



TRANSFORMING IMPERFECT TRACES OF ANCIENT ARCHITECTURE INTO GRAPHIC
ELEMENTS FOR CONTEMPORARY BUDDHIST OFFERINGS



By

Miss Natnicha KAJKUMJOHNDEJ

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for Doctor of Philosophy Design Arts (International Program)

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Miss Natnicha KAJKUMJOHNDEJ : Transforming Imperfect Traces of Ancient Architecture into Graphic Elements for Contemporary Buddhist Offerings Thesis advisor : Professor Eakachat Joneurairatana, Ph.D.

This study examines the transformation of imperfect remnants of ancient Buddhist architecture into graphic elements for modern Buddhist offerings. The research reinterprets *cracks, textures, and aged surfaces* found in sacred architecture as visual metaphors embodying Buddhist ideas of impermanence and non-attachment. Through a *practice-based design process*, the study investigates how these imperfections can inspire *sustainable, meaningful, and emotionally resonant* packaging that re-establishes the connection between *spiritual symbolism* and *contemporary life*.

The study addresses the growing commercialisation of Buddhist offerings in Thailand, where mass-produced designs frequently lack *cultural depth* and *environmental consciousness*. The design framework it develops combines *traditional spiritual values* with *modern design sensibility*, drawing from Wabi-Sabi aesthetics, material semiotics, and visual communication theory. Fieldwork comprised *interviews, surveys, and prototype assessments* to examine how *form, material, and symbolism* influence user perception and ritual experience.

The findings indicate that embracing imperfection as a design language fosters *spiritual connection, authenticity, and ecological awareness*. The study presents the *Sacred Imperfection Model*, an innovative theoretical framework that regards *aged and flawed forms* as instruments for enhancing *faith and mindfulness*. Ultimately, the research redefines Buddhist packaging as both a *visual and spiritual medium* that restores *sacred value* to daily practice while resonating with the preferences of a *new generation of conscientious consumers*.



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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The material culture of Buddhist practice is deeply symbolic, historically continuous, and spiritually intentional (the doctrine of dimensions). In Thailand, the offering of Sangkhathan sets—usually consisting of candles, robes, and utensils—has been a major ceremony through which the laity makes merit and reaffirms ties with the monastic order. Such objects are not just functional; they have multiple meanings. They mediate the sacred and the everyday, giver and receiver, the ephemeral and the eternal.

Nevertheless, today's consumer society is changing the image and form of Buddhist offerings to an extent previously unimaginable. The mass-produced Sangkhathan sets found in supermarkets and convenience stores are becoming more visible and purely commercial. These designs, often driven by minimalism and consumer efficacy, risk sidelining the spiritual symbolism behind traditional packaging systems. Items that were historically chosen for their imperfections and echoes of impermanence may soon become too pristine. These Buddhist offerings, within this process, are the “imperfect traces”, the organic decay of offerings made during ceremonies, their material wear and tear reminiscent of the original temple architecture and layered passage of time itself.

This research responds to the urgent need to address that loss. It presents a designed reimagining of Buddhist supplies that highlights the aesthetic and symbolic value of the imperfect materiality found in ancient architecture, its cracks, patinas, chipped surfaces, and weathered tones, in contemporary packaging. The aim of incorporating these traces into the graphic language and material form of Buddhist offerings is to re-establish a corporeal porosity with Buddhist philosophy, particularly *anicca*, the

principle of impermanence. Such porosity introduces sensibility to otherwise functional and commodified spiritual artefacts.

The idea is closely related to *Wabi-Sabi*, a Japanese concept that finds beauty in imperfection, impermanence, and incompleteness as a paradigm for reinterpreting sacred design. When we view ageing as an asset, we recognise the decay of ancient architecture as a form of enduring beauty. Although subtle, such design interventions help users reconnect with the broader spiritual meanings that texture, form, and material decay convey.

Socio-religious transformation also redefines certain symbols and aesthetics as part of this adaptation. Despite the continued prevalence of customary Buddhist practices, Gen Z and Millennials are increasingly distancing themselves from institutionalised belief systems. In the United States, for instance, 44% of adults aged 18–29 are religiously unaffiliated, and globally, 30–43% of young adults identify as unaffiliated (ACCESS Newswire, 2023; AP News, 2023). Instead, many now identify as “spiritual but not religious” (SBNR), seeking forms of personal spirituality characterised by deep emotional and aesthetic resonance rather than institutional adherence.

Many young people are detaching themselves from organised religions but not spirituality. The worldwide market for spiritual and devotional products was estimated to be near USD 3.6 billion in 2022 and will reach nearly USD 8.3 billion by 2031. As per the National Retail Federation (2024), consumer spending on Easter in the US is expected to reach USD 23.6 billion in 2025, religious gifts and decorations. Religion-related activities and goods contribute about USD 1.2 trillion to the United States economy.

This contradiction presents a timely opportunity for the development of sacred products that retain their meaning yet resonate with the contemporary mind. Turner (2010) argues that the commodification of religion, particularly in Southeast Asia, shows how the market has become entangled with spirituality. This research does

not view this convergence as a threat but rather as a potential site of transformation where design can re-imbue devotional products with symbolic and aesthetic meanings.

By viewing Buddhist supplies through an architectural lens, packaging is understood as anything but neutral, it reveals our spirituality and culture. Using the eroding surfaces of ancient temples as a source of inspiration can provide visual motifs, textures, and materials for contemporary packaging, whether for sacred or secular products. This not only revitalises material religion but also offers new ways of engaging youth who seek authenticity, cultural resonance, and emotional richness in their spiritual practices.

As such, this study makes an important contribution to the discourse on sustainable spiritual design, visual semiotics, and aesthetics. It invites us to consider how imperfection, a quality often disregarded by industrial design, can become a powerful visual language for evoking the sacred, heritage, and inner transformation in the age of mass production and visual fatigue.

In addition to these cultural and aesthetic tensions, the theological foundation of merit-making also supports the importance of material form in Buddhist offerings. Merit (bun) is traditionally accumulated through intentional actions that cultivate generosity, morality, and mental discipline (Harvey, 2013). The offering materials therefore function not only as utilitarian items but also as symbolic instruments that mediate karmic exchange and reinforce the cyclical logic of giving. Contemporary packaging that obscures these values through overly commercial or synthetic visual identity can disrupt the ritual intentionality associated with bun-making, producing what scholars describe as a divergence between spiritual purpose and material presentation (Crosby, 2020). Understanding this theological dimension strengthens the relevance of reintroducing imperfection, patina, and architectural memory as conduits for reflective, meaningful merit practices.

1.2 Significant of Research

This section examines a significant tension in contemporary Thai religious life. While Buddhist devotional products retain economic and cultural value, younger generations are increasingly disengaging from institutional religion. Although Thailand is predominantly Buddhist, with roughly 67 million identified as Theravada Buddhists (World Population Review, 2025), this apparent homogeneity masks deeper shifts among the nation's youth

Millennials and Gen Z, in Thailand and globally, are increasingly disaffiliating from religion. A survey by the Survey Centre on American Life (2024) reports that, in the United States, 34 percent of Gen Z identify as religiously unaffiliated compared to 29 percent of Millennials. While comprehensive Thai data are not yet available, regional studies indicate a similar trajectory, with more Thai youth describing themselves as “spiritual but not religious” (Turner, 2010).

This disconnection from major religious institutions coexists with sustained personal spirituality, reflected in the global growth of spiritual and devotional goods. ACCESS Newswire (2023) estimates the market at USD 3.6 billion in 2022, projected to reach USD 8.3 billion by 2031. In the United States, Easter spending is expected to reach USD 23.6 billion in 2025, including gifts, decorations, and food (National Retail Federation, 2024). Religion's total economic contribution in the US exceeds USD 1.2 trillion, spanning ritual, goods, education, and services (Grim & Grim).

This duality presents an opportunity to engage younger audiences through design that moves beyond superficial minimalism. This thesis seeks to restore meaning and depth to contemporary Buddhist supplies by incorporating weathered textures, patinas, and architectural remnants. The architectural elements derived here from ageing religious buildings reflect Wabi-Sabi, which appreciates impermanence and imperfection, in contrast with the sterile perfection typical of modern packaging (Jain et al., 2024).

Moreover, within Southeast Asia's commercial spiritual economy, religious objects are increasingly pre-packaged, prioritising visual uniformity over symbolic depth (Turner, 2010). While ready-made Sangkhathan sets in Thai supermarkets are convenient, they may diminish reflective and ritual quality. The present study therefore proposes a design-led approach that restores layers of historical memory, cultural imperfection, and architectural depth, making sacred products more than mere visual attractions.

The study combines the themes of preservation, generational identities, and aesthetic authenticity to open new avenues for research. The paper contributes to the broader discourse in design studies, religious material culture, and visual communication. It offers practical solutions for designers, temples, and entrepreneurs responding to the rapidly changing needs of today's Thai Buddhists, particularly Millennials and Generation Z, who together number over 30 million and increasingly shape spiritual marketplaces with their demands.

Furthermore, the environmental and cultural concerns raised in this study align with several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), and climate action (SDG 13). Religious activities, including merit-making, are rarely discussed within sustainability discourses, yet the increasing use of non-biodegradable packaging materials contributes directly to plastic waste in temples and urban waste streams (UNEP, 2021). Integrating sustainable aesthetics and materials into Buddhist packaging therefore supports both cultural preservation and global sustainability objectives, reinforcing the broader societal relevance of this research.

1.3 Statement of the Problems

The material culture of devotional practice related to Buddhism in Thailand, particularly regarding Buddhist supply packaging, is becoming increasingly separated from its spiritual, historical, and environmental contexts, despite deep cultural embeddedness.

Sangkathan sets and merit-making supplies made from synthetic materials that do not decompose are now produced in massive quantities. These items often imitate consumer products, using shiny plastic, foil seals, and rigid boxes or packaging that obscure rather than enhance their ritual meaning.

This commodification raises several interrelated concerns. First, there is a visual and tactile disconnection between the packaging and the philosophy it represents, causing symbolic dissonance. The most affected concept is the Buddhist notion of impermanence (*anicca*) and non-attachment. These designs tend to reinforce habits of consumption and disposability rather than mindfulness or spiritual intention. Little is being done to address the environmental impact. Pooja Samagri, sacred items wrapped in unrecyclable plastic, generate tonnes of waste every year. Most of these items end up in temples and landfills without any official disposal protocol, despite being intended to generate good merit.

As younger generations such as Gen Z and Millennials have begun to engage with religion for its aesthetic, symbolic, or personal meaning rather than orthodoxy, traditional forms of Buddhist packaging seem unappealing. These generations seek emotional connection, ethical sustainability, and visual coherence in the things they consume, including spirituality. However, little academic or design-oriented attention has been given to how Buddhist packaging can evolve to align with these generations' values on ritual integrity.

In conclusion, research on design does not appear to connect the sacred with the textures, surfaces, and material traces of ancient Thai architecture. Architectural remains, such as weathered stones, moss-covered surfaces, and faded murals, possess linguistic and symbolic values that resonate with Buddhist cosmology and the concept of impermanence. However, packaging design almost entirely overlooks this archive of embodied meaning. As a result, sacred gifting may deteriorate into mere consumer goods rather than preserving cultural memory and contemplative value.

To address the problems above, this thesis proposes an innovative design paradigm: the imperfect traces of ancient architecture can be transformed into visual and material codes for contemporary Buddhist packaging. Through this approach, the study aims to connect the old and the new, the sacred and the utilitarian, the sustainable and the spiritual.

1.3.1 Industry Context

Thailand's Buddhist supply industry has evolved from its traditional, ritual-oriented roots into a modern, consumer-based merchandising sector. Products such as Sangkhathan sets, once specially made and distributed locally, are now packaged and sold in convenience stores, supermarkets, and through online sellers. These commercial formats are often designed more for visual uniformity, durability, and ease of transport than for symbolic depth or ritual sincerity. Komin (1990) noted that such changes are common in Thailand, where sacred elements and modernity often conflict, especially in urban areas. This evolution is not unique to Thailand. According to Turner (2010), throughout Southeast Asia, spiritual commodities increasingly reflect the dual pressures of religious devotion and capitalist consumption, resulting in products crafted for visual appeal that resemble consumer goods more than sacred items. The concept of "designer merit" packaging is on the rise, proposing that desired value can be accumulated through branding, colour, spatial construction, and product design that creates a particular effect.

1.3.2 Economy Impact

Devotional and spiritual products are gaining economic significance globally. The world market for devotional merchandise was valued at USD 3.6 billion in 2022 and is projected to reach USD 8.3 billion by 2031, growing at an annual rate of 8.7% (ACCESS Newswire, 2023). In the US alone, spending on gifts, food, and religious-themed decorations for Easter is expected to exceed USD 23.6 billion in 2025, (National Retail Federation, (2023). Thailand-specific figures may not be formally tracked; however, the local religious economy remains strong. According to the National Statistical Office of Thailand (2023), up to 93.5% of Thai people are Buddhists, and a significant amount of consumer behavior involves making merit, from donating at temples to buying offerings. Younger generations, such as Gen Z and millennials, now comprise over 55% of Thailand's population (World Bank, 2023). As this group has developed a stronger preference for products based on aesthetic and ethical values, their market influence has broadened the religious goods sector.

1.3.3 Environmental Consequences

While religious objects serve a spiritual function, many are not eco-friendly in modern times. Non-biodegradable items such as PVC wrap, foiled cardboard, and synthetic ribbons are used for pre-packaged products. Thailand generates over 2 million tons of plastic waste every year (Pollution Control & Programme, 2021) with no separation of waste considered religious or symbolic (Johnston & Phayakhrut, 2024). These materials contribute to plastic pollution in Thailand. It is notable that items considered sacred are often discarded almost without ritual consideration once merit is made. The packaging of these items is made from materials that facilitate this disposability. The plasticity, shiny surfaces, bright colours, and rigidity of these materials distance the objects from the natural cycles of decay and renewal that once reflected *anicca*. According to Jain et al. (2024), if meaning is not attached to design minimalism, it could become another form of consumer disengagement instead of serving as a site of spirituality.

1.3.4 Waste Management Challenges

The disposal of religious products presents a major paradox. The respectful disposal of sacred items is generally conducted by burning, burying, or reusing them. However, modern packaging materials are not compatible with these methods.

There is limited recycling potential for mixed-material components such as laminated plastics or metallic foils, which are typically incinerated or sent to landfill (Johnston & Phayakhrut, 2024). This ambiguity can lead to uncertainty regarding their disposal. Consumers are often unable to dispose of these materials appropriately and are unsure of alternative actions. This situation creates both material and ritual problems in this context. The packaging therefore combines ecological impact with a disconnect in signification. The research suggests that a carefully designed intervention employing cultural semiotics and architectural metaphors can address this gap. Such an approach would restore environmental awareness and ritual clarity.

The aesthetic disappearance of wear, age, and impermanence in contemporary packaging also contradicts long-established Buddhist material practices. Historically, ritual objects in temples have displayed visible signs of use, erosion, and natural degradation, which scholars interpret as material expressions of anicca and humility (Swearer, 2010). The absence of these qualities in modern, mass-produced devotional products creates a symbolic dissonance, where ritual materials appear overly pristine and disconnected from the embodied reality of Buddhist architectural heritage. This gap further reinforces the urgency to re-examine how material decay and architectural traces can be meaningfully reintegrated into contemporary design.

1.4 Hypotheses

This study is based on the premise that borrowed visual and material cues derived from ancient architectural features can be integrated into the packaging of

Buddhist products, thereby enhancing their symbolic significance and aesthetic relevance, as well as encouraging sustainable purchasing among youth.

The following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Packaging designs that evoke the appearance of old, crumbling buildings (with cracks, patinas, and erosion) will appear more spiritually authentic and emotionally resonant than traditional commercial Buddhist packaging.

H2: Users exposed to packages with architectural imperfections will experience a greater sense of mindfulness and contemplation and will perceive things more in line with Buddhist principles such as impermanence (*anicca*) than with standard designs.

According to the hypothesis, Gen Z and Millennial participants will be more aesthetically and emotionally attracted to sacred packaging that uses historical visuals and sustainable materials than older cohorts.

Incorporating timeless architectural features from heritage structures into the packaging design will positively influence participants' perceptions of the offering's cultural value, ecological nature, and ritual significance.

The aim of these hypotheses is to confirm the main statement of this thesis: that architecturally imperfect contemporary sacred design can address the symbolic and ecological gaps in current Buddhist packaging and engage with the changing aesthetics and values of younger generations.

To minimise researcher bias in interpreting architectural imagery and aesthetic qualities, the study employed a multi-stage selection protocol. Images of architectural traces were collected from multiple temple sites and cross-referenced with historical documentation to reduce interpretive distortion. The selection of patterns, textures, and forms was validated through iterative consultation with

practising designers, monks, and informed lay participants, ensuring that decisions were grounded in shared cultural understanding rather than personal preference. This process aligns with qualitative visual research standards that emphasise triangulation and reflexive interpretation (Rose, 2016).

1.5 Objective of Research and Contributions

This study aims to examine how visual and material elements derived from the imperfect traces of ancient Buddhist architecture, such as patina, erosion, and asymmetrical form, can be intentionally incorporated into the design of contemporary Buddhist packaging. The objective is to redesign the appearance and tactile qualities of puja items to appeal to modern consumers while preserving the essence and symbolism of prayer. This study contributes to design research by developing a hybrid design methodology at the intersection of heritage, visual semiotics, and contemporary packaging theory.

Additionally, this study makes three core contributions:

1. This research expands the theoretical discourse on spiritual material culture within the context of visual communication design.
2. The research introduces a practice-based design framework that operationalises imperfection as a communicative device within packaging aesthetics.
3. It offers insights relevant to sustainable design practices by advocating emotionally durable and culturally rooted spiritual products. These results will be useful for designers, scholars of religion, heritage professionals, and those seeking to achieve spiritual authenticity in modern material formats.

1.6 Research Questions

To address the main problem of the study, the following research question is posed: In what way can the imperfect visual traces of ancient Buddhist architecture be transformed into packaging designs for Buddhist items to ensure the preservation of rituals and enhance spiritual engagement among contemporary users?

Sub-questions include:

1. What are the primary physical and visual features of ancient Buddhist architecture? What is their symbolic significance?
2. How is contemporary packaging of Buddhist offerings is influenced by commercial, aesthetic and cultural factors?
3. How can the aesthetic principle of imperfection be revalorised in the design of sacred products?

A secondary research intention emerged from the reviewer feedback: to examine whether the theological meaning behind merit-making is sufficiently represented within the visual language of contemporary packaging. This sub-theme supports the central research question by ensuring that material form is assessed not only through aesthetic or cultural lenses but also through doctrinal significance, addressing a gap identified by scholars of Thai Buddhism who emphasise the need to align ritual materials with doctrinal meaning (Skilling, 2021).

1.7 Scope of the Research

The objective of this research is to study the packaging of Buddhist supplies for merit making; in particular, Sangkhathan sets in Thailand. The study explores how concepts of material and form can be drawn from the aesthetic of ancient temples of Southeast Asia, especially Thailand. While the study will not engage in theological

discourse, it will focus on the symbolic interpretation within the domain of graphic and product packaging design.

The analysis will be based on the qualitative findings regarding packaging trends and the visual analysis of the architectural remains. Additionally, the research will include a practice-based design demonstration. The target audiences comprise Thai Buddhists, especially younger generations like Gen Z and Millennials, who now access Buddhist products and practices in a mediated, aesthetic, and accessible way.

While the scope focuses primarily on Thai Buddhist practices, insights drawn from comparative traditions such as Japanese material aesthetics (e.g., Wabi-Sabi) are used only as conceptual parallels rather than primary cultural models. To maintain cultural specificity, the research prioritises Thai architectural motifs, local ritual practices, and domestic material culture. Cross-cultural references are included solely to illuminate design approaches that resonate with similar philosophies of impermanence and material humility.

1.8 Limitation of Research

This research is subject to several limitations:

1. The project is geographically confined to Thailand and may not fully consider the nuances across other Theravāda or Mahāyāna contexts.
2. The interpretation of ancient architecture through images can be subjective, and researcher bias may have influenced the selection of visual materials.
3. While user feedback from interviews and prototype evaluations was considered, the findings cannot be generalised to all Buddhist consumers due to the small sample size and qualitative nature of the study.

Finally, the research focuses on the material and symbolic nature of design and does not engage deeply in liturgical or canonical prescriptions that could affect the understanding of sacred offerings among various sects or regions.

A further methodological limitation relates to the scale and diversity of participants. Although the purposive sampling strategy allowed for depth of qualitative insight, the relatively small sample of Gen Z participants, monastics, and shop owners limits the generalisability of findings. This is consistent with qualitative design research, where the emphasis is placed on interpretive richness rather than statistical generalisation (Tracy, 2020). Nevertheless, this limitation highlights the need for future studies to include broader demographic groups to strengthen empirical validity.

1.9 Relationship Between Research Components

This research investigates Buddhist offerings and souvenirs, exploring how ancient architecture elements can be reinterpreted within modern design. The research methodology involves a qualitative examination of the design process, analysis of consumer feedback from diverse demographics in Thailand, and case studies on successful architecturally-inspired product design. The scope of this study excludes an analysis of production methods or a broad market analysis beyond defined demographic.

The study utilises a coherent framework that aligns its research objectives (RO), research questions (RQ), and scope, methodology, and expected outcomes. This integrated approach enables a detailed investigation into how the aesthetics of imperfect ancient architecture transformed into the modern Buddhist packaging.

The primary objective of the research is to develop a design methodology that reinterprets the imperfections found on ancient Buddhist architecture, such as cracks, erosion, and patina; for use as an aesthetic element in contemporary

packaging of Buddhist supplies. This goal addresses the main research question, which investigates how these sacred visuals can be adapted for contemporary packaging to maintain ritual significance within contemporary spiritual practices, particularly among younger generations with an affinity for aesthetics.

To address the main research question and inform a design that is symbolic, contextual, and emotional. This study employs a qualitative and practice-based methodology. This approach includes a visual analysis of ancient Buddhist architectural form, interviews to designers, temple-goers and packaging users, as well as the development of new packaging prototyping. The scope of the study focuses on Thai Buddhist offering practices and the associated material culture, which comprises assorted items for offering.

The relationship between the components and parts is based on the assumption that modern Buddhist packaging can recover spiritual power and cultural integrity by using a visual language of imperfection that draws on heritage structures. The design outcomes are assessed beyond their aesthetic appeal. Therefore, the outcomes should arouse emotional and spiritual responses that resonate with the Buddhist values of impermanence and humility.

In conclusion, the contributions expected from study to spiritual design practice, the discourse on religious material culture, and sustainable packaging all depend on the integration and articulation of all the parts. The research design ensures that each aspect works together to address the overall question of how visual remnants of the past can be rearticulated to serve present spiritual and visual needs.

This relationship is further informed by the theological framework underpinning merit-making. Visual identity, material selection, and ritual intention must interact cohesively to preserve symbolic meaning. By situating design practice within a doctrinally informed structure, the research ensures that its outcomes are not merely

aesthetic interventions but culturally and spiritually grounded contributions to contemporary Buddhist material practice.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

1.10.1 Imperfect Traces of Ancient Architecture

In this study, “imperfect traces of ancient architecture” are understood as cracks, aged surfaces, patina, and decayed textures found in older religious buildings. Modern design often overlooks these elements, which represent impermanence and beauty within a broader design ethos. They are particularly aligned with the Wabi-Sabi philosophy, which holds that contemplating the incomplete and transient enriches one’s spiritual depth (Koren 1994). In the Thai context, these traces transport us through time, history, and the sacredness of a particular decay.

1.10.2 Buddhist Offerings

Buddhist offerings are material items presented during merit-making and ritual practices, including Sangkhathan sets, monk robes, alms bowls, incense, candles, and other devotional objects. Buddhist communities celebrate the offering of food and drinks, especially fresh flowers and incense, at shrines and temples. Monks depend on villagers for their daily meals. According to Turner (2010), these offerings mediate between the sacred and the mundane, affirm the devotee’s commitment to Buddhism, and support monastic communities.

1.10.3 Graphic Elements: Colour, Font, Logo, Pattern, and Symbol

Contemporary packaging in the context of Buddhist supplies refers to the use of modern materials—such as plastics, foils, and cardboard—combined with minimalist design strategies, sustainability considerations, and user-centric presentation. This trend meets urban consumers' demands for convenience and aesthetic appeal but poses the risk of standardising or diluting the spiritual essence of traditional rituals. As Jain, Sharma, and Huang (2024) argue, packaging designed thoughtfully—balancing market expectations with spiritual meaning—can bridge

commercial needs and religious authenticity.

When applied to graphic design, key elements such as *colour*, *font*, *logo*, *pattern*, and *symbol* serve as visual codes that communicate both aesthetic and cultural values:

1. Colour: Traditional Buddhist colour palettes—such as gold, saffron, and white—convey spirituality, purity, and merit.
2. Font: Contemporary fonts often draw on Thai typographic traditions, such as looped or modern sans-serif styles, to evoke cultural identity and enhance readability (art4d, 2024).
3. Logo: Emerging brands of Buddhist offerings often use simple, symbolic logos that balance traditional icons with modern functionality.
4. Pattern & Symbol: Sacred motifs (lotus, Dharmachakra, Kanok, temple geometries) are reinterpreted in packaging decoration to invoke cultural memory and ritual resonance.

Together, these graphic elements offer a balanced means of visual storytelling—reinforcing spiritual meaning while addressing modern design expectations.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a critical review of relevant literature concerning the transformation of religious material culture, specifically, the design and packaging of Buddhist supplies in present-day Thailand. The primary aim is to position this research within current academic discourses on visual communication, sacred design, material semiotics, packaging theory, and religious consumption. Specifically, the review traces the history and philosophy of imperfection and transience in spiritual design and examines emerging trends in the commercialisation and aesthetic uniformity of sacred products.

This chapter structures the theoretical framework of the study into several key areas. It begins by examining Buddhist material culture and the Sangkhathan offerings. Next, it delves into aesthetics of architecture, focusing on the decaying structures of ancient monuments and their symbolic connection to impermanence and devotion. Subsequent sections discuss the philosophy of Wabi-Sabi and the significance of imperfection in design before exploring current packaging practices with a focus on their religious aspects. The chapter then examines shifting attitudes towards institutional religion among younger generations and the emerging economic geography of spiritual goods. Finally, it argues that these trends indicate an overriding shift towards individualised, aestheticised spirituality.

This chapter draws on literature from disciplines such as design studies, sociology of religion, semiotics, and consumer behaviour to examine the opportunities and tensions that arise when the sacred intersects with modern design. Identifying gaps in the existing literature, thus helps to justify a design-led investigation into the reconstruction of ancient architectural traces through packaging that reinfuses meaning into contemporary Buddhist gifts.

2.1 The Significance of Buddhist Ritual Objects in Thai Civilisation

Buddhist ritual artefacts in Thailand are not merely objects for religious ceremonies; they also encapsulate memory, continuity, and cultural heritage. The use of ritual objects helps to create a bridge between the material and the immaterial, whether for the daily offerings of the average devotee or for high temple ceremonies. The presence of ritual objects in Thai households or temple grounds reflects the philosophy of life of Thai people in relation to Buddhism. For them, Buddhism is not just a religion but a philosophy that permeates life, shaping values, aesthetics, and behaviour.

Their importance, however, extends beyond spiritual devotion. Artefacts reflect Thailand's long history of syncretism, political symbolism, and evolving cultural identity. Thai Buddhism has adapted to existing and changing environments over time. These artefacts demonstrate how it has engaged with modernity and how meaning can be embedded in material objects, including those that may appear fragile, broken, or even impermanent.

The current section begins by examining the early manifestations of ritual objects and their meanings during different periods of Thai history. It then considers how we use and interpret them today, when traditional forms of spirituality coexist with consumer aesthetics and new-generation practices. This realisation forms the thesis's key question: how the architectural imperfections of the past be redesigned into meaningful contemporary Buddhist supplies.

To strengthen the contextual foundation of this research, the theological dimension of merit-making requires clearer articulation. Merit (bun) operates within a karmic economy where intentional giving, humility, and moral discipline create positive spiritual outcomes (Harvey, 2013). Ritual objects therefore function as mediating tools that embody generosity and reinforce communal ties. As scholars of

material Buddhism note, the physical qualities of ritual materials influence how merit is perceived, transmitted, and embodied (Crosby, 2020). This perspective emphasises the importance of aligning packaging aesthetics with doctrinal meaning, particularly when visual design risks overshadowing the spiritual intention behind the offering.

2.1.1 Historical Background

The ornamental objects of Thai Buddhism have a long history shaped by negotiations of spirituality, politics, and aesthetics. The institutionalisation of Theravada Buddhism in Thailand began in the southern Nakhon Si Thammarat Sukhothai period. King Lithai's enhancement of the Trai Phum text presents a triadic cosmology of sensuality, form, and formlessness, situating the Buddhist world within a hierarchical cosmic order (Malikhao, 2017). The ritual objects produced during this period directly reflect the belief system, making merit accessible as a means of connection to the cosmic world order.

Buddhism integrated Brahmanic, animist, and Hindu elements as it spread during the Ayutthaya and early Rattanakosin periods, giving it the layered symbolic structure seen today. This syncretism was reflected in offerings, talismans, and temple motifs. Over the years, monarchs adeptly engaged with religious authority through intricate ritual participation, temple construction, and public offerings, using ritual ointments as both religious and political tools (Malikhao, 2017; Tulyasuwan, 2021).

The Rationalisation of Buddhism under King Mongkut (Rama IV) and King Chulalongkorn (Rama V): Education within the monastery was systematised to discourage all that is mystical elements. However, as modernisation advanced, the symbolic function of the ritual objects remained significant. According to Thammawat and Boonrawd (2021), these elements functioned not only as a means of offering but also as a medium of education.

The meaning of Thai Buddhist artefacts—historical and contemporary—can thus be understood as palimpsests of centuries of accumulation. The materials from which they are made often show signs of imperfection, decay, or use, such as weathered wood, frayed robes, and sooty incense bowls. As noted in recent scholarship, these imperfections are not mere flaws but are instead essential signals of authenticity, temporality and humility (Phra Suthithammanuwat, 2020). This concept is directly relevant to the present study, which is concerned with the reinterpretation of imperfect architectural traces into sacred packaging design, illustrating how through use, gesture, and intention, the imperfect becomes sacred.

2.1.2 Current Practices and Symbolism

In modern-day Thailand, while Buddhist ritual items remain central to religious life, their utility and meaning have been recontextualised. The religious sphere, once limited to the monastery and cloister, has been gradually appropriated, commercialised, and transformed into something aesthetic and emotional. The rituals practised today with these objects reflect a Buddhism that is traditional yet adaptive—highly symbolic, yet increasingly shaped by convenience, consumerism, and changing generational values.

Supermarkets, roadside stalls, and online sellers now offer pre-packaged, ready-to-offer ritual objects such as candles, robes, incense, and alms sets. The items are often colour-coded, laminated, vacuum-sealed, or wrapped in plastic displaying printed gold patterns; these layers carry additional visual codes that suggest purity, merit, and auspiciousness (Tulyasuwan, 2021). Although the objects remain sacred, their presentation now has a more consumer-oriented aesthetic—one that aligns with the pace of modern life. Even individuals who go to the temple to “make merit” (Tham bun; ทำบุญ) may no longer personally choose or prepare their offerings; they often buy pre-packaged sets, shifting the focus from personal engagement to a gesture of convenience.

The change in ritual practice reflects the broader phenomenon of popular Buddhism in Thailand. According to Malikhao (2017), many modern Thai Buddhists turn to amulets, fortune-telling, spirit-medium cults, and charismatic monks rather than canonical texts or other orthodox forms of Buddhism. The way we interpret a ritual object can be influenced by these alternative expressions of belief. A monk-blessed bracelet, for example, may serve as a spiritual emblem, a fashionable accessory, and a protective ornament. Similarly, an analysis of temple murals, coins, amulets, and Bodhi-leaf-shaped pendants may yield an interpretation based less on textual meaning and more on the feelings or memories they evoke.

The reasons for engaging with rituals are changing. As noted by Thananithichot and Chardchawarn (2022), more than one-fifth of Thai Buddhists reported that, for most of the time, they do not experience direct influence from their religion. Moreover, more recently, over 80% of Thai Buddhists reported participating in temple rituals. However, many Thai Buddhists stated that they participate for personal reasons, such as hoping for better health, mental calmness, or luck in business. This indicates a shift away from rigorous doctrinal practice towards a more utilitarian, emotional, and symbolic relationship with religion. In this context, Buddhist ritual objects are not only intended to accumulate merit for future rebirths but have also become tools for managing uncertainties in life, and for finding comfort or security in the present. What is emerging is a novel synthesis of faith, beauty, and practical usefulness. The aesthetic appeal of severely damaged or aged sacred objects, as discussed by Phra Suthithammanuwat (2020), reflects this trend. In Thailand, Buddhists consider a chipped statue or a smudged mural not as something to be discarded, but as a sign of good fortune. Whether it is the texture, weathering, or patina of a ritual item, these material qualities themselves become symbols. This symbolism highlights the importance of the fundamental Buddhist doctrines of impermanence (annica; อนิจจัง) and non-attachment (anatta; อนัตตา) in understanding the nature of all forms.

The aesthetic character of these weathered artefacts suggests their potential for creating a visual narrative in design. Objects that show visible signs of age or wear are viewed as more “real,” more emotionally grounded, and more spiritually charged than pristine, latest items. This concept holds significant implications for a design practice that aims to translate architectural traces into Buddhist packaging. This approach argues that authenticity is not about being ‘flawless’ but is instead achieved through the reconstruction of history, time, and spiritual weight through visuals.

Packaging, therefore, becomes more than a functional container. Architecture is a visual and material language through which belief is communicated. A lotus flower with a faded print, an embossed outline of a temple spire, or the uneven texture of recycled paper can each create a sacred ambience before the ceremony begins.

In many cases, practitioners today, whose canonical understanding differs from that of earlier generations, regard the image as a powerful symbol of religious literacy. Through its design, tactile quality, and visual familiarity, it connects us to Buddhism. People of Thailand today still make merit but not just because it is a tradition but also as a way to express their feelings and moral values.

Giving, or *dāna*, enhances our ethical awareness, sensitivity, and sense of responsibility towards others. In a world increasingly influenced by individualism and consumer values, this quality is particularly important. Rather than viewing ritual donation in transactional terms aimed at karmic return, people often perceive it as an inner cultivation process that encourages practitioners to move beyond the self for the benefit of others (Phongsak, 2019). There is some evidence suggesting that foundational Buddhist teachings regard generosity as the entry point for spiritual progress and social harmony.

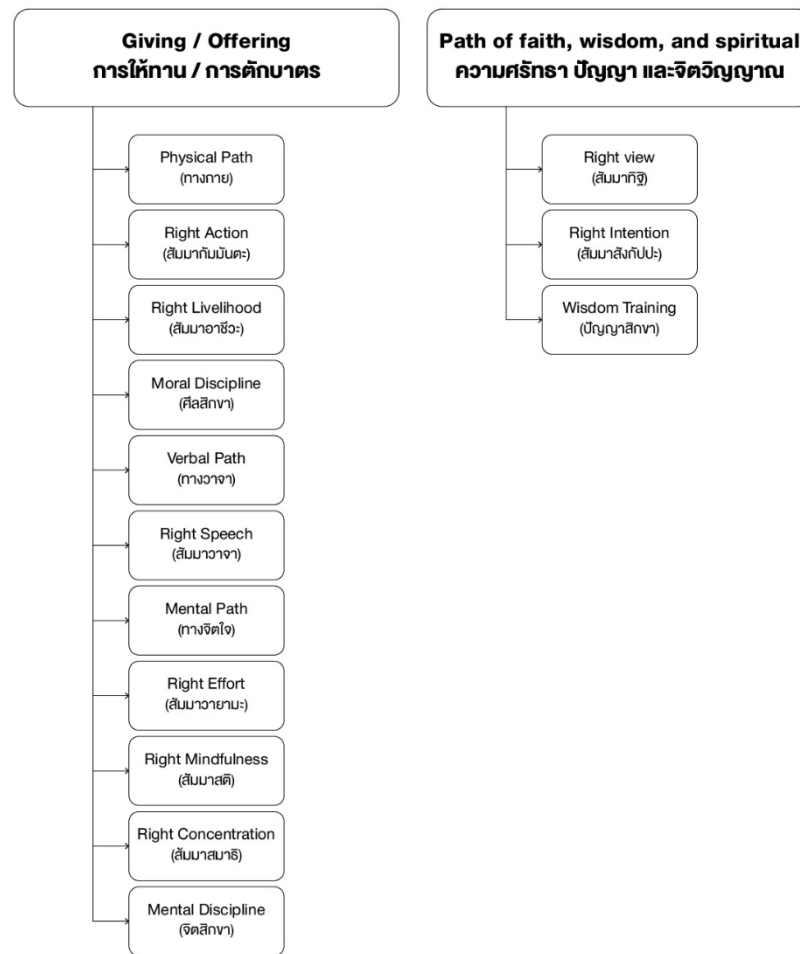


Figure 1 – The Path of Giving and Spiritual Development in Buddhism

Giving represents a form of cultural resistance in the context of globalisation. Through the symbolic offering of a lotus flower or a pre-packaged set of robes, ritualised generosity affirms a Thai identity grounded in local moral traditions. As highlighted by Phongsak (2019), the visual, material, and performative elements of merit-making practices shape collective memory through the expression of individual devotion. Thus, the ritual objects serve as carriers of belief and an ethical code of social conduct, reminding believers of their duties towards others.

Buddhist ritual objects can, therefore, be regarded as complex cultural artefacts rather than simply worship tools. Symbolic meanings that connect the

spiritual and material, as well as the personal and communal, continue to be conveyed. As we explore how ancient architectural fragments can be reimagined as contemporary Buddhist offerings, it is important to understand, that the value embedded in these forms lies not only in their shapes but also in their ethics and emotions. When designed with purpose, these objects can help extend culture and lead to new expressions of compassion, awareness, and belief.

In the end, modern ritual practice in Thailand shows that symbolism is becoming more varied. The meanings of ritual artefacts now include not only spiritual values, but also emotional value, aesthetic preference, and cultural memory. Due to the complexity of the situation, the main task for designers and researchers is not to preserve the forms, but to find new ways of expressing old truths, as long as these expressions correspond with modern life and new cultures.

2.2 Environmental and Social Challenges

Buddhist ritual artefacts, as they adapt to the realities of contemporary Thai society, increasingly find themselves at the intersection of pressing environmental and social issues. Although these objects still hold significant spiritual meaning, their forms, uses, and modes of consumption have undergone fundamental change, presenting several ethical, ecological, and intergenerational challenges. The rapid growth of mass production, increasing reliance on plastic, and rising use of disposable materials, mark a turning point for the future of both the environment and religious devotion. A widening gap between age-old tradition and the younger generation threatens the continuity of cultural knowledge, thereby undermining the spiritual relevance of these artefacts.

The changing situation requires fresh thinking about how we might incorporate Buddhist values such as mindfulness, compassion, and non-attachment into the design and distribution of ritual objects. Furthermore, a more nuanced

understanding of social currents, such as the personalisation of spirituality and the digitalisation of belief, is essential to redefine the role of these artefacts in everyday life. The next two sub-sections will address the current rituals' impact on the environment and the changing attitudes of the youth. Both issues are important for rethinking how Buddhist ritual objects can remain meaningful, ethical, and emotionally engaging over time.

2.2.1 Environmental Concerns

Many Buddhist rituals are rooted in traditions that embody mindfulness, non-attachment, and compassion. However, some contemporary practices inadvertently contribute to environmentally harmful actions. In Thailand, the burning of incense and candles, as well as the use of ready-made alms sets in ritual contexts, although spiritually significant, create environmental problems that conflict with the sustainability inherent in Buddhist teachings. One of the main problems is air pollution caused by daily incense burning in temples, homes, and spirit houses. Research suggests that burning incense emits significant quantities of PM2.5, CO, formaldehyde, and VOCs, especially in enclosed spaces (Qin, Song, & Jin, 2019).

The effects of NDS and household air pollution should not be underestimated. These emissions generate not only indoor air pollution but are also likely to contribute to environmental risk factors. Furthermore, such emissions peak during important religious festivals, when the use of pollution-emitting NDS increases. Exposure to respiratory disorders, cardiovascular strain, and carcinogenic effects has raised ethical questions about the consequences for spirituality and nature, experts say.

The issue has been exacerbated by the development of various pre-packaged ritual goods, a very recent phenomenon. Items such as candles, monk robes, lotus-shaped candles, and alms sets are now packaged in vacuum-sealed plastic, laminated foil, or

shrink wrap with mass-produced gold printing. Although these designs are intended to symbolise purity and merit, they contribute to the problem.

However, they are manufactured from non-biodegradable substances. Furthermore, this contributes to the accumulation of plastic waste, both in urban and rural temple sites. Contemporary offerings are rarely reusable or compostable, unlike traditional offerings, which were wrapped in banana leaves or natural fibres.



Figure 2 – Sangkhathan Offering Set with Bucket and Light Bulb
(Source: <https://www.หนึ่งสิ่งมงคล.com/สังฆทาน-ชุดถังและหลอดไฟ>)

When we consider our global environmental responsibilities, these practices relate to all the UN SDG targets. The burning of incense is an occupational hazard that leads to poor indoor air quality. A study conducted in Tamil Nadu showed increased levels of toxic pollutants in the air in temples. The monks and the pilgrims are not the only ones who will experience this situation. Most elderly people and children who accompany their families for merit-making will face this problem as well.

One of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calls for Shift to Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. The large-scale production of disposable religious items is a prominent example of contemporary unsustainable consumption and production patterns. Many ritualistic items are bought with the idea of merit, used for a short time, and then destroyed; they therefore have short lifespans. Ritual waste is, thus, endless.

SDG 13: Climate Action – The CO₂ emanating from incense burning, which is not often recognised as a significant source of pollutant, adds to the world's cumulative footprint through thousands of temples and homes. Essentially, harming the environment is not in line with the beliefs of Buddhism.

SDG 15: Life on Land – Improper disposal of the packaging and burnt remnants related to the rituals can pollute the temple campus, water systems and farming soils. This happens especially in temple forests, as these rituals spaces are often considered sacred and are used for specific rituals. Such pollution directly threatens local biodiversity and the health of terrestrial ecosystems, undermining the objectives of SDG 15.

The ecological inadequacy of rituals is relevant to the study's aim to re-envision Buddhist packaging through architectural traces. This research explores how artefacts of sacred architecture, such as tiles, carvings, and patterns, can be reinterpreted in packaging. This approach offers a twofold solution: conserving memory and reducing the environmental burden. The use of crushed temple tiles in recycled paper, or dyes based on ornamentation, may carry equivalent spiritual significance; however, such choices may not be strictly eco- friendly.

Additionally, the emotional and symbolic purpose of these ceremonial items remains unchanged when designers accept the impermanence (anicca; อนิจจัง) and non-attachment (anatta; อนัตตา) of Buddhist ideals. Honouring imperfection and decay in appearance and materials are a sustainable Buddhist recognition (MCC, 2021). Packaging that visibly ages, weathers, or degrades over time can symbolically enact the Buddhist life cycle, providing practitioners not only with a physical object to give away, but also an object lesson in non-attachment.

In this context, design becomes not merely a matter of form or convenience but an instrument for ethical transformation. According to the study by Qin et al. (2019), the use of electronic incense burners initially faced resistance but has shown potential to reduce emissions, while maintaining satisfaction with the ritual. Both designers and the spiritual community can navigate the fine line between authentic culture and sustainability. They can uphold the symbolic meanings without resorting to harmful practices.

In conclusion, environmentally sustainable ritual practice does not require discarding rituals but reinterpreting them through ethical design. Designers can create eco-conscious Buddhist packaging that draws on the visual and material language of participants' rituals to connect with both global and spiritual consciousness. This research proposes converting architectural artefacts into sustainable products as a strategy for cultural conservation and ecological intervention.

2.2.2 Engagement of Younger Generations

The challenge and opportunity in designing ritual objects for Thailand today lie in how this generational transformation in Buddhism is interpreted. Although Buddhism is part of Thai identity, younger generations are not adopting the same practices as their elders. They engage with spirituality in more personal, fragmented, and media-driven ways. This shift has profound ramifications for the perception, design, and consumption of Buddhist ritual objects today.

Recent studies confirm this change. Jitruay and Thananithichot (2023) have noted that, while being Buddhist remains important to youth, participation in rituals is selective and motivated more by emotional and practical reasons, such as hope for success, peace of mind, and protection, rather than by Buddhist doctrine itself. According to Wittberg (2021), many young people around the world are distancing themselves from institutional religion but remain spiritual, demonstrating that spirituality can take different forms.

In Thailand, young people are significantly exposed to a consumerist interpretation of Buddhism due to the celebrity monk trend and mega temples. According to Vanin (2020), Thailand's popular Buddhist figures embody celebrity culture as they appear on social media feeds, reality shows, and endorsements. The aesthetics of spirituality are transformed into a consumable offering. Although this may appear to be a matter of vanity, there is truth in the observation that the youth are not rejecting spirituality but are instead pursuing it through channels that are relevant, affective, and visual.

Similarly, consumerism influences Buddhists in their choice of lifestyle (Phonphakdee, 2019). People are no longer limited to do-it-yourself rituals for offerings, as these can now be packaged, customised, branded, and made available online. Young people who do not actively visit temples or shrines still connect with Buddhist symbols in their daily lives, for example, by wearing bracelets blessed by monks and burning candles that come in minimalist and designer packaging. This evolution of aesthetics allows design to reframe the ritual artefact in a way that reflects emerging values such as environmental responsibility, individuality, and emotional wellbeing.

The shift also aligns with educational philosophies that focus on emotional management and practical experiences. According to Phongphit and Hewison (2020), moral development in youth must be promoted through real-life and emotional experiences, rather than memorisation of precepts. This means that one should

avoid repeating traditional packaging or ritual objects, and instead provoke emotion, raise questions, and tell a story. The design of Buddhist artefacts, therefore, can serve as an educational and spiritual medium, enabling younger people to relate to Buddhism on their own terms.

This generates interesting possibilities, from a design perspective. Developing products that incorporate visual decay and simplicity, wabi-sabi, or the use of upcycled ancient materials would align with youth values of sustainability, mindfulness, and authenticity. Ritual items become agents of emotional expression rather than mere religious artefacts. While a gift may be ordinary, packaging can enhance its aesthetic appeal or suggest spiritual themes such as contemplation of impermanence, intention, and compassion.

Ultimately, the rationale in this section underpins the core argument of the thesis, which states that one-dimensional analysis is insufficient for judging the ritual artefacts of Buddhism, as they affect imaginative and cultural forms derived from their historical context and environmental concerns. Generational psychology is equally important. By employing design that is emotionally engaging, ethically appropriate, and aesthetically pleasing, the cultural continuity of Buddhism and its meaningful adaptation in the modern world can be addressed.

2.3 Aesthetic Concepts and Their Spiritual Meaning

The aesthetic aspect of ritual objects is not merely about surface beauty. It functions as a tool for meaning, spirituality, and identity. Within Buddhist practices, visualisation and touch play a key role in the perception and experience of sacredness. Whether in traditional rituals or modern lifestyle choices, design elements such as material texture, colour tone, surface irregularity, and visual motifs have become important means of expressing religious sentiment and continuity. In this section, we discuss two relevant aesthetics: the Japanese Wabi-Sabi and the significance of deterioration and (material traces). Both transform the remnants of

ancient architecture into a contemporary Buddhist context. Rather than concealing age or striving for perfection, their perspective emphasises authenticity, impermanence, and spiritual memory, which align closely with Buddhist philosophy. In doing so, they provide a philosophical and visual foundation for creating products that not only serve a function but also resonate with Thailand's living Buddhist heritage.

2.3.1 The Philosophy of Wabi-Sabi

The philosophy of Wabi-Sabi, rooted in Japanese culture, suggests that value lies in things that are imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. As both a philosophy and a visual language, Wabi-Sabi engages deeply with Buddhism, particularly in relation to the design of Thai ritual objects. Through its emphasis on impermanence and humility, it resonates with the Buddhist concepts of *anicca* (the impermanence of life) and *dukkha* (the suffering or unsatisfactoriness in life) and is relevant to the transformation of architectural remnants into spiritual packaging.

Wabi refers to the solitary beauty of nature and living in rustic simplicity with a certain elegance. Sabi denotes the beauty found in the wear and tear of time. Thus, wabi-sabi is the beauty of natural things that are imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. (Interior Design Course) In this sense, wabi-sabi celebrates textures that display age and imperfection, as well as asymmetry, and irregularity, in contrast to the Western emphasis on symmetry and perfection. The beauty of erosion, oxidation, or fragmentation invites meditation on the transience of life. The recognition of beauty in decay is not superficial but serves a spiritual purpose. As Saito (2017) emphasises, the aesthetics of aged or imperfect objects carry emotional and moral significance, encouraging deeper reflection on the nature of existence.



Figure 3 – Image of a Japanese Tea Bowl

A classic example of Wabi-Sabi is that of a bowl whose cracks have been repaired with golden lacquer (kintsugi). Haragayato. (2016, July 1). Kintugi [Photograph].

Wikimedia Commons. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kintugi.jpg>.

This philosophy invites us to reconsider how we communicate sacredness in Buddhist offerings. Designers do not need to use shiny plastics or gold-laminated finishes to create a spiritual mood. Rather, rough textures, muted tones and uneven edges are sufficient, as they reflect the material's natural decay. These imperfections are not flaws but poetic cues. They reflect *mono no aware* (物の哀れ)—the 'pathos of things': the recognition that nothing is permanent, together with the gentle sadness this brings (Ng, 2019). In this sense, *wabi-sabi* does not merely beautify decay but spiritualises it.



Figure 4 – Shigaraki Unglazed Tea Bowl (Chawan)

A rustic bowl from the Shigaraki area of Japan, which is made in a wood burning kiln, a bowl without glaze. Zunkir. (2019, October 27). Chawan orangé à glaçure laiteuse – Labit [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons.

(Image Source:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chawan_orang%C3%A9_%C3%A0_gla%C3%A7ure_laiteuse_-_Labit.jpg.)

This sensitivity is becoming increasingly prominent in the context of contemporary Buddhist design in Thailand, as new generations of designers grapple with how to maintain manifestations of transcendence amid ecological and cultural change. Heine (2021) argues that Buddhist aesthetics have always engaged with the material world in fluid and adaptive ways, drawing on lived experience and local expressions rather than strict doctrine. In this framework, Wabi-Sabi is more than a Japanese philosophy; it is a transnational spiritual design strategy. The perfect packaging of Buddhist ritual objects invites one to reconsider the very notion of perfection, seeking a vocabulary of form that is understated, soulful, and honest.

While Wabi-Sabi provides a useful comparative lens, Thai cultural aesthetics also contain indigenous philosophies of imperfection. Concepts such as khwam mai

sombun (ความไม่สมบูรณ์ – incompleteness), phap ruen kao (ภาพเรือนเก่า – aged domestic architecture), and tamnan (ตำนาน – layered historical traces) emphasise authenticity, temporal depth, and the emotional resonance of ageing materials. Thai aesthetics prioritise the emotional memory of surfaces, where wear, erosion, and patina communicate sincerity and humility (Nitibhon, 2019). These ideas mirror the spiritual acceptance of impermanence in Theravāda Buddhism, grounding the design direction in local cultural logic rather than importing foreign philosophies.

2.3.2 Symbolism in Material Traces and Decay

In the Buddhist universe, materials always possess significance, emotional charge, and karmic potential. The spiritual meaning of an object with cracks, weathering, or decay is not a sin. When we deal with ruined elements or architectural fragments, the power of symbolism gradually increases. These elements hold spiritual residue and considerable historical depth. In this study, ancient architectural traces are analysed and reinterpreted through modern packaging. The material decay of these traces thus gains symbolic charge to facilitate spiritual communication.

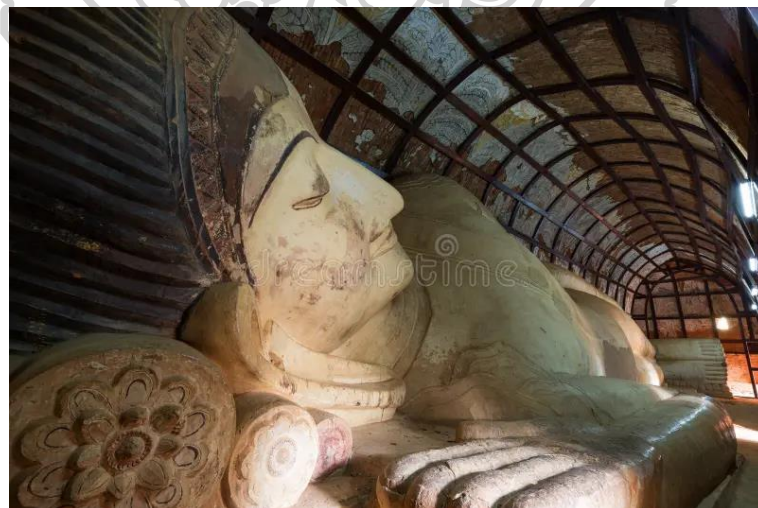


Figure 5 – Weathered Buddha Head from Bagan

This image from Bagan, Myanmar, is famous for showing the head of a Buddha who gets daily weathered off for years. Photographer Unknown. (n.d.).

Buddha statue in Bagan, Burma (Myanmar) [Stock photograph]. Dreamstime. Retrieved July 18, 2025, from <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-photo-huge-statue-reclining-buddha-inside-temple-bagan-metre-long-th-century-shinbinthalyaung-myanmar-burma-image92436417>

Decay here does not mean something is neglected. It is a continuous process. A ragged edge of a tile, chipped paint, or erosion on stone can all serve as visual metaphors for *samsāra* – the cyclical existence of birth, death, and rebirth. Changes to the body, including grey hair, are a persistent reminder that all things are impermanent (*sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā*). Preserving and highlighting these marks is a ritual of mindful remembrance, rather than hiding or erasing them.

Cultural memory is also embedded in these materials. In the Buddhist context of Thailand, the restoration of temples typically preserves certain existing weathered elements. These elements are considered sacred not because of their utility, but because they are spiritually significant. According to Saito (2017), the aesthetics of imperfection often emerge from the relationship between the object, its history, and the community. A Buddha figure carved from weathered wood, with features faded by age, may not appear attractive. However, such a figure is believed to be more powerful, as it has accumulated greater ‘charge’ from years of prayers, incense, and tears.



Figure 6 – Picture of Wooden Buddha Statue from Ayutthaya Period

This 450-year-old wooden buddha from Ayutthaya is crackly and discoloured.

Nevertheless, it is a much-admired piece.

(Source: <https://puttharugsa.com/พระพุทธรูปไม้โบราณสมัย>)

These material traces are also connected by karmic continuity. The deterioration of surfaces serves as a symbol to remind us that nothing in this world is fixed, as the Buddha taught long ago. Employing this kind of symbolism in packaging design allows new forms to retain an old spirit. Rough textures that suggest erosion can serve as tools for invoking sacred presence. Using recycled materials, unfinished surfaces, or faded designs on packaging does not only indicate sustainability; it also signifies spirituality. Myra Batchelor used the offering to give this term a particular charge.

When creating contemporary ritual items, most of which are derived from and imitate ancient architecture, decay is not only an aesthetic consideration but also an ethical one. It acknowledges the enduring nature of time and history, as well as the modesty of form. Designers could explore materials that reveal their own life and transformation, thus offering users a lasting invitation to engage with the object and its meaning, rather than creating surfaces that merely imitate timeless imperfection.

2.4 Ancient Architecture as Cultural and Visual Heritage

Ancient architecture across Asia, particularly in Thailand, serves not only as physical heritage but also as a visual and symbolic archive of cultural values. These structures bear traces of artisanry, spiritual devotion, and social order. Their weathered surfaces—cracks, patinas, or faded ornamentation—convey meanings beyond material decay. They stand as living texts, revealing the impermanence of existence while embodying the resilience of cultural memory. For this research, photographs from fieldwork have been selectively included to illustrate how these imperfect traces appear in situ and how they may be transformed into contemporary design languages.

The following fieldwork photographs below illustrate how imperfect traces of ancient architecture embody layered meanings across diverse cultural contexts. These visual records provide tangible evidence of how time, weathering, and human interaction transform surfaces into symbols of impermanence and continuity.

In Macau, China, carved wooden panels and painted latticework reveal layers of erosion and fading, where ornamentation continues to communicate symbolic value despite surface decay. **In Agra, India**, the red sandstone reliefs and floral carvings exhibit softened edges and chipped surfaces, demonstrating how imperfection becomes a visual metaphor for endurance. Similarly,

fragments and arches illustrate how cracks and weathering alter in detail, with erosion itself forming part of their historical identity. **In Jaipur, India**, patterned

plaster walls and painted motifs display peeling layers and fading pigments, producing a textured record of architectural fragility and the passage of time. Finally, **in Bangkok, Thailand**, temple mosaics and stucco floral motifs reveal discolouration, broken fragments, and moss growth, where damage is transformed into a medium of aesthetic and spiritual resonance.

These examples illustrate how imperfection across geographies can be seen not only as deterioration, but also as aesthetic and symbolic cues. Such traces become valuable references for contemporary design, especially when reinterpreted into graphic elements and packaging that seek to connect the sacred past with present-day practices.

The aesthetic of weathering has been widely discussed in architectural and conservation theory as a material index of time. Scholars argue that patina, surface erosion, and structural deterioration serve as visual records of human use, environmental exposure, and historical continuity (Pallasmaa, 2012). These traces provide emotional depth by revealing the relationship between people, materials, and temporality. Within Buddhist contexts, weathering can also symbolise *anicca*, where ageing surfaces prompt reflection on impermanence and humility (Swearer, 2010). Incorporating these principles into packaging design therefore reconnects devotional products to a long-standing architectural vocabulary deeply embedded in Thai religious environments.

Source Locations	Imperfect Traces of Ancient Architecture
Macau, China	
Agra, India	
Delhi, India	
Jaipur, India	
Bangkok, Thailand	

Table 1 – Visual References of Sacred Architectural Motifs Collected from Field Observation

2.4.1 Historical Context of Ancient Thai and Asian Architecture

The evolution of architecture in Thailand and wider Asia results from the interweaving of religious doctrine, political authority, and cultural symbolism. In Thailand, stupa-like chedis and prangs became prominent during the Sukhothai and Ayutthaya eras, serving as physical embodiments of Buddhist cosmology. These structures often symbolise Mount Meru as the cosmic axis, with central stupas surrounded by satellite elements arranged in mandala-like layouts, particularly evident in Wat Mahathat at Sukhothai Historical Park (McDaniel, 2017). Beyond Thailand, structures such as Cambodia's Angkor Wat exemplify the temple-mountain metaphor, where tiered central towers represent Mount Meru, encircled by moats symbolising the cosmic ocean (Freeman and Jacques, 2006).

2.4.2 Iconography, Ornamentation, and Structural Elements

In ancient Asian religious architecture, ornamentation functions as symbolic communication rather than mere decoration. Thai temples feature lotus motifs symbolising purity, Naga serpent carvings serving as guardians, and Kanok patterns derived from lotus and sacred flame forms (Government of Thailand, 1996). Structural elements such as prang towers in Ayutthaya temple complexes suggest vertical movement, creating a visual connection between earth and the divine (Ives, 1988). Khmer temples, through narrative bas-reliefs such as the Churning of the Ocean of Milk, incorporate cosmological stories directly into architectural surfaces (Freeman & Jacques, 2006).

2.4.3 Preservation, Decay, and the Aesthetics of Imperfection

Heritage conservation across Asia often balances careful restoration with an appreciation of historically worn textures. In Thailand, faded murals and weathered Buddha images are sometimes revered rather than replaced, as spiritual authenticity is found in age-worn surfaces (Jirakkajorn, 2014). This aesthetic sensibility aligns with the Japanese concept of wabi-sabi, which embraces imperfection, impermanence, and incomplete beauty (Juniper, 2018). The sensory qualities of decay—crumbling stucco, patina, moss—are not merely historical evidence but vividly embody both fragility and endurance, making them valuable sources of design inspiration.

2.4.4 Translating Architectural Traces into Contemporary Design Language

The reinterpretation of architectural traces for modern design is not replication but reimagining. The textures of cracks in stone walls, the muted hues of patinated metal, and the asymmetries in ornamentation can inspire graphic linework, colour palettes, or packaging patterns. These design choices evoke heritage and authenticity while addressing contemporary aesthetic sensibilities (Cross & Proctor, 2014). By incorporating such traces into Buddhist packaging, design moves beyond utility and becomes a vessel for cultural memory and spiritual resonance.

2.5 Packaging Design in Buddhist Supplies

Packaging theory provides several dominant models that help explain how consumers interpret material cues. Underwood (2003) conceptualises packaging as a holistic brand communicator, where colour, texture, and form trigger associative meanings before verbal information is processed. Meanwhile, Rettie and Brewer (2000) describe packaging as a semiotic system in which visual elements function as signs that signal quality, intention, and cultural identity. These models support the relevance of integrating culturally meaningful textures and patterns into merit-making packaging, as such cues can shape emotional perception and spiritual resonance.

Material communication theory further emphasises that physical qualities such as roughness, grain, reflectivity, or natural imperfection influence how objects are valued and interpreted (Karana et al., 2015). In devotional contexts, materials that appear too synthetic, glossy, or mass-manufactured may distance the object from ritual authenticity. A design approach that embraces textural irregularity and muted tonality can therefore evoke humility and sacredness, aligning with Thai spiritual aesthetics.

The selection of packaging theory for this study is grounded in its suitability for analysing aesthetic perception in non-commercial contexts. While many frameworks were developed for consumer goods, their principles remain applicable because merit-making items also operate through visual signalling, emotional influence, and cultural symbolism. This alignment justifies the use of packaging semiotics and material communication as the primary theoretical lenses for this research.

2.5.1 Buddhist Supply Sets of Traditional Form

Ritual offerings, particularly in the form of Sangkhathan sets, are a common religious practice in Thai Buddhist life. These packs typically contain useful items such as robes, toiletries, canned food, and similar necessities. They are believed to transfer merit to the donor and assist the recipient monk in his duties. Rooted in Theravada traditions, these offerings hold both symbolic and practical value. The items are often packaged in a transparent plastic container or bucket, representing merit and benefit.

While functioning as intended, traditional Sangkhathan sets are often mass-produced and commercial in appearance, focusing solely on performance rather than spirit. The sanctity of the act, which is not apparent from the packaging as all

sets appear similarly slick and plasticised, reduces rich traditions to a commodified kit. This homogeneity also reflects a way of life, ensuring the continuity of culture and identity. According to research by the Fine Arts Department of Thailand, these sets are largely influenced by historical models of Dana, or generosity, within the framework of Thai Buddhism, where visual form follows religious function. (Fine Arts Department of Thailand, 2019).

The traditional Sangkhathan bucket is a well-known merit-making basket in Thailand. Show proof of good health when you leave. Instead, choose to state illnesses. You owe it to others. These sets raise important design questions, despite their cultural rootedness. Is sacredness compatible with sustainability? How does the reimagining of traditional forms affect their meritocratic value?

2.5.2 Contemporary Buddhist Product Design

Buddhist design in Thailand has changed in recent times due to consumer consciousness, aesthetics, and environmental awareness. Modern ritual offerings aim to merge visual elegance with cultural symbolism. Buddhist product design by studios and young Thai artists is evolving with the times. They are promoting new products that remain relevant to the lifestyles of young people while still serving as spiritual tools.

As a result, gold lamé wrappings and plastic buckets are being replaced with biodegradable, reusable packaging, minimal and graphic layouts, and muted colour palettes. These designs reflect ecology and embody the values of mindfulness, simplicity, and elegance found in conventional Buddhism.

This shift has been aided by the emergence of social media and carefully arranged images. According to Niyomsilpa (2020), in the Thai Buddhist world, consumerism is being redefined through personalisation, ethical sourcing, and visuals.

A hybrid of sacred artefacts and aspirational commodities reflects the new spiritual lifestyle, combining elements of primitive and modern Indian and Chinese Buddhism.



Figure 7 – Buddhist Offering in Minimalist Design

(Source: <https://www.sirinanmongkol.com/product/สังฆทานชะลอมปิ่นโตกลม-8>)

2.5.3 Packaging as a Medium of Belief and Ritual

In Buddhist ritual, packaging is not merely a utilitarian resource, it serves as a semiotic and emotional interface between the practitioner and the divine. Packaging's visual language—materials, colours, textures, and writing—conveys sanctity, purpose, and culture. The ritual's first point of contact defines the giver's mindset and the receiver's understanding. Ritual packaging contains symbolic codes, as noted by Sangkhavasi (2023), which determine how an offering is judged in terms of purity and value, as well as the amount of merit gained from the offering. The transparent pail, for example, symbolises the value of “visible giving” in Thailand, highlighting honesty, transparency, and a form of shared belief. In contrast, materials that are opaquer or more natural may ensure modesty.

Through the use of packaging, transitions are marked along two axes: the first between the mundane and the sacred, and the second between the giver and the monk, as well as the material and the unseen. Therefore, it eventually attains significance far beyond its mercantile provenance. The design and packaging incorporate ritualistic and spiritual uses that render the packaging sacred.



Figure 8 – Symbolic Inscriptions and Sacred Eco Materials Cover The Ritual Packaging
(Source: Siam Green Eco)

2.5.4 Packaging Theory and its Effects in Religion

The Packaging theory used in marketing and consumer behaviour studies addresses how the design, material, structure, and visual cues of packaging influence customers' perceptions of a product and their purchasing decisions. Although often discussed mainly in relation to commercial products, this theory demonstrates how packaging can function symbolically and experientially. It can also be applied more broadly to religious and spiritual contexts, such as Buddhist offerings.

In a religious context, packaging is considered more than a container; it serves as an intermediary for beliefs, symbols, and rituals. The systematic use of offerings—whether a Sangkhathan basket or packaged merit goods, requires a language beyond mere utilitarianism. The packaging's visual design, texture, and material become

extensions of the act, reflecting concepts of karma, impermanence, and merit-making. Here, packaging is both message and messenger.

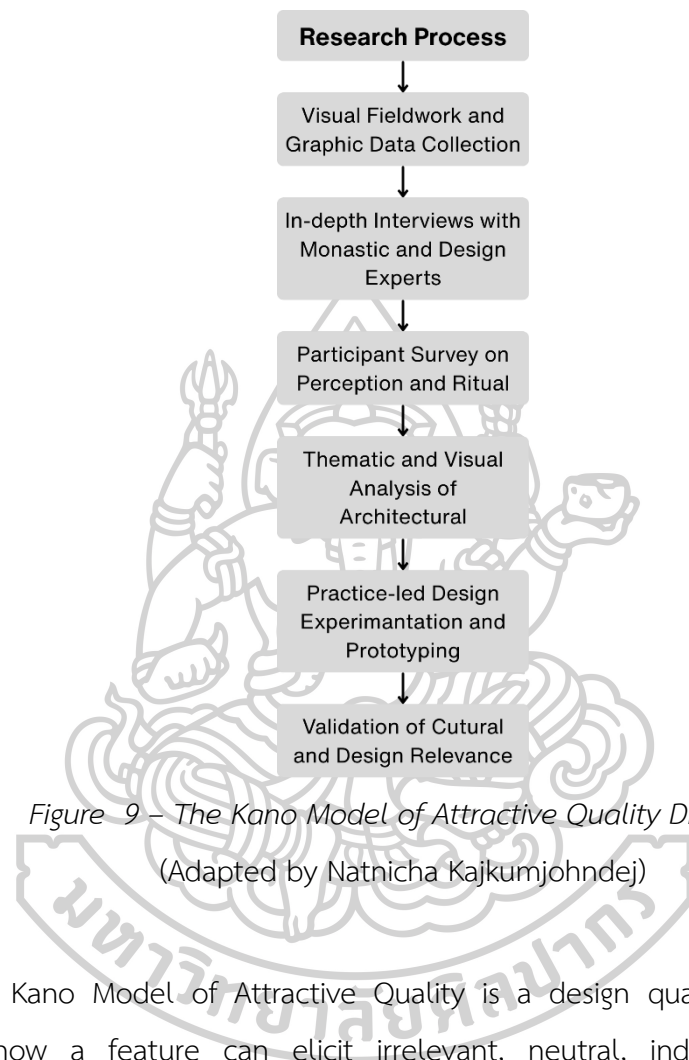


Figure 9 – The Kano Model of Attractive Quality Diagram
(Adapted by Natnicha Kajkumjohndej)

The Kano Model of Attractive Quality is a design quality framework that describes how a feature can elicit irrelevant, neutral, indifferent, delight, or satisfaction responses. Although the original focus was on quality engineering and product development, religious product design closely follows its principles. In this model, packaging elements can be categorised as follows. Basic needs (Must-Be Quality) are the essential quality attributes, if these are not fulfilled, they cause displeasure, but their fulfilment does not result in satisfaction. Hygienic wrapping, arrangement, and labelling may be part of religious packaging.

Performance characteristics are those that customers prefer more and dislike less. Eco-friendly materials, ease of handling, and clear spiritual messaging can be provided in this context.

Excitement needs (attractive qualities) are attributes that are not expected, and result in delight when discovered. Buddhist offerings can also be made from waste, such as fragments of sacred architecture, scripts from mantras, incense in holders made of biodegradable material, and the use of aged textures inspired by Wabi-Sabi.

When designers interpret Buddhist packaging using this framework, it can incorporate emotion, meaning, and surprise in addition to function. A packaging design that reveals a blessing after unwrapping, or one that uses recycled materials from temples, can transform a mundane act into an emotional ritual. The aim is not to be “contained” but rather “conveyed”.

Saito (2017) states that design aesthetics for spiritual purposes must prompt mindfulness and emotional involvement in the user or participant. As spiritual products become increasingly commercialised in urban Thailand, applying Kano’s model allows designers to maintain a balance between traditional values and contemporary consumer appeal.

2.5.5 Innovation in Material and Format of Modern Offerings

Present-day Buddhist gifts are changing in shape and purpose. Due to environmental concerns, generational differences, and changing urban lifestyles, what is offered, and how it is offered are being reinvented by designers. In this evolution, innovation in materials and formats plays a pivotal role in connecting the sacred with the sustainable.

Religious packaging in Thailand is characterised by gold foiling, cling film, and mass production. Despite their allure, these materials often conflict with core Buddhist values. In contrast, contemporary innovations use recycled paper, biodegradable containers, natural dyes, woven palm leaves, or reused wood fragments from temples or ancient structures.

These innovative designs reflect culture and benefit the environment simultaneously. According to a recent trend observed by Sareh in 2023, sustainability is no longer limited to activists. Increasingly, designers are adopting circular design principles, aligning packaging life cycles with Buddhist cosmology, in which things are born, decay, and transform.

Format innovation is equally important. The use of modular packaging, collapsible baskets, and stackable structures improves the logistics of goods while also suggesting ideas of impermanence and adaptability. Contemporary Sangkhathan sets are often designed with multi-use components. For example, the packaging itself can become part of the offering, such as reusable cloths, foldable altar pieces, and items that can be repurposed as flowerpots or candle holders.

Furthermore, these materials and the structural choices made correspond to the “Excitement Needs” category of Kano’s model, wherein a mundane offering becomes a poetic object that can delight users. The act unwrapping the offering is transformed into a ritual of gratitude. This layered experience strengthens and enhances the spiritual transaction between giver and receiver.

These innovations have not been reduced before; they reinvent it. As highlighted in *Dynamic Encounters between Buddhism and Contemporary Culture*, reinterpretation of Buddhist objects drives innovation, rather than outright rejection. Therefore, packaging becomes a spiritual agent of decay, karmic echoes, and mindful transformation.

2.6 Graphic Identity and Visual Communication

Visual communication has been integral to religions and rituals since time immemorial. In Buddhist cultures, the significance of symbolism, graphic form, and typography far exceeds purely aesthetic considerations. In contemporary Buddhist material culture, graphic design continually preserves sacred codes from the past to serve present-day authority. This section examines how graphic systems are used by ritual objects to communicate spiritual value, particularly in a Thai context. It also explores script in Buddhist communication, as well as the mystical and cultural values of the scripts and fonts employed.

In addition, Visual hierarchy plays a key role in shaping how viewers interpret religious packaging. According to Lupton (2014), typographic scale, spacing, weight, and rhythm determine the emotional tone of a design and influence perceived sincerity or sacredness. In Thai contexts, the verticality and curvature of traditional letterforms evoke cultural familiarity and spiritual solemnity (Pongpairoj, 2018). Including visual examples, particularly of long vertical strokes and Lai Thai motifs, is essential for helping readers understand these compositional references, especially for non-Thai audiences.

2.6.1 Graphic Design and Visual Language in Ritual Objects

The designs and other visuals found on ritual objects in Thai Buddhism are not coincidental; they intentionally convey messages about hierarchy, auspiciousness, and the connections between the mundane and the sacred. Symbols, such as the lotus flower, Dharmachakra (wheel of law), and images of the Buddha, are framed within symmetrical compositions and bordered by flame-like patterns or Kanok. These elements serve as markers of the divine and as protective motifs that indicate sacred space (Chandler, 2023).

The positioning and alignment of graphic details in ritual design are based on the cosmological principles of the Buddhist church. Mandala-inspired grids are

discretely incorporated into the murals of many temples and inside the offering trays to create a sense of balance and to focus the eye. Offerings usually appear as incense boxes. Other examples include alms sets or chanting book covers. These often use gold foil on dark red, orange, or black backgrounds. The use of negative space is also very important, as empty spaces are not simply voids; rather, they contribute to the unseen space, which embodies Shunyata—emptiness, with potential (Tan 2020).

Today, these visual codes are interpreted in new materials and formats, such as green packaging or digital altar kits. However, symbolic grammar remains consistent. For instance, the digital prayer apps still retain the saffron hues and lotus motifs of physical worship, indicating continuity in visual languages. Graphic design is used in religious contexts not merely as ornamentation; rather, it functions as ritually meaningful signs that enable the faithful to engage in their spirituality and assert doctrine (Naing, 2022).

2.6.2 Font Design and Sacred Typography in Thai Religious Contexts

Typography plays a unique and powerful role in Thai Buddhist communication, particularly in conveying authority and sacredness. The choice of typeface is often ritualised. Thai script used in sacred texts or ritual announcements frequently employs angular, structured forms that recall ancient inscriptions or Lanna-style lettering. These typographic choices suggest an ageless and ceremonial permanence.

In temple signs, memorial plaques, and printed chanting guides, similarly designed typefaces are used: long vertical strokes, tight letter spacing, and increased space between lines. The rhythm of the typography slows the pace of reading, reflecting the meditative nature of chanting. Stone inscriptions at ancient temple sites serve as the source of form for many fonts, which are carefully designed to connect the present moment to thousands of years of devotion (Sattar, 2023).

In recent times, designers have created fonts specifically for Buddhist and spiritual places. These fonts may contain ornamental loops or flourishes inspired by the **Kranok** pattern. They may also exhibit asymmetry to align with the Buddhist ideology of accepting natural imperfections. The text explains that creating a holy font or typography is not merely for appearance; it is a form of visual theology related to karma, merit-making, and the sacredness of words.

In contemporary Buddhist supplies packaging, sacred writing often distinguishes a ritual object from a commodity. For example, traditional users may reject a font that appears particularly sleek or Westernised because it lacks the appropriate tone of reverence. Consequently, designers must balance readability with cultural relevance, and spiritual symbolism. As Wongthong and Saelim (2023) note, a typographic form is considered sacred due to its visual characteristics as well as its historical and emotional associations. The use of sacred typography is therefore both instrumental and spiritual. It is a crucial aspect of the graphic identity of Buddhist material culture, transforming printed letters into visual chanting that guides both the eye and the spirit.

2.6.3 Logos, Branding and Identity in Spiritual Products

In the design of spiritual goods today, logos and branding are not merely identifiers, but vessels of meaning that encapsulate spiritual values, traditions, and emotional significance. Whether Buddhist amulets, their incense packaging, or other deity-related items, the branding of such spiritual objects must be both commercial and cultural. A logo can be an excellent reflection of a culture or a religion. Company logos are designed to appear familiar yet distinctively convey an identity.

A good spiritual brand will likely include semiotic elements that convey values such as purity, tranquillity, wisdom, and enlightenment. For example, because of their strong spiritual associations, symbols like the lotus flower, dharma wheel, or mandala are often incorporated into the logo design of Buddhist products. These

religious symbols attract religious consumers to the product and also provide visual legitimacy by infusing the product with religious meaning (Sardana et al. 2018).

The visual system of a brand, including its font family, colour palette, and symbol, can influence trust and relationships. Consumers often perceive products associated with a spiritual brand as more trustworthy and possessing moral authority, especially if the brand's visual identity is consistent and respectful, according to Sardana et al. (2018). In such cases, branding becomes not only a corporate means of communication but also a spiritual one.

Moreover, the emotional and aspirational aspects of spirituality are often embedded in brand narratives and designs. For instance, in the souvenir market for religious objects in Thailand or India, the packaging is often a beautiful gold colour with a calligraphic typeface and images that evoke divinity or holiness (Schroeder, 2012).

According to the ERIC report on graphic design education (ED652228), students who learn to brand spiritual products are often encouraged to examine in depth the cultural and religious codes of the people for whom they are designing. As a result, the brand identity created will respect both the visual trends and the spirit. Branding becomes a teaching tool that emerging designers use to understand design ethics and consumer insights.

Hence, in spiritual design, the logo and branding serve not merely a decorative purpose, but also function as agents of belief, culture, and market differentiation. A spiritual brand has the capacity to inspire reverence through design. As a result, it establishes trust, enhances value perception, and enables consumers to use symbols within a market increasingly enriched by the sacred within the secular.

2.7 Architectural Patterns and Visual Translations

In the Buddhist and wider Asian worlds, architecture is filled with patterns that hold much more significance than mere decoration. These patterns visually convey cosmological, philosophical, and spiritual meanings. Architectural motifs commonly found in temples, stupas, gateways, and internal sacred spaces express a language of coded meanings linked to religion, history, and region. The patterns and forms present in these spaces are not simply decorative but represent a transformation of beliefs into space and form.

There is a notable increase in the use of traditional architectural elements, particularly in spiritual products. This study refers to the process as visual translation, which involves the extraction of elements from sacred or heritage architecture for application to objects, packaging, or visual communication systems. Nonetheless, some degree of interpretation is necessary to achieve conceptual meaning and cultural relevance of the resulting pattern.

This section focuses on the identification, extraction, and application of traditional architectural motifs in which cultural significance is embedded and may be transformed through decoration. The purpose of this discussion is to review the opportunities and responsibilities associated with adapting sacred patterns for modern visual and commercial purposes.

2.7.1 Traditional Designs Used in Buddhist and Asian Edifices

Buddhist and Asian architecture convey similar meanings and values, creating connections through traditional motifs. These symbols are not merely decorative; they embody a code representing Buddhist cosmology and ethics. Temple and stupa monuments, as well as decorative elements, are found throughout Asia, not only in India.

Among the most popular symbols is the lotus flower. The lotus flower is rooted in mud and rises out of it. It signifies purity and enlightenment (Turner, 2010).

The lotus is a common motif in Buddhist architecture, often found in bas-reliefs, stupa bases, and ceiling patterns. Its use is intended to invoke transcendence and the clarity of spiritual experience.

In Thailand, the wheel of law (dharma), with its eight spokes representing the noble eightfold path, is another common motif that appears carved over temple doorways or on ritual objects, signifying the road to liberation (Jantaro, 2021).

In Thailand, traditional designs such as the “**Kanok**” or flaming pattern are stylised from nature. These motifs appear on gables, window frames, and murals. According to Wongthes (2011), this motif symbolises the sacred power of fire and divine transformation. The Kanok, including the “**kranok bai mai**” forms, which resemble flames shape leaves, represents grace and spirituality. Moreover, it serves as a core component of continuity in Thai art. Diverse motifs add beauty to Hindu buildings. Additionally, the motif lends significance to spiritual objects such as textiles, and devotional items.

Furthermore, the recurrence of similar patterns and round-shaped symbols, including circles, sacred knots, and cloud-scroll patterns, expresses the Buddhist view that everything is impermanent and interrelated. These elements aid meditation and contemplation and also create a visual rhythm within the sacred space to engage the devotee (Turner, 2010).

The design of Buddhist supplies and their packaging is a contemporary topic. Furthermore, the use of these representations is a means by which cultural authenticity is established through changes in form. By incorporating these motifs into contemporary packaging design, the past remains present through the sacred aesthetic of the packaging.

2.7.2 Pattern Extraction and Design Application

The innovative design tradition translates visual patterns into adaptable assets that suit today's sensibilities. In Buddhist and Thai architecture, as part of decorative art, elements are not arbitrary. They often convey deeper meanings related to the macrocosmic and non-cosmic worlds. These elements are frequently symbolic or representational, in religious and social contexts. According to Chirapravati (2009), reincorporating these motifs can enhance the aestheticism of new media such as packaging, textiles, and digital formats.

Temple murals and ceiling medallions, for example, have usually featured a symmetrical floral design resembling a mandala. These circular designs signify symmetry and universal cosmic order. The patterns can be used in circular product labels, incense packaging seals, or icons on digital interfaces once vectorised. Because of the inherent symmetry of these forms, they create an almost meditative rhythm, which can be appropriate for products or services in the spiritual or wellness sector (Chirapravati, 2009).

The Lotus Flower as a base for seated Buddha images in murals and sculptures. It represents purity rising above muddy waters. As such, it can be simplified into line drawings or geometric forms for use in skin care packaging, ritual set branding, or spiritual journals. For instance, repeated use of a stylised lotus petal design on the lid of a Sangkhathan offering box can create both visual coherence and sacred association through its use.

The Kranok is a flame-shaped arabesque often found on temple eaves, window frames, and borders of murals. This symbol represents dynamism, resilience, and the cycle of life, death, and rebirth. Reinterpreted, it may take the form of ornamental framing on invitation cards for ceremonies or as a graphic element on fabric wrapping for gifts. The sharply curvilinear and flowing characteristics of the Kranok pattern are also appropriate for edge treatments in product design, for

.example, on the borders of tote bags or eco-friendly packaging sleeves (Chirapravati, 2009).

Similarly, mythical creatures from the **Himmapan** forest—such as the Kinnari (half-woman, half-bird), the Hongsā (celestial swan), and the **Erawan** (three-headed elephant)—provide narrative-rich motifs that can be partially extracted and recomposed into modern storytelling visuals. A wing of the **Kinnari** may be isolated and stylised into a logo for a spa brand that emphasises spiritual transformation, while the trunks of **Erawan** can inspire the shape of entwined incense sticks in a product box design.

The floral pattern known as Dok Jok is another motif commonly found on wooden ceiling tiles and temple gables. The star shape can be flattened and used as a secondary pattern, applied across the tissue lining or inside the product wrapper. The soft metallic foiling complements the design without overpowering the overall appearance.

By converting these patterns into digital vector format, designers gain the flexibility to use them in print, web, embroidery, or embossing. However, designers must contextualise these images to ensure their cultural richness does not become merely another decorative choice. A brief description printed on the packaging, QR codes linking to information on heritage, or design notes on the spiritual or historical significance of each design may be necessary. In other words, the viewer or consumer encounters both the beauty and the meaning behind each pattern (Chirapravati, 2009).

As such, pattern extraction is not appropriation but continuation; dead patterns are revived and enlivened through their appropriate use in the context of design.

Each traditional Thai pattern (Lai Thai) carries historical and symbolic significance rooted in Buddhist cosmology, court tradition, or vernacular craft. The kranok motif, for instance, symbolises flame and divine radiance, while the bai pod pattern references growth, protection, and merit accumulation (Chancharoenchai, 2017). Including brief historical descriptions and citations for each pattern not only strengthens academic credibility but also clarifies why these motifs are appropriate for a merit-making context. This contextual layer ensures that the design process is not reduced to aesthetic borrowing but is grounded in cultural meaning.

2.7.3 Cultural Meaning Found in Ornamentation

Buddhist and Asian ornamentation are not merely decorative but constitute a visual language imbued with meaning through cultural engagement involving religious, social, and cosmological dimensions. For example, in Thai temples, the small gable apex (chofa) and stucco reliefs on the walls convey spiritual, moral, and social messages (Chirapravati, 2009). The ornamentation detail forms part of the experience of sacred space, mediating between human and divine through form, repetition, and type.

Traditional motifs often embody key Buddhist concepts. The repeated use of the lotus motif in temple architecture reiterates the doctrine of spiritual awakening, while the flower also denotes purity and transcendence above worldly problems. Similarly, the representation of cloud-like arabesque designs, known as lai khrueng, depicts heaven and the celestial domain. These images suggest the presence of divinity within the architectural space (Chirapravati, 2009). These motifs do not appear randomly; rather, their placement follows a hierarchy, whereby the more sacred and powerful the element, the higher its elevation and the more central its position in murals and reliefs.

Beyond iconographic representation, the materials and methods of ornamentation also carry meaning. For example, gold leafing is not only a sign of wealth, but also signifies merit-making, luminosity, and the timelessness of truth in

Buddhism. Embedded glass mosaics on temple walls or columns are designed to reflect light, creating a supernatural effect and highlighting architectural features such as windows or niches for sacred icons. The use of reflective materials can evoke a sense of celestial realms, enhancing the meditative and transcendent atmosphere of the space (Hou et al. 2023).

Temple ornamentation features animals with specific meanings. Garuda is typically carved on door lintels or column capitals, signifying the presence of a protector figure against enemies and representing power and loyalty. The Naga, resembling a snake on staircase railings or at the base of a temple, symbolises danger and fertility. It serves the dual role of guarding the temple and connecting the human world with the underworld and the heavens. These creatures are not merely decorative; they also fulfil narrative and protective functions within the architectural vocabulary (Chirapravati, 2009).

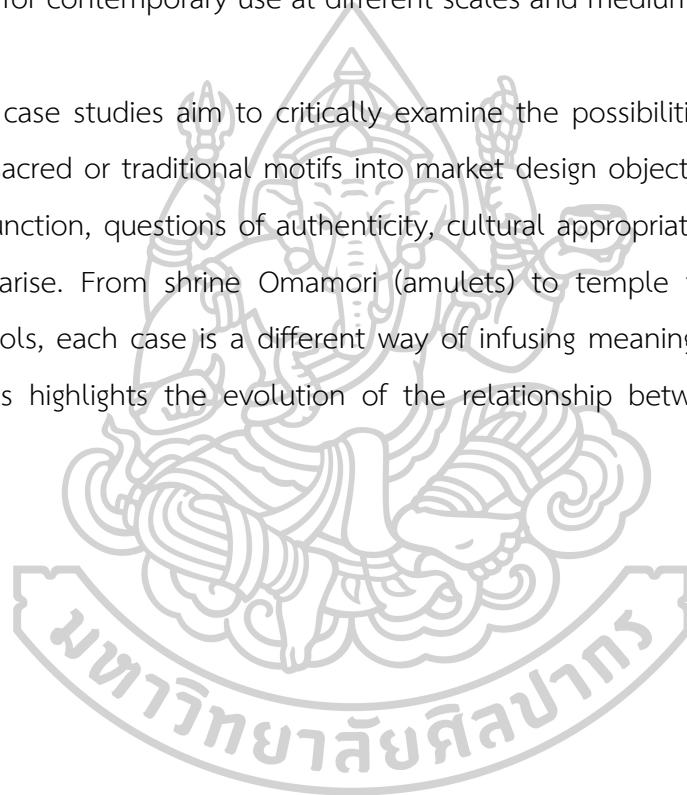
When design incorporates ornamental references, contemporary influences, or spiritual elements, the message remains reliable. For example, product boxes featuring Naga scales embossed on the side can evoke meanings of protection and transformation. Similarly, a fabric wrap with **Chofa** patterns might symbolise the same. Through packaging or product identity, the thoughtful use of these forms contributes to a culturally embedded appearance that acknowledges history while allowing for reinterpretation through material and format innovation.

Thai decoration also operates through auspicious symbolism and the belief in merit (bun). The intentional placement of patterns at the cardinal points, the use of sacred numbers in repeating floral decorations, and the adoption of specific colours according to the day of the week are among the elements that create a spiritual logic in the visual field. When modern designers are aware of these associations and use them with respect, they become part of a rich lineage of visual storytelling and belief (Chirapravati, 2009).

2.8 Analysis of Case Studies and Cultural Patterns

This section shows selected case studies illustrating how traditional cultural patterns are reimagined, adapted or commercialised through contemporary design interventions. Each case teaches us how heritage elements can be turned into a modern product without changing its meaning with the help of religious motifs, sacred architecture and colour schemes. Souvenir, food packaging, fashion, and lifestyle branding are just some examples showing how traditional aesthetics is repurposed for contemporary use at different scales and mediums.

The case studies aim to critically examine the possibilities and problems of translating sacred or traditional motifs into market design objects. At the junction of form and function, questions of authenticity, cultural appropriation, symbolism, and innovation arise. From shrine Omamori (amulets) to temple tilework and sacred stone symbols, each case is a different way of infusing meaning into contemporary designs. This highlights the evolution of the relationship between spirituality and design.



2.8.1 Conventional Souvenirs from Japanese Shrines and Temples



Figure 10 – Omamori: Protective Charms Commonly Seen at Japanese Shrines

(Source: <https://www.dplantour.co.th/โอมาโมริ-Omamori->

เครื่องรางที่เห็นได้บ่อยในศาลเจ้าญี่ปุ่น/)

Japanese shrine and temple souvenirs, especially **Omamori** (personal amulets), provide an excellent example of how sacred symbols can be adapted into portable everyday design while maintaining their ritual significance. Omamori are small, mass-produced items that are nonetheless endowed with spiritual value and remain deeply connected to the sacred place from which they come. Typically, each amulet contains a printed blessing inside a coloured cloth pouch that is sewn with assorted designs, such as *kanji* characters, temple crests, or depictions of deities. The design of these amulets has evolved significantly. While traditionally plain silk pouches, they can now be found in diverse forms, including cartoon shapes or versions made with reflective materials for traffic safety. However, they still serve the same function: protection and guidance from the spirit world (Reader & Tanabe, 1998).

This fusion of traditional significant with modern application aligns with the framework of this research, which aims to reconfigure visual traditions properly through contemporary design. Similar to Omamori, this project enables a spiritual essence to transcend time and space. The goal is not to replicate the past but rather to transform it through materials, media, and meaning. Through the careful use of textiles, size, and symbolism, these objects maintain a sense of reverence while appealing to current consumer empathy. Their success lies in the clear graphic identity, the codified form, which projects authenticity, even when appropriated for tourism or secular use (Mendes, 2015).

In addition, the packaging design of Omamori supports their spiritual function and emotional connection. Often, these amulets are bought with intent, given to loved ones, kept in the wallet, or tied to a backpack, only to be returned to the shrine for burning later. The object's lifecycle is circular by design, emphasizing temporality, meaning, and proper disposal. Similarly, this study aims to design spiritual packaging that acknowledges its lifecycle, intentionality and reuse of the packaging, either through biodegradable formats, meaningful ornamentation, or a respectful presentation strategy.

Omamori, sacred amulets from Shinto and Buddhist temples, have not only retained their popularity over the centuries, but have also become commercially viable. This is largely due to the clarity of their design, the story behind their origin, and the emotions they evoke. They demonstrate how physical design can serve as a medium for spiritual belief and connect history and modernity in a compact form.

While Japanese examples such as omamori or Wabi-Sabi offer relevant parallels, it is equally important to consider Thai ritual products that embody domestic spiritual identity. Objects such as luk nimit (ลูกนิมิต), monk offering baskets, or amulet pouches demonstrate how Thai material culture encodes protective symbolism and reverence (Skilling, 2021). These examples help bridge the

conceptual gap between comparative aesthetics and local religious expression, reinforcing the Thai-centric orientation of this research.

2.8.2 Ice Cream Inspired by the Tiles of Wat Arun in Bangkok



Figure 11 – 3D Ice Cream with Patterns Inspired by The Tiles of Wat Arun

(Source: https://tna.mcot.net/gallery_news/1189868)

Pop Icon is a Bangkok-based artisanal dessert brand, launched an ice cream collection in 2023 inspired by the ceramic tiles of the Wat Arun (Temple of Dawn). (Reuters, 2023) The collection was launched in 2023. The collection, known as Flower of Dawn, replicates the floral patterns found on the ceramic tiles of the central prang. The 3D-printed ice cream designs mirror the intricate pattern of temple's flower tiles, transforming a revered architectural motif into an edible art form.

Flavours such as butterfly pea and coconut (for the blue variant) and Thai milk tea (for the terracotta-toned one) are not only taste-driven but also chromatically faithful to the architectural palette of Wat Arun (Pookasook & Kittisilpa, 2023).

This case is interesting, because it transforms sacred material culture into something ephemeral and consumable, allowing a new type of ritual to occur. Tourists and locals do not simply view and photograph these motifs; they also touch, taste, and smell them. This is relevant to the central research question of the thesis, which concerns the capacity for traces of antiquity to be transformed into spiritual offerings through contemporary design. Additionally, the profits from the sale of ice cream are allocated to the educational and medical initiatives of Wat Arun (Nation Thailand, 2023).

This is another example of how spiritual design need not be limited to static altars or ritual tables but can extend to ephemerality while retaining cultural references. The design, with its visual tactility and product storytelling, remains faithful to its sacred source while reengaging the public with overlooked details of Thai religious architecture.

2.8.3 Karava Thailand



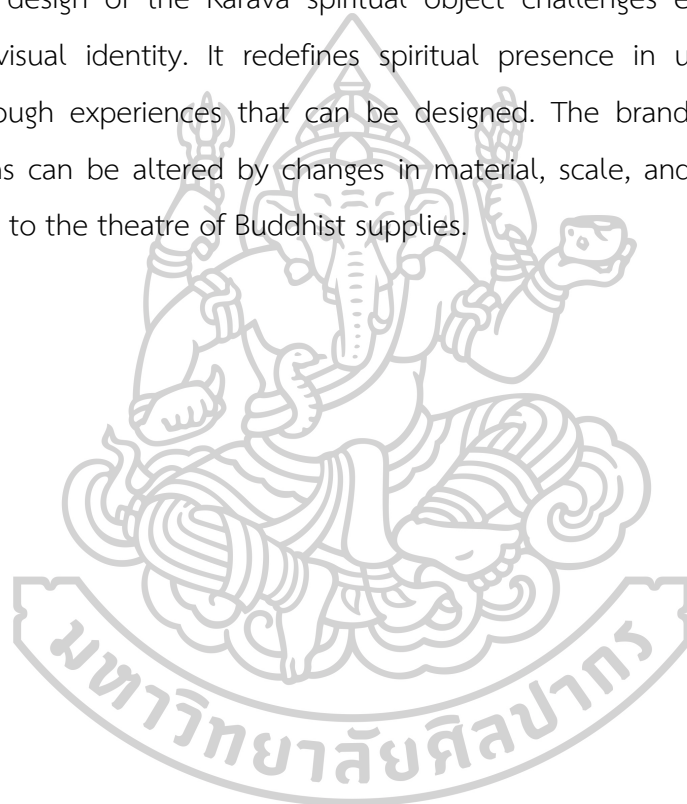
Figure 12 – The Vishuddhi Ganesha – Worship of The Pure White Lord Ganesha
(Source: <https://karavathailand.com/pages/white-ganesha-old-cust>)

Karava Thailand presents a compelling argument for transforming spiritual figures and symbols into branded contemporary artefacts.

Two Thai designers, whose roots lie in Chinese-Thai beliefs, established this brand (Karava). They aim to create minimalistic symbolic sculptures with a religious aspect. Their work includes the polygonal deity Vessavana as well as Ganesha. Additionally, there is the White Buddha in gold-coated resin with a matte-toned resin base. Unlike other religious statues designed for worship, Karava figures are stylised to fit into modern interior designs (Marketing Oops, 2024). They show influences from Scandinavian minimalism and low-poly art.

The brand's achievement demonstrates a growing consumer trend to incorporate spirituality into domestic life without compromising aesthetic concerns. These sculptures serve as sacred objects and conversation pieces, connecting faith with lifestyle. The traditional iconography is reduced to essential visual cues used to develop their form. This relates to the thesis explored herein, which seeks to omit the symbolic in favour of the aesthetic in religious offerings.

The design of the Karava spiritual object challenges expectations with its modernist visual identity. It redefines spiritual presence in urban, design-savvy spaces, through experiences that can be designed. The brand demonstrates how sacred forms can be altered by changes in material, scale, and signifier—principles that are key to the theatre of Buddhist supplies.



2.8.4 Harmenstone Thailand



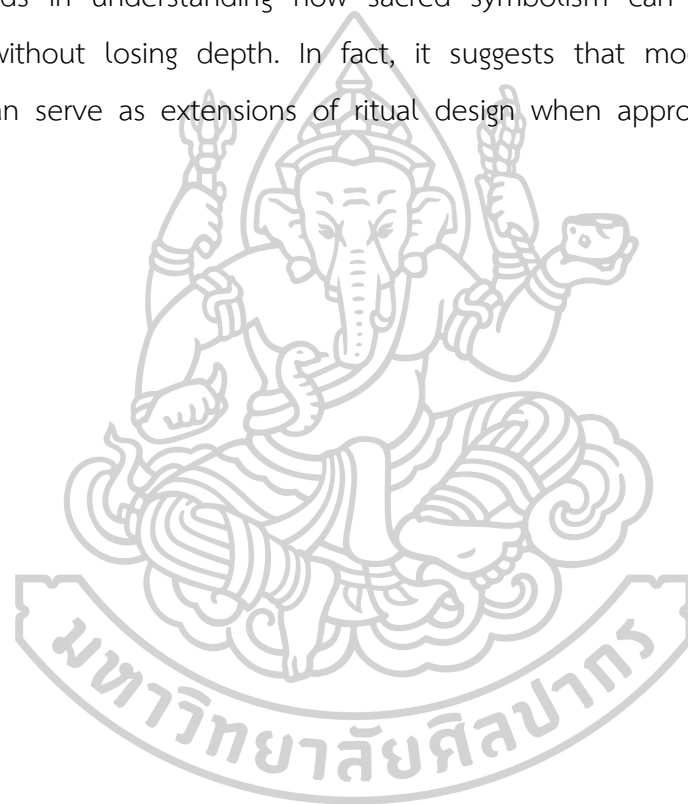
Figure 13 – *The Ganpati – Ganesha Awakening Bracelet with Amethyst Gemstone*
 (Source: <https://harmenstone.co.th/collections/gemstone-bracelets/products/the-ganpati-amethyst>)

Harmenstone Thailand is also Karava's sibling brand, exploring the relationship between religion and fashion through accessories. The brand, specialises in gemstone bracelets that incorporate sacred figures into their metal cuff series, combining high craftsmanship with spirituality. Statues of deities such as Kali, Ganesha, Naga, and Lakshmi are carved on metal plates alongside specific stones believed to enhance personal energy or provide protection. The result is a fusion of wearable amulets and design-conscious jewellery.

Harmenstone's design philosophy aligns directly with one of the main arguments of this dissertation. In other words, spiritual design, when applied in a contemporary manner, is not rendered powerless. The objects become intimate

rather than alienating through clever symbolism and tactile quality: they are worn on the skin, integrated into daily life, and endowed with meaning by the user. The bracelet becomes an altar for the wrist.

Harmenstone cleverly uses visual restraint and branding to convey meaning. The typography, packaging, and brand tone are consistent with themes of power, clarity, and balance, recalling the visual discipline of well-made ritual offerings. This example aids in understanding how sacred symbolism can exist in a branded economy without losing depth. In fact, it suggests that modern packaging and branding can serve as extensions of ritual design when approached with cultural sensitivity.



2.9 Naming in Design and Cultural Contexts

In practice, many contemporary brands adapt sacred or traditional terms into new forms that depart from their original Pali or Sanskrit roots. This tendency reflects both creative interpretation and the need for accessibility in a globalised market. For example, names of meditation apps, wellness products, or spiritual lifestyle brands often retain the phonetic sound of the original word while adjusting the letters to suit English readability. The result is a hybrid form that is easier for international audiences to pronounce and remember yet still carries the resonance of the sacred root.

This approach is particularly evident in English-language adaptations of Buddhist or Indic concepts. Words such as “Nirvana” are sometimes stylised as “Nirvanna” in brand names, while “Karma” can appear as “Kharma” or “Carma” to suggest originality while remaining recognisable in sound. Similarly, “Mantra” may be written as “Mantrah” or shortened to forms like “Mantr” for visual effect. These variations do not erase the underlying cultural association. Instead, they demonstrate how naming can serve as a flexible design tool that negotiates between authenticity and modern branding strategy.

Consumer psychology research indicates that naming influences emotional response, perceived sincerity, and brand attachment (Klink, 2001). In religious contexts, names also carry spiritual resonance and symbolic meaning. Thai Buddhist naming practices frequently draw from virtues (e.g., Metta, Santi), sacred numerology, or cosmological references. Understanding how naming affects intention and emotional association enables a more culturally sensitive approach to branding merit-making products. This supports the need for more robust theoretical grounding as highlighted by the examiner.

For Buddhist offerings, this insight is significant. A brand or product name inspired by temple architecture, ritual practices, or philosophical terms does not

need to replicate the original script exactly. More important is that the name conveys the intended meaning and emotional quality to its users. By balancing linguistic authenticity with creative adaptation, naming becomes a way to situate imperfection and heritage within the contemporary design language of packaging.

Original Root (Pali/Sanskrit)	Adapted Brand Spelling (English)	Effect on Perception and Branding
Nirvāṇa	Nirvana / Nrvna	Retains spiritual resonance but introduces a modern visual style; easier to trademark.
Karma	Kharma / Carma	Maintains a phonetic link to the original while introducing novelty; remains approachable for global audiences.
Mantra	Mantr / Mantrah	Shortened or stylised for modern design appeal; evokes heritage while contemporary.
Dāna (generosity, giving)	Dana / Daana	Simplified spelling improves readability and balances authenticity with ease of use.
Anicca (impermanence)	Anicha / Anecha	Modified vowels to fit English phonetics; conveys meaning while appearing brand-friendly.

Table 2 – Adaptation of Sacred Terms in Contemporary Branding

2.9.1 The Role of Naming

Naming is often the first element of a corporate identity. Names serve as signifiers that convey cultural memory, symbolic value, and emotional resonance—particularly in spiritual and lifestyle contexts.

2.9.2 Case Study Examples

The adaptation of Pali and Sanskrit terms into contemporary brand naming offers a valuable perspective for understanding how linguistic heritage is used in modern design contexts. In Thailand, as in other regions, the roots of Buddhist and Indic languages are often not preserved in their original orthographic form but are modified to enhance contemporary readability, memorability, and global communication. As Turner (2010) notes in his discussion of religious commodification in Southeast Asia, spiritual and cultural symbols frequently undergo transformation when entering consumer markets, and naming is one of the most prominent sites of this negotiation.

Karava (karavathailand.com) is a clear example. The name is derived from the Pali word *gāraṇa*, meaning respect or reverence. This root is formed from *guru* (ครุ), signifying that which is weighty or worthy of honour, with the addition of the suffix to form a noun of state. In its Thai form, *karava* (คารวะ) commonly signifies paying respect or showing deference. The brand, however, adapts the spelling to “Karava,” simplifying diacritical markers and creating a form that is visually clean, easy to remember, and resonant across linguistic boundaries. This adaptation illustrates how a Pali-derived concept can be retained semantically while being altered orthographically for modern branding purposes (Malikhao, 2017).

Aesop (aesop.com), although not Thai, provides a comparative case. The name originates from the ancient Greek **Αἴσωπος** (Aisōpos), the storyteller whose fables became globally recognised. The brand does not reproduce the original script but adapts it into the English form “Aesop,” a spelling that is minimal yet

recognisable. This case demonstrates how heritage names from any culture are routinely modified for contemporary consumer contexts (Cross & Proctor, 2014).

THANN (thann.co.th) also exemplifies linguistic transformation. The brand name is derived from *thañña* (ธัญ), a Pali root meaning grains, cereals, and agricultural produce. In Thai, this root appears in the compound *ธัญพืช* (thanya-phuet), which means cereals or crops. Instead of using the full term, the brand isolates and transliterates the first syllable, resulting in “THANN.” This spelling condenses a complex Indic root into a concise and impactful wordmark, balancing semantic authenticity with a global branding strategy (Tulyasuwan, 2021).

DISAYA (disaya.com) is adapted from the Thai personal name Ditsaya, which means good fortune. The original name carries a Sanskrit resonance through **Śrī** (auspiciousness) embedded in its etymology. In its branded form, “DISAYA” uses a modern Romanised spelling, emphasising elegance and readability while retaining the semantic field of luck and auspiciousness. This adaptation demonstrates how phonetic closeness can be prioritised over orthographic accuracy, making the name more memorable for both Thai and international audiences (Phongsak, 2019).

PAÑPURI (panpuri.com) makes more explicit use of Pali–Sanskrit roots. The brand derives its name from *paññā* (wisdom) and *puri* (city or dwelling place). *Paññā* in Pali denotes insight or wisdom, a central concept in Buddhist teaching, while *puri* evokes the sacred cities of India. In its adapted form “PAÑPURI,” diacritics are partially retained (the tilde over ñ), signalling authenticity, but the compound structure is simplified for branding. This approach blends heritage with modern design, presenting a name that is both culturally grounded and commercially accessible (Jain et al., 2024).

Karmakamet (karmakamet.co.th) demonstrates how names are hybridised from Indic cosmology and geographical references. The first part, “Karma,” derives

from the Sanskrit *karman* (act, deed, work), a widely understood concept in both Eastern and global contexts. The second part, “Kamet,” refers to a Himalayan Mountain associated with purity and sacred landscapes. By combining these elements, the brand creates a name that suggests both spiritual causality and natural sanctity, situating itself within a regional history of cross-cultural influence (Vanin, 2020).

NaRaYa (naraya.com) is derived from the Sanskrit *Nārāyaṇa*, a major Hindu deity identified with Vishnu. The brand adapts the name into “NaRaYa,” softening the original orthography and inserting capital letters to emphasise readability and distinction. The semantic association with divine power remains intact, but the spelling creates a light, approachable identity for contemporary audiences (Malikhao, 2017).

Divana (divanaspaspa.com) derives from the Sanskrit root *divana*, which can be translated as passion or desire. The brand’s spelling preserves the phonetic sound while presenting a refined and international image, demonstrating how Sanskrit-derived words can be adapted for use in the wellness industry.

Khagee (khageethaimassage.com) is derived from the Khmer word *khjī* (ខ្លឹម), meaning fresh, green, or tender. The brand alters the spelling to “Khagee,” creating a form that is simple, visually balanced, and easily pronounceable. Although the word is Khmer rather than Pali, this example highlights the same strategy of adapting sacred or traditional words for modern recognition.

Gaaya (oasisspa.net) derives from the Sanskrit *kāya*, meaning body or self. The brand adapts the word to “Gaaya,” lengthening the vowels for phonetic clarity and aesthetic appeal. The semantic root remains evident, while the altered spelling creates a softer and more marketable identity (Heine, 2021).

Supanniga (supannigaeatingroom.com) refers to the flower supannikarā, which originates from Pali. The brand shortens the form to “Supanniga,” making it phonetically simple while maintaining a reference to heritage flora.

At-Ta-Rote (facebook.com/attarote.thaicuisine) adapts attha (meaning, benefit) and rasa (taste, emotion). Although the compound has deep Pali–Sanskrit roots, the brand presents it as the hybrid “At-Ta-Rote,” a form that is easy to pronounce and highly memorable. This deliberate modification demonstrates how ancient compounds can be reworked into names that carry cultural significance yet remain accessible to non-specialist audiences.

Taken together, these case studies illustrate a consistent strategy. Pali, Sanskrit, Khmer, and other linguistic roots provide a reservoir of meaning, but their modern adaptation often involves phonetic simplification, orthographic innovation, and visual stylisation. Rather than diminishing the cultural weight of the terms, these strategies enable the names to function effectively in contemporary markets. In line with Saito (2017), the act of naming thus mediates between tradition and modernity, balancing authenticity and accessibility in ways that resonate both locally and globally.

2.9.3 Implications for Naming and Strategy

The review of literature and case studies indicates that names derived from Pali or Sanskrit roots often require adaptation when used in contemporary design and consumer contexts. Exact transliterations can appear heavy or inaccessible, especially when extended diacritics or complex consonant clusters are present. To appeal to wider audiences while retaining symbolic depth, simplified spellings and phonetic approximations are frequently adopted. This approach allows cultural authenticity to remain embedded in the name while improving readability, memorability, and visual harmony.

These insights inform the approach to naming in this study. The chosen term derives from *adhittāna* (อธิษฐาน), a Pali–Sanskrit root conveying determination, resolution, and spiritual vow. While the root holds strong symbolic resonance in Buddhist philosophy, a direct rendering such as “Adhitthana” would present challenges of length, pronunciation, and typographic complexity. Following observed strategies from brands such as Pañpuri and Karava, simplified forms were considered, including “Adhitthaan,” “Atitharn,” and “ATITHAN.” Each offered a balance between authenticity and usability, but the form “Atithan” was ultimately identified as the most suitable. It reflects common Thai pronunciation, removes unnecessary orthographic weight, and produces a concise, modern form that remains recognisable.

The implications of this study are twofold. First, the process of naming must balance etymological accuracy with communicative clarity, ensuring that spiritual or cultural roots are not lost in translation. Second, the strategy of simplification demonstrates how design practice can translate theoretical insights into practical outcomes. By applying this reasoning, the name Atithan exemplifies how heritage-based terms can be reframed to engage contemporary audiences while retaining their symbolic and cultural significance.

2.10 Overview of Literature and Gaps

This chapter has outlined various bodies of literature that contribute primarily to the conceptual, cultural, and design framework of the study. The study begins with a section on Buddhism and material offerings. Gifting plays a key role in Buddhism, as evidenced by the presence of Sangkhathan sets. These are culturally ingrained; yet their symbolic aesthetics are often overlooked in their packaging. Numerous studies highlight that offerings, or “sanghata”, are merit-making activities (Chirapravati, 2009). However, very few assess how the form, packaging, and visual

identity of these items are adapted to contemporary consumerism or spiritual branding.

In Section 2.1, “The Semiotics of Belief in Visual Form”, it is shown how semiotic theories help frame the creation of meaning in religion. The reviewed literature suggests that the signs and symbols deployed in spiritual design operate at multiple denotative and connotative levels. However, to date, applied research has not explored how these signs are altered or retained when adapted for mass-produced ritual-related items. The act of buying spiritual goods from a shelf at the supermarket is not usually discussed in semiotic terms; therefore, this research seeks to examine how belief can become enmeshed in material and visual structures.

In Section 2.3, Wabi-Sabi and the Symbolism of Traces, establishes the philosophical foundation of the research. Wabi-Sabi is the appreciation of things that are imperfect, impermanent, and incomplete. The aesthetic of Wabi-Sabi values the worn, which resonates with authenticity. Similarly, many believe that working with such timeworn materials can produce spiritual works. Although Wabi-Sabi is frequently referenced in design theory, this concept is often interpreted through a Japanese perspective and is not localised within Thai Buddhist material culture. Furthermore, this study proposes a new visual language that skilfully employs such flaws and irregularities to imbue packaging with spiritual depth and emotional warmth, qualities that are often removed from design.

In Section 2.5 Buddhist Product Design and Packaging, research on traditional and modern Buddhist commodities revealed a dissonance between their sacred function and commercial presentation. Although some modern projects are minimalist or luxurious, few consider the concepts of packaging theory or cultural semiotics. The integration of Kano’s Theory of Attractive Quality demonstrated how certain designs can transform user anticipation and usefulness into delight. However, further work is needed to understand how packaging can simultaneously serve ritual, narrative, and economic purposes.

In Section 2.6, examined *Graphic Identity and Visual Communication in Spiritual Design*, examines how typeface, icon, and layout are used to construct a perception of the sacred. Studies have shown that formal typefaces and certain graphic motifs can convey solemnity or tradition. However, recommendations for the synthesis of these visual systems remain limited and untested. This raises the question of whether contemporary visual systems can evolve without compromising a sacred aura? There is a lack of systematic scholarship on the delicate balance between respect and modernity, particularly in the context of digital Thai religious packaging.

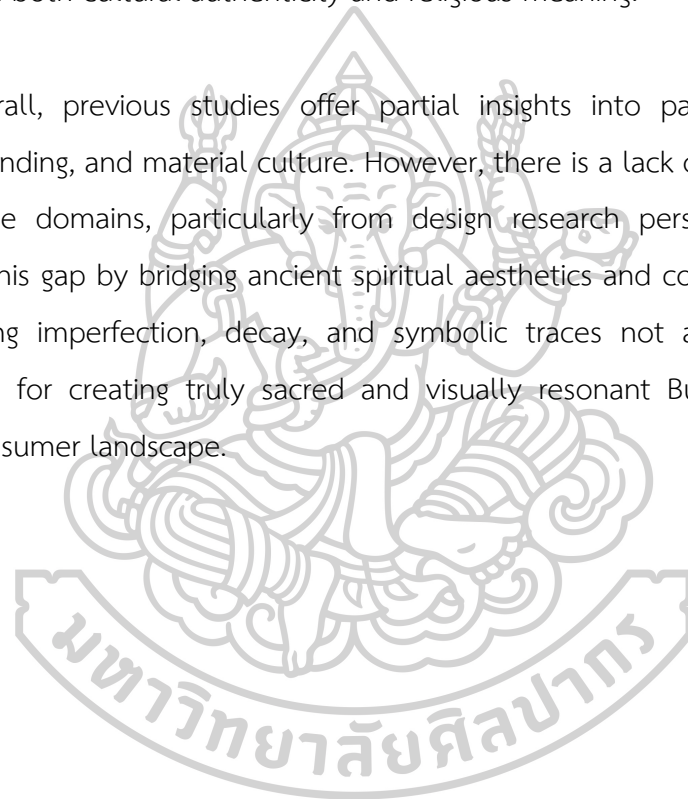
In Section 2.7, the architectural patterns and visual translations were discussed, highlighting how the ornamentation of temples, ceiling medallions, and antique motifs contains embedded spiritual meanings. Extracting cultural patterns and using them in souvenirs and interior spaces is common. However, reframing these as flat, vector-based graphics for packaging or incorporating them into consumer rituals is less common. This is especially true for motifs from decaying architecture, which are considered sacred due to their patina of peeling interiors, incompleteness, and fading paint. Nevertheless, they are rarely regarded as desirable and are often described as “unpolished” when applied to products.

The case studies in Section 2.8, on the other hand, also demonstrate the applicability of the theories, with examples ranging from souvenirs sold at shrines in Japan to Thai brands such as Harmenstone and Karava. These instances illustrate how cultural meaning is contested in relation to form, material, and brand. However, most examples focus on either function or marketability, rather than on the articulation of spiritual meaning within the aesthetic strategy.

Additionally, low-cost spiritual supplies or designs bearing the flawed marks of history are frequently excluded. This is precisely what this thesis addresses.

The literature review demonstrates that while aesthetic discussions of Thai heritage, Buddhist philosophy, and packaging design exist independently, there is a lack of scholarship exploring how these domains intersect within the context of merit-making products. The theological basis of bun-making, the semiotics of packaging, and the aesthetic logic of architectural decay have rarely been integrated into a single design framework. This gap reinforces the need for a more comprehensive theoretical foundation, ensuring that the design outcomes are grounded in both cultural authenticity and religious meaning.

Overall, previous studies offer partial insights into packaging, symbolism, spiritual branding, and material culture. However, there is a lack of cohesive synthesis across these domains, particularly from design research perspective. This thesis addresses this gap by bridging ancient spiritual aesthetics and contemporary product design, using imperfection, decay, and symbolic traces not as obstacles but as foundations for creating truly sacred and visually resonant Buddhist offerings for today's consumer landscape.



CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Framework and Approach

The research adopts a design-based mixed-methods framework that combines visual, qualitative, and quantitative approaches to ensure a holistic investigation. This framework is based on the principle that cultural heritage and contemporary design must be understood both empirically and experientially. The study therefore incorporates graphic data collection, photographic fieldwork, market surveys, and interviews to triangulate findings.

The framework unfolds in three stages: First, graphic documentation was conducted through field visits, where photographs of ancient architecture and Sangkhathan packaging were taken to capture material textures, ornamentation, and visual traces of imperfection. These photographs served not only as archival evidence but also as design stimuli, informing their later abstraction into packaging motifs. Second, quantitative data collection was conducted via an online questionnaire distributed to key stakeholders. This stage provided measurable insights into the priorities and preferences of respondents, including their evaluation of sustainability, symbolism, and practicality. Finally, qualitative engagement through interviews enabled the study to explore nuanced cultural and emotional perspectives that numerical data alone could not convey.

The integration of these three stages—visual documentation, quantitative surveys, and qualitative interviews—ensures that the research framework is both analytical and practice-led. By positioning design as a mode of inquiry, the methodology bridges the gap between traditional heritage values and modern packaging demands, generating insights that are both theoretically grounded and practically applicable.

Double Diamond Design Process

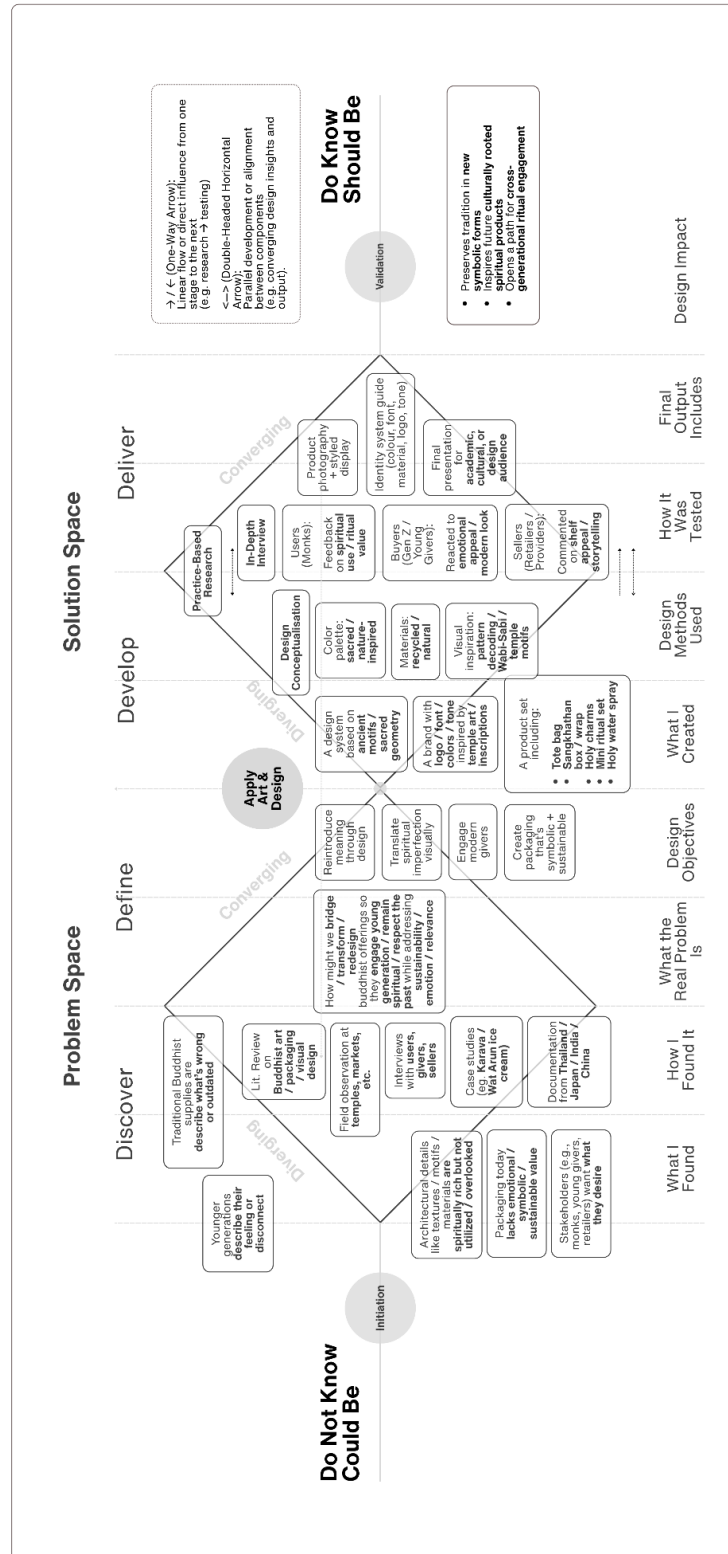


Figure 14 – Diamond Design Process Applied to Buddhist Packaging Design
 Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej (adapted from the Double Diamond model)

This diagram applies the Double Diamond design thinking model to guide the development of packaging design for contemporary Buddhist supplies. The process was used both to frame the study and to align the researcher's practical design journey with user needs and spiritual relevance.

The first half of the diamond—Discover and Define—focuses on identifying gaps in meaning and emotional connection within existing packaging. Interviews were conducted with monks, donors, and general consumers to uncover insights about overlooked visual elements and spiritual disconnects. These observations revealed that many packaging formats fail to communicate their sacred intent, especially to younger generations.

In the second half—Develop and Deliver—the insights were translated into prototypes that integrate spiritual symbols, sustainable materials, and modern visual language. Design references from temple architecture, sacred geometry, and minimalist aesthetics were explored. Prototypes were tested with target groups for feedback on perceived spiritual value and visual appeal.

The Double Diamond model served not only as a guideline, but also as a reflection of iterative practice—balancing tradition with contemporary expression and merging aesthetic clarity with cultural depth.

Although the Double Diamond framework originates from product and service design, its structured stages—Discover, Define, Develop, Deliver—have been widely applied in qualitative and practice-led research because of their emphasis on iterative exploration and synthesis (Design Council, 2019). The model supports open-ended investigation while still guiding the researcher toward refined outcomes, which is appropriate for design research involving cultural and religious contexts. At the same time, scholars note that Double Diamond can overlook deep cultural nuances if not supplemented with contextual inquiry (Sanders & Stappers, 2014). This study addresses this limitation by integrating interviews, thematic analysis, and visual decoding to capture socio-cultural meanings beyond surface aesthetics.

3.2 Graphic Data Collection and Ground Engagement

Primary data collection was conducted during a field trip to visit temple ruins and shrines in Thailand, sites that hold both religious and historical significance. These visits were documented through photographs, sketches, and written notes, serving as the initial phase of inquiry. The analysis focused on the material remains of wall paintings, flaking jalis, corroded metal components, missing decorations, and cracked flooring. Although these elements are in a state of decay, they were treated as significant material evidence.

In addition to visual documentation, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposively and snowball-sampled group possessing experiential knowledge of Thai Buddhist practices and material culture. This group is comprised:

Two ordained Buddhist monks.

Seven novice monks (monastics in training).

Two proprietors of alms-offering supply shops.

Six members of Generation Z, representing a demographic of new cultural consumers.

The interviews investigated how imperfection, authenticity, and the spiritual agency of visual form are understood by participants. Special emphasis was placed on the modern perception of decayed material traces, such as chipped ornamentation and faded murals. Participants were asked to consider whether these flaws could enhance spiritual significance. Furthermore, participants were interviewed to ascertain their reactions to the potential repackaging and redesigning of ritual objects. The key question explored was whether such an aesthetic intervention would dilute, transform or preserve the meaning of the object?

A broader survey was also conducted among a random online urban population in Bangkok, resulting in 50–60 responses. The objective of the survey was

to understand consumers' attitudes towards the aesthetics of the ritual object, the significance of the object in terms of spirituality, and the contemporary packaging of the objects in Buddhist contexts.

The sampling strategy in this research followed purposive qualitative selection, focusing on participants with direct experience in merit-making and devotional purchasing. While the sample size is relatively small, qualitative design research prioritises depth over breadth, allowing rich, context-specific insights (Tracy, 2020). The selected participants—Gen Z merit-makers, shop owners, novices, and ordained monks—represent key stakeholder groups directly involved in the offering process. This composition provides a foundational understanding of behaviour and perception relevant to the design objectives, though future research may expand this sample for greater representativeness.

3.3 Graphic Data Collection Methods

This section outlines the visual and contextual data collection methods used to study the packaging of Buddhist ritual offerings. The aim was to understand the graphic and material characteristics present in contemporary market practices and traditional packaging aesthetics. The collected data informed the development of design concepts that bridge sacred meaning with modern presentation.

3.3.1 Market Observation

The market observation focused on documenting existing packaging styles found in local Buddhist offering shops. Field visits were conducted to photograph and record visual presentations, materials, and structural designs currently used in ritual product packaging. This process provided direct insights into how religious offerings are visually communicated in everyday contexts.

Shop Name (Onsite)	Photo Ref		Packaging Style Type(s)
Benjaboon (เบญจบุญ)	 		Traditional / Current Usage
Buachart (บัวฉัตร)	 		Traditional / Current Usage
Ekkatham (เอกรธรรม)	 		Traditional / Current Usage
Jie Hiap Seng (เจี่ยเฮียบเซ็ง)	 		Traditional / Current Usage
Lor Hong Nguan (ลื้อฮงจ้งวน)	 		Traditional / Current Usage
Lor Hong Seng (ลื้อฮงเซ็ง)	 		Traditional / Current Usage

<p>Narongchai Panich (ณรงค์ชัยพานิช)</p>			<p>Traditional / Current Usage</p>
<p>Narongchai Sangkhaphan (ณรงค์ชัยสังข์ภัณฑ์)</p>			<p>Traditional / Current Usage</p>
<p>Phichit Sangkhaphan (พิจิตรสังข์ภัณฑ์)</p>			<p>Traditional / Current Usage</p>
<p>Rungrueang Panich (รุ่งเรืองพานิช)</p>			<p>Traditional / Current Usage</p>
<p>Siriphant Panich (ศิริภัณฑ์พานิช)</p>			<p>Traditional / Current Usage</p>
<p>Thammakorn Karnchang (ธรรมการช่าง)</p>			<p>Traditional / Current Usage</p>

Thitaphan (ฐิตาภัณฑ์)			Traditional / Current Usage
Tritip (ไตรทิพย์)			Traditional / Current Usage
Shop Name (Online)	Photo Ref		Packaging Style Type(s)
Boongusonn (บุญกุศล)			Contemporary
Boonruksa (สังฆทานบุญรักษา)			Contemporary
Boonwada (บุญवादา)			Contemporary
Chitlada (จิตรลดา)			Contemporary

Dharaya (ธาราญา)			Contemporary
Nuanchawee (นวลฉวี)			Contemporary
Patt Sangkhapan (ปัทมสังฆภัณฑ์) ตั้งฉกัณฑ์)			Contemporary
Toong Boon (ตุงบุญ)			Traditional
Shop Name (Hybrid)	Photo Ref		Packaging Style Type(s)
Big-C			Commercial
Lotus			Contemporary, Commercial

Makro			Commercial
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Table 3 – Packaging Style per Shop

Shop Name (Onsite)	Plastic	Clothes (Fabric)	Woven (Bamboo & Rattan)	Paper	Others
Benjaboon (เบญจบุญ)	✓	✓	✓		
Buachart (บัวฉัตร)	✓	✓			
Ekkatham (เอกธรรม)	✓		✓		
Jie Hiap Seng (เจี่ยเฮียบเซ็ง)	✓	✓		✓	
Lor Hong Nguan (ลื้อฮงง่วน)	✓		✓		
Lor Hong Seng (ลื้อฮงเซ็ง)	✓		✓		
Narongchai Panich (ณรงค์ชัยพานิช)	✓	✓	✓		
Narongchai Sangkhaphan (ณรงค์ชัย สังฆภัณฑ์)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Phichit Sangkhaphan (พิจิตรสังฆภัณฑ์)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Rungrueang Panich (รุ่งเรืองพานิช)	✓	✓	✓		

Siriphant Panich (ศิริพันธ์พาณิชย์)	✓	✓	✓		
Thammakorn Karnchang (ธรรมกรการช่าง)	✓	✓	✓		
Thitaphan (ฐิตาภัณฑ์)	✓	✓	✓		
Tritip (ไตรทิพย์)	✓	✓	✓		
Shop Name (Online)					
Boongusonn (บุญกุศล)	✓	✓	✓		
Boonruksa (สังฆทานบุญรักษา)	✓	✓	✓		
Boonwada (บุญवाद)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Chitlada (จิตรลดา)				✓	
Dharaya (ธาราญา)	✓	✓	✓		
Nuanchawee (นวลฉวี)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Patt Sangkhapan (ปัทม สังฆภัณฑ์)		✓	✓	✓	
Toong Boon (ทองบุญ)	✓	✓	✓		
Shop Name (Hybrid)					
Big-C	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Lotus	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Makro	✓	✓	✓	✓	
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Table 4 – Material Used per Shop

Shop Name (Onsite)	Daily Use	Ritual Use	Food	Medicine	Others
Benjaboon (เบญจบุญ)	✓	✓	✓		
Buachart (บัวฉัตร)	✓	✓			
Ekkatham (เอกธรรม)	✓	✓			
Jie Hiap Seng (เจี่ยเฮียบเซ็ง)	✓	✓	✓		
Lor Hong Nguan (ล้อฮงจ้วน)	✓	✓			
Lor Hong Seng (ล้อฮงเซ็ง)	✓	✓			
Narongchai Panich (ณรงค์ชัยพานิช)	✓	✓	✓		
Narongchai Sangkhaphan (ณรงค์ชัย สังฆภัณฑ์)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Phichit Sangkhaphan (พิจิตรสังฆภัณฑ์)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Rungrueang Panich (รุ่งเรืองพานิช)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Siriphant Panich (ศิริภัณฑ์พานิช)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Thammakorn Karnchang (ธรรมกรการช่าง)	✓	✓			

Thitaphan (ฐิตาภัณฑ์)	✓	✓			
Tritip (ไตรทิพย์)	✓	✓			
Shop Name (Online)					
Boongusonn (บุญกุศล)	✓	✓			
Boonruksa (สังฆทานบุญรักษา)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Boonwada (บุญवाद)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Chitlada (จิตรลดา)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dharaya (ธาราญา)	✓	✓			
Nuanchawee (นวลฉวี)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Patt Sangkhapan (ปัทม สังฆภัณฑ์)	✓	✓	✓		
Toong Boon (ตุงบุญ)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Shop Name (Hybrid)					
Big-C	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Lotus	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Makro	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Table 5 – Product Type per Shop

Rank	Material	Explanation
1	Plastic	Found in ribbons, shrink-wrap, buckets, wrappers; used in almost every shop
2	Clothes (fabric)	Organza, satin wraps, often combined with plastic or used for decorative effect
3	Woven (bamboo/rattan)	Seen in natural baskets, base containers; traditional & popular, but not universal
4	Paper	Least common; usually in box packaging or tags, not a structural material
5	Others	Includes foam boards, metal foil, wood trays, PVC sheets, or cellophane used decoratively or structurally in premium packaging

Table 6 – Observed Material Frequency Ranking

Among the 25 shops surveyed, plastic remained the most prevalent material due to its affordability, versatility, and appearance across all retail types. This was followed by fabric wraps and traditional woven bamboo containers. Paper appeared least frequently and was mostly used in auxiliary packaging elements, along with a small number of alternative materials such as foam, foil, or wood in premium and hybrid packaging contexts.

Table	Content	Key Insight
Packaging Style per Shop	Categorises all shops into Traditional, Contemporary, and Commercial styles based on photos	Almost offline shops are traditional , while online shops lean contemporary, and hybrids are mixed (especially supermarkets)
Material Used per Shop	Marks if shops use Plastic, Fabric, Woven, Paper, Others	Traditional shops favour plastic , online shops incorporate more woven and paper (eco-friendly trend), hybrids mix all
Product Type per Shop	Indicates what each shop sells: Daily Use, Ritual, Food, Medicine, Others	Most traditional shops provide ritual items , while online and hybrid shops expand to daily and lifestyle products
Summary Tables	Aggregated data of above	Confirms patterns: traditional shops = ritual + plastic, online = eco + diverse, hybrid = price-sensitive, semi-traditional

Table 7 – Table Summaries and Insights

3.3.2 SWOT Analysis of the Current Sangkhathan Market

The SWOT analysis (Figure 15-17) provided a systematic assessment of the Sangkhathan market, clarifying its strengths and areas for improvement.

Weaknesses: Despite these advantages, the market suffers from over-standardisation and overreliance on plastics. The lack of variation across products diminishes symbolic richness, and reliance on synthetic packaging materials has led to criticism from environmentally conscious consumers.

Opportunities: There is a growing demand for sustainable packaging and culturally authentic products, particularly among younger demographics who are attentive to ecological issues while also seeking emotional and symbolic resonance in their religious practices. This creates a design space for introducing new packaging forms that combine eco-friendly materials with traditional motifs.

Threats: The market faces risks of saturation and cultural dilution. The growing uniformity of current products risks alienating practitioners who value authenticity, while environmental criticism threatens the credibility of packaging that relies on non-biodegradable materials.

The SWOT mapping thus highlights the urgent need for innovation. By aligning ecological responsibility with cultural authenticity, Sangkhathan Packaging can evolve from a disposable commodity to a meaningful ritual object.



Figure 15 – SWOT Analysis: Onsite Shop

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

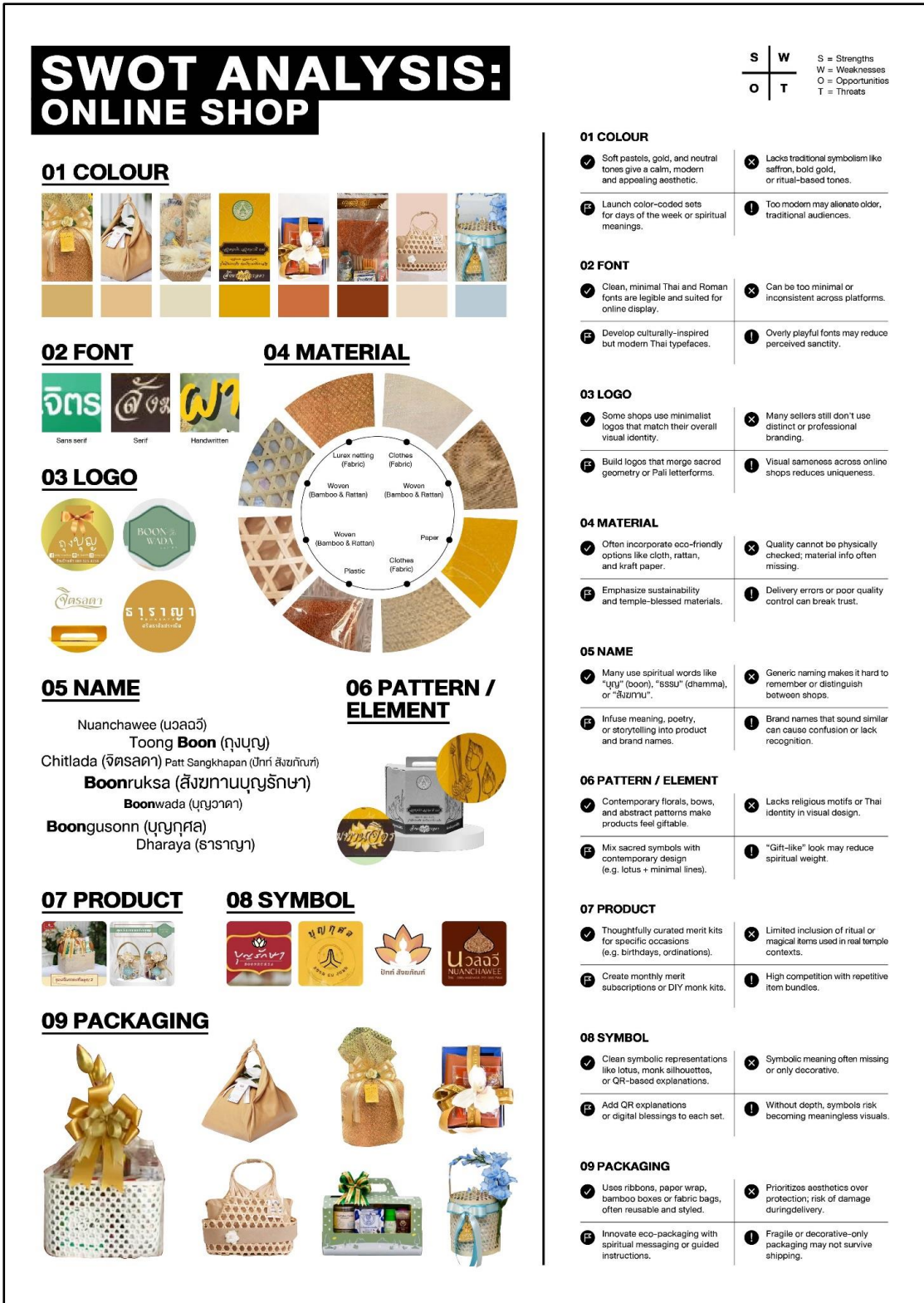


Figure 16 – SWOT Analysis: Online Shop

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)



Figure 17 – SWOT Analysis: Hybrid
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Strengths	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports Buddhist Communication & Continuity Acts as a tangible tool for expressing faith and continuing Buddhist traditions. - Convenient & Fast People can buy pre-packed sets without having to prepare them manually; suitable for fast-paced, modern lifestyles. - Easily Accessible Available through various channels: local markets, department stores, and online platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repetitive & Unattractive Design Often packed in generic transparent plastic buckets without distinct visual identity or new design. - Colour Choices Lack Meaning Uses flashy or overly bright tones that don't reflect Buddhist values of calmness and simplicity. - Bulky & Inconvenient Large plastic bags or boxes are not easy to store or transport. - Low-Quality or Irrelevant Contents Includes items monks may not need or use (e.g., expired medicine, preserved herbal drinks, generic ointments). - Wasteful Packaging Predominantly single-use plastic, contributing to environmental waste with no recycling system in place.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redesign with Beauty, Simplicity & Relevance Apply contemporary design principles that respect faith and promote environmental sustainability. - Customised Offering Sets Curated based on actual needs of specific temples or individual merit-makers. - Alignment with Mindful Living Reflect simple, meaningful ways to make merit that resonate with modern mindful lifestyles. - Storytelling & Community Involvement Use narrative (e.g., origin stories, local artisans, natural materials) to deepen connection and meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Declining Popularity Among Young People Seen as repetitive, outdated, or not aligned with modern spiritual values. - Rise of Secularism Particularly in urban areas, people are turning to alternative spiritual practices outside traditional religion. - Ethical & Practical Criticism Concerns over wasteful giving or offering items that monks cannot use.

Table 8 – Summary of SWOT Analysis

Conclusion - “Contemporary Sangkhathan sets that convey meaning, ensure quality, and are eco-friendly”

The future of Sangkhathan should embrace essential, thoughtful design rooted in simplicity, spiritual relevance, and sustainability — supporting the lifestyle of modern people without abandoning the sacred spirit of giving and respect in Buddhism.

3.3.3 Online Questionnaire with Key Stakeholders

The online questionnaire was developed using a semi-structured format and was informed by existing instruments measuring packaging perception and consumer behaviour (Rettie & Brewer, 2000; Karana et al., 2015). The final survey received 58 valid responses within the target demographic. The questionnaire items, response options, and formatting are provided in Appendix A. Referencing the appendix within the main text clarifies the instrument design and supports research transparency.

First, respondents consistently valued sustainability as a top priority, with biodegradable packaging materials ranking higher than conventional plastics. Second, participants expressed strong preference for packaging that integrates cultural symbolism—such as lotus motifs, traditional colours, or references to architectural ornamentation—suggesting that visual authenticity enhances the emotional connection to the ritual. Finally, respondents emphasised design quality as a factor influencing their choice, indicating that aesthetics and spiritual resonance are increasingly intertwined in contemporary practice.

Notably, younger respondents placed higher value on authentic imperfection, interpreting signs of natural texture and asymmetry as more spiritually meaningful than glossy, mass-produced surfaces. These survey findings confirmed that the design hypothesis—that imperfect traces of architecture can be reinterpreted into meaningful packaging—resonates with contemporary stakeholder values.

Topic	Key Takeaway
Major Age Group	Generation Y / Millennial (1977 - 1994)
Gender Majority	Female
Primary Location	Thailand
Belief System Majority	Buddhism
Religious Spending	10,000–50,000 THB
Top Purchase Motivation	Less than 5% of income spent on religious products
Most Common Purchase Frequency	1–2 times a year
Top Purchase Channel	Local shops
Main Purchase Influence	Product contents / quality
Receptiveness to Redesign	Positive — open to redesigned merit-making offerings
Preferred Design Direction	High design value

Table 9 – Summary of Key Consumer Insights on Buddhist Product Purchasing Behaviour

Thematic Analysis: Beliefs, Rituals, and Purchase Behaviour (Buddhist Supplies)		
1. Demographic Identity	Theme	Modern Female Urban Buddhists
	Insight	The majority of respondents are <i>female millennials</i> based in <i>Thailand</i> , indicating the dominant group driving current and future trends in religious product consumption.
2. Spiritual Affiliation & Practice	Theme	Rooted in Buddhism
	Insight	Buddhism remains the central belief system, shaping motivations and receptiveness to ritual-related offerings. This underlines the spiritual context products must align with.
3. Spending Behaviour	Theme	Low but Intentional Spending
	Insight	Most spend less than 5% of income on religious supplies. Purchases are intentional, often tied to meaningful rituals or occasions rather than

Thematic Analysis: Beliefs, Rituals, and Purchase Behaviour (Buddhist Supplies)		
		habitual buying.
4. Purchase Habits	Theme	Infrequent but Purposeful
	Insight	Buying happens <i>1–2 times a year</i> , often around significant religious events or merit-making opportunities, suggesting strong ties to seasonal or life-cycle moments.
5. Distribution & Access	Theme	Trust in Local Availability
	Insight	Local shops remain the dominant purchase channel, showing that accessibility and familiarity are key—even as online channels emerge.
6. Purchase Drivers	Theme	Substance Over Symbol
	Insight	Product <i>content and quality</i> are the most important factors influencing decisions—buyers

Thematic Analysis: Beliefs, Rituals, and Purchase Behaviour (Buddhist Supplies)		
		seek usefulness and relevance over tradition alone.
7. Openness to Innovation	Theme	Design-Driven Spirituality
	Insight	Respondents are open to redesigned offerings, especially when the improvements increase <i>aesthetic value, practicality, or cultural connection</i> . This affirms the design potential in spiritual products.

Table 10 – Thematic Analysis: Beliefs, Rituals, and Purchase Behaviour (Buddhist Supplies)

3.3.4 In-Depth Interviews with Stakeholders

To complement survey data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with monks, vendors, and frequent donors. These interviews allowed for a nuanced interpretation of the cultural and practical dimensions of Sangkhathan packaging. Monks highlighted the importance of ritual authenticity, noting that packaging should not only contain practical items but also serve as an embodiment of merit-making intention. Vendors, in contrast, focused on the realities of cost and consumer behaviour, explaining that plastic packaging remains the cheapest and most visually consistent option, even as they recognised its environmental drawbacks.

Donors, particularly younger ones, expressed a desire for packaging with emotional significance. Several reported feelings disconnected from offerings that resembled generic consumer products, suggesting that designs rooted in cultural heritage would enhance their sense of participation. Table 11, which summarises coded interview themes, demonstrates this contrast: while monks emphasised spiritual values, vendors prioritised logistics, and donors sought emotional and cultural resonance.

These interviews provided essential qualitative depth to the methodology, ensuring that the research findings go beyond surface-level observation to an understanding of how stakeholders interpret meaning within packaging. Such perspectives are vital for generating design strategies that are not only functional but also spiritually authentic and emotionally compelling.

The study employed a six-phase thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) widely recognised framework: familiarisation with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. This method is appropriate for design-led research because it allows subjective experiences and symbolic interpretations to surface organically. Coding reliability was improved by iterative cross-checking and memo writing, ensuring that themes reflected participant meaning rather than researcher assumptions.

Stakeholders	Insight
Users (Monks)	<p>Core Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily necessities such as soap, toothpaste, detergent, floor cleaner, garbage bags, dish soap ● Items that are simple and durable
	<p>Frustrations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outdated or low-quality products, especially: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Items with short shelf life ○ Redundant products monks already have ○ Items monks cannot use (e.g., cosmetic-style packaging) ● Receive excess unused items (bowls, flashlights, old-fashioned items like "Shower head") ● Too many low-quality or unnecessary medical kits ● Pre-packed sets often look luxurious but lack function
	<p>Design Preferences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prefer compact, minimal, easy-to-carry packages (A4 size is ideal) ● Excessive plastic or over-wrapping feels wasteful and inappropriate ● Open to redesigned packaging if it is not too flashy or luxurious ● Use natural, eco-friendly packaging (woven baskets, cloth bags)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some monks like the idea of "travel kits" or customised sets by temple type (city vs forest monks)
	<p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include functional, relevant items (e.g., items aligned with study if temple has a school) ● Prefer separate containers for wet/dry items ● Colour and packaging should align with monastic context — earth tones, calm hues ● Support QR codes for chants / teachings and thoughtful use of Buddhist proverbs
<p>Buyers (Gen Z / Young Givers)</p>	<p>Buying Motivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Occasions: birthdays, merit for deceased relatives, spiritual relief ● Want a sense of meaning, not just ritual
	<p>Purchase Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Often buy at temples or supermarkets ● Prefer mid-sized sets (M or L) with a sense of completeness ● Many still rely on temple staff to choose for them
	<p>Attitudes Toward Giving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Want to do good and make merit, but often feel

	<p>disconnected from current product presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Packaging aesthetics and uniqueness are important in decision-making ● Skeptical of sets that feel mass-produced, irrelevant, or outdated
	<p>Design Preferences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clean, minimal, or traditional-inspired designs ○ Packaging with storytelling or personal meaning ○ Options that feel “giftable” and not just “religious” ● Want practical, usable products (personal care, cleaning, health products) ● Prefer muted colours or temple-aligned tones (brown, orange, beige) ● Dislike wasteful packaging — favour items that can turn into a yām (ยาม) or be reused
	<p>Environmental Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong preference for recyclable or reusable materials ● Dislike excess plastic and decorative ribbons that cannot be reused
	<p>Suggestions</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sets tailored to intention (e.g., for health, finance, love) ● Reuse > recycle focus (e.g., cloth bags, natural materials, not just cardboard) ● Customisation appreciated: want to feel thoughtful and intentional in their offering
Sellers (Retailers / Providers)	<p>Observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Customers are price sensitive but still want aesthetic packaging ● Some prefer convenience (pre-packed sets), others ask for custom orders ● Eco-friendly materials are supported if price stays reasonable ● Interest in woven materials or recyclable packaging is growing
	<p>Current Limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Most offerings are based on conventional set templates ● Lack of understanding of monk preferences ● Struggle to balance aesthetics with cost and convenience
	<p>Openness to Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interested in more creative or curated set

	<p>options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Willing to consider eco-conscious designs that also attract younger buyers ● Emphasise that any redesign must still feel “appropriate” for religious merit
	<p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simple, local materials that can be repurposed or look premium ● Open to collaboration with designers if results match buyer behaviour

Table 11 – Insights from Monastic on Core Needs and Frustration

Category	Users (Monks)	Buyers (Gen Z / Young Givers)	Sellers (Retailers / Providers)
Product	Want high-quality, useful items (toiletries, medicine, daily use)	Value purposeful, curated products — not random or outdated items	Prefer ready-to-sell products, but willing to adjust if quality boosts perceived value
Packaging	Prefer compact, easy-to-store, not overwrapped packaging	Want portable, aesthetic sets (e.g. travel kits, mini sets with purpose)	Look for packaging that is practical to stack, handle, and sell
Material	Support non-plastic, non-wasteful options	Strong preference for eco-friendly	Open to switching if materials are cost-

	(like cloth bags, kraft paper)	materials and reusable containers	effective and durable
Design	Favour modest, humble design — not too flashy	Want simple but modern aesthetics — clean layout, sacred feel, emotionally appealing	Believe good design helps differentiate in crowded markets
Colour	Prefer neutral or soft tones — reflect calmness and spiritual tone	Avoid bright yellow/orange; want tones that feel contemporary and respectful	Follow market demand but willing to try new colour schemes if appealing to young buyers
Suggestions	Recommend sets that meet real needs , less decorative, more thoughtful Suggest font design, spiritual quotes , QR codes, prayer elements, reusable formats Strongly prefer separating wet and dry items to avoid	Appreciate organised sets by themes (love, work, health, etc.) for emotional relevance	Welcome new ideas like modular kits , seasonal packaging, or community-made collaborations

	damage/contamination		
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Table 12 – Cross-Key Stakeholder Takeaways

Thematic Analysis

Theme	Key Takeaway
Product	Desire for high-quality, purposeful offerings across all stakeholders
Packaging	All prefer compact, practical, and aesthetically pleasing packaging
Material	Strong consensus for eco-friendly and non-wasteful materials
Design	Shared value in simplicity and emotional resonance through design
Colour	Shift toward neutral and respectful tones, avoiding outdated schemes
Suggestions	Support for innovation: personalisation, functionality, storytelling

Table 13 – Thematic Analysis

3.4 Practice-led Design Experimentation

The research followed a practice-led design process, guided by field observations, to develop a series of packaging experiments. The tactile and visual impressions gathered during site visits were directly used to conduct these

experiments, such as the textures, patterns, and forms of the decaying temple architecture. Creating translations involved abstracting these elements into modular structures and graphic components.

Prototyping was conducted using sugarcane pulp board with vellum; recycled plastics such as cellophane, and fabric. All these materials allow you to touch and explore the beauty of decay and renewal. The materials were selected not only for their eco-friendliness, but also for their spiritual or cultural significance. For example, vellum was used to suggest transparency and transience, while sugarcane pulp was chosen to evoke impermanence due to its organic fragility.

Reflective practice influenced design, making it an iterative process. Each prototype was assessed not only for its appearance and feel but also for how effectively it communicated. In other words, did it evoke *anicca* (impermanence) or *dukkha* (suffering)? The researcher kept a detailed process journal that was both personal and critically inquiring. The creative journal recorded design thinking, feelings, materials, and ideas, all of which were reflected upon during the making process.



3.5 Thematic Analysis

A thematic analysis based on the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to interpret the qualitative data obtained from surveys, interviews, and prototype evaluations. This analytical method enabled the identification of recurring themes and underlying meanings related to the perception and reception of redesigned Buddhist offering packaging.

A mixed-methods approach was applied, combining three complementary tools:

Questionnaires, which explored donation behaviours, user preferences, and material acceptance (n = 61).

Semi-structured interviews, which examined aesthetics, usability, and symbolic expectations (n = 15).

Prototype evaluations, comparing redesigned eco-friendly packaging with conventional market sets.

Table 14 – Participants and Key Insights

Group	N	Key Insight
Monks	15	Preferred compact sets for easier storage
Benefactors	18	Prioritised symbolic meaning and neatness
Consumers	28	Preferred eco-friendly, minimal packaging
Total	61	Cross-generational insights

The survey data focused on frequency of donation, perceptions of product quality, usability, and environmental awareness. Interview discussions provided in-depth reflections on symbolic interpretation, convenience, and emotional connection with the redesigned offerings. Prototype testing further compared standard multi-layered packaging with the new simplified design sets.

The responses were coded inductively using NVivo to allow patterns to emerge from within the data rather than from pre-determined categories. Coding reliability was ensured through collaborative refinement by two researchers, reaching substantial inter-coder agreement ($K = 0.86$).

Theme	Code Examples	Frequency	Representative Quote
Sacred Symbolism	temple, merit	15	“Packaging should reflect temple aesthetics.” (Monk)
Minimalist Aesthetics	simple, clean	13	“Neutral tones feel respectful.” (Gen Z respondent)
Eco-Sustainability	reusable, bamboo	12	“I prefer paper over plastic.” (Benefactor)
Functional Usability	compact, stack	11	“Smaller sets save storage space.” (Monk)

Table 15 – Thematic Coding Results

The final thematic structure reflected both cultural and functional perspectives, revealing four overarching concepts: Sacredness in Imperfection, Symbolic Memory in Decay, Visual Continuity and Rupture, and Design as Cultural Stewardship. These themes summarised user insights and were reintegrated into the design process.

For instance, the principle of choice to preserve visible cracks and irregular textures in the prototype surfaces, communicating the spiritual notion that damage can hold meaning. Similarly, the principle of **Visual Continuity** guided the layout and folding structure to echo architectural motifs from temple forms, creating a dialogue between traditional sanctity and contemporary visual language.

Hence, the thematic analysis not only generated interpretive insights into sacred design perception but also served as a creative mechanism for shaping the material, visual, and symbolic language of the design outcomes.

3.6 Graphic Data Analysis

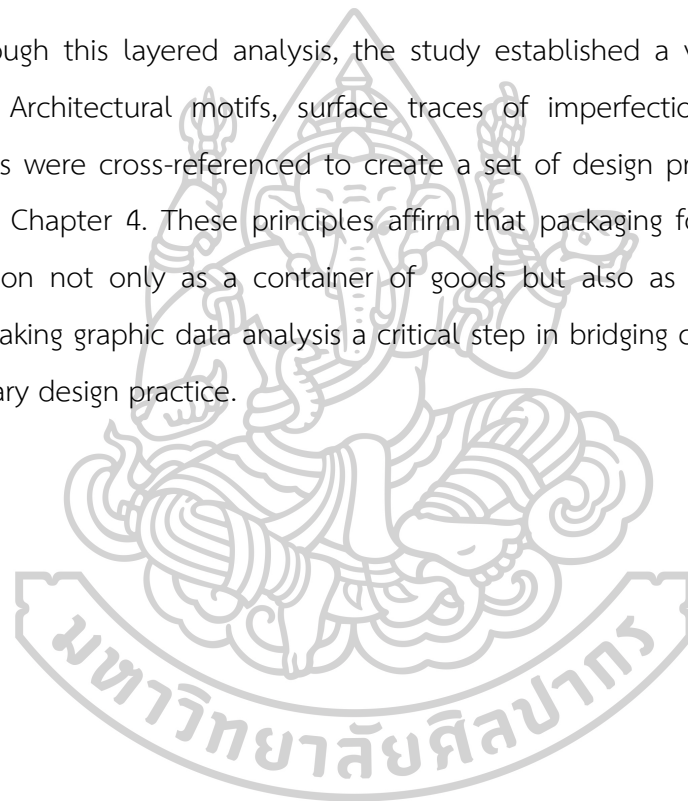
The collected graphic data was analysed to identify patterns, motifs, and symbolic traces that could inform the transformation of architectural heritage into contemporary packaging design. The dataset comprised field photographs, market documentation, survey charts, SWOT diagrams, and coded interview transcripts, all examined in relation to the study's objectives.

The analysis proceeded in three phases. First, the visual archive created during fieldwork was systematically reviewed. Photographs of ancient architecture were examined for recurring iconographic motifs, such as lotus petals, Naga scales, and flame-like Kanok patterns, as well as textural traces of imperfection, including cracks, peeling surfaces, and faded pigments. These imperfections were not treated as flaws but as aesthetic values, embodying the Buddhist principle of impermanence (anicca). This phase enabled the study to extract designable elements directly from cultural heritage.

Second, market graphics from temple fairs, supermarkets, and online platforms were analysed to highlight the visual codes of contemporary Sangkhathan packaging. Bright synthetic colours, glossy foils, and repetitive standardised layouts dominated the commercial packaging landscape (see Figures 3.5–3.7). In contrast, traditional community-assembled offerings relied on earth tones, natural textures, and organic arrangements. By comparing these two modes, the analysis underscored the tension between ritual authenticity and market efficiency, framing the design challenge as one of reconciliation.

Third, the quantitative and qualitative visual data from questionnaires and interviews were integrated into the analysis. Charts from the questionnaire (Figures 3.8–3.10) showed measurable stakeholder preferences for sustainability, cultural symbolism, and design quality. Meanwhile, interview coding (Figure 3.11) visually mapped the differing emphases of monks, vendors, and donors. Taking together, these graphics confirmed that contemporary consumers value packaging that balances practical convenience with symbolic depth and ecological responsibility.

Through this layered analysis, the study established a visual framework for translation. Architectural motifs, surface traces of imperfection, and stakeholder expectations were cross-referenced to create a set of design principles that will be carried into Chapter 4. These principles affirm that packaging for Buddhist supplies must function not only as a container of goods but also as a carrier of cultural memory, making graphic data analysis a critical step in bridging cultural heritage with contemporary design practice.



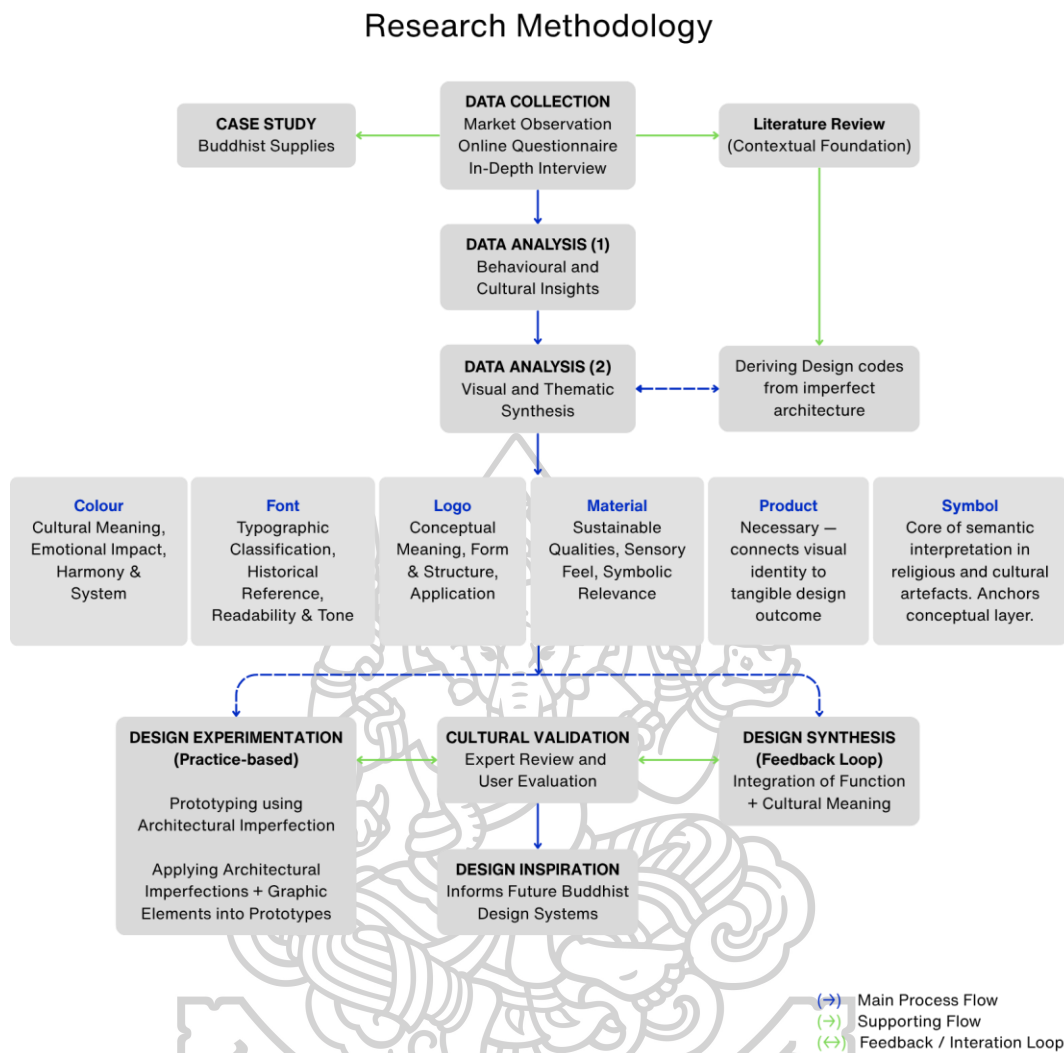


Figure 18 – Research Methodology Framework for Buddhist-Inspired Packaging Design

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure outlines the research methodology used to explore identity and packaging design in the context of Buddhist supplies. The process begins with data collection through both onsite and online market observation, alongside stakeholder engagement via online questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Stakeholders are categorised into three groups: users (monks), buyers (Gen Z and young givers), and sellers (retailers and providers).

The study proceeds through two stages of data analysis. The first stage identifies key components of identity and packaging, including colour, font, logo, material, name, pattern, product, and symbol. The second stage refines these insights through user input. A case study of Buddhist supplies further supports the analysis, evaluated through the lenses of creativity, aesthetics, and function.

The outcomes of this methodology inform the development of design inspiration, ensuring that the final outputs are both culturally resonant and responsive to contemporary user needs.

3.6.1 Behavioural and Cultural Insight Analysis

The behavioural and cultural insights derived from the graphic data highlight the way packaging functions as more than a material vessel: it is also a cultural signifier and a reflection of evolving social values. The questionnaire results, when analysed alongside interviews, reveal that generational differences shape the expectations of Buddhist supply packaging in distinctive ways. Younger respondents, particularly those based in cities, emphasised sustainability, aesthetics, and individuality. For them, packaging is part of a lifestyle practice: its appearance communicates both personal identity and cultural participation. Older respondents, by contrast, valued convenience and affordability, emphasizing the functional role of packaging as a support to the ritual itself rather than as a symbolic medium. This difference underscores a gradual shift in cultural priorities, where ritual aesthetics and environmental awareness are gaining traction among younger practitioners.

Interviews with monks, vendors, and donors further revealed how different groups negotiate meaning. Monks emphasised the principle of ritual authenticity, suggesting that packaging should embody humility, restraint, and sincerity rather than unnecessary embellishment. Their perspectives connected directly with Buddhist teachings of simplicity and impermanence. Vendors, however, expressed concern with the realities of consumer demand. They noted that customers are more easily drawn to brightly coloured plastics, decorative ribbons, and standardised shapes,

even when these features dilute symbolic meaning. This pragmatic approach underscores the commercial pressures shaping the market. Donors provided a middle ground: while many acknowledged the practicality of modern packaging, they also described a sense of disconnection when offerings resembled generic supermarket commodities. Several younger donors, in particular, articulated that packaging which incorporated textures of imperfection, muted tones, and traditional motifs would make their offerings feel more spiritually authentic.

Taken together, these insights reveal a layered cultural picture: packaging is interpreted differently by stakeholders depending on their role and generation. The behaviour of vendors, the guidance of monks, and the values of donors form an interwoven cultural ecosystem that is central to the design process. Recognising these insights ensures that any design intervention must navigate the complex balance of practicality, authenticity, and symbolism that defines the Sangkhathan market.



3.6.2 Visual Identity and Brand System Synthesis

The development of a coherent visual identity requires more than aesthetic decision-making. Each element of the brand system colour, typography, logo, material, name, pattern, product, symbol, and packaging serve as a carrier of cultural and spiritual meaning. The following synthesis explains how these components were conceptualised and how their symbolic values guide the design process, ensuring that the resulting visual system is not only functional but also embedded with cultural resonance.



Figure 19 – Symbolic Elements Representing the Core Motifs in Buddhist Offering Design

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Wheel of Law – Dhammacakka (ธรรมจักร, Pali: Dhammacakka)

The Wheel of Law represents the turning of the Buddha’s first sermon, the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. It symbolises the continuous movement of wisdom, truth, and compassion. Its circular form conveys balance, continuity, and the cyclical nature of existence. This symbol was chosen because it grounds the visual identity in canonical Buddhist teaching and communicates the project’s aim of linking design to timeless principles of order and truth.

Bodhi Leaf – Bodhirukkha (ใบโพธิ์, Pali: Bodhi)

The Bodhi leaf comes from the Bodhi tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment. It signifies awakening, resilience, and compassion. The heart-shaped form is visually approachable and symbolises gentleness and the nurturing of

wisdom. This symbol was selected because it directly connects the identity with the story of enlightenment and conveys growth, truth, and the pursuit of knowledge, resonating with the study's theme of transformation.

Lotus – *Paduma* (ดอกบัว, Pali: *Paduma* or *Uppala*)

The lotus is one of the most recognisable Buddhist symbols. When emerging from the mud, it represents purity arising from imperfection and the capacity for moral and spiritual progress despite difficulties. When blooming above water, it represents enlightenment and wisdom (*paññā*). This symbol was chosen because it mirrors the conceptual foundation of the research—transforming imperfection into value. Its adaptability makes it ideal for logos, graphic patterns, and packaging elements.

Floral Dharma – *Pupphadharmā* (บุปผาดธรรม, Pali: *Puppha* = flower)

Floral offerings are central in Buddhist rituals, representing impermanence and devotion. The act of offering flowers embodies sincerity and respect, while the inevitable fading of blossoms reminds practitioners of transience. This symbol was included to reflect beauty, temporality, and the generosity of giving. It resonates strongly with packaging design, which aims to be aesthetically pleasing yet conceptually tied to impermanence and merit-making.

“Sound of Awakening” – *Dhammarava* (สุรเสียงธรรม, Pali: *Rava* = sound, *Dhamma* = truth/teaching)

The bell symbolises the sound of Dharma, which awakens practitioners to mindfulness and presence. It is both a call to awareness and a reminder of impermanence. Within the identity system, the Sound of Awakening evokes clarity, resonance, and transformation, aligning with the goal of designing offerings that communicate beyond material form. It represents the spread of wisdom and the awakening of consciousness, making it a powerful metaphor for design communication.

3.7 Design Guideline Summary

The validation stage consisted of **two structured review sessions** involving designers, practitioners, and individuals familiar with merit-making rituals. Each session lasted approximately one hour and followed a guided critique format that assessed clarity, cultural appropriateness, theological relevance, and material feasibility. The feedback informed refinements in texture selection, typographic emphasis, and symbolic elements. While the validation process is limited in scale, it offers initial evidence supporting the feasibility and cultural resonance of the design outcomes.

The development of a coherent visual identity requires more than aesthetic decision-making. Each element of the brand system—colour, typography, logo, material, name, pattern, product, symbol, and packaging—serves as a carrier of cultural and spiritual meaning. The following synthesis explains how these components were conceptualised and how their symbolic values guide the design process, ensuring that the resulting visual system is not only functional but also embedded with cultural resonance.

Colour

Colour operates as one of the most immediate forms of communication within a visual identity. In this study, neutral and respectful tones are prioritised, reflecting a shift away from overly ornate or outdated schemes toward palettes that communicate sincerity and calmness. Shades of earth, ivory, and muted gold are selected to signal humility and sacredness, while occasional use of deep indigo or muted red reflects cultural associations with meditation, solemnity, and ritual spaces. The restrained palette also aligns with eco-conscious values, avoiding over-saturation and wasteful printing processes. Symbolically, the choice of neutral tones represents balance and equanimity, while the use of muted accent colours gestures toward the impermanence of material vibrancy.

Font

Typography anchors the visual identity in readability while communicating cultural tone. A clean sans-serif is paired with a carefully selected serif that references classical forms. Rounded letterforms suggest warmth, inclusivity, and human touch, while geometric structures express discipline and determination, echoing the concept of *adhiṭṭhāna* (resolution). The dual system allows the identity to shift between sacred and contemporary registers, ensuring accessibility without abandoning heritage. Typography thus functions as both a practical medium of communication and a visual metaphor for the balance between tradition and present-day adaptation.

Logo

The logo is designed as a central signifier of the identity system, functioning as a unifying mark that embodies determination and spiritual vow. Its visual structure simplifies complex symbolic references into a form that is recognisable, scalable, and versatile across media. By abstracting sacred geometry—such as the circle of wholeness or the upward progression of the lotus—the logo encapsulates the journey from imperfection toward enlightenment. Its simplicity avoids ornamental distraction, aligning with contemporary branding strategies while retaining the depth of symbolic reference.

Materials

Materials selected for packaging and product presentation play a communicative role equal to visual design. Eco-friendly, recyclable, and non-wasteful options were chosen to reflect Buddhist values of non-harm and moderation. The tactile qualities of uncoated paper, sugarcane pulp, or natural fibres communicate authenticity and humility, reinforcing the sense that offerings are not about luxury but about sincerity. In symbolic terms, the choice of material situates the product within a discourse of impermanence: natural textures wear and change over time, reminding users of transience while embodying respect for the environment.

Name

The name functions as a verbal anchor for the entire identity. Drawing from *adhittāna* (อธิษฐาน), meaning determination, resolution, or spiritual vow, the brand adopts the simplified form Atithan. While the root form Adhitthana reflects the Pali–Sanskrit orthography, its complexity in transliteration risks alienating everyday users. Following strategies observed in case studies such as Pañpuri and Karava, simplification allows the name to be memorable, pronounceable, and modern while retaining spiritual authenticity. The chosen form represents a balance: it preserves the cultural depth of the root while aligning with contemporary readability, demonstrating how heritage terms can be modernised into effective design identities.

Pattern / Element

Graphic patterns and elements draw inspiration from both architectural traces and Buddhist iconography. Repetitive geometric forms reference temple lines and lattice structures, while flowing curves symbolise the impermanent movement of water and air. Such motifs are not merely decorative; they embed narrative layers into the identity. For instance, the use of concentric circular patterns reflects the cyclical nature of existence, while fractured textures suggest imperfection as a site of beauty and renewal. By transforming these symbolic references into repeatable visual elements, the identity system gains flexibility for applications across print, digital, and spatial design.

Product

At the level of the offering itself, the product is framed as a carrier of both purpose and symbolism. High-quality, intentional design reflects the stakeholder demand for offerings that are not generic but meaningful. By integrating values such as sustainability, functionality, and narrative depth, the product extends beyond a utilitarian role to become an artefact of spiritual communication. This orientation ensures that every tangible output resonates with both the giver and the recipient, reinforcing the cultural significance of merit-making practices.

Symbol

Symbolism is central to the identity system, with the lotus as its primary motif. The lotus in the mud represents purity arising from imperfection, suggesting the potential for enlightenment within the conditions of everyday life. The lotus above the water represents transcendence, wisdom (paññā), and spiritual awakening. Together, these states illustrate the continuum between struggle and resolution. Secondary symbols include the circle, signifying wholeness and impermanence, and the rhythmic line, suggesting continuity and flow. These symbolic references provide a library of meaning from which graphical elements, icons, and secondary marks can be developed, ensuring that every design choice carries semantic depth.

Packaging

Packaging operates as both container and medium of communication. Compact, practical, and aesthetically pleasing forms are prioritised, reflecting stakeholder preferences. More than functionality, packaging becomes a site of storytelling, embedding values such as mindfulness, compassion, and impermanence. For example, minimal graphics on natural fibre paper communicate restraint and sincerity, while inscriptions or subtle symbols connect the act of giving to narratives of merit-making. In this way, packaging ceases to be peripheral and instead becomes integral to the ritual and design experience.

Synthesis

When brought together, these elements constitute a visual identity and brand system that is coherent, meaningful, and adaptable. Colour, typography, logo, material, name, pattern, product, symbol, and packaging each carry embedded meaning, ensuring that the system communicates consistently across contexts. This synthesis not only establishes a strong design foundation but also provides the conceptual framework for future graphical applications. Every choice is anchored in cultural significance, reinforcing the study's aim of transforming imperfection and heritage into a contemporary design language.

3.8 Validation and Cultural Resonance

A few informal review sessions were held by stakeholders like religious practitioners and educators were arranged for review-validation. Participants were invited to engage with the prototypes and give open-ended feedback about aesthetic legibility, symbolic appropriateness, and spiritual resonance. Instead of looking at user satisfaction from a commercial point of view the aim of this phase of the study was to assess whether people who were aware of the cultural and spiritual intent embedded in the design would pick it.

According to this idea of design, design itself is not seen only as functional or aesthetic—design becomes an act of cultural translation, an act whereby sacred meaning is preserved (or adapted or augmented) through form, texture and symbolism. Consequently, the methodology accepts the need for contextual sensitivity in every stage of research: site engagement, material choice, symbolic coding, and audience reception.

The primary limitation of the validation process lies in its small sample size and the absence of formal theological experts. While monks participated during earlier interviews, the validation sessions focused more on design interpretation than doctrinal meaning. Future research would benefit from including senior monastics or scholars of Buddhist studies to strengthen the theological grounding of symbolic and visual components.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

This study received approval from the Silpakorn University Human Research Ethics Committee (Certificate No. 144/2568, approved on 1 August 2025). All interviews were conducted with informed consent, and the subjects were made aware of the study and its purpose. Anonymity was preserved where requested. The research was also mindful of not removing any holy temple elements or replacing them in a culturally inappropriate or commercially exploitative manner. The objects produced were for speculation rather than market use, ensuring that the sanctity of sacred symbols and sites was protected.



CHAPTER 4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Design Inspiration

Design Conceptualisation Framework

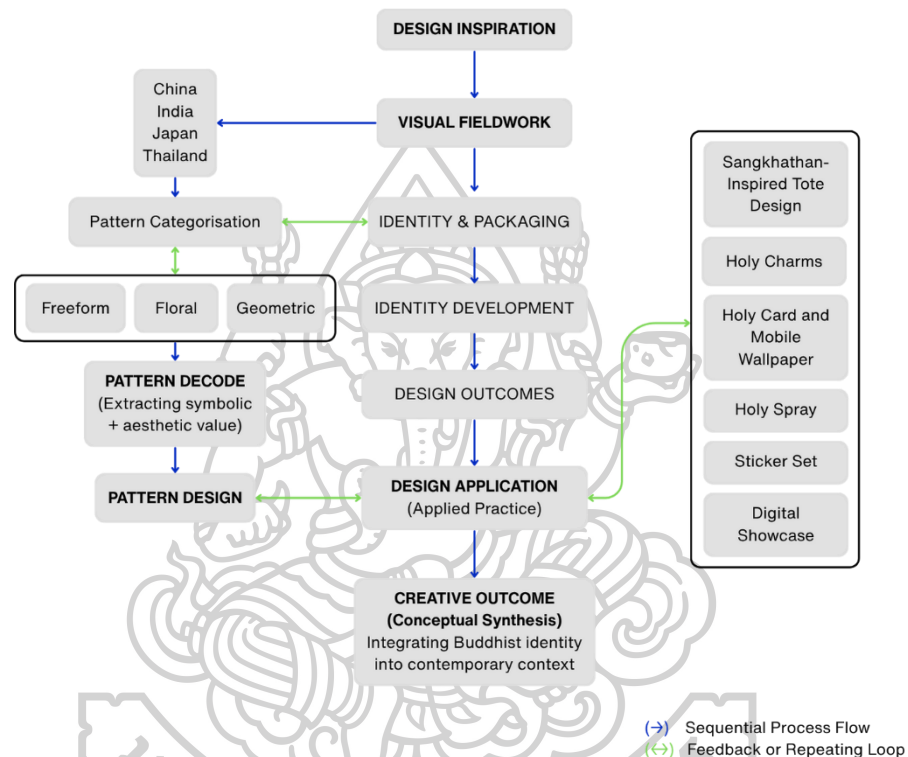


Figure 20 – Design Conceptualisation Framework for Buddhist-Inspired Packaging

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This framework follows the principles of **Research Through Design (RTD)** and **Practice-Based Research**, where knowledge is developed through cycles of making, reflection, and contextual understanding. It illustrates the conceptual process of integrating architectural elements from Buddhist cultural contexts into contemporary packaging design. The process begins with design inspiration drawn from fieldwork at significant sites in **China, India, Japan, and Thailand**, leading to the categorisation and interpretation of patterns into **Freeform, Floral, and Geometric** types. These insights inform the development of visual identity components—colour, form, pattern, material, and symbol—which are then applied

to packaging artefacts such as the *Sangkhathan Tote*, *Box or Wrap*, and *Holy Charms*. The framework demonstrates how traditional aesthetics can be reinterpreted through creative practice to maintain spiritual meaning while achieving modern design relevance.

4.1.1 Design Inspiration Overview

The starting point for the design process was the recognition that architectural imperfection is not simply a material condition but a cultural and spiritual signifier. During the fieldwork phase, a large collection of photographs was taken across temples and heritage sites in Thailand, as well as in other Asian contexts such as Cambodia and India. These photographs documented the visible traces of time—cracked stucco, faded murals, eroded reliefs, and oxidised metals. At first glance, these features might appear as flaws, but in the cultural framework of Buddhist aesthetics, they become reminders of impermanence and humility. In this sense, imperfection itself carries an aesthetic charge.

This awareness shaped the research into seeing ancient structures not as finished monuments but as living texts that continue to communicate through their surfaces. The cracks of a sandstone relief, the irregularities of lotus ornamentation, or the discolouration of paint do not erase meaning; they add layers of historical memory and spiritual resonance. These surfaces embody the principle of impermanence, reminding practitioners that all material things are transient. In this way, the fieldwork archive did not simply document architecture; it revealed a design vocabulary already embedded in cultural practice.

The inspiration therefore grew from an act of translation. Instead of importing forms directly from architecture into packaging design, the process sought to reinterpret their qualities—irregularity, layering, fragility, resilience—into contemporary applications. The architectural traces became visual resources that

could be abstracted into patterns, textures, and motifs. They also offered a philosophical grounding, guiding the design toward a balance between cultural memory and modern application. This stage of inspiration established a bridge between the cultural past and the present, allowing packaging to move beyond a utilitarian role and toward becoming a carrier of spiritual and symbolic depth.

4.1.2 Architectural Documentation and Pattern Classification

Supervised by Prof. Eakachart Joneurairatana, PhD, the extensive visual archive from fieldwork was carefully documented and then classified into categories to make the inspiration process more systematic. Hundreds of photographs were reviewed and grouped according to recurring characteristics, resulting in three broad categories: freeform, floral, and geometric patterns. Each category represented not only a visual style but also a symbolic and cultural dimension.



Figure 21 – Prototype Review and Design Evaluation Session

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

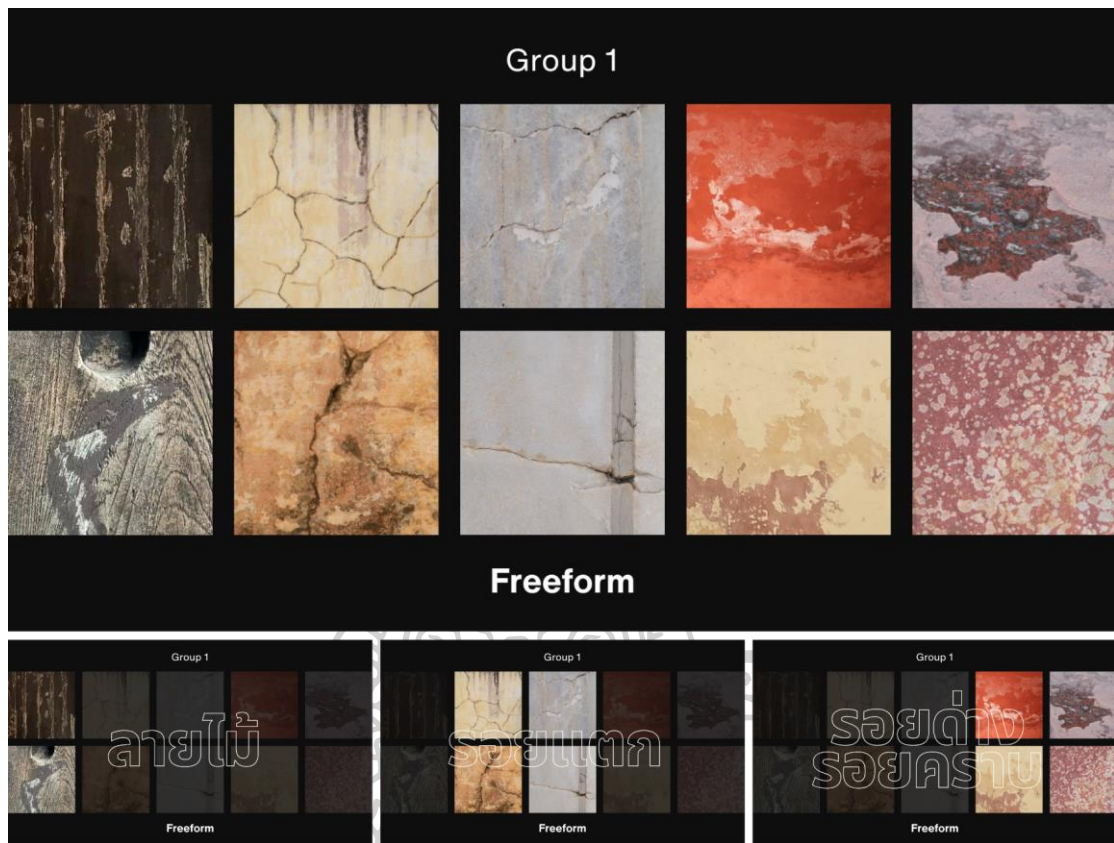


Figure 22 – Visual Samples of Freeform Patterns Collected from Aged Architectural Surfaces

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The first category, freeform patterns, emerged from surfaces shaped by erosion, cracking, and uneven weathering. These irregular patterns were found in temple walls where plaster had peeled away, or in stone carvings where time had softened the edges. Freeform traces have no strict symmetry and often appear unpredictable. Yet their unpredictability embodies fragility and human vulnerability. They remind practitioners of natural processes, such as the growth of moss or the splitting of stone, and bring attention to the reality that all structures, no matter how grand, will eventually yield to time.

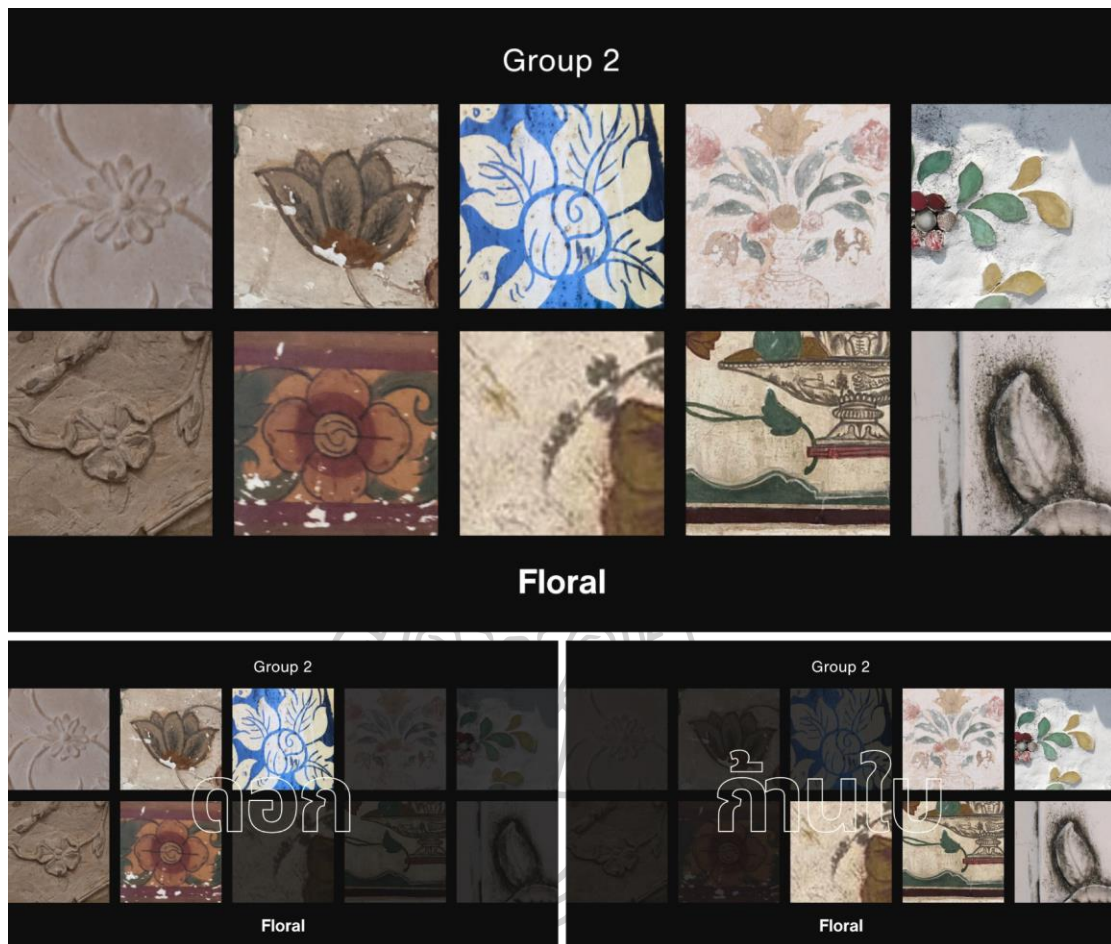


Figure 23 – Visual Samples of Floral Patterns Inspired by Lotus and Botanical Motifs in Buddhist Art

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The second category, floral patterns, is closely tied to the symbolic use of the lotus in Buddhist and Asian art. Lotus petals carved into temple bases, vine-like stucco crawling across walls, or blossoms painted in murals form a rich decorative vocabulary. These floral motifs signify purity, protection, and rebirth, qualities deeply embedded in Buddhist philosophy. In addition, floral designs are adaptable into surface ornamentation, making them particularly useful for packaging translation. Their organic repetition communicates beauty while simultaneously carrying spiritual messages.

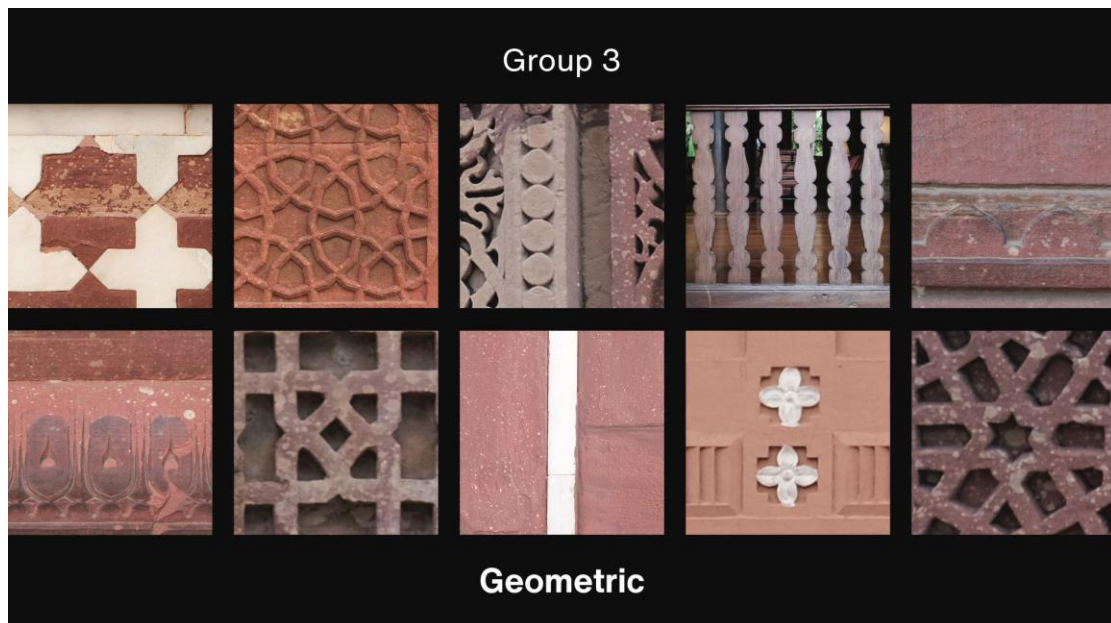


Figure 24 – Visual Samples of Geometric Patterns Derived from Temple Architecture and Decorative Motifs

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The third category, geometric patterns, was derived from mandala-like temple floor plans, Naga scales, and flame-like Kanok arrangements. These motifs are characterised by their symmetry, rhythm, and mathematical order. Unlike freeform patterns, geometric motifs provide a sense of control, stability, and spiritual structure. They are often connected to cosmological diagrams, where every line and circle represents the order of the universe. Within packaging design, geometric motifs provide balance and clarity, complementing the irregularity of freeform traces and the natural flow of floral elements.

The classification process was not intended to reduce the richness of the patterns but to create a manageable framework for analysis and translation. By organising motifs into categories, the design process could move fluidly between the organic and the structure, between the fragile and the enduring. Together, the three categories form a complete spectrum of visual inspiration, rooted in heritage but adaptable for contemporary design outcomes.

4.1.3 Pattern Decoding Tables and Transformation Process

To bridge the gap between raw documentation and usable design, the next stage involved the development of decoding tables. These tables functioned as analytical tools that broke down each pattern into its fundamental elements. Each pattern was examined in terms of its visual structure—line quality, shape, degree of symmetry, and potential for repetition—as well as its symbolic meaning. For example, cracks in plaster walls were identified as irregular lines that could be reinterpreted into abstract graphic networks. Faded lotus murals were identified as floral shapes with incomplete symmetry that could be transformed into repeatable modular forms. Naga scales, with their precise rhythm, could be tessellated to create surface textures adaptable for backgrounds or frames.

The decoding process emphasised transformation rather than replication. The goal was not to copy heritage motifs directly into packaging but to reinterpret their qualities into new forms that remain recognisable yet relevant for modern contexts. For instance, when cracks were redrawn digitally, they became linear patterns resembling organic veins or river maps, suggesting both fragility and continuity. Floral elements, when stylised, became modular ornaments that could be scaled across packaging without losing their symbolic reference. Geometric patterns, when abstracted, become grids or mandala-inspired frameworks suitable for layout structures or logos.

The decoding stage intentionally emphasised interpretive analysis rather than direct imitation. As design researchers caution, literal replication of heritage motifs risks producing pastiche or superficial appropriation (Lai, 2020). By focusing instead on underlying principles—rhythm, directionality, layering, erosion, and spatial tension—the process ensured that the resulting visual language would feel rooted in Thai architectural memory without copying specific temple ornamentation. This approach aligns with contemporary design ethics, which prioritise cultural sensitivity and original reinterpretation over stylistic duplication.

This stage of the process ensured that the heritage material was not simply decorative but structurally integrated into the design system. The decoding tables became a key reference, guiding the progression from inspiration to application. They provided a visual dictionary where every pattern carried both formal and symbolic value, ready to be activated in the subsequent stages of prototyping and refinement.



Abstract (Random)								
Original	Color	Elements		Primary	Secondary			
		Outline	Filled					
					+	+	+	+
					=	=	=	=
					S1	S2	S3	S4
					Tertiary			
					+	+	+	
					+	+	+	
					=	=	=	
					T1	T2	T3	

Figure 25 – Development Process of Freeform Pattern Elements from Original Textures to Abstract Compositions

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

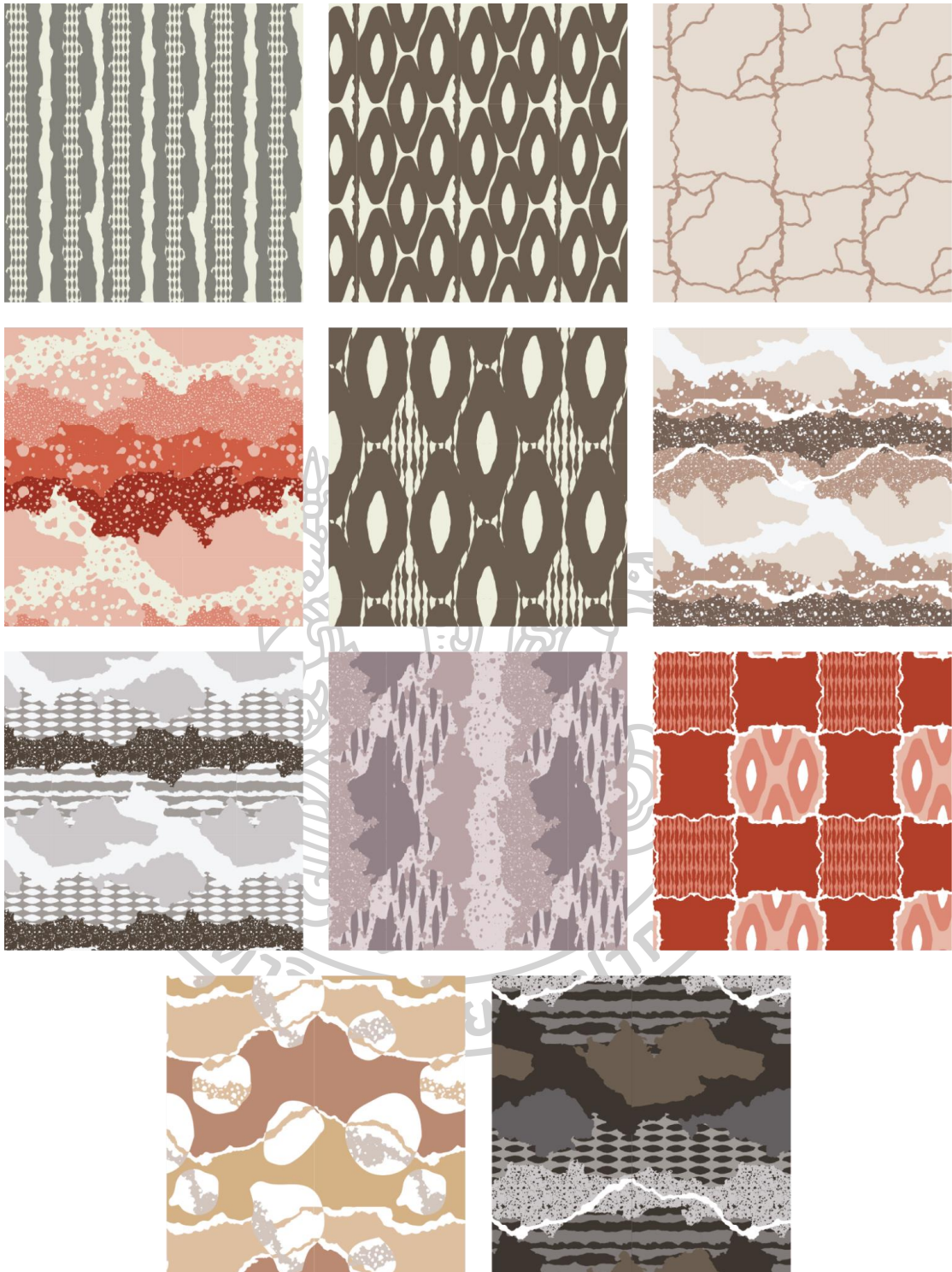


Figure 26 – Final Freeform Pattern Designs Derived from Sacred Architectural Textures

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Flower / Plant								
Original	Color	Elements		Primary	Secondary			
		Outline	Filled					
				 = 				
				 = 	+	+	+	+
				 = 	=	=	=	=
					Tertiary			
				 = 				
				 = 	+	+	+	
				 = 	=	=	=	

Figure 27 – Development Process of Floral Pattern Elements from Original Motifs to Layered Compositions

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)



Figure 28 – Final Floral Pattern Collection Representing Sacred and Natural Symbolism in Contemporary Context

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Geometry								
Original	Color	Elements		Primary	Secondary			
		Outline	Filled					
					+	+	+	+
					=	=	=	=
					Tertiary			
					+	+	+	
					=	=	=	

Figure 29 – Geometric Pattern Development Process Showing Element Extraction and Composition Stages

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)



Figure 30 – Geometric Pattern Development Process Inspired by Sacred Architectural Motifs

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

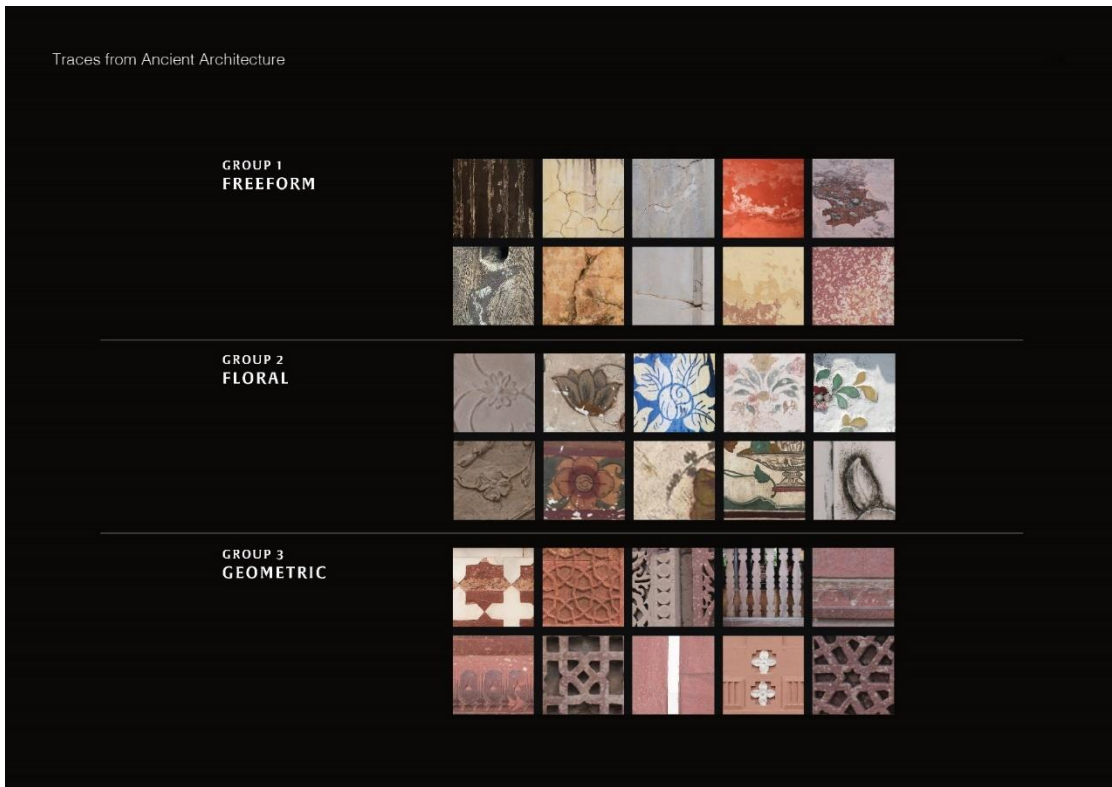


Figure 31 – Traces from Ancient Architecture



4.1.4 Printmaking Experimentation Using Architectural Patterns



Figure 32 – Silk Screen Printmaking Experimentation
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Printmaking was used as an experimental technique to test how architectural patterns might translate into contemporary design while retaining their imperfections. Techniques such as linocut, block printing, and stencil work were employed to reproduce motifs by hand. Unlike digital replication, printmaking introduced natural irregularities through uneven ink distribution, variable pressure, and textured edges. These irregularities echoed the weathering of architectural surfaces, reinforcing the principle that imperfection is central to the aesthetic.

To address concerns regarding the transition from experimentation to final concepts, the exploratory phase involved generating multiple rounds of iterative sketches, test prints, and material samples. Each experiment was evaluated for its ability to convey impermanence, humility, and sacred resonance. These iterations acted as a filtering process that gradually refined the direction while preserving the organic qualities discovered through hands-on experimentation. Although only a selection is shown in the main document, the full set of sketches and test sheets is

included in **Appendix C** to demonstrate the breadth of development work undertaken.

Regarding scalability, printmaking textures were digitised and vector-refined to ensure they could be reproduced across various formats without losing tactile character. While hand-printed marks offer unique irregularities, the digitised versions maintain visual inconsistencies that evoke the original craft. This process mirrors methods used in contemporary branding systems where analogue origins are preserved through controlled digital translation (Vanderploeg & Brown, 2019). The approach ensures aesthetic authenticity while enabling practical application in packaging production.

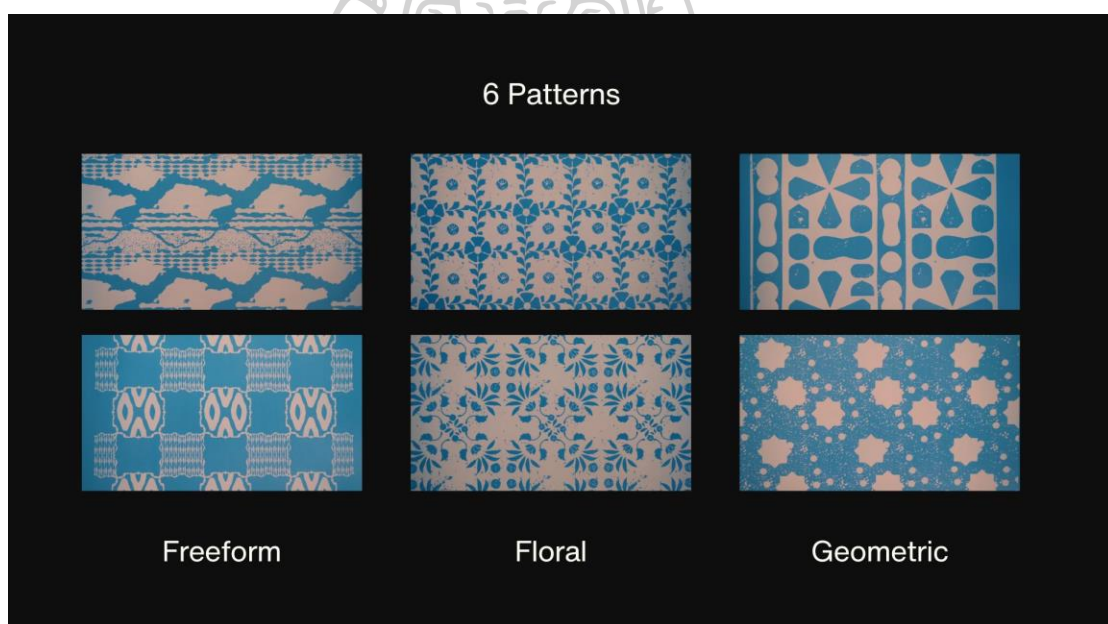


Figure 33 – Set of Six Printed Pattern Categorised into Freeform, Floral, and Geometric Designs

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

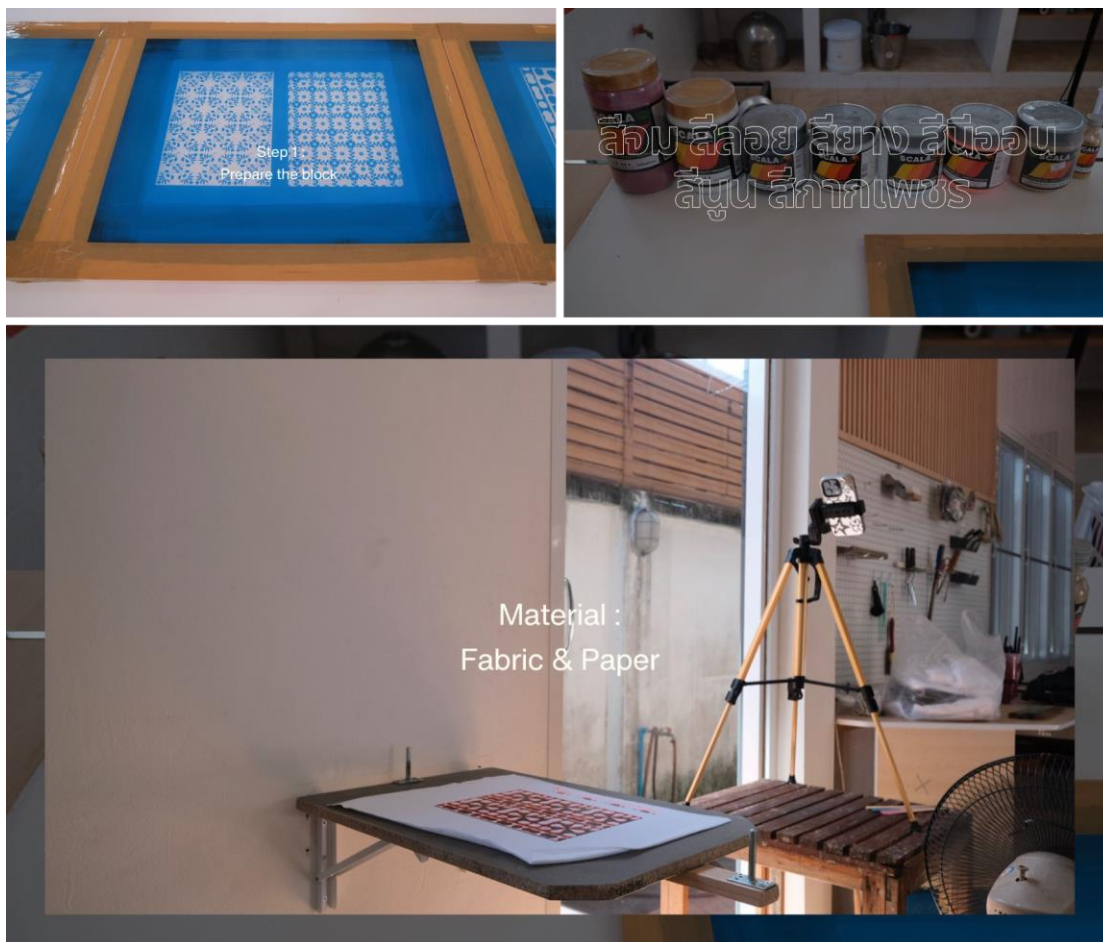


Figure 34 – Silk Screen Printing Process and Materials Used, Including Fabric and Paper Surfaces

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The printmaking experiments generated a library of textures and forms that could later be digitised. Cracks carved into linoleum blocks produced linear networks that appeared organic and fragile. Lotus motifs pressed onto paper with fading ink created incomplete yet evocative impressions. Geometric grids, when block-printed, revealed slight distortions that made them more human and tactile. These outcomes demonstrated that imperfection could be re-staged in the design process, not just documented from the past.

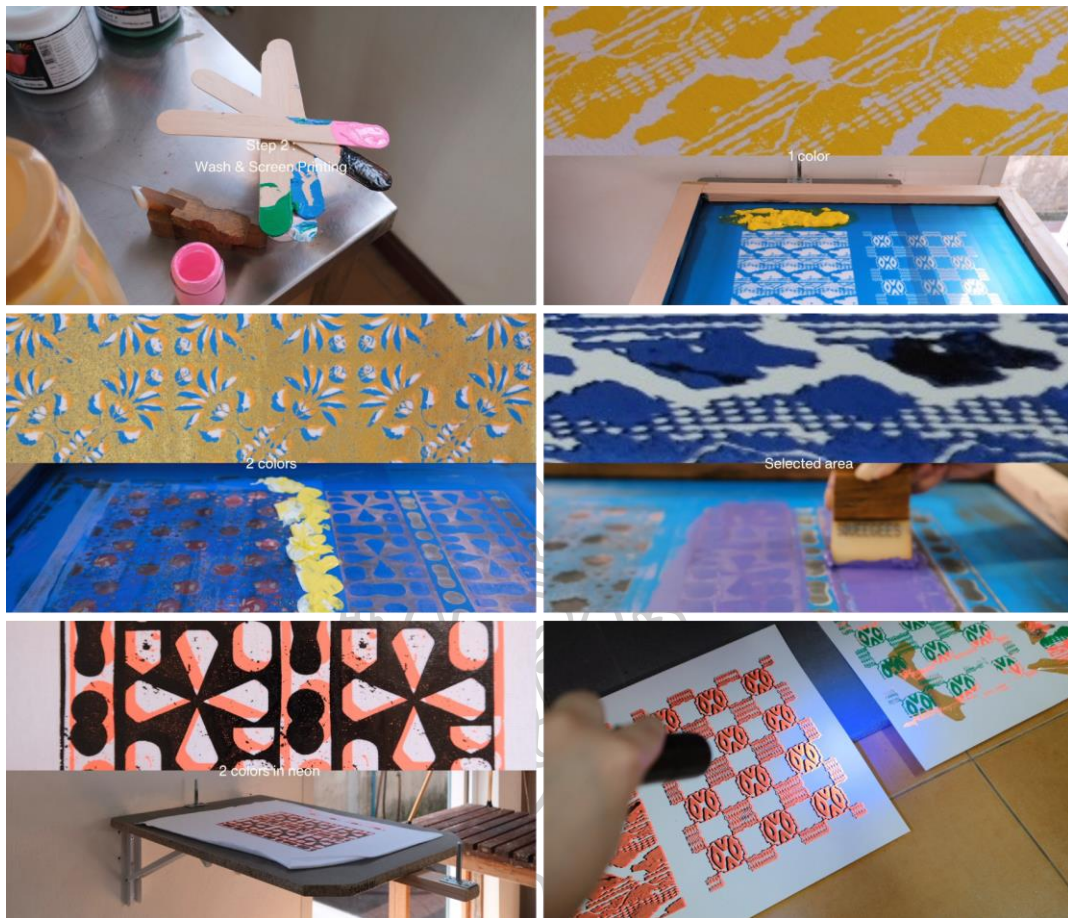


Figure 35 – Silk Screen Printing Process Showing Multi-Colour Layering and Application on Fabric and Paper

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

By integrating handmade experimentation, the research grounded its design approach in materiality. The tactile results highlighted the potential for packaging to communicate not only through image but also through texture. The printmaking stage provided a counterpoint to purely digital methods, ensuring that the final outcomes retained a sense of warmth and authenticity. In this way, printmaking functioned as both an artistic exploration and a methodological strategy, bridging cultural inspiration with practical design development.



Figure 36 – Additional Printmaking Experiments Conducted to Explore Variations in Pattern and Material Application

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

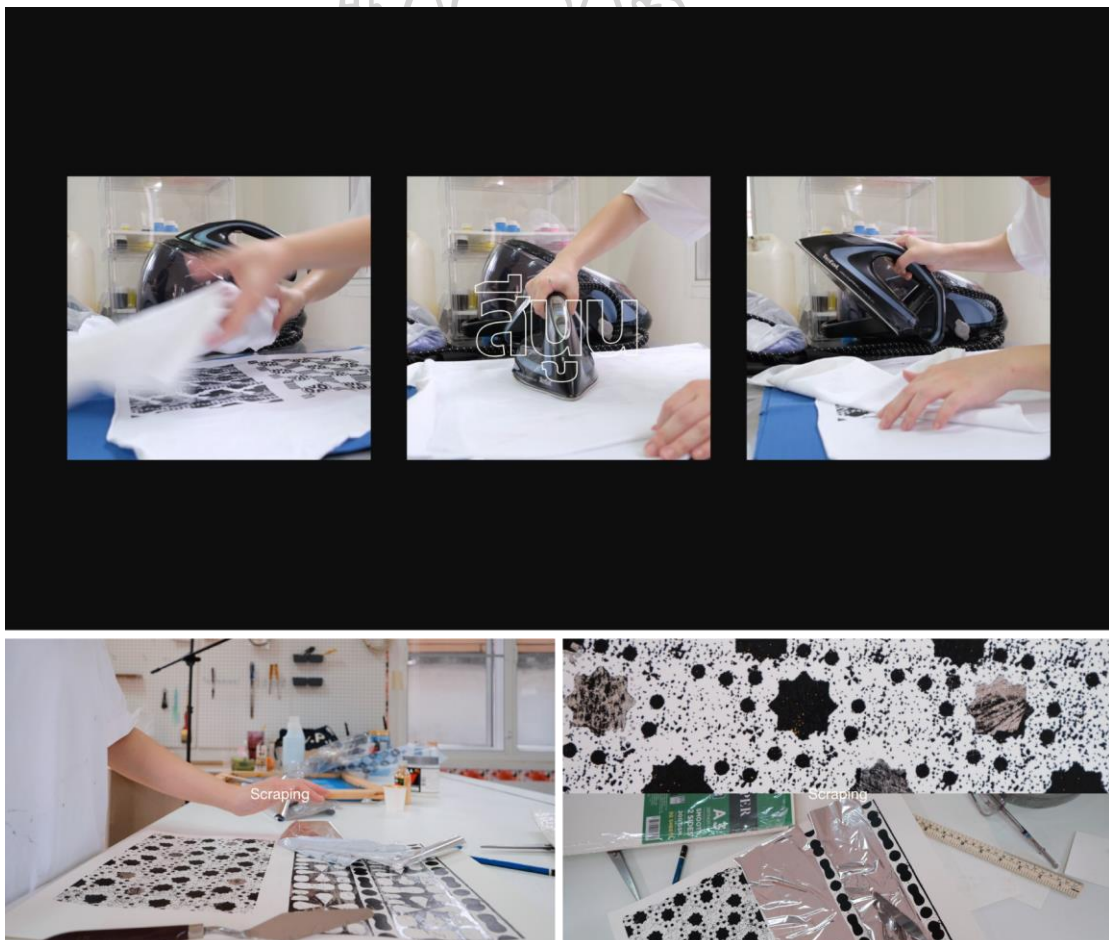


Figure 36 – Heat Transfer and Screen Printing Experiments Demonstrating the Application of Architectural Patterns on Different Materials

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)



Figure 37 – Raised Paint Technique (สีนูน) Used to Create Textural Relief in Printed Surfaces

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

In addition to traditional block printing, the study also experimented with (raised paint technique). This method involved layering pigment to create three-dimensional relief effects on the surface of the print. The use of raised paint technique enabled motifs to appear not only as flat visuals but also as tactile forms, echoing the embossed quality of temple murals and carved stucco details. The raised texture added a sensory dimension, inviting touch and providing a material connection that paralleled the experience of encountering architectural ornament in situ. When applied to patterns such as lotus blossoms or flame-like Kanok motifs, the raised paint created depth and shadow reminiscent of the original architectural context, where carvings project from temple walls to interact with light and space.

This stage of experimentation was significant because it demonstrated that imperfection and material presence can be communicated not only visually but also through texture. By layering printmaking and raised pigment techniques, the research developed a library of design elements grounded in tactile authenticity. These outcomes later informed the digitisation process, where selected textures and patterns were adapted for packaging prototypes. In this way, experimentation with

block printing, stencil work, and raised paint technique Raised paint (สีนูน) demonstrated that design development can move fluidly between heritage inspiration, material experimentation, and contemporary application.

4.2 Design Series

4.2.1 Series 1: Logo Exploration

The first stage of the design series focused on exploring logo concepts as a way of creating a recognisable identity system. The aim was to translate the imperfect traces of ancient architecture into a visual mark that could stand as both a symbol of authenticity and a functional identifier for the brand. Early sketches were inspired by circular stupa plans, mandala arrangements, and crack lines found in temple plasters. These forms were repeatedly redrawn to capture a sense of incompleteness while still maintaining visual balance.

During this stage, experimentation emphasised abstraction over replication. Cracks were stylised into delicate linework, lotus petals were reduced into modular geometric shapes, and the Kanok flame motif was simplified into a repeatable curve. The process yielded multiple variations: some logos leaned toward symmetry and clarity, while others celebrated asymmetry and fragmentation. These contrasts reflected the underlying tension in the research between permanence and impermanence, order and disruption.

The outcome of Series 1 was not a final logo but a visual vocabulary of possibilities. The exercise highlighted that the most successful directions were those that balanced cultural reference with contemporary simplicity—logos that carried the aura of history without becoming overly ornate or literal.



Figure 38 – ATITHAN Logo Design Showcasing Symbolic Representation of Sacred Identity

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

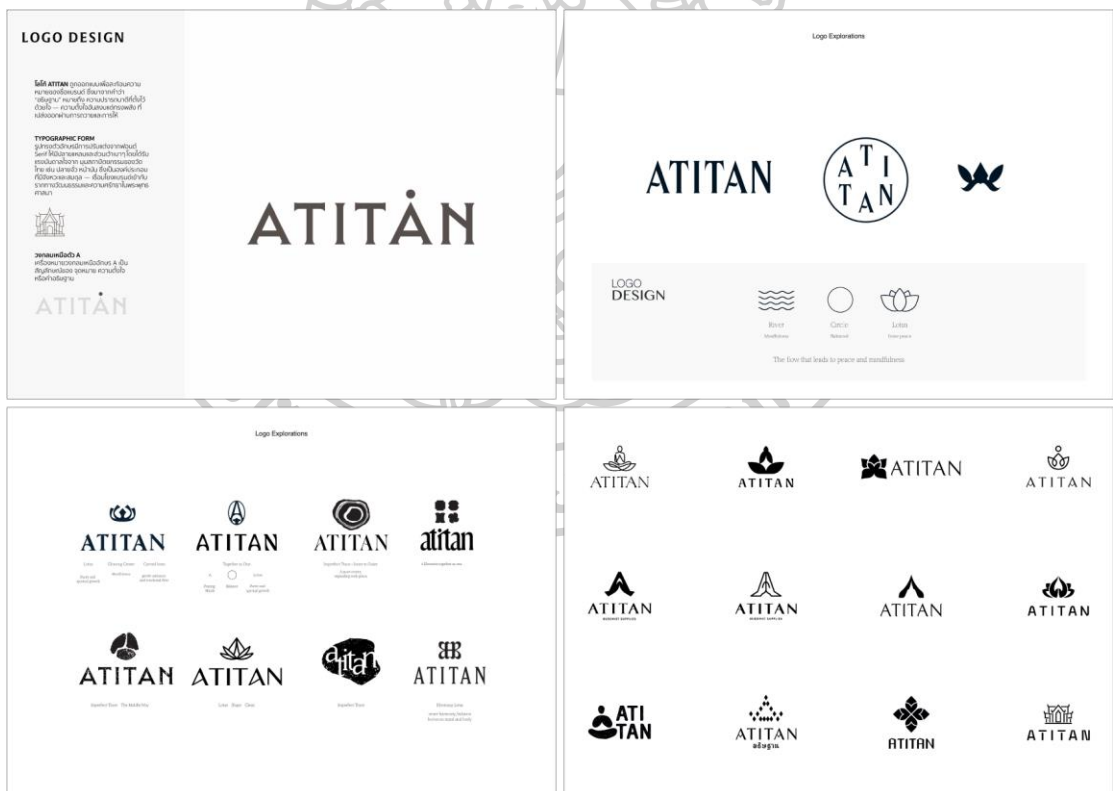


Figure 37 – ATITHAN Logo Design Exploration and Visual Identity Development

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure illustrates the design process behind the creation of the ATITHAN visual identity. It presents multiple logo variations, typeface experiments, and symbol explorations derived from sacred and architectural motifs found in Buddhist and Asian cultural contexts. The variations reflect the designer's intention to balance modern aesthetics with spiritual symbolism, emphasising clarity, elegance, and cultural depth. This exploration phase demonstrates how form and meaning were integrated to achieve a cohesive visual language for the ATITHAN brand.

4.2.2 Series 2: Identity and Packaging Prototypes

The second series moved from logo exploration into broader identity formation and packaging prototypes. Here, the design system began to expand into applications that integrated colour palettes, typography, and material textures derived from fieldwork. Prototypes were constructed using muted tones such as faded reds, patinated greens, and aged whites, accented with subtle gold to preserve ritual resonance.

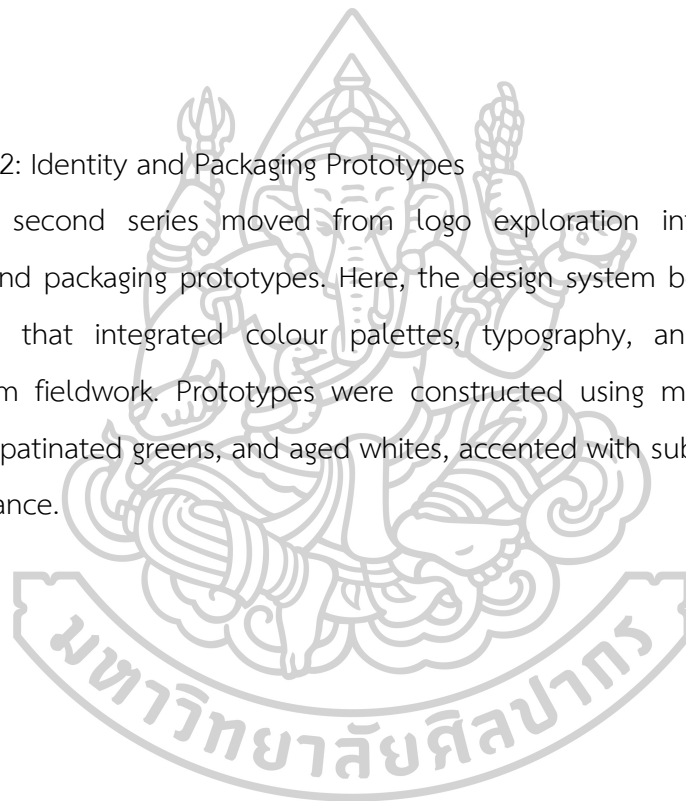




Figure 38 – ATITHAN Brand Application and Product Packaging Collection

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the final visual identity of the ATITHAN brand applied across various product and packaging designs. The design showcases a cohesive aesthetic language that integrates sacred symbolism, minimalist form, and contemporary refinement. The use of metallic gold and earthy tones reflects themes of purity, value, and spiritual reverence. Each product, from perfume bottles to eco-friendly tote bags, embodies the concept of “Sacred Imperfection,” merging

traditional craftsmanship with modern material and form to evoke a sense of ritual, respect, and mindfulness in everyday offerings.



Figure 41 – ATITHAN Brand Application and Product Packaging Collection
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the final visual identity of the ATITHAN brand applied across various product and packaging designs. The design showcases a cohesive aesthetic language that integrates sacred symbolism, minimalist form, and contemporary refinement. The use of metallic gold and earthy tones reflects themes of purity, value, and spiritual reverence. Each product, from perfume bottles to eco-friendly tote bags, embodies the concept of “Sacred Imperfection,” merging traditional craftsmanship with modern material and form to evoke a sense of ritual, respect, and mindfulness in everyday offerings.

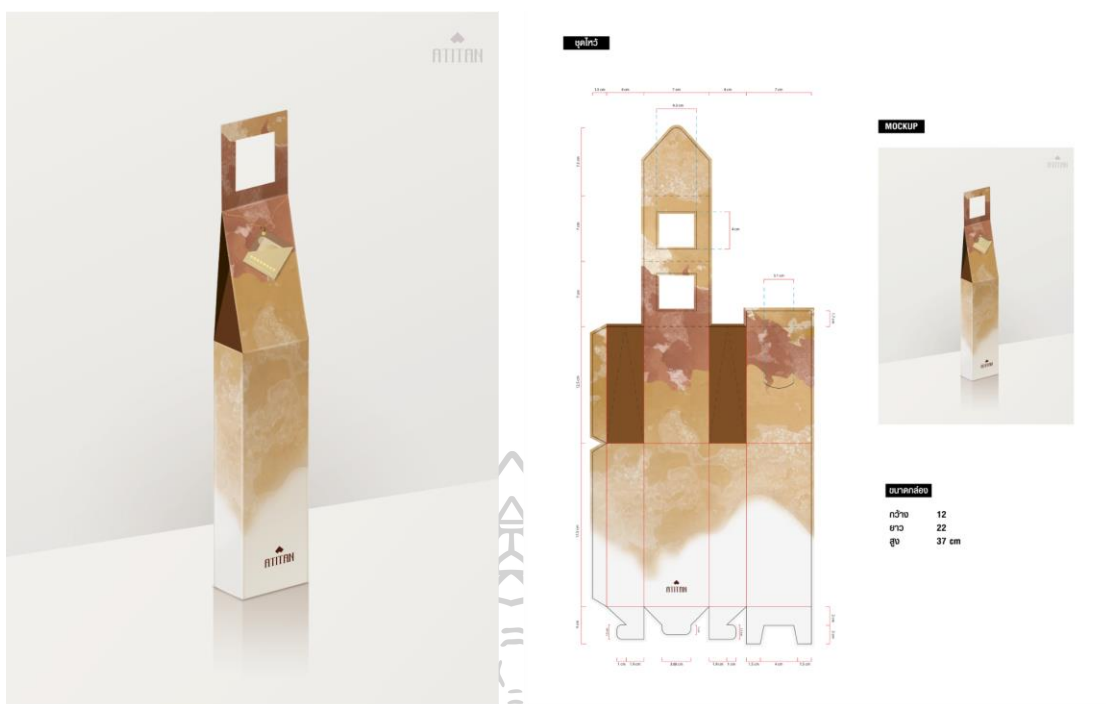


Figure 39 – Structural and Visual Design of the ATITHAN Tall Gift Box
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the design and dieline layout of the ATITHAN tall gift box prototype. The packaging features an elongated vertical form with a folded top closure inspired by pagoda silhouettes, reflecting the symbolic height and spiritual ascension found in Buddhist architecture. The printed pattern integrates “Sacred Imperfection” motifs, blending organic textures and temple wall traces in warm earthy tones. The dieline diagram demonstrates precision in structural folding and ergonomic handling, combining visual elegance with practical usability suitable for modern ritual offerings.



Figure 40 – Structural and Visual Design of the ATITHAN Box for Multiple Offerings
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure illustrates the dieline and assembled view of the ATITHAN multi-offering box. The packaging structure combines practicality with symbolic meaning, featuring a folded design with a triangular handle reminiscent of temple gables. The surface graphics integrate “Sacred Imperfection” patterns inspired by aged temple textures and natural patina, printed in warm, earthy tones. The dieline layout highlights the technical precision behind the foldable structure, demonstrating how craftsmanship and spiritual symbolism are unified through contemporary packaging design.



Figure 41 – Packaging and Structural Design for ATITHAN Perfume Bottles

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the ATITHAN perfume concept, combining sacred-inspired bottle design with packaging dieline. The glass bottles are topped with wooden caps and adorned with medallion-style tags that carry sacred motifs, reinforcing symbolic value. Below, four dieline layouts illustrate variations of the structural packaging, each with printed textures derived from “Sacred Imperfection” patterns. These box

designs integrate both protective function and spiritual aesthetics, ensuring the packaging communicates refinement, ritual significance, and modern usability.

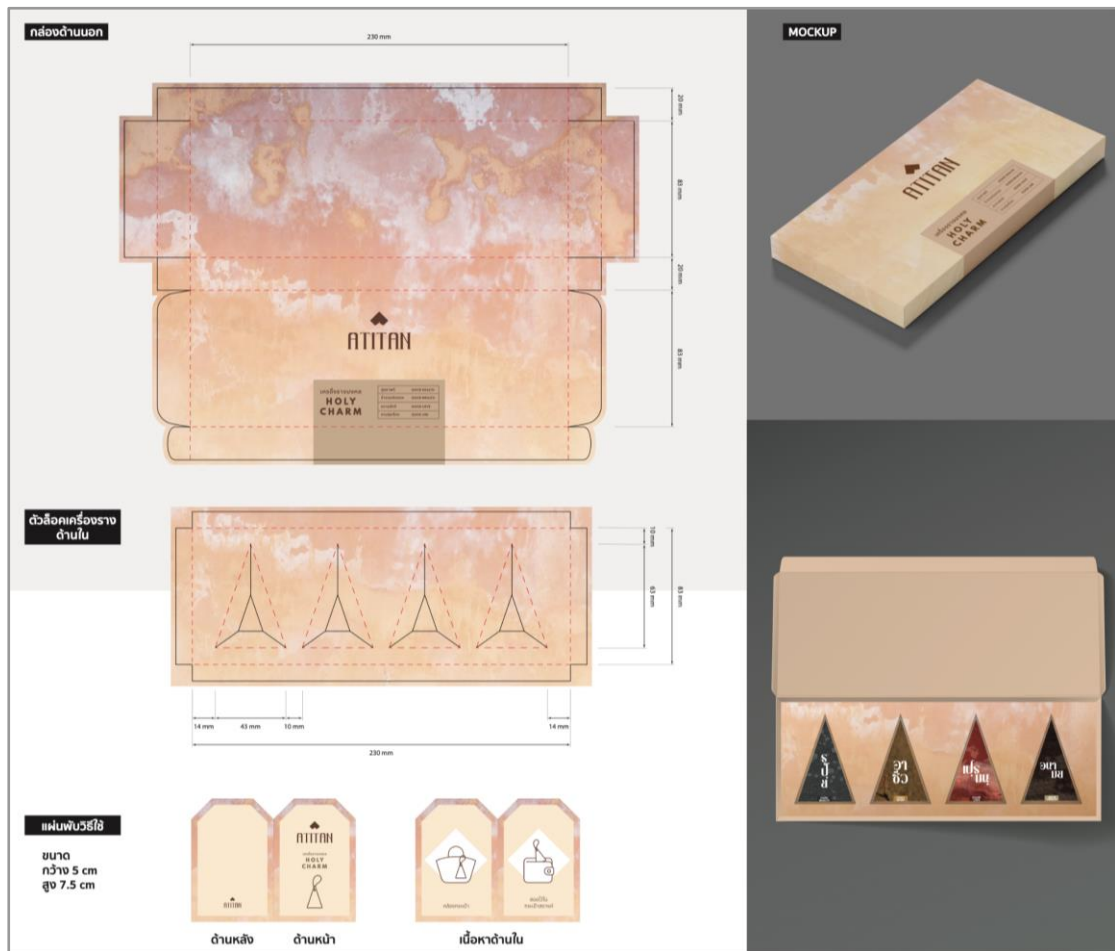


Figure 42 – ATITHAN Holy Charm Packaging and Dieline Design
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Packaging structures were designed to echo architectural layering. Boxes opened in a sequence of folds reminiscent of temple gateways, while tote designs incorporated repeating lotus patterns derived from stucco documentation. Raised paint (สีนูน) was also applied in experimental prints, producing tactile surfaces that resembled embossed temple murals. This use of texture introduced a physical dimension that encouraged touch, creating a connection between user and object similar to the experience – ATITHAN of brushing one’s hand across a weathered temple wall.

Identity prototypes tested how the design language could adapt to different scales: from small labels and charms to full Sangkhathan boxes. Each prototype was evaluated not just on visual appeal but on how well it communicated authenticity, impermanence, and ecological responsibility.

4.2.3 Series 3: Refined Logo Development

Building on insights from Series 1, the third series refined logo directions into cohesive candidates for final adoption. Feedback from initial testing suggested that overly complex forms risked being unreadable in smaller applications, while designs that embraced minimal abstraction were more versatile.

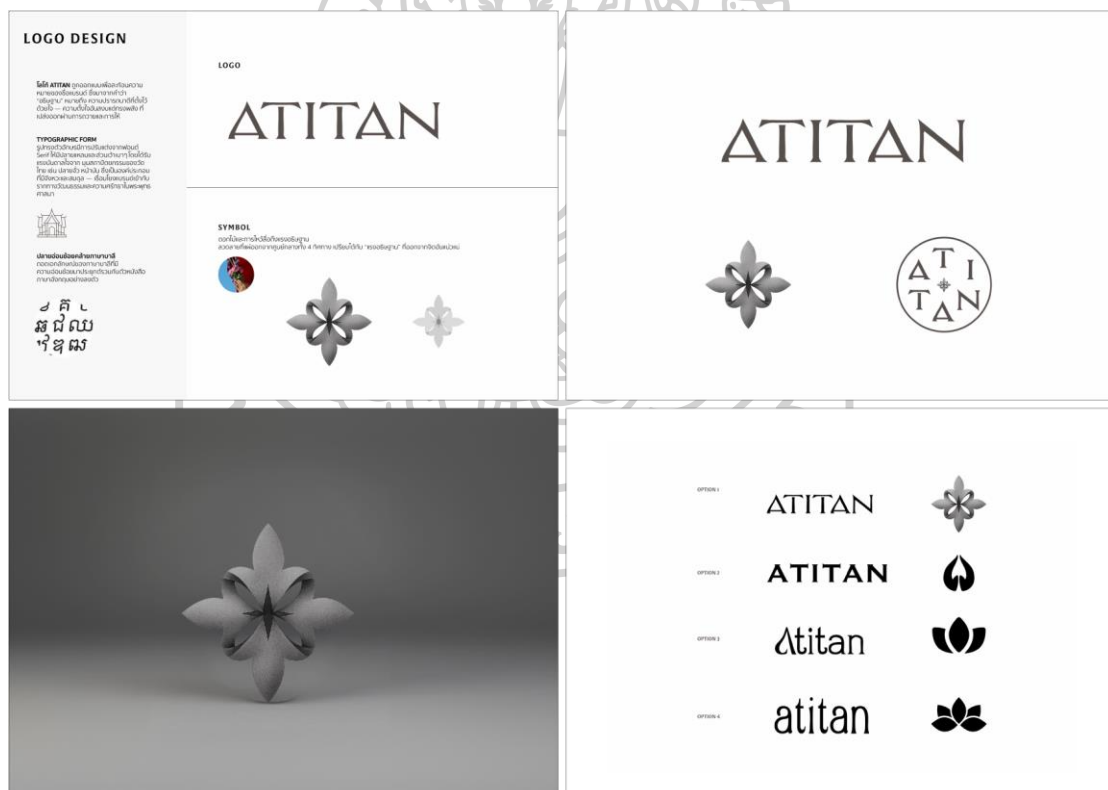


Figure 43 – Refined Logo and Symbol Development of ATITHAN

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The refinement process involved removing unnecessary detail while preserving the symbolic essence. Crack lines were redrawn as subtle accents within circular structures, creating a balance between symmetry and imperfection. Floral motifs were adjusted to suggest a lotus without literal representation, and Kanok-inspired curves were integrated into the outer frames to signal continuity.

Through multiple iterations, the refined logos achieved a dual identity: on one hand, they projected cultural rootedness; on the other, they were contemporary enough to function in digital environments, product labels, and promotional materials. This stage confirmed that the logo could serve as a unifying mark, carrying forward the principle of imperfection while remaining clear, flexible, and modern.

4.2.4 Series 4: Graphic Element, Colour Palette, and Product Application

The fourth series synthesised all previous explorations into a holistic identity system, extending beyond logos to encompass graphic elements, colours, patterns, and product applications. Architectural traces documented during fieldwork were transformed into repeatable surface patterns. Freeform cracks became linear textures for backgrounds, floral elements were tessellated into decorative frames, and geometric mandala structures provided layout grid

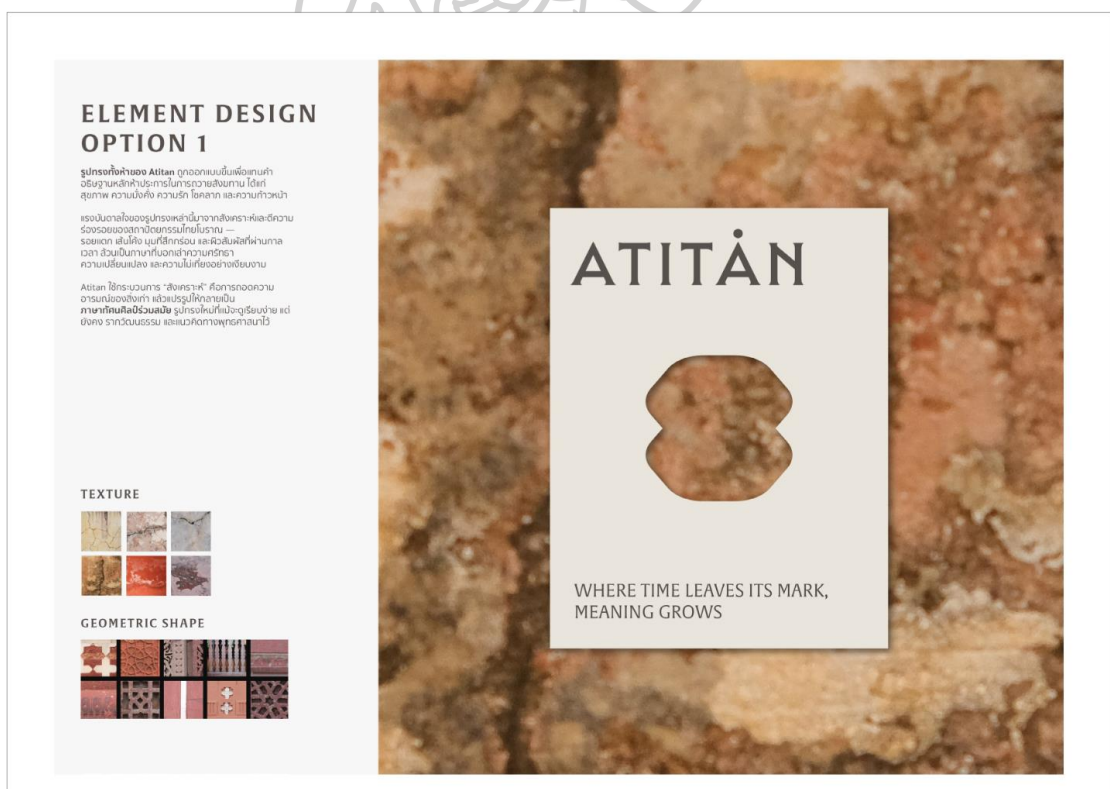


Figure 44 – ATITHAN Visual Communication and Element Design

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure showcases the *ATITHAN* brand's visual storytelling through packaging and conceptual compositions. The top visuals explore poetic narratives such as "Cracks are reminders of passage" and "Where time leaves its mark, meaning grows," symbolising imperfection and spiritual transformation. The lower section, titled *Element Design Option 1*, integrates textures inspired by temple architecture with geometric motifs derived from sacred ornamentation. Together, these visuals demonstrate how materiality, typography, and form intertwine to evoke the brand's central philosophy of timelessness, healing, and renewal.



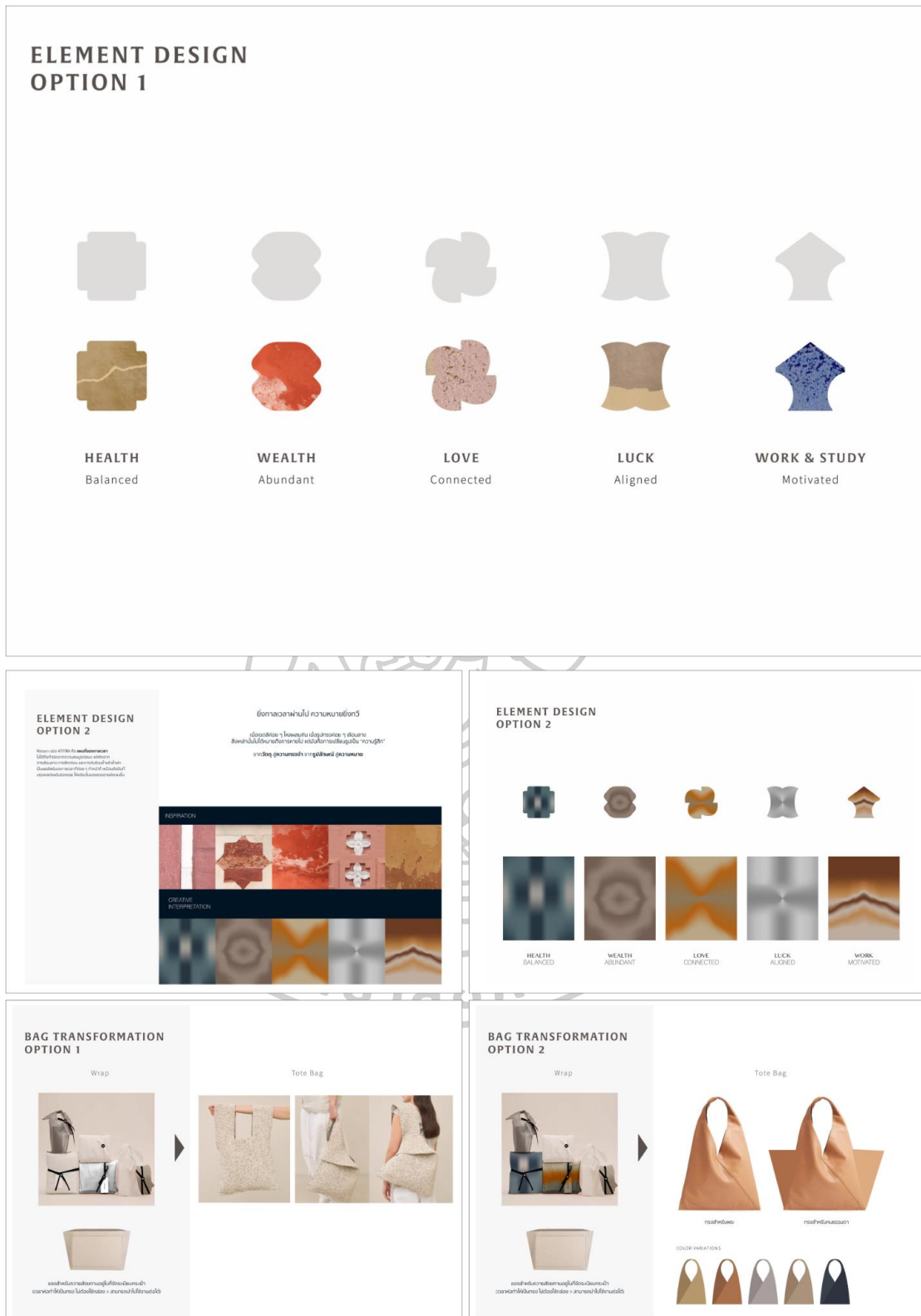


Figure 45 – Element Design and Bag Transformation Options

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents *ATITHAN*'s **Element Design Option 1**, illustrating five symbolic forms that represent Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, and Work & Study. Each shape is tied to a spiritual value, expressed through colour and texture variations derived from architectural and natural inspirations. The lower panels display **Element Design Options 2 and 3**, extending the visual identity through refined motifs and pattern applications. The **Bag Transformation Options** further demonstrate how sacred geometry can inform practical design, integrating aesthetic and spiritual symbolism into modern, functional packaging.



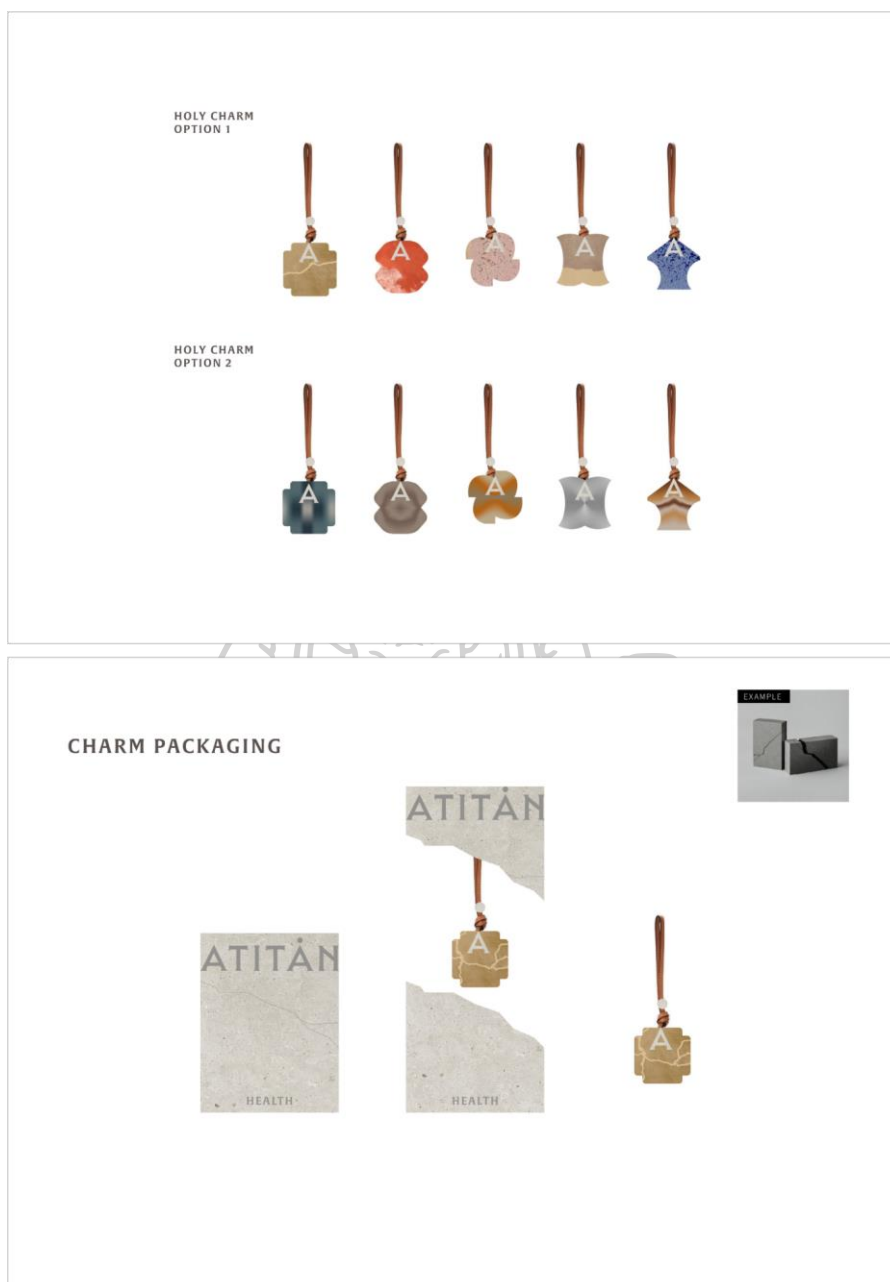


Figure 46 – Charm Packaging

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The colour palette finalised in this stage was directly derived from field photography: muted reds from temple brick, oxidised greens from aged bronze, and faded whites from weathered stucco. These tones were paired with gold highlights to preserve symbolic resonance. Together, the palette communicated both age and

vitality, rooting the products in history while appealing to contemporary aesthetic sensibilities.

Applications extended into Sangkhathan boxes, tote bags, holy charms, and digital showcases. Each product employed the identity system with different charms highlighted symbolic icons, tote designs emphasised repeating patterns, and boxes layered textures to evoke architectural depth. The goal was to demonstrate that the design system was flexible and scalable, capable of adapting across diverse product formats without losing coherence.

By the end of Series 4, the identity had matured into a comprehensive design language, one that embedded architectural imperfection into every level of visual communication. This established the foundation for the final design outcomes presented in Section 4.3.

4.3 Final Design Outcomes

The development from exploratory textures to the finalised identity was guided by a set of evaluative criteria grounded in both design and theological considerations. These included cultural appropriateness, symbolic clarity, production feasibility, and alignment with the spiritual purpose of merit-making. By mapping the experimental outcomes back to these criteria, the final identity emerged not as an abrupt shift but as a synthesised resolution of the earlier visual and conceptual investigations.

The ATITHAN mark was designed to reflect a balance between divine radiance, architectural decay, and ritual humility. However, it is acknowledged that the multi-layered shading may present production challenges across foil stamping, embroidery, or monochrome digital formats. To address this, a secondary simplified version has been proposed for one-colour applications. This aligns with professional

branding practice, where alternate versions of a mark are created to maintain recognisability and practicality across different substrates (Lupton, 2014).

4.3.1 Corporate Identity System

The corporate identity system represents the most consolidated stage of the design process. What began as scattered explorations of cracks, lotus motifs, and Kanok curves has now become a cohesive language that guides every application, from logos to packaging. The system establishes clear rules around colour usage, typography, logo placement, and symbolic integration.

The final logo adopts a circular mandala-inspired frame, disrupted by subtle crack-like lines that suggest imperfection without breaking legibility. This mark is supported by a muted colour palette derived from fieldwork photography—faded reds, oxidised greens, and aged whites—paired with gold as a ritual accent. Typography follows the principle of cultural resonance with accessibility: a clean Thai typeface for clarity, accompanied by calligraphic accent forms for emphasis.

The identity system was intentionally designed to be modular. Rather than a fixed visual template, it offers flexible guidelines that allow each product to adapt while maintaining coherence. This flexibility reflects the Buddhist principle of impermanence, where visual identity evolves with context but retains its essence. The corporate identity therefore functions as a living system, capable of representing the project across both physical and digital domains.



Figure 47 – Element Design and Bag Transformation Options

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

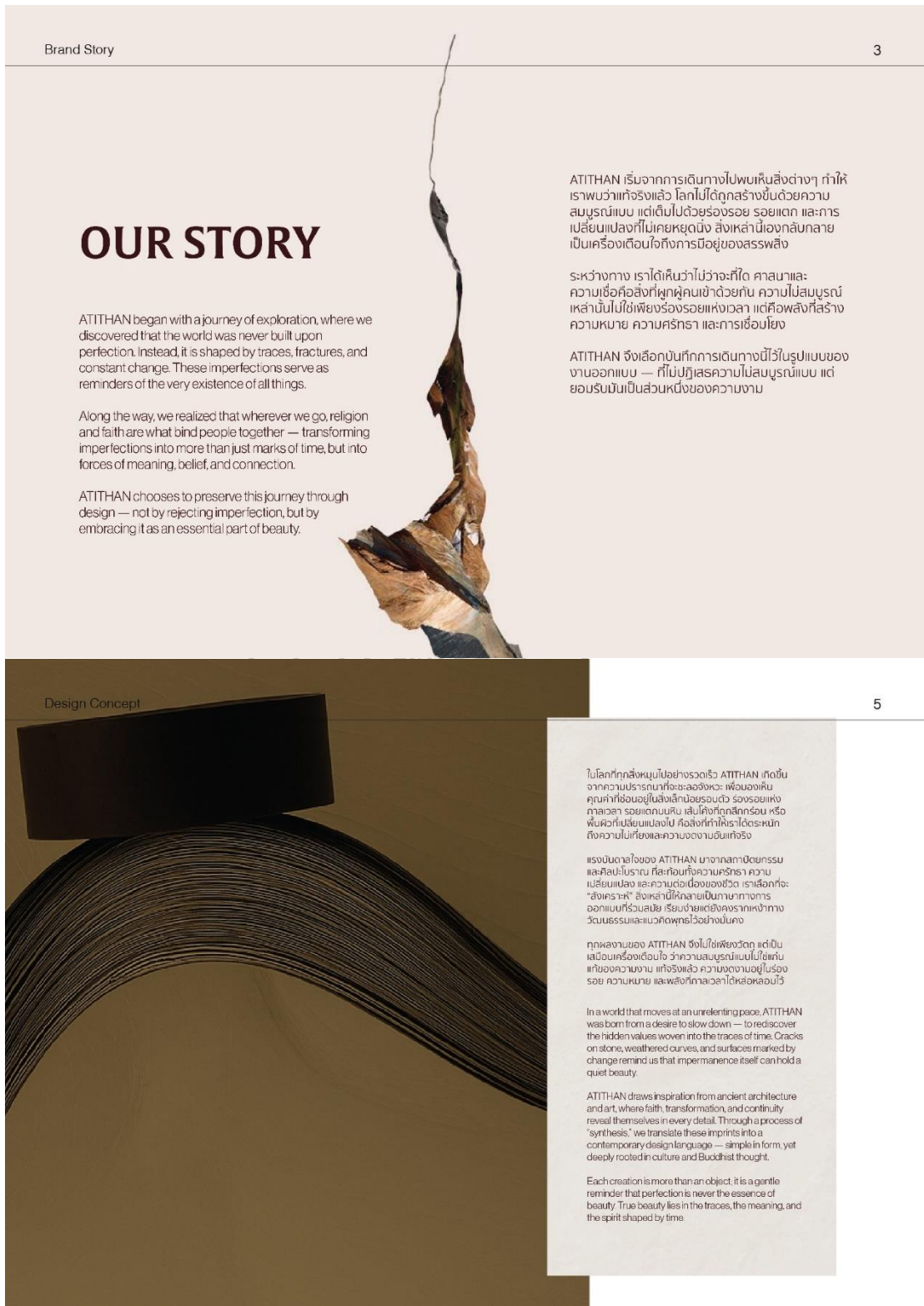
This figure illustrates a stylised lotus motif abstracted from traditional architectural ornamentation. The design merges organic curvature with geometric precision, symbolising purity, spiritual awakening, and continuity within Thai Buddhist art. The motif functions as a transitional visual element that bridges sacred architectural symbolism with contemporary design identity, reinforcing the project’s conceptual integration of spiritual and material aesthetics.



Figure 48 – ATITHAN Logotype

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

At the centre of the system is the logo, which evolved from early explorations of mandala layouts and stupa-inspired geometry. The final mark is circular, echoing cosmological diagrams, but is disrupted by fine, crack-like lines running through its structure. These subtle disruptions prevent the logo from appearing overly polished, allowing it to convey a sense of history while remaining contemporary. The logo serves as the anchor for the brand system, appearing on Sangkhathan boxes, tote designs, and charms, and maintains its clarity across different scales, from small labels to large-format displays.



OUR STORY

ATITHAN began with a journey of exploration, where we discovered that the world was never built upon perfection. Instead, it is shaped by traces, fractures, and constant change. These imperfections serve as reminders of the very existence of all things.

Along the way, we realized that wherever we go, religion and faith are what bind people together — transforming imperfections into more than just marks of time, but into forces of meaning, belief, and connection.

ATITHAN chooses to preserve this journey through design — not by rejecting imperfection, but by embracing it as an essential part of beauty.

ATITHAN เริ่มจากการเดินทางไปพบเห็นสิ่งต่างๆ ทำให้เราพบว่าแท้จริงแล้ว โลกไม่ได้ถูกสร้างขึ้นด้วยความสมบูรณ์แบบ แต่เต็มไปด้วยร่องรอย รอยแตก และการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่ไม่เคยหยุดนิ่ง สิ่งเหล่านี้เองกลับกลายเป็นเครื่องเตือนใจถึงการมีอยู่ของสรรพสิ่ง

ระหว่างทาง เราได้เห็นว่าไม่ว่าจะที่ใด ศาสนาและความเชื่อคือสิ่งที่ผูกผู้คนเข้าด้วยกัน ความไม่สมบูรณ์แบบนั้นไม่ใช่เพียงร่องรอยแห่งเวลา แต่คือพลังที่สร้างความหมาย ความศรัทธา และการเชื่อมโยง

ATITHAN จึงเลือกบันทึกการเดินทางนี้ไว้ในรูปแบบของงานออกแบบ — ที่ไม่ปฏิเสธความไม่สมบูรณ์แบบ แต่ยอมรับมันเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของความงาม

ในโลกที่ทุกสิ่งหมุนไปอย่างรวดเร็ว ATITHAN เกิดขึ้นจากความปรารถนาที่จะชะลอจังหวะ เพื่อนอนหลับพักผ่อนชั่วขณะสักครู่ในสิ่งเล็กน้อยรอบตัว ร่องรอยแห่งกาลเวลา รอยแตกบนหิน เส้นโค้งที่กลิ้งกร่อน หรือพื้นผิวที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไป คือสิ่งที่ทำให้เราได้ตระหนักถึงความไม่เที่ยงพลความงดงามอันแท้จริง

แรงบันดาลใจของ ATITHAN มาจากสถาปัตยกรรมและศิลปะโบราณ ที่สะท้อนถึงความศรัทธา ความเปลี่ยนแปลง และความต่อเนื่องของชีวิต เราเลือกที่จะ "สังเคราะห์" สิ่งเหล่านี้ให้กลายเป็นภาษาทางการออกแบบที่ร่วมสมัย เรียบง่ายแต่ยังคงรักษาเจตจำนงวัฒนธรรมและแนวคิดพุทธไว้อย่างแนบ

ทุกผลงานของ ATITHAN จึงไม่ใช่เพียงวัตถุ แต่เป็นเครื่องมือเตือนใจ เราความสมบูรณ์แบบไม่ใช่แก่นแท้ของความงาม แต่คือร่องรอย ความงามซ่อนอยู่ในร่องรอย ความหมาย แลพลังที่กาลเวลาได้หล่อหลอมไว้

In a world that moves at an unrelenting pace, ATITHAN was born from a desire to slow down — to rediscover the hidden values woven into the traces of time. Cracks on stone, weathered curves, and surfaces marked by change remind us that impermanence itself can hold a quiet beauty.

ATITHAN draws inspiration from ancient architecture and art, where faith, transformation, and continuity reveal themselves in every detail. Through a process of "synthesis," we translate these imprints into a contemporary design language — simple in form, yet deeply rooted in culture and Buddhist thought.

Each creation is more than an object; it is a gentle reminder that perfection is never the essence of beauty. True beauty lies in the traces, the meaning, and the spirit shaped by time.

Figure 49 – Design Concept

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the overarching design concept, “Where Time Leaves Its Mark, Meaning Grows.” The visual composition highlights the interplay between impermanence and preservation, drawing inspiration from the textures of aged materials and Buddhist notions of transience. It reflects the project’s philosophical foundation, merging spiritual symbolism with contemporary design sensibility.

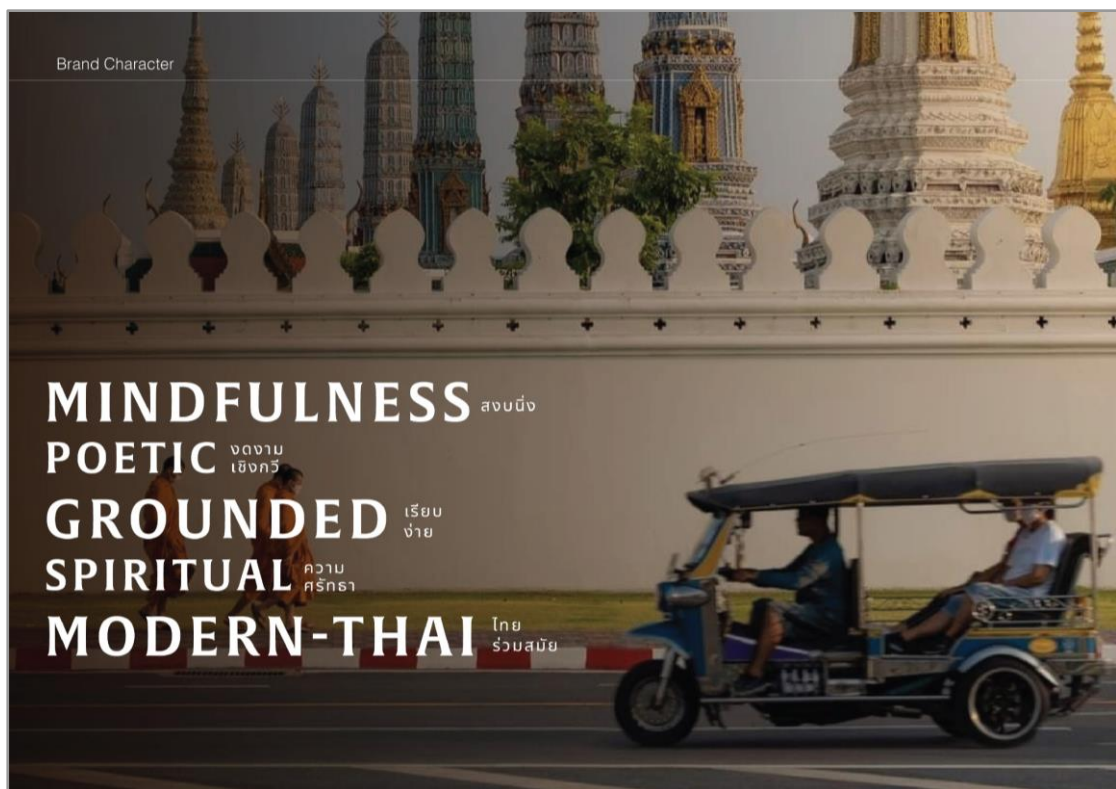


Figure 50 – Character Definition

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure expresses the key character traits that guide the visual and conceptual identity: *Mindfulness*, *Poetic*, *Grounded*, *Spiritual*, and *Modern-Thai*. These qualities embody the tone and essence of the project, uniting contemplative calmness with a refined modern Thai sensibility.

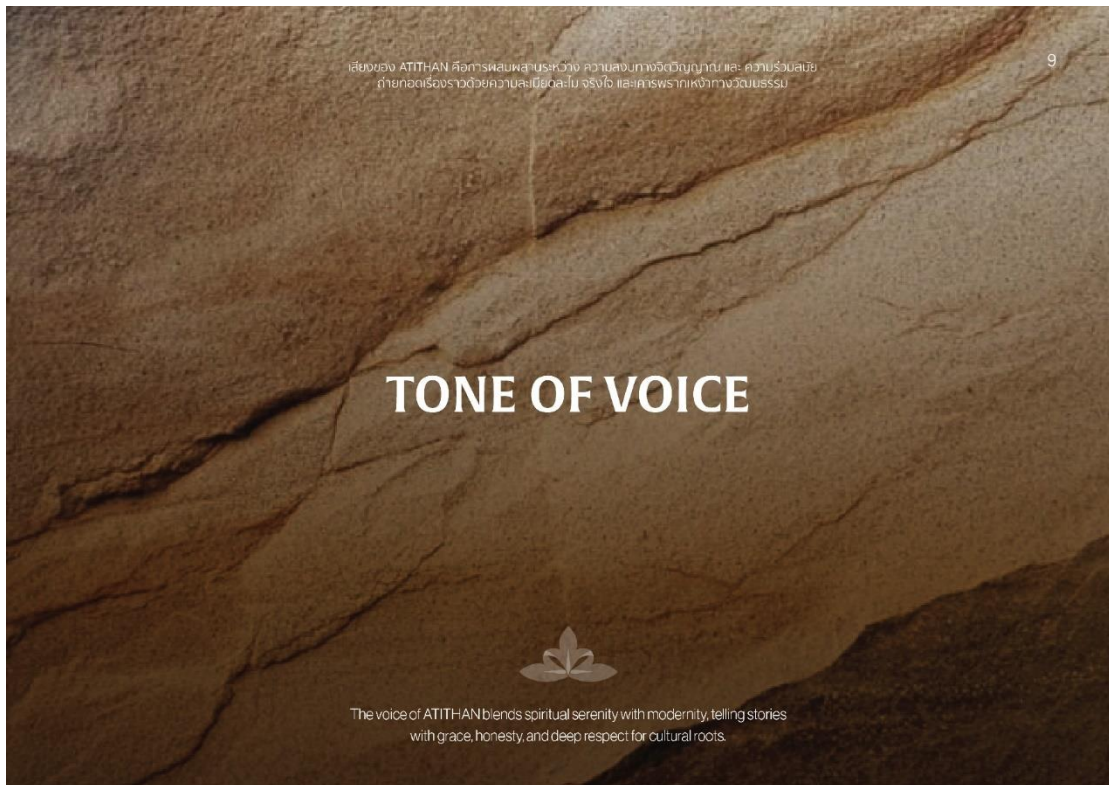


Figure 51 – Tone of Voice
 (Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the tone of voice that defines the *ATITHAN* brand communication. It reflects a balance between spiritual serenity and contemporary sensibility, conveying messages with grace, sincerity, and reverence for cultural heritage. The tone embodies calmness and authenticity, aiming to inspire mindfulness while remaining accessible and modern.



Figure 52 – ATITHAN Visual Identity Introduction
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure introduces the ATITHAN visual identity, showcasing its refined aesthetic that draws inspiration from natural textures and spiritual calmness. The composition highlights the brand's essence of mindfulness, timelessness, and material tactility rooted in Thai cultural philosophy.

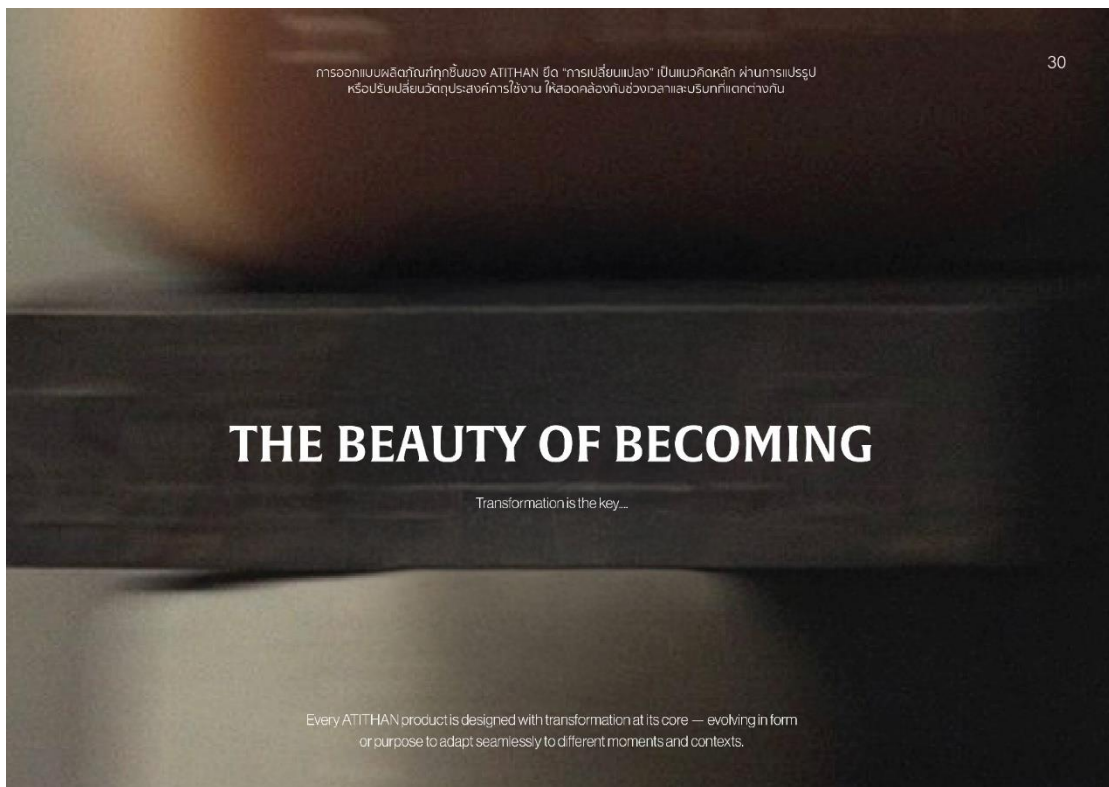


Figure 53 – Key Visual: The Beauty of Becoming
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure showcases the *ATITHAN* key visual titled “*The Beauty of Becoming*”, which encapsulates the brand’s philosophy of transformation. The visual metaphorically represents evolution through form, texture, and light, suggesting growth, impermanence, and mindfulness. It conveys how each *ATITHAN* product embodies adaptability and transformation, aligning with the brand’s spiritual and aesthetic narrative.

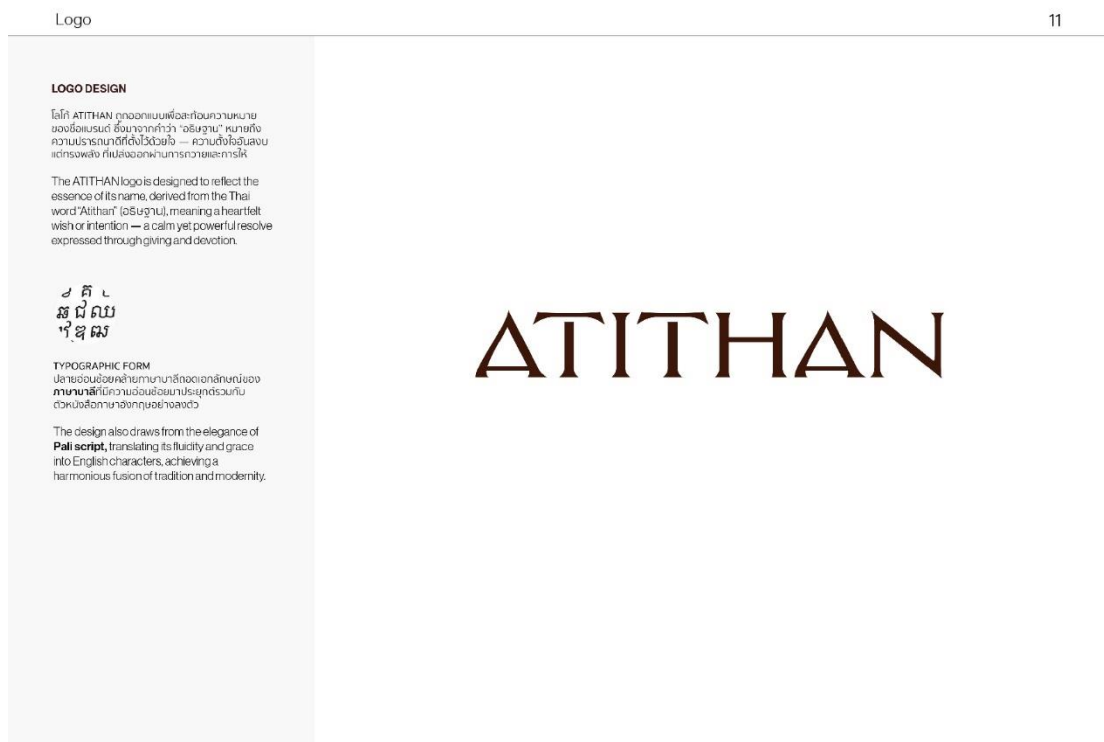


Figure 54 – Logo Design and Typographic Form

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the *ATITHAN* logo and its typographic composition. The logo design symbolises harmony between tradition and modernity, with letterforms reflecting both balance and sophistication. Its geometry embodies grounded elegance, representing *ATITHAN*'s core values of serenity, cultural respect, and contemporary refinement.

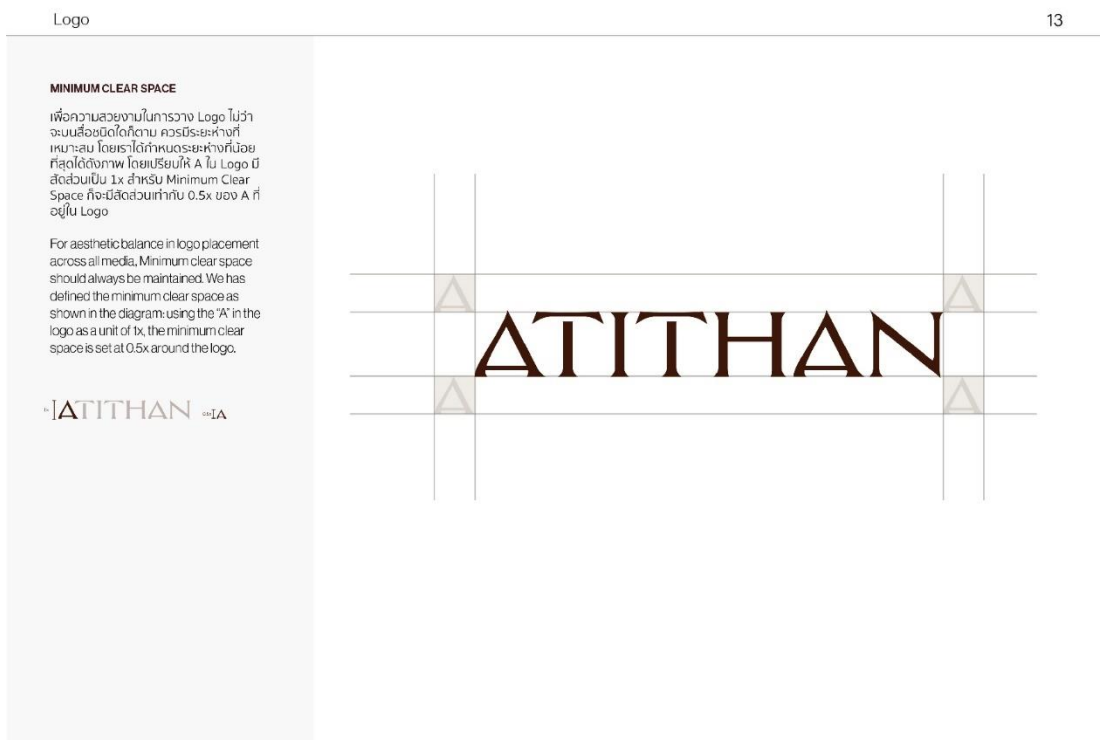


Figure 55 – Logo Construction and Clear Space

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure shows the construction grid and minimum clear space for the *ATITHAN* logo. The proportional framework ensures visual harmony and balance in every application, maintaining the elegance and legibility of the typographic form. The layout defines precise spacing rules that preserve the logo's refined character and consistent presence across media.

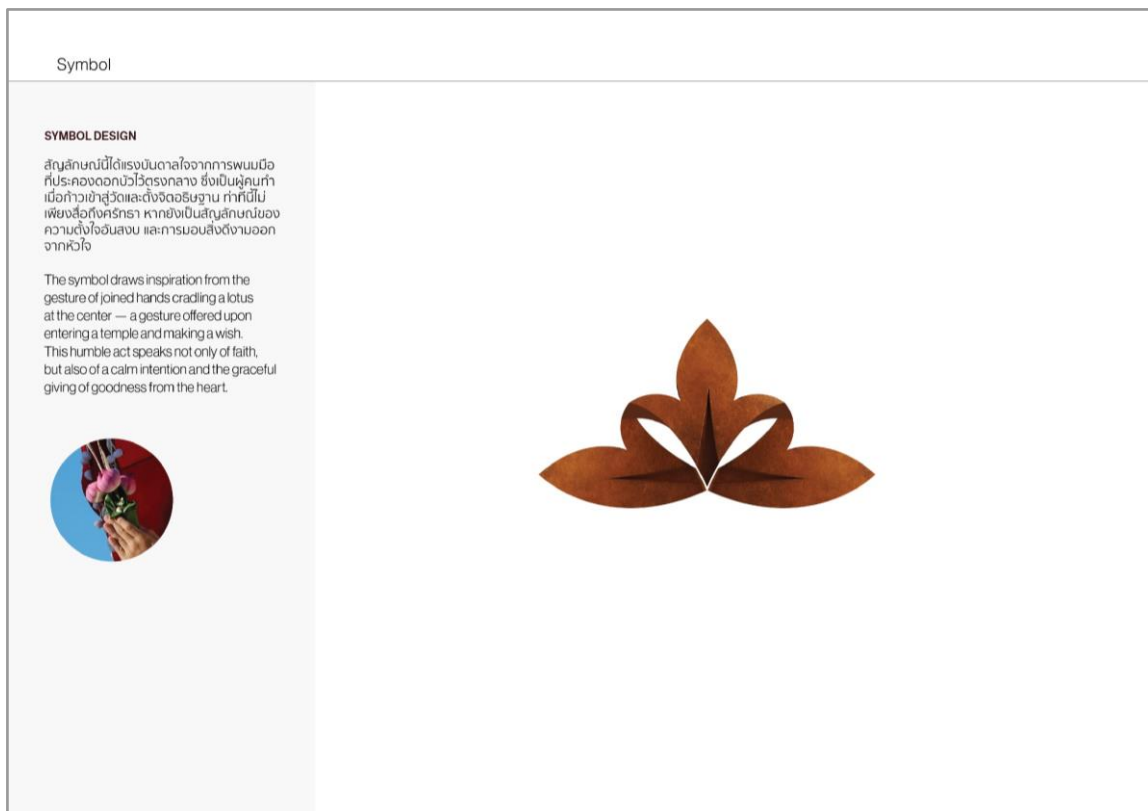


Figure 56 – Symbol Design

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the *ATITHAN* symbol, inspired by the organic curves of lotus petals and traditional Thai ornamentation. The form conveys serenity, mindfulness, and spiritual growth. Its symmetrical composition reflects balance and grace, encapsulating *ATITHAN*'s fusion of cultural depth and modern sophistication.

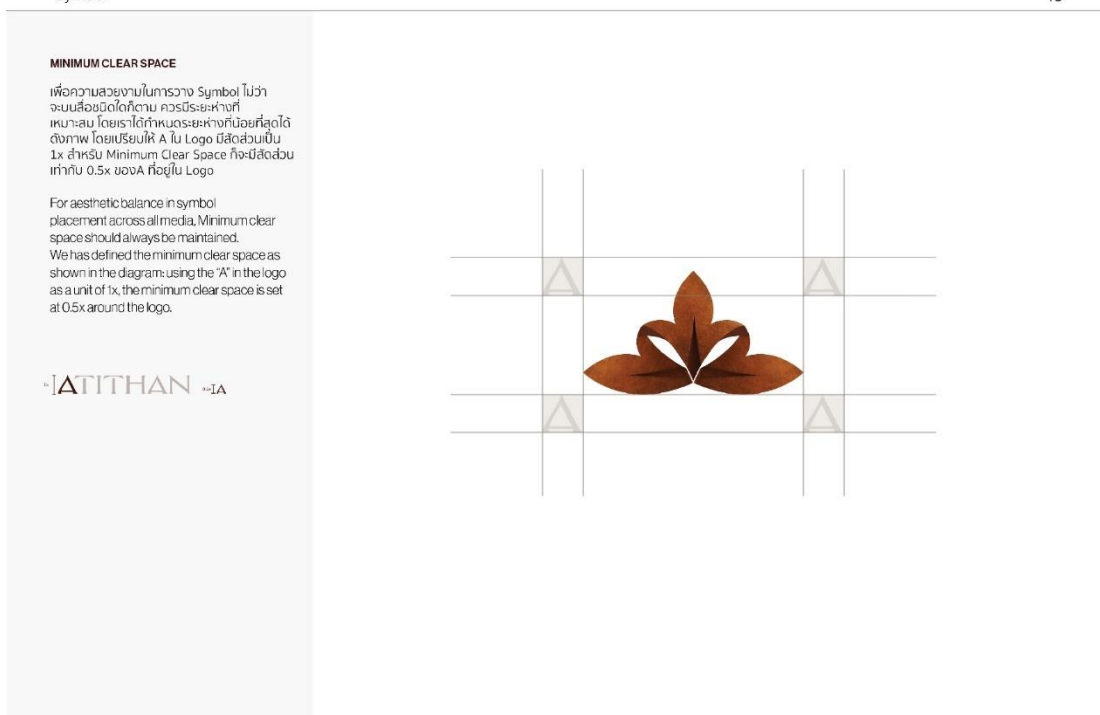


Figure 57 – Symbol Construction and Clear Space
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure shows the structural framework and minimum clear space for the *ATITHAN* symbol. The proportional grid ensures geometric precision, while the defined spacing guidelines maintain the symbol's clarity and presence in various compositions. The visual balance reinforces elegance and harmony central to *ATITHAN*'s identity system.

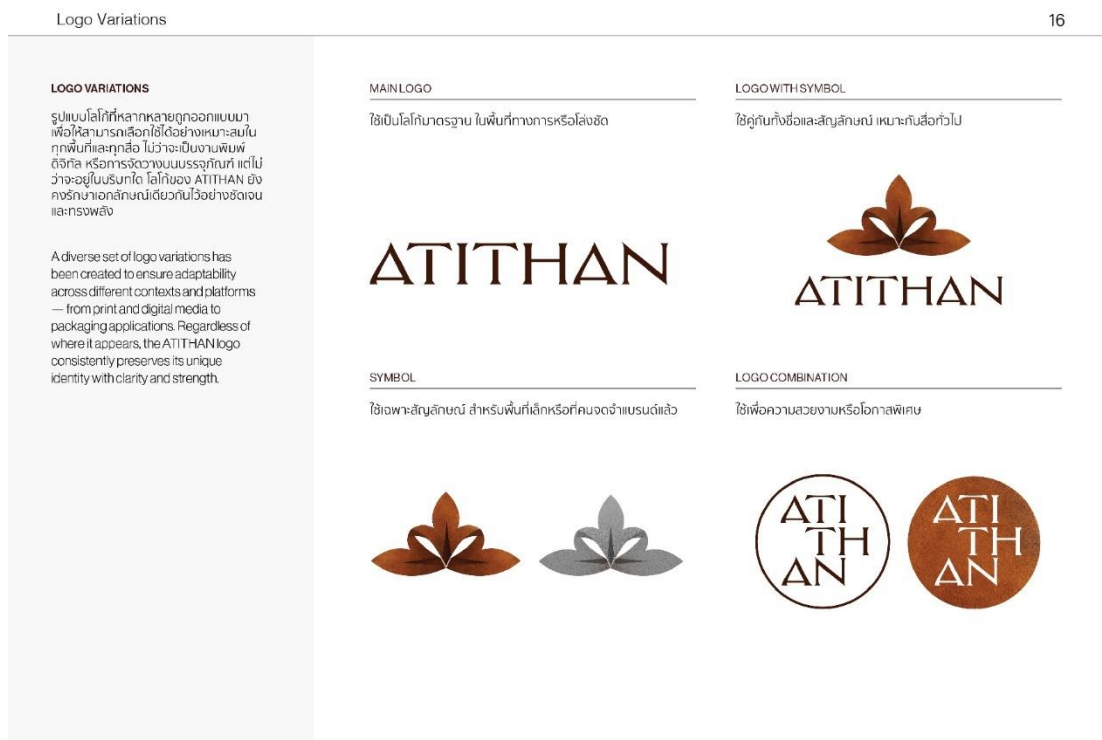


Figure 58 – Logo Variations
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure demonstrates the *ATITHAN* logo system, comprising the main logotype, symbol, logo with mark, and combined lockup. Each variation allows flexibility across applications while preserving brand consistency. The modular system ensures adaptability in scale and format, reflecting *ATITHAN*'s philosophy of balancing tradition and modernity.



Figure 59 – Logo in Colours

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure illustrates the *ATITHAN* logo and symbol system applied across colour variations. The palette combines earthy and warm tones inspired by natural materials, expressing the brand's grounded yet refined identity. The visual consistency across monochrome and full-colour executions reinforces *ATITHAN*'s sense of balance and elegance.



Figure 60 – Moodboard

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the *ATITHAN* mood board, capturing the emotional and aesthetic direction of the brand. The imagery conveys themes of mindfulness, poetic simplicity, and grounded spirituality through material textures, natural forms, and warm lighting. It establishes the sensory tone guiding *ATITHAN*'s visual language and design development.



Figure 61 – Poster Examples
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Typography was equally significant in establishing tone and legibility. Existing market packaging often uses heavily stylised or ornamental scripts that are difficult to read and sometimes disconnected from ritual dignity. In response, this project selected a primary typeface that is clean, geometric, and contemporary, ensuring accessibility and clarity. Accent typography was derived from calligraphic influences observed in temple inscriptions and manuscript lettering. The pairing of these two approaches, one modern and utilitarian, the other rooted in sacred heritage—reflects the balance between present-day usability and cultural continuity. Typography is not treated here as a neutral conveyor of information but as an element carrying emotional and symbolic resonance.



Figure 62 – English Typography System

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The typographic system pairs **Alverata - Semibold** as the display font with **Neue Haas Grotesk Display Pro 55 Roman** as the body font. This pairing reflects the project's balance between **heritage and modernity**. Alverata, with its classical serif form inspired by medieval inscriptions, conveys a sense of timeless artisanry, while Neue Haas Grotesk adds clarity and neutrality, ensuring readability. Together, they reinforce the project's **holistic visual identity**, integrating cultural depth with contemporary design precision.



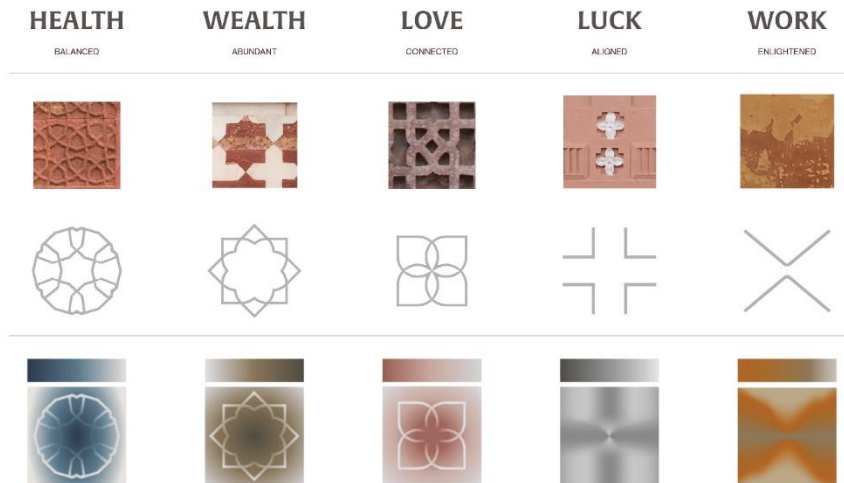
Figure 64 – Colour System
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure shows the *ATITHAN* colour system, developed to represent five core values: Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, and Work. Each hue embodies emotional and symbolic meaning drawn from Thai-Buddhist philosophy, blending earthy and serene tones to reflect balance, abundance, connection, alignment, and enlightenment in modern spiritual living.



Figure 65 – Graphic Element Design
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

Colour was guided by the visual archive of fieldwork. The palette was taken directly from the surfaces of aged temples: the warm red of exposed brick, the muted green of oxidised bronze, the chalky white of weathered stucco, and the earthy browns of worn sandstone. Gold was introduced as a subtle accent, not in its commercial, shiny form, but in a muted, matte finish that recalls gilded temple ornament aged by time. These colours resist the artificial saturation of supermarket packaging, instead grounding the identity in tones that evoke history, fragility, and ritual seriousness. Together, the palette communicates both calmness and depth, inviting viewers to slow down and perceive texture rather than brightness.



HEALTH BALANCED	WEALTH ABUNDANT	LOVE CONNECTED	LUCK ALIGNED	WORK ENLIGHTENED
<p>WHEEL OF LAW ธรรมจักร</p> <p>การหมุนของธรรมจักรเป็นองค์สำคัญของพระพุทธเจ้า เป็นพลังความสมดุลและสุภาพเรียบร้อย ที่ทำให้ และชีวิตที่ก้าวหน้า</p> <p>The turning of the Wheel of Law symbolizes the Buddha's teaching that leads to liberation and well-being. It represents that true health is found in harmony of body, mind, and spirit.</p>	<p>BODHI LEAF ใบโพธิ์</p> <p>ใบโพธิ์ เป็นสัญลักษณ์ของการตรัสรู้ การหลุดพ้นทุกข์ที่มีพลังความบริสุทธิ์อันไม่ยอมแพ้หรือความอดทนและความอุดมสมบูรณ์ และพลังที่ช่วยให้เจริญ</p> <p>The turning of the Wheel of Law symbolizes the Buddha's teaching that leads to liberation and well-being. It represents that true health is found in harmony of body, mind, and spirit.</p>	<p>LOTUS ดอกบัว</p> <p>ดอกบัวที่เติบโตจากน้ำอย่างบริสุทธิ์ แฝงไปด้วยทั้งที่ศรัทธา ความเมตตา และความงามของจิตใจที่พร้อมแนบเนียน</p> <p>Pink petals from the water, the lotus symbolizes unconditional love, compassion, and the beauty of a heart in its harmony.</p>	<p>FLORAL DHARMA บุปผารธรรม</p> <p>ดอกไม้ที่งดงามและที่เปี่ยมงาม ปะริสุทธาอันประเสริฐสุด ธรรมที่งดงามอย่างสมบูรณ์ คือเครื่องเตือนใจว่าโลกสวยอยู่รอบๆเรา จากชีวิตที่ดำเนินไปด้วยความดีของทุกคน</p> <p>The floral dharma represents the message of Dharma. It is a gentle reminder that wherever you go, the fortune flows where there is harmony with virtue.</p>	<p>SOUND OF AWAKENING สุริยเสียงธรรม</p> <p>เสียงระฆังที่ดังกระหึ่มดังถึงขอบฟ้าของโลก ดึงดูดทุกคน ให้ก้าวสู่ความกระจ่างใส ปากทางที่รักษาความเป็นมนุษย์ เพื่อใจ และแรงบันดาลใจใหม่</p> <p>The ringing bell awakens the spirit, speaking truth and righteousness. It is a call to awaken work with wisdom, compassion, and renewed heart.</p>

Figure 66 – Pattern Design
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

4.3.2 Blessing Tote Design

The **Blessing Tote** was positioned as the flagship outcome of the project. Designed to transform into three different carrying modes, it represents the fusion of symbolic intention with everyday usability. Its adaptability was demonstrated through live prototype testing, where users could switch between **hand-carry**, **shoulder-carry**, and **folded-clutch** modes, reinforcing the concept of design as both ritual and lifestyle.

Raised paint detailing (สีนูน) was documented to highlight the tactile imperfection embedded into the surface, encouraging touch and reinforcing the project's material narrative. The tote featured repeating lotus and Naga motifs, screen-printed in softened, mural-inspired tones. These choices echoed traditional symbolism while maintaining a grounded connection to contemporary aesthetics and sustainability.

The tote functioned not as a religious artefact but as a designed object inspired by the values of giving, blessing, and continuity. Its reusability and portability were emphasised throughout the presentation to demonstrate how sacred symbolism could extend beyond temple walls into modern daily life.

In the broader documentation, the tote was used to anchor the identity system's scalability, showing how the project's visual and conceptual language could translate across formats while retaining emotional and cultural depth.

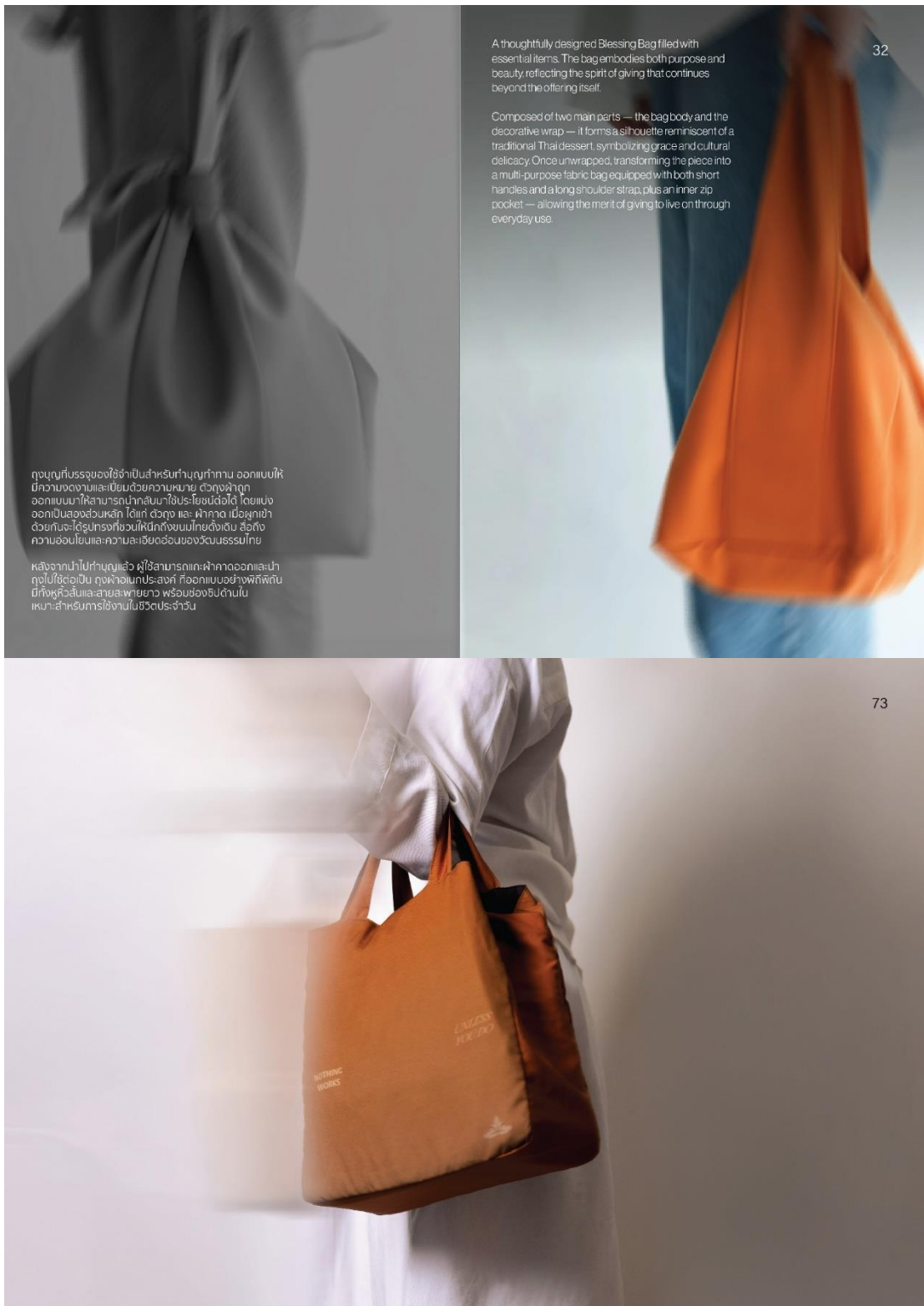
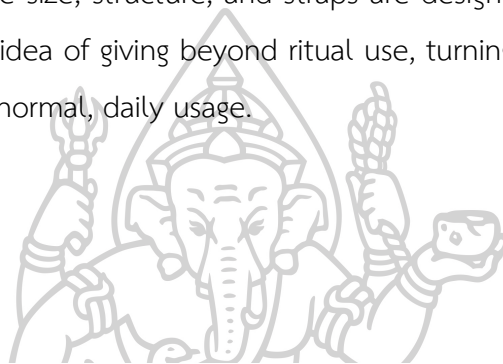


Figure 67 – Wrapping Design Inspired by Monastic Robes

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure shows the ATITHAN wrapping bag, a design that borrows the folding logic of monastic robes but is intended for anyone to use, not merely for religious offerings. The wrap functions first as a gift covering, then unfolds into a reusable tote that can be carried in three ways — by hand, over the shoulder, or cross-body.

The saffron-toned fabric and layered folds reference the quiet elegance of monk robes, while the size, structure, and straps are designed for everyday life. The concept extends the idea of giving beyond ritual use, turning the wrapping itself into a practical object for normal, daily usage.



DESIGN 1
BLESSING BAG



WRAPPING FABRIC

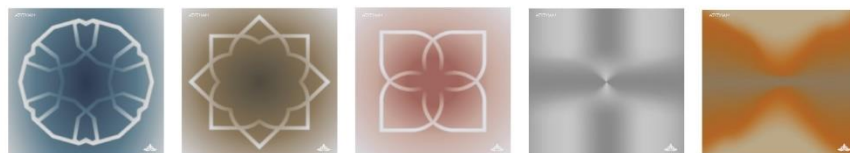


Figure 68 – Tote Bag Design Series
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure showcases a collection of tote bags inspired by the five *ATITHAN* values — Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, and Work. Each tote bag carries its respective colour scheme and subtle motif, blending practical usability with cultural symbolism.

The tote design demonstrates how contemporary functionality can coexist with spiritual modesty. The restrained ornamentation and muted textile palette are intentionally selected to avoid visual excess, aligning with monastic values of simplicity and humility. The design further acknowledges the shift in urban merit-making practices, where portability and reusability play increasing roles in reducing waste, thus supporting SDG-aligned behavioural change (UNEP, 2021).





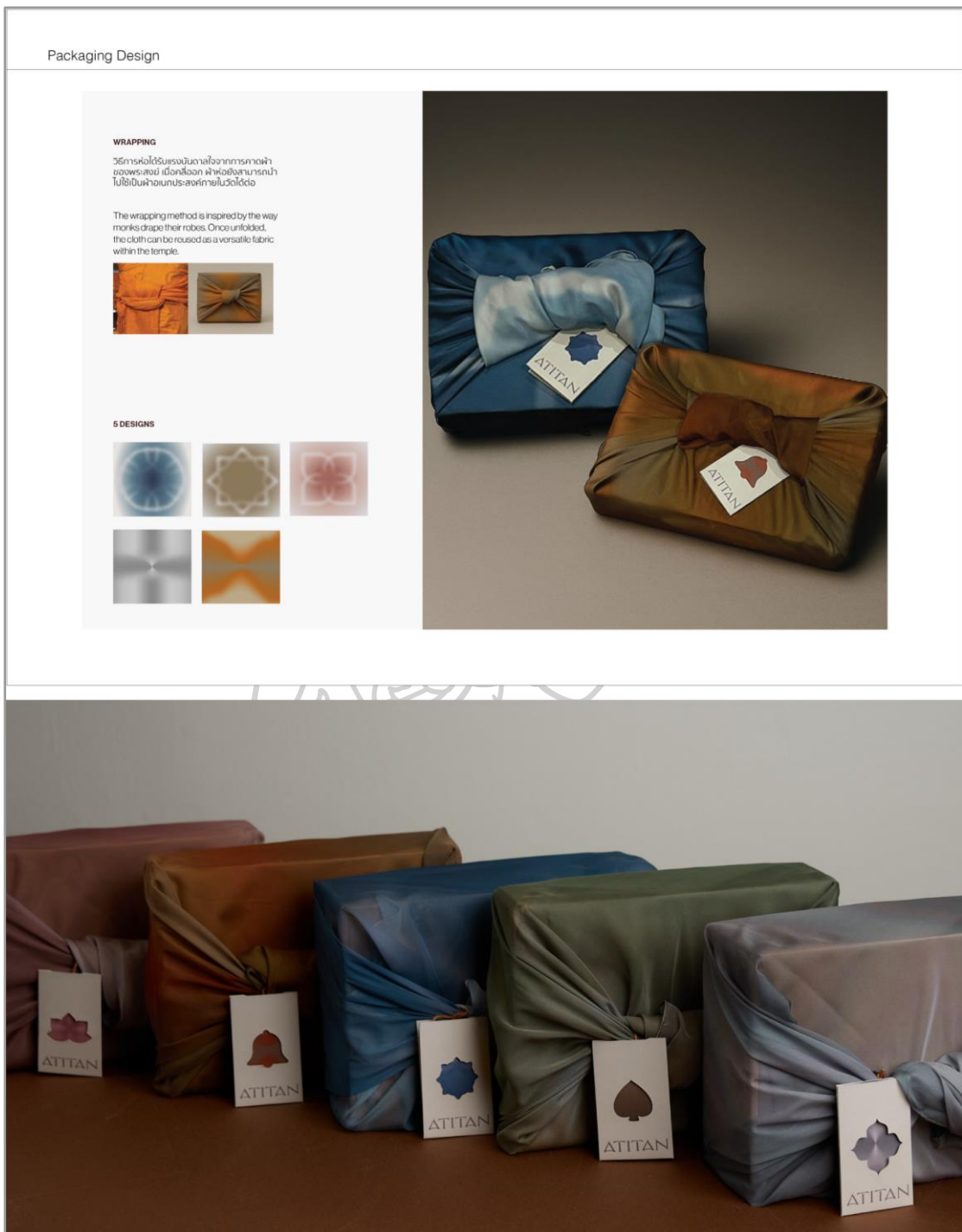


Figure 69 – Tote Bag Prototyping
 (Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The prototype explores size, structure, and handle length to test usability and proportion, while also examining the dual-fold construction to ensure the fabric

and form stay upright without collapsing. Different folding and gusset variations are tested to check capacity, weight balance, and overall strength before choosing the final material.



Figure 70 – Wrapping Design I: Tied Bundle

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This design applies to a wrapping method inspired by monastic simplicity, forming a soft bundle that gathers the fabric at the top and is secured with a single tie. The approach highlights the humble yet intentional aesthetic of Buddhist offerings, combining functional restraint with visual warmth through the use of earthy fabric tones.



Figure 71 – Wrapping Design II: Dual Fold Inspired by Thai Dessert
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This design draws inspiration from traditional Thai dessert wrapping techniques, where fabric is folded symmetrically from both sides and secured at the top. The result creates a structured yet delicate form that symbolises care and craftsmanship. The dual-fold wrapping not only enhances visual harmony but also represents the mindful process of giving, merging everyday cultural aesthetics with spiritual intent.

4.3.3 Holy Charms: Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, Work

The holy charms further demonstrate the flexibility of the system. Each charm distils motifs into compact icons that represent health, wealth, love, luck, and work. Their packaging maintains consistency with the larger system but operates at a more intimate scale, appealing to individual use. These charms show that the identity can adapt to different levels of ritual practice, from large offerings to personal tokens.

These five categories were selected because they reflect both traditional Buddhist values and the aspirations of contemporary practitioners. In Buddhist contexts, merit-making is often directed toward securing blessings for one's well-being, livelihood, relationships, and future fortune. At the same time, in modern consumer culture, these themes resonate with everyday concerns, forming a bridge between spiritual symbolism and personal life.

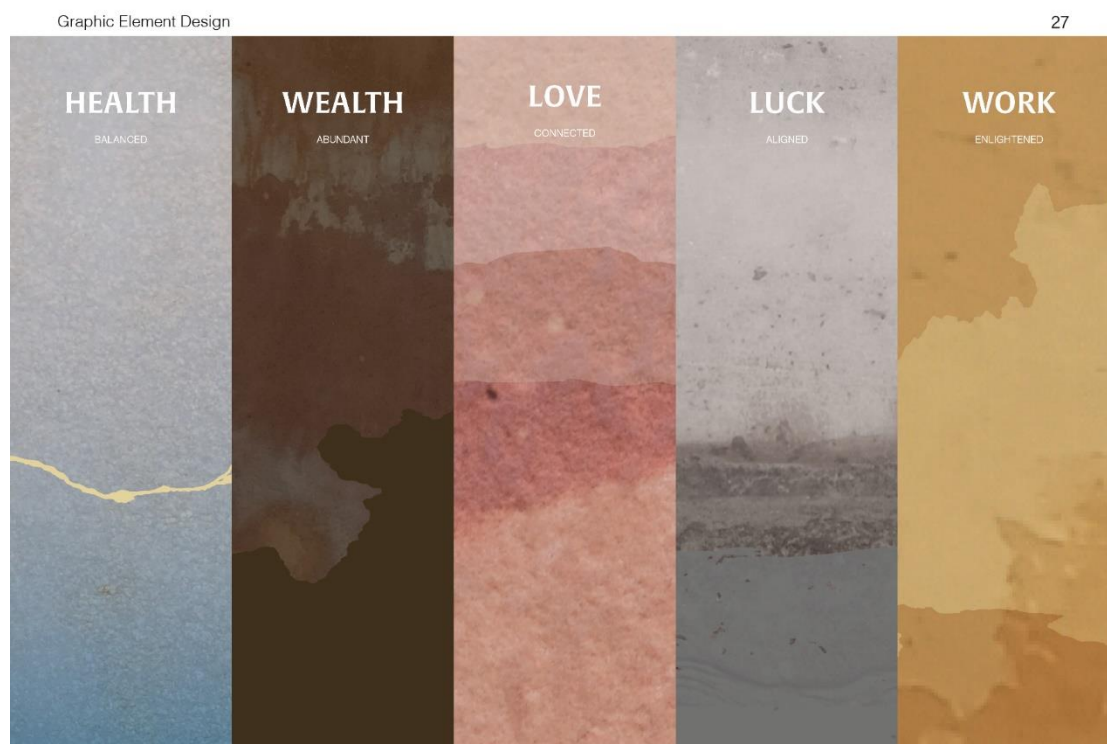
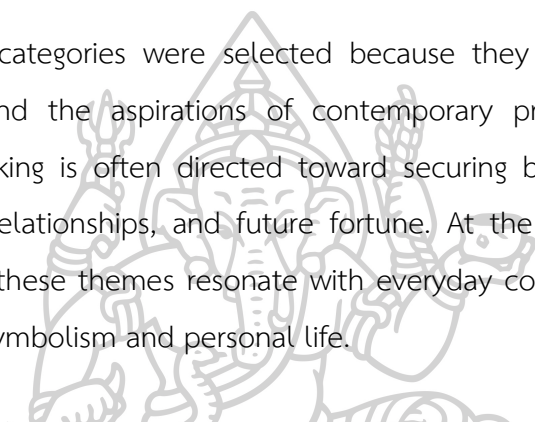


Figure 72 – Graphic Element Design Representing Five Aspects of Life and Faith

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The graphic element design symbolises five essential blessings—**Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, and Work**—each represented through sacred Buddhist motifs. The Wheel of Law (Dharmachakra) represents balance and mindfulness, the Bodhi Leaf signifies enlightenment and abundance, the Lotus embodies purity and love, the Floral Dharma symbolises prosperity and alignment, and the Bell conveys awakening and wisdom. Collectively, these elements express harmony between spiritual symbolism and everyday life.

Health was chosen because of its centrality in Buddhist thought, where the body is regarded as the foundation for practice. A healthy body enables meditation, ritual performance, and compassionate service. The lotus motif was therefore used to symbolise renewal and purity, reminding users that health is both physical and spiritual.

Wealth was included because offerings have historically been linked to prosperity and the redistribution of resources. While merit-making traditionally emphasises generosity rather than accumulation, wealth here is framed as stability and security, qualities represented in geometric tessellations that suggest growth and continuity.

Love was selected because of its cultural and spiritual importance as a form of connection and compassion. Floral vines and intertwined motifs were employed to convey intimacy and unity, extending the meaning of love beyond romance to include friendship, family, and universal care.

Luck has long been associated with protective talismans in Thai and broader Asian culture. The Naga-inspired motifs represent guardianship and the unpredictable nature of fortune, acknowledging that while impermanence shapes life, symbolic rituals can help practitioners feel protected and hopeful.

Work was incorporated as a modern adaptation, recognising that livelihood and career are pressing concerns for contemporary practitioners. The mandala grid, used as the design foundation, conveys discipline, balance, and order. It reminds users that work, when aligned with ethical conduct, can itself be a form of practice.

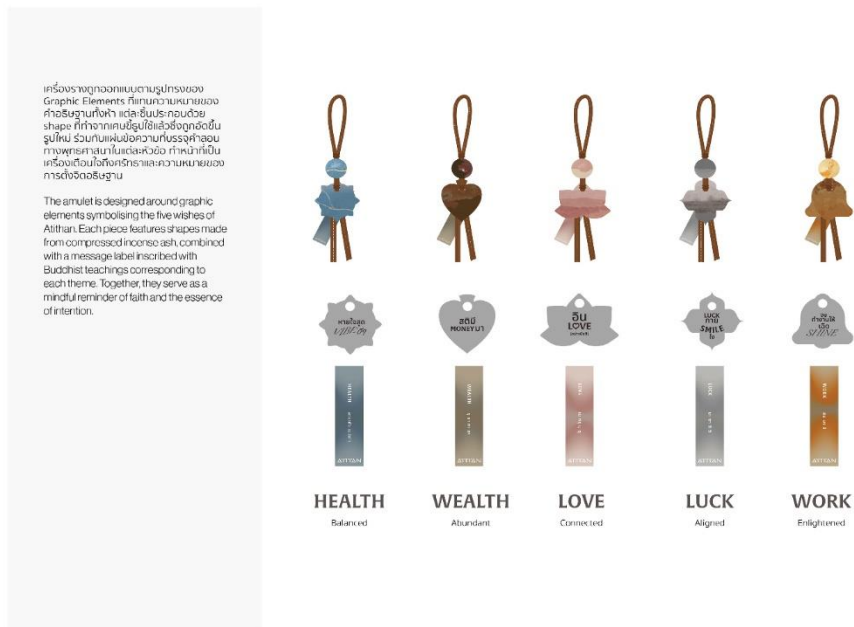


Figure 73 – Packaging Design of Holy Charm
 (Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure illustrates the *ATITHAN* Holy Charm collection, designed to embody five essential blessings — Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, and Work. Each charm integrates geometric forms and colours derived from Buddhist symbolism, serving as a tangible reminder of mindfulness and faith within everyday life.

สิ่ง Charm ที่สร้างขึ้นจากของที่เหลือใช้
ภายในวัด ปานานี่รูปใหม่ให้คุณค่าและ
ประโยชน์ต่อเมือง เรื่องเล่าที่วัดในฐานะ
แหล่งเรียนรู้ และเรียนรู้แนวคิด
"Transformation" -- การเปลี่ยนแปลง
สิ่งหนึ่งไปสู่สิ่งหนึ่งอย่างมีความหมาย
Crafted from repurposed incense ash
collected from temples, the Holy Charm
transforms remnants into new forms of
value. It connects back to the temple as a
place of faith, while embodying the
concept of "Transformation" -- turning
one state into another with deeper
meaning.

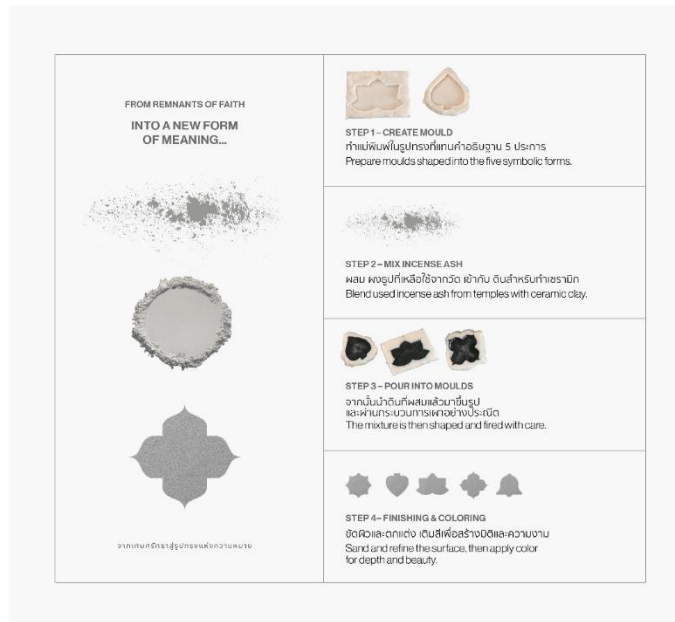


Figure 74 – The Making of Holy Charm
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure outlines the process of creating the Holy Charm, made from repurposed incense ash collected from temples. The ash is blended with clay, pressed into symbolic moulds, and then finished with colour and surface treatment, transforming discarded remnants of faith into a new meaningful object.



Figure 75 – Holy Charm Prototype
 (Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The holy charms were presented as intimate, personal artefacts that extended the identity system to the scale of everyday use. Each charm was displayed with its packaging, arranged in a sequence that emphasised the thematic categories of health, wealth, love, luck, and work. The presentation included enlarged prints of the motifs used for each charm, showing how lotus, floral vines, Naga scales, and mandala grids were abstracted into compact icons.

The documentation explained why these categories were chosen, linking them to both traditional Buddhist practice and contemporary aspirations. Presentation boards described how health relates to purity and renewal, wealth to stability and generosity, compassion and connection, luck to protection and fortune, and work to discipline and livelihood. This contextual framing ensured that the

charms were not seen as decorative accessories but as meaningful design artefacts that continued the project's narrative of imperfection and authenticity.



Figure 76 – Charm Packaging Mock-up for Factory

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The charm packaging was developed as digital mock-ups to communicate production specifications to the manufacturer. Each design maintains the project’s visual identity while exploring colour and form variations linked to the five key themes—health, wealth, love, luck, and work. The mock-ups ensured material accuracy, scale precision, and alignment with the symbolic intent of the design, bridging conceptual design and practical fabrication.



Figure 77 – Material Reference and Bead Prototype Development

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure shows the material exploration and colour palette references used in designing the charm beads. The study takes inspiration from natural minerals, ceramic glazes, and handcrafted textures to create tactile and spiritual resonance. Each bead corresponds to one of the five thematic categories, embodying symbolic

meanings through hue and finish. The prototypes were developed to evaluate visual harmony, proportion, and manufacturability for final production.



Figure 78 – Charm Casting Process and Prototype Development

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure illustrates the process of making the charms, from mould preparation to casting and finishing. The images show plaster moulds in various

shapes representing symbolic motifs, including lotus, bodhi leaf, floral dharma, and bell forms. The production involved pouring material into the moulds, removing air bubbles, and allowing the charms to dry naturally before refinement. The final pieces display variations in texture and surface finish, reflecting the handcrafted quality and the project's appreciation of imperfection and material authenticity.



4.3.4 Holy Card and Mobile Wallpaper



Figure 79 – Blessing Card Design for Offering Set

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

The blessing card is part of the ATITHAN offering set, featuring a lotus-shaped cut-out that symbolises purity and merit. Soft pink tones and minimal typography create a calm, refined presentation suitable for ceremonial use.

เครื่องรางของความโชคดี และความสุขอันเป็นมงคล
 สามารถเป็นของขวัญที่มอบให้คนรอบข้างได้
 เพื่อเป็นสิริมงคลให้ทุกคนในครอบครัว

Blessing Card can be kept as a charm of good fortune
 and a heartfelt token of blessings.

Thoughtfully designed in a compact, credit card sized
 format, it is easy to carry, allowing the essence of giving
 and blessings to accompany you wherever you go.

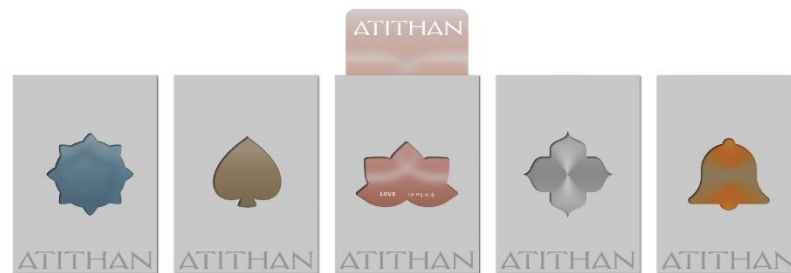
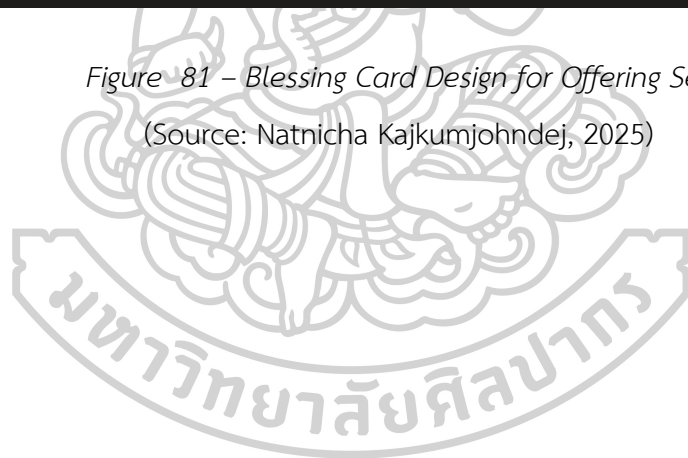


Figure 80 – Blessing Card Collection Representing Five Fortunes
 (Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the complete set of *ATITHAN* blessing cards, each symbolising one of the five fortunes: Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, and Work. Each card features a unique geometric emblem and colour palette derived from Thai architectural motifs, reflecting the spiritual and cultural significance of each wish. The minimalist layout emphasises the refined and contemplative tone of the collection.



Figure 81 – Blessing Card Design for Offering Set
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)



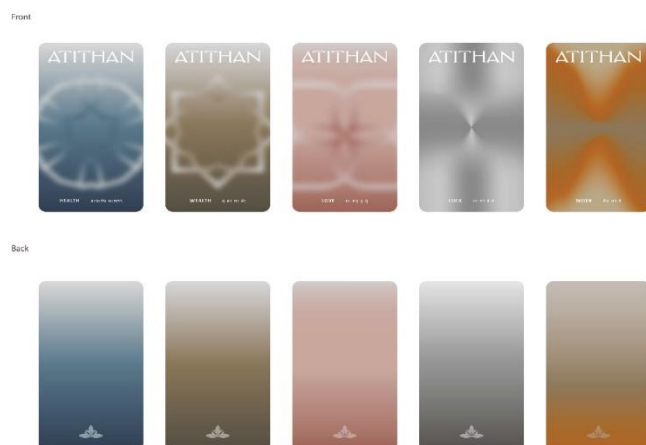


Figure 82 – Front and Back Designs of the Blessing Card Set
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)





Figure 83 – Blessing Card Prototype Set
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the prototype stage of the *ATITHAN* blessing cards, showing grayscale mock-ups for both front and back designs. Each card maintains its symbolic representation but in simplified, uncoloured form, intended to demonstrate structural consistency before final colour application.



Figure 84 – Conceptual Mood and Spatial Essence
 (Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the ATITHAN Blessing Card Series, each representing a distinct aspect of well-being—Health, Wealth, Love, Luck, and Work. The gradient colour system and subtle geometric patterns visually embody serenity, faith, and balance, reflecting Buddhist-inspired harmony through contemporary aesthetics. The cards are designed to be tactile and symbolic, functioning both as spiritual keepsakes and aesthetic design objects that merge tradition with minimal modern sensibility.

4.3.5 Holy Spray

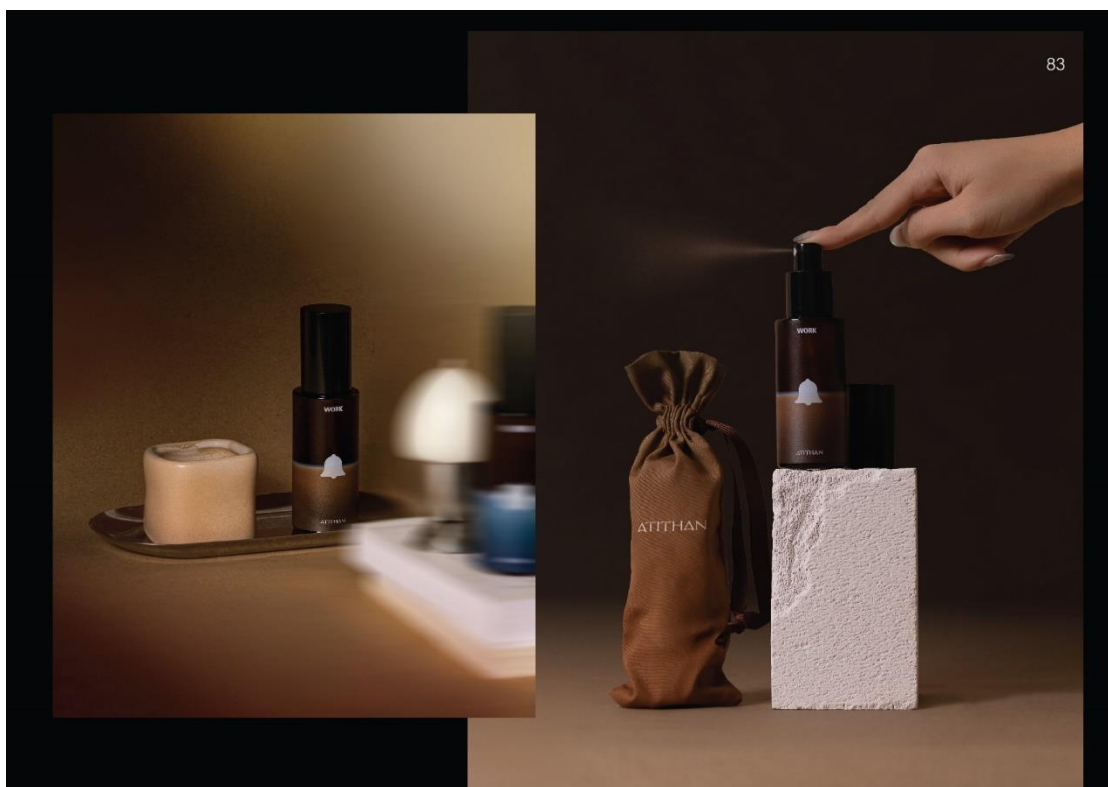


Figure 85 – Holy Spray Collections
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents reference examples of existing scent-related products, including Pillow Spray, Room Spray, and Ambience Sachet designs from contemporary Thai brands. These references inform the aesthetic and functional direction of ATITHAN's product design, focusing on simplicity, refinement, and

sensory experience. The use of textured surfaces and potential laser-cut detailing aligns with the project's concept of combining artisanry with spiritual meaning.



4.3.6 Sticker Set

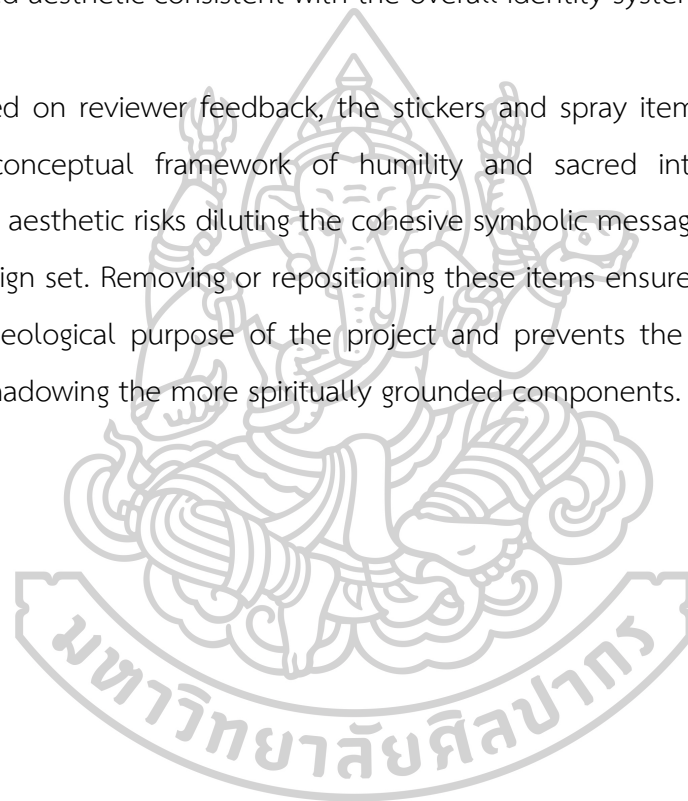


Figure 86 – Buddhist-inspired Sticker Collections

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents the Everyday Dharma sticker set, designed to reinterpret Buddhist teachings through modern visual expression. Each sticker conveys a mindful message inspired by sacred motifs such as the lotus, bell, and bodhi leaf, paired with uplifting phrases that merge spiritual wisdom with contemporary lifestyle values. The collection promotes awareness of Buddhist virtues including balance, gratitude, and simplicity, encouraging users to integrate mindfulness into daily life. The design combines soft gradients, symbolic forms, and minimal typography to evoke calmness and a refined aesthetic consistent with the overall identity system

Based on reviewer feedback, the stickers and spray items may diverge from the core conceptual framework of humility and sacred intention. Their more commercial aesthetic risks diluting the cohesive symbolic message established by the primary design set. Removing or repositioning these items ensures stronger alignment with the theological purpose of the project and prevents the peripheral products from overshadowing the more spiritually grounded components.



4.3.7 Digital Showcase



Figure 87 – ATITHAN Mobile Application Interface

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure showcases the *ATITHAN* mobile application's visual identity, designed to reflect the brand's minimalist and spiritual tone. The interface features a clean layout, warm gradient tones, and the central circular motif symbolising enlightenment and continuity, reinforcing the brand's connection to mindfulness and transformation.



Figure 88 – Application User Journey
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure illustrates the user flow within the ATITHAN application, presenting key interactions such as selecting offerings, exploring products, and using digital merit-making functions. The design integrates cultural authenticity with modern digital usability, promoting accessibility while maintaining a contemplative and refined visual atmosphere.

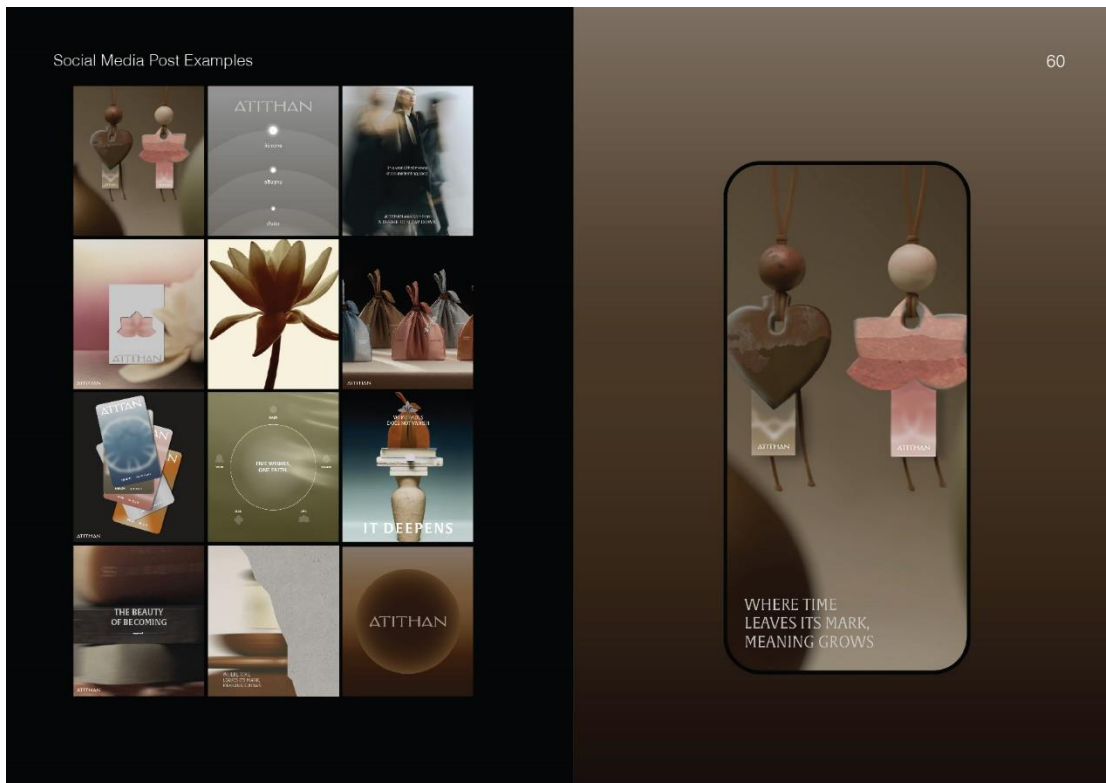


Figure 89 – ATITHAN Social Media and Digital Display Design
(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

This figure presents ATITHAN’s digital presence via social media and mobile display mock-ups. The visuals highlight the cohesive integration of product aesthetics and digital storytelling, using soft gradients, symbolic forms, and meditative imagery to evoke tranquillity and reflection. The tone conveys modern spirituality through minimalist composition, aligning physical offerings with their virtual representation to create a unified and contemplative brand experience.

To further support usability evaluation, a wireframe walkthrough is included in **Appendix D**. This demonstrates navigation flow, information hierarchy, and user

pathways within the digital interface. As several Buddhist applications already exist, documenting this structure helps clarify how the proposed system differentiates itself through its emphasis on ritual preparation, material education, and sustainable alternatives for merit-making.

4.3.8 Visual Identity

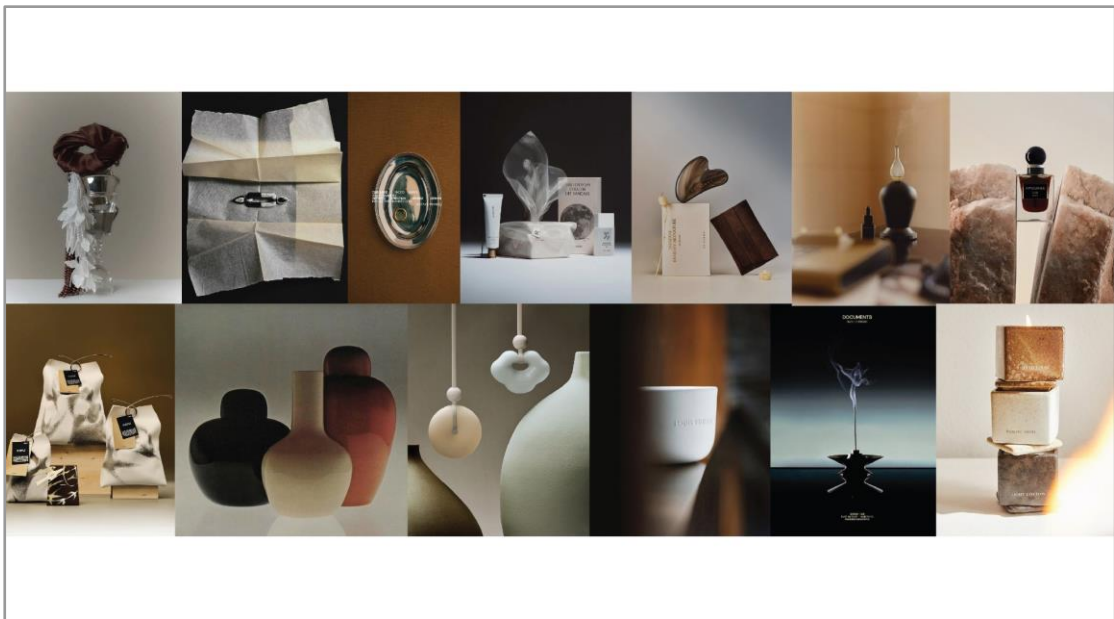


Figure 90 – Visual Direction and Material

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)



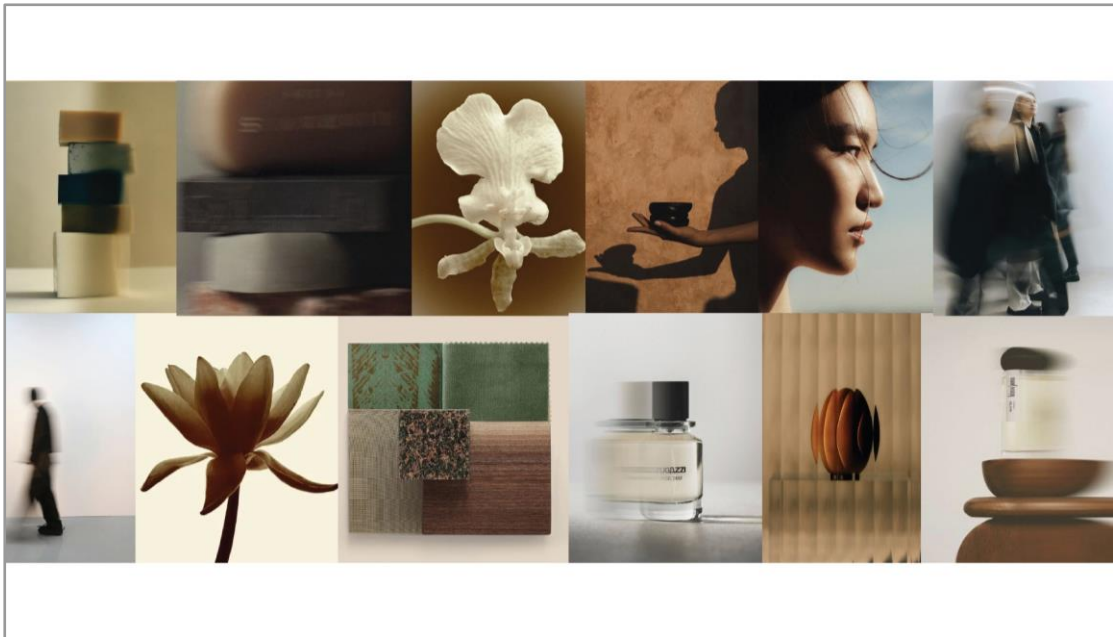


Figure 91 – Conceptual Mood and Spatial Essence

(Source: Natnicha Kajkumjohndej, 2025)

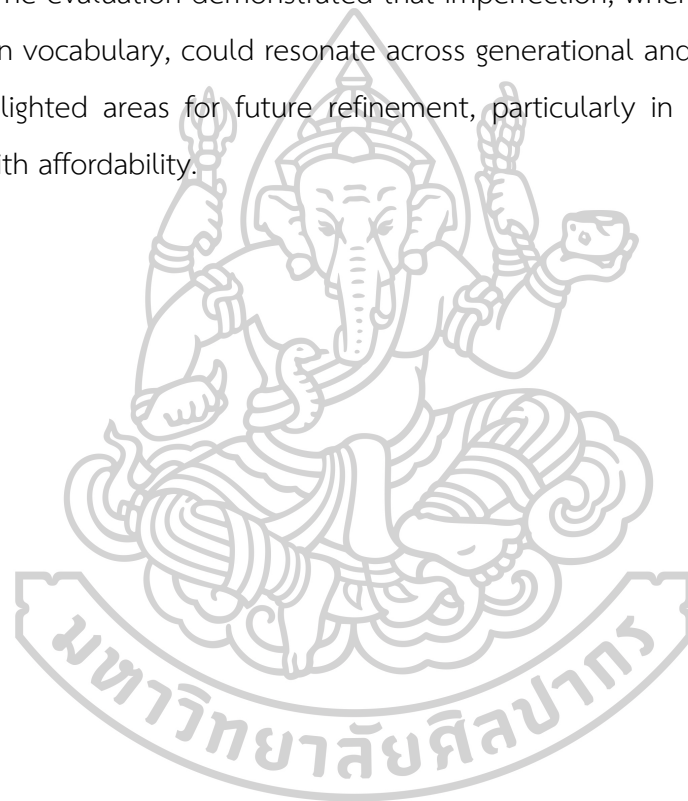
4.4 User Testing and Evaluation

The evaluation phase involved presenting the prototypes to a selection of stakeholders, including monks, temple vendors, and lay practitioners. Feedback was gathered through semi-structured discussions and observation of participant reactions. This stage was critical in determining whether the design outcomes successfully communicated the intended values of authenticity, impermanence, and ecological awareness.

Monks responded positively to the restrained use of ornament and muted palette, noting that the designs conveyed a sense of sincerity and humility appropriate for offerings. They emphasised that the tactile qualities of the raised paint surfaces made the packaging feel closer to sacred objects rather than commercial products. Vendors recognised the practicality of the tote and the modular structure of the box, though some expressed concern about whether production costs could remain competitive with plastic alternatives. Lay practitioners,

especially younger participants, described the charms as personally meaningful and praised the ecological dimension of the tote design. Several respondents indicated that the muted tones and imperfect textures gave the objects a sense of depth and authenticity absent from current market offerings.

Overall, user testing confirmed that the design system aligned with cultural expectations while opening new possibilities for sustainable and meaningful packaging. The evaluation demonstrated that imperfection, when carefully translated into a design vocabulary, could resonate across generational and stakeholder groups. It also highlighted areas for future refinement, particularly in balancing ecological materials with affordability.



CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

This research explores how the imperfect traces of ancient Buddhist architecture, such as patina, cracks, and erosion, can be reinterpreted in the design of contemporary Buddhist offerings. Through a practice-led methodology, the study examines how imperfection could convey symbolic and emotional meaning within spiritual contexts.

The research finds that the aesthetic of imperfection—rooted in Buddhist philosophy and the visual language of ancient architecture—can evoke mindfulness and reconnect users with the sacred values of humility and impermanence. The resulting design outcomes demonstrate how tradition and innovation can coexist in contemporary spiritual product design.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader discussion on sustainable design and visual semiotics by proposing a new approach that integrates emotional, cultural, and ethical dimensions into the design of sacred packaging.

5.1 Recommendations and Suggestions

To evaluate the practical relevance and social impact of the proposed design concept, it is recommended that the project be extended through pilot implementation on online sales platforms. This will allow assessment of how the design performs in real market conditions and whether it successfully attracts the interest of potential consumers.

Following the advice of Assistant Professor Veerawat Sirivesmas, PhD, a focus group should be organised with participants from Generation Z to discuss their perceptions, emotional responses, and aesthetic preferences regarding the design. Their feedback will provide valuable insights into generational attitudes towards

contemporary Buddhist offerings and help refine the design language to align with their values and expectations.

In addition, validation should be sought from a Buddhist monk, who will review the design to ensure it remains respectful and appropriate within the context of Buddhist practice. The monk's role will be to validate spiritual suitability rather than to act as an end user. This step will help confirm that the design maintains its sacred integrity while embracing modern aesthetics.

The theological dimension of the project gained prominence during feedback, as several reviewers noted the centrality of doctrinal meaning in merit-making. In Theravāda Buddhism, ritual giving is not merely a physical act but a practice embedded in intention (cetana) and humility (Harvey, 2013). The textures derived from architectural decay symbolise anicca, guiding the giver toward reflective awareness. The restrained ornamentation and organic imperfections used throughout the system mirror monastic values that emphasise simplicity over display (Skilling, 2021). Incorporating these doctrinal references affirms that the visual identity is not purely aesthetic but aligned with the spiritual logic of Buddhist generosity.

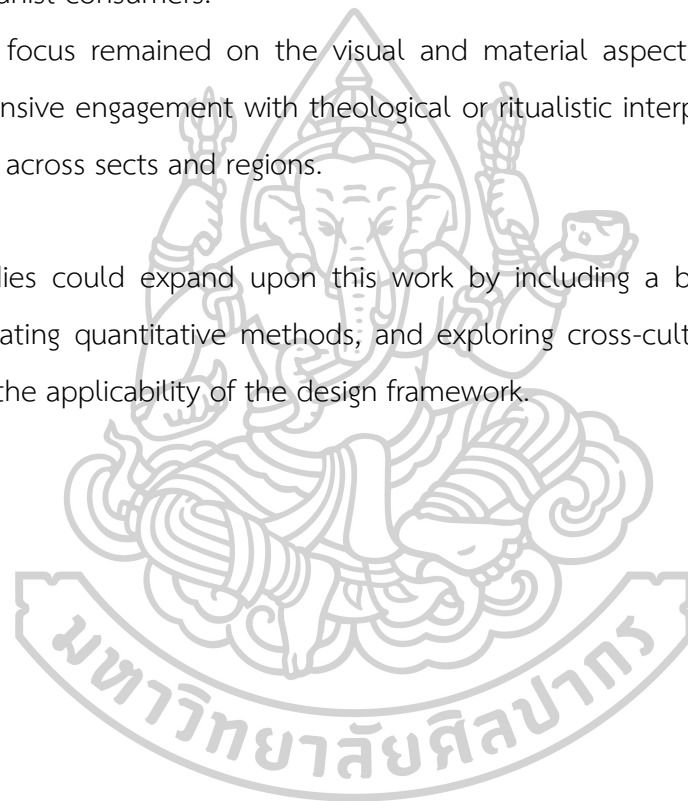
The sustainability dimension of the project aligns with international goals on responsible consumption and waste reduction. The emphasis on reusability, reduced material waste, and biodegradable alternatives supports SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). By reinterpreting traditional aesthetics through environmentally conscious materials, the project presents an approach that addresses both cultural continuity and ecological responsibility, an intersection seldom explored in religious packaging design (UNEP, 2021).

5.2 Limitations

While this research provides valuable theoretical and practical insights, certain limitations should be acknowledged.

1. The study was geographically confined to Thailand and therefore does not fully represent the broader diversity of Buddhist practices across Asia.
2. The evaluation relied primarily on qualitative data from a limited number of participants, which restricts the generalisability the findings cannot be to all Buddhist consumers.
3. The focus remained on the visual and material aspects of design, without extensive engagement with theological or ritualistic interpretation, which may vary across sects and regions.

Future studies could expand upon this work by including a broader demographic base, integrating quantitative methods, and exploring cross-cultural comparisons to strengthen the applicability of the design framework.



5.3 Sacred Imperfection Model

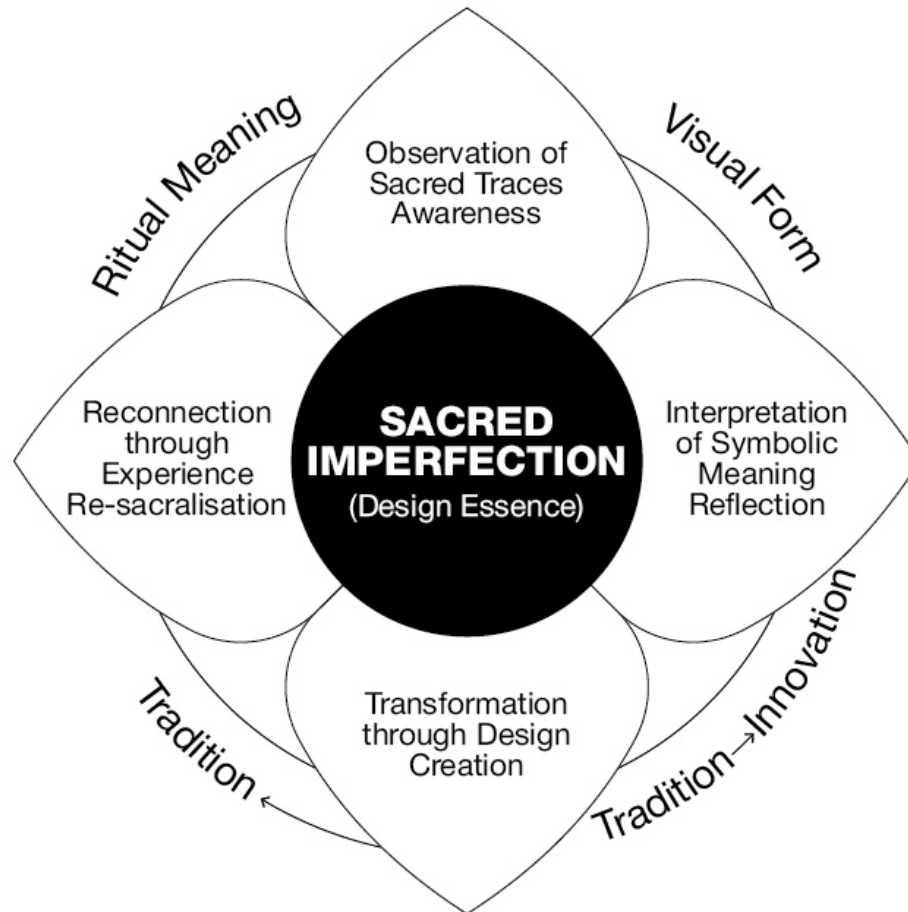


Figure 92 – Natnicha Kajkumjohndej's Sacred Imperfection Framework: A Theoretical Model for Contemporary Buddhist Offering Design (2025)

The "Sacred Imperfection Model" visualises how I interpreted, developed, and redefined Buddhist offering design through observation, reflection, creation, and reconnection. The model is shaped like a lotus to represent purity, growth, and mindfulness. At the centre of the model is the design essence of "**Sacred Imperfection**", symbolising the belief that beauty and spirituality can exist within flaws, traces, and decay.

Each petal surrounding the centre represents a key stage of the design process.

Observation of Sacred Traces represents the first stage, in which I explored and recorded the physical traces of sacred spaces and objects, such as temple walls, aged ornaments, and the materials used in offerings. This stage focuses on awareness and how observation becomes a form of mindfulness.

Interpretation of Symbolic Meaning involves understanding and translating Buddhist beliefs, rituals, and visual symbols into design insights. I studied the meanings behind forms, textures, and gestures within religious practice to understand how sacred qualities could be expressed through contemporary aesthetics.

Transformation through Design shows how insights from the first two stages were translated into physical outcomes. I experimented with structure, layout, and materials to create designs that are simple, elegant, and environmentally responsible. This stage reflects creation, where design becomes a mindful act of transformation.

Reconnection through Experience represents how the redesigned offerings are experienced by monks, benefactors, and users. It reflects re-sacralisation, meaning the restoration of sacred emotion through design. This stage demonstrates that sacred values arise not only from tradition but can also be rediscovered through interaction with contemporary forms.

The outer layer of the model represents the connection between ritual meaning and visual form, as well as the balance between tradition and innovation. These two relationships remind me that design can remain faithful to spiritual roots while being open to modern change.

Overall, the model reflects my personal and academic understanding of how sacred design can evolve without losing its essence. It demonstrates that imperfection is not a weakness, but a visual and emotional language that communicates humility, awareness, and timeless beauty.

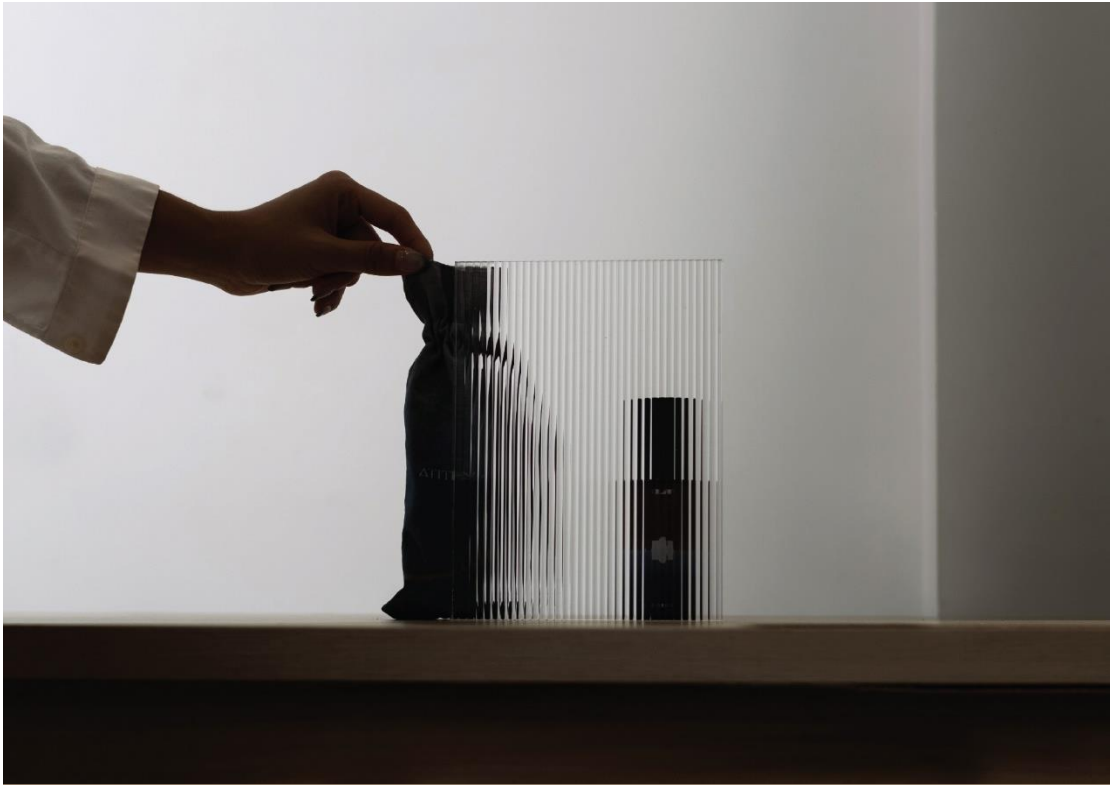












ATITHAN

TRANSFORMING IMPERFECT TRACES FROM ANCIENT ARCHITECTURE
INTO GRAPHIC ELEMENTS FOR CONTEMPORARY BUDDHIST OFFERINGS

NATNICA KAJKUMJOHNDEJ
(DINDA 14 | 650430015)

Appendix B: Online Survey



Survey: Beliefs, Rituals, and Purchase behaviour (แบบสำรวจ: ความเชื่อ พิธีกรรม และพฤติกรรมการซื้อ)

This survey is part of my final thesis project, aimed at understanding consumer behavior regarding the use of religious and/or ritual items. By completing this survey, you will be helping me achieve my degree in Design Arts.

แบบสำรวจนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของโครงการวิทยานิพนธ์ ซึ่งมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาพฤติกรรมผู้บริโภคที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการใช้สิ่งของทางศาสนาและ/หรือพิธีกรรม ซึ่งการตอบแบบสำรวจนี้จะมีส่วนช่วยให้ฉันสำเร็จการศึกษาในสาขาศิลปะการออกแบบได้

* Indicates required question

1. Age Range (ช่วงอายุ) *

Mark only one oval.

- Generation Alpha (2010 - 2024)
- Generation Z (1995 - 2009)
- Generation Y/Millennial (1977 - 1994)
- Generation X (1965-1976)
- Baby Boomers (1946-1964)

2. Gender (เพศ) *

Mark only one oval.

- Male (ชาย)
- Female (หญิง)
- Other (อื่นๆ)

3. Place of residence (ถิ่นที่อยู่) *

Mark only one oval.

- Thailand (ไทย)
- Outside of Thailand (นอกประเทศไทย)

4. Race/Ethnicity (เชื้อชาติ/ชาติพันธุ์) *

Mark only one oval.

- Thai (ไทย)
- Thai - Chinese (ไทย - จีน)
- Chinese (จีน)
- Indian (อินเดีย)
- Other: _____

5. Belief System (ระบบความเชื่อ) *

Mark only one oval.

- Christianity (ศาสนาคริสต์)
- Buddhism (ศาสนาพุทธ)
- Islam (ศาสนาอิสลาม)
- Hinduism (ศาสนาฮินดู)
- Other: _____

6. Monthly Income Range (ช่วงรายได้ต่อเดือน) *

Mark only one oval.

- < 10,000 THB
- 10,000-50,000 THB
- 50,000-100,000 THB
- > 100,000 THB
- Other: _____

7. Religious Expenses e.g. merit-making, temple visits, offerings : Approximately what percentage of your income goes towards these expenses? monthly basis (ค่าใช้จ่ายทางศาสนา เช่น ทำบุญ วัด ทำบุญ : รายได้ของคุณเป็นค่าใช้จ่ายเหล่านี้ประมาณกี่เปอร์เซ็นต์ต่อเดือน)

Mark only one oval.

- < 5%
- 5-10%
- 11-20%
- > 20%
- Other: _____

8. Choose all applicable occasions: Reasons for purchasing religious items including offering: incense, and candles?

เลือกโอกาสที่เหมาะสมทั้งหมด: เหตุผลในการซื้อสิ่งของทางศาสนา รวมถึงเครื่องเช่น ไม้ธูป เทียน?

Check all that apply.

- For religious rituals (เพื่อใช้ในการประกอบพิธีกรรมทางศาสนา)
- For peace of mind (เพื่อความสบายใจ)
- For good luck (เพื่อเป็นสิริมงคล)
- For collection or as a souvenir (เพื่อสะสมหรือเป็นที่ระลึก)
- For profit (เพื่อเก็งกำไร)
- Other: _____

9. Frequency of purchase (ความถี่ในการซื้อ) *

Mark only one oval.

- 1-2 times a year (ปีละ 1-2 ครั้ง)
- 3 months once (3 เดือนครั้ง)
- Once a month (เดือนละครั้ง)
- 2-3 times a month (เดือนละ 2-3 ครั้ง)
- Weekly (ทุกอาทิตย์)
- Other: _____

10. Where do you purchase these items? (คุณซื้อสินค้าเหล่านี้ได้ที่ไหน?) *

Mark only one oval.

- Local shops (ร้านค้าในท้องถิ่น)
- Malls (ห้างสรรพสินค้า)
- Online stores (ร้านค้าออนไลน์)
- Other: _____

11. What influences your purchase decision the most? (อะไรมีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อของคุณมากที่สุด)

Mark only one oval.

- Packaging (บรรจุภัณฑ์)
- Brand/Image (แบรนด์/ภาพลักษณ์)
- Product Contents/Quality (เนื้อหาผลิตภัณฑ์/คุณภาพ)

12. Have you ever purchased or used any religious items? (คุณเคยซื้อหรือใช้อะไรที่เกี่ยวข้องกับศาสนาบ้าง?)

Check all that apply.



Merit-making offerings (สังฆทาน)



Candle (เทียน)



Incense (ธูป)



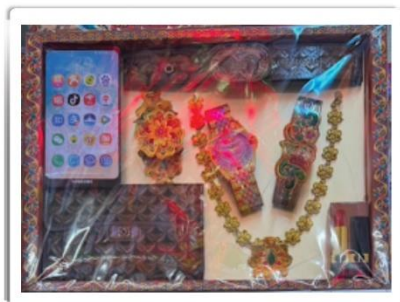
Sacrificial offering (ของใช้ไหว้เจ้า)



Calendar (ปฏิทิน)



Incense burner decoration accessories (กิมฮวย)



Kongtek (กงเต็ก)



Fortune stick (เซียมซี)



Talipot fan (ตาลปัตร)

None (ไม่เคย)

Other: _____

13.

Based on the previous question, would you consider purchasing these items if they were redesigned? (จากคำถามก่อนหน้านี้ คุณจะพิจารณาซื้อสินค้าเหล่านี้หรือไม่หากได้รับการออกแบบใหม่?)

Mark only one oval.

Yes (ซื้อ)

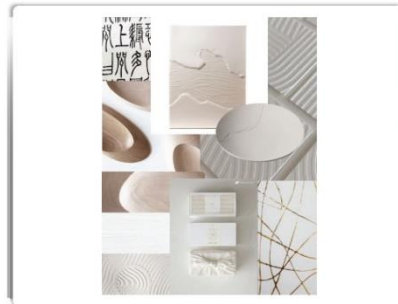
No (ไม่ซื้อ)

14. Why or why not?

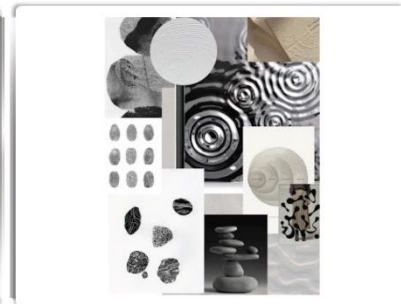
(เพราะเหตุใด?)

15. Which design do you prefer? (คุณชอบดีไซน์แบบไหนมากกว่า?) *

Mark only one oval.



Option1



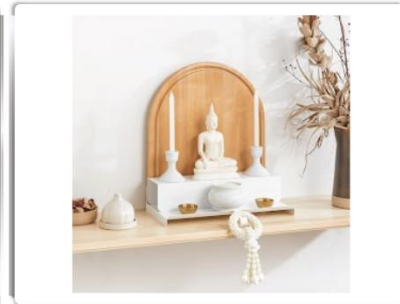
Option2

16. Which design do you prefer? (คุณชอบดีไซน์แบบไหนมากกว่า?) *

Mark only one oval.



Option1



Option2

17. Which design do you prefer? (คุณชอบดีไซน์แบบไหนมากกว่า?) *

Mark only one oval.



Option1



Option2

18. Which design do you prefer? (คุณชอบดีไซน์แบบไหนมากกว่า?)

Mark only one oval.



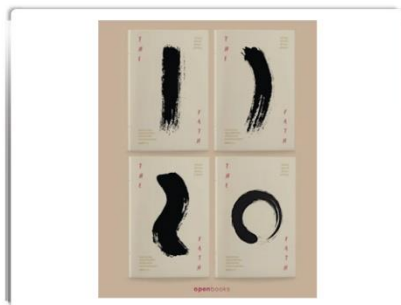
Option1



Option2

19. Which design do you prefer? (คุณชอบดีไซน์แบบไหนมากกว่า?)

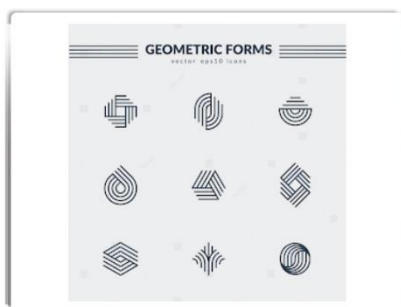
Mark only one oval.



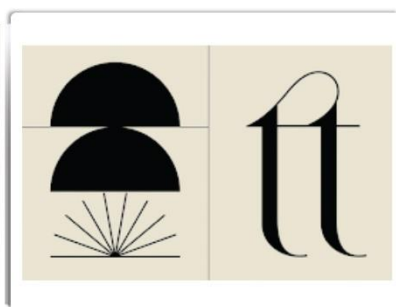
Option1



Option2



Option3



Option4

Appendix C: In-Depth Interview

In-Depth Interview Questionnaire for Monks / Users of Sangkhathan Sets

(แบบสอบถามสำหรับผู้ใช้สังฆทาน / พระสงฆ์)

The following questions were used to explore daily usage patterns, needs, preferences, and perspectives regarding existing Sangkhathan sets and their suitability for actual monastic practice.

<p>1. In your daily monastic life, which items do you use most frequently? Are there any items you often lack or would like to have more of?</p> <p>ในชีวิตประจำวัน พระสงฆ์ใช้อัฐบริวารอะไรบ่อยที่สุด? แล้วมีของอะไรที่มักขาด หรืออยากได้เพิ่มเติมบ้างไหม?</p>
<p>2. Among the items usually included in Sangkhathan sets, are there things you do not use, or receive in excessive quantity?</p> <p>โดยทั่วไปเครื่องสังฆภัณฑ์ที่ญาติโยมนำมาถวาย มักมีของอะไรที่ไม่ได้ใช้งาน หรือมีมากเกินไปบ้างไหม?</p>
<p>3. How appropriate do you consider the current size of Sangkhathan sets—too small, too large, or suitable? Which size is most convenient?</p> <p>ขนาดของเครื่องสังฆภัณฑ์ในปัจจุบัน พระสงฆ์คิดว่าเล็กไป ใหญ่ไป หรือพอดีแล้ว? แบบไหนใช้งานสะดวกที่สุด?</p>
<p>4. How do you perceive the colours and appearance of Sangkhathan items today? Are they appropriate, or should anything be changed?</p> <p>สีหรือหน้าตาของเครื่องสังฆภัณฑ์ในปัจจุบัน พระสงฆ์รู้สึกว่าจะเหมาะสมหรือไม่? มีอะไรที่ควรเปลี่ยนไหม?</p>
<p>5. Does packaging design influence customer decisions? Which styles are most appealing?</p> <p>คุณคิดว่าการออกแบบบรรจุภัณฑ์ของสังฆทานมีผลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อไหม? แล้วแบบไหนที่ลูกค้าชอบมากที่สุด?</p>
<p>6. How satisfied are you with the overall quality of items typically found in Sangkhathan sets? What should be improved?</p> <p>พระสงฆ์พอใจกับคุณภาพของของในเครื่องสังฆภัณฑ์แค่ไหน? มีอะไรที่ควรปรับปรุงหรือเปลี่ยนแปลงบ้างไหม?</p>
<p>7. Would environmentally friendly or biodegradable packaging be beneficial for Sangkhathan sets? Is it necessary?</p> <p>ถ้าสังฆทานใช้ซองหรือบรรจุภัณฑ์ที่เป็นมิตรกับสิ่งแวดล้อม พระสงฆ์คิดว่าเป็นเรื่องดีไหม? มีความจำเป็นหรือไม่?</p>
<p>8. If you could recommend additional items that should be included in modern Sangkhathan sets, what would they be?</p> <p>ถ้าพระสงฆ์สามารถแนะนำของที่ควรมีในสังฆทานเพิ่มได้ อยากให้อะไรบ้าง ที่เหมาะกับการใช้จริงในปัจจุบัน?</p>
<p>9. If you were to design your own Sangkhathan set, what characteristics would you prefer? (size, colours, arrangement, types of items)</p> <p>ถ้าได้ออกแบบสังฆทานเอง อยากให้มีลักษณะอย่างไร? เช่น ขนาด สี การจัดของ หรือชนิดของของที่ใช้ได้</p>

In-Depth Interview Questionnaire for Sangkhathan Producers / Retailers

(แบบสอบถามสำหรับผู้ผลิต / ร้านขายสังฆทาน)

These questions were used to examine retail trends, customer behaviour, product selection, and commercial perspectives related to Sangkhathan sets.

1. Which types of Sangkhathan sets sell best in your shop, and why? ชุดสังฆทานแบบไหนขายดีที่สุดที่สุดในร้านของคุณ? เช่น ชุดยา ชุดของใช้ ชุดอาหารแห้ง ฯลฯ แล้วเพราะอะไรชุดนั้นถึงขายดี?
2. When customers purchase Sangkhathan sets, what specific items or qualities do they usually look for? เวลาลูกค้ามาซื้อสังฆทาน พวกเขามักมองหาของแบบไหนเป็นพิเศษ? เช่น ของคุณภาพดี ราคาถูก หรือของที่หายาก
3. What are the primary factors influencing customers' decisions when purchasing Sangkhathan sets? คุณคิดว่าปัจจัยหลักที่ทำให้ลูกค้าตัดสินใจซื้อสังฆทานคืออะไร? เช่น ราคา ความสวยงาม หรือความสะดวก
4. Which type do customers currently prefer most: pre-packed sets or customised sets? ตอนนี้ลูกค้านิยมสังฆทานแบบไหนมากที่สุด? เช่น ชุดสำเร็จรูป หรือแบบจัดตามสั่ง
5. Does packaging design influence customer decisions? Which styles are most appealing? คุณคิดว่าการออกแบบบรรจุภัณฑ์ของสังฆทานมีผลต่อการตัดสินใจซื้อไหม? แล้วแบบไหนที่ลูกค้าชอบมากที่สุด?
6. What is your perspective on using environmentally friendly materials in Sangkhathan sets? Do customers value this? คุณมองอย่างไรกับการใช้สินค้าที่เป็นมิตรกับสิ่งแวดล้อมในสังฆทาน? ลูกค้าให้ความสำคัญมากน้อยแค่ไหน?
7. Would customers be interested in Sangkhathan sets that incorporate locally made items? ถ้ามีการใช้สินค้าในท้องถิ่น คุณคิดว่าลูกค้าจะสนใจไหม? และคุณเห็นความสำคัญกับเรื่องนี้แค่ไหน?
8. If designers proposed new Sangkhathan concepts for your shop, what characteristics would you prefer? ถ้ามีนักออกแบบมาเสนอรูปแบบสังฆทานใหม่ให้ร้านของคุณ คุณอยากได้แบบไหน? เช่น ดูดี ใช้งานได้จริง หรือคุ้มค่า
9. Do you have ideas for new Sangkhathan sets that are not currently available but may have good sales potential? คุณมีไอเดียใหม่ ๆ อยากให้มีสังฆทานแบบใหม่แบบไหนในร้าน ที่ตอนนี้ยังไม่มี แต่คิดว่าน่าจะขายดี?

In-Dept Interview Questionnaire for Buyers of Sangkhathan Sets

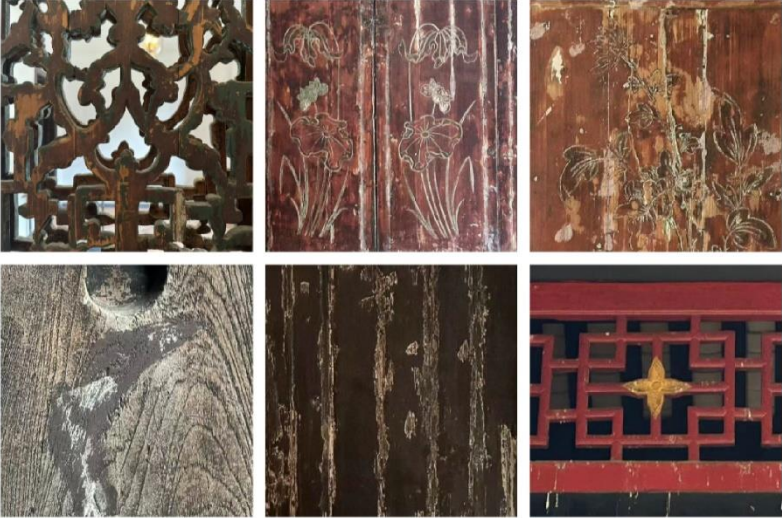

(แบบสอบถามสำหรับผู้ซื้อสังฆทาน)

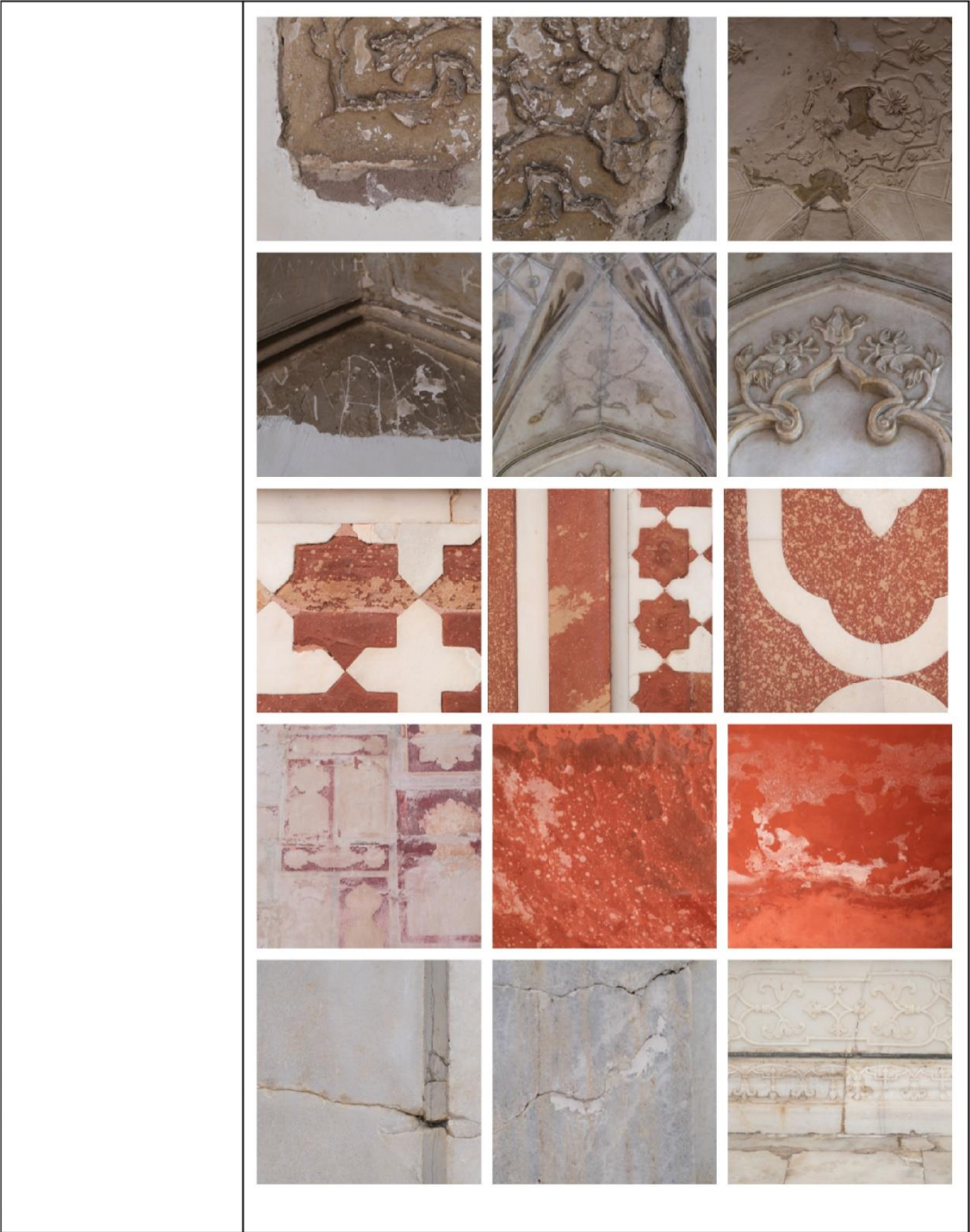
The following questions were used to understand consumer behaviours, preferences, purchasing motivations, and perceptions of Sangkhathan products.

<p>1. On which occasions do you usually purchase Sangkhathan sets, and for what reasons? คุณมักซื้อสังฆทานในโอกาสใดบ้าง และมีเหตุผลอะไรที่ทำให้คุณเลือกซื้อในช่วงเวลานั้น? (เช่น ทำบุญวันเกิด, อุทิศส่วนกุศล, แก่บ่น ฯลฯ)</p>
<p>2. What factors influence your decision when selecting a Sangkhathan set? ปัจจัยอะไรที่คุณใช้ในการเลือกซื้อสังฆทาน? (เช่น ราคา, คุณภาพสินค้า, ความสวยงาม, ความสะดวก ฯลฯ)</p>
<p>3. Where do you usually purchase Sangkhathan sets? Do you have a preferred shop or supplier? คุณมักซื้อสังฆทานจากที่ไหน และมีร้านหรือแหล่งที่ซื้อประจำหรือไม่? (เช่น ร้านขายเครื่องสังฆภัณฑ์, ซูเปอร์มาร์เก็ต, ออนไลน์ ฯลฯ)</p>
<p>4. What size of Sangkhathan set do you typically prefer (small/medium/large), and why? โดยทั่วไปแล้ว คุณชอบสังฆทานขนาดเล็ก กลาง หรือใหญ่? เพราะเหตุใดจึงเลือกขนาดนั้น?</p>
<p>5. Which categories of items do you prefer within a Sangkhathan set, and for what reasons? คุณมักเลือกของประเภทไหนในสังฆทาน และอะไรเป็นเหตุผลที่คุณเลือกของหมวดนั้น? (เช่น ผ้าไตรจีวร, ยารักษาโรค, อุปกรณ์การเรียน, ของใช้ส่วนตัว, ของดำรงชีพ, อาหารแห้ง, อุปกรณ์ให้แสงสว่าง, ผลิตภัณฑ์ทำความสะอาด ฯลฯ)</p>
<p>6. How important are colours and visual appearance of Sangkhathan packaging to you? Do you have any preferred styles? คุณให้ความสำคัญกับสีหรือรูปลักษณ์ของบรรจุภัณฑ์สังฆทานมากน้อยแค่ไหน? มีสีหรือรูปแบบที่คุณชอบเป็นพิเศษไหม?</p>
<p>7. Do you prefer pre-packed Sangkhathan sets or customised sets? Why? คุณชอบสังฆทานแบบจัดสำเร็จ หรือแบบเลือกของตัวเองได้มากกว่า? เพราะอะไร?</p>
<p>8. Based on your experience, how satisfied are you with the quality and usefulness of items in typical Sangkhathan sets? จากประสบการณ์ที่ผ่านมา คุณพอใจกับคุณภาพและความเป็นประโยชน์ของของในสังฆทานแค่ไหน? มีอะไรที่รู้สึกว่าคุณควรปรับปรุงหรือไม่?</p>
<p>9. What are your opinions regarding the use of eco-friendly materials or packaging in Sangkhathan sets? Would you still purchase them if the price increased slightly? คุณคิดอย่างไรเกี่ยวกับการใช้บรรจุภัณฑ์หรือสินค้าที่เป็นมิตรต่อสิ่งแวดล้อมในสังฆทาน? ถ้าราคาสูงขึ้นเล็กน้อย คุณจะยังสนใจไหม?</p>
<p>10. Do you have any additional suggestions regarding the design, size, colours, or contents of Sangkhathan sets? คุณมีข้อเสนอแนะเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับรูปแบบ ขนาด สี หรือสิ่งของในสังฆทาน เพื่อให้เหมาะสมกับพระและการทำบุญมากขึ้นหรือไม่?</p>

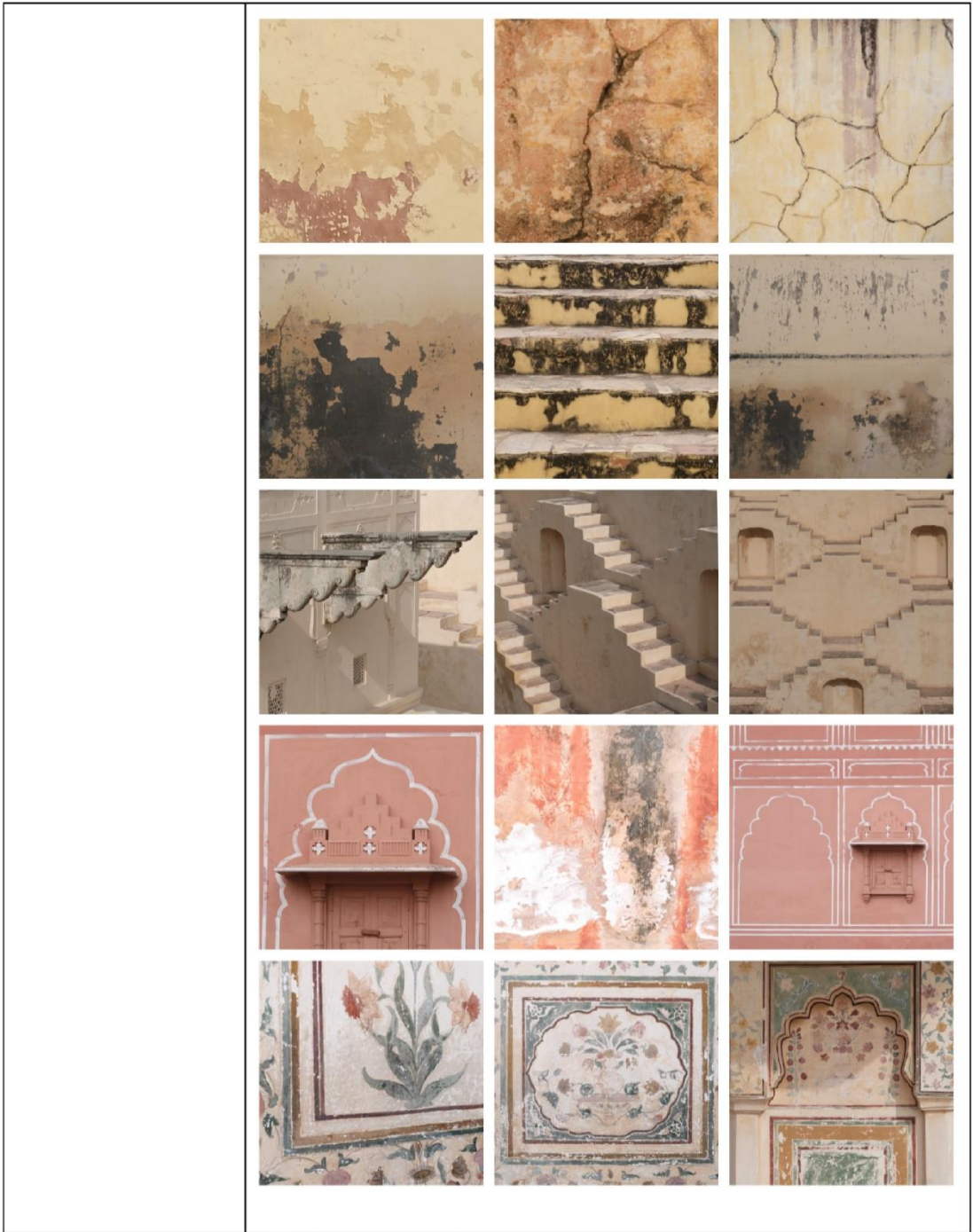
Appendix D: Field Work Photos


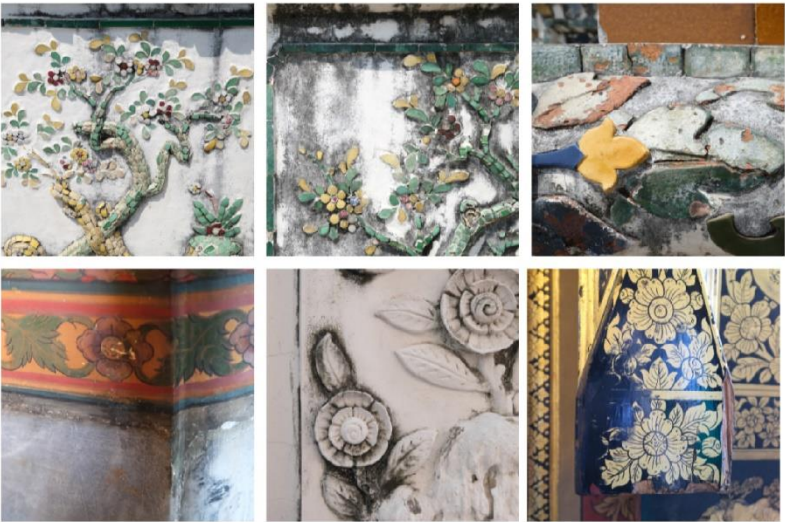


Source Locations	Imperfect Traces of Ancient Architecture
<p>Macau, China</p> <p>Mandarin's House, Templo de Kun Iam Tong</p>	
<p>Agra, India</p> <p>Sikandra, Taj Mahal</p>	



<p>Delhi, India</p> <p>Jama Masjid, Jantar Mantar, Nazir Ka Bagh</p>	
<p>Jaipur, India</p> <p>Amber Palace, City Palace, Gatore Ki Chhatriyan, Nahargarh Fort, Panna Meena ka Kund, Patrika Gate, Shri Jeagat Shiromani Ji Temple</p>	



<p>Kyoto, Japan</p> <p>Tenryu-ji , Ryōan-ji , Higashiyama Jisho-ji</p>	
<p>Bangkok, Thailand</p> <p>Wat Pho, Wat Arun, Jim Thompson House Museum</p>	

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 Buddhist Supplies. Journal of Educational Innovation and
 Research, Vol. 10, No. 3, July–September. ISSN 3027-6446
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AWARD RECEIVED

2024

D&AD Awards

Wood Pencil, Casting / Street Casting – The Boxer

Shortlisted, Film / TV/VOD Commercials Over 120 Seconds

– The Boxer

Shortlisted, Editing / Short Form – The Boxer

Cannes Lions

Silver, Film Craft / Editing – The Boxer

Shortlisted, Film Craft / Casting – The Boxer

Bronze, Film / Consumer Goods – The Boxer

The One Show

Merit, Moving Image Craft & Production / Casting

– The Boxer

Merit, Branded Entertainment / Use of Drama

– The Boxer

2023

Showcased Bangkok Bunny Boys 2023

– Bangkok Design Week 2023

2017

1st Prize Scholarship, Beauty & Glamour Competition

hosted by Glamour Magazine – Domus Academy

2nd Prize, Design Marathon Competition in collaboration

with Arago – Domus Academy

