy was adopted, combining multiple channels and multilingual formats:

1. QR Code-Based Digital Survey:

QR codes were set up linking to both Google Forms and Wenjuanxing (WJX.cn), allowing participants to complete the survey via their mobile phones. The platforms supported real-time data collection and smooth switching between Chinese and English interfaces.

2. Verbal Interview Records:

For participants who showed strong interest in the designs, one-on-one informal interviews were conducted to explore their emotional associations, symbolic

interpretations, and cultural reflections. These conversations generated supplementary qualitative insights beyond the questionnaire data.

5.2.3 Questionnaire Content Design

The questionnaire was structured around five key evaluation dimensions, comprising nine Likert-scale questions and two open-ended questions, covering the following aspects:

1. Cultural Communicability:

“Do you think this piece of jewelry helps you understand Buddhist culture?”
(5-point Likert scale)

2. Purchase Intention:

“Would you consider purchasing this jewelry?” (5-point Likert scale)

3. Wearing Experience:

For participants who tried on the jewelry, ratings were collected on comfort, weight, and compatibility using a 5-point scale.

4. Price Acceptability:

Included both a multiple-choice question on acceptable price ranges and subjective assessment prompts for perceived value.

5. Cross-Cultural Acceptance:

Questions such as “Do you agree with the spiritual theme expressed in the design?” and “Do you think this jewelry fits your national or cultural wearing context?” were used to evaluate resonance across Chinese and Thai audiences.

6. Spiritual Resonance of the Jewelry:

Questions such as “When you see or wear this set of jewelry, do you experience a kind of reflection or resonance that goes beyond mere visual beauty?”

The questionnaire was presented in bilingual Chinese-Thai format, with details provided in the Appendix.

In addition, interactive feedback zones were established within each exhibition area, including voting stations and a keyword response wall, where visitors were encouraged to select their favorite designs and share spontaneous impressions using color-coded stickers and feedback cards.

5.3 Exhibition Feedback and Preliminary Conclusions

This section synthesizes the results from on-site observation, questionnaire data analysis, and interview records to systematically review audience behavior and emotional responses during the exhibition. It analyzes public perception and preferences regarding the five thematic jewelry collections and explores how these insights may inform future design development and strategies for cultural communication.

5.3.1 On-Site Observation and User Behavior Analysis

During the exhibition, a combination of non-intrusive observation and interactive data tracking was used to monitor audience behavior. Key indicators included interaction duration, spatial distribution of visitor activity, and frequency of engagement:

1. Interaction Duration:

The average time spent per visitor in the exhibition area was approximately 4 minutes, with nearly 64% of participants engaging in try-on experiences, indicating a high level of participation.

2. Areas of Concentration:

The zones themed Reincarnation and Tranquility attracted the highest visitor attention and foot traffic.

3. Frequent Actions:

Jewelry try-on accounted for 65% of interactive behavior, followed by sticker-based voting for favorite designs. Some participants also actively initiated conversations with staff to learn more about the design concepts.

These findings indicate that the exhibition's open spatial layout and interactive engagement formats effectively stimulated audience involvement. The design works demonstrated a strong capacity to guide visitor behavior and foster emotional connection.

5.3.2 Summary and Analysis of User Survey Results

To evaluate the public acceptance and cultural communicative effectiveness of the jewelry designs, a bilingual user survey (Chinese Thai) was conducted during the physical exhibition. A total of 122 responses were collected from both Chinese and Thai participants. The questionnaire was structured around key dimensions including demographic profile, Buddhist cultural awareness, perception of the design, wearing compatibility, aesthetic preference, and purchase intention. The results are summarized as follows:

1. User Background and Cultural Awareness

Among all respondents, the majority were young consumers aged 18–30, accounting for 65% in China and 50% in Thailand, followed by traditional culture enthusiasts (18.33% in China, 35.48% in Thailand). Regarding Buddhist cultural awareness, 48.33% of Chinese participants reported familiarity with Buddhist culture, whereas this proportion was higher among Thai respondents at 67.74% (see Figure 51), indicating a notable cultural background difference between the two groups.

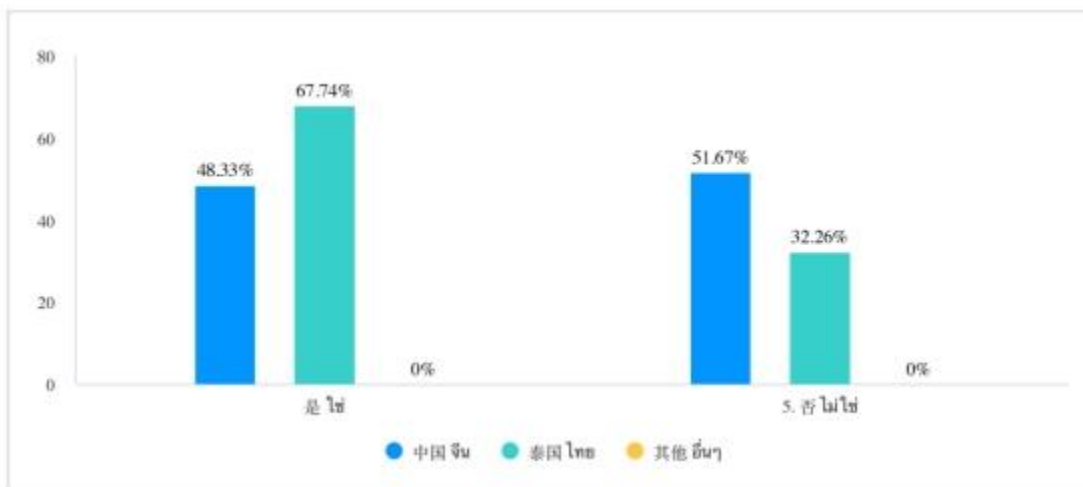


Figure 51 *Questionnaire Results: “Are you familiar with Buddhist culture?”*

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025

2. Effectiveness of Cultural Communication

When asked whether the jewelry helped them better understand Buddhist culture, most respondents expressed a positive opinion. The average score from Chinese users was 3.95 out of 5, while Thai users gave a slightly lower score of 3.79 (see Figure 52). This suggests that the jewelry series demonstrates a consistent degree of cultural communicative value across different cultural contexts.

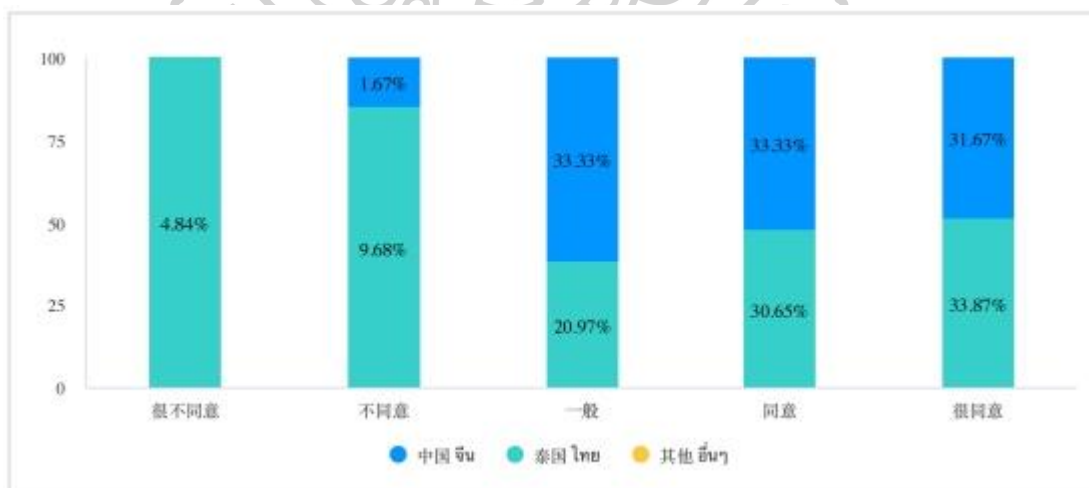


Figure 52 *Survey Result: “Do you think this jewelry helps you understand Buddhist culture?”*

Note. Researcher's research and compilation,2025

3. Spiritual Theme Resonance

Among the five thematic collections, the Reincarnation series received the highest emotional resonance—selected by 63.33% of Chinese and 69.35% of Thai respondents—followed by Awakening and Emptiness. This indicates that users responded more positively to designs symbolizing transformation, flow, and spiritual cycles. Regarding agreement with the spiritual themes, the average score from Chinese users was 4.10, while Thai users gave an average of 3.55 (see Figure 53), suggesting that Chinese respondents were more likely to perceive the intended spiritual meaning embedded in the design.

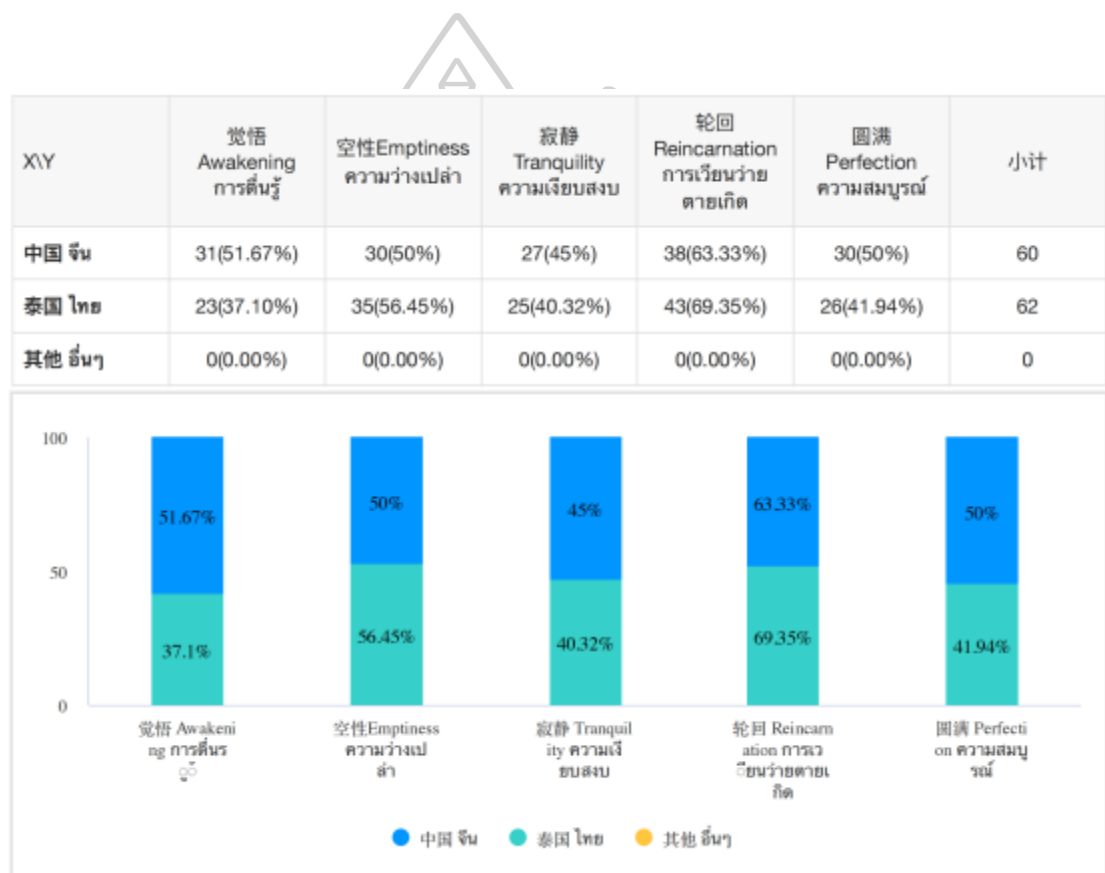


Figure 53 Survey Result: “Which collection best represents the spiritual essence of Buddhist culture?”

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

4. Wearability and Adaptability

In terms of wearability—including comfort, weight, and stability—Chinese users gave slightly higher scores than their Thai counterparts. For example, the average score for weight suitability was 3.97 in China and 3.26 in Thailand. Additionally, 66.67% of Chinese and 74.19% of Thai participants agreed that the jewelry was “appropriate for wearing in their own country,” indicating that the series is generally well-suited to everyday use in both cultural contexts from both structural and aesthetic perspectives.

5. Purchase Intention and Price Expectation

The average purchase intention score was 3.92 among Chinese users and 3.47 among Thai users. Regarding acceptable price range, Chinese consumers tended to favor the 1,000–3,000 THB range (approximately 200–600 RMB), while Thai consumers showed a preference for products priced below 1,000 THB. This reflects a notable difference in psychological pricing expectations and perceived value of artistic jewelry between the two cultural groups.

6. Spiritual Resonance of Jewelry

According to the statistical analysis of the questionnaire’s rating scale, the average scores across the three core evaluation dimensions are as follows:

- Reflective Resonance (Symbol Recognition): 3.87
(Chinese participants: 4.43; Thai participants: 3.31)
- Emotional Arousal: 3.68
(Chinese participants: 4.05; Thai participants: 3.31)
- Embodied Interaction: 3.80
(Chinese participants: 4.10; Thai participants: 3.51)

These results indicate that Chinese participants generally reported a stronger connection with the spiritual and symbolic aspects of the jewelry, whereas Thai participants showed a more moderate response across all dimensions.

The high-frequency emotional keywords collected from user responses to each thematic collection reveal distinct cross-cultural interpretations:

Awakening Series:

Chinese users frequently used terms such as “uplifting,” “enlightenment,” “light,” and “wisdom”, indicating a philosophical interpretation of Buddhist awakening. In contrast, Thai users commonly used words like “dignified,” “sacred,” and “confident,” highlighting a perspective grounded in religious ritual and personal empowerment.

Emptiness Series:

Chinese respondents associated this collection with keywords such as “emptiness,” “transparency,” “stillness,” “silence,” and “letting go,” reflecting a Zen-inspired pursuit of spiritual liberation. Thai participants, on the other hand, often described the works as “serene,” “open” and “fantastical,” indicating an emotionally expressive and imaginative reception of the concept of emptiness.

Tranquility Series:

Chinese users frequently used words like “serene,” “restrained,” and “quietude,”

aligning with Buddhist notions of Samatha (calm abiding) and inner observation. Thai users emphasized terms such as “warm,” “impel” and “filled with memories,” interpreting tranquility as a space of emotional refuge and gentle psychological comfort.

Rebirth Series:

Chinese respondents highlighted abstract terms such as “cycle,” “temporality,” “life and death,” and “nirvana,” framing the work as a metaphysical representation of Buddhist cosmology. Thai users preferred more individualistic and expressive terms like “unique,” “brave,” and “outstanding,” viewing the rebirth theme as a symbol of energy, identity, and personal agency.

Perfection Series:

Chinese users used keywords such as “circle,” “balance,” “symmetry,” and “wholeness,” reflecting a structural appreciation of harmony informed by Confucian-Buddhist-Daoist ideals. Thai users favored terms like “valuable” “like a gemstone,” and “distinctly charming,” suggesting that the concept of perfection is interpreted as a union of aesthetic appeal and spiritual essence.

In summary, Chinese users tend to experience resonance through philosophical introspection and symbolic understanding, while Thai users emphasize emotional affect, ceremonial atmosphere, and expressive individuality. These cultural distinctions not only affirm the differing cognitive-emotional frameworks through which Chinese and Thai participants interpret Buddhist vegetation motifs, but also validate the effectiveness of this research’s proposed “Symbolic Transformation – Sensory Experience – Cultural Resonance” design model for cross-cultural jewelry design.

Summary

The results of this user study indicate that both Chinese and Thai participants generally hold a positive attitude toward the modern jewelry designs inspired by Buddhist vegetation motifs. The designs performed well across dimensions such as cultural understanding, symbolic expression, and wearability. In particular, the thematic collections of Reincarnation and Awakening received the strongest emotional resonance, reflecting users’ engagement with spiritually symbolic content.

5.3.3 Expert Interview Analysis

This section aims to validate the academic rigor and cultural accuracy of the design methodology through expert interviews, and to further explore the contemporary expression of Buddhist vegetation motifs in the cultural contexts of China and Thailand. A structured questionnaire combining quantitative scoring and open-ended feedback was used to systematically collect multi-dimensional evaluations of the final design prototypes.

The expert assessment focused on the following dimensions:

1. Cultural Authenticity of symbolic motifs

2. Innovation in jewelry design
3. Academic Recognition of the design logic
4. Readability of Symbolism, based on both Buddhist philosophical interpretation and visual-aesthetic composition.

The interviewees included four experts from the fields of art and design, jewelry design, and cultural studies, based in China and Thailand. Detailed participant information is provided in Table 42.

Table 42 Expert Interview Participant Information

ID	Name	Field of Expertise	Institution	Country/Region
E1	Yu-Pei Kuo	Art & Design	Assistant Professor, National Kaohsiung University of Science and Technology	Taiwan (China)
E2	Lin Longqi	Art & Design	Assistant Professor, Rangsit University	Taiwan (China)
E3	Lin Zhu	Art & Design	Lecturer	China
E4	Pensiri Chartniyom	Jewelry Design	Teacher	Thailand

Note. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

1. Cultural Authenticity and Academic Recognition

In the dimensions of cultural authenticity and academic recognition, the average score given by experts was 4.75 out of 5 for both. The experts agreed that the jewelry collection successfully preserved the symbolic meaning of Buddhist vegetation motifs while maintaining a clear academic foundation and logical consistency in religious symbolism. One expert remarked that the designs "integrate the artistic values of both Chinese and Thai cultures, extending traditional meanings into contemporary visual expression."

2. Innovation and Symbolic Interpretation

For the innovation dimension, the average score was 4.5, affirming the project's breakthrough in structural proportions, visual composition, and material experimentation. Highlights mentioned in the evaluations included the use of mixed media, artistic construction of form, and sense of proportion in the design. Regarding symbolic interpretation, both the Buddhist philosophical readability and the visual-aesthetic composition received scores of 4.75, indicating that the designs were not only philosophically meaningful but also visually accessible and comprehensible.

3. Strengths and Recommendations for Improvement

The experts emphasized the project's strength in balancing traditional cultural elements with contemporary expression and noted that the works were "readily

acceptable to contemporary audiences.” A Thai expert observed, “The collection is easy to understand within today’s context and resonates with younger generations’ renewed interest in Buddhist spirituality.”

Recommendations for further refinement included:

- Strengthening the sense of series continuity and thematic coherence.
- Allowing for bolder scaling in some designs to enhance symbolic tension and expressive depth.
- Improving wearability and comfort through optimized material choices.

Summary

Overall, the expert interviews strongly affirmed the effectiveness of the designs in terms of cultural symbolism, aesthetic construction, and spiritual communication (see Figure 54). The project was regarded as having significant academic value and cultural transmission potential. In future development stages, the study will incorporate these expert insights to enhance the coherence of the design series, increase visual tension, and refine material strategies—ultimately improving the adaptability and aesthetic resonance of the jewelry within both Chinese and Thai cultural contexts.

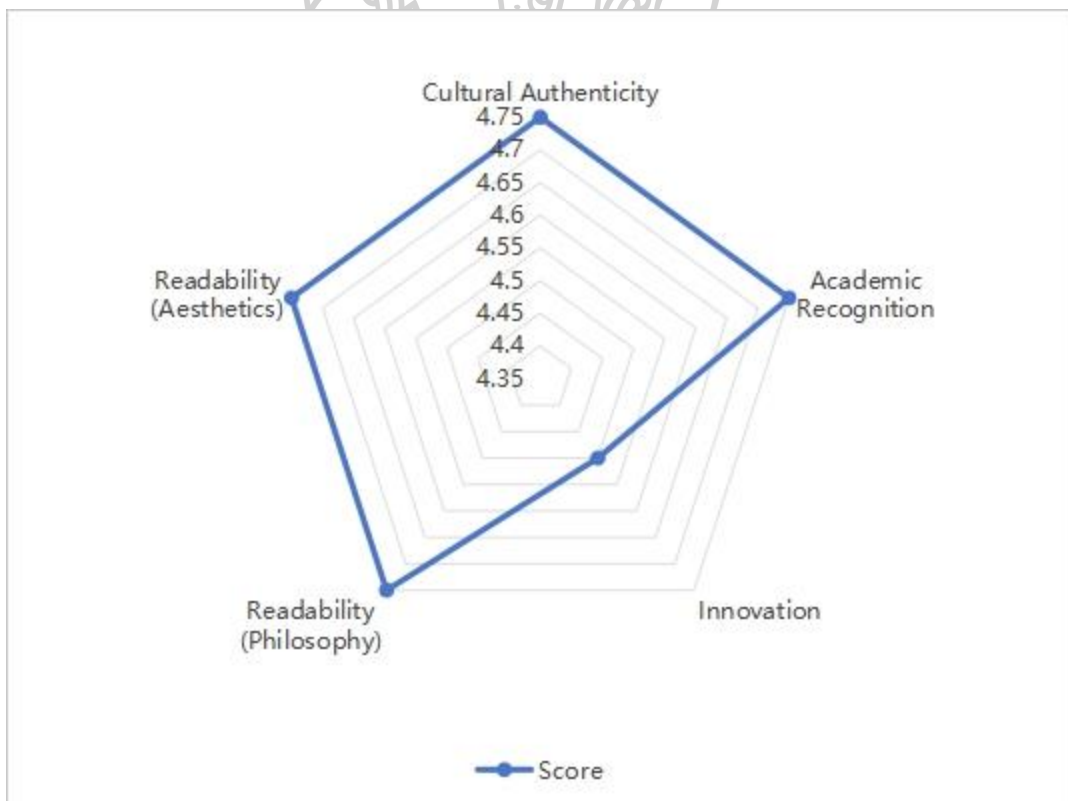


Figure 54 *Expert Interview Data Chart (5-point Scale)*

Source. Researcher's research and compilation, 2025

Chapter 6

Research Conclusions

This chapter synthesizes the key findings of the study and reflects upon its theoretical, methodological, and practical implications within the field of contemporary design. Centered on the cross-cultural reinterpretation of Buddhist vegetation motifs from China and Thailand, the research bridges historical symbolism with modern wearable expression—specifically through the medium of jewelry. Drawing upon literature analysis, visual semiotic decoding, iterative design experiments, and user validation through cross-cultural surveys and exhibitions, the study constructs a methodological pathway that transforms spiritual concepts into perceptible and emotionally resonant design outcomes. The conclusions presented herein aim to clarify the research contributions, offer insights into cross-cultural symbolic communication, acknowledge limitations, and propose directions for future exploration.

6.1 Research Summary

This study takes Chinese and Thai Buddhist vegetation motifs as its point of departure, focusing on the religious aesthetics and visual languages of the Tang Dynasty in China and the early Rattanakosin period in Thailand. It explores their innovative applications in contemporary expression, with a particular emphasis on jewelry as an intimate medium endowed with communicative cultural potential.

Through an interdisciplinary methodology combining literature review, visual motif analysis, design experimentation, and user testing, the research establishes a conceptual transformation path from "Buddhist spirituality → symbolic motifs → bodily perception". It proposes a design framework centered on "emotional imagery – structural language – material symbolism."

The main conclusions of the study are as follows:

1. Spiritual Reconstruction of Symbolic Motifs

By systematically analyzing lotus, vine, camellia, and flame motifs from the Tang and Rattanakosin periods, the study abstracts the spiritual core of Buddhist teachings—such as awakening, emptiness, reincarnation, and generosity—from traditional ornamental forms. These are translated into structural visual morphemes (e.g., spiral forms, enclosures, repetitive radiations), providing a cultural foundation for modern design expression.

2. Formal Exploration of Contemporary Expression

The study employs rapid sketching, visual evolution diagrams, and 3D modeling to convert abstract symbolic imagery into wearable structures. The designs emphasize rhythm, tactility, light-shadow interaction, and structural cadence, shifting the design logic from “motif representation” to “spiritual evocation.”

3.Reconfiguration of Material and Perception

Drawing on Yuriko Saito's (2007) theory that materiality embodies ethical attitudes, the research delves into how semi-translucent materials, mirrored metals, velvet surfaces, and mother-of-pearl textures evoke emotional resonance. It emphasizes ethical aesthetics at the sensory level.

4.Bodily Interaction and Resonance Testing

Through prototype testing and audience interviews with Chinese and Thai participants, the study demonstrates how jewelry activates spiritual meaning during the act of wearing. Analysis of resonance indices and emotional keywords reveals cultural variation in the perception of Buddhist concepts such as emptiness and awakening, highlighting mechanisms of symbolic reinterpretation in cross-cultural contexts.

5.Positioning within the Global Design Discourse

By comparing the work with contemporary jewelry artists such as Ruudt Peters, Lin Cheung, and Manon van Kouswijk, the study establishes an innovative direction for Eastern spiritual jewelry. It emphasizes the integration of introspective expression, wearable rituality, and cross-cultural visual construction, injecting new cultural dimensions into the global field of contemporary jewelry.

6.2 Research Contributions

Grounded in the cultural semantics of Buddhist vegetation motifs from China and Thailand, this study addresses the question of how spiritual motifs can be transformed into wearable expressions in contemporary design. It proposes an integrated design research pathway that combines cultural semiotics, bodily perception design, and cross-cultural user studies. The specific contributions are outlined in three key dimensions:

1. Theoretical Contributions

·This research establishes a translational model that moves from Buddhist motifs → emotional imagery → structural language → material systems → bodily perception, providing a theoretical foundation for the reconfiguration of traditional religious motifs in contemporary expression.

·By incorporating interdisciplinary theories—including semiotics (Peirce), everyday aesthetics (Yuriko Saito, 2007), and perceptual psychology (Donald Norman, 2004)—the study systematically analyzes how the spiritual core of Buddhist motifs can be re-perceived and reactivated through form and material.

·Through a historical contextual comparison of Chinese and Thai Buddhist motifs, the study clearly articulates the “cultural pathways of visual language”, filling a gap in the current literature concerning the intersection of religious motif design and cross-cultural symbolic perception.

2. Methodological and Process Innovations

·The study proposes a design methodology framework built on the progression

of emotion → symbol → structure → material → interaction, emphasizing the transformation of internal spiritual imagery into visual, tactile, and wearable design languages.

·It innovatively constructs a complete experimental workflow, encompassing rapid sketching → prototyping → material simulation → interaction testing → exhibition feedback, integrating subjective experience with user data through a dual-feedback loop.

·In the cross-cultural user research phase, the study introduces the “Resonance Score” method, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative keyword analysis to develop a “cultural-emotional resonance” evaluation model with high applicability for future design assessment.

3. Original Contributions in Design Practice

·The study completes five original jewelry series under the themes of Awakening, Emptiness, Stillness, Samsara, and Fulfillment, each rooted in Buddhist philosophy and constructed with clear emphasis on bodily interaction and cultural meaning.

·The jewelry designs incorporate rotating mechanisms, tactile textures, dynamic components, and reflective light structures, transforming the act of wearing into an extended process of emotional activation and spiritual cultivation, thus surpassing the limitations of static decorative jewelry.

• The Value of Integrating Chinese and Thai Themes. The decision to integrate Chinese and Thai Buddhist botanical motifs is grounded in both cultural relevance and design innovation. China and Thailand represent two influential streams of Buddhist art—Mahayana and Theravāda—each with its own distinct symbolic language, ritual aesthetics, and philosophical emphasis. By bringing these traditions into dialogue, the research uncovers shared spiritual values such as compassion, detachment, and enlightenment, while also highlighting regional differences in visual symbolism and pattern construction.

This fusion expands the symbolic vocabulary available to contemporary designers, enabling a multi-layered expression that is both locally rooted and globally relevant. It challenges the boundaries of singular cultural identity and proposes a transcultural design logic capable of mediating meaning across belief systems and aesthetic traditions. From a design perspective, the integration of motifs such as the Chinese peony and Thai kanok or time flower allows for a richer formal language, one that can express Buddhist principles through emotionally resonant and visually compelling forms. This approach not only contributes to the preservation and reinterpretation of cultural heritage, but also positions design as a tool for spiritual reflection and intercultural communication.

·Feedback from the exhibition and observed user interactions confirm the effectiveness of the designs in religious cultural communication, everyday wearability, and cross-cultural symbolic activation, indicating strong potential for further development into commercial jewelry collections or pedagogical design models.

Using the “Awakening” piece as the central exemplar, this work demonstrates the

project’s translation of Buddhist philosophical concepts into contemporary visual language, alongside notable technical and aesthetic innovations in materiality and structural form. Drawing on the Buddhist notion of “awakening,” the design integrates the lotus and firework as dual symbolic motifs—the former representing wisdom and purity of mind, the latter evoking the sudden flash of enlightenment and the essence of impermanence. The synthesis of these two visual symbols generates a compelling spiritual tension between formal construction and perceptual experience, effectively shifting from traditional to contemporary expressive modes.

In terms of form, the piece employs a radially centered structure, featuring multilayered curled components that emulate both the unfurling of a lotus and the burst of fireworks (see Figure 55). This configuration not only focuses visual attention on the symbolic “inner awakening” core, but also creates a dynamic tension through its ordered motions, thereby reinforcing the emotional resonance of the “awakening” theme. By deliberately avoiding literal representation and instead adopting a “linear–radial–spatial expansion” compositional strategy, the design constructs a non-figurative field of spiritual implication, resonating with Buddhist philosophical principles such as “form arises from the formless” and “dissolving attachment to reveal insight.”

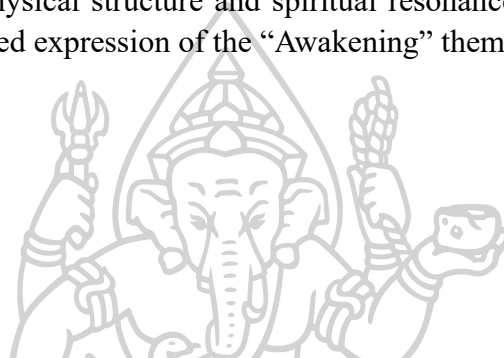


Figure 55 *Dual dynamic forms—lotus unfolding and firework bursting.*
Note. Photographed by the author, 2025.

In terms of material expression, the piece is crafted entirely from transparent organic resin, whose crystalline clarity symbolizes the immateriality and purity inherent in the “manifestation of wisdom.” At the center, a subtle gradient of pale yellow to orange is applied outward, visually stimulating an inner light that intensifies the spiritual emergence of an enlightening moment. This halo-like diffusion effect enhances the wearer’s perception of the abstract uplift of the spirit. Surrounding this

focal point, multiple curled, spiraling branch-like elements form a flexible, interwoven spatial structure. The contrast between rigid and flexible components not only improves wearability and visual layering, but also embodies Buddhist principles of “dependent arising” and “the Middle Way” through its structural logic.

Although the design does not employ smart or modular materials, it demonstrates strong visual complexity and emotional resonance through the combination of material craftsmanship, dynamic construction, and light-shadow perception. During wear, the transparent resin responds to ambient lighting conditions with variations in brightness and shadow, the curled forms provide kinetic tactile feedback, and the central halo shifts focal intensity based on viewing angle (see Figure 56). This synchronization of physical structure and spiritual resonance exemplifies the piece’s symbolic and embodied expression of the “Awakening” theme.



Bright



Spotlight



Dark



Figure 56 *Presentation of the “Awakening” theme under varying lighting conditions*
Note. Photographed by the author, 2025.

Therefore, the “Awakening” themed jewelry piece achieves a pivotal breakthrough in both the abstract expression of spiritual imagery and in material and technical complexity by synergistically integrating visual semantics, formal language, and structural materiality. It stands not only as a successful case of systematic translation of design language, but also as a critical validation of this study’s cross-cultural jewelry design pathway—from symbolic motif, through spiritual philosophy, to embodied experience.

6.3 Insights from Cross-Cultural Research

By comparing the historical evolution, visual structure, symbolic meanings, and contemporary expressions of Buddhist vegetation motifs in China and Thailand—and by analyzing the emotional resonance differences in user feedback from both countries—this study further reveals how Buddhist visual culture is received, perceived, and spiritually interpreted within different cultural contexts. These findings offer the following insights for future design research transitioning from “symbolic design” to “cultural communication”:

1. Cross-cultural visual symbolism follows diverse pathways

Although China and Thailand share a common foundation in Buddhist thought, their visual reception of spiritual themes such as enlightenment, emptiness, and reincarnation differs significantly.

Chinese users generally favor minimalist and abstract forms, more likely to perceive the philosophical depth of “emptiness” through concepts like negative space, restraint, and compressed structure.

In contrast, Thai users tend to prefer figurative and visually rich designs that directly connect to religious belief and ritual experience—for example, their higher acceptance of elements like lotus flowers, flames, and gold.

This suggests that visual symbols are not fixed “images” in cross-cultural communication but rather “carriers of meaning within context.” Designers must therefore adapt symbolic translation strategies to resonate locally while remaining respectful to their cultural origins.

2. Cultural resonance is not the same as symbolic recognition

The study finds that emotional resonance with Buddhist vegetation motifs often stems from personal religious experience, bodily memory, and spiritual association—rather than mere recognition of the motifs themselves.

This indicates that in cross-cultural design, “symbol recognition rate” should not be the sole metric of acceptance. More importantly, one must consider whether the

symbol evokes bodily sensations, emotional responses, and spiritual engagement in the wearer.

For instance, some Chinese users experienced a sense of “dynamic stillness” through the rotating petal structures, while some Thai users felt a meditative rhythm akin to prayer beads in the rolling wheel structure. This highlights bodily interaction as a key medium of emotional resonance—far more powerful than static cultural representation.

3.A contemporary Eastern design language must reestablish the relationship between spirit, structure, and interaction.

Cross-cultural design should move beyond the superficial “collage of Chinese and Thai elements” and aim to reconstruct a design language rooted in Eastern spiritual logic.

This study integrates structural metaphors such as unfolding flowers, entwining vines, and revolving cycles to connect Buddhist philosophy with physical design, and further establishes a holistic path of spiritual awakening → bodily engagement → cultural resonance through the act of wearing.

This exploration of contemporary Eastern design philosophy suggests that future research must transcend decorative ethnic stylization and instead reconstruct design language through philosophical, emotional, and perceptual dimensions. Only in this way can Eastern culture be organically expressed and spiritually conveyed in a global context.

6.4 Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study systematically explores the spiritual expression, structural design, and cross-cultural reception of Buddhist vegetation motifs from China and Thailand—and advances the integration of theory and practice through prototyping, user research, and exhibition validation—it still presents several limitations that merit further refinement and expansion in future research.

1. Limitations in Sample Size and Research Scope

While the user studies and exhibition feedback involved participants from both China and Thailand, the sample size was constrained by interview duration, exhibition schedule, and available resources. As a result, the study could not fully represent a wide spectrum of demographics, religious backgrounds, and jewelry consumption preferences. Particularly in the resonance score analysis, the current data relies primarily on qualitative interviews and subjective ratings, lacking a robust quantitative foundation for statistical significance.

Future Direction: It is recommended to expand the sample size using online quantitative surveys and multi-regional user experiments to enhance the study’s generalizability and academic rigor. Additionally, incorporating psychological scales or physiological feedback (e.g., skin responses during wear, emotional tracking curves) could help verify the somatic basis of emotional resonance.

2. Technical Constraints in Material and Structural Experimentation

The material choices in this study were primarily based on handcrafted prototypes and 3D printing. Some complex structures (e.g., rotating joints, rollers, elastic connectors) were constructed using simulated materials during the experimental phase, which limited the demonstration of commercial-level durability, structural integrity, and long-term wearability. Detailed testing for wear lifespan or skin reactions (e.g., perspiration, friction) was not conducted.

Future Direction: Industrial-grade fabrication technologies—such as multi-material 3D printing, injection molding, and biomimetic composite materials—are recommended to expand the expressive potential of “perceptual jewelry.” Integration with flexible sensors and thermoresponsive materials could further elevate the technological dimension of spiritually expressive design.

3. Insufficient Conversion to Contemporary Communication and Commercial Pathways

This study focuses on the visual translation of spiritual symbols and the construction of bodily interaction in wearing practices. However, it lacks a systematic strategy for transforming these design outcomes into culturally transmittable and market-viable products. While the designs possess emotional depth and cultural richness, they have not been fully examined in terms of commercialization, product line development, or daily user integration.

Future Direction: Future research may integrate product design, cultural and creative industries, and digital communication platforms to extend these “spiritual motif jewelry” works into scalable cultural brand systems. Possible pathways include meditation accessories, seasonal ritual jewelry, and personalized spiritual gifts—enabled by digital try-on tools and metaverse-based avatars to support the fusion of Buddhist spirit × contemporary lifestyle.

4. Visual-Evoked Association:

The color, transparency, and form of the jewelry can trigger not only symbolic recognition but also personal memories, emotional moods, or spiritual imagery. Future iterations may consider how visual elements evoke intuitive associations—such as radiance with awakening, cool translucency with emptiness, or circular rhythm with continuity—at a cognitive or emotional level.

5. Tactile and Thermal Response:

The choice of materials (e.g., matte metal, resin, ceramics) can offer temperature sensations or textures that generate subconscious responses. For instance, the coolness of silver may correspond to calmness and stillness, while soft ceramic surfaces may invoke a sense of grounded comfort. Future work may investigate how tactile perception supports the emotional narrative of Buddhist themes.

6. Ritualization in Daily Life:

To move beyond symbolic display and make spiritual jewelry meaningful in daily use, future designs may explore how to embed micro-rituals into wearing behavior. This could include responsive surfaces (e.g., light reflection that changes

with movement), modular structures for seasonal or intentional change, or narrative packaging that guides reflective interaction. Such development can transform jewelry from a static object into a medium of mindful living.

Conclusion

In summary, while this research has made notable contributions to the contemporary expression of Buddhist motifs, cross-cultural perception mechanisms, and embodied design experience, it still faces multidimensional challenges in theoretical construction, technological realization, and dissemination strategies. Future work should continue expanding in areas such as material experimentation, user perception modeling, and cultural storytelling frameworks—paving the way for a transformation from symbolic art pieces to a contemporary Eastern spiritual jewelry system with true socio-cultural communicative power.



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