



**THE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM FOR  
EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN**



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by

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### **Abstract**

The study on religion pluralism for experimental design purposes aims to 1) study the importance, form of construction, religion pluralism, and material culture in each religion, and 2) design and experiment with creations exhibition of the connection between objects, particularly through symbolism and material culture. The research methodology employed in this study includes creative research; data collection, experimentation, and the design of exhibition spaces supported by documentary research. The study found that these are all things that humans have created to communicate instead of using words. They utilize emotions, history, beliefs, and desires to create symbols that express their identity and desires. In religion, two of these clothing and religious ceremonies are widely employed for communication. Interestingly, the researcher found some connections between the creation of symbols.

The study of religious pluralism for experimental design employs experimental research methods. It involves searching for information and studying to achieve creative exhibition results, showcasing work from the beginning of the study to the final point the researcher wishes to present. This concludes the open-ended performance of the work, avoiding a specific direction for visitors because the researcher acknowledges human diversity in thought. Additionally, through posing that question, the researcher studied and researched until finding the answer. Indeed, what enables all religions to endure to this day is not, as commonly believed, God, but rather human beings. Humans have created symbols to transmit beliefs, love, and faith across generations, ensuring the longevity of religions despite the passage of time.

(Total 44 pages)

**Keywords:** Religion pluralism, Material Culture, Symbolism

Student's Signature ..... Thesis Advisor's Signature.....

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Background and Significance of the Problem**

It all started with an interest in something small: 'Cutting the neck of a chicken in Islam' for cooking and eating in the family. In this practice, there are certain rituals that take place, and they don't only happen in one place but all over the world. Every time an animal is killed for food, every Muslim must turn towards Mecca, Saudi Arabia. There are two questions about this ritual.

A: The first question is, how does everyone in the world know which direction Mecca is? The researcher found the answer to this question. In this era, there are applications that make it easy to find the direction. While searching for this answer, the researcher found some additional information: facing Mecca is not only done when cutting the neck of a chicken for cooking, but also during the slaughter of other animals, religious ceremonies, prayers, and in various other contexts.

B: The second question is: Why did this tradition arise? In seeking the answer to this question, many stories were discovered. Initially, the intention was to study only Islam, but the answer revealed the origins of all religions in the world, which are interconnected. The sequence of events is as follows.

The following answers and assumptions are based on various texts such as the Bible, the Quran, and the Tripitaka.

A: God was born

B: God created Adam and Eve

C: Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and fell from heaven

D: Adam and Eve created people on earth

E: Abraham was born and Abraham created a family

F: He had children named Isaac, Ismail, and Mayan

G: One day, God sent Gabriel (a messenger from God) to test Abraham to see if he believed in Him. If he did, Abraham was to kill his son to prove his faith. Just as Abraham was about to do it, Gabriel stopped him and said that God already believed in him, so he should find an animal to sacrifice instead. Abraham used a chicken to perform the ritual.

H: The three sons of Abraham dispersed. According to the scriptures, the three major religions on Earth were born from these three sons: Isaac, Ishmael, and Mahayana Buddhism. They are Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism.

From the stories in the initial texts, the researcher discovered that the origins of all three religions came from the same point. However, the texts mentioned above may not be entirely reliable, as they were written and included in the scriptures of various religions. Therefore, the researcher focused on studying the three main religions mentioned above to investigate the connections between them, including their origins, traditions, symbols, and even the details of their practices.

This study has led the researcher to shift the focus from the earlier mentioned Islamic tradition of chicken throat-cutting to the study of the history of the three religions. From the field study, one interesting thing was discovered: currently, the world has come a long way since the beginning of religions. In the past, different areas may have been divided by religion, race, or ethnicity. However, nowadays, those areas have merged into one. This change may be due to time, the increasing global population, the changing era, the advent of technology, or other factors. Because of these factors, those areas have now become 'multicultural areas'. In many places, different religions share the same space to perform rituals. All rituals of all religions are similar, involving aspects of birth, aging, illness, and death. Another discovery made by the researcher is that the symbols of all three religions have similar origins. Sometimes, they may originate from flowers used for worship in each religion. Flowers all have different centers that grow from seeds and continue to grow in the same manner.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

1.2.1 To study the importance, form of construction, religion pluralism, and material culture in each religion

1.2.2 To design and experiment again with creations that demonstrate the connection between objects, particularly through symbolism and material culture

## 1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Is it true that all religions originate from the same starting point? What are some indicators of connections and similarities suggesting this shared origin, such as the universal occurrences of birth, marriage, and death? In these instances, every religion incorporates rituals or traditions that involve similar activities?

1.3.2 Considering the unsuitability of urban areas for the population, it is assumed that various communities and religions have merged, residing within the same vicinity. Some areas even share places of worship, where they perform certain rituals together. Is this assumption accurate?

## 1.4 Design concept framework

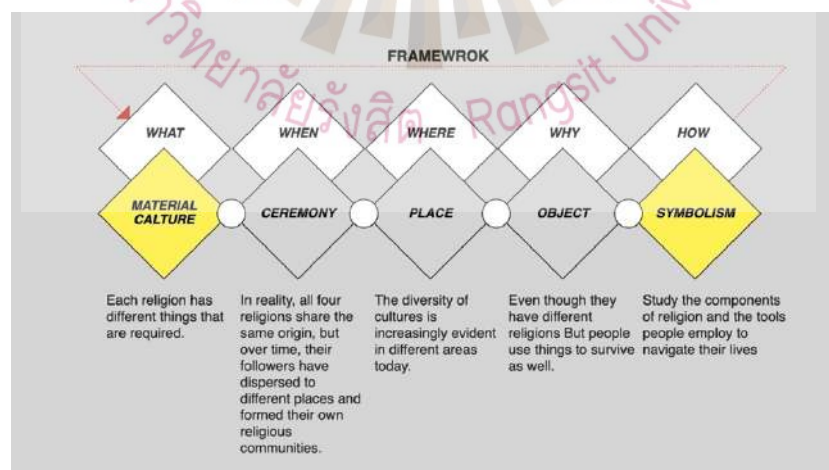


Figure 1.1 Design concept framework

Source: Researcher

## 1.5 Definition of Terms

**Material Culture** tools, weapons, utensils, machines, ornaments, art, buildings, monuments, written records, religious images, clothing, and any other ponderable objects produced or used by humans. If all the human beings in the world ceased to exist, nonmaterial aspects of culture would cease to exist along with them. However, examples of material culture would still be present until they disintegrated. The debate within social anthropology as to whether material culture is dominant in molding nonmaterial aspects is a continuing one. That the impact of material culture has varied from society to society seems clear.

**Phenomenology** is a philosophy of experience. For phenomenology the ultimate source of all meaning and value is the lived experience of human beings. All philosophical systems, scientific theories, or aesthetic judgments have the status of abstractions from the ebb and flow of the lived world.

Literally, phenomenology is the study of “phenomena”: appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first-person point of view.

**Unity and Faith**, the supernatural bond that exists among all who adhere to the one divine revelation. This bond exists on two levels: the level of being, in that all participants in this unity share the same supernatural virtue of faith freely given them by God; and the level of conviction, in that these participants cling to the same revealed truth. Grounded in the oneness of God and of His plan of salvation, this bond admits of varying degrees of realization that culminate in the full-blown unity of faith that exists among the members of the Catholic Church.

**Symbolism** is a literary device that uses symbols, be they words, people, marks, locations, or abstract ideas to represent something beyond the literal meaning.

The concept of symbolism is not confined to works of literature: symbols inhabit every corner of our daily life. For instance, the colors red, white, and blue typically symbolize patriotism (in America at least), which is why they're the favored hues of political yard signs. Colors like orange and brown connote fall, which is why they adorn so many Thanksgiving decorations. Road signs, logos, and emojis are other examples of symbolism—the visuals correspond to ideas, companies, or moods.

**Type of Symbolism**, just about every color human can see has some kind of emotional or psychological association. For example, red is often associated with anger and passion, while blue is often associated with calmness. Authors often rely on color psychology their work, symbolizing different character traits, feelings, settings, or foreshadowing events to come through color imagery.

**Animal symbolism**, Certain animals are considered symbolic, such as a dove symbolizing peace or a rat symbolizing disease. Whether a species deserves certain cultural associations or not, that association can be a powerful symbolic tool. You might come across lion imagery to suggest royalty or snake imagery to suggest deceptiveness.





## **Chapter 2**

### **Research Theory**

The researcher has reviewed concepts and theories related to the process of creating symbols for use in each religion. This exploration aims to uncover the common thread among all religions, which utilize symbols for communication.

The theory of symbolism perception guides this study, leading the researcher in their investigation. Reviewing literature in this field enables the researcher to design and conduct data analysis, facilitating the discovery of further research insights.

#### **2.1 Literature review**

To answer this question, the researcher would like to study and review in the following order:

##### **2.1.1 The symbol red in Egyptian religion**

From the book of The Symbolism of Red in Egyptian Religion by Gwyn Griffiths. He uses to mention that

Colour symbolism as we know it today often has its roots in religion and magic although the awareness of origin may commonly be lacking. Even when the source of a particular usage is known, the interpretation may not be simple. The foundation of the Red Cross organization in 1864 involved the adoption, as emblem, of a red cross on a white ground; the cross is Christian and it is red because blood is red, the succor of the wounded soldier being thus implied. Here is a fairly simple case. The Red Flag of Communism derives, it seems, from a flag which implied, in Paris in 1789, the opposite of revolution: it was at first a flag proclaiming the application of martial law, but in 1792 came the counter-emblem, a red flag including the words "Martial Law of the People".

So here a strange twist has occurred. Blood is again the probable source of the colour; hence too the red flag for danger.<sup>1</sup> Yet red as the colour of blood can also be beneficent and life-giving; probably this is the intent of the red ochre spread over the bones of the "Red Lady" of Paviland circa 16,000 B.C. The Red Dragon of Wales likewise betokens a rampant vitality, admixed originally, no doubt, with an element of threat; here the origin may be in a Roman standard mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus. Ancient Egypt provides examples of a varying connotation, and the god Seth is the centre of much of the symbolism. (Gwyn Griffiths, 1972, pp. 81-90)

After researcher studied Gwyn Griffiths' theory, the study confirmed that symbols have been used to convey meaning for a long time. For example, the founding of the Red Cross organization in 1864 featured a red cross on a white background, which is the Christian symbol of the cross. The color red symbolizes blood, and the organization aimed to provide assistance to wounded soldiers.

The researcher found connections between various symbols in this article, leading to established assumptions. The red flag of Communism appears to have come from a flag which was hinted at in Paris in 1789, as opposed to revolution. At first it was a flag proclaiming martial law, but in 1792 the opposite symbol was used. which is red the flag includes the word "People's Martial Law" has caused strange events to occur here. There's blood again.

Possible sources of color So are red flags for danger<sup>1</sup>. But red, like blood, can also be beneficial and life-giving. Perhaps this was the purpose of the bright red color that spread across the bones of the "Red Lady" of Pavlina around 16,000 BC

### **2.1.2 Symbol in the religious consciousness**

From the book of Symbol in the religious consciousness by Kurt Moritz Artur. He uses to mention that



The formation of religious symbols that occur when unconscious ideas are aroused or when a process of consciousness occurs is principally a matter of religious experience. Such symbols usually become intellectual acquisitions, and, as religious concepts are further elaborated upon, the symbols may even finally become subjects of major theological questions. In Christian theology, for example, summaries of dogmatic statements of faith are called symbols (e.g., the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds and the confessional books of Protestantism, such as the Augsburg Confession of Lutheranism). This particular use of the term *symbol* is exceptional, however. In the development of the symbol, religious experience, understanding, and logic are all connected, but each places different accents on the individual categories and species of symbol. Occasionally, religion is regarded as the origin and the product of certain established (or fundamental) symbols. In such cases the outcome of the process of the structuralization of religious consciousness would then be the establishment of a symbol that is generally applicable to a particular historical species of religion. Conversely, one could ask whether the experience and establishment of an individual or collective symbol by a creative personality or a community is not itself the establishment of a religion. If so, the classical symbol that was developed at the time of the foundation of any one particular religion would then be constitutive for its origin and further development (e.g., the *taiji* or the combination of the opposite yet complementary forces of yin and yang for the Chinese, the cross for the Christian religion). In any event, the symbol belongs to the essence of humanity's coming to religious consciousness and to the formation of history's institutional religions. It plays a fundamental and continual part in the further growing of such religions and in the mental horizons of their followers. (Moritz & Goldammer, 2024)

After reading Kurt Moritz's article, Artur Goldammer, the researcher discovered that the hypothesis previously proposed aligned with many religious symbols, which originate from the creative endeavors of human beings. These symbols often stem from beliefs and observations within a group, and they may undergo changes in form over time in response to evolving beliefs and societal shifts. For instance, Taijiquan symbolizes the combination of opposing yet complementary forces of Yin and Yang.

What Kurt Moritz and Artur Goldammer wrote is related to J. Gwyn Griffiths article on the birth of symbols, which originates from the creative process of human beings. They utilize beliefs and observations to design symbols that communicate desired meanings, such as the use of the cross symbol and the color red in the Red Cross organization. Here, the color red symbolizes blood, often associated with illness or death. Another example is the symbol of Taijiquan, which embodies equal amounts of yin and yang energy. This symbol is represented as black and white, divided into halves.

### **2.1.3 Islamic art theory to support the Ayutthaya style of decoration**

From the research of Islamic art theory to support the Ayutthaya style of decoration by Waiyaveta, W. He studied the origins of symbols in Islam and their connection to the art of the Ayutthaya period to mention that

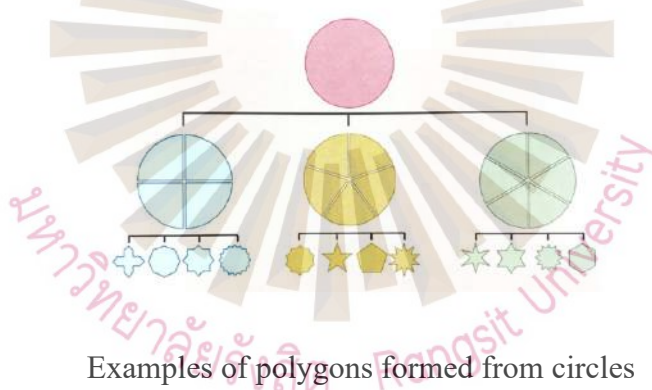
Islamic art seeks to adhere to religious rules, such as avoiding depictions of people and animals to prevent idolatry, which has led to the development of unique artistic concepts. These include three types of decorative patterns: calligraphic patterns, geometric patterns, and floral patterns. These creations maintain their beauty while adhering to religious prohibitions. Islam has spread to various regions worldwide, resulting in the blending of local art and culture with Islamic traditions to produce diverse forms of Islamic art. Despite this diversity, Islamic art continues to uphold fundamental Islamic principles. The Arabesque pattern or floral pattern originates from patterns inspired by nature. It has been used in decorative arts internationally for a long time. What makes floral patterns in Islamic art distinctive and unique is the incorporation of geometric structures into the pattern design, creating symmetrical patterns that are characterized by their beauty and harmony. These patterns are organized systematically, and Arabesque patterns are commonly used in various decorative works. They are applied without limitations, appearing in contexts such as decoration in the Quran, household items, carpets, and more. In this research, the researcher has collected and extracted the fundamental formulas of Abul Waf'a Al-Buzjani from the books then transcribed and compiled them to be used as tools for understanding technical theories and

techniques. The basics of Islamic art involve creating polygonal geometric shapes in ornamental designs, beginning with circles. The reason for starting with circles is that the circle symbolizes the beginning of the universe or the emptiness at the center, which represents the unity of every universe. (Waiyaveta, 2018)



Figure 2.1 L'ART DE L'ISLAM

Source: Mozzati, 2018



Examples of polygons formed from circles

Source: Waiyaveta, 2018

After reading 'Islamic Art Theory to Support the Ayutthaya Style of Decoration' by Worrapoj Waiyaveta, the researcher discovered the connection between flowers and various symbols in Islam. Initially, the researcher hypothesized that various symbols in religion would originate from flowers because historically, people often selected beautiful objects for use in worship. Therefore, flowers were among the first items used. Worrapoj Waiyaveta also mentioned that symbols originate from circles. The reason for starting with circles is that the circle symbolizes the beginning of the universe or the emptiness at the center, which represents the unity of every universe.

#### 2.1.4 Flowers and Religions: semiotic and historical remarks

From the Flowers and Religions: semiotic and historical remarks by Papasidero, M. He talks about the various uses of flowers in themselves. to mention that

Some contributions of this special issue are related to the history of religions. Flowers and plants are important elements of many religious traditions, also because they play a crucial role in cosmogonies and myths of origin. From the analysis of the case studies considered, a radical opposition and a constant oscillation between a concrete and a metaphoric/symbolic use of plants emerges. There are many symbolic values given to the plants in our examples, as in the case of regality – represented by the palm and other trees – and the Mesopotamian sovereigns' need to propitiate the divine sphere (cf. Verderame's and Bertolini's papers), but also in the Christian context, with the metaphoric representation of God and His abundance in the desert landscapes described by pilgrims in the *Loca Sancta*, represented by the oasis, the garden and water (cf. Sabbatini's paper), or in the image of the lily of the field included in the aforementioned evangelical image of the lily, symbol of God's care. This case demonstrates how a religion, like Christianity, takes and transforms social and ritual habits (the Roman use of flowers and plants) in order to avoid the risk of practicing a superstitious use of flowers or idolizing them. One of the concrete expressions of the materiality of flowers in Early Christianity is the habit of putting them on altars and tombs – a practice often condemned by the Church Fathers because of its relation with the pagan one. (Papasidero, 2020)

After reading *From the Flowers and Religions: semiotic and historical remarks* by Marco Papasidero, the researcher sought information on flowers used in worship of the gods, and in ancient times, aside from using flowers for worship, they were also newly adapted to design various ceremonial systems to communicate various activities. Marco Papasidero shared the same idea as Worrapoj Waiyaveta regarding the relationship between flowers and oneself. This suggests that the tradition of using

flowers was observed early on by Christians, who placed them on monuments and tombs, as well as in Buddhism. Once again, flowers are used to pay respects to the deceased.

### 2.1.5 What is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

What is Maslow's hierarchy of needs? Cyrus Wahome spoke about Maslow's basic human needs theory, which was read and discussed by Sachdev (2022)

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in psychology that explains the five different levels of human needs. This theory created by Abraham Maslow is based on how humans are inspired to satisfy their needs in a hierarchical order. Starting from the bottom going upwards, the five needs are physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. The hierarchy goes from the most basic to the most advanced needs. The ultimate goal is to reach the highest level of the hierarchy, which is self-actualization. Your motivation is dependent on a hierarchy of needs. These needs are organized in a pyramid showing the needs that should first be met prior to higher needs. Even so, the order of these needs is not inflexible, since they can be adjusted depending on individual and other circumstances. Motivation is highly determined by more than one basic need, which may result in satisfying several needs altogether. Written by Sachdev (2022)



Figure 2.3 Basic human needs, Maslow's Theory

Source: Joy, 2020



Researchers have discovered one thing that allows various religions to survive. Even though time has passed for a long time That thing is human All humans have basic needs. This causes symbols and rituals to be passed on from generation to generation. Let future generations be aware of the existence of that religion. Based on Maslow's basic human needs theory, which describes basic human needs. The researcher found an article by Cyrus Wahome which was read and critiqued by Poonam Sachdev. Both of them had the same thoughts as the researcher regarding the 5 needs, which may be adjusted according to each person. Because each person has different ideas. But everyone definitely needs these 5 things.

### **2.1.6 How to Create Shared Symbols**

From the How to Create Shared Symbols by Nicolas Fay, Bradley Walker, Nik Swoboda, Simon Garrod. They talk about the How to Create Shared Symbols to mention that

Humans are a symbolic species (Deacon, 1997). Human cognition and behavior are dominated by symbol use, evident from our everyday use of numeric and linguistic systems. But where do these symbols come from? This question is presented by Harnad (1990) as the symbol grounding problem; how shared meanings can arise from arbitrary symbols in the absence of a pre-established shared symbol system. A solution to the symbol grounding problem was offered by Peirce (1931), who suggested that symbols evolved from motivated signs that share a non-arbitrary correspondence between the sign and its meaning, that is, iconic signs that resemble their meaning (e.g., a portrait of van Gogh that brings the Dutch painter to mind), or indexical signs that share a natural association between the sign and its meaning (e.g., the smell of smoke is an index of fire). This paper examines the social learning strategies through which shared symbols might arise from motivated signs. Written by Fay, (2018)

The researcher has found information from this article that confirms a hypothesis dating back to the beginning of the study: humans have been using symbols

for a very long time. However, these symbols may not have been elaborate pictures in the past; they could have been simple devices used to indicate a need or communicated through imagery (e.g., a portrait of van Gogh that evokes the Dutch painter), or indexical signs that naturally associate a sign with its meaning (e.g., the smell of smoke indicating fire), enabling viewers to understand needs conveyed through images without words. This form of communication, the researcher observes, differs from modern symbols that are clearer in communication. Understanding the nuances of different eras takes time and development to reach the most effective form.

### **2.1.7 Universal Principles of Human Communication: Preliminary Evidence from a Cross-cultural Communication Game**

From the Universal Principles of Human Communication: Preliminary Evidence From a Cross-cultural Communication Game by Fay (2018) They talk about Universal Principles of Human Communication to mention that

A defining feature of the world's 6,000–8,000 languages is their diversity, seen at every level of linguistic organization (Evans & Levinson, 2009). By contrast, there are striking similarities in interactive language use (Levinson, 2016). One example is turn-taking in conversation (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Across a range of languages, interlocutors follow a one-at-a-time rule during conversation, speaking turns tend to be short (around 2 s) and the gaps between speaking turns tend to be very brief (around 200 ms; Heldner & Edlund, 2010; Stivers et al., 2009). Similarly brief turn transition gaps are seen in sign language (De Vos, Torreira, & Levinson, 2015). Another example is the use of other-initiated repairs (OIRs) to signal trouble and address breakdowns in communication (Schegloff, 2000; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977). OIRs are a frequent feature of conversation that is observed across a diverse range of languages (Byun, de Vos, Bradford, Zeshan, & Levinson, 2018; Dingemanse & Enfield, 2015; Dingemanse, et al., 2015). The implication is that whereas language is socially learned, there may be innate and universal principles of language use. Written by Fay, (2018)



The researcher discovered the necessity of using symbols from this article. With over 6,000-8,000 languages spoken worldwide across diverse places and cultures, symbols are essential for effective communication through various images. They enable people from different cultures to understand immediately—for instance, the cross symbol signifies Christianity and is prominently displayed in Christian churches and other places like hospitals, where a red plus symbol indicates a medical facility. Therefore, the creation and utilization of symbols hold significant importance for humans as a communication tool, complementing spoken language.

### **2.1.8 A Prelinguistic Gestural Universal of Human Communication**

From the A Prelinguistic Gestural Universal of Human Communication by Ulf Liszkowski, Penny Brown, Tara Callaghan, Akira Takada, Conny de Vos. They talk about A Prelinguistic Gestural Universal of Human Communication to mention that

One of the most characteristic means of human prelinguistic communication is the pointing gesture, emerging around 12 months of age. In the modern context, Bates (1979) was one of the first to attribute “cosmic importance” to infant pointing in the construction of language and meaning (see also Werner & Kaplan, 1963). Research since then has provided direct empirical evidence for a close relationship between prelinguistic pointing and language development (for a recent meta-analysis, see Colonnese, Stams, Koster, & Noom, 2010). For example, the onset of pointing predicts first words (Carpenter, Nagell, & Tomasello, 1998; Fenson et al., 1994; Harris, Barlow-Brown, & Chasin, 1995), the frequency of pointing increases with the vocabulary spurt (Iverson, Capirci, & Caselli, 1994; Lock, Young, Service, & Chandler, 1990), and the combination of points and words predicts the onset of syntactic two-word combinations (Iverson & Goldin-Meadow, 2005). Indeed, pointing remains a crucial accompaniment of adults’ deictic speech in many languages. Delayed development of pointing gestures after brain injury predicts delayed language acquisition (Sauer, Levine, Rowe, & Goldin-Meadow, 2010), and aberrant development of pointing is both symptom and source of autism (Baron-Cohen et al., 2000). The uniqueness of pointing is

further corroborated by the fact that humans are the only primate species who communicate with each other through pointing gestures Written Liszkowski, (2012)

The researcher discovered the origin of symbols from childhood in this article. Initially, the researcher believed that creating symbols usually stemmed from individuals with ideas or adults aiming to communicate broadly. However, it is actually an innate human instinct from birth, such as pointing fingers when desiring something, even before babies can speak to communicate verbally. This behavior occurs instinctively from the desire for something. In addition to pointing, the researcher also identified other behaviors like hugging and kissing as physical and symbolic expressions. For instance, a hug can convey congratulations upon meeting someone, yet it can also signify farewell depending on the context.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Methodology**

The research topic, The study of religious pluralism for experimentation employs creative research methods. It involves studying the emergence of symbols and material culture within each religion, including an exploration of their origins, to establish connections and conduct thorough research down to the roots of their emergence. The work is exhibited in the form of spatial design, enabling visitors to experience the emergence of symbols and material culture from each religion. This is achieved through the design of the exhibition's movement space, guiding visitors along a walking route to observe the events. The design is informed by research into the origins of all religions, utilizing gathered information to shape the exhibition space.

#### **Research scope**

This exhibition will be on display from April 24th to 30th, 2024, at Building 8, Rangsit University, Pathum Thani Province, Bangkok. It will showcase the results of a study on the three main religions: Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. The researcher found that these three religions were among the earliest to emerge in the world.

### **3.1 Research process**

3.1.1 To study the origins of the main external appearance and general information about Buddhism and Islam is necessary in order to understand their starting points.

3.1.2 To study the various components and rituals carried out every year on this night and their connections.

3.1.3 Summarize all the data to study the various connections and create a research space for creativity.

## **3.2 Population and Samples**

The researcher has studied all three main approaches, focusing not only on Buddhism but also on Islam and the history of these three religions, gathering comprehensive information to organize a creative exposition that explores the history and connections between them.

## **3.3 Expected conclusions**

3.3.1 For those who come to visit the exhibition, learn about the origins of the three main religions in the world: Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.

3.3.2 For those who come to visit the exhibition, know that every religion is similar, and what allows a religion to survive is not God, but humans—individuals who uphold and pass on their faith from generation to generation.

## **3.4 Data Analysis**

The researcher has collected various information about Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam from before the emergence of all religions on Earth until the present era, when all religions have become distinct from each other. The aim is to find connections within each religion by gathering information on symbols used in religion, rituals and their components, doctrines, and organizing them for study and incorporate this information into the experiment to develop a model for creating an experimental space for organizing a creative exhibition.

## Chapter 4

### Research Result

Presenting the work in the exhibition, utilizing the studied information to enhance visitors' understanding of the symbolism and material culture in Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. The researcher discovered a connection between the teachings and the names used to call God in all three religions. Initially, the study also included Judaism to encompass the main religions in the world, but it was later excluded upon discovery that it constitutes a distinct religion from Christianity.

#### 4.1 Research Result 1

Starting with the initial objective, the first step involves studying the details of various religions. The student must examine all major world religions, namely Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, with regard to religious materialism: architecture, clothing, religious artifacts, rituals, symbols, and followers. This detailed study aims to identify similarities or commonalities shared by all religions, thereby confirming the hypothesis that all religions originate from a common point.

4.1.1 Diagram showing the similarities among the four religions in the practices of reading aloud, calling out to God, and teaching.

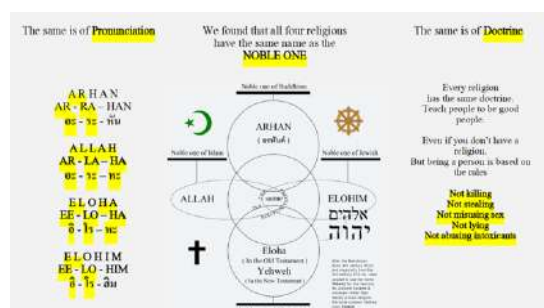


Figure 4.1 Diagram showing similarities between the four religions

Source: Researcher



4.1.2 The researcher discovered that all four religions have various rituals that are interconnected. Each religion has rituals for birth, marriage, and death. Rituals are fundamental to human experience.

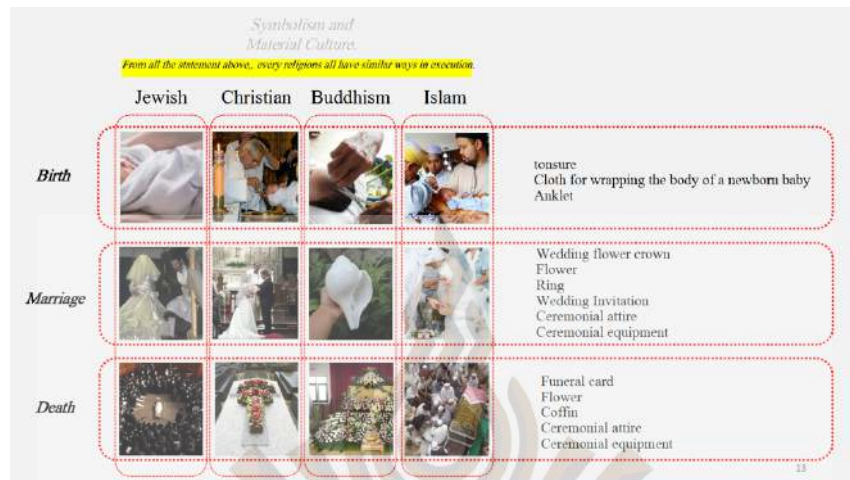


Figure 4.2 Diagram showing similarities between the four religions

Source: Adapt and design from Researcher

4.1.3 The researcher discovered that all four religions use flowers or plant species as offerings to God to show respect, and they are used in various ceremonies.

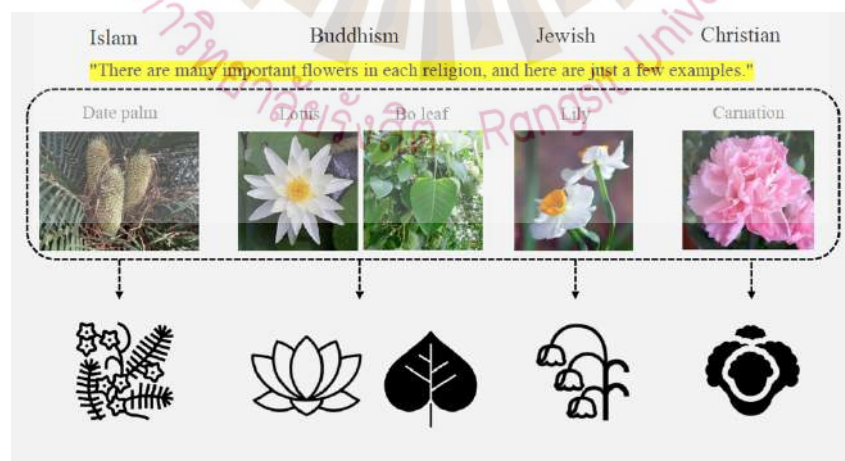


Figure 4.3 Diagram showing similarities between the four religions

Source: Adapt and design from Researcher

4.1.4 The researcher discovered that in all four religions, each has a specific set of clothing for performing rituals, as well as similar building architecture and rituals.

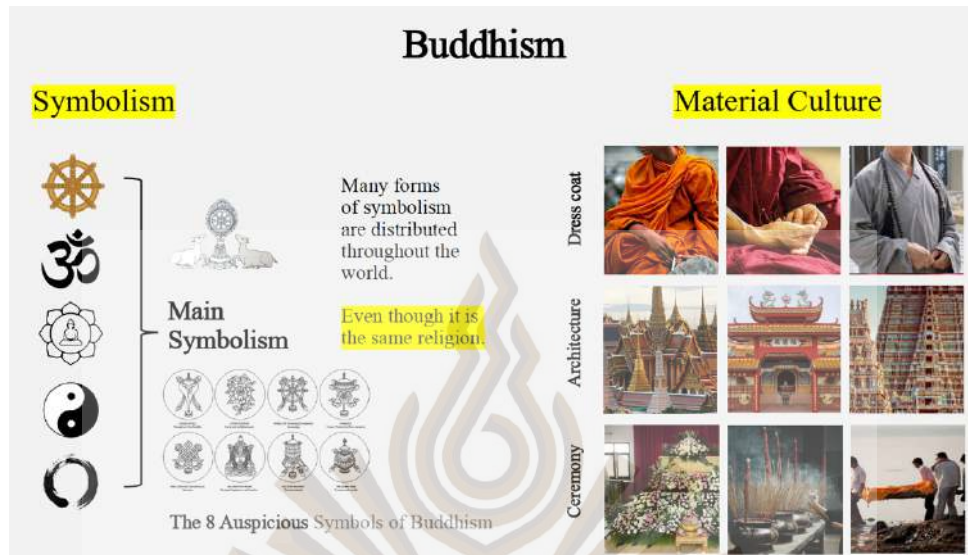


Figure 4.4 Study Buddhist architecture, ceremonies, and ritual outfits.

Source: Adapt and design from Researcher

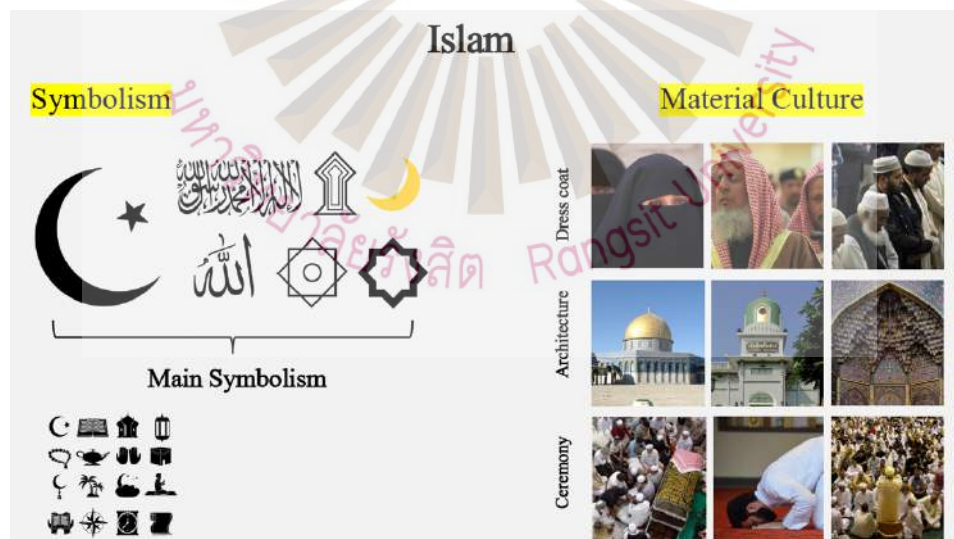


Figure 4.5 Study Islam architecture, ceremonies, and ritual outfits.

Source: Adapt and design from Researcher



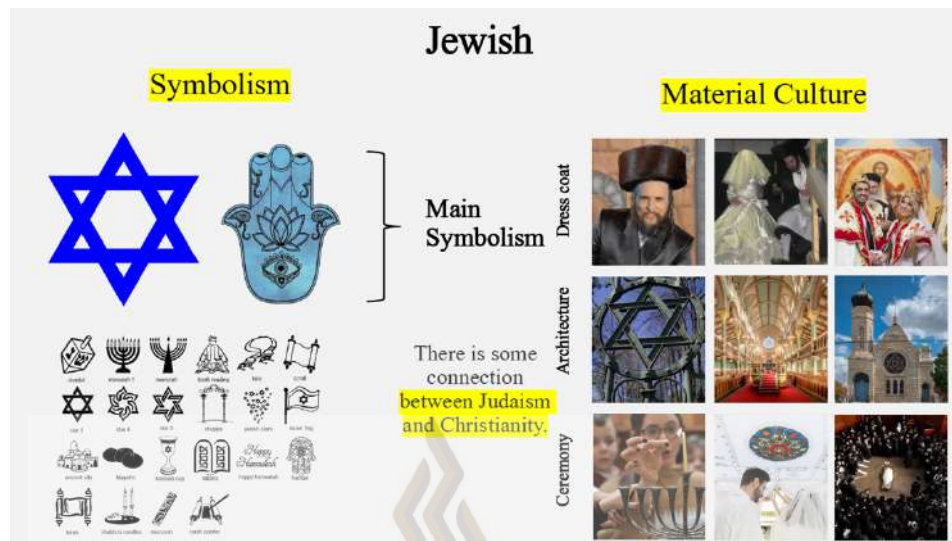


Figure 4.6 Study Jewish architecture, ceremonies, and ritual outfits.

Source: Adapt and design from Researcher

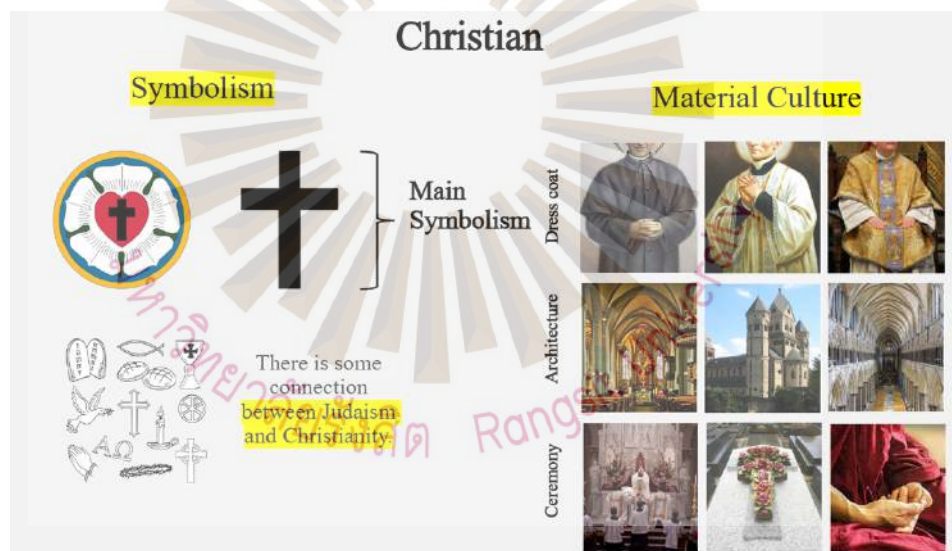


Figure 4.7 Study Christian architecture, ceremonies, and ritual outfits.

Source: Adapt and design from Researcher

4.1.5 The researchers discovered that the origins of all religions are in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. One thing found at this origin is a circular shape used in various ceremonies by the people of this place. Many people have also said that it is the center of the world.

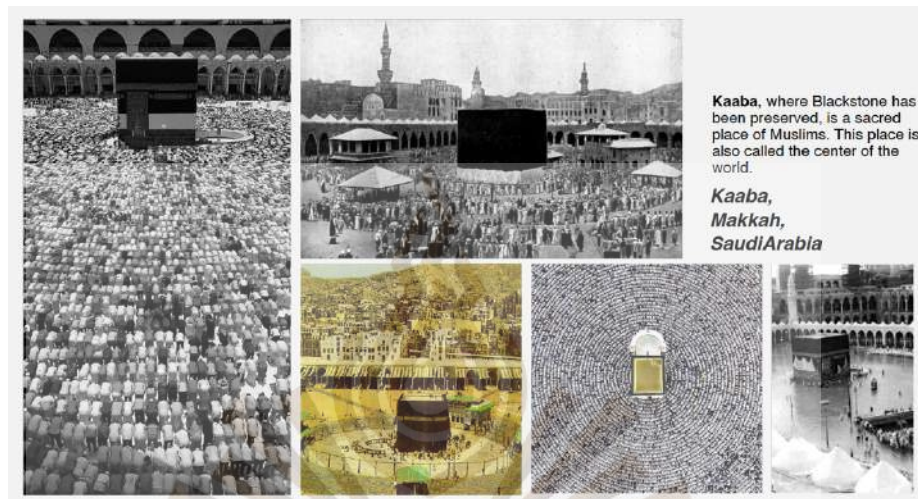


Figure 4.8 Kaaba, Makkah, Saudi Arabia

Source: Adapt and design from Researcher

4.1.6 Investigating the origins of symbolism and material culture in Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam to identify common points of symbolism emergence.



Figure 4.9 Round church window. The design is based on the shape of a flower.

Source: Reynolds, 2024



4.1.7 Researchers discovered that flower petals are arranged from the largest outer petal to the smallest inner petal, representing the continuous growth of the flower in a radial pattern from the center.

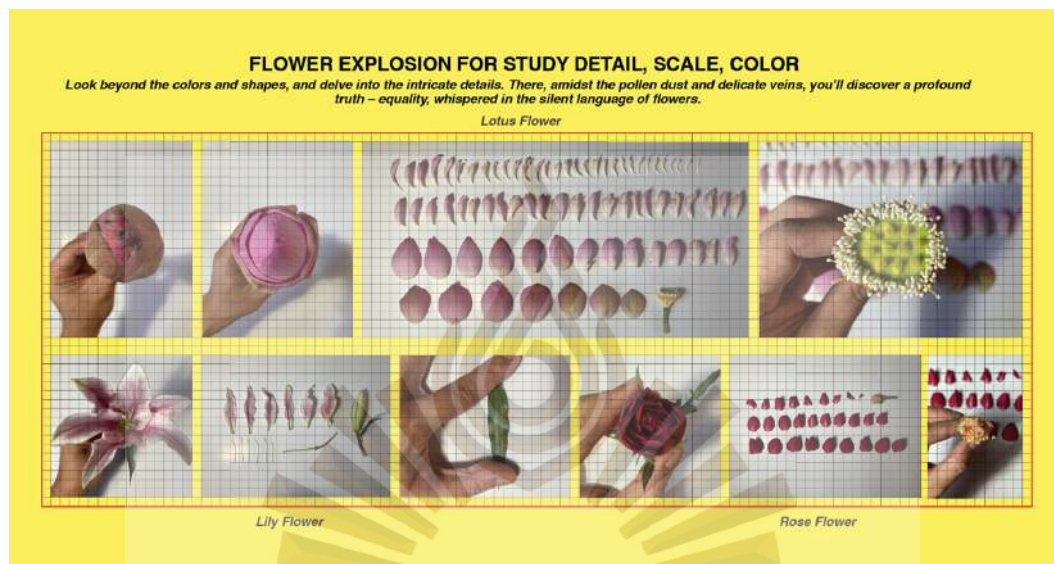


Figure 4.10 Flowers study picture

Source: Researcher

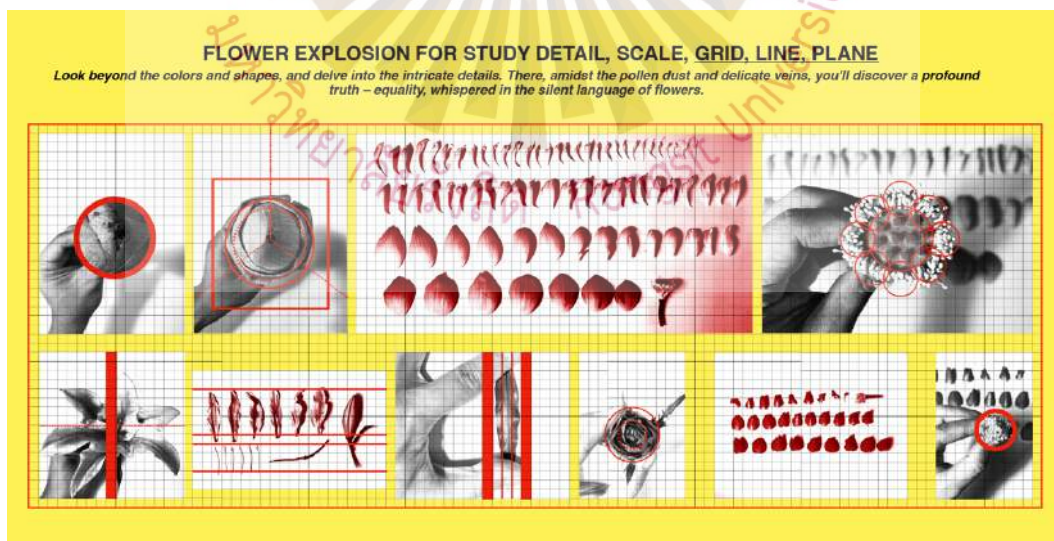


Figure 4.11 Flowers study picture

Source: Researcher

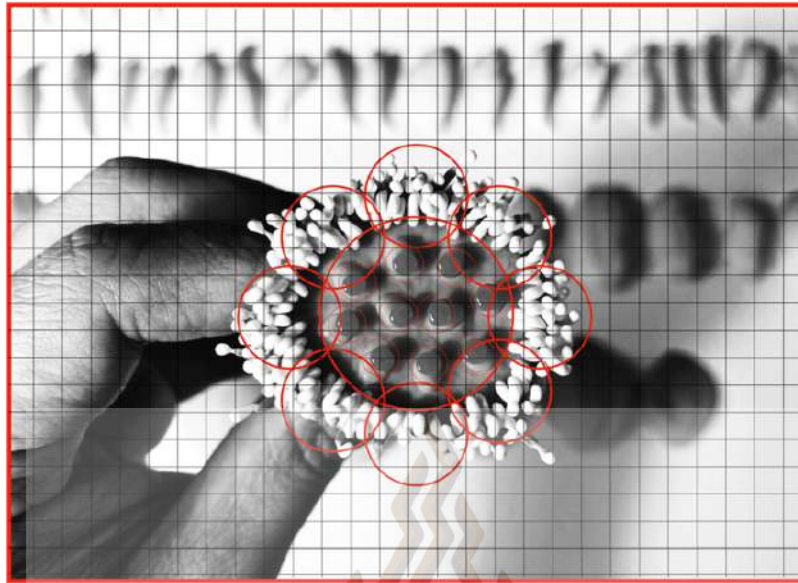


Figure 4.12 Images from the researcher's study of flower shapes.

Source: Researcher

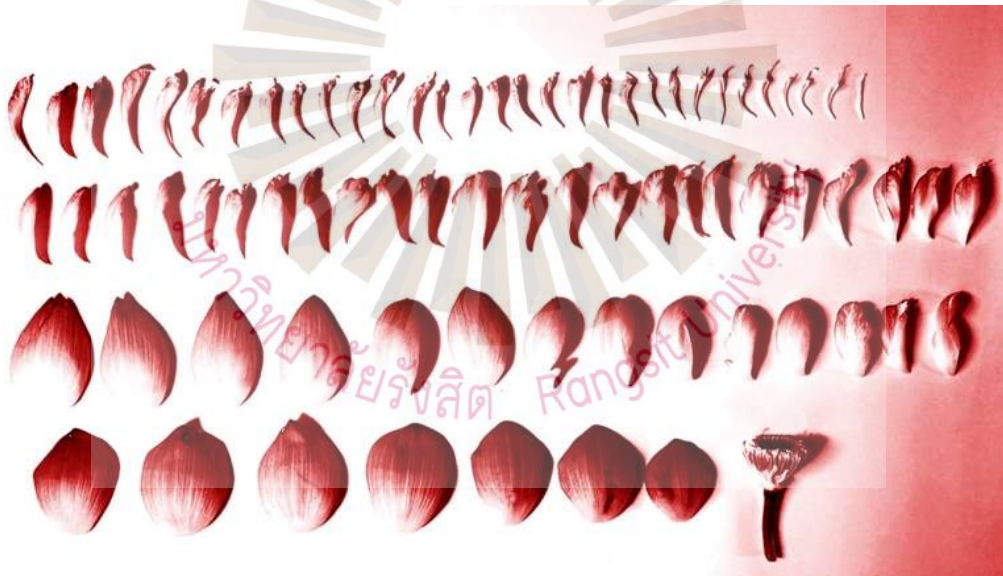


Figure 4.13 Images from the researchers. The image depicts the study of lotus flower petals, arranged from the largest on the outside to the smallest on the inside, expressing the continuous growth of the flower in a radial pattern from the center.

Source: Researcher

4.1.8 The researchers found similarities in the growth of the flowers used by various religions. Through the study of flowers used in various religions to honor gods and perform rituals, researchers discovered that every flower grows from a central point and expands more and more as the days go by. In addition to studying flower shapes, they also found similarities in the different shades of flowers.



Figure 4.14 Images from the researcher's study of flower color.

Source: Researcher



Figure 4.15 Images from the researcher's study of flower color.

Source: Researcher





Figure 4.16 Images from the researcher's study of flower color.

Source: Researcher

4.1.9 Incorporating all gathered information into the design of the exhibition space.

By studying the shapes of flowers, the researcher discovered that all types exhibit symmetry. They grow from a central point and spread out in a spherical manner. But this is what enables religion to survive. It's not solely God, but people—people who create symbols to communicate their beliefs, and who design clothing for use in important ceremonies within each religion.

The things that enable people to survive are the 5 factors or Basic Human needs, which are 6 as follows: Physiological Needs, Safety and Security Needs, Social Needs, Esteem Needs, and Self-Actualization Needs. When studying the five factors that are essential for human existence, you will find various items that we use in our daily lives. These items are what help people survive and preserve religion and symbols.

Physiological needs include four necessities: food, clothing, shelter, and medicine. It is argued that not all humans require the same nutrients to sustain life.

Safety and security needs are more complex in nature. Humans desire control over their lives, making safety and security paramount. Examples of these needs include financial stability, health safety, and protection from accidents and injuries, as we prefer predictability and dislike unnecessary risks.

Social needs are closely related to love or a sense of belonging, fulfilling the societal requirements for emotional states, feelings, and relationships. This includes various actions and the involvement in different groups, such as research groups that filter data based on their findings.

Esteem needs emerge as other needs are fulfilled. At this level, we desire respect from others, which can be divided into the desire to become someone or have pride, gaining expertise in various skills, and seeking respect from others through fame and prestige.

This need also includes things like self-esteem. People who meet their esteem needs feel confident in their abilities.

Self-Actualization Needs represent the highest level of needs according to Maslow's theory. It involves recognizing one's abilities and striving to become one's true self. This could manifest as pursuing specific goals, such as striving to excel in a particular field, or as a broader pursuit of personal growth and development.



## 4.2 Research Result 2

For the objective outlined in item 2, the researcher gathered all the information studied and developed it into a creative exhibition space design. Various methods were employed to transform the gathered information into designs, experimenting with the shapes and forms found in each religion, in order to design the space and curate significant religious items for display at the event.

### 4.1.10 Diagram format used in exhibitions.

Use circular and straight lines, studied and analyzed from the shapes of flowers that all religions use similarly, designed in a circular shape resembling the growth pattern of a flower from its center point. It resembles the researcher's journey from the beginning of the research process until the discovery of its origin.

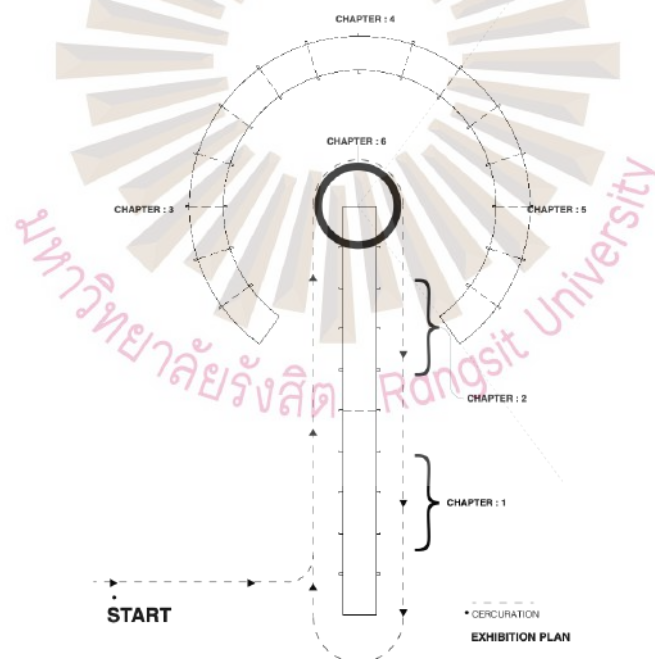


Figure 4.17 Exhibition space design plan and the format of walking around the event.

Source: Researcher



4.1.12 This creative exhibition has been named 'Living Behind a Symbols' by those who studied it. It explores various details that have been pieced together. The first episode focuses on the practice of slaughtering chickens in Islam. However, the act of cutting a chicken's throat predates the emergence of all religions on Earth, leading to the discovery of something greater. It reveals the origins of every religion and identifies the common thread that has enabled each religion to endure to this day: the symbols left behind by people to perpetuate their beliefs.

The exhibition is planned to be divided into two main parts: a straight-line table and a circular table around it. The straight-line table represents the starting point of students' studies, while the circular table displays all the researched items where people have left symbols related to human needs. The first display point features a depiction of a chicken with its throat cut, marking the beginning of this exploration before uncovering many other subsequent findings.



Figure 4.19 The picture shows the beginning of the study

Source: Researcher



Figure 4.20 Exhibition pictures the name of the exhibition:  
"Leaving behind a Symbol"

Source: Researcher



Figure 4.21 Exhibition pictures the name of the exhibition:  
"Leaving behind a Symbol"

Source: Researcher



4.1.13 Around the display stand, graphics accompanying the detailed study of the work have been posted. These will be used in the exhibition period so that visitors can discover various details along with the exhibitor. These details include images showing the birth of religions, images demonstrating the discovery of the correct pronunciation of the word 'God' in each religion, images studying the sizes and proportions of various types of flowers, and so on.

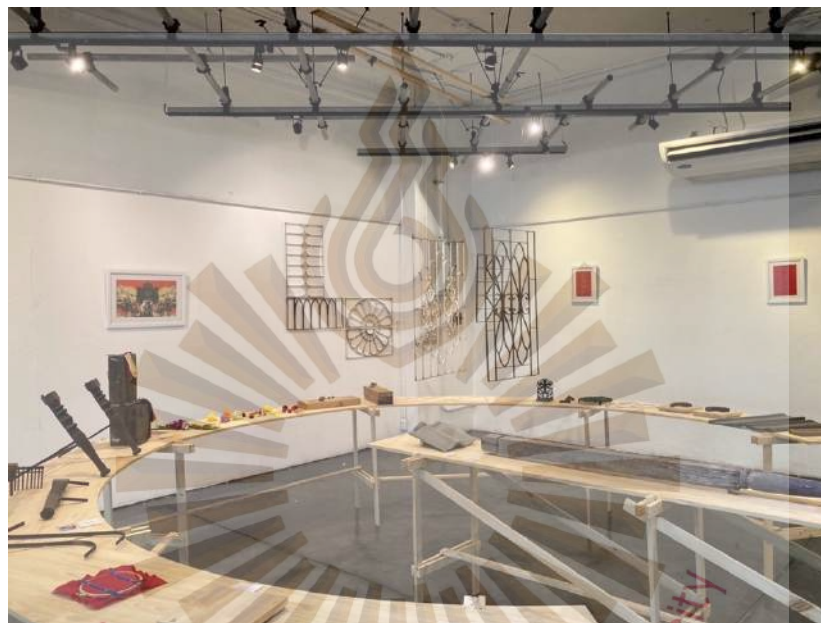


Figure 4.22 Exhibition pictures the name of the exhibition:  
"Leaving behind a Symbol"

Source: Researcher



Figure 4.23 A graphical representation of the discovery of  
commonalities across religions

Source: Researcher



4.1.14 At the event, there was a flower display representing flowers used in various religions for worshipping God or performing rituals specific to those religions. Alongside the symbolic flowers on display, there was also a visual study of each type of flower, focusing on their shapes and origins. The researcher found that every flower shares the same structural characteristic of growing from the center, akin to humans in terms of reproduction. Using these flower shapes, the researcher designed the exhibition layout. Furthermore, apart from discovering the structural characteristics of flowers, the researcher also explored the various shades of flowers, leading to insights into the use of colors as symbols. For example, they noted the use of the yellow color of marigold flowers resembling the color of monk's robes.



Figure 4.24 The picture shows different types of flowers that are important to various religions.

Source: Researcher

4.1.15 At the event, various furniture and appliances were displayed, showcasing findings from the study. Flower patterns were incorporated into the design, such as chair legs shaped like flowers and brass parts carved into floral motifs.



Figure 4.25 The picture shows a piece of furniture.

Have a relationship with flowers

Source: Researcher



Figure 4.26 The picture shows a piece of furniture.

Have a relationship with flowers

Source: Researcher



Figure 4.27 The picture shows types of flowers that are important to various religions.  
Source: Researcher



Figure 4.28 Exhibition pictures the name of the exhibition:  
"Leaving behind a Symbol"  
Source: Researcher

4.1.16 At the event, a viewing chart was distributed to visitors to provide details and the basic idea of the show. It was prepared in A3 paper size format and consisted of a total of 4 pages.



Figure 4.29 Documents for distribution to visitors at the event

Source: Researcher

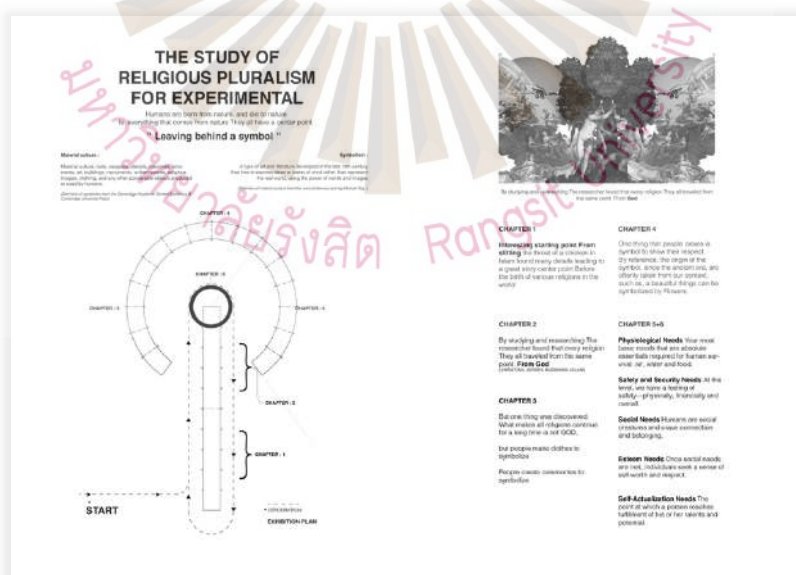


Figure 4.30 Documents for distribution to visitors at the event

Source: Researcher



4.1.17 At the event, there were other exhibits that differed in their use of symbols. For example, there were ancient walking sticks with heads shaped like various animal heads, symbolizing status and power. There were also hats worn during Thai wedding ceremonies, symbolizing the union of men and women. Additionally, stone slabs used for carving names, which also serve as grave markers in the Chinese style, were displayed.



Figure 4.31 The image shows details of symbols other than flowers.

Source: Researcher



Figure 4.32 Exhibition pictures the name of the exhibition:

"Leaving behind a Symbol"

Source: Researcher



4.1.18 On the last day of the exhibition, experts from various fields visited the event, ready to provide advice in case of exhibiting or expanding this work in the future.



Figure 4.33 There are experts who come to visit the work and give advice.

Source: Researcher

From the exhibition, this creative display uses experimental methods to explore commonalities by hypothesizing about the origins of various religions. Researchers gathered insights from visitors of different faiths who noted similarities in religious details while exploring the exhibition. This contrasts with the common perception that all religions are distinct, affirming a belief held by scholars: that all religions share similarities. They posit that these similarities endure across generations not as divine but as human creations—symbols crafted to perpetuate beliefs, faith, and the identity of God.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The study of religious pluralism for experimental design employs experimental research methods. It involves searching for information and studying to achieve creative exhibition results, showcasing work from the beginning of the study to the final point the researcher wishes to present. This concludes the open-ended performance of the work, avoiding a specific direction for visitors because the researcher acknowledges human diversity in thought. However, there is a commonality: the inclination to leave behind certain symbols or at least express affection for someone.

The researcher posed two questions: 1) To study the significance, architectural forms, religious pluralism, and material culture within each religion. 2) To design and experiment anew with creations that illustrate the connection between objects, particularly through symbolism and material culture, in order to explore questions of belief, faith, and the preservation of human symbols. And through posing that question, the researcher studied and researched until finding the answer: Indeed, what enables all religions to endure to this day is not, as commonly believed, God, but rather human beings. Humans have created symbols to transmit beliefs, love, and faith across generations, ensuring the longevity of religions despite the passage of time.

#### **5.1 Conclusion and Discussion**

Through the analysis of gathered information, the researcher delved into the study of symbols and material culture among various communities. This investigation led to the identification of three primary starting points: Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. Emphasizing the symbolic and material culture of these three traditions, the researcher found similarities in the emergence of interfaces for conveying beliefs and faith. These similarities suggest a belief in verifiable faith and the possibility of passing down one's heritage over generations. Through the transmission of personal narratives,

this practice serves as a confirmation of worship and facilitates its continuation to future generations.

In this study, the researcher uncovered a misunderstanding regarding the distinctions among the three religions: Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, assuming they are fundamentally different. However, through the study, the researcher found commonalities among all three religions. They share similarities in teachings, beliefs, and elements that enable their existence. It's not the deities of each religion but rather the people who preserve the symbolic and material culture, passing it on to subsequent generations, that allows all religions to endure and thrive.

## **5.2 Suggesttion**

In this study, the researcher identified certain flaws in the exhibition, particularly in the design of the exhibition space. The study did not include the opinions of visitors regarding the design of such spaces, which could have been valuable for refining suggestions into a comprehensive design. For future students who wish to exhibit this research, further investigation may be necessary. Alternatively, they could utilize the exhibition plan to formulate a questionnaire and develop a more comprehensive design.

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