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University of Southampton

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Winchester School of Art

**The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments
and the Embodiment of the “Utopolis”**

by

Armaj Sombunjaroen

ORCID ID 0009-0007-8619-8546

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

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The research investigates the rise of luxury retail establishments in Thailand that are redefining the luxury experience through Thai national heritage and culture. This phenomenon contradicts Thai retail developers’ convention of drawing inspirations from foreign cultures to create a sense of luxury. The process of invoking and incorporating heritage in this context is termed as “heritagisation”, representing a reversal in the industry’s practice, where the developer produces an ideal land rather than an exotic land for visitors to experience. This notion of the ideal land and metropolitan characteristics of the luxury retail development also leads to a proposed theoretical idea of the “Utopolis”. The Utopolis represents an abstract space that lurks within the physical retail space and partially appears through the design features imbued with heritage.

In order to build on the idea of the Utopolis, the research investigates two case studies: 1) ICONSIAM and 2) Central Ayutthaya, two exemplary developments in Thailand with the heritagisation of Thai culture throughout their overall environments. The research also explores existing bodies of knowledge on heritage, luxury and space. The amalgamation, adaptation and reinterpretation of existing theories from these bodies of knowledge all lead to a new theoretical framework to comprehensively view luxury retail developments with four types of theoretical spaces: the Firstspace; the Secondspace; the Thirdspace; and the Fourthspace. The Firstspace represents findings made through direct observations of the retail developments’ tangible features, while the Secondspace constitutes findings conducted via in-depth interviews to discover the developers’ intangible ideal. Additionally, focus groups with local visitors provide insights into the consumer’s perspective, validating analyses and findings made for the Firstspace and the Secondspace. The research deconstructs findings from the Firstspace and the Secondspace to socially construct the Thirdspace, the Heterotopia, and its six principles. Lastly, deconstructed findings from the Firstspace and the Secondspace, which reflect the Heterotopia, are also socially constructed to reveal the Fourthspace, the Utopolis, and its own six principles. The investigation also confirms the comprehensive methods used to design a luxury retail development with Thai heritage and the idea of Utopolis as a thematic map for developers. This research concludes that the luxury retail developments embody the Utopolis, a Utopian city.

Keywords: Luxury, Luxury Retail, Luxury Store, Retail Development, Spatial Design, Space, Thai Culture, Thai Design, Thai Heritage, Thailand, Thai Luxury, Utopia, Utopianism, Utopolis

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Armaj Sombunjaroen

Title of thesis: The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments and the Embodiment of the “Utopolis”

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

Armaj Sombunjaroen

17 December 2024

Signature: Date:

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Definitions and Abbreviations

Benjarong	A type of Thai porcelain completely glazed in many colours and sometimes gold. Benjarong means five colours in Thai.
Chedi	A specific kind of pagoda and stupa in Thailand.
Kanok	A traditional pattern that means gold but the shape was inspired by fire.
Krathong	A small vessel filled with flowers, folded banana leaves and candles placed in the water as a form of thanksgiving and prayer on the day of Loy Krathong festival, the first full moon around the end of October or November, the end of the rainy season.
Malai	A Thai garland usually made from many jasmine buds, used in religious ceremonies and to pay respect to elders. It can also be used as an apology.
Nark	An alloy of bronze, gold and silver, a colour that is bronze led with a hint of gold.
Phan Phum	An object for worshipping or paying respect to important beings including the Buddha, the dharma (doctrine, or teaching), and the sangha (the monastic order, members of royal families and ancestors). 'Phan' is a round tray with a pedestal, usually in either gold or silver. 'Phum' means taper or lotus shape, similar to 'Phanom Mue', which is how Thai people put their palms together at chest level as an expression of greeting, respect, gratitude and apology. Nowadays, materials used to form 'Phum' consist of candles, silver and gold-coloured fabric. Traditionally, it would have been made with a repetition of flowers and folded leaves.
Sabai	A piece of textile, commonly pleated and used by women to wrap around the breast and over one shoulder.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 My Life and My Dissatisfaction with the White Bright Mall

When we think of a new multi-million pound luxury retail development opening in a major cosmopolitan city of the world, we often think of an ultramodern white bright shining development made of concrete, glass and steel that houses stores of luxury brands. However, as an individual who once worked full-time for a retail property developer in Thailand and travelled the world visiting new retail projects, I have become discontent with the stark similarities in retail design, atmosphere and experience between the luxury retail developments across continents without having to name the projects. When so many projects are indistinguishable from one another, they ultimately become common, a word contrary to the exclusive idea of luxury. When I visit one of these retail developments, I feel that such a project can exist anywhere without any consideration for the local cultural identity or heritage, apart from featuring retail stores by local brands.

The faculty of the Winchester School of Art knew about my dissatisfaction with the white bright mall and asked me to identify a luxury retail development that I adore, and I often gave Liberty London as an exemplary example of what retail developers should strive for. Despite selling merchandise from luxury brands, the attractiveness and the differentiation of Liberty from its London competitors lies not in the merchandise that other developments can also sell, but in the very English cultural heritage experience it provides through its Tudor revival architecture/interior and unique exclusive own products that capture the essence of the English culture and lifestyle. Liberty London will be discussed further in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.4. Furthermore, Liberty London represents a long-established example in the history of luxury retail development, but in recent years, especially around the Asia Pacific, new noteworthy luxury retail developments that attempted to incorporate local heritage have opened, such as Ginza Six in Tokyo, Japan, and Taikoo Li in Chengdu, China. In Thailand, my birthplace, luxury retail developers are also designing new developments with Thai heritage, and I am focusing this research on the design of luxury retail developments in Thailand. I hope that this research will inspire retail developers to dare to design new projects in their cities with their local heritage too, ending the common white luxury retail developments.

1.1.1 My Background in Luxury Retail Development and My Life Goal

I was born in Bangkok, Thailand, and in addition to my birthplace, I have also lived and studied in the following countries in chronological order: the United States of America, Australia, China, the Netherlands, and Japan. This wealth of international experience ingrained in me a sense of advocacy for the appreciation of cultural differences and uniqueness. Growing up abroad as a Thai person during the 1990s and 2000s, I found that sometimes my country was looked down upon as a less-developed nation. I often had to boast about the luxury retail developments in Bangkok to people of high ignorance who never imagined Bangkok as a modern, thriving, cosmopolitan city and who believed that their world alone was the best. These constant praises of luxury retail developments in Bangkok would one day land me a job with Siam Piwat, a luxury retail property developer in Bangkok, where I got to work full-time for nearly five years on the development of ICONSIAM, one of the two luxury retail properties that this research investigates. After the launch of ICONSIAM in November 2018, I noticed the phenomenon that ICONSIAM kickstarted in Thailand and left my full-time position. With this phenomenon in mind, I decided to further my education with a PhD to generate new knowledge relating to it. I hope this new knowledge may shine a new light and dimension on Thailand, as a nation that dares to innovate in luxury retail developments with its own heritage. Lastly, a PhD has always been one of my life goals. I have always thought about what my personal legacy should be when I am no longer physically here in this world and I spiritually go to a utopia somewhere. For me, a PhD represents the best legacy of substance that I may leave behind for this multicultural world.

1.1.2 Defining Luxury Retail Development

For this research, I have intentionally chosen to refer to the department store, the shopping mall and mixed-use retail development altogether as luxury retail developments. As a retail developer myself, the department store, the shopping mall and mixed-use retail development actually represent different types of retail formats due to differences in business models. The department store acts as the procurer, the marketer and the seller of goods and services to consumers while the shopping mall mainly operates as the landlord that collects rent from various brands/retailers. A mixed-use retail development constitutes the next evolution of a retail format where the development expands to not just focus on retail alone by featuring spaces beyond the department store and the shopping mall such as offices, hotels, residential buildings and many more that also provide additional diversified revenue. This research focuses on spatial design

rather than the management of retail developments.

From a design point of view, the department store, the shopping mall, and the mixed-use retail developments all theoretically have the same design characteristics that make a space luxurious. Luxury retail developments from the department store in the mid-19th Century have contained the characteristics of sheer size, open access to luxury, controlled themed environment and architectural innovation. All of these characteristics are interconnected and essential to the success and luxuriousness of the department store (Miller, 1981; Lancaster, 2000). Architectural innovation allows for the creation of a larger building. A larger building permits the display of more merchandise, which can generate more sales due to the increased floor space. More space also enables themed decorations, creating a controlled thematic environment that immerses visitors and provides an escapist experience not just for those who purchase but also for people who only visit. In addition to experiencing the controlled thematic environment, a larger space allows visitors to browse the array of merchandise anonymously, without the pressure to make a purchase. The sheer size of the department store can also accommodate a large number of clients, ensuring its commercial success even without mandatory purchases. Details based on these characteristics are further discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1 on the Tangibility and Intangibility of Luxury. The shopping malls that originated in the United States also continued to build on these four characteristics (Styhre, 2019). The mixed-use retail development, another US innovation, also possesses these key attributes, which correlate with features of luxury in architecture such as innovative architecture, immense scale and the ability to allow people of all social standings to escape to their fantasies (Condello, 2014). Therefore, the department store, the shopping mall and the mixed-use retail development all contain the same luxurious characteristics in their spatial designs. This has caused the research to collectively refer to the three retail formats discussed above as “luxury retail development”. Finally, it is also crucial to mention that a luxury retail development may or may not contain stores of luxury brands. It is the design of the luxury retail development, rather than the featured luxury stores, that allows a sense of fantastical escapism, a form of luxury championed by retail developers.

Ultimately, as established in the first paragraph of this section, a luxury retail development always has the primary objective of making money through shopping. A luxury retail development consistently serves as a prime space for consumption. However, as a retail developer, I can expertly say that it is naive to generalise that every initiative (including design features) is aimed directly at making money. A developer often relies more on customer relationship management

and marketing promotions rather than on the production of design features to generate income. Sometimes, a design feature represents a vanity project for the developer, showcasing their greatness and originality over competitors. At times, a developer may also intentionally create a feature to attract more people to visit the luxury retail development, even if this design does not directly encourage spending. A developer is also aware that not everyone who visits will make a purchase, but they understand that it is more likely for a financial transaction to occur if more people visit and spend a longer duration of time at the retail development.

Moreover, from my experience, I can say that seasonal events and celebrations have become more of a norm rather than a mere marketing ploy to attract visitors. Due to competition, every developer is expected to host such events, and if one development doesn't, visitors can always go somewhere else. Nevertheless, the luxurious fantastical escapist experience created through the immersive design environment and seasonal events plays a significant role in the creation of special moments that cause visitors to lose track of time in the retail development. Thus, the immersion in the design features and seasonal celebrations may consequentially promote the mood to consume rather than directly lead to the purchase of goods or services. Bringing in the masses through events does not always equate to higher revenue.

A developer may also sometimes intentionally create a space specifically to sell certain types of products or services. This research will also show that some design features are more accessible to the public, while others are created to promote a particular kind of consumption. Before delving into the design features investigated by this research, one must first understand the history of luxury retail developments to fully grasp the discussions that will be made later in this thesis.

1.2 History of Luxury Retail Developments

1.2.1 The Western Origin of the Luxury Retail Developments

The first luxury retail development began in 1852 in Paris with Le Bon Marche (Lancaster, 2000), which pioneered the department store as a new retail format (Beaumont, 2006; Crossick & Jaumain, 2019). Before Le Bon Marche, consumers could only enjoy the luxury shopping experience at the maison of design houses where the space consisted of several floors with a

ground floor dedicated to retail and the upper floor to the workshops that produced luxury goods and the office of the management (Nobbs et al., 2012). The novelty and luxuriousness of the department store established by Le Bon Marché derives from its sheer size through architectural innovation that allows a themed controlled environment for everyone to access (Miller, 1981; Lancaster, 2000). First, Le Bon Marché reached a grand scale of 52,800 sq. m. (Lancaster, 2000) through the use of steel and glass, an architectural innovation at the time (Miller, 1981; Lancaster, 2000). The use of steel also opened up the floor space and allowed the display of various kinds of goods in many 'departments' like ladies' ready-to-wear, menswear, shoes, stationery and toys in one destination (Miller, 1981). Moreover, the wide-open floor space permitted big groups of people to manoeuvre, and explore incognito (Lancaster, 2000) without having to purchase anything. Visitors also didn't need to enquire about the price, due to the price tag, another novelty innovated and standardised by Le Bon Marché (Miller, 1981; Lancaster, 2000; Beaumont 2016). Architectural innovation also allowed Le Bon Marche to control and theatrically theme its environment through its displays and decorations to create fantasies for consumers (Miller, 1981).

Unlike the present Le Bon Marché that is owned by LVMH, which sells luxury goods from luxury brands (LVMH), the 19th-Century Le Bon Marché acted as a seller of mass-produced goods from industrialisation and exotic luxuries imported from the Orient (Miller, 1981), while the realm of local luxury goods made in Europe belonged to the maison (Nobbs et al., 2012). Hence, the merchandise did not actually lead to the luxury experience. The spatial design actually produced the luxury experience by creating a fantastical sense of escapism. Le Bon Marche represented a new phenomenon that eventually proliferated across Europe and the rest of the world (Crossick & Jaumain, 2019). In Paris, other now famous luxury department stores followed the success recipe pioneered by Le Bon Marché with Printemps in 1865 (Miller, 1981; Lancaster, 2000) that differentiated from Le Bon Marché with colourful exuberant design (Crossick & Jaumain, 2019) and Galeries Lafayette opened in 1895 (Miller, 1981; Lancaster, 2000). During the early days of the Parisian department stores, developers often used designs and images of the Orient in their retail environments to promote and sell exotic imported oriental goods and mass-produced goods born through industrialisation simultaneously. For example, Le Bon Marché used an oriental image of a Moroccan caravan to market toys for children, a type of mass-produced good that had no relevance to Moroccan culture but became imbued with the exotic luxuriousness of the Orient (Coëffé & Morice, 2020). More detailed examples of orientalism in the Parisian department stores will be discussed further in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.4 on Heritagisation through the Context of Thai Luxury Retail Development. Therefore, the developers intentionally chose to create a sense of

luxury through escapism to the Orient, a foreign exotic land far from the city in which these department stores are located.

Across the Atlantic, further luxury retail transformations started to take place in the United States (Lancaster, 2000; Condello, 2014; Styhre, 2019). Two early department stores in America – Marshall Field's, the first department store in North America built in Chicago, and Macy's, the first department store in New York established in 1874 – both imitated the department stores of France such as Le Bon Marché (Lancaster, 2000). Moreover, they employed European architecture and sold European fashion to American consumers who looked to Europe as the source of luxury. The American Midwest, especially in Chicago, also became the cradle for new luxury retail design innovations (Lancaster, 2000; Condello, 2014). In 1907, Marshall Field's opened a new department store, the biggest in the United States at the time, that replaced the previous European-style building with the modern and simplistic Chicago School of Architecture with a skylight by Tiffany's, a local American luxury brand. Marshall Field's also featured five restaurants for fine dining (Lancaster, 2000), another form of leisure apart from shopping. Moreover, in 1898, Chicago made history with the first mixed-use luxury retail complex with the opening of the Carson, Pirie and Scott department store. Although still designed with European architectural features and richly ornamented with a molten floral steel façade, the Carson, Pirie and Scott department store also featured a 12-storey skyscraper for offices, another form of architectural luxury, right above the department store (Condello, 2014). With the introduction of the office building above the department store, the developer transformed the development from just a department store into a mixed-use retail development where people could not only shop but also work. After the Second World War, the American Midwest also gave birth to the shopping mall, another revolutionary retail concept that took the idea of a visit to a retail establishment for other kinds of purposes apart from shopping even further with the creation of Southdale Center, the world's first shopping mall, in Minneapolis, designed by Victor Gruen. Victor Gruen innovated by amalgamating the department store, the highlight of the shopping mall, with arcades of specialist shops, restaurants and non-retail-related entertainment and civic offerings such as libraries, theatres, art galleries and health services in a controlled environment with a modernist design (Styhre, 2019). Unlike the escapism to Europe seen in early American department stores, the white modernist shopping mall took consumers to a foreign unfamiliar land free from any kind of heritage (Backes, 1997) and became the prototype for future shopping malls that spread to the rest of the world (Styhre, 2019). The modern white shopping mall represents a legacy and heritage of the United States, originating from the American Midwest. The shopping mall is also a paradoxical heritage, as it is a heritage that erases other cultural heritages, which Backes (1997)

termed ‘a blank space’, and will be discussed further in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3 The Utopia, the City, and the Luxury Retail Development. This idea of a blank space is very powerful and applicable to cultures worldwide, especially in Asia.

When luxury retail developments emerged in Asia, they represented a Western concept introduced into Asia (Wang, 2018). In Japan, Mitsukoshi was one of the first Western-style department stores in Asia. From the beginning, Mitsukoshi had Western-style architecture, interior design and displays where it sold Western goods. All of these Western features made Mitsukoshi a destination for Japanese consumers to become modern and Western (Tamari, 2016). Even early department stores in Communist China copied the West with modernist design rather than using traditional Chinese designs (Chang et al., 2019). Thailand also followed the convention to make luxury retail developments foreign and exotic for the local population.

1.2.2 Foreign Inspirations for Luxury Retail Developments in Thailand

From the very beginning, luxury retail developments in Thailand had been foreign in design and experience. In 1872, Englishman Richard Ramsay established Ramsay & Company as the first department store in Thailand. Ramsay & Company sold Western fashion (Navimun, 2021; Roy 2017) in a two-storey European-style building (Navimun, 2021), provided by King Rama V, which was previously an unoccupied royal manor (Roy, 2017). In 1879, another Englishman, Harry Badman, opened another department store, Harry A. Badman & Co. (Nana, 2017; Navimun 2021), which also sold imported European goods in the form of accessories, jewellery, clocks, and furniture for Thai royalties and aristocrats (Endo, 2013; Nana, 2017; Roy, 2017). Later, in 1907, the King of Thailand officially opened Badman & Co. in a new three-storey European-style palatial building (Nana, 2017) developed by the Crown Property Bureau (Roy, 2017). After the Second World War, Thai businesses began to venture into the development of luxury retail. In 1956, Central Group launched Central Wang Burapha as the first department store developed and operated by a Thai company (Feeny et al., 1996; Endo, 2013). More importantly, the owners of Central drew inspiration from retail formats that they observed during their trips abroad. Central also held sole distribution rights to many imported Western items in Thailand (Endo, 2013). In 1964, Daimaru from Japan, another foreign culture, opened Thai Daimaru, the first Japanese department store in Bangkok which also appealed to the elite of Bangkok in competition with Central (Feeny et al., 1996). Viraphol (1976) mentioned that Thai Daimaru sold products imported

from Japan, considered luxuries¹ for the Thai population, and claimed that the general public opinion favoured a ban on the import of Japanese luxuries due to Thailand's trade deficit with Japan during the 1970s. The issue of the trade deficit and capital flowing out of Thailand will be discussed further at the end of this section. Despite its Japanese heritage and the retail of imported Japanese luxuries, Thai Daimaru created a modern building that also featured escalators for the first time in Thailand, an innovation and a luxury at the time (Ünaldi, 2014).

Later in 1973, Siam Piwat, another Thai luxury retail developer which started off in 1959 as a hotel developer and operator of the Siam Intercontinental Hotel, opened Siam Center next to the hotel as the first international standard shopping mall in Thailand (Ünaldi, 2013). In 1974, Central opened its flagship Central Chidlom department store on the same road as Siam Center (Endo, 2013). In the 1980s, another plot of land on the same road between Siam Center and Central Chidlom, formerly Phetchabun Palace, was developed into a mega shopping centre called the World Trade Center by the Crown Property Bureau. After successions of retail operators, the name finally changed to Central World after Central Group took over the lease of the development. Originally, Central World was going to be named the Wang Phetchabun Department Store, but the developer neglected the local heritage for a name that was more international instead (Ünaldi, 2014). In 1997, the Mall Group, another retail developer, also opened a shopping mall called "The Emporium" with the use of a French architecture firm. In 1997, Siam Piwat also opened Siam Discovery, a mixed-use retail development next to Siam Center with a 30-storey office building called Siam Piwat Tower right above. In 2001, Siam Piwat and the Mall Group began to develop Siam Paragon in a joint venture on the former site of the Siam Intercontinental Hotel between Siam Center and Central World. Siam Paragon also employed the same French architecture firm that designed The Emporium. In the early conceptual development, the architect drew inspiration from Parc André Citroën in Paris (Ünaldi, 2013). Siam Paragon opened in 2005 and became one of the largest and most high-end shopping malls in Thailand at the time (Endo, 2013).

During the 2010s, three more luxury retail developments opened on the same road again. In 2011, between The Emporium and Central Chidlom, another developer called LH Mall & Hotel

¹ It is important to note that Japanese luxuries don't imply just traditional Japanese goods. By the 1970s, Japan was already in its post-war economic miracle, and Japanese goods also included modern products like cosmetics and electronics.

opened Terminal 21 (LH Mall & Hotel, 2022), the design of which imitates an airport terminal so that customers can gain a sense of escapism by immersing themselves in themed decorations and art installations inspired by various foreign destinations, such as Tokyo, Rome, Paris, London, the Caribbean and America (Vukadin et al., 2018). In 2014, Central Group opened Central Embassy right next to its flagship Central Chidlom Department Store. Central Embassy is a mixed-use retail complex with the luxury Park Hyatt hotel. The development was named Central Embassy because the land once belonged to the British Embassy. Central also employed Amanda Levete, a British architect. Levete claimed to draw inspiration from Thai culture and heritage (Gerc, 2014). However, Gerc (2014) argued that the finished design resembled Levete's previous design of Selfridges in Birmingham with the aluminium-cladded exterior façade and ultra-white, clean and minimal interior. Thus, Central Embassy contains design similarity to a foreign luxury retail development and a design that contrasted with the local culture, which will be discussed further in Section 1.4 on Thailand and its Idea of Luxury. In August 2022, Central Group finalised the deal to purchase Selfridges Group. The inspiration and aspiration of Central has now become its acquisition (Van, 2022). Figure 1.1 below depicts the Central Embassy by Levete.



Figure 1.1 Central Embassy Designed by Amanda Levete
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

A year after the grand opening of Central Embassy, the Mall Group opened EmQuartier opposite The Emporium in 2015 (Satrusayang, 2015). EmQuartier features an ultra-white, modern, curvy exterior and a vertical garden by the French botanist Patrick Blanc right inside (Boiffils). Therefore, all of the luxury retail developments discussed above embody foreign exotic lands for the Thai population. Furthermore, every luxury retail development, apart from Daimaru, which no longer

exists, features the West in one way or another, from imported Western merchandise, designs inspired by Western developments and Western standards, to the employment of Western designers. A Thai retail developer can instantly claim to be a luxurious space simply by promoting foreign designers who designed the environment, international brands that retail within the development, or overseas artists who created installations for the retail space.

The myriad ways in which Thai retail developers embrace the West also reveal a fundamental issue with modern white luxury Thai retail developments, particularly concerning the outflow of capital from Thailand and the distribution of wealth through investment and consumption. Starting with the investment aspect, first and foremost, the production of a luxury retail development requires capital. A developer uses part of the investment capital to employ specialists such as architects, landscape architects, engineers, and retail planners. These specialists are typically well-educated individuals with experience, of which there are few in society. If the expert employed is foreign, the money also flows out of Thailand. A retail development also requires construction materials such as glass, steel, and concrete, and payment for these materials tends to go to major construction material companies, meaning money flows into already wealthy and established corporations. The international brands that rent spaces from the developer also have to invest in their own stores, with more money again going to the major construction material companies. Moreover, luxury stores around the world, excluding flagship stores, usually adhere to the same standards for retail design (Thomas, 2008; Moore et al., 2010), and this international standard often results in capital flowing towards international suppliers of these major foreign brands rather than companies within Thailand. Therefore, direct investment benefits only a few in Thai society or even flows out of the country.

The context of consumption presents further problems regarding the distribution of capital. When a person buys a product from a foreign brand within a luxury retail development, seven percent of the value goes back to the Thai government in the form of VAT. Imported goods also have tariffs that provide additional income for the government. A portion of this purchase is also shared with the developer, either as rent or as shared revenue in the form of a commission from the brand. However, after deductions by the government and the developer, the foreign brand retains the majority of the money, which contributes to keeping the majority of the Thai population poor. I am not saying that foreign companies do not bring benefits to the Thai economy. Foreign companies employ Thai people and pay corporate tax, but ultimately, it is essential to ensure that more Thai people benefit, particularly from foreign investments and local consumption. This issue

also ties into theoretical critiques of consumerism exacerbated by luxury retail developments. Benjamin (2002) wrote,

“For the first time in history, with the establishment of department stores, consumers begin to consider themselves a mass... Hence, the circus-like and theatrical element of commerce is quite extraordinarily heightened.” (p. 45)

This statement by Benjamin prompts one to consider what the mass of Thai society, primarily consuming at retail developments in major cities, really represents nowadays. Although the circus theatrically referred to the environment of the retail development, in the context of Thailand, behind the façade of the modern city exemplified by luxury retail developments, the Thai people have been deceived by this circus of capitalist corporate consumerism. It appears to showcase Thailand as a robust economy but simultaneously keeps the country generally poor through the concentration of wealth and the outflow of capital from the nation. According to the World Bank (2024), Thailand ranked 27th in the world economically, with a GDP of 514,944.99 million USD, just behind Austria, as an upper-middle-income nation. Thailand also reduced the poverty rate from 58% in 1990 to 6.8% in 2020. However, 79% of the Thai people in poverty remain in rural provinces. In terms of wealth concentration, Phongpaichit & Baker (2017) also claimed that Thailand is a highly inequitable nation, with most of the wealth concentrated around Bangkok, and the top one percent of the population controlling fifty percent of the country's total income generated through investment and rent. As discussed earlier, Thai luxury retail developments contribute to the societal and economic structural problems in Thailand.

The societal and economic structural conundrums in Thailand, in which Thai luxury retail developments have also played a role, correlate with the theoretical writings of Baudrillard (1998) in *The Consumer Society*. Baudrillard investigated various spaces of consumption, including department stores in Paris, and critiqued modern-day consumption as a vicious cycle because people superfluously and perpetually consumed in pursuit of limitless economic growth. This economic growth always resulted in social inequality, where Baudrillard claimed,

*“Whether growth is egalitarian or inegalitarian, we shall say that **growth itself which is a function of inequality**. It is the need of the inegalitarian social order - the social structure of privilege - to maintain itself that produces and reproduces growth as its strategic element. To put it yet another way, the internal autonomy of (technological, economic) growth is weak and secondary by comparison with that determination by the social structure. ” (Baudrillard, 1998, p. 53)*

These ideas of growth as a function of inequality and as the determinant of a privileged social structure have also manifested in Thailand and its luxury retail developments, as discussed earlier. Moreover, growth requires consumption, and in modern consumer society, Baudrillard stated that consumers give importance to ‘heroes of consumption.’ Heroes of consumption are individuals who project an image of affluence by flaunting their personal consumption, ironically keeping themselves poor by constantly spending beyond their needs to appear rich. More ironies arise because these heroes of consumption also influence others to buy objects they do not actually need, merely to fulfil a superficial value. This value may appear as a collective societal value, but Baudrillard mentioned the paradox where the value of personal individualism actually drives consumption. However, consumers are not individuals but rather a collective of social conformists. People who may consider themselves individuals are, in reality, subject to corporations and capitalist organisations that perpetuate the vicious cycle of consumption and societal disequilibrium. Against social consumption fuelled by personal interests, Baudrillard (1998) argued,

*“Without that anticipation and reflexive potentialization of enjoyment in the ‘**collective consciousness**’, consumption would merely be what it is and **would not be such a force for social integration**. It would merely be a richer, more lavish, more differentiated mode of subsistence than before.” (p. 194)*

In this concluding statement by Baudrillard, a ‘collective consciousness’ is required to prevent consumption from enforcing social inequality and to promote greater social integration. Past Thai luxury retail developments that embraced the West mainly fuelled inequality. However, new luxury retail developments such as ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya, which incorporate Thai cultural heritage, a form of collective consciousness, may have the potential to integrate more of Thai society than before, while revealing other forms of social exclusion.

1.3 Luxury Retail Developments Designed with Thai Heritage

1.3.1 Case Study 1: ICONSIAM

The practice of Thai retail developers using foreign lands as inspiration in the design was disrupted by the grand opening of ICONSIAM at the end of 2018, next to the river and far away from the one major commercial road where all the other major luxury retail developments are located. ICONSIAM boasted the concept of “the best of Thailand meets the best of the world” (Losmithgul, 2018) with 750,000 sq. m of retail space, including a 25,000 sq. m luxury wing called ICONLUXE (Jitpleecheep, 2018), about half the size of Le Bon Marché in Paris (Lancaster, 2000). ICONSIAM also features two ultra-luxury residential towers (Yuda, 2018), the 70-storey Magnolia Waterfront Residence standing as the tallest skyscraper in Bangkok (Richmont’s, 2021) and the 54-storey first Mandarin Oriental Residence in South East Asia, a luxury hospitality brand that originated in Thailand with the first hotel built in Bangkok in the 19th century (Xinying, 2019). Figure 1.2 below depicts the river-facing side of ICONSIAM with a glimpse of one of the residential towers on the right and stained-glass mosaic mural, a technique used in the temple of the Emerald Buddha inside the Grand Palace of Bangkok, which depicts a traditional Thai scenery with famous landmarks such as temples, pagodas and images of the Buddha. Chapter 4 Section 4.1 provides detailed descriptions of the design features at ICONSIAM. Lastly, this research chose ICONSIAM as Case Study 1 for its investigation.



Figure 1.2 ICONSIAM’s River-Facing Side Taken from ICONPARK
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

1.3.2 Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya

ICONSIAM constitutes just one example in which the developer intentionally chose to invoke Thai heritage as the design inspiration for its luxury retail development. On 30th November 2021, Central Group opened Central Ayutthaya as the biggest mixed-use retail development of the region in the former Thai capital of Ayutthaya. The developer described the concept of Central Ayutthaya as the ‘Capital of Wonders’ to display the grandeur of a city filled with UNESCO World Heritage sites. Customers can also take photos with redesigned landmarks of Ayutthaya (Bangkok Post, 2021). Figure 1.3 below depicts the exterior of Central Ayutthaya from the entrance that faces the city hall of Ayutthaya. The façade and floor are completely covered in red bricks, a construction material synonymous with the city image of Ayutthaya, due to the many historical red brick ruins of palaces and temples. Moreover, the entrances also invoke the traditional Thai aquatic way of life with an artificial pond filled with blossoming water lilies, an arched timber bridge and a traditional Thai wooden boat that visitors can get on to take photos. The red brick façade also has an arched triangular roof rather than a flat horizontal roof to reference the gable in traditional Thai architecture. Moreover, the public square in front of the entrance also features traditional bamboo benches and parasols for the recreation of visitors. As a result, Central Ayutthaya was chosen as Case Study 2 for this research. Chapter 4 Section 4.2 gives a comprehensive description of the design at Central Ayutthaya.



Figure 1.3 Red Brick Entrance of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

1.3.3 Future Luxury Retail Developments that Claimed to Incorporate Thai Heritage

ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya represent just the beginning of the research's phenomenon. At least two more luxury retail developments that have claimed to incorporate Thai heritage will open in Bangkok within the next few years. In 2023, the first phase of One Bangkok, a 2.85 billion GBP mixed-use development with five office towers, five luxury hotels, three residential buildings and four retail zones, was supposed to open to the public (Hicks, 2019). As of the end of 2023, the first phase was delayed for 2024 instead (Hollis, 2023). The official website of One Bangkok states in its vision that One Bangkok will incorporate the history of Bangkok and the essence of Thailand (One Bangkok, 2018). Just around the corner from One Bangkok, Central Group, in a joint venture with Dusit Thani, a Thai luxury hospitality group, also plans to open Dusit Central Park in 2024. Dusit Central Park is a 1.1 billion GBP development that will feature three towers: a residential tower, a hotel tower and an office tower that sits over a retail complex (Burgos, 2022). The official website of Dusit Central Park claims the project is a new landmark inspired by Bangkok and Thai heritage (Dusit Central Park, 2021). Therefore, the phenomenon of designing a luxury retail development with local heritage is just beginning.

1.4 Thailand and Its Idea of Luxury

This research also requires a degree of cultural knowledge of Thailand and its luxuries in order to understand the discussions, the insights and the findings made in the later chapters. As a result, the research also needs to introduce the idea of Thai luxuries which is opulent, maximalist, vibrant, sparkly, colourful, intricate and, most importantly, multicultural. Thai luxuries also represent a stark contrast to the modern white minimal luxury retail development. The understanding of Thai luxuries starts with the comprehension of Thai history and the concept of statehood in Thailand. Thai history manifests in four major periods: Sukhothai [1238], Ayutthaya [1351], Thonburi [1767] and Rattanakosin [1782 to present day], one of the names of Bangkok. Each period derives from the name of the capital city of Thailand during that time. In the past, the capital city from a Thai point of view represented the most prominent and dominant city that claimed suzerainty and granted protection over smaller and less powerful cities in the region in return for allegiances and resources (London 2009; Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019).

The Kingdom of Thailand started in 1238 when the rulers of Sukhothai freed Thailand from the influence of the Khmer. The Sukhothai Period saw the adoption of foreign cultures and the

formation of the Thai identity. After more than a century of Sukhothai dominance over Thailand, the power of the city faded with internal fighting between princes, and Sukhothai became a vassal to another Thai city established around 1351 to the south called Ayutthaya. Ayutthaya became the capital of Thailand for the next 419 years. Ayutthaya represented the longest period in Thai history and witnessed the prosperity of traditional Thai luxuries in the royal court and the temples. This prosperity came to an end in 1767 when the Burmese sacked, looted and burned Ayutthaya to the ground, and the Thonburi period began when King Taksin repelled the Burmese, established Thonburi as his capital and spent most of the time restoring stability rather than reviving the lost splendour of Ayutthaya. The Thonburi period lasted only 15 years after the nobility revolted against King Taksin's growing madness and religious fanaticism. At the end of Taksin's reign, the throne passed to General Chakri. In 1782, General Chakri moved the capital to the opposite side of the Chao Phraya River and established Bangkok as the capital of the Chakri dynasty (London, 2009; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019), which has ruled Thailand to the present day. All Chakri Kings are also referred as Rama (Chakrabongse, 2019). Thailand today is still a monarchy, and throughout its history, its luxuries have been associated with the royal court. Furthermore, most Thai luxuries originated from abroad, but the royal court made these luxuries Thai by adapting their designs to the Thai maximalist preference for colour, vibrancy and intricacy.

1.4.1 The Shining Temples and Buddhas

Since the Sukhothai period, temples have been the most important building in Thai cities and towns throughout the kingdom (Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). In the past, only the temple itself was allowed the luxury of construction with long-lasting durable materials such as bricks and stucco, while other buildings, even palaces, were made from wood (London 2009). King Ramkamhaeng of Sukhothai levied his subjects to build more temples when he decreed that the temple represented the heart of religion, education and the art in Thailand (Smith, 2017), because a Thai temple traditionally functioned not just as the house of worship but also as an educational institution for men to study various subjects and the social space to host festivals for men and women to meet in order to find a match for marriage (Chakrabongse, 2019). Therefore, the temple became the epicentre of various activities for Thai communities. Furthermore, a person has to do a good deed to gain good karma in Buddhist teaching (London, 2009; Smith 2017), and one of the ways for Thai elites to use their wealth to gain a good deed has been the patronage for the construction of buildings that could benefit many people in society (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). The temple represented the most traditional Thai option, but in

modern times, hospitals, schools and libraries are also acceptable (Chakrabongse, 2019). Thai citizens also donate objects to the temples to make good merit and residents of more affluent areas usually donate more expensive and grander items to the temple (London, 2009).

Thai Kings throughout history have been the biggest patrons and supporters of temples. Firstly, King Ramkhamhaeng of Sukhothai (1279 – 1298) established diplomatic relations with Sri Lanka (London, 2009; Chakrabongse), the centre of Buddhism at the time, and brought a foreign luxury over from abroad in the form of a bronze image of the Buddha called “Phra Buddha Sihing” (Chakrabongse, 2019), which became the inspiration for other Buddha images made in Thailand that were enshrined in temples throughout the kingdom (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). During the Ayutthaya era, Kings of Ayutthaya built over 100 temples, and one of the temples contained a statue of the Buddha bathed in 272 kilograms of gold (Chakrabongse, 2019). Most kings initiated a temple construction project after taking the crown and made grander and more luxurious temples, outdoing their predecessors. Around the end of the Ayutthaya era, the city became inundated with new temples mostly built by the nobility who also joined the royal tradition in constructing temples for the public (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017).

In the chaotic 15 years of the Thonburi period, King Taksin did not build any new temple (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017), a luxury even the King could not afford. However, by the beginning of Bangkok, King Rama I patronised the education of monks and built more temples again (London, 2009; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017). King Rama III (1824-1851) built nine new temples and repaired over 90 during his reign. He also commissioned the 27-metre reclining Buddha made from bricks and covered in gold, and the mural around this reclining Buddha acted as a picture library on religion, medicine, astrology, history and other subjects, emphasising the role of the temple as the place of learning in Thai society. King Rama IV built five new temples during his reign (Chakrabongse, 2019). By the beginning of the 3rd millennium, Thailand consisted of more than 24,000 temples and monasteries (London, 2009). ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya also contain many explicit and implicit features similar to Thai temples that the research will discuss further in Chapter 6, section 6.2.

1.4.2 The Golden Royal Court of Siam

The Thai preference for gold isn't confined to just the temples. Gold became associated with luxury in Thai culture in the royal court too. In 1630, Joost Schouten, a Dutch officer of the Dutch East India Company, described the palace complex of Ayutthaya as buildings and towers completely covered with gold (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2016). Gold was not just in the design of the palace but also in the palace laws known as the Three Seals Code that governed and dictated the rituals and etiquette of the Thai Royal Court with sumptuary laws relating to gold. Although only an estimate of 10% of the Palace Laws survived the sacking of Ayutthaya in 1767 (Chakrabongse, 2019), the surviving documents provided tremendous accounts on the role of gold in regulating royal life and social privileges. For example, the Palace Laws dictated that the King had to bath in 17 royal ceremonies to cleanse inauspiciousness from the Kingdom. During this ceremonial bathing, the King bathed in a golden tub with scented and flowered water. Furthermore, the King often used golden objects associated with auspiciousness like umbrellas, lotuses, eggs and plates during royal ceremonies (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2016). The Palace Laws of Ayutthaya also regulated members of the royal family with different titles that come with different privileges related to gold. For instance, a Great Prince was entitled to a three-tiered *aphirom*², a carriage decorated in an alloy of gold, silver and *nark*³ and a flat seat golden throne with no arms or back (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2016). This metallic alloy combination of gold, silver and *nark* will be seen in a design feature at ICONSIAM discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.6.2.

Gold also played a role in diplomacy, as cities under the dependencies or protection of Ayutthaya from Chiang Mai in the north to Malacca in the south sent flowers/trees made from gold and silver as offerings to the Kings of Ayutthaya (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2016). King Rama I had a forest of these gold and silver offerings after he was able to regain suzerainty over neighbouring states once under the influence of Ayutthaya (Chakrabongse, 2019). During the reign of King Rama IV, the royal family of Laos still sent golden and silver trees as tributes to the king (Leonowens, 2020). A Thai golden object that serves as a symbol of respect and homage similar to and related to these gold and silver trees also serves as an inspiration for one of the main design features at Central Ayutthaya that will be investigated in Chapter 4 Section 4.6.3. Moreover, the use of the colour gold plays an important role in the design of both ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya too.

² a specific kind of umbrella with a tall, long handle, with multiple tiers used as regalia in a royal procession or planted above their thrones.

³ An alloy of bronze, gold and silver, a colour that is bronze led with a hint of gold.

For the construction of Bangkok, King Rama I aimed at building palaces and temples that epitomised the lost golden city of Ayutthaya (Bunnag et al., 1984; Suksri & Freeman, 1996; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). The King employed experts who survived and escaped the sacking of Ayutthaya. The King also torn down the ruins of Ayutthaya as construction materials for the new capital (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019), where the exterior walls of the palaces and temples of the Grand Palace were decorated with gold and sparkling stained-glass tiles (Suksri & Freeman, 1996; Chakrabongse, 2019), while the interior of the palaces from the ceiling to all the walls immersed the courtiers with gilded motifs and patterns (Suksri & Freeman, 1996). Thai artisans painted the ceiling of traditional Thai palaces ablaze with crimson red and gold (Suksri & Freeman, 1996; Chakrabongse, 2019) and gilded the walls with patterns and murals depicting sceneries based on Hindu cosmology (Suksri & Freeman, 1996; London 2009). Figure 1.4 below shows the Grand Palace in Bangkok.



Figure 1.4 The Grand Palace of Bangkok, Built to the Image of the Lost City of Ayutthaya (Sombunjaroen, 2023)

1.4.3 The Westernisation of Palaces and the Incorporation of Thai Heritage

During the reign of King Rama II, the appreciation of foreign architecture started in the royal court when the King commissioned a garden with several islands in a lake connecting bridges of various styles and Chinese pagodas and European pavilions in the Grand Palace. King Rama IV later built the Saranrom Palace next to the Grand Palace completely in the Western neo-classical style (Chakrabongse, 2019), while Suksri & Freeman (1996) attributed the design as Palladian, both Western-style architectures. The royal court later utilised the Saranrom Palace as the residence

for visiting dignitaries and later as the office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Despite King Rama IV's attempt to Westernise, Prince Oscar of Sweden, who stayed at the palace, ironically described the architecture as oriental (Suksri & Freeman, 1996).

During the reign of King Rama V, the King also followed in the footsteps of his father by ordering a construction of a new palace within the complex of the Grand Palace called the 'Chakri Maha Prasart', which contained three Thai spired roofs with the main building built in the Italian style as the first noteworthy adaptation and fusion of Western-style architecture with Thai design in Thailand (King 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). The hired British architect, John Chinitz, initially designed the palace entirely in the Italian neo-classical style with three domes to emphasise the King's leaning toward Western ideals, but Somdet Chao Phraya Sri Suriyawong, the former regent during King Rama V's childhood years as King, re-convincing the King to maintain a Thai identity with Thai-style spires (Suksri & Freeman, 1996; King 2017). The notion of the golden spires will be discussed for the case of ICONSIAM in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1. More importantly for this research, the example of the Chakri Maha Prasart with its fusion of Thai and Western architecture shows the idea of combining cultures into a novel creation. This idea represents a quintessential part of the production process that this research has termed as heritagisation, which will be discussed further in the literature review in Chapter 2 and seen in the observations in Chapter 4 with analyses of the in-depth interviews in Chapter 5. Figure 1.5 below reveals the Chakri Maha Prasart with the three Thai spires and the European facade.



Figure 1.5 The Chakri Maha Prasart in Bangkok
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In 1900, King Rama V attempted again to build an Italian-style Carrara marble palace with a dome called Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall and employed a group of Italian architects and engineers who received a brief to emulate the design of St Paul's Cathedral in London and St Peter's in Rome. By 1907, groups of Italians arrived in Thailand to start the project. However, King Rama V would not get to see the palace's completion in 1915, as he passed away on 23rd October 1910 (Lazara & Piazzardi, 1996). Although architecturally Western, a synergy between Thailand and Italy manifested in the golden fresco inside by Italian artist Galileo Chini that combined Italian aesthetics, such as cherubs inspired by Thai children, with Thai creatures from the Garuda to the white elephants (Suksri & Freeman, 1996; Lazara & Piazzardi, 1996). The utilisation of imagery of traditional Thai creatures in various design features has also been observed in both case studies.

1.4.4 Chivalry, Warfare and the White Elephants

In terms of traditional creatures, the elephant also constitutes another form of luxury in Thai culture. The elephant is considered a luxury in Thai society because it represents an expensive possession with high upkeep (Bullen, 2023). Jany (2020) also mentioned the elephant as a valuable animal in Thai history due to its use in warfare, labour, and even for the judicial punishment of criminals. For those who could afford elephants, during times of warfare, an elephant battle was the noblest form of combat (Chakrabongse, 2019). Moreover, the King, members of the Royal family, and aristocrats rode on elephants behind walking soldiers during Royal processions (Patterson, 2012), making the elephant a mode of transportation that signified status. Thai Kings even used elephants as a form of restitution (Smith, 2017) and as diplomatic gifts (Bullen, 2023). Even in the 20th century, the elephant was still used as a form of payment due to its value in Thai society (London, 2009).

Out of all the elephants, the white elephant (albino in the Thai language) was the most luxurious (Chakrabongse, 2019; Leonowens, 2020). According to Thai laws, any white elephants discovered within Thailand must be presented and given to the King, a luxury reserved only for kings in the region (London, 2009; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Leonowens, 2020). Under the Palace Laws of Ayutthaya, the King granted great rewards to those who could capture a white elephant for the crown (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2016). In 1874, a white elephant could fetch a price of 50,000 USD (Bullen, 2023), estimated at \$1,377,960.53 when adjusted for inflation in 2024 (In2013Dollars, 2024). The rarity of the white elephant derives from a very rare mutated recessive gene that a white elephant must inherit from both parents (Parker, 2004). King Maha Chakrapat of Ayutthaya

held the record for possessing the most white elephants, with seven (Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). This caused the King of Burma, who owned no white elephants, to declare war on Ayutthaya when the King of Thailand declined his request for two white elephants (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). At the end of the war, King Maha Chakrapat gave the King of Burma two white elephants as part of the peace settlement and ordered his subjects to search for more white elephants to ensure his prestige remained unmatched by the King of Burma (Smith, 2017). Baker & Phongpaichit (2017) mentioned that beautiful women, white elephants, jewels, and gold mines in Thailand were among the reasons for Burma's constant attacks on Thailand. Thus, the white elephant became one of the rare objects of value, similar to gold and precious stones, that kings in the region went to war over.

Apart from its rarity, the white elephant is also a divine creature in Thai culture. Thai people worship the white elephant like a deity (Leonowens, 2020) and white elephants were kept exclusively by Thai Kings because the white elephant represented the nation's glory and happiness, an influence from India in the form of Brahman belief (Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). The white elephant represented kingship to the point that a Thai Ambassador to the Court of St James during the reign of King Rama IV used the simile "beautiful and majestic as a white elephant" to describe Queen Victoria (Leonowens, 2020) with the utmost respectful intention. King Rama IV also incorporated the white elephant into the first European style order and chivalry in Thailand called 'the Order of the White Elephant' (Chakrabongse, 2019). This represents a European concept with a Thai heritage. Figure 1.6 on the next page shows the white elephant on the medal next to the red sash for the Knight Grand Cross (First Class) of the Order of the White Elephant. The white elephants will also be seen and discussed in both case studies in Chapter 4. In one of these examples, a caparison that resembled Thai silk decorated the elephant.



Figure 1.6 The Order of the White Elephant
(Sombunjaroen, 2021)

1.4.5 Golden and Colourful Thai Silk

Silk has also been a luxury in Thailand since the Ayutthaya period, but Thailand has not always been the producer of silk. Kings of Ayutthaya held the royal monopoly on trade and the royal court imported silk from China and Japan (Breazeale, 1999). By the time of King Rama IV in Bangkok, Anna Leonowens had recorded Thailand as a nation that exported raw silk (Leonowens, 2020). From the historical role as the importer of silk, Thailand has become the exporter of silk to major markets such as the United States of America, Japan and the United Kingdom (Patichol et al., 2014). In modern times, Thai society still associates Thai silk with high fashion and the royal court. For over two decades from the 1960s, Queen Sirikit of Thailand commissioned royal outfits by the Parisian couturier Pierre Balmain until his death in 1982. Balmain reinvented the Thai national costume into Western outfits for Queen Sirikit. Many of these outfits by Balmain involved the use of Thai silk due to the ability of Thai silk to project the Thai identity. For example, in 1964, Balmain created a national Thai dress for the Queen's visit to Austria with Thai silk golden brocade (Chakrabongse, 2016). Silk with golden brocade was once reserved for royalty (Petcharaburanin & Saisavetvaree, 2018). Figure 1.7 in the next page shows a piece of colourful Thai silk with a traditional intricate pattern from golden brocade that anyone can now purchase at ICONSIAM.

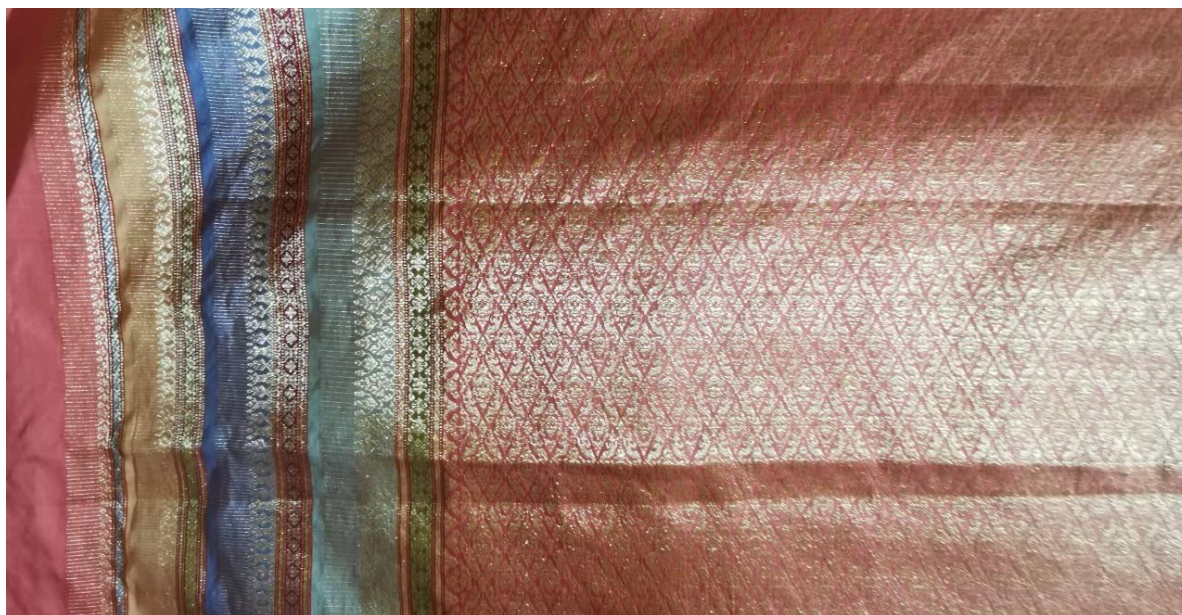


Figure 1.7 A Golden Brocade Piece of Thai Silk
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From the 1970s onward, Queen Sirikit started to commission Balmain to use another type of Thai silk known as ‘Mat mii’, a Thai Ikat with a strong colour and geometric pattern to support rural citizens in northeastern Thailand who often lost their primary income from agriculture, as the region was prone to flood and drought. This was the first time that the Thai Ikat became associated with royalty (Chakrabongse, 2016). The high price of Thai Ikat derives from a complex traditional hand-weaving technique where the most skilled weaver could only craft about four metres of silk per day (Patichol et al., 2014). Nowadays, Thai society shows appreciation for the silk as a Thai luxury by wearing Ikat outfits during formal and special occasions such as a wedding dress (Patichol et al., 2014). The consumption of silk also means supporting women in the rural region of Thailand who can gain additional income from the production of Thai silk rather than only relying on agricultural produce as the sole source of income (Chakrabongse, 2016). Therefore, people can attain good merits by indulging in silk.

Another key figure in the promotion of the Thai silk industry was Jim Thompson, an American veteran who was sent to Bangkok at the end of the Second World War. Jim Thompson opened his first silk shop in 1949 with Thai investors (London, 2009). During the 1950s, his shop became a must-visit destination for tourists to purchase Thai silk (Chakrabongse, 2016). Apart from Queen Sirikit’s effort to promote Thai silk, Jim Thompson also played a pioneering role in the revitalisation of the Thai silk industry by providing technological assistance and retailing silk for

women who had to weave from their homes to raise their family while earning an income at the same time. King Rama IX awarded Jim Thompson the Order of White Elephant in recognition of his service to the development of the silk industry in Thailand. In the Thai luxury retail industry, Jim Thompson stands as the only Thai luxury brand that could operate a store on the same floor or area as other major international luxury brands, a testament to the status of silk as a luxury in Thai culture. The store of Jim Thompson at ICONSIAM will also be investigated in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.6. Moreover, both ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya featured Thai silk in a myriad of dimensions, from merchandises, upholstery of furniture and even art installations.

1.4.6 The Auspiciousness of Vibrant Colourful Luxuries in Thai Society

Apart from silk, during the Ayutthaya period, Thai people produced cotton, which they exported to India to get Indian artisans to dye and print the fabric with Thai design (Bunnag et al., 1984; Breazeale, 1999) and exported the finished fabric back to Thailand at a reasonable price that not only Thai royalties and the nobility could afford (Breazeale, 1999). The finished fabric came back in the form of colourful chintz, also known as Indo-Thai fabrics. The Thai royal family members also used these colourful Indo-Thai fabrics but differentiated themselves by employing artisans of the royal court to further paint over the printed pattern with gold leaves (Bunnag et al., 1984). Colourful chintz has been observed as a part of a temporary exhibition at Central Ayutthaya, and the research will investigate it in Chapter 4, Section 4.7.

During the Ayutthaya era, the royal court also adopted the practice of wearing colours according to the day of the week to bring about auspiciousness and signify social status. Based on Khmer cosmology inspired by Hinduism from India, Thai astrology assigned each day of the week to a specific celestial body such as the planets, the sun and the moon. Furthermore, each celestial body represented a Hindu deity that corresponded with a specific colour. For instance, Sunday represented red because of Surya. Beginning from Sunday to Saturday, the colour of each day goes in the following order: red, yellow, pink, green, orange, blue and purple (Petcharaburanin & Saisavetvaree, 2018). By the time of King Rama V, the royal court in Bangkok still dressed in colour in accordance with the day of the week, and the fashion during this time was to wear complementary colours to distinguish oneself even further (Suksri & Freeman, 1996; Petcharaburanin & Saisavetvaree, 2018). Pramoj & Tulachandra (2005) described this custom and fashion of the palace in the novel “Four Reigns” during the reign of King Rama V, where Monday

meant a yellow bottom with a blue or violet sabai⁴ on the top (Pramoj & Tulachandra, 2005). The royal court of King Rama V considered wearing just one colour unfashionable (Petcharaburanin & Saisavetvaree, 2018). Figure 1.8 below depicts a mannequin wearing a traditional Thai outfit for women with the blue sabai over a shirt with a mandarin collar on the top that contrasted a piece of yellow silk draped into a Jong Kraben, a bottom traditionally worn by Thai people with a shape similar to a pantaloon. This colour combination represents Monday, as claimed by Pramoj & Tulachandra. The 'sabai' also constitutes an important element of this research because it serves as a main design feature of ICONSIAM in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1.



Figure 1.8 Traditional Thai Outfit for Women Inside ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

⁴ A piece of textile, commonly pleated and used by women to wrap around the breast and over one shoulder

From the reign of King Rama VI, Thai elites gradually abandoned the culture of wearing a specific colour on a certain day (Petcharaburanin & Saisavetvaree, 2018). Despite this, the appreciation of colours remains in modern Thai culture. For example, Richard Dimbleby described all the Thai diplomats and students in London at Victoria Station waiting to meet King Rama IX and Queen Sirikit for their majesties' official state visit to the UK as dressing their best in vivid colourful silk, a never-before-seen state occasion of so many colours on the platform of Victoria Station (BBCThai, 2020).

The state occasion on the platform of Victoria Station was not the first time an English person described Thailand in a colourful manner. Back to the reign of King Rama IV during the Victorian Era, Anna Leonowens wrote in her book that when the children of the Thai prime minister came to meet her for the first time, the room ignited with colours of crimson, orange, blue, purple and gold from the silk and the bejewelled golden jewellery they wore (Leonowens, 2020). Precious gemstones and jewels also represented admiration for colourful luxuries in Thai culture. Thai people believe that different precious stones such as diamonds, rubies, sapphires and emeralds hold a certain divine power to bring good fortune, and various stones could be mined throughout the Kingdom (London, 2009).

1.4.7 Benjarong, the Vibrant Multi-Colour Porcelain

Another appreciation of colours in Thai luxury manifests in the Benjarong, a type of multi-colour porcelain once used only by the royal family and the nobility since the Ayutthaya era (London, 2009). During that era, the Thai royal court traded with China, the main market for luxuries, not just for silk but also to obtain porcelain (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017). In the beginning, the Benjarong was a white porcelain enamelled with five colours: red, yellow, green, black and white (London, 2009; Niyomrath, 2011) as plates, bowls, teapots, tea cups, vases, spoons and many more. "Benja" is one of the words for the number five in Thai while "rong" implies colour, hence the name Benjarong. The Benjarong was also called the "Sino-Thai wares" due to its origin in Imperial Ming China, where the porcelain was known as "Wuchai", also meaning five colours in the Chinese language. Initially, the royal court of Ayutthaya just imported this type of colourful porcelain from China, but later on, the royal court employed artisans to design patterns to suit the Thai taste, which were sent to China for production. During the reign of King Narai of Ayutthaya, King Narai commissioned craftsmen in Japan to adapt the Benjarong by incorporating gold with enamel colours (Niyomrath, 2011), which would be known as Lai Nam Thong [Golden Water

Pattern] Benjarong and which utilised gold in another glazing process (London, 2009), adding even more luxury. Figure 1.9 below reveals two types of Benjarong porcelain. The Benjarong on the left contains gold in combination with other enamelled colours, while the Benjarong on the right showcases five colours of white, brown, green, blue and yellow with no gold.



Figure 1.9 Thai Benjarong Porcelain
(Sombunjaroen, 2021)

By the reign of King Rama I in Bangkok, China no longer just made Benjarong for the Thai royal court but also exported them to the Thai market. From the reign of King Rama II, as stability came back to Thailand and prosperity grew, the Lai Nam Thong [Golden Water Pattern] Benjarong also grew in popularity and Thai artisans of the court of King Rama II perfected and finalised the various patterns. During the reign of King Rama V, Thai artisans produced Benjarong for the first time at one of the palaces, but the popularity of Benjarong also started to fade with Westernisation, which led to the growing preference for Western-style porcelain from Europe (Niyomrath, 2011). In contemporary times, a traditional Benjarong possesses between three (London, 2009) and eight colours (London, 2009; Niyomrath, 2011) or even more in red, yellow, white, black, green, navy blue, pink, purple, orange and brown (Niyomrath, 2011). Anyone can now purchase a Benjarong ranging from a piece crafted according to a standard once used by royalty with 18 carat gold, to a cheap imitation (London, 2009). The Benjarong also serves as the main design feature for a space in Central Ayutthaya and as retail merchandise in ICONSIAM.

1.4.8 The Adopter to the Adapter to the Producer of Luxury

From the analysis of various Thai luxury items, an identifiable pattern of chronological stages could be established in comprehending the Thai psyche of luxury. Firstly, Thailand historically and traditionally played the role of the adopter of luxuries. As a nation strategically connecting trade between the Far East from China and Japan with the rest of the world, from India to Persia to Europe, and blessed by an abundance of natural resources, Ayutthaya became a major trading port where Thailand exported raw materials such as rare timbers, animal hides, rice and dye to foreign markets while manufactured luxury goods such as porcelain and silk entered Thailand (Breazeale, 1999) with the foreign merchants who brought foreign ideas. Furthermore, Kings of Ayutthaya also acted as merchant kings who possessed their own trading fleets and held a royal monopoly on traded goods by legislating that all products had to go through the king's warehouse (Breazeale, 1999; Smith, 2017; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017). As a result, many precious items considered Thai luxuries today, with the exception of golden objects and jewellerys, were initially foreign luxuries imported into Thailand for and controlled by the royal court.

After the adoption and the consumption of foreign luxury goods in the original design, the Thai royal court later played the role of the adapter of luxury by getting artists to design the imported luxuries with the golden and vividly colourful design once described by Anna Leonowens as ostentatious, opulent and extravagant (Leonowens, 2020). The royal court would then commission the producers of luxury from the originating country with the Thai design. During the Ayutthaya period, many Thai-designed luxuries were reserved just for royalty or the royal court as the distinguisher of status and social class. Moreover, Breazeale (1999) mentioned that the Thai luxuries of Ayutthaya are limited to local consumers and not exported to foreign markets. The adaption of luxury into a specific fashion is not a new phenomenon but a frequent and common occurrence in the history of luxury, like orientalism as luxury in the royal courts of Europe (McCabe, 2008). However, the situation in Thailand is unique and contrary to luxury's tendency to draw inspiration from exotic lands because of the Thai spirit to endeavour for foreign luxuries in the local style, rather than just adopting fashion from overseas.

After adapting luxuries into Thai design, Thailand progressed into the last stage as the producer of Thai luxury from the establishment of Bangkok as the capital of Thailand. The palace complex itself was the place for the production of luxuries when King Rama I established the "Chang Sip Mu" [Ten Categories of Craftsmen], such as painters, sculptors, lacquer makers, carvers and

metalsmiths, to make luxuries for the palace (Bunnag & Siribhadra, 1984). Furthermore, the inner court of the Grand Palace, an area strictly forbidden by men except for the king and princes under the age of 10, served as the place for girls from the nobility to learn the art of making luxuries such as perfumes, candles and flower garlands (Suksri & Freeman, 1996). Flower garlands are called 'Malai' in Thai and Thai people still offer the most intricate and the grandest Malai to members of the royal family or people that the giver hold in high esteem (London, 2009). Figure 1.10 below shows a less intricate Malai used as an offering for deity at home in the centre of the image. The Malai composed of jasmine buds strung together into a doughnut shape with a floral tassel made from roses and milkweeds, and flowers hanging out from the circular jasmine doughnut. On the left of the jasmine Malai, a Malai made of beads served as the permanent offering for the deity. Both garlands contain the same shape and this shape should be referred back to in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.2 because the Malai also serves as an inspiration for one of the hanging installations inside ICONSIAM.



Figure 1.10 The Thai Malai Flower Garland
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Apart from the inner court of the Grand Palace, during the reign of King Rama V, the Front Palace⁵ of Maha Uparaja Bovornvijaya, the last vice king of Thailand also became the place for the production of luxuries due to the vice king's passion in decorative arts and patronage of craftsmen

⁵ Due to situating at the most front piece of land from the Grand Palace compound

(Suksri, & Freeman, 1996) and the first place for Benjarong porcelain production in Thailand (Niyomrath, 2011). Many local Thai items used as inspiration for design features in ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya are associated with the palace.

In modern times, the palace has remained the primary source of traditional Thai luxuries through Queen Sirikit's Support Foundation, established to educate and train artisans from throughout the Kingdom in traditional Thai arts and craftsmanship after the Queen's discovery that traditional crafts throughout Thailand were disappearing after the Second World War. Unlike the reservation of many traditional Thai luxuries for royalties and the nobility in Thailand in the past, anyone can now consume Thai luxuries from the Support Foundation and emulate the style and fashion of the Thai royal court (Bunnag & Siribhadra, 1984). Thai consumers can also attain good merits in congruence with Buddhist belief by promoting Thai arts, ensuring the continuation of Thai crafts and supporting the livelihood of craftsmen. Furthermore, in 2001, the Thai government further established OTOP (One Tambon One Product), where the government encouraged one tambon, a village in Thai, to produce one particular craft, not just the high arts, under the patronage of the Support Foundation (London, 2009), the movement to promote Thai culture is in vogue and constantly gaining momentum.

As Ayutthaya and Bangkok are cities in the Central Region of Thailand and the seats of the royal court, most of the luxuries discussed in this section are actually Thai luxuries originating from the Central Region, with the exceptions of elephants, which can be found in other parts of Thailand, and Ikat from the Northeastern Region. It is also important to note that Thai feudalism meant that Thai Kings in either Bangkok or Ayutthaya claimed suzerainty over other cities in the various regions bordering Central Thailand. As a result, the Central Thai culture and its luxuries tend to dominate the image of traditional Thai cultural heritage. However, Thai cultural heritage is not singular. Thailand consists of four major regions: Central, Northern, Northeastern, and Southern. Each region has its own unique culture, manifested in differences in language, traditional outfits, textiles, cuisines, and architecture. Chapter 4, Section 4.3, will further reveal these cultural differences among the four major regions.

In terms of luxuries, the Northern Region was originally the Kingdom of Lanna, which did not officially become part of Thailand until the 19th century (London, 2009). As a result, the North came to possess luxury objects specifically associated with the Lanna Royal Court. Moreover,

descendants of the former ruling families of Lanna still exist in Thailand today, with family names such as na⁶ Chiang Mai, na Lamphun, and na Lampang, all of which signify Northern cities. In the Northeastern Region, various villages produce different kinds of exquisite silk beyond Ikat. The Northeastern Thai language shares more similarities with the language of Laos than with that of Central Thailand. Southern Thailand, with its Muslim population, also creates Batik textiles with exquisite patterns hand-drawn using candle wax, differing from Batik made in Malaysia or Indonesia. With a focus on luxury retail developments in cities of the Central Thai Region, many of the Thai luxuries discussed in this thesis will represent the cultural heritage specific to Central Thailand. As a Thai person from Central Thailand, I would like to make it clear that I am not imperialistically claiming these luxuries represent all of Thailand. Traditional Thai luxuries discussed in this thesis are facets of Thai culture, and the reader should be aware of this as well.

In this research, the reader will also encounter a specific term, 'Thainess', from the quotations of Thai individuals who participated in the study. Thainess derives from the Thai term 'ความเป็นไทย' (Kwam-Pen-Thai) and is a subjective term usually used by Thai people to discuss the attributes of being Thai. In a tangible sense, which is highly relevant to this research, a person uses Thainess to describe an object with observable physical characteristics similar to those traditionally associated with Thai heritage, especially Thai luxuries. These observable physical characteristics can manifest in a variety of tangible forms, such as colour, texture, pattern, material, or shape, that remind the person of Thai culture. For example, Pierce Brosnan's Thai-inspired Malibu beachfront house is not a traditional Thai house (traditional Thai houses will be explored later in Chapter 2, Section 4.3) at all, with its chimneys and long balconies, but the house still contains elements of Thainess, such as green glazed clay tiles for the roof, similar to the roof of a temple, or the use of teak, a luxurious golden wood native to Thailand (Montes, 2020). Much of the discussion on Thainess in this research will be similar to this Thai-inspired Malibu house, where the luxury retail development's physical design features that invoke Thai cultural heritage also possess elements of Thainess.

⁶ Na" in Thai means 'of', and it is similar to former French aristocrats who have 'de' in their family names or German nobles who have 'von' in their surnames. In Thailand, a surname with 'na' can only be granted by the King, and the surname is legally restricted to the family members of that specific house. Thus, "na Chiang Mai" means 'of Chiang Mai', signifying the former ruling house of Chiang Mai. It is also important to note that "na Ayudhya" or "na Ayutthaya" is strictly reserved for cadet branches of the Thai Royal Family, as the current Thai royal family, who established Bangkok as the capital of Thailand, claims lineage from the city of Ayutthaya.

On the other hand, Thainess can also be used to describe intangible, abstract characteristics of being Thai, which are paradoxically complex and require deep cultural knowledge of Thailand. For example, 'Thai' itself is one of the words meaning 'free', so Thailand means 'land of the free.' Even in the Thai language today, when a person has paid off all his/her debt, another Thai person might congratulate this person on his/her financial freedom by saying, 'You are Thai now.' However, Thai society is not free at all, given its hierarchical social structure, which is even reflected in the Thai language. For instance, Thai people use different terms for simple words like 'I', 'you', or 'eat' when speaking to members of the royal family, monks, respected elders, or friends. When I was a child, I was constantly warned and taught by my mother to refer to someone by their official title, no matter how close. The ability to command the Thai language also signifies prowess in showing respect and deference in society. Another archaic hierarchical reflection in the Thai language can be seen in the direct translation for superiors at work, where Thai people use the word 'Chao Nai', which actually means 'master lord.' Freedom in the Thai context relates more to national independence than to social equality. Thai people take great pride in national independence because Thailand was never colonised by a European power (London, 2009; Chakrabongse, 2019). When I was in elementary school in Thailand, I was taught from a very early age to value Thai national independence and how Thailand only lost its independence twice to Burma, but great Thai Kings like King Naresuan and King Taksin were able to liberate the nation. My Thai history teacher also described Ayutthaya as a lost, prosperous city of gold, which fuelled even more national pride, even though Thailand was never a major empire of the world.

Foreigners should also be aware of the great pride in Thai national independence to avoid offending a Thai person. Just in March 2024 alone, two incidents occurred where foreigners offended Thai national pride on Thailand's own soil, causing national uproar. In Phuket, 500 locals rallied and protested on the beach in front of a seafront villa occupied by a Swiss man who physically assaulted a Thai doctor and claimed that the doctor was on his private property, while the doctor was actually on the public beach (Chuenniran, 2024). In Bangkok, over 100 Thai transgender individuals gathered in the nightlife area within a few hours after news went viral on social media that a group of 20 Filipina transgender individuals had attacked six Thai transgender individuals (Connor, 2024). These two incidents reflected a section in the Thai national anthem stating that, "Thais love peace, but are not cowards in war. Our sovereignty will never be threatened." Thai national sovereignty is protected to the extent that foreigners are neither permitted to purchase nor own land in Thailand. Foreigners may only purchase apartments within a condominium complex, with the government limiting foreign ownership to a maximum of 49% of the total units in a building. In 2024, the government planned to increase this quota from 49%

to 75% to stimulate the economy through the inflow of foreign capital, which was met with public criticism. Some critics even accused the government of putting the nation up for sale (Hutasingh & Nanuam, 2024).

Thailand may have many regulations restricting foreigners, but Thai society itself is not typically anti-foreign, as it is also known for its hospitality, another intangible virtue of Thainess. Thai openness to foreign cultures can be seen in the adoption and synergy of foreign elements into its own traditional luxuries, as discussed in this section. The combination of cultures can also be seen in Thai names. Thai people usually have an official name using words from Sanskrit or Pali, two ancient languages of Buddhism from India, while they often have nicknames derived from other languages. For example, my full name is Armaj Flash Sombunjaroen. Armaj is an ancient Sanskrit word meaning nobleman, but everyone in my family, my colleagues, and my close friends actually call me 'Flash', an English word. Moreover, my last name means complete (Sombun) prosperity (jaroen) in Thai, but the word 'jaroen' also signifies my Chinese lineage because prosperity represents one of the Chinese values and part of my great-grandfather's name, a Chinese man who immigrated to Thailand. In Thailand, the word 'jaroen' is also commonly found in the names of businesses and business tycoons with Chinese heritage.

In Thailand, one can find a mixture of cultures in many families. For example, Somdet Chao Phraya Sri Suriyawong, the Thai regent who lobbied the King to replace three Western domes with Thai spires at Chakri Maha Prasart, was descended from a Persian merchant who settled in Ayutthaya when the city was still the capital of Thailand (Wyatt, 1968). The Thai regent was not actually anti-Western, as Leonowens (2020) described the house of Chao Phraya Sri Suriyawong as a palace richly decorated in the most expensive European style, featuring furniture, carpets, candelabras, and silverware, combined with oriental antiques. Thai multicultural cosmopolitan society has existed since the Ayutthaya period. Jacques de Bourges, a French national who visited Ayutthaya, described the city as,

*"There are few cities in the whole of the East where one can see so many
different nationalities as in Siam, and more than **twenty different languages**
are spoken there."* (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017, p. 133)

Baker & Phongpaichit (2017) also claimed that European maps of Ayutthaya revealed settlements of various ethnicities, such as Chinese, Dutch, French, Japanese, Malaysian, Persian, and Portuguese, living together as a cosmopolitan city. According to Wise (2024), King Taksin himself was the son of a Chinese immigrant, making him a Thai King who was also a second-generation Chinese immigrant. The current Thai royal family also has Chinese lineage, as the mother of King Rama I had Chinese ancestry. Wise also mentioned that modern Thailand still represents a multicultural society comprising Burmese, Chinese, Lao, Malaysian, Mon, and Vietnamese people, who are accepted into society because they can provide economic benefits and live under the agenda of the ruling elites. Moreover, Thai society also welcomes foreigners with Thai hospitality, as long as they do not offend Thai national pride.

Finally, many intangible Thai values that compose Thainess are related to Buddhist virtues, such as charitability through performing good deeds. In relations to luxuries, McAleer & Mao (2017) concluded that Thai Buddhist teaching in restraining from lust and greed of the material world possessed no direct consequence on Thai consumers' intention to purchase from luxury brands because personal and interpersonal factors had a greater impact on Thai consumers. However, from the examples of traditional Thai luxuries discussed in this chapter, it could be argued that Thai Buddhist teachings in terms of the attainment of good karma by doing good deeds for the public became the justification for the extravagance of Thai luxury, and an opposite to the demoralization of luxury in the West by Berry (1994). A luxury bag could be enjoyed at a fashion show without guilt if combined with Thai silk to promote Thai crafts. Haute Couture could also be commissioned if it promoted Thai identity and supported rural craftsmen. In terms of luxury retail developments in Thailand, a conventional retail development that mainly showcases the West does not usually retail traditional Thai products made by rural craftsmen due to the exorbitant expense involved in designing and constructing a shop inside the luxury retail development, which requires special lighting, crystal-clear glass⁷ for the window façade, and rich furnishings. Rural craftsmen also face barriers related to business registration, accounting, and legal contracts when operating a store inside a retail development. Furthermore, the vibrant and maximalist nature of traditional Thai products often contradicts the white and minimalist design atmosphere of modern Western-inspired malls. However, this research will demonstrate that Thailand is no longer just the adopter of the foreign retail format, but it is also adapting and producing luxury retail developments in its own ways by invoking its own heritage and identity in the same manner

⁷ The clearer the glass, the more expensive it is, while glass with a tint of green is cheaper.

as Thai society did with its palaces, textiles and porcelain in the past. The invocation of Thai heritage has also enabled the showcase and retail of traditional Thai luxuries that are typically excluded from other conventional Thai luxury retail developments. For me, a luxury retail development that incorporates Thai heritage represents a new form of Thai luxury that also deserves investigation.

1.5 Aims and Objectives

Therefore, this research investigates a recent phenomenon where luxury retail developments are redefining the luxury experience through retail designs that feature local Thai cultural heritage as a next evolution of Thai luxury by exploring two case studies: 1) ICONSIAM; and 2) Central Ayutthaya. From this investigation, this PhD thesis plans to contribute:

- The comprehensive design process to incorporate Thai heritage into the luxury retail development; the tangible.
- Original theoretical idea of Utopolis that redefines the luxury experience of the Thai retail development; the intangible.

In summary, this research aims to investigate the heritagisation of Thai luxury retail developments and the embodiment of the Utopolis. To fulfil this research's aim, this thesis has the following objectives:

1. Propose and create an original theoretical framework by exploring the existing literature
2. Find the appropriate methodology and data collection methods that correspond to and support the proposed theoretical framework to validate the idea of the Utopolis
3. Observe tangible design features that incorporated Thai heritage in the luxury retail developments
4. Interview developers and visitors of the Thai luxury retail developments to investigate intangible ideals and perceptions
5. Theoretically construct the fundamental principles of the Utopolis

1.6 Research Overview

With the aims and objections discussed in the previous section in mind, the research has the following overview for each chapter. To understand this phenomenon in depth, Chapter 2, the literature review, explores three fields of knowledge: heritagisation, luxury and space.

Furthermore, existing theories have been framed through the conceptual binary of tangibility and intangibility to define the heritagisation, luxury and space that are specific to the research's phenomenon and unique to their respective fields of knowledge. All of these theories also lead to the formulation of a new theoretical framework that reveals an original concept, introduced and championed by this thesis, called the 'Utopolis'. The Utopolis represents an intangible imagination of an alternative ideal city inspired by the tangible real city of retail development. This Utopolis exists in parallel with the real city and within luxury retail developments. As a result, this research will not only investigate the production of tangible physical designs with heritage in Thai luxury retail developments but also the abstract Utopolis within each development.

In Chapter 3, which deals with methodology, the research uses the theoretical framework from the literature review as a basis for selecting an appropriate qualitative research method for each theory within the theoretical framework to form a set of research methods for data triangulation that includes direct observations, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and documentation. This set of research methods is then utilised in a case study approach with an inductive mode of reasoning in a social constructivist methodological manner. Moreover, the set of research methods also allows for the social construction of the Utopolis through thematic analysis. As a result of the proposed theoretical framework from the literature review in Chapter 2 and the social construction of the Utopolis through thematic-analysed iterated data from direct observations, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and documentation in Chapter 3, the following chapters 4, 5 and 6 focus on a specific idea in the theoretical framework that correlated to a different set of research methods.

In Chapter 4, the research concentrates on the iterated observational findings of the two case studies. The chapter begins with design overviews of ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya. Then each section goes into the categories of design approach similarities through examples of design features that incorporated the Thai heritage of both case studies. These observed design features included the architecture and interior design created by the developers and tenants, the permanent long-term design, and the seasonal decorations, displays and events that represented

the temporary short-term design. An abundance of observations was made, but to comply with the word limit of the thesis, I was only able to write about the main key findings required in the construction of the Utopolis. Moreover, these observations were cross-validated with data from the focus groups.

Chapter 5 focuses on the ideal of the developers by thematically analysing the data from the in-depth interviews from both case studies. The thematic analyses provided findings on the developer's conception of a retail development as a modern space and the implication of heritage against the notion of modernity. The chapter also reveals the themes for inspiration derived from Thai heritage invoked by the developers and the different ways the developers adapted and incorporated inspiration from the past into a design. The thematic findings also include the notion of building a development for present-day people and the importance of factoring in cultural understanding and relevancy of chosen heritage by the people today in the heritagisation process. The research then combined all the findings into a thematic map that summarises the optimal way to design a retail development with heritage in the mindset of the developers.

In Chapter 6, the research revised the thematic map from Chapter 5 by incorporating selected observational findings from Chapter 4 to complete into the finalised thematic map. Moreover, the research deconstructs elements from this comprehensive thematic map to formulate and shed light on the theoretical proposed idea of the Utopolis that developers should keep in mind when it comes to the heritagisation of luxury retail development. Chapter 6 also presents the findings relating to the principles of the Utopolis and the understanding of the design process in incorporating heritage into luxury retail development. Finally, Chapter 7 ends with the conclusion, the summary of the key findings and the limitations of the research.

1.7 Scope of the Research

From the overview of the thesis, it should be seen that the research primarily focuses on the spatial production of the retail development with Thai heritage, with preliminary findings on the consumers' perceptions on the invocation of the national past into the space. The research does not focus on the effect of the design on the consumption or behaviour of visitors. Moreover, the findings on the heritagisation process and the notion of Utopolis were based on two existing case studies in Thailand. Therefore, the research was only based on the implications of the Thai

cultural past in the heritagisation process. Thailand does not represent the only country that is developing luxury retail establishments with heritage, and the research is using Thailand as a starting point for the idea of the Utopolis. Thailand has also been specifically chosen as the main focus due to the availability of the two luxury retail developments designed with Thai heritage already open to the public. Furthermore, I am also able to leverage my personal connections from my background in retail development to conduct the required research. Thailand is the foremost place to research this phenomenon because more luxury retail developments that have claimed to incorporate Thai heritage will open within the next few years with billions of pounds in investment. To further understand the complexity of the research's phenomenon and to theoretically realise the idea of Utopolis within the luxury retail development, the research has to start with the exploration, the reinterpretation and the combination of existing theories that are relevant to the production of the luxury retail development in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction of the Literature Review

In Chapter 1, Introduction, the research established that the use of local cultural heritage in the design of new luxury retail developments represents a new phenomenon in Thailand. Thai Retail developers no longer embrace the West as the only source of inspiration. They are also going back to their roots, their history and their culture to design new luxury retail developments in Thailand. Two luxury retail developments have opened to the public within the past few years or are under construction at the time of writing this literature review; therefore, existing academic writings on this subject remain scarce. Nevertheless, there are new literatures that mention ICONSIAM, one of the luxury retail developments designed with Thai heritage discussed in the introduction, but this literature review will show that these limited writings are not investigating the heritagisation of Thai luxury retail developments that this research intends to originally explore.

The originality of this research derives from three fields of theories: heritagisation, luxury and space. Furthermore, all of these theories have been framed through the conceptual duality of tangibility and intangibility, which will define the exact types of heritagisation, luxury and space that are all unique in their respective academic fields. Starting with the first section of this literature review, section 2.2 discusses current theories and understandings on heritagisation, the use of the past to create something. Heritagisation comes first because the research focuses on the production of luxury retail development and heritagisation represents a form of production process. Then, in section 2.3, this literature review explores ideologies on luxury because the heritagisation process specific to this research creates a new form of luxury experience that differs from the kind of luxury traditionally used by retail developers in the past. This new kind of luxury also leads to section 2.4 on space. In viewing space, this research not only investigates the materialisation of Thai luxury retail developments designed with heritage but has also developed and proposed a novel concept of the Utopolis. Apart from the physically constructed tangible retail development, this physical space also embodies an abstract, intangible Utopolis, because the very distinct luxury experience produced through the heritagisation process leads to this Utopolis. When viewing a luxury retail development, it can also represent a utopian city. This utopian city inhabits luxury retail development and manifests through the design. No academics have written about an abstract utopian city that is based on the actual city of the retail development and lurks within a luxury retail space before, let alone the making of a Thai luxury retail development with heritage.

Academics such as Kern (2008), Dehaene & De Cauter (2008), Muzzio & Muzzio-Rentas (2008), Condello (2014) and Crossick & Jaumain (2019) wrote spatial analyses of luxury retail developments before, but the discussed retail establishments did not correspond with the phenomenon of this research, as all of the luxury retail developments discussed were not designed with local heritage. Moreover, none of these writings covers the idea of the Utopolis of the research. It is not just about the explicit mention of the Utopolis as a neologism, but the combination of utopianism, heritagisation and city-likeness of the luxury retail spatial production together within one academic discussion. For example, Harvey (2000) explored the utopian hope for a mall in Baltimore in reviving its city centre without discussing the citylike feature of the space, despite discussing in other chapters the common imagery representation of the Utopia as a city. Moreover, this mall didn't contain the utilisation of local heritage that is specific to the research's idea of heritagisation.

While Coëffé & Morice (2020) mentioned the use of local heritage in Parisian luxury department stores without the notion of the utopian metropolis. These Parisian department stores are not newly created and possess their own corporate heritage, an internal history that retail managers can invoke and use. Dion (2022) argued that newly created luxury brands without their own corporate heritage can use cultural heritage instead. As a result, this research further expands on Dion's idea that cultural heritage is not just used for new luxury brands but also for new luxury retail developments. This research also contributes a different theoretical lens to view space by adapting Soja's (2014) theory on the Thirdspace through Soja's own writing and other theories on heritagisation, luxury and space to not just find the Thirdspace but also the Utopolis. Apart from Backes (1997) and Fujioka & Pitkänen (2022), Soja also represents one of the few academics who wrote about the city-like quality of luxury retail development. Nevertheless, the writings of Backes, Fujioka & Pitkänen, and Soja also lacked the components of heritagisation and utopia. Moreover, through the heritagisation process, the Utopolis also contains characteristics that mean that this abstract space does not belong to Soja's Thirdspace. In summary, the original contribution of this research will advance the knowledge of producing another form of tangible luxury space with heritage and the creation of another abstract intangible space within a tangible space, the Utopolis. All of these contributions and originalities begin with an understanding of heritagisation.

2.2 Heritagisation

2.2.1 Heritagisation, the Authorisation of the Past vs. the Invocation of the Past

Firstly, the term ‘heritagisation’ refers to the production process in creating heritage and existing theories on heritagisation diverge into two branches. The first branch takes heritagisation on the most traditional and conventional route. Commonly, heritagisation implies a process in which an authority ennoble a specific object that has fulfilled a set of criteria with the status of heritage. The most prominent example of heritage authorisation is UNESCO (Carter et al., 2020), which grants the status of World Heritage to natural and historical sites that fulfilled its values. This World Heritage status leads to international efforts to protect and preserve such sites (Stainforth, 2020). Bendix et al. (2017) also mention UNESCO as the world’s authority on heritage. In contemporary times, UNESCO not only accredits a site as a World Heritage site for its conservation but also for economic reasons like the promotion of tourism. In another example of authorising heritage, Heinich (2011) revealed that, in France, the French Ministry of Culture employs art historians to determine if an object should have the status of French national heritage. These art historians judge through five values: authenticity, ancientness, rarity, beauty and signification. Signification means the ability to express meaning and to symbolise something. Moreover, the status of French national heritage also means that the object must be managed and conserved for the public. In the same manner as Heinich (2011), Davallon (2011) also referred to heritage as an inheritance belonging to the community that was decided by a panel of experts. This inheritance of the community again requires preservation, protection and governance. However, Davallon also argued for another approach by viewing heritagisation as a symbolic process rather than just an authorisation process. In this symbolic process, the people of today construct a relationship with the past by giving present-day meanings and values to historical objects that they did not create. Moreover, this symbolic process deals with both the intangible and the tangible, because people must create knowledge, the intangible, on objects in order to be classified as heritage. People must also work together collectively, as the knowledge created must be communally understood by others and not just by a single person. Knowledge alone is not enough, because heritage still requires a certain level of materialisation to really exist, the tangible. Luxury retail developments are similar in this regard because the conceptualisation and construction process require many people working together, and no single person can bear every task alone. Lastly, Heinich’s (2011) value of signification and Davallon’s idea of heritagisation as a symbolic process both similarly reveal that heritagisation also involves the creation of meanings and symbols. This idea of meanings and symbols also persists in the second branch of theories on heritagisation.

The second branch of heritagisation deals with invoking symbols of the past for the present. In one of the earliest mentions of heritagisation in this manner, Walsh (1992) claimed heritagisation as a process to select images of the past as a collective memory for the continuation of a historical identity and the improvement of space ambience. Moreover, Walsh viewed heritagisation very negatively because the ruling elite often played a curatorial role in choosing 'shallow' images to represent a national identity. Images can formulate imagined themes, such as the monarchy and country estates, which Walsh found and criticised in the analysis of British museums and historical sites that tried to de-industrialise their identities. In a more positive and oppositional view of heritagisation to Walsh, Mármol et al. (2015) claimed heritagisation as the process of launching symbols that can create a better ideal through the restoration of an alleged lost world, which can be very seductive. This seduction makes the symbols more convincing and allows a consensus without conflict to form a collective cultural heritage.

In this second branch of heritagisation, heritage and culture are very much intertwined. Carter et al. (2020) argued that heritagisation of places constitutes a type of cultural production. Through heritagisation, people create and recreate cultural meanings by invoking, gathering, classifying, translating and commodifying the past as an asset in the present. In addition, Carter et al. also stated that heritage represented an arrangement of memories, identities and space. For instance, European elites in the past produced heritage by invoking the history of Ancient Greece and Rome as an idealised past in their contemporary creations to fulfil their cultural, social and political values. This example goes with Mármol et al.'s (2015) claimed idea of reviving a seductive lost world that can fulfil ideals.

In solidarity with Walsh (1992), Carter et al. (2020) also claimed that a minority of the well-educated elite often controlled the production of heritage through cultural establishments such as museums because the heritagisation process requires knowledge. This elite control resulted in one-sidedness in heritage production and caused Carter et al. to argue for more untraditional, untypical and diverse forms of heritage. Examples of untraditional heritage mentioned by Carter et al. included: the transformation of the old Berlin Tempelhof Airport as a park and then a housing development for immigrants; the invocation of Taiwan's history of tobacco farming to re-develop villages; and the remembrance of deceased pets by commemorating their relationships with humans through the commission of sculptures is exemplified in this research by a bronze sculpture of Trim the cat, located on Macquarie Street outside the Mitchell Library in Sydney, Australia. Trim belonged to and travelled with Captain Matthew Flinders, a British navigator

whose contribution to the exploration of South Australia was commemorated with a bronze sculpture outside the Mitchell Library by the public in 1925. The bronze sculpture of Trim was erected 71 years later in 1996, behind the sculpture of Flinders, Trim's owner. Trim only became famous in his own right after a publisher released the story of Trim's adventures with Flinders in 1977, after going through Flinders' personal account. In this particular example, Kean (2020) mentioned that the story of Trim the cat attracts more public interest nowadays than the significance of his owner. The Mitchell Library's bookshop also contains various merchandise featuring Trim but not Flinders. Kean also demonstrated that people in 1996 could invoke a different part of the same history that was discovered after the commission of Flinders' sculpture in 1925 and was growing in popularity to appeal to contemporary audiences. Moreover, the sculpture of Trim represents a newly made object. As a result, heritagisation does not always have to happen in historic places or objects. Heritagisation can take place in new creations, such as luxury retail developments, too. Furthermore, a luxury retail development must also choose and invoke elements of the past that appeal to the current public. Finally, Carter et al. provided no examples of luxury retail developments that have gone through heritagisation.

Karlstrom (2013) also claimed heritagisation as a form of cultural production that can take place in new creations. Karlstrom analysed a situation in Laos where the local population promoted the destruction of a historic temple to construct a grander temple on the very same site. The local people did not object to the temple's demolition because they believed in the spirit of the land, a belief embedded in the religions of the region from Theravada Buddhism and Animism to Hinduism. With this belief, the old temple merely represented a shell and the spirit of the temple transcended to the new temple in the exact same location. As a result, Karlstrom concluded that heritage was not just about the search for meanings to the tangible past. Heritage also contains an inner spirit, the intangible, which constituted the culture. This intangible culture then manifested through diverse tangible forms, even the new. Karlstrom's conclusion also corresponded with Davallon's (2011) idea of heritagisation as a symbolic process that involved the expression of culture, the intangible, through materialisation, the tangible. Finally, Karlstrom, who specialised academically in religious heritage sites, noticed that the heritagisation process also gave and upheld a sacred quality that set a heritage apart from other places. This idea of spatial sacredness will further be explored in section 2.3.2, The Use of Heritage by Luxury Industry, and section 2.4.1, Space, Place and Heterotopia.

2.2.2 Heritagisation and the Production of Culture

In many theories on heritagisation discussed in the previous section, culture and knowledge both constitute abstract intangible elements in the production of heritage. Davallon (2011) mentioned that to create heritage is to create new knowledge. Carter et al. (2020) also referred to the necessity of knowledge in the creation of heritage, which equals a cultural production process. Karlstrom (2013) also claimed that heritagisation is a form of cultural production where the created culture represented the inner intangible spirit of the heritage. The interconnection between culture and knowledge is not new and has been written about and studied by academics before. Bourdieu (1993) analysed art and literature to frame the fundamental idea of culture as a perpetual dynamic reproduction of knowledge throughout history. When a culture producer such as an artist or a writer created a piece of work, the creation consisted of inherited knowledge passed down through generations as the basic building blocks of culture. This particular knowledge allowed a particular group of people to collectively recognise, comprehend and give value to the symbolism in the creation. Bourdieu, like Walsh (1992) and Carter et al. (2020), also criticised the dominance of the elite in cultural production by enforcing knowledge through educational establishments. As a result, the created work never solely represented just the producer of culture but also intentionally and unintentionally the elite's imposed knowledge in society. Another important idea of culture established by Bourdieu lies in the fluid and dynamic quality of culture because every cultural creation always takes a position that may diverge or even contradict the inherited knowledge to inspire and instigate change. This constant change and reproduction of passed-down knowledge as a historical process permitted the continuation and the presence of culture, which reflected society. Although Bourdieu's theory only focused on literature and art as tangible forms of culture, this research argues that the core idea of culture as a perpetual dynamic reproduction of knowledge throughout history remains a relevant foundation to the very concept of heritagisation, because the people of today make new knowledge from the inherited knowledge of the past, and this is heritagisation.

Patterson (2014) also adhered to Bourdieu's idea of culture as knowledge by defining culture as:

“a dynamically stable process of collectively made, reproduced, and unevenly shared knowledge structures that are informational and meaningful, internally embodied and externally represented and that provide predictability, coordination equilibria, continuity, and meaning in human actions and interactions.” (p. 1)

The idea of internal embodiment and external representation of culture as a reproduction of knowledge again shares similarities to Davallon (2011) and Karlstrom (2013), where heritage contains the intangible culture/knowledge that manifests through the tangible materialisation. Patterson further explained that humankind constantly produces and shares meanings that can alter over time. This shared meaning, such as ideologies produced by humans, formed the basis of knowledge. Moreover, the public or a group of people must also recognise and understand knowledge to transform it into cultural knowledge. For Patterson, cultural knowledge manifests in two main forms: declarative and procedural. Declarative cultural knowledge deals with facts. This type of cultural knowledge is passed down through school in a similar way to the cultural knowledge discussed by Bourdieu (1993). On the other hand, procedural cultural knowledge constitutes a pattern of actions determined by the circumstance, which is not taught in educational establishments, like declarative cultural knowledge. People learn procedural cultural knowledge through practice, such as cycling or cooking. Similar to Patterson, Roberts (2015) classified two types of knowledge: explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is codified and universally accepted, which corresponds to Patterson's declarative knowledge and knowledge taught in classrooms like Bourdieu. On the other hand, tacit knowledge is implicit and contextually specific, arising from the constant and long-term collective actions of people in a similar way to procedural cultural knowledge.

Patterson (2014) also claimed that all cultural knowledge, whether declarative (explicit) or procedural (tacit), also possesses values and norms. Values represent the collectively agreed-upon social attitude. All humans evaluate knowledge. In this evaluation process, people may choose to differ from society's values and ignite cultural change. Value also plays a role in the formulation of people's ideals, aspirations and desires. On the other hand, norms consist of the common rules, expectations and conditions in certain settings. People behave in a certain way in one situation and another way in another circumstance because of norms. Values and norms also provide structure and applicability to cultural knowledge. Finally, the idea of ideals, aspirations and desires in cultural values represents a quintessential element to this research and will be discussed further in section 2.3.1 Tangibility & Intangibility of Luxury, and section 2.4.3 Utopia, the City & the Luxury Retail Development.

2.2.3 The Heritagisation Process vs. the Orientalising Process

Like heritagisation, the orientalising process of Orientalism also involves the creation of knowledge that requires collective recognition and understanding in order to become cultural knowledge. Said (1979) explained that Orientalism is the study of anything Asian through the investigation of the narrative and visual representation rather than the facts of an Asian culture. Academics usually analyse the private experiences and testimonies of individuals in that particular region to form a collective consensus on the narrative. Said was also very critical of Orientalism in the past because traditionally Western scholars analysed testimonies from Westerners who had lived in a particular Asian nation to form a Western narrative and representation of that Asian country. Thus, Said also argued for future researches to be conducted by local academics with testimonies by the local population to formulate a local narrative that truly revealed how the local people would like to be represented. Said (1994) further explained that local cultural representation, the intangible, manifests in an aesthetic form, the tangible, similar to Davallon (2011), Karlstrom (2013) and Patterson (2014). The entire process of Orientalism stated by Said also shares the very same characteristics of heritagisation. Firstly, the analysis of testimonies and experiences creates certain 'knowledge' on a culture. This knowledge is then used to represent a culture. People then recognise a culture based on this knowledge and transform knowledge into cultural knowledge. This process also possesses no difference to the heritagisation process stated by Walsh (1992) with the selection of images to represent a nation. However, in Walsh's context, the subject was Britain, not Asia, and the people producing heritage were the local British people.

Said (1994) also stated that the power to control the narrative equated to a form of imperialism. In the past, European powers controlled the narrative through colonisation, which resulted in the loss of local identity to foreign powers. Even in contemporary times, major world powers, such as the United States of America, still control the narrative because of American economic dominance through its multinational companies. Finally, Said concluded that as a consequence of imperialism, cultures and identities have become amalgamated on a global scale, resulting in the absence of truly pure culture in contemporary times. However, mankind still and always will possess the determination to create its own cultural identities. The creation of cultural identities also requires the power of imagination. Said also termed the attempt to create one's own culture a "divorce" from everyday culture. As a result, the idea of an opposition, the other side that a producer of culture has to counter, always exists in the orientalising process. For instance, Mentges (2017) wrote about the "re-orientalising" of Uzbekistan after the fall of the Soviet Union. The Uzbek government used its traditional textiles, such as the ikat and the 'Suzani', a traditional

embroidered wall carpet, to invoke its past lost under Soviet Imperialism as a part of the modern-day national identity. Cardeira da Silva (2017) also claimed the Moroccan government's restoration of the Portuguese Cathedral in the city of Safi and the revival of the city's Portuguese colonial past with assistance from the Portuguese government as both heritagisation and reversed orientalism, due to Morocco's Islamic Arabic heritage, even though the country itself is located in North Africa. This process of 're-orientalising' by Mentges and 'reversed orientalism' by Cardeira da Silva both complied with theories on invoking the past in the second branch of heritagisation, as discussed in section 2.2.1.

Orientalism and heritagisation also share another similarity with the conventional producer of heritage. Just as Said (1994) talked about the necessity of the imagination in the orientalising process, Anderson (2006) claimed that the power of imagination constitutes a quintessential aspect of the formation of a nation's cultural identity by stating,

*"It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of **each lives the image of their communion.**" (p. 6)*

Thus, the concept of a nation itself is imagined. Citizens of the same country never truly know every fellow citizen, yet they all possess collective images of their culture that bind them together as a nation. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said (1994) did not mention Thailand at all, as Thailand was never colonised. However, in *Imagined Communities*, Anderson, an expert in Southeast Asia, often used Thailand as an example, despite its never having been under colonial rule in the context of Said, because Thailand also had to create a national identity, such as through the use of the monarchy as a unifying national image and the enforcement of the Central Thai language as the nation's official language. The use of Central Thai as the official language of Thailand also represents part of the dominance of Central Thai culture over the entire Thai nation, which I have warned about in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.8 The Adopter to the Adapter to the Producer of Luxury.

Similarly to Said, Anderson noted that products of nationalism manifest in various cultural forms, such as poetry, visual arts, and music. Additionally, Said considered academic research on nationalism in the past to be very Eurocentric, as even studies on Thailand were conducted by

Western scholars, much like other traditional research on orientalism. Lastly, Anderson argued that in most cases dealing with the production of national identities around the world, the bilingual intelligentsia of a country usually played a key role in imagining the national identity, which they also advocated to the masses. The concept of the elite as the producer culture also appeared in writings on heritagisation and cultural production by Walsh (1992), Bourdieu (1993), Davallon (2011), Heinich (2011) and Carter et al. (2020). Therefore, both orientalism and heritagisation usually deal with the local elite as the producer of heritage and culture. More importantly, in accordance with Anderson, the nationalist image created through the heritagisation process constitutes a façade of a public image that was, in reality, not created by the public but by a minority, a pseudo-public image that will be explored further in Section 2.4.2 The Pseudo-Public Space: A Private Space Disguised as a Public Space.

The invocation of national cultural heritage in the heritagisation process may also lead to an "us vs. them" attitude, similar to Said's concept of the East vs. the West. In a manner akin to Anderson, Billig (2012) conceptualised the idea of Banal Nationalism, where a nation is comprised of collectively recognisable symbols, such as the flag. More interestingly, national symbols become banal because, as Billig (1995) wrote,

*"Symbols become turned into **routine habits** and, thus, they become **enhabited**."* (p. 42)

In a nationalist agenda, national symbols become enforced in everyday life and routines,⁸ making these symbols both ordinary and familiar to the local population. As these national symbols condition people into a routine, the local population also possesses a collective mindset of what is familiar to their communities and what is exotic to them. Billig also stated,

⁸ When I was in primary school in California, I also had to pledge allegiance to the flag every morning, even though I do not have US citizenship.

"Nationalism as merely one form of identity amongst countless others.

Nationalism is more than this: it is a way of thinking or ideological consciousness.

*In this consciousness, nations, **national identities and national homelands appear as 'natural'**. Most crucially, the 'world of nations' is represented as a 'natural', moral order. **This imagining of 'us', 'them'**, homelands and so on must be habitual or unimaginatively accomplished; yet, it also provides a complex way of talking about the world.* (Billig, 1995 p. 10)

Therefore, for Billig, an "us against them" mentality always exists, much like in Said's Orientalism. However, the heritagisation process does not have to be monocultural. The heritagisation process does not always involve the selection of heritage symbols that solely belong to one culture. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.7, Benjarong: The Vibrant Multi-Colour Porcelain, the colourful Benjarong porcelain with golden patterns of Thailand itself represents the invocation of Chinese 'Wuchai' porcelain, the gold gilding pottery technique of Japan, and traditional Thai patterns. Therefore, the Thai Benjarong is a symbiosis of China, Japan, and Thailand and is a far cry from monocultural heritagisation that segregates one nation from another. More intriguingly, Billig also wrote about the idea of homeland familiarity, which falls within the context of heritagisation in Thai luxury retail developments, and explored in the next section.

2.2.4 Heritagisation through the Context of Thai Luxury Retail Development

From all the shared similarities between orientalism and heritagisation, this research views the process of orientalisation as a form of heritagisation. Heritagisation represents the overarching umbrella. The act of orientalising specifically focuses on culture with origins or locations in Asia and sits under heritagisation. Although the context of this research is Thailand, this does not automatically mean that the term "orientalising" should be used. If the same process is taking place in other non-Asian countries like Britain, in Walsh's (1992) case it is referred to as heritagisation, the context in Thailand should not be termed as 'orientalising' just because of the location. Moreover, Said's connotative idea of a divorce from the dominant culture in Orientalism (1994) is also not very complementary to the idea of heritagisation of this research. The heritagisation of Thai luxury retail developments possesses a juxtaposition of various cultures together in harmony that represents more of a marriage, a matrimonial celebration of cultures rather than a cultural divorce. This multicultural juxtaposition also constitutes a principle of heterotopia, a theory on an abstract space that will also be discussed further in section 2.4.1 on

Space, Place and Heterotopia. In addition, if the cultural production process of Thai luxury retail developments represents a Thai divorce to the West, Western brands would also not incorporate Thai heritage into their stores to correspond with concepts of Thai retail projects developed by Thai people. The West should also not be viewed antagonistically. As a result, the term 'heritagisation' was specifically selected as the keyword in the title of this research over the word 'orientalising.'

The specific idea of heritagisation of this research does not belong to this first branch of heritagisation, where an authority gives a status of heritage to a historical site in order to preserve it for the community. In Thailand, just like in France, the Ministry of Culture also designates places as heritage sites, and this research does not investigate whether the Ministry of Culture or UNESCO can classify and accredit Thai luxury retail developments as heritage sites. This research also does not claim that the developers have built historical heritage sites. Thai luxury retail developments are very new and are opposite to historical places made by people who had long gone from this earth. Thai luxury retail developments also do not require conservation and protection. In addition, most of the people who produced such developments should be and hopefully are still alive as this literature review is being written⁹ in order to conduct further research. Nevertheless, this research does not neglect every characteristic of the first branch of heritagisation because the idea of heritage belonging to the community remains important for this research. Neither the public nor the government may own Thai luxury retail developments in legal terms, as Thai luxury retail developments normally belong to companies owned by private individuals. However, as will be revealed in Chapter 4, Thai retail developments allow the public to access and experience an ideal concocted by the developer that seductively fulfils the collective desires of the Thai community through spaces inspired by, designed with, or decorated with Thai heritage, with no compulsory payment required for entry. Moreover, visitors of means can purchase not just international luxuries that come with their own ideals and values but also Thai luxuries that can support local businesses and even communities. The consumption of Thai luxuries can also realise an ideal based on Thai heritage that is collectively recognisable by the Thai community. This idea of a heritage belonging to a community will be explored more deeply in section 2.4.2 The Pseudo-Public Space, a Private Space's Disguise as a Public Space.

⁹ Including myself who worked on ICONSIAM

The heritagisation of this research is more aligned with the second branch of heritagisation. The invocation of Thai history allows Thai luxury retail developments to contain many tangible design similarities and the intangible inner spirit of Thai heritage sites. The tangible materialisation of the luxury retail development may be new, but the space also contains intangible cultural knowledge passed down through generations from Thai people who are no longer here. A design that features Thai heritage involves the invocation and incorporation of traditional Thai objects and cultural elements by a Thai developer. Thai objects and cultural designs possess their own collectively understood meanings and symbolisms. These cultural meanings and symbols project values and ideals based on the cultural knowledge that the Thai people of today have inherited from their ancestors. Some cultural knowledge behind certain Thai design features may not be fully comprehensible to modern-day Thai people but was understood by those in the past. Chapter 5 will disclose the intangible cultural meanings behind the selected inspirations from Thai heritage in the various design features that incorporated Thai heritage, as investigated in Chapter 4. As Karlstrom (2013) mentioned, the Laos people believed that the spirit of the old temple moved to the newly built temple on the exact same site. Thai people too share a similar spiritual belief to the people of Laos. What if the spirit of Thailand can manifest not only in the same type of building and in the same location that previously hosted the original structure, old temple to new temple? By conducting further philosophical thinking through this spiritual belief, the spirit of Thailand may also manifest in a different location and in a newly materialised form that does not typically embody Thai heritage, such as a luxury retail development. Moreover, the spirit of Thailand, or Thainess, can be combined with features of other cultures to create new luxuries within the retail development. This is, in essence, a very different kind of heritagisation that this research will investigate.

Academics have written about heritagisation and the luxury retail developments before, but not in the exact same manner as established above. It is also noteworthy that heritagisation does not constitute a new process in the production of luxury retail developments. Coëffé & Morice (2020) stated that during the early years of the Parisian department stores in the 19th Century and early 20th Century, French luxury retail establishments often imagined their spaces with the Orient. As a result, the Parisian department stores allowed the local Parisian population to escape from ordinary day-to-day life to an exotic foreign land. For example, Les Grands Magasins du Louvre hung oriental carpets around the walls of its department during the 1910s. Le Bon Marché also often created a vision of the Orient in its spatial decorations and its communications, such as an advertisement that depicted a Moroccan caravan transporting toys. However, in more recent times, Parisian department stores have reversed the heritagisation process by employing French

heritage instead. For instance, in 1975, Le Printemps became the first department to get its façade listed as a French historic monument, the first branch of heritagisation. Les Galeries Lafayette has also made its own “Heritage and Historical Archives” department and provided guided tours of the store’s historical features. The heritagisation/orientalising process during the early years of Parisian department stores did not match the heritagisation of this research because the French invoked a foreign history and culture. This research focuses on the locals’ invocation of local heritage. The turnaround with the heritagisation of French department stores with French heritage also does not exactly correspond with the context of this research. French department stores contain over a century of history that managers of French retailers can choose to invoke. On the other hand, the luxury retail developments in Thailand are very new in the world of retail, with no history of its own to utilise or register as heritage. Thai retail developers have to imagine Thai heritage by invoking Thailand’s past through the design of luxury retail developments.

Closer academic writings on a luxury retail development with this research’s concept of heritagisation are on the Canadian West Edmonton Mall’s re-creation of Christopher Columbus’s Santa Maria, foreign sceneries in the developments of Las Vegas’ casino resorts and the amalgamation of the Orient with the nostalgia of England at Liberty London department store. Williamson (2004) claimed that the replica of the Santa Maria at West Edmonton Mall incorporated a white-washed European imagined history of the American frontier into a modern-day creation without any integration of the native history. The West Edmonton Mall, a mega-mall constructed in the 1980s, featured a replica of the Santa Maria (Lowe & Wrigley, 2000), which was a product of its time, particularly reflecting the ideals of the developer. The Santa Maria represented an exotic object from the past, imbued with the glorified myth of Christopher Columbus as imposed by the Canadian education system at the time. According to Puk (1994), up until the 1990s, before the call to revise the history of Christopher Columbus taught in social studies lessons, Canadian students perceived Columbus as a great hero who discovered North America by exploring with a fleet of ships sponsored by Spain, despite the fact that Columbus landed in the Caribbean and never actually set foot on either U.S. or Canadian soil. Moreover, Puk claimed that the North American education system placed great importance on individuality, where every individual should be proud of themselves, and the story of Columbus as a brave hero who dared to sail into uncharted waters supported this value of individuality. Columbus is mythologised in North American culture to the point that towns, cities, and provinces in Canada are named in honour of Columbus, the hero (Pelta, 1991). For instance, British Columbia is a province named after Columbus, but it has no direct historical connection to him because the

province is located on the other side of North America, next to the Pacific Ocean, a body of water that Columbus never sailed. The replica of the Santa Maria represents a developer's creation that appealed to Canadian consumers. The Santa Maria was exotic, while at the same time relevant to local consumers because of the cultural knowledge taught in schools. When a local Canadian climbed aboard the Santa Maria, they didn't just feel an exotic experience from being on board a Spanish ship but could also feel like their hero, whose bravery led to the mythologised 'discovery' of America. The developer could have chosen any foreign ship to invoke a sense of exoticism, but they intentionally chose the Santa Maria, the largest ship of Columbus's fleet, to culturally engage the people of Canada. Despite the Santa Maria's historical provenance not belonging to the city of Edmonton, Canada. The choice to invoke this specific ship to fulfil an intangible ideal through a culturally and collectively recognised knowledge among Canadians partially corresponded to the research's notion of heritagisation. Williamson (2004) also wrote of other design features with heritage in the West Edmonton Mall, such as a 19th Century European-inspired boulevard and a New Orleans themed street. These examples again represent the invocation of foreign heritage just for the exotic experience. Thus, the Santa Maria constituted just a small, isolated example that partially correlated with the research's idea of heritagisation in a mega mall by not relying solely on exoticism, but also fostering an ideal that was locally recognisable, comprehensible, and applicable to Canadians. However, in Thailand, Thai developers have incorporated Thai heritage in various design features throughout luxury retail developments. As a result, the scale of the heritagisation at West Edmonton Mall pales in comparison to the case studies of this research. The immense scale also represents a quintessential characteristic of luxury that will be discussed later in section 2.3.1 on the tangibility and intangibility of luxury.

Sharr (2017) discussed a period of time from the 1990s to early 2000s when developers utilised exotic 'scenography' in the design of luxury mega-resorts in Las Vegas that combined hotels, casinos and retail, such as the re-creation of Paris's Eiffel Tower and the incorporation of the Belle époque facade into a Parisian complex or the duplication of the Venetian architecture like Piazza San Marco and Rialto Bridge and the water landscape of Venice with artificial canals filled with gondolas. These examples again represent the employment of foreign cultures in the heritagisation process. More interestingly, Sharr also provided an example of a resort called New York-New York that replicated iconic New York buildings such as the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building into a resort that resembles a miniature New York City. This example contrasted with previous examples because the US developers invoked its own local culture into a development. However, this example of New York-New York still doesn't exactly fit with the context of this research because the heritagisation process leads to the embodiment of another

faraway metropolis within the country, rather than the city in which the development is located. The design process that draws upon the local cultural heritage of the city where the development is located represents the specific concept of heritagisation focused on by this research. It concerns luxury retail development that does not appear exotically out of place within the cultural and historical context of the city it calls home, in line with the idea of a homeland mentioned by Billig (1995). Las Vegas actually had two Wild West themed casinos called The El Rancho Vegas and the Final Frontier built during its early casino days of Las Vegas around the 1940s and 1950s, but these resorts faded away with the competition of exotic, culturally themed mega-resorts (Schwartz, 2001). Hypothetically, if Las Vegas still possessed a luxury casino resort complex called Vegas-Vegas that incorporated the desert landscape of Nevada and its Western cowboy heritage into the design of a mega-complex, this example would have complied with the research's notion of heritagisation.

The prominent exemplary example of a retail development with the same context of heritagisation as this research remains Liberty Department Store in London. Liberty boasted about its heritage and the design of its development on its official website, with a dedicated section called 'Our Heritage', by stating,

"A realisation of Arthur's (Last name is Liberty) original vision, our magnificent Great Marlborough Street shop followed in 1924. Our beautiful building was designed by Edwin T. Hall and his son Edwin S. Hall. In 1922, the builders Messrs Higgs & Hill were given a lumpsum of £198,000 to construct it, which **they did from the timbers of two ancient 'three-decker' battle ships.** Records show more than 24,000 cubic feet of ships timbers were used including their decks **now being the shop flooring: The HMS Impregnable – built from 3040 100-year-old oaks from the New Forest - and the HMS Hindustan, which measured the length and height of our Liberty building.**

*The 1920s was a time of **Tudor revival, considered the most crafted and English of architecture**, so the shop was engineered around three atriums. **Designed to feel like a home**, each atrium was surrounded by smaller rooms, complete with fireplaces and furnishings. Ever the purveyor of craftsmanship, Arthur Liberty had a furniture workshop in Archway, London. Run by Lawrence Turner, the workshop produced **Liberty Arts and Crafts furniture and the intricately carved panels and pillars found throughout the store. The craftsmen allowed his fantasy, ensuring every ornament was a one-off - paving the way for discovery.**"* (Liberty, n.d., paras. 3-4)

Through these two paragraphs alone, Liberty presented several key ideas relevant not just to the research's notion of heritagisation but also to concepts of luxury and utopia, which will be discussed further in sections 2.3 and 2.4. Firstly, the research's heritagisation can be seen from the combination of the first sentence in each paragraph. The owner (the developer), whose name referenced a mythical king of his nation, chose to invoke an architectural style that was in vogue at the time. This style represented an ideal of his nation because it was the most crafted and the most English (the local cultural heritage). Adburgham (2023) also claimed that the Tudor inspiration was derived from the founder's intention to link Liberty to the prosperous golden age of Elizabethan England, with its historic trades among guilds and the home of John Llewellyn, the director and head of the silk department. Called Ashwell Court, it was a new home that attempted to revive Tudor architecture during that time.

The idea of home also constitutes a quintessential element in the invocation of local heritage that is familiar to the local population. It is not just about the design features that reference a house, like small rooms, fireplaces, and furnishings mentioned on Liberty's website, nor the actual house discussed by Adburgham. Despite providing the cosiness of a home, the overall size of the building is titanic in comparison to a standard house (unless we are considering an English aristocratic stately home) with the length and height of a three-decker battleship. The Tudor-revival architecture also provides an abstract sense of home rather than just the physical manifestation of a home. This is an architectural style that is more familiar to the people of London while also linking back to the great Elizabethan age, a glorious period of English history taught in schools, a cultural knowledge relatable to the local residents of London that they can also take pride in.

A time gap of three centuries may exist between Elizabethan England and 1920s England, but that doesn't mean remnants of the Tudor past do not exist in modern London. A city changes over time with the creation of new buildings and public projects. However, even in July 2024, when I searched 'list of Tudor buildings in London' online, the first result was a list by Chesher (2023), a London tour guide and blogger, who listed buildings such as the Staple Inn, which features a façade constructed in 1586, St Bartholomew's Gatehouse, built in 1595, and the Queen's House in the Tower of London, a national and city landmark. Tudor architecture still forms part of the scenography of London, and it is an architectural style that the people of London have grown up with. The revival of Tudor architecture can also provide a degree of familiarity, allowing it to be considered part of home, beyond just the exoticism of time.

This abstract idea of home can also be applied to cities like Bangkok and Ayutthaya, the two cities featured in the research's case studies. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.1 The Shining Temples and Buddhas, Thailand boasts around 24,000 temples and monasteries. Particularly in the capital city and the former capital city, one doesn't have to go far to experience traditional Thai architecture, which is prominently displayed in temples. Bangkok, like London, is a modern historic city, where skyscrapers and new buildings of glass, steel, and concrete contrast with ancient sites, such as temples adorned with gold, stained glass, and vibrant tiled roofs. ICONSIAM itself is located near Suwan Temple, just a five-minute walk away. This temple can also be seen from the road before reaching ICONSIAM. Retail developments such as Siam Paragon and Central World are located right next to Pathum Wanaram Temple. Ayutthaya is similar to Bangkok. The historical ruins of temples can be seen next to newer temples built after the sack of Ayutthaya, as well as modern-day townhouses, shops, and residences. A modern public hospital of glass and concrete is just an eight-minute walk from a historical site. Thus, the local Thai population who grew up in Bangkok or Ayutthaya is accustomed to Thai heritage, which has been ingrained in the scenography of each city. Thai developers did not invoke Thai heritage in luxury retail developments for the exoticism of time to appeal to the local population, but rather to create a sense of an ideal home. The idea of the ideal home will be explored further in this literature review.

Apart from writing about Arthur Liberty's choice to employ Tudor-revival architecture to fulfil his vision and ideal, the intentional decision by present-day Liberty to focus on the use of timbers from warships in the construction of the building also plays on another form of national pride. A warship can represent more than just a physical military vessel. It can also be a symbol of the United Kingdom as a great power through its navy. Moreover, the idea of upcycling materials appeals to the modern-day value of sustainability. Imagine standing on the wooden floors of Liberty, armed with this historical knowledge, or hearing a Liberty staff member recount it. Such a narrative fosters a connection to the warships that once defended the shores of the Empire, potentially evoking a sense of national pride and patriotism. Liberty also highlights the story of these warships on its website to emphasise its English heritage, further complementing its Tudor-revival architecture.

The navy and the British Empire are also integral to the identity of Liberty. Cheang (2017) also discussed Liberty's embodiment of the British Empire with its Tudor-style architecture and its role as a retailer of oriental goods, especially Chinese merchandise brought about by the vast maritime

trade network of Imperial Britain. Lysack (2015) too implied the idea of Liberty's as the representation of luxury and the British Empire with not just exotic oriental goods from abroad but also oriental goods commonly seen within Britain. This linkage of the navy and the nation's maritime trade to oriental goods is also central to the research's concept of heritagisation, as Liberty was a luxury retail development that featured traditional local architecture and sold imported exotic goods. A co-existence between the West and East can happen under one roof, unlike the idea of a cultural divide mentioned by Said and Billig, as discussed in the previous Section 2.2.3. In the context of Thai luxury retail developments, and vice versa to Liberty, a retail environment that features Thai heritage can also sell merchandise from Western brands. A retail development in Thailand doesn't always have to visually represent the West and promote only Western ideals. A Thai development can also promote locally created cultural heritage, similar to Liberty's Arts and Crafts movement, the final paramount facet of heritagisation seen in Liberty.

In the last two sentences of the second paragraph quoted from Liberty's website, Liberty purposefully called attention to the Arts and Crafts Movement and its patronage of English craftsmen, including Laurence Turner, who was also an Englishman and who set up a workshop in London to produce furniture and objects for the interior decoration of Liberty. According to Luckman (2012), the Arts and Crafts Movement in England advocated for the support of English artisans, whose skilled labour and passion for their crafts represented the ideal workforce, work life, and purpose in life, countering the disappearance of rural craftsmanship and the harsh working conditions of factories brought about by the Industrial Revolution. Furthermore, Luckman also discussed British patriotism in the Arts and Crafts Movement, noting its origin in Britain and how it drew inspiration from nature in Britain to proclaim that Britain, too, had the capability to produce ornate handcrafted goods to compete with artisans from Japan or Germany, the leading sources of handmade crafts at the time. Therefore, Liberty did not just look English with its Tudor revival architecture, the exterior shell that invoked a glorified past, but it was internally English by immersing its environment with handcrafted adornments made by English craftsmen who lived in London for the people of London. In addition, these decorations, which financially supported English labour, existed among the imported luxuries from overseas retailed by Liberty. This co-existence between the local and the exotic represented a showcase that English crafts could also exist on par with, and be seen as a luxury like, exotic goods from abroad. A Londoner could purchase imported luxuries while also taking pride in English craftsmanship by experiencing and marvelling at the interior produced by their fellow city men at the same time. In the same manner as the English Arts and Crafts Movement and Liberty, a luxury retail development that invokes

Thai heritage can also place its culture, its nation, and its crafts on the same level as foreign brands that retail in the same space.

In the previous five paragraphs, it is evident that Liberty's heritagisation process exemplifies the specific notion of heritagisation discussed in this research in numerous ways. Liberty's choice of the Tudor-revival style connects its space to a golden age of England, representing a local developer's invocation of their own heritage to evoke an idealised, familiar homeland. Moreover, Tudor revival architecture doesn't represent an empty shell, its interior also financially supported and showcased local luxuries from a workshop in London, the city that Liberty also called home. The heritagisation of Liberty allowed local luxuries to thrive among their exotic counterparts without the segregation between East and West, as viewed through the theoretical lens of Said's Orientalism, nor the "us against them" through the theoretical lens of Billig's Banal Nationalism. Liberty focused on its local heritage from its original inception to represent the land it calls home, yet it has also been able to accommodate foreign cultures into this ideal home under the same roof. Liberty also constitutes a rare example among historical luxury retail developments, which tended to draw on the exoticism of foreign cultures to achieve a sense of luxury.

Finally, existing literatures on the heritagisation of Thai luxury retail developments remain inadequate. Academics have mostly written about design features with Thai heritage in ICONSIAM by focusing on consumption and tourism. Lunchaprasith et al. (2020) wrote that since the 1960s, the Thai government started to promote the traditional floating market as a tourist destination after the modernisation of Thailand caused floating markets to decline and disappear. This promotion resulted in a constantly growing popularity of the floating market among tourists. The floating market has also become one of the Thai national symbols. In Thailand, there are now many forms of floating markets. This includes the themed simulated floating markets created by retail developers, such as the floating market inside ICONSIAM. Cheshmehzangi (2021) also wrote about the floating market in ICONSIAM in just one paragraph by describing the indoor floating market at ICONSIAM as a new form of traditional Thai culture. The indoor floating market at ICONSIAM constitutes only one manifestation of heritage and these writings possess no deeper insights on the production process of such heritage. Kammeier (2019) also mentioned Bangkok as a major tourist destination filled with shopping malls of various sizes, with images of ICONSIAM and a short description comparing the design of the main building of ICONSIAM to a crystal. This writing also lacks insight into the heritagisation process at ICONSIAM because, in reality, the inspiration of the crystal building described by Kammeier actually derived from Thai heritage. Guo

(2020) also investigated factors in determining consumers' decision to visit a mall in Bangkok and wrote about several alluring features of ICONSIAM, such as the collection of luxury stores, the indoor floating market and the breathtaking riverside location. However, Guo did not mention how some of the luxury stores actually incorporated Thai heritage nor how malls in Bangkok do not normally situate along the river like other major heritage sites in Bangkok. As a result, the existing literature does not discuss heritagisation of Thai luxury retail development in the manner of this research. Finally, it is also worth mentioning that Kammeier (2019), Guo (2020) and Cheshmehzangi (2021) are foreigners who wrote about Thailand. However, the process of heritagisation relies on cultural knowledge, which in turn requires cultural awareness and understanding of Thailand that foreigners may not possess. This research is also not about foreigners' views and tourists' perceptions of features with Thai heritage in luxury retail developments. This research focuses on local insights and understanding into the values and ideals in producing a luxury retail development with Thai heritage. The notions of values and ideals also lead to the next body of knowledge on luxury.

2.3 Luxury

2.3.1 Tangibility and Intangibility of Luxury Similar to Heritagisation

Davallon (2011) and Karlstrom (2013) both mentioned that heritagisation consisted of both intangible and tangible qualities, where the intangible culture required a certain level of tangible materiality. In existing knowledge on luxury, luxury too possesses both intangibility and tangibility. In one of the earliest theories on luxuries, Veblen (1899) termed the phrase 'conspicuous consumption', where the elite had to constantly obtain a variety of items desirable by society, especially rare objects, to stand out and to set themselves apart from the rest of the population. These tangible items also fulfilled the elite's ideals of the superior class in society. Up until contemporary times, Brun & Castelli (2013) mentioned that many people still perceive luxury as tangible materialistic goods such as designer clothes, luxury cars, and high jewelleryes. These goods signified wealth, status and an elite way of life. On the other hand, Brun & Castelli also claimed that luxury no longer just represented material goods exclusive to the very few. Nowadays, more people beyond the elite can access luxury, even without the means to purchase luxury goods. Experiences, the intangible, in the forms of shopping atmosphere, shopping experiences, and services are allowing access to luxury to surpass the acquisition of worldly material goods, the tangible.

Chandon et al. (2016) termed tangible rare expensive material goods for the happy few as 'traditional luxury'. In contrast to traditional luxury, Chandon et al. explained that 'modern luxury' focused on the intangible experiences opened to anyone. Kauppinen-Räsänen et al. (2019) also concluded a new wave of luxury as personal experiences. For instance, Kauppinen-Räsänen et al. revealed an intangible luxury experience in the form of temporary special moments that were created by immersion in one's environment to allow an escape from reality, time and place. The act of shopping could also create special moments of escapism. Holmqvist et al. (2020) also mentioned the escape from the ordinary everyday as a kind of special moment which in turn constituted a form of intangible luxury. Finally, Thomsen et al. (2020) classified luxury into two polarising categories: 'traditional luxury' and 'unconventional luxury'. In the same manner as Veblen (1899), Brun & Castelli (2013) and Chandon et al. (2016), Thomsen et al. (2020) also associated 'traditional luxury' with owning rare, premium, high-quality products that only very limited few could afford. In this traditional sense of luxury, people have to possess tangible luxury objects and display them as status symbols in society. These people could obtain objects that were not within reach for most people. Lastly, Thomsen et al. also defined experiences accessible by many people in society as 'unconventional luxury'. An example of unconventional luxury is a special moment that allows an escape from usual day-to-day life.

Brun & Castelli (2013), Chandon et al. (2016), Kauppinen-Räsänen et al. (2019), Holmqvist et al. (2020) and Thomsen et al. (2020) all separated luxury into the traditional and the new. However, luxury should not be seen in such a black and white, polarising manner. Luxury in many contexts, especially in relation to architecture, retail and space, always consists of the tangible and the intangible. Furthermore, the intangible luxury experience may not be as modern or unconventional as claimed in recent academic writings, because the tangibility and intangibility of luxury have co-existed for centuries. From the analysis of several types of luxurious buildings throughout history, Condello (2014) concluded that the architecture of luxury is the celebration of excess with rare materials, ornamentation, innovative architectural features, immense scale and exoticism from the locals' perspective. All of these characteristics also provided an ultimate experience for people of all social standings to immediately escape to their fantasies. For instance, Condello wrote that during the 15th Century, Leon Battista Alberti's design of the Santa Maria Novella in Florence welcomed exoticism of the East by incorporating imported stones from Egypt and Arabia, a luxury at the time. Furthermore, the public could freely marvel at the excess from exotic lands. Condello (2014) also wrote about two luxury retail developments: the Carson, Pirie and Scott Department Store in Chicago and the Daslu Department Store in Brazil. Opened in 1898, Carson, Pirie and Scott Department Store emulated the luxury of Europe by featuring a

richly ornamented floral metal façade in full display for the public. Carson, Pirie and Scott Department Store also became the first mixed-use luxury retail development as it also featured a 12-storey skyscraper, another form of architectural luxury, right above the store. As for the Daslu Department Store in Brazil, Condello wrote that the design featured neo-European ornamentations instead of local Brazilian designs. Both department stores allow people to escape from their homeland to Europe, a foreign land.

Although Condello did not use the term ‘heritagisation’ with the design of luxury architecture, examples discussed above demonstrated the process of heritagisation, as discussed in section 2.2.1. Heritagisation can also lead to the creation of a special moment, as in a sense of exoticism and escapism, to achieve a luxury experience. Furthermore, the writing of Coëffé & Morice (2020) on the early days of Parisian department stores’ utilisation of the Orient to theme their environment also adhered to Condello’s theory on the architecture of luxury. The early Parisian department stores created an immersive experience with exotic materials that allowed anyone a sense of escapism to foreign Oriental lands. This sense of escapism created special temporary moments and made a retail development luxurious. Condello also did not mention that luxury retail developments were one of the early examples of accessible luxuries, which constituted a key characteristic of “modern/unconventional luxuries” as claimed by Brun & Castelli (2013) and Thomsen et al. (2020). Open access to luxuries and special moments were key success factors for luxury retail developments since the dawn of shopping in the 19th Century. Miller (1981) wrote that early department stores during the mid-19th Century, starting with Le Bon Marché, ‘democratised luxury’ by allowing anyone to enter for free without the requirement of purchase. Consumers immersed an array of merchandise in various departments located inside a palatial building with themed displays and decorations like a theatre. This theatrically theme in a grand spacious space allowed a sense of escapism to a fantasy exotic land for consumers. This unique business model of the department store was revolutionary at the time, as only small shops existed beforehand. Lancaster (2000) also wrote that small-scale shops did not provide consumers with anonymity and enforced purchase. At Le Bon Marché, consumers freely explored incognito and experienced luxury items without having to purchase or own any material goods. The department store became successful and spread to other major cities of the world because it facilitated a dream and democratised luxury. The writings of Miller and Lancaster also corresponded with Condello’s definition of the architecture of luxury. As a result, special moments, the intangible luxury, have co-existed with tangible luxuries for a very long time and since the 19th Century in the case of luxury retail developments.

Even a modern-day example of an unconventional intangible luxury experience discussed in academia requires a certain level of tangibility. For example, Özbölük (2020) found that research participants who rented million-dollar properties once reserved for billionaires and celebrities in the most exclusive neighbourhoods of Los Angeles via Airbnb Plus experienced special moments. In modern times, there is no denying that new services are empowering the masses with the means to easily experience material possessions once limited to only the ownership of the rich. However, in the case of the rental of Airbnb Plus properties in Los Angeles, an intangible luxury experience would not have been possible without the exclusive homes of the super-rich, the tangible material luxury. Furthermore, it is important to mention that the material goods do not have to be rare, expensive or exclusive in order to experience luxury. In the research by Kauppinen-Räsänen et al. (2019), participants mentioned small bites of chocolate and facial treatment as luxury experiences. Even an affordable item, such as a piece of chocolate, the tangible, can provide a sense of luxury, the intangible. The facial might be a service, an intangible luxury, but there are material goods involved to allow this luxury experience to happen, from the actual skincare products used in the facial treatment to the built environment where the facial takes place. Von Wallpach et al. (2020) also found that research participants classified tiny special moments in life as a luxury experience, such as time to read a book, time to enjoy gadgets, time to take photos of pets and an opportunity to get together in the backyard. Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie (2011) also mentioned having time as an intangible luxury. One may consider free time to be a very saturated form of intangible luxury. Nevertheless, free time alone may not lead to a luxury experience because it has to be spent with certain objects or in a specific setting, which are both tangibles. As a result, luxury requires a certain level of materiality to experience intangible luxury. This is in the same manner as heritagisation, as mentioned by Davallon (2011) and Karlstrom (2013), because heritage also contains the intangible culture within but expresses out through the tangible materialisation.

The intangibility of luxury consists of more than just the experience of special moments. More importantly, luxury plays a role in the realisation of desires and ideals. However, Veblen (1899) focused on the consumption of material possessions, the tangible. This very early writing also revealed that luxury fulfilled the social ideal of class, an intangible aspect of luxury. Brun & Castelli (2013) also stated that intangible luxury experiences provided people with an elevated standard of life, which may also fulfil personal ideals and not just social ideals. Berry (1994) used the word 'desire' throughout the entire book and associated desire with the idea of luxury. Moreover, Berry discussed the desire for a magnificent life better than the life of their predecessors as a luxury. This represented a strong desire for an ideal life. Berry also stated that the desire for luxury was

socially constructed. Danziger (2005) also stated that the desire for self-actualisation influenced the choice of luxury consumption. The consumption of luxury was also expressed and revealed the ideal self. Thus, luxury involves the creation of ideals like heritagisation. Ideal represents another important component of this research that will be discussed further in section 2.4.3 Utopia, the City and the Luxury Retail Development. Ko et al. (2019) also stated that luxury consumption reflects the personal values of the consumers, and Pandelaere & Shrum (2020) argued that luxury fulfilled the concept of oneself. Moreover, luxury also conveys the desired identities of individuals. Cristini et al. (2017) found that luxury deals with the desire for meaningfulness and supreme excellence. Excellence often goes hand in hand with the image of exclusivity, even though the luxury may not actually be exclusive. In addition, Cristini et al. stated that luxury fulfils desires but also leaves consumers constantly desiring more and more. Kosevi (2015) also stated that luxury is excessive desire.

Desire constructs the understanding and identity of luxury. Correspondingly, desire has made luxury highly personal, subjective and consumer/consumption-centric. As this research focuses on the production of luxury rather than the consumption of luxury, it is also important to comprehend the connection between desire from the consumption of luxury to the production of luxury. Armitage & Roberts (2016) explained that luxury contains no glossary of clearly designated meanings and instead argues for an ever-changing 'Spirit of Luxury' that is based on sociocultural values that relate to both the production and consumption of luxury. This spirit of luxury also combines culture, the past, innovation, philosophy and ideologies. Kapferer & Valette-Florence (2016) found that luxury brands contain 'dream value' with which they seduce consumers. For instance, a luxury brand such as Louis Vuitton uses images of glamour fuelled by celebrities, art and its designers to fuel the dreams of consumers. Kapferer & Valette-Florence also concluded that nowadays luxury brands should possess values to dream for and not plainly rely on exclusivity nor the tangible material aspects of luxury. Seo & Buchanan-Oliver (2015) mentioned the image of luxury brands as a dynamic process in expressing unique, social, cultural and individual meanings for consumers. Roper et al. (2013) stated that society constructs the very idea of luxury because luxury too relies on cultural knowledge of a group of people to be realised as luxury. From the interpretation of cultural knowledge, people give values and meanings to luxury, too. Therefore, referring back to theories on section 2.2 on heritagisation, luxury production in itself constitutes a form of cultural production. Mármol et al. (2015) and Carter et al. (2020) both claimed the utilisation of the past for a better ideal world. The past constitutes passed-down knowledge and, in accordance with Patterson (2014), knowledge contains values within that express the ideals and desires of people. As a result, luxury production and heritagisation can happen at the same

time. More importantly, heritagisation can also create luxury. Finally, people have used heritage to create luxury before.

2.3.2 The Use of Heritage by the Luxury Industry

The utilisation of heritage has been an established business practice in the industry to achieve luxury status. Aaker (1997) stated that luxury brands, in comparison to mainstream brands, depend heavily on credibility. This credibility provides trust and a superior image, which justify the premium price. Moreover, a credible, trustworthy brand image often takes time to build. Time in itself is a luxury, as stated by Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie (2011). Aaker (2004) then explicitly identified heritage as an asset for brands to leverage into brand image and credibility. The use of heritage also means a brand's investigation of the past to find the origin of its success, which could be used to define and redefine the brand in contemporary times, the very definition of heritagisation as discussed in section 2.2 on heritagisation. Thomas (2008) also stated that luxury brands originally succeeded by creating exclusive exquisite products that took an abundance of time to be produced by well-trained artisans. Thomas then criticised the fact that luxury brands still use the image of quality craftsmanship as a part of their heritage to create an image/illusion of luxury. However, mass production has replaced traditional craftsmanship to fulfil the constant global international expansion of luxury brands. Wiedmann et al. (2012) also stated that heritage continues to remain crucial for luxury in contemporary times because heritage signifies an image of depths, authenticity and credibility for a brand. Even innovative luxury brands with no heritage of their own, such as Tesla, still use heritage. Andrews (2013) revealed that Tesla also uses the past for its image by referencing the name of Nikola Tesla, the pioneer of electricity, whose history befits the idea of the electrical innovation that the brand sells, despite no direct connection between Nikola Tesla and the founder of the brand itself. Hypothetically, if Tesla was named after its founder, it should have been called 'Elon' or 'Musk' instead. Thus, heritage has been synonymous with luxury and vice versa.

The use of heritage also has many contexts within the luxury industry. Firstly, Dion (2022) distinguished between heritage brands and brands with heritage. For Dion, heritage brands constitute brands that intentionally choose to invoke their heritage as a value of the brand. However, a brand with heritage represents a brand that has been established for a very long time but may decide not to use its rich history as a value. For instance, Louis Vuitton constituted a heritage brand because it invokes its image as a pioneer of travel since 1854. On the other hand,

examples of brands with heritage include L'Oréal and Hugo Boss. Although L'Oréal was established in 1909, it focuses on ideal excellence and innovative beauty products. As for Hugo Boss, the brand was founded in 1924 and had business deals with the Nazi regime. Thus, Hugo Boss does not use its past. Dion then further explained that the use of the brand's own history constitutes corporate heritage. However, not every brand may have been established for a long enough time to contain corporate heritage. In this situation, cultural heritage can be used instead. Cultural heritage constitutes a synthesis of the past in continuity to represent people or nations. Dion provided the example of Shang Xia launched by Hermès in 2008, where the brand utilised traditional Chinese culture and craftsmanship into a present-day design. Finally, Dion provided two examples of heritagisation by heritage brands: 'brand copying' and 'retro-branding'. Brand copying meant to simply duplicate the corporate history of the brand, such as the design, without adapting it for the present. On the other hand, retro-branding requires the adaptation of the past into the present-day context. Similar to Dion's retro-branding, Kapferer (2014) also mentioned that luxury brands are transforming their heritage for the future. Cooper et al. (2015) also discussed the importance for luxury brands to make heritage relevant in the present-day context and used Burberry as one of the research's case studies. Burberry started out as a quality outerwear maker. Burberry's outerwear was also often associated with iconic British people such as the trench coat for Lord Kitchener during World War I. However, the fortune of the brand declined during the 90s when its management decided to scrap the outerwear division, which resulted in the brand's loss of heritage, uniqueness and appeal. In the successful attempt to revive the brand, Christopher Bailey, the brand's newly appointed creative director in 2001, went back to iconic collections of Burberry in the past, such as the trench coat, and redesigned these iconic garments for contemporary fashion. Modern-day British people who personified traditional Britishness were also used like Lord Frederick Windsor. All of these examples also corresponded with the second branch of heritagisation, the invocation of the past in the modern-day context. This invocation of the past also creates an ideal of luxury.

Academics have also written about the usage of heritage in luxury retail stores. König et al. (2016) wrote that the tailors at Savile Row stood out from other tailors around the world because of their heritage. These tailor shops at Savile Row often exhibit old order books, old fabric sample books, and even garments no longer worn in the present time, such as breeches. These items have no other functions except for the display of heritage. Moreover, the example of Savile Row's use of heritage also contained no adaption of heritage. The heritage came as it was. In examples of adapting heritage for the present in luxury retail, Dion & Arnould (2011) mentioned that many luxury brands started out as couture houses, and these brands still use their new haute couture

collections in their display for admiration rather than consumption. Haute couture also links a brand to its heritage as the original authority on fashion. Luxury brands also often 'mythologised' their founders in their original stores, the first store of the luxury brand. The private lives of founders who are no longer living in this world from their personal taste and space are used as images, designs and symbols for the brand. For instance, the entrance of the brand Dior's Avenue Montaigne flagship store showed a video of the founder Dior's private villa in Normandy. Chanel, the brand, also made a replica of the founder Chanel's living room. Sales staff also learned stories of their founders and told these stories to customers like Dior's love of lilac and how the lilac has appeared in the brand. Dion & Borraz (2015) also termed original stores of luxury brands 'heritage stores', the pinnacle of stores for luxury brands. The heritagisation of luxury brands' heritage stores has also been termed 'sacralisation' because sacred places often represent places of origin for the identity of a social group. These heritage stores also embody the birthplace of the brand's identity and history. Therefore, a heritage store possesses the quality of a sacred place. The sacralisation process contains four key characteristics of Places, Myths, Rituals and Prohibitions. For heritage stores of luxury brands, places represent where the history of the brand appeared within the store, a place within the place, such as a founder's home or the haute couture atelier. Myths imply recognisable features and symbols of the brand that appear in the architecture, which may circulate through other locations such as Dior grey, the signature colour of the brand, created by Dior himself. Rituals mean the enforcement of certain rules that people must follow, or an important activity, such as the process of buying a very exclusive item at the store or a haute couture fashion show. Prohibitions constitute places within the store that the public may not enter without authorisation, such as the atelier or the private zone once reserved for the founder of the brand. The idea and the characteristics of spatial sanctity will be deeply explored in section 2.4.1 Space, Place and Heterotopia.

2.3.3 The Luxury through the Context of the Thai Luxury Retail Developments

This research frames a very different idea of luxury. Said (1994) mentioned that mankind always strives to create its own cultural identity, and this research investigates this constant desire to create cultural identity through luxury retail developments. The luxury retail developments of this research are not luxurious just because of special moments (Kauppinen-Räsänen et al., 2019; Thomsen et al., 2020; Von Wallpach et. al., 2020) that take visitors to a foreign exotic land (Condello, 2014), in the same manner as other luxury retail developments in the past (Miller, 1981; Lancaster, 2000; Condello, 2014; Coëffé & Morice, 2020). This research also reiterates again that it does not focus on tourist consumption because the Thai design of the developments would

create special moments of exotic escapism for tourists anyway. In theory, tourists would consider Thai retail establishments to be luxurious. However, the heritagisation process and the tangible materialisation of the culture are creating an ideal world (Mármol et al., 2015; Carter et al., 2020) for a superior life that is beyond the situation that exists currently (Berry, 1994). In the context of this research, the developer produced a representation of a dreamed and ideal land. This ideal land is not fulfilling the ideal of self on an individualistic personal level (Danziger, 2005; Brun & Castelli, 2013; Pandelaere & Shrum, 2020) nor the ideal of a social class (Veblen, 1899; Brun & Castelli, 2013). This ideal land represents the fulfilment of a collective communal social ideal of a nation rather than class. An ideal that can appeal to the masses of local Thai citizens to fulfil collective desires and aspirations. However, in alignment with Baudrillard's (1998) critiques of modern-day consumption as a vicious cycle that keeps people poor, Cristini et al. (2017) stated that luxury fulfils desires but also leaves consumers constantly desiring more and more. As a result, luxury retail developments with Thai heritage are luxurious because heritage can create special moments that transport visitors to an ideal motherland rather than an exotic foreign land, but this luxuriousness still perpetuate perpetual consumption.

The heritagisation process constitutes a social construction of this ideal luxury land. As discussed in section 2.2.4 on the heritagisation of this research, in the same manner as Dion (2022), the Thai luxury retail developments are very new with no corporate heritage of their own. As a result, Thai luxury retail developments have to draw on cultural heritage to create this kind of luxury. Many examples discussed in section 2.3.2 on the use of heritage by luxury industry except for Shang Xia by Hermès were also about the invocation of corporate heritage rather than cultural heritage in the heritagisation process. This research will contribute to the use of local cultural heritage in the production of local luxury retail spaces, rather than production of luxury brands, which is lacking in the current academic understanding of luxury. Furthermore, writings on luxury and the use of heritage have focused on luxury brands and their stores rather than the luxury retail developments. For Dion (2022), there are two starkly different types of heritagisation through corporate heritage: brand copying and retro-branding. Luxury heritage brands often choose one path over the other in the heritagisation process. In the context of luxury retail development, the situation may not be as black and white. The heritagisation with cultural heritage may require both “heritage-copying” and “retro-heritage creation” to design and materialise a luxury retail development with heritage. For “heritage-copying”, heritage may be imitated without any adaptation. On the other hand, in the case of “retro-heritage creation”, heritage may have to be reinterpreted and adapted into the modern-day context. Dion & Borraz (2015) defined the key characteristics of a heritage store as the origin of a corporate luxury brand. Following on the logic

of heritagisation as discussed in section 2.2.4 on the heritagisation through the context of Thai luxury retail development where the culture, the passed-down knowledge through generations, can transcend into a new creation, the luxury retail development through its ideal Thailand may also represent reincarnations for the origin of Thai culture. This research will also contribute to the defining characteristics of this ideal Thailand, which also represents a form of Utopianism that leads to the next discussion on the Utopolis.

2.4 Utopolis

2.4.1 Space, Place and Heterotopia

As the main context is luxury retail development, this research also requires the understanding of theories on space and place. Firstly, it is important to establish that space and place also possess tangible and intangible characteristics like heritagisation (Davallon, 2011; Karlstrom, 2013) and luxury (Brun & Castelli, 2013; Chandon et al., 2016; Thomsen et al., 2020). Starting with space, Lefebvre (1991) demonstrated the idea of tangibility and intangibility by arguing that space constitutes not just an object nor an object to hold things, as all spaces not only manifest the physical environment, but also a mental and social field. In this sense, a space represents not just the matter that materialises the space, the tangible, but also the codes and symbolisms made by humans in the production process, the intangible. More importantly, the production of codes and symbolism precedes the actual production of the space itself. Once a space has been created, it has already been preconditioned with codes and symbolisms as a system of meaning through forms, sets of relations and boundaries that signal the reality of society and the institution that the space represents. Furthermore, humans also use values in the production of codes and symbolism because humans are social beings. Lefebvre's space production process aligns with the idea of invoking symbols in the heritagisation process discussed in section 2.2.1 (Davallon, 2011; Heinich, 2011; Mármol et al., 2015). Moreover, as argued in section 2.2.2, values inhabit cultural knowledge (Bourdieu, 1993; Patterson, 2014) and as mentioned in section 2.3.1, they can also lead to the production of luxury (Armitage & Roberts, 2016; Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016). Therefore, space production also represents a form of cultural production and heritagisation that not only produces luxury but also space.

A "place" in the same manner as a space also possesses both tangible and intangible qualities. Hubbard (2005), influenced by Lefebvre, also made the idea of a place very clear by claiming that

a certain form of space transforms into a place through the naming and the identification of unique imaginations related to certain social activities. Tuan (1979), as a geographer, claimed a place as a locatable space and unlike a space, people often tried to describe the 'spirit' of a place or the 'sense' of place, which represented a personality that existed within a place. This personality required symbolism that people developed and associated with the place through time. This symbolism created through time again corresponded with the idea of culture as inherited knowledge through generations (Bourdieu, 1993; Patterson, 2014). The idea of a spirit within a place also corresponded with Karlstrom's (2013) idea of heritage containing an inner spirit that manifests through the tangible physical materiality. When combining the two definitions of place by Tuan (1979) and Hubbard (2005), a place constitutes a location with a name, distinct activities and an inner spirit containing symbolisms and imagination developed through time by society. When the name of a place comes up, people do not just think of the physicality that defines space. The name also provokes and invokes the inner imaginations and symbolisms related to the space. As a result, a place itself constitutes both the identifiable tangible physicality and the intangible spirit, the culture-filled imaginations and symbolisms. This tangible physicality and the intangible imagination within both make a place identifiable.

More complexity arises when intangible abstract spaces can also exist within another space or place. The inner spirit of a place in terms of symbols and imaginations represents just one form of abstract intangible space. Lefebvre (1991) identified three types of spaces as 'Spatial Practice', 'Representations of Space' and 'Representational Space'. 'Spatial Practice' investigates the networks of local and global places through perception, everyday pattern and social relations of members in society or a class of people. 'Representations of Space' analyses knowledge, symbols, images and ideology that experts such as architects or urban planners imagined and used to conceive, construct and represent a space. Moreover, Lefebvre viewed the "Representations of Space" critically as imperialistic and capitalistic because the elite could dominate other groups of people through the ideology of the space conceived. Thus, the elite not only controlled the physical space such as the land but also the abstract "Representations of Space". This criticism of Lefebvre again aligns with the notion of the elite's dominance over cultural production (Walsh, 1992; Bourdieu, 1993; Davallon, 2011; Heinich, 2011; Carter et al., 2020), as discussed in section 2.2.3 on heritagisation vs. orientalisering. The "Representations of Space" then becomes another abstract space, the "Representational Space", once people experience the space by living, conducting activities and passively memorising the images and symbols conceived by the experts. For Lefebvre, the "Representational Space" allows the true complete understanding of space, as "Representations of Space" fail to provide knowledge on the experience from people living in the

space itself. The three spaces have also been referred to in corresponding order as Perceived Space, Conceived Space and Lived Space as a triad of abstract social spaces. Finally, Lefebvre argued that abstract spaces possessed fantasy imageries that worked as a mirage to cause a space to appear as 'something else' from what the space actually contains.

Foucault (1984) also investigated an abstract space that makes a tangible space appear as 'something else'. Firstly, Foucault claimed that space as a Western concept derived from a history of European experiences since the Middle Ages, where mankind possessed the idea of sacred places in contrast to profane places and protected places against open places. These sacred places could also be abstract and exist not in the tangible physical reality as in on earth/the terrestrial realm, but also in the intangible celestial realm. Foucault further argued that abstract spaces still possess an inner sacred quality despite the desanctification of space since the 19th Century and the rationalisation of space in contemporary times. Furthermore, Foucault claimed that space does not represent a void that people live in but rather a cluster of relations, such as a site with cinemas, cafes and beaches or a house with different kinds of rooms and objects. An analysis of this cluster of relations in a certain space often reveals a reflection that mirrors other spaces. Foucault termed these other spaces as "heterotopias". Heterotopia not only reflects other spaces but also a utopia, a sacred place. Finally, Foucault formulated six principles to understand this abstract concept of the intangible heterotopia:

1. Every culture in the world manifests heterotopia.
2. Every heterotopia possesses an exact specified function that may change as history unfolds.
3. Heterotopia juxtaposes many spaces in a single space in a contradictory manner.
4. Heterotopia disrupts the normal flow of time in either of the two following ways:
 1. Accumulative: spaces where time permanently compiles up, such as libraries or museums;
 2. Festive: opposite to accumulative, where time becomes temporal, such as a festival or a vacation.
5. Heterotopia deals with entrances and exits, as no heterotopia allows the public to openly and freely access the space and may even exclude some people despite appearing fully accessible. Once a person enters a heterotopia, he/she becomes subject to certain rituals.

6. Heterotopia reveals the reality of the space, the true nature.

Soja (2014) further reinterpreted, refined and expanded on Lefebvre's (1991) theory on three abstract spaces by incorporating Foucault's (1984) heterotopia into a theory called the "Thirdspace". Soja re-termed the 'Perceived Space' of Lefebvre as 'Firstspace', the 'Conceived Space' as 'Secondspace' and the 'Lived Space' as 'Thirdspace'. For Soja, as the Firstspace requires perception, it constitutes the visible reality of the space in regard to the quantifiable tangible material world, such as the physical matter, the construction, the land. Although the Firstspace represents the tangible, it also possesses a dynamic quality as the materiality and the physicality of the space may change over the time. The Secondspace, similar to Lefebvre, represents the imaginations, ideals, ideologies and imageries conceived by the producers of the space who often desire to change the image of what a space can be. As a result, the Secondspace is intangible and not visible nor quantifiable like the Firstspace. The deconstruction of the Firstspace and the Secondspace, in binary, allows the reconstruction of the Thirdspace, 'the other space', that possesses both qualities of the Firstspace and the Secondspace: the reality vs. imagination, the material vs. the metaphor, the perceived vs. the conceived, the tangible vs. the intangible. Furthermore, Soja admitted that the concept of the Thirdspace follows Foucault's idea of heterotopia, where the Thirdspace provides an illusion of other spaces within the space. Foucault did not provide a clear method to formulate the heterotopia apart from finding clusters of relations, and Soja solved this dilemma through Lefebvre's theory on space production. This Thirdspace represents a different way to think about spatiality and provides a comprehensive way to view a space. On the next page, Figure 2.1 demonstrates the interpretation of Soja's theory in a comprehensible diagram. This figure reveals the three spaces of Soja – Firstspace, Secondspace and Thirdspace – with the meaning of each space. It also demonstrates the importance of the binary between the Firstspace and Secondspace in creating and finding the Thirdspace, the Heterotopia.

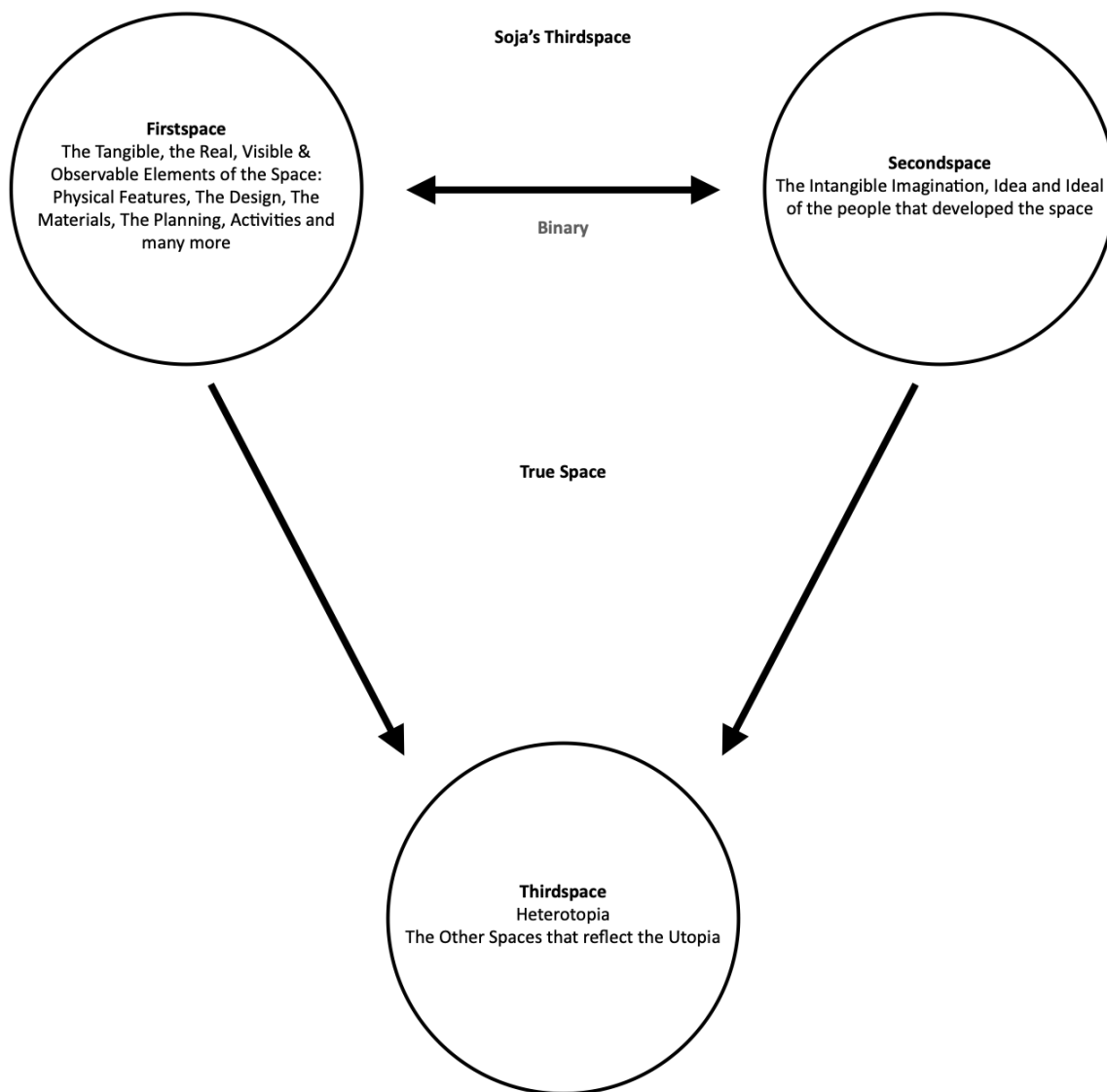


Figure 2.1 Interpretation of Edward Soja's Theory
(Sombunjaroen, 2021)

Urbach (1998), Johnson (2006), Soja (2014) and Knight (2016) all critiqued Foucault's (1984) writing on heterotopia as very abstract and difficult to interpret unambiguously. This abstract ambiguity resulted in many diverging and paradoxical forms of interpretations for heterotopia in academia. Despite making the identification and analysis of the heterotopia much easier than Foucault's vague "cluster of relations", Soja's interpretation neglected the idea established by Foucault that a heterotopia also reflected the Utopia. Soja mentioned that the Thirdspace, the heterotopia, possessed no sacred quality, a characteristic in a utopian space. In contrast to Soja, Johnson (2006) interpreted and argued that a heterotopia contradicts and obstructs a utopia, rather than just demurely reflecting it. For Johnson, the utopia can invoke a collective ideal and desire for change. However, the heterotopia shatters the utopia because Johnson viewed a heterotopia as a very troubling space with its disruption of time, enforcement of rituals, and

exclusion of people. Finally, Johnson also stated that both the heterotopia and the utopia represented a counterforce to the predominant culture in society. Beckett et al. (2016) also adhered to Johnson's idea of heterotopia as a counterspace to the dominant culture and reinterpreted Foucault's heterotopia further by claiming heterotopia as social movement spaces of resistance and freedom. Beckett et al. theorised five types of social movement heterotopias: Contained; Mobile; Cloud; Encounter and Rhizomic. Specifically, in Rhizomic Heterotopia, a counter-social movement is camouflaged within everyday life. Rhizomic Heterotopia also inhabits establishments that may seem incompatible and even contradictory to the social movement.

In the field of architecture, Jencks (1993) has also interpreted heterotopia similarly to Johnson (2006) and Beckett et al. (2016) by claiming that architecture amalgamated predominant cultures with subcultures as hetero-architecture. Inspired by Jencks' hetero-architecture, Urbach (1998) also concluded that heterotopias are localised oppositional spaces of defiance. However, Urbach left what the heterotopia opposed open for further interpretations due to the subjective situational context of each architectural space, which may possess different types of oppositions. Urbach (1998), Johnson (2006) and Beckett et al. (2016) all viewed heterotopias as a local oppositional force to a dominant culture. This oppositional force correlates with Said's (1994) idea of a divorce from the everyday culture. In the context of luxury retail developments with Thai heritage, a polarising force between the local Thai heritage and the West exists. A luxury retail development in itself is a Western creation introduced into Thailand that primarily houses international brands. However, Chapters 4 and 5 will later illustrate various design features that combined Thai culture with foreign cultures into a more collaborative force rather than a conflicting oppositional one, while other unexpected forms of conflicting oppositional forces from the heterotopia will be revealed in Chapter 6.

In an extreme oppositional interpretation of heterotopia to the field of architecture, Knight (2016) claimed Foucault did not theorise heterotopia to investigate physical material space in contradiction to Jencks (1993), Urbach (1998), and Soja (2014). Knight argued that heterotopia represented an abstract space freed from the physicality and geometry of a physical space. Moreover, Knight contradicted Soja's argument of a heterotopia as a de-sanctified space by stating that a heterotopia should be utilised to formulate contemporary parallel representations of semi-mythical imaginary spaces, the utopia. As a result, a heterotopia still pertained to a level of sanctity as a modern reflection of a utopia. For Knight, both the heterotopia and the utopia constituted imaginary spaces. In contrast to Knight, Reid (2020) claimed that in any spatial

imaginings, heterotopia included, the imaginings of space always derived from the real physical space lived by humans. This imagined space breaks the limitations of the physical human space. Lastly, a human may not be able to literally live in an imaginary space but can travel and escape to imaginary spaces. This research also interprets Foucault's heterotopia in its own particular way. While still using Soja's theory to produce the heterotopia, it is very important not to forget Foucault's idea that the heterotopia also reflects the Utopia, in a similar manner to Johnson (2006) and Knight (2016). Furthermore, in accordance with Reid (2020), both the utopia and the heterotopia can be constructed through real physical spaces and imaginings. More quintessentially, spaces such as the heterotopia and the utopia also allow a sense of escapism, which constitutes a quintessential component in the theory of this research. Therefore, the utopia represents a quintessential element of this research.

Before delving deeper into the idea of the Utopia, it is also important to note that many academics have investigated many existing retail developments as a heterotopia before. Muzzio & Muzzio-Rentas (2008) analysed the malls in North America, including the West Edmonton Mall discussed in section 2.2.4, as heterotopia through the six principles of Foucault. However, Muzzio & Muzzio-Rentas viewed the fourth principle not in one manner or another by claiming the mall as both accumulative and festive. Muzzio & Muzzio-Rentas supported this argument by using the West Edmonton Mall's replica of the Santa Maria and a fleet of modern-day submarines in operation. However, West Edmonton Mall took out the submarines in 2012 for a new attraction to provide new unforgettable experiences (Ramsay, 2012). The deliberate decision by the developer of West Edmonton Mall to replace the submarines also reveals a dynamic characteristic in retail development, where a physical design feature may not exist permanently because a developer is required to update its offerings by creating new experiences to constantly attract people to visit the development.

The impermanence of a design feature within a retail development contrasts with spaces like museums and libraries, which permanently accumulate time, as discussed by Foucault (1984). Libraries and museums are akin to mankind's perception of a black hole that draws in objects for eternity. When an object enters their collection, the people of the space try to preserve it for as long as possible, and the archive keeps growing continuously to represent a compilation of time. It is true that a museum may need to return certain pieces in its collection due to ethical issues, such as looted artefacts. A library may also lose a book due to lending and human usage. Nevertheless, the main focus of spaces like museums or libraries, in the context of the

heterotopia's fourth principle, lies in the preservation and accumulation of objects over time. As discussed earlier in section 2.2.4 on Heritagisation through the Context of Thai Luxury Retail Development, exceptions of permanence in retail development exist, like the listed façade of Le Printemps or the historical archives of Les Galeries Lafayette. However, these examples represent only a few exceptions within the industry. It is important to remember that the main function of retail development is to sell merchandise. A department store has to sell as many objects as possible, so products come in and go out constantly. Unsold merchandise is either put on sale or replaced to make way for new objects that the public desires at the time. Due to limited physical space, a shopping mall also removes stores of obsolete brands that are no longer appealing and replaces them with strong, relevant brands that can draw more visitors. A brand also has to renovate its own store periodically, especially when it refreshes its identity. The development itself also has to undergo renovations when spaces become worn out through human activity over a long period of time. Antiquated design features, such as the submarines of West Edmonton Mall, also require replacement with new features to excite the public.

A luxury retail development, especially one that incorporates cultural heritage like Liberty, with its fusion of Tudor England, British Empire trade, and 1920s Arts and Crafts ornate interior features combined with modern-day merchandise in one space, may juxtapose different periods of time together, much like an archive in a museum or a library that contains objects from different eras collected over time. This juxtaposition actually represents Foucault's third principle. However, in the context of Foucault's fourth principle of heterotopia, the luxury retail development doesn't primarily focus on the permanent accumulation of time but rather on a temporal festivity, especially through the design features created by the developer to allow visitors a fantastical escape from the ordinary every day. The festivity is also temporal because a development is not open 24 hours a day, and closing time forces visitors to leave the celebration upon exiting the space.

Crossick & Jaumain (2019) also employed the idea that the heterotopia causes a certain space to appear as a different kind of space by terming the department store as a 'cathedral of consumption', where luxury characteristics from the department store transformed shopping into leisure rather than just the procurement of goods for ownership. Consumers went to department stores, which acted as a showroom that preached good taste and the latest fashion. Through the analogy of the department store as a cathedral of consumption, Crossick & Jaumain also revealed a two-sided aspect to retail development. On one side, a retail development resembles a

cathedral's architectural luxuriousness, as discussed by Condello (2014), because the space allows visitors to immerse themselves in a grand and themed environment, mentally leaving behind the outside reality and mundane daily life. The cathedral also gives the appearance of a public space, but it actually draws the public in for the purpose of consumption, which is the main objective of retail. In similarity to Crossick & Jaumain, Dehaene & De Cauter (2008) also compared the shopping mall to the agora, the marketplace and the gathering place in the heart of ancient Hellenic cities because of the growing role of the mall as a semi-public space in parallel with everyday culture and consumption. Kern (2008) also analysed 'the lifestyle centres', a phenomenon of malls in North America that began in the early 2000s. Kern demonstrated this idea of the mall as a semi-public space for everyday culture under a disguise of an imitated high street that represented a part of everyday life. 'The lifestyle centres' reflected the high street by opening up the mall from the traditional box and theming the environment with sidewalks, outdoor furniture, street lamps and much more to form a safe partial outdoor space for affluent consumers who could stay away from unwanted elements of the real street, such as crime, litter, beggars, and homeless people. Coëffé & Morice (2020) also investigated the department stores in Paris as heterotopias by arguing that the Parisian department stores now embody the city of Paris as monuments for locals and tourists rather than just spaces of consumption and modernity. The embodiment of Paris may seem evident as the department stores are situated in this city, but this has never been the case because the function of department stores in Paris shifted dramatically since their conception. As discussed in section 2.2.4, initially the department stores in Paris mainly served the local population of Paris as the place for the public to escape to a distant land, especially the Orient. However, in a highly globalised world, Parisian department stores now embrace Paris and went through heritagisation by not only offering 'Made in Paris' French luxuries but also French lifestyle and heritage for tourists who represent the majority of customers in contemporary times. This shifting role also illustrates the second principle of Foucault's heterotopia. This research will not only investigate Thai luxury retail developments as a heterotopia but will further contribute a theory on different kinds of abstract space that can be viewed in binary with the heterotopia.

2.4.2 The Pseudo-Public Space, a Private Space's Disguise as a Public Space

Foucault's (1984) fifth principle discussed the idea of the heterotopia containing the illusion of a public place. Writings by Dehaene & De Cauter (2008) and Kern (2008) also discussed the semi-public quality of the luxury retail developments. As a result, this research also requires the comprehension of the differences between the public space and the private space. The two

contrary spaces are separable and identifiable through two aspects: ownership and management of the space. Despite its appearance as a public space, a space still classifies as a private space if the space belongs to private individuals or private entities who manage the space. On the contrary, for a public space, the people own the space through public institutions, such as a government agency that also manages the space for the public (Orillard, 2008). Lefebvre (1991), Soja (2014) and Dehaene & De Cauter (2008) all viewed the private space critically. The public space is meant for everyone to benefit, but the privatisation of public spaces may not allow everyone to benefit from the space because a heterotopia excludes some groups of people.

In the context of luxury retail developments, the space can never be truly public, as private businesses most of the time hold the rights to the space in which they operate. The luxury retail development also represents one of the ultimate capitalist symbols. As discussed in section 2.2.4, the heritagisation process of this research also does not mean the endowment of the status of heritage to a luxury retail development, which will turn the spatial legal entity of the luxury retail development to the public domain. Orillard (2008) wrote about an exception and an attempt to make a retail development belong to the public. During the 1960s, the French government attempted to please the French public by creating a public retail space when it replaced a prime public space in the centre of Paris with 'Les Halles', an underground shopping centre, as part of the city centre renewal project. In a revolutionary move, the French government nationalised all shopping arcades of 'Les Halles' and gave them the same legal entity as the streets of Paris. The government also assigned the local authority responsible for the street to manage these shopping arcades. However, this revolutionary concept also failed and the government had to give the management of the shopping passageways back to the private business that operated the retail development. In alignment to Orillard, Carmona (2021) stated,

"Privately owned and managed spaces can never be as fully public as traditional ones, but instead have different and complimentary roles to play." (p. 139)

As a result, this tangible space of the luxury retail development may never truly belong to the public to become a genuine public space, the luxury retail development represents a pseudo-public space. Carmona also concluded that pseudo-public spaces represent an unavoidable fabric of the modern-day city that can also bring value, particularly when private enterprises take over

the management of underutilised public spaces for the city's reinvigoration. However, Carmona cautioned that a city must not allow itself to be subjugated by pseudo-public spaces, and these spaces must primarily serve public interests over private interests. The idea of private interests superseding public interests introduces the conundrum of a pseudo-public space, such as a luxury retail development, as the space is conceptualised and materialised by a private enterprise with the primary purpose of generating profit through shopping. In *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, Bourdieu (1984) argued that the social elite control the capital and the education system for cultural production in various media, which results in the dominance of the ruling class as the tastemakers in society. As tastemakers, the elite define what is considered good taste, which may exclude the preferences and cultural production of the middle and working classes. Bourdieu also referred to the department store, a form of cultural medium, as 'the poor man's gallery', where the space showcased a lifestyle of the upper class, even though not everyone could afford this lifestyle. Furthermore, in one particular sentence highly relevant to luxury retail development, Bourdieu (1984) wrote,

*"In terms of changes in the mode of domination, which, substituting seduction for repression, public relations for policing, advertising for authority, the velvet glove for the iron fist, pursues the **symbolic integration of the dominated** classes by **imposing needs rather than inculcating norms**."* (p. 154)

Within this sentence alone, many ideas relevant to luxury retail development can be identified. The retail space may impose an ideal that enchants the public, but this ideal may also suppress others. The retail development may appear as a cordial PR figure welcoming people to its space, but it also polices this space. Moreover, the retail development can exhibit symbolism contrived by the elite that authoritatively enforces the purchase of goods and services, which is the main business objective of the developer. In similarity to Bourdieu, Carmona (2010) viewed the shopping mall as an 'exclusionary space' where the private developer, whose main role lies in making money, is granted control over people's actions inside the retail space, despite the mall's role as a communal space for the public to meet in suburban America. Contrary to the notion of freedom of speech, a value enshrined in the US Constitution, many court cases regarding the right to protest and express oneself within the mall usually ended in defeat. The court often ruled that the developer's private rights took precedence over the constitutional rights of citizens, with very few exceptions ruling in the opposite scenario. Therefore, the retail development may give the illusion of a public space, but it is actually a pseudo-public space that serves private interests under a public disguise.

The luxury retail development also presents a public disguise due to its shared spatial similarities with the museum, a space usually owned by the public for public interests. Bennett (1995) wrote,

*“The similarities between the **museum** and the **department store** have often been noted. Both were **formally open spaces allowing entry** to the general public, and both were intended to function as **spaces of emulation**, places for mimetic practices **whereby improving tastes, values and norms of conduct** were to be more broadly diffused through society.”* (p.30)

The ending of this quotation also reflects Bourdieu’s (1984) idea of the luxury retail development as a space for tastemakers. Furthermore, Bennett mentioned three principles relating to the architecture of exhibition spaces. Firstly, new innovative construction materials such as glass and cast iron allowed for enclosed spaces with an abundance of light for the exhibition of objects. Secondly, clear passageways with exhibitions on the side made it easier for the public to manoeuvre. Thirdly, the separation of space into galleries allowed everyone to see each other, creating an environment of self-surveillance and self-discipline. All of these principles share similarities with the spatial features pioneered by Le Bon Marché, as claimed by Miller (1981). Le Bon Marché employed glass and steel to allow more light into the space, highlighting the merchandise, the first principle of exhibition. The use of steel also permitted more floor space, which allowed walkways for the public to move around and view products on both sides, similar to the second principle with exhibition objects on two sides. Finally, the separation of space into galleries, as mentioned in the third principle, is also similar to the separation of space into departments at Le Bon Marché. As a result, the luxury retail development also possesses spatial qualities similar to those of a museum. This similarity further perpetuates the pseudo-public image of the luxury retail development, and this research will reveal more design features used by retail developers that make the retail space even more like a museum in Chapter 4.

The resemblance to a museum and the heritagisation process, which places national culture on public display within luxury retail developments, also makes the space appear akin to a World Expo, a type of space with its own theoretical issues relevant to the context of this research. Through the investigation of World Fairs, World Expos, and Great Exhibitions, temporary national exhibition spaces between 1851 and 1939, Greenhalgh (2017) critiques these national exposés in terms of their imperialistic portrayal of national dominance over colonial powers and the use of

the national image for the primary purpose of enticing society to consume. Greenhalgh (2017) wrote,

*“From 1851 to 1940 then, commitment to empire at exhibitions never slackened or lost its fervour, it merely changed emphasis. This could be said of British concern for empire in general; during the brief period between the scramble for Africa and the Boer War, the calm expansiveness of British imperial policy foundered and an attitude of ‘benevolent’ appropriation became one of increasingly paranoid defence. **The ambition to consume** as much as possible became a frenzied desire to hold on to what had already been won. Exhibitions became a propaganda ground for imperial justification, attempting **to reinforce the unity of empire and to imbue the British public with an imperial pride.**”* (p. 59)

From the final sentence of the quotation above, this research can reapply key ideas in the critique of world fairs that are relevant to the context of Thai luxury retail developments that invoke national heritage. The display of Thai heritage through design features may similarly invoke a sense of national pride, which may consequentially project a unified, singular image of Thailand, despite the complex multicultural dimensions of Thai identity, which I cautioned against in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.8 The Adopter to the Adapter to the Producer of Luxury. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 1, the main objective of luxury retail development is to generate profits, and the ambition to make people consume will always persist. However, this research will demonstrate that the heritagisation process, which exhibits national heritage, also facilitates the consumption of more Thai luxuries, with capital going towards Thai individuals too rather than merely supporting the consumption of foreign goods that traditionally populate other luxury retail developments in Thailand. In relation to ideas relating to the heritagisation process, Greenhalgh (2017) also mentioned,

*“It was involved in the **manipulation of appearances** by adjusting the **superficial elements** in the object **to suggest the contemporary world,** and, by implication, **the future.** It attempted **to carry the consumer away from the immediate world, hinting at a universe he or she had not yet experienced; more than anything else, it was about disguise.**”* (p. 166)

Greenhalgh was discussing the Art Deco exhibition of the 1920s and how it disseminated knowledge on applying the Art Deco artistic style to various objects by adjusting design elements to create new forms that signified the future. In the context of Thai luxuries, the heritagisation process not only involves the display and imitation of heritage, but also the transformation of design characteristics from Thai heritage into other objects, in similarity to Dion's (2022) retro-branding. Furthermore, this retro-heritagisation process can create a sense of escapism from the everyday world, in correlation to Condello's (2014) architecture of luxury, by transporting visitors to a world they have never experienced, yet one that is still based on familiar Thai heritage, a new version of Thainess. This research will reveal the numerous ways in which retro-heritagisation can manipulate Thai elements, or Thainess, derived from Thai heritage to create new forms of Thai luxuries.

The research must also caution that the heritagisation process continues to serve as a disguise to promote consumption ideals within luxury retail developments in Thailand, particularly in Bangkok, which has functioned as 'the poor man's gallery', in line with Bourdieu's perspective. In a study investigating social engagements between different social classes in Bangkok, Wissink and Hazelzet (2016) observed that Bangkok is a city with a significant wealth gap and profound inequalities between the rich and the poor, where the elite often visit malls for public occasions, a pseudo-public space in Thai society. However, Wissink and Hazelzet's research also found that the retail space in the Thai socio-cultural context possesses less exclusionary characteristics, where the rich did not venture into spaces where the poor lived or spent their time, but the poor crossed over into the realm of the rich by also spending time at retail developments. Moreover, the food courts of shopping malls represented one of the few spaces in Bangkok where people of different social standings and incomes happened to gather together. The poor aspired to the lifestyle of the rich, and one of the spaces to access this lifestyle was the food court inside a mall.

The idea of the food court as a space for an accessible meal for the masses may seem like a well-established convention in the retail industry, but in a culture renowned for its food, where even a street food stall received a Michelin star (Descalsota, 2022), the food court can represent more than just a space for an affordable meal. For instance, Nair (2022) wrote about the curation of local Thai dishes available at the food court of Siam Paragon, featuring Pad Thai from Thipsamai, beef noodles from Rod Dee Ded, and grilled chicken by Jeerapan. Names of vendors such as Thipsamai, Rod Dee Ded, and Jeerapan require in-depth cultural knowledge of Thailand, but most locals would know these vendors as Bangkok's well-established experts in particular types of Thai

food. Even though these names represent established local culinary institutions of Bangkok, they are not standardised fine dining establishments for the people of Bangkok. On the contrary, a simple online search for images of the original stores of these vendors outside the mall reveals unairconditioned food stalls on the ground floor of terrace houses next to the street, a stark contrast to the luxury environment of the mall. Therefore, people can come to the food court of the mall to consume foods by local brands beloved by and accessible to both the rich and poor alike. This research will also provide more insights on the Thai food court through Central Ayutthaya.

Apart from the accessible quality food court in Thailand, another factor that draws the Thai public to the mall is air-conditioning. KN et al. (2018) mentioned Bangkok as one of the world's hottest cities, with the people of Bangkok using retail developments as spaces to escape the heat and pass the time. Upon deeper reflection on what KN et al. claimed, it becomes apparent that the well-off population of Bangkok can afford the installation of air-conditioning and the increased electricity bills at home from its usage. For the affluent, an air-conditioned public space, such as a retail development, represents a preference rather than a necessity because they can also afford air-conditioning at home. In contrast, the less affluent population of Thailand must consider the cost burden of higher electricity consumption when using air-conditioning at home. In 2022, the Thai government caused a national uproar when a spokesperson recommended that people restrict their use of air-conditioning to save on electricity bills and combat the cost of living. One recommendation was to set the air-conditioning temperature at 27 degrees Celsius with an electric fan running simultaneously, as a fan consumes less electricity than air-conditioning set at the usual 23-24 degrees Celsius (Meechukhun, 2022). One of the places open to the public where people do not have to bear the personal cost of air-conditioning is the retail development because the developer pays the electricity bill. A person may save on their electricity bill but then become subjected to the displays, promotions, and marketing activities that encourage further spending at the retail development, a vicious and never-ending cycle of consumption in our modern economy. Thus, air-conditioning also plays a role in the pseudo-public façade of the luxury retail development.

The context of the luxury retail development as a pseudo-public space in Thai culture becomes more complex through the heritagisation process. As argued in section 2.3.3 on the Luxury through the context of the Thai Luxury Retail Developments, the heritagisation process can invoke a public ideal, and people come to the luxury retail development to access this ideal, in addition

to the air-conditioning and the food court. The developer, a private entity, invokes Thai cultural heritage, a public domain, which in turn creates an even more public image for a space that primarily focuses on making money, reflecting the private interests of the developer. Despite this more public image, the developer controls the capital and decision-making process, becoming the tastemaker for Thai culture, which may still exclude certain people in Thai society. This research will reveal the exclusionary aspects of Thai luxury retail development while also illustrating new features that make luxury retail developments incorporating Thai heritage more inclusive than conventional white retail spaces. As a pseudo-public space, the tangible physical space of the luxury retail development with Thai heritage may never truly be a public space, but the public can still access the intangible ideal formulated and presented by the developer. Lastly, the notion of ideal also leads to the concept of Utopia.

2.4.3 The Utopia, the City and the Luxury Retail Development

Utopia has been studied in the field of architecture where it constitutes a design characteristic in modern architecture in the 20th Century. The word 'utopia' represents a combination of three Greek words: 'ou' for no, 'eu' for good and 'topos' as in place. Therefore, the good place and the no place become a good placeless place (Coleman, 2014). In modern architecture, especially in urban planning, architects tried to wash away the past and the culture of the city to make the 'no place' with the belief that design could shape human lives into an ideal society, the 'good place' (Pinder, 2002; Coleman, 2014). Despite the 'good' intention, this utopian belief can lead to authoritarianism and the rejection of local identities to formulate the 'no place'. Modern architects and city planners of the 20th Century failed to deliver an ideal city in reality (Harvey, 2000; Coleman, 2014). Moreover, the utopian design caused the problems that exist in the present-day cities (Pinder, 2002). Coleman (2013) argued that architecture possesses limitations in making the ideal of the utopia become a reality. Harvey (2000) also mentioned that when the word 'Utopia' came to mind, people often imagined a bright white pristine city on top of the hill. Many portrayals of utopias throughout history were not physically created but only existed in the imaginations of people through the forms of writings and drawings. Harvey further argued that once a utopia is materialised into tangibility, the materialisation will ultimately shatter the utopia itself.

Nevertheless, a tangible place also provides a sense of the abstract intangible utopian ideal. Coleman (2013) claimed that in terms of architecture, the work of Frank Gehry has been

described as utopian with its modern shapes and forms that created a fantasy world without ornamentation. In more contemporary times, the works of Rem Koolhaas and Daniel Libeskind have followed this concept of utopia in architecture. Busbea (2012) also stated that even Paris, a city enriched with heritage, tried to rid itself from its past through utopianism during the 1960s. This can be seen with the development of the Centre Pompidou, with the lack of ornamentation apart from the exposed pipes that became incorporated into the design of its modern cubic façade. The Utopian ideal was also used in the invention of the shopping mall, the next progression of the luxury retail development from the department stores. Styhre (2019) argued that the post-World War II era was a period of utopianism in modern architecture, exemplified by Victor Gruen's creation of the Southdale Centre, the world's first shopping mall, in Minneapolis. The innovation of Victor Gruen resided in the amalgamation of the department store, the highlight of the shopping mall, with arcades of specialist shops, restaurants, and non-retail-related entertainment and civic offerings such as libraries, theatres, art galleries and health services in a controlled environment with a clean modernist design. The abundance of parking spaces, another feature of the shopping mall, also facilitated the get-together of people even further. All these features of the shopping mall created a perception of a safe utopian community and a civic centre for the growing middle class in the expanding American suburbs. Backes (1997) also analysed uniformed, basic, white and modernist malls in North America as a blank space. This caused Backes to argue that this blank space allowed the mall to represent a new land that is free from history and heritage. As a result, the shopping mall is luxurious by not taking customers to foreign exotic lands like department stores. The shopping malls allow customers to escape to a utopia, a white shining, unfamiliar, placeless land.

This research investigates a very different type of utopia from the utopia established by the academics above. A utopia created through the ideals within the heritagisation process that invokes a sense of escapism to an imagined, idealised and localised motherland rather than a distant, unfamiliar, placeless land. Harvey (2000) also referred to the invocation of the past as "Utopian Nostalgia." However, the existing academic discussion on utopian nostalgia is not on the invocation of local history to create a local cultural utopia. It is still about the invocation of foreign history to create a sense of escapism to exotic lands. In modern times, Disneyland constituted the most extreme example of this utopian nostalgia to the point that Marin (1984) called Disneyland a "Degenerative Utopia" because of the invocation of nostalgia to commodify culture, which produced a fake happy harmonious fantasy world constantly under observation with the lack of authenticity and history. Disneyland utilised cultures as its own and enforced an Americanised ideology based on foreign cultures on visitors without them realising once they entered the

fantasy world. Harvey (2000) also employed this idea of Marin by referring to malls in America as a “Degenerative Utopia” because the malls in America also took the formula from Disneyland by creating safe fantasy environments that celebrated the consumption of commodities in a similar fashion to Disneyland. Harvey also referred to a luxury retail development as “Developers’ Utopia”, where the elite controlled the capital to imagine, create and impose an elitist ideal world onto the public.

This research views Marin’s (1984) and Harvey’s (2000) criticisms of the usage and the commodification of cultures for commercial benefits as problematic because the true issue with Disneyland lies in Disney’s tendency to invoke foreign cultures and histories for its sole financial gain. This is evident by simply looking at the replication of the European-styled castle, the centrepiece, the main landmark, and the signature experience of every Disneyland around the world. The original Disneyland in California features Sleeping Beauty’s Castle (Disneyland). Disneyland Paris also has a different version of Sleeping Beauty’s Castle (Disneyland Paris). Disney World in Florida showcases Cinderella’s Castle (Disney World). Tokyo Disneyland features both Cinderella’s Castle and Beauty and the Beast’s Castle (Tokyo Disneyland). All of these castles referenced stories that originated in France. Hong Kong Disneyland goes even further with its cultural references. Initially, it featured the same Sleeping Beauty’s Castle as Disneyland in California, but in 2021, Disney renovated the castle to include 12 additional towers, each drawing inspiration from different Disney animated films such as Aladdin, Pocahontas, Snow White, The Little Mermaid, and many more (Brandon, 2021), blending French culture with stories from Arabia, Native America, Germany, Denmark, and other nations.

Bayless (2015) also claimed that Disney drew inspiration from the architecture of the German Neuschwanstein Castle to create their original castle for Disneyland in California, its first theme park. Neuschwanstein Castle was built in the 19th century from the vision of King Ludwig II, who left the crown in debt from his castle constructions. However, in 2018, Neuschwanstein Castle alone attracted approximately 1.5 million tourists, bringing great economic benefits to the people in the region (Bäumler & Lepik, 2018), a German castle made by a German king that ultimately strengthened the people on the land of its heritage. However, the same cannot be said for the castles inside the various Disneylands. When people visit Disneyland and stop by the castle, they may also eat at one of the nearby restaurants. Usually, most the restaurants inside any Disneyland are operated and owned by Disney. If a person buys merchandise at a store next to the castle, the products are also owned by Disney. Dreier (2020) also claimed that Disney’s merchandise has

exploited labour in Haiti, Bangladesh, and China in the past. Thus, the bulk of the spending by an individual goes back to the Disney corporation. Disneyland may pay income tax and property tax to the city and country that hosts it, but the people from the lands that Disney drew inspiration from for its own commercial success do not gain a direct share of the revenue generated by Disneyland. Disney doesn't rent out restaurant spaces to cafes or restaurants with origins in France or Germany. Disneyland also doesn't retail external merchandise such as traditional crafts and products from the lands of its animations to generate revenue that financially supports people from these lands. The Disneyland in Paris contains the most irony because a person can simply visit an authentic historic chateau within driving distance of the theme park. Chateau ticket income can go to the castle owner. The spending on food and drinks can help a local restaurant, and shopping for souvenirs can also support a shop in the community, spreading money to more parties rather than just one entity, the American Disney itself.

Bayless (2015) also mentioned that Disney mainly focused on the exterior of the castle in its first Disneyland, with the interior being an afterthought because Disney did not initially plan what to do with the castle's interior. Consideration of the interior came after the completion of the castle, at which point Disney decided to add dioramas depicting scenes from *Sleeping Beauty*. Hence, places such as Disneyland also become a degenerative utopia because the materialisation of the utopia represents an empty shell with no authentic cultural spirit inside. This research also disagrees with Harvey's comparison of malls in North America to Disneyland because most malls in America represented the placeless utopia devoid of culture where the invocation of the past did not take place, with a few exceptions, such as the West Edmonton Mall with its replica of the Santa Maria (Williamson, 2004; Ramsay, 2012). In contrast, the heritagisation of Thai luxury retail developments presents a very different situation from Disneyland and the malls of America, as the invocation of Thai history and culture can also promote Thai individuals and traditional Thai products, thereby dispersing more income to the local community, rather than solely benefiting the developer and its international retailers. This should not be viewed as degenerative. Furthermore, this research will also argue that luxury retail developments that went through the Thai heritagisation process possess not only the tangible visible material manifestation of culture but also the intangible inner spirit of the Thai people, as argued in section 2.2.4 Heritagisation through the context of Thai Luxury Retail Development. The Thai luxury retail developments do not constitute an empty shell without the local culture inside like Disneyland, nor the retail properties of North America.

Influenced by Said (1979; 1994) and Harvey (2000), Niezen (2007) identified three types of utopias that exist in a postcolonial future: Civilisational Utopianism, Obscurantist Utopianism and Primordial Utopianism. In “Civilisational Utopianism”, people combine their ideal and their reality to imagine a utopia. In “Obscurantist Utopianism”, people live in the ‘Cosmopolis’, a borderless land where a collective group of global citizens live freely from any form of domination and identity. This “Obscurantist Utopianism” represents the utopianism seen in modern architecture as discussed prior that cleared away the past. “Obscurantist Utopianism” also represents the form of utopia in the conventional shopping malls. Finally, in “Primordial Utopianism”, instead of one collective group of people with no identity, the world still contains many collective communities where they articulate their own culturally distinctive utopia by invoking the perfected past, the original way of life, as a nostalgic alternative world from a world that changed through globalisation to alleviate cultural loss. In line with Niezen’s “Primordial Utopianism”, Mitchell (2000) also argued that a utopia in the present must start with the past to create an alternative future with a collection of reimagined pasts. Coleman (2014) also mentioned that the alternative utopia represents a permanent desire for what could have been and for an escape from reality that is synchronised with history. Therefore, the Utopia of this research represents a combination of “Civilisational Utopianism” and “Primordial Utopianism”, where the ideals and imaginations of the past are intertwined with the current reality to create an alternative reality. Finally, the process of heritagisation also exists in the imagination process of the utopia.

The imagination of utopia is also intrinsically linked to an imagined city. Harvey (2000) argued that the imaginers of utopia often portrayed a utopia as a city for how the citizens can live. For example, Harvey referenced the 15th century painting, “The Ideal City” (da San Gallo, 1480-1484), depicting a side view of a city with all buildings similar to an ancient Roman city to enforce the idea of the city representing the utopia. Pinder (2002) also stated that a utopia expresses the missing possibility unimagined in the present from people’s desires for an alternative city life. This alternative city constitutes both the imagined and the real city because people can dream and think of life in a city in a certain way, even without visiting the city before. Moreover, people do not just construct the city in their imagination, but fill the city with their ideals and desires. Gupta & Ferguson (1997) mentioned that people often use remembered place as a tool to bind people together and build a sense of community. People can imagine a city that still exists today in an alternative manner as a utopia based on the bygone past of the city once remembered.

The utopia does not just intertwine with the city, but also the luxury retail development. Backes (1997) also metaphorically argued that the luxury retail development is an ideal city because the luxury retail development's self-contained characteristic is where people live their entire day inside. In another similarity to the city, the luxury retail development also represents a place to exchange ideologies and cultures just like a city. Visitors can also realise their dreams and aspirations. Thus, the luxury retail development can also be viewed as a city of ideals. In a construction description of South Coast Plaza, a luxury mall in Orange County, California, that resembled a city Soja (2014) wrote,

"Building a city, where anything you want can be found... through the phalanx of showy department stores and many arched portals..." (p. 262)

The sentence above constitutes the lone example and the only time in the entire book on the Thirdspace that Soja connected the luxury retail development to the idea of a city. Therefore, the concept of the city also innately exists in Soja's theory, and this research plans to explore deeper into uncharted academic waters of the retail space's city-like quality. Fujioka & Pitkänen (2022) also claimed that modern-day luxury retail developments contained a metropolitan quality. In Asia in particular, the luxury retail developments epitomise the city because the shopping malls, in major cities around the Asia Pacific and particularly in Bangkok, are not just situated in the suburbs like in the West but also dignify the city centres and the most important area of the city as clusters of luxury retail developments (Castello, 2018; KN et al., 2018). Every city has its own history, regulations, and population with different purchasing power, which causes cities to develop differently in terms of luxury retail developments. For instance, Tokyo and Seoul, two major markets for luxury consumption, both have luxury retail developments in the city centre and luxury walking streets such as Omotesando in Tokyo and Apgujeong in Seoul, similar to New Bond Street in London and Avenue Montaigne in Paris. Furthermore, the bombing of Tokyo during World War II opened up land in the city centre for new developments, which also applied to Seoul after the Korean War. It is also important to note that Tokyo and Seoul are Asian cities with a cooler climate that facilitates the leisure of shopping on luxury walking streets. In contrast, Hong Kong and Singapore are cities with warmer temperatures throughout the year, and as island city-states, land is very limited, resulting in exorbitant land prices. The hot climate and steep property prices facilitate the development of air-conditioned, multi-level shopping malls that can accommodate many international brands under one roof. Bangkok also has a hot climate like Hong Kong and Singapore, but land is not as expensive as in these two cities. Thai laws actually

force international brands into retail developments because foreign individuals or entities cannot legally own land in Thailand. Thai law stipulates that a foreign entity may lease land for a maximum of 50 years for commercial purposes, but further government approval is still required (Hutasingh & Nanuam, 2024). This legal barrier, combined with the hot climate, causes international brands to rent or lease spaces from Thai developers. The lease of spaces inside a retail property owned by a Thai developer does not require government approval. Thai developers also offer foreign entities additional support, such as facilities management and marketing promotions. All of these factors have contributed to the image of luxury retail developments becoming synonymous with cities in the Asia-Pacific region.

2.4.4 The Utopianism of the City and the Luxury Retail Development in Thai Culture

For Bangkok in particular, King (2008) explained that Bangkok lacked proper zonings like Western planned cities, which caused a sense of dystopia. In comparison to the disorder of Bangkok, the malls of Bangkok represented an imposed ideal, orderly Bangkok, in opposition to the city's disorder. Therefore, the malls in Bangkok reflect an ideal version of it. However, King also referred to malls as one of the contributors to the disappearance of the traditional aquatic lifestyle of the people in Bangkok in return for modernisation and globalisation. Moreover, King claimed that these malls could have existed anywhere in the world. For this research, in contrast to the Thai malls of the past, new luxury retail developments with Thai heritage are reviving memories of a lost Bangkok to bring forth an ideal utopian Bangkok.

The idea of the utopian city is also very much ingrained in the history and the culture of Thailand. The former Thai capital of Ayutthaya derived its name from the holy Indian city of Ayodhya, a real place in India. However, for the Thai people, Ayodhya also constituted the unreal celestial place, because Ayodhya also represented the city of the mythical Prince Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu, the Hindu god (Chakrabongse, 2019). Hence, Ayutthaya reflected on two types of Ayodhya: the real tangible city in India and the unreal intangible celestial city in Hinduism. The former capital of Ayutthaya lasted for over four centuries, from 1351 to 1767 (London 2009; Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). The Ayutthaya era also witnessed the prosperity of traditional Thai luxuries in the royal court and the temples (London, 2009; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019).

After the destruction of Ayutthaya by the Burmese, King Rama I built Bangkok based on Ayutthaya, a lost real utopia (Bunnag & Siribhadra, 1984; Suksri & Freeman, 1996; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). The name Rama was also chosen specifically as a regnal name in reference to the mythical Prince Rama of the Indian city of Ayodhya and the founder/the first king of the once glorious Ayutthaya (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). Since Rama I, all Thai Kings ruling from Bangkok have also been referred to as Rama (Chakrabongse, 2019). In addition, throughout Thai history, one city, the most important city in the nation, has always dominated and represented Thailand (London, 2009; Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). In theory, Bangkok, as the current capital, epitomises and represents Thailand in contemporary time. Since King (2008) mentioned that the luxury retail development in Bangkok also reflected the ideal Bangkok, a luxury retail development such as ICONSIAM, one of the case studies of this research, also reflects a utopian Bangkok, which was inspired by the utopian Ayutthaya, that again was inspired by the utopian Ayodhya. There is a chain of reincarnated utopian cities in Thai culture. Although the luxury retail development may be designed with heritage on the national level, for Thailand in particular, the main city also represents the nation. Therefore, the concept of the utopian city is even more important for the study of luxury retail developments in Thailand.

2.4.5 The Utopolis of the Thai Luxury Retail Developments

The luxury retail development represents both the utopia and the city. Gupta & Ferguson (1997), Harvey (2000), and Pinder (2002) all established the interconnection and the entanglement between the utopia and the city. Backes (1997), Soja (2014), Castello (2018), and Fujioka & Pitkänen (2022) have all written about the city-like quality of the luxury retail development. As a result, this research is claiming that there is another abstract utopian metropolitan space that further academic revelations and this research have termed the “Utopolis.” The Utopolis constitutes the original contribution of this research because it is not another heterotopia. Foucault (1984) argued that a heterotopia also reflects a utopia. Moreover, Dehaene & De Caeter (2008) viewed heterotopias as the polarising force between place and non-place that exists with the ‘polis’, the ideal of the city. Soja (2014) also admitted that the Thirdspace, the heterotopia, in itself is de-sanctified. However, the heritagisation process can bestow a space with a sacred quality (Davallon, 2011; Karlstrom, 2013; Dion & Borraz; 2015). It is also important to establish that Soja (2014) might have written Thirdspace in the singular form not the plural form as in Thirdspaces, but Soja also stated that by deconstructing the Firstspace and the Secondspace, the binary analysis of both the Firstspace and the Secondspace will lead to other spaces, plural. As Foucault’s heterotopia is very much open to interpretation (Urbach, 1998; Johnson, 2006; Soja,

2014; Knight, 2016), this research also interprets things differently by claiming that the analysis of the Firstspace and the Secondspace may not reveal just the Thirdspace, the heterotopia, but other kinds of abstract spaces. For the luxury retail development designed with heritage, there is also another abstract space called the 'Utopolis'. This aligns with Johnson's (2006) interpretation of heterotopia with the duality between heterotopia and utopia while still using the method of Soja to formulate these two spaces. The idea of deconstructing the Firstspace and the Secondspace to formulate the heterotopia and the Utopolis also corresponded with Reid (2020), where the imagination, the Secondspace, is also based on the real physical space, the Firstspace.

This Utopolis represents the alternative, ideal, parallel version of the city in which the luxury retail development designed with heritage is located. A visitor can experience this Utopolis through the design features, participate in various activities, and even purchase merchandise that all invoke certain aspects of Thai heritage, contributing to the ecosystem of this alternative ideal city. Just from the design features and activities that incorporate Thai cultural heritage and require no compulsory payment, the Utopolis also fulfils the dreams and aspirations of the local populace by allowing them to escape to an alternative ideal version of the real city in which they are actually located. This Utopolis also restores nostalgic memories and lost ways of life, gone with the time through colonisation, Westernisation and modernisation. For foreigners, the Utopolis still allows them to escape to a foreign exotic land. Thus, the Utopolis can realise luxury. Therefore, this 'Utopolis' constitutes the final quintessential element of the theoretical framework of this research. Instead of Soja's triangular triad with the Firstspace and the Secondspace in binary to formulate the Thirdspace, this research argues for a quadrilateral framework with the Firstspace and the Secondspace in binary to formulate not just the Thirdspace but also a "Fourthspace". This Fourthspace represents the Utopolis. It also works in binary with the Thirdspace to allow a truer and more comprehensive view of space in the context of the luxury retail development. Figure 2.1 in section 2.4.1 Space, Place and Heterotopia illustrates Soja's triad of space, while Figure 2.2 on the next page demonstrates the new proposed theoretical framework to analyse and view the space of the luxury retail development with the 'Utopolis' as the 'Fourthspace'.

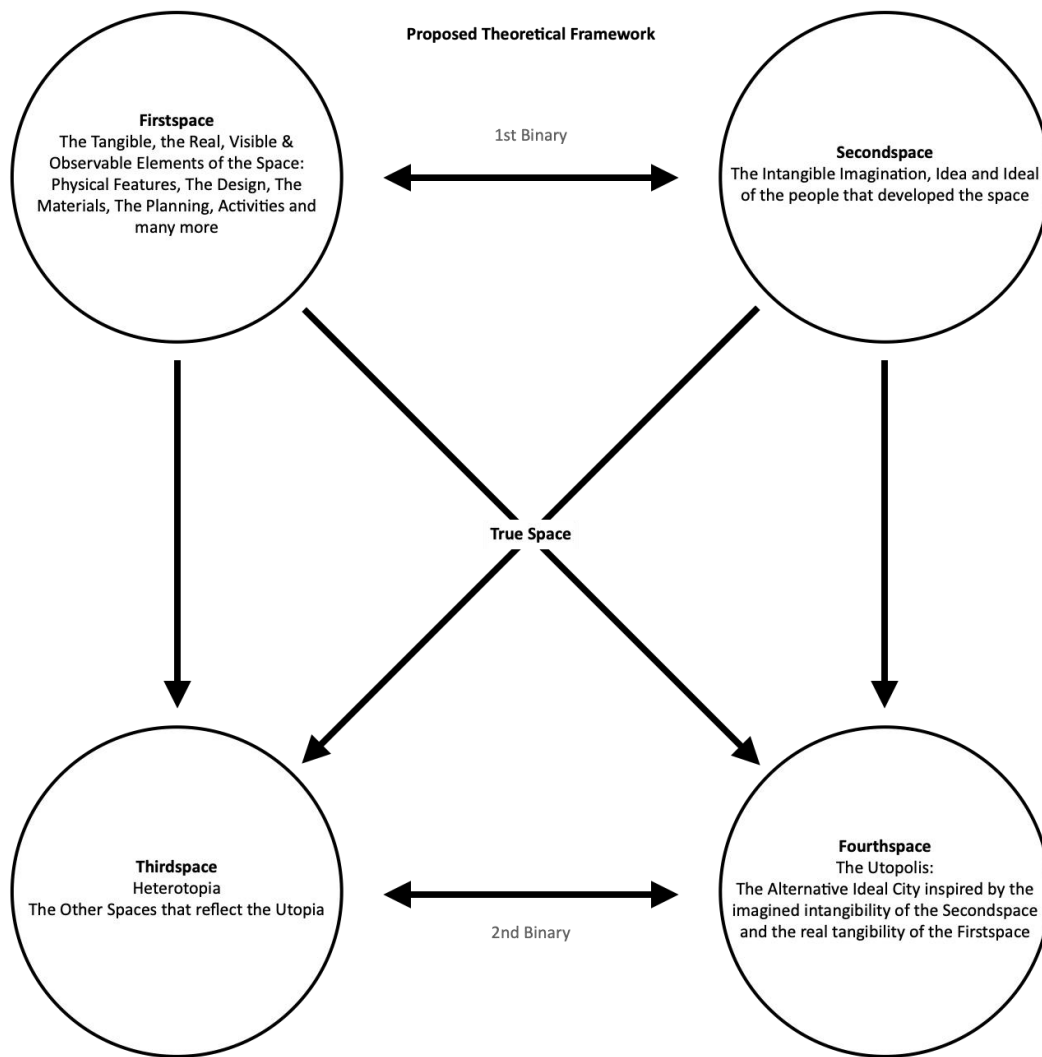


Figure 2.2 Proposed Theoretical Framework
(Sombunjaroen, 2021)

2.4.6 Marxist Theories on Space and the Idea of an Egalitarian Luxury Space

Many of the academics referenced in the formulation of the theoretical framework, such as Anderson, Carter et al., Foucault, Harvey, Lefebvre, Marin, Said, Soja, and Walsh, represent a continuation of a long line of leftist theorists that critiqued authoritative imperial and elitist characteristics within their fields of expertise. In addition, many also often provided writings against capitalism, while some even revealed discontentment with the commercialism of the luxury retail space. However, through the heritagisation process, this research will illustrate that the luxury retail development allows locals to gain access to an ideal land based on their cultural past by experiencing the space, even though the space still fuels capitalist consumption. An ideal that allowed locals to see their own culture elevated as a luxury, too, where the heritagisation breaks free from the subjugation to Western culture and the capitalist corporate brands of the

West and the restoration of a more harmonious balance between the East and the West. Beyond the accessible themed environment, a luxury retail development can also become a space where local brands, local individuals, and local products can thrive. Shopping can also support local Thai communities, not just finance major international corporations, the symbols of capitalism. Luxury retail developments, as will be revealed in this research, still always contain the problems of authoritative elitism and commercialism, but the heritagisation process makes the space more egalitarian than ever before.

It is also essential to mention that the proposed theoretical framework in Figure 2.2 doesn't represent the first time that ideas from leftist theorists have been employed to analyse a luxury space. Many of these leftist theorists also focus on spatial production, which is essential for this research. Moreover, their Marxist leniency may provide a different perspective on the comprehension of a luxury space. For instance, Roberts & Armitage (2020) also theorised the idea of "The Third Realm of Luxury" by using ideas from Anderson, Lefebvre and Soja. In variation to the research's proposed theoretical framework, the Third Realm constitutes the co-existence and interconnectivity between a real physical luxury space, the First Realm, and an imaginary space, the Second Realm. Through this conceptual lens of the Third Realm of luxury, Austin & Sharr (2020) investigated "The Collective", a co-living apartment complex that compacted many bedroom units together with shared communal spaces to provide more affordable living for students and young professionals in London. The idea of an inexpensive communal living space may not seem explicitly luxurious, but Austin and Sharr discussed a new dimension of spatial luxury based on a sense of belonging through shared values and the aspiration for the ideal home that everyone possesses, no matter rich or poor. Similarly, the Utopolis also resembles another luxury egalitarian land of communal shared values for an ideal home that anyone can access.

Despite the similarities to the "Third Realm of Luxury" of Roberts & Armitage (2020), the research's proposed theoretical framework plans to investigate, discuss and contribute findings differently. Firstly, through the specific context of the luxury retail space, the Firstspace and the Secondspace represent the intention of the developer, the tangible observable materialisation of space from the intangible ideal of the developer. These two spaces of the developer's intention also represent the design process that includes heritagisation. More thought-provokingly, the Thirdspace and the Fourthspace correspond to the unintentional polarising abstract spaces that the research can construct from the developer's intention. It is true that the research can just

construct the Utopolis alone as a Thirdspace in the same manner as Soja and Roberts & Armitage, but the binary and the separation between the heterotopia and the Utopolis provide a more comprehensive and egalitarian view of luxury retail development. The luxury retail development should not solely be viewed through the Utopolis as a glorious ideal space. The heterotopia can contrast the Utopolis to reveal the hazards, the drawbacks and the issues of the luxury retail development to still critique a capitalist space in a leftist manner through the heterotopia. Thus, the heterotopia and the Utopolis should not exist together in one space. The Utopolis, as the shining city, should enlighten academia as the original contribution, while the heterotopia provides caution to the idea of the Utopolis.

One more issue relevant to this research is situated within the anti-imperialist nature of left-wing academics and the research's concept of heritagisation that leads to the Utopolis. Anderson, Harvey and Said all made arguments against imperialism in their writings. In the case of Said, despite his expertise in Orientalism, he still criticised Orientalism as a Western idea imposed onto Asia. As a Thai person who developed one of the case studies and with the argument for the Thai endeavour to adopt and adapt foreign luxuries into its own stylistic preference discussed in Chapter 1 Section 1.4, I cannot in good conscience comfortably refer to heritagisation in the research's context as re-orientalism. Orientalism does not exist in the Thai psyche. The Thai language doesn't even have a word for Orientalism, with the closest direct-translation meaning 'ideology of the east' (Longdo). If I had titled my thesis, 'The re-orientalising of the Thai luxury retail developments', I would be enforcing a foreign concept that shouldn't exist into the Thai design process, and this also equates to academic imperialism on Thailand. Conversely, if I had termed the design process as 'Thai-nisation', the created neologism may more conform to the Thai developer's design process, but this term contains a connotation of right-wing nationalism and goes against the left-leaning theories used in this research. Thai-nisation also appears mono-cultural, which contradicts the idea of the city as a cultural exchange. Moreover, in accordance to the idea of Orientalism advocated by Said (1979) and Banal Nationalism by Billig (1995), in Thai-nisation, an ideological segregation always exists between the West and the East; an us against them situation. As a Thai person who grew up in both worlds, this is not the Utopianism that I support. I champion a utopia in which many cultures can exist and thrive among one another. Therefore, I am not radically claiming that the heritagisation process should replace foreign culture entirely with Thai culture. People can also synergise cultures into an original creation, a new luxury, and heritagisation represents the most appropriate terminology for the design process of this thesis to lead to the proposed idea of the Utopolis.

Finally, a person with deep cultural knowledge of Thailand who has read this thesis so far might think that, a Thai man with all the hallmarks of Thai elitism and privilege¹⁰ in life may be taking leftist theories for granted. I would like to state outright that I am not claiming that luxury retail developments designed through Thai heritagisation have become socialist egalitarian spaces, just as I am not claiming that Thai developers have actually built a real utopia on earth. Retail developments will always be capitalist spaces due to their primary objective of generating profits for developers and retailers. The engine for modern economic growth also depends on domestic consumption, and retail developments represent a part of this economic engine since Thai people spend so much of their time inside shopping malls. Like it or not, the luxury retail development represents a part of the contemporary lifestyle of many Thai people, and we must find new ways to support the local Thai economy more than before. As a man who takes pride in his culture, I personally believe that heritagisation is one of the ways forward, or else I wouldn't have spent my personal fortune and time on this PhD thesis. Luxury retail developments in Thailand shouldn't neglect their own culture, heritage, and luxuries. The inclusion of Thai culture, heritage, and luxuries will allow more Thai people to share in the financial benefits and become a part of this economic growth. Thus, I am suggesting that the heritagisation process can make luxury retail developments lean more toward the left and become more equitable for more Thai people than conventional Thai retail developments that mainly embrace the West. At the same time, I am also not suggesting that foreign cultures should be entirely excluded from luxury retail development.

2.5 Conclusion of the Literature Review

Throughout this entire literature review, the scope of this research has been framed through the duality of tangibility and intangibility. Starting with heritagisation, the overarching theory has implications and interconnections with the rest of the theories on luxury and space. The heritagisation process, specific to this research, involves the invocation of intangible local historical/cultural knowledge into a tangible new creation by local developers who comprised of local people. In the context of this research, the production and the design of a luxury retail development with Thai heritage involves this heritagisation process because the retail developer also searches, selects and invokes intangible Thai historical and cultural knowledges which are

¹⁰ A mother with a last name that signifies a cadet branch of the Thai royal family, a nanny, an international education throughout his entire life, fluency in English, and the ability to afford the tuition fees for a PhD at a foreign university, where the total cost could pay for a house in the Thai provinces or a small flat in Bangkok.

applied into the design of a luxury retail development, a tangible new creation, to materialise and manifest the Thai cultural heritage, the intangible. Moreover, values and ideals also exist within cultural heritage. Lastly, the heritagisation process can also create a sense of sanctity.

Into the theories on luxury, the heritagisation of this research contradicts established knowledge on the conventional practice of retail developments in achieving a sense of luxury by creating special moments that allow consumers to escape to a foreign and unfamiliar land. At a retail development designed with a local heritage, escapism to an exotic land still provides tourists with the same luxurious impression. But more importantly, the retail development designed with local heritage is luxurious for locals because heritagisation realises the desires and aspirations of the local population through ideals within the invoked intangible cultural heritage of the heritagisation process. The tangible materialisation of heritage in a retail development takes the local population to a sacred, ideal, and familiar motherland, rather than to an unfamiliar exotic place. The ideal motherland is a very particular concept of luxury because it fulfils a collective cultural aspiration rather than personal aspiration on an individual level or social aspiration of class, like other forms of luxuries.

From the theories on heritagisation and luxury, a luxury retail development consists not only of the tangible physically constructed space but also of an abstract intangible ideal motherland that inhabits within the physical space. Furthermore, tangible materiality expresses the abstract ideal motherland within. This research has adapted and reinterpreted Soja's (2014) Thirdspace through other theories on space into a new theoretical framework in order to investigate this ideal abstract land that has been termed the "Utopolis" for the context of the research due to the distinct metropolitan quality of the luxury retail development and the ability of heritagisation to ingrain a space with ideals and sacredness, which constitute characteristics of a utopia. Through the proposed theoretical framework, tangible space represents Firstspace, while the abstract ideal of luxury retail developers constitutes the Secondspace. The Firstspace and Secondspace in binary can formulate two spaces that exist in another binary: the Thirdspace as in the Heterotopia and the Fourthspace as in the Utopolis. Both the Thirdspace and Fourthspace contain both the tangibility of the Firstspace and the intangibility of the Secondspace, a fusion of the reality and the imagination; the past and the present; the limitations and the possibilities.

From all the theories discussed in this literature review, starting with heritagisation, narrowing down through luxury and space finally led to a focus on the Utopolis. This research hypothesises that the Utopolis represents an alternative and ideal version of the city that exists within a luxury retail development and in parallel to the real city of a luxury retail development. The Utopolis is the quintessential concept that makes a luxury retail development designed with local heritage luxurious in a different manner to other retail developments in the past because it allows locals to escape to an ideal city of the city that they call home. Figure 2.3 below summarises Chapter 2, the literature review of this PhD thesis.

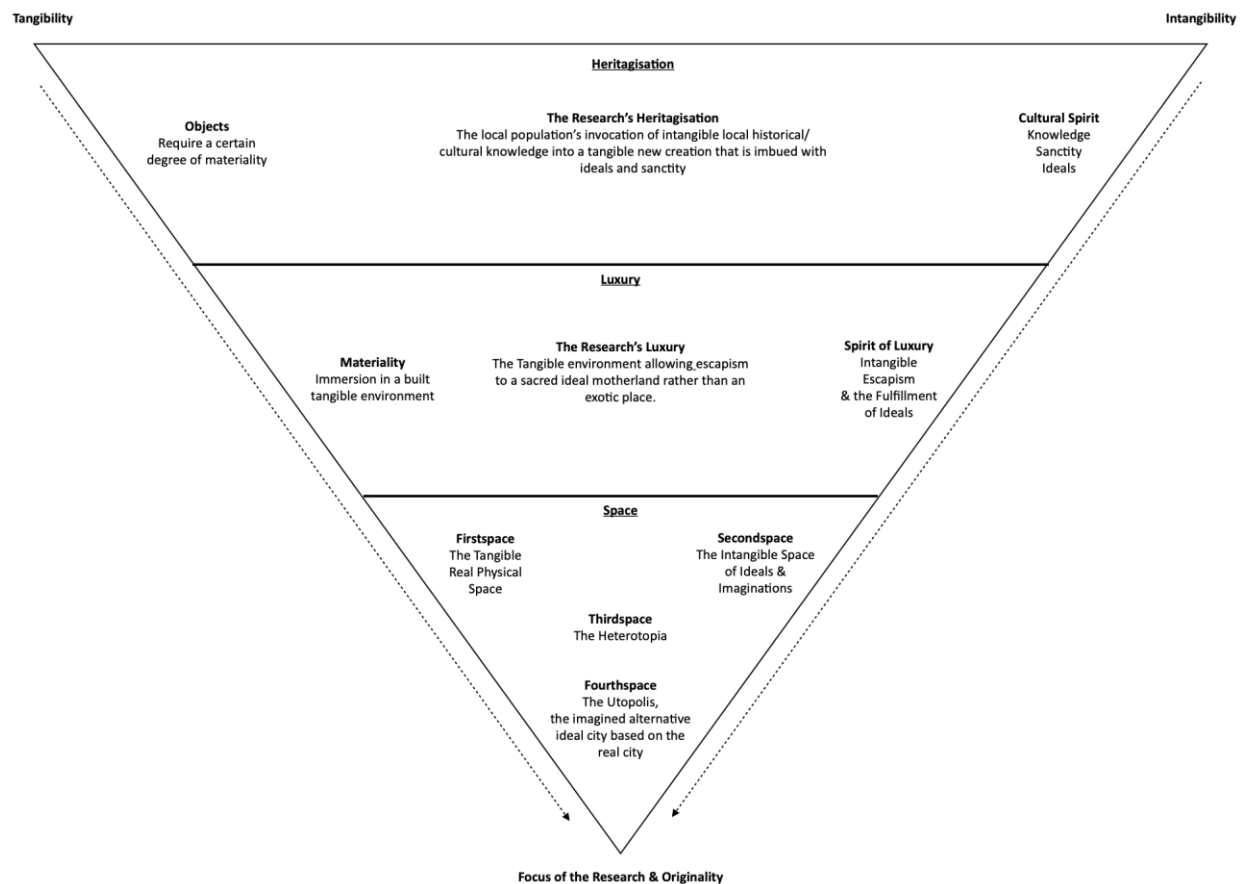


Figure 2.3 Summary of the Theories in the Literature Review
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Nevertheless, a more in-depth investigation into the Utopolis is required to find, formulate and understand the characteristics and principles of Utopolis. If the Utopolis exists in binary with Foucault's (1984) heterotopia, more unanswered issues arise by going through the heterotopia's six principles. If every culture has a heterotopia, does the Utopolis manifest in the same manner as the heterotopia? Every heterotopia also has a function that may evolve over time, but how

does the Utopolis relate to or affect this function? Contradictory juxtapositions also exist within a heterotopia, and does this apply to the Utopolis? Furthermore, a heterotopia disrupts time, but how does time work in the Utopolis? Moreover, a heterotopia enforces rituals and how does this influence the features of the Utopolis? All of these issues have led to the first main research question: What are the principles of Utopolis contrived from the Thai luxury retail developments? Moreover, this research theorises that the combination of these principles should produce a scenography of the Utopolis, as inspired by Sharr's (2017) scenography in designing luxury casino resorts in Las Vegas. The scenography allows an imagination and visualisation of what the Utopolis looks like. The revelation of the Utopolis' principles with its scenography leads to the second research question: How can the Utopolis be used in designing a luxury retail development with Thai heritage? This second question represents a key question in achieving the goal of the research by providing new knowledge that will inspire and guide the design of future luxury retail developments. In summary, the main research questions of this thesis are:

1. What are the principles of the Utopolis contrived from the Thai luxury retail developments?
2. How can the Utopolis be used in designing a luxury retail development with Thai heritage?

In conclusion, this research aims to provide two original contributions. The first contribution constitutes the establishment of a theory on the Utopolis in order to view a new generation of luxury retail developments more comprehensively and differently. Academics may also be able to use the theory of Utopolis on other kinds of spaces, not just the luxury retail development. Nevertheless, for this research, the heritagisation of luxury retail developments has led to a spatial embodiment of the Utopolis. A luxury development and a Utopolis are inextricable from one another. Thus, research on luxury retail developments with heritage should not be conducted without the proposed Utopolis. The spatial embodiment of Utopolis through the luxury retail development also leads to the second original contribution, where the research publishes the ways to design a luxury retail development with the idea of the Utopolis by using Thai luxury retail developments designed with heritage as a starting point. Lastly, the research requires an understanding of the heritagisation process in physically and ideally designing a luxury retail development to formulate principles that construct the Utopolis. Thus, the next chapter dives into the methodology demanded to reach the Utopolis that also corresponded to the proposed theoretical framework established in this chapter.

Chapter 3 Methodology

In the previous chapter, the thesis established the theoretical framework in Figure 2.2 to understand the heritagisation process in designing a luxury retail development and to discover the principles of the Utopolis. This chapter explores the 'how' that involves: the methodology to abstractly formulate the Utopolis; the data analysis technique to understand the heritagisation process; and the research methods for data collection in correspondence to the theoretical spaces within the proposed framework. The methodology and the data collection methods with the proposed theoretical framework will allow the research to fulfil its main objectives in revealing the principles of the Utopolis and provide a comprehensive understanding in the heritagisation process of the Thai luxury retail development. Before going into the methodology, the analysis technique and the data collection methods, the research must first dive into the issue of a quantitative or qualitative research.

3.1 Qualitative Research

In choosing between qualitative and quantitative, Punch (2014) scoped the idea of quantitative research as the collection of numerical data while qualitative research deals with the collection non-numerical data such as words and images. In dealing with numerical data, quantitative research often relied on statistics in providing research findings while non-numerical data of a qualitative research provides insights into a social phenomenon (Barnham, 2015). This research actually focuses on a social phenomenon as established since Chapter 1 on the incorporation of Thai heritage in recent luxury retail developments in Thailand. As a result, this thesis focuses on qualitative research rather than quantitative research. In addition, a qualitative research approach involves two measures: 1) the in-depth understanding of how to do things by analysing collected materials to obtain unique data through iteration, which results in 2) the outcome, a novel discernment of a specific issue (Aspers & Corte, 2019). The two research questions of this thesis deal exactly with these two measures of qualitative research by investigating how to design a luxury retail development and the principle of the Utopolis.

In order to comprehend the way to design a luxury retail development with heritage, this research requires detailed non-numerical information from the developers. Previous academic research that investigated similar subjects such as flagship stores of luxury brands (Nobbs et al., 2012) and

Parisian department stores (Coëffé & Morice, 2020) also used a qualitative research method by conducting interviews with individuals who have worked in retail business to acquire extensive information. Moreover, this research deals primarily with the producers of luxury retail development with preliminary research on consumers' insights. Thus, this research does not utilise any quantitative research method because it does not require a vast amount of data from mass numbers of consumers. Lastly, when discussing about Utopolis' principles, the notion of 'principle' also implies the 'qualities' of the Utopolis. Due to all of these reasons, the chosen methodology, the data analysis technique and the data collection methods are all based on a qualitative research approach.

3.2 Social Construction of the Utopolis through Case Studies

From the basis of qualitative research, the research employs a social constructivist approach as the methodology in the theoretical production of the Utopolis. The Utopolis represents a specific social understanding of a phenomenon which this methodology provides (Morgan, 1996). Moreover, social construction also leads to a revelation of a social reality specific to a certain social group (Boyland, 2019) and for the context of this research, the specific social group constitute the Thai retail developers which I have also been a part of. Through social construction, the research depends on the personal perspective of the researcher in the analysis of the data, the subjective, in conjunction with iterated data from the perspective of others, the objective, for the realisation of the social reality (Pouliot, 2007; Vaismoradi et al., 2016; Boyland, 2019). As a result, knowledge created through this methodology is a combination of objectivity and subjectivity (Pouliot, 2007; Boyland, 2019) and represents the social reality of people who developed luxury retail developments with heritage. Finally, as discussed in Chapter 2 Section 2.3 on Luxury, Berry (1994) argued that luxury represents a social construction. Thus, the social constructivist approach constitutes a befitting methodology for the realisation of the Utopolis, another form of luxury.

For further social understanding of the phenomenon, this research chose to explore luxury retail developments with heritage as case studies because a 'case' as in the object of the research is chosen as it represents a complex, unique and contemporary phenomenon with an abundance of information that requires in-depth investigation in a specific natural setting through multiple research methods (Johansson, 2007; Yin, 2014). Researchers have also used case studies in the academic fields of sociology, anthropology, architecture, planning, environmental studies and

business studies before (Johansson, 2007). Moreover, unlike grounded theory (Meyer, 2001), a case study requires a theoretical proposition beforehand, as the data from the case study does not result in a theory (Meyer, 2001; Yin, 2014). The data enriches and validates the proposed theory of the research (Yin, 2014) and without a theoretical framework beforehand, such as 'Utopolis', the data of the case study may produce just descriptions and basic information without any relevance to the research (Meyer, 2001). Therefore, the case study approach also goes in hand with the social construction of the Utopolis.

The combination of subjectivity and objectivity from the social constructivist approach also requires various data collection methods. The case study again complements social constructivism because the case study requires at least three methods of data collection to allow the data to go through triangulation and form a network of evidence that permits the pattern matching of data through iteration to validate one another into a generalised data of the case study (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2014). Moreover, the generalised data also validates the theory of the research through the inductive mode of reasoning (Johansson, 2007). Through inductive reasoning, the researcher reads and analyses overlapping raw data into summarised and coded categories/themes which are then used in the development of a theory (Thomas, 2006). For this research, iteration of data will lead to themes that empirically guide the research and test the tentative theoretical framework of the Utopolis proposed in the literature review. Inductive reasoning also goes hand in hand with a social constructivist methodology (Pouliot, 2007), where the researcher has to create knowledge that portrays a social reality through the researcher's own interpretation of the collected data. Moreover, interpretation relies on the experience and cultural knowledge of the researcher to analyse and inductively formulate themes from iterations. Thus, the research utilised thematic analysis too.

For the thematic analysis, the researcher chose to apply Willig et al.'s (2017) steps in thematic analysis in the context of the research's theoretical framework. The process of thematic analysis started with familiarisation with the data. From the comprehension of the overall collected data, specific topics relevant to the idea of Utopolis and the design of the luxury retail development started to inductively appear. From familiarisation, the research combines different collected data together into categories and generates codes as subthemes. After reviewing each subtheme, the researcher may further amalgamate subthemes into themes that are then illustrated in a thematic map. This research uses the thematic map to comprehensively reveal the complete heritagisation process of luxury retail development. In understanding themes and codes,

Vaismoradi et al. (2016) explained themes as personal interpretations and social contextualisation of a phenomenon, while codes represent moveable, frequently iterated reference points that the research can assign for the development of themes. As a theme constitutes the personal interpretation of data into a social context for understanding a phenomenon, thematic analysis also complements the fusion of subjectivity and objectivity in a social constructivist methodology. Finally, the thematic analysis of data also followed Bryne's (2011) approach, where the research does not rely on just the iteration of data for unbiased findings, the objectivity, but also non-repeated data that the researcher deemed quintessential for the creative interpretation, the subjectivity, which further enriched the proposed theory of the Utopolis.

As this research investigates a new phenomenon through a proposed theoretical framework that requires different methods to acquire data for the 'Firstspace' and the 'Secondspace', I have chosen four data collection methods instead of the required minimum of three for a case study. The four data collection methods employed by this research are: 1) in-depth interviews; 2) direct observations; 3) focus groups; and 4) documentation. These four chosen data collection methods corresponded with the proposed theoretical framework as discussed in the previous chapter, the literature review. Direct observations provide data for the Firstspace of the theoretical framework, while in-depth interviews with the developers of a luxury retail development supply data for the Secondspace. Moreover, the focus groups with the consumers of the luxury retail development validate both the Firstspace and Secondspace. Finally, documentation will also validate the data collected from both the Firstspace and the Secondspace. As a result, this permits the triangulation and, moreover, the analysis of data from many perspectives: the producers as in individuals who worked on the development of either case study, the researcher as in myself, who observed each case study based on the theoretical framework from the literature review and my personal background as a retail developer, and the consumers who equals the visitors of each luxury retail development, and third parties in the respective order of the data collection methods. In addition, as discussed in the literature review, this research adapted Soja's (2014) technique to reach, analyse and comprehend the heterotopia of a space for the development of the proposed theory of the Utopolis, too. Soja argued for the deconstruction of the Firstspace and Secondspace and taking the deconstructed elements from both of these spaces to build a new abstract space. In the same manner as Soja, iterated and inductively created themes from each data collection method act as bricks for either the Firstspace or the Secondspace. The research then selects thematic bricks from these two spaces as materials to socially construct the heterotopia and, more importantly, the Utopolis. Figure 3.1 on the next page summarises the

chosen research methods in correspondence to the theoretical framework established in the literature review as the overall research design of this thesis.

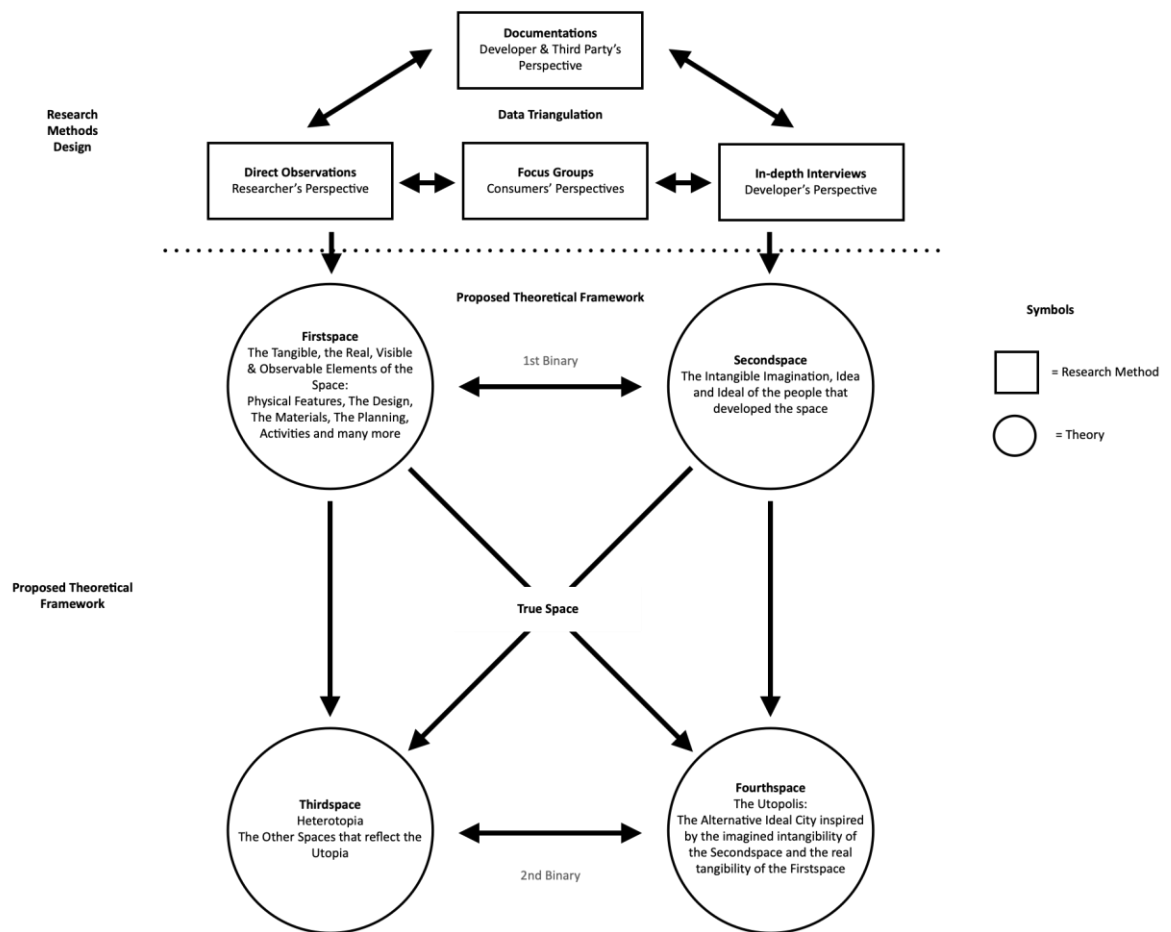


Figure 3.1 Proposed Theoretical Framework with the Research Plan
(Sombunjaroen, 2021)

Figure 3.1 is applied to each selected case study: 1) ICONSIAM; and 2) Central Ayutthaya. This research has two case studies because the use of more than one case study also helps to cross-validate the findings of one case study to another (Yin, 2014), and one case study may also provide limited information to form generalised data which may also be biased (Meyer, 2001). By the time of submission, ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya represent the only two prime examples of the research's phenomenon that the research could conduct within the required timeframe.

Finally, the University Ethics Committee approved the conduct of this research on 4th April 2022 with Ethics number 71202 for the data collection methods of in-depth interviews, direct observations and documentation. In the following year, the University Ethics Committee approved an extension and an amendment to also conduct a focus group with consumers of the

luxury retail developments on 9th February 2023 with Ethics number 71202.A2. The year difference came from the fact that this research did not initially plan to conduct focus groups with consumers of the luxury retail development, because this research initially only focused on the production of space and, more specifically, the design of the luxury retail development with Thai heritage. Nevertheless, the research later on included a focus group with consumers to enrich the research further by providing insights that may correlate or even contrast with those of the producers of the space. Social construction represents a combination of the researcher's subjectivity with objectivity. Findings from the consumers' perspective also validate the personal observation made by myself for the Firstspace. In addition, data from consumers can also assist the proposed idea of the Utopolis as a city that also has its citizens, and a part of this citizenry constitutes the consumers, as in the visitors and the shoppers of the luxury retail developments. In the following sections, the research goes into each of the data collection methods conducted with the observations for the Firstspace.

3.3 Direct Observations of Case Studies: The Firstspace

Direct observation takes place when the researcher visits the site of the case study to gather data (Tellis 1997). In urban studies, this method is the most important because no other research alternative exists for an actual visit to a place to take notes and photos (Byrne, 2020).

Photography is also very important in this research because a photo provides information, a narrative and a representation of meanings. The narrative and the representation of meanings permit the comprehension and interpretation of history, society and culture (Ortiz, 2021), which are critical to the social construction of the theory. This research used unstructured observation because this method examines a setting naturally without any attempt to change, control or manipulate the space. Unstructured observation also requires the researcher's intuition and past experience (Byrne, 2020), in line with the needed subjectivity of the social constructivist methodology. Thus, for this research, I acted as the observer.

For each observation, I visited each case study incognito to take photos with my mobile phone camera of observable publicly accessible design features that incorporated Thai heritage. In order to comply with the ethics policy of the university, no photos used in this research contained people in luxury retail developments. Moreover, to comply with unstructured observation, people were not disturbed to move away from photos, nor were any objects moved inside the case study retail development. To avoid fatigue, each observation was capped at three hours per visit. During

each observation, I walked in one direction, floor by floor. Once I had walked through the entire development, I walked back in the same direction, floor by floor, to ensure that no design features with Thai heritage were missed. Hidden accessible places such as toilets, car parks, small shops next to the car parks were also visited. Table 3.1 below lists the features I looked out for during each visit.

List of Design Features to Observe
1. Architectural and Interior Design such as floor, walls, construction materials, and furniture (exterior and interior)
2. Art Installations
3. Products / Merchandises
4. Displays of Products
5. Seasonal Decorations
6. Temporary Construction of Events
7. Content in LED Screens
8. Other Marketing materials like Posters, Coupons, or Flyers
9. Maps, & Directories
10. Features that people can interact with

Table 3.1 List of Design Features Observed at Both Case Studies
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Moreover, the research also created a list of examples of Thai heritage to look out for in a design feature. This list also includes luxuries in Thai culture discussed in Chapter 1 Section 1.3 on Thailand and its Idea of Luxury. Table 3.2 below shows the list of Thai heritage examples.

List of Thai Heritage Examples to Observe in Design Features
1. Gold, Gold Leaf, Golden Objects, Gold Design
2. Thai textiles like Thai silk, natural dye, batik
3. Thai patterns and drawings
4. Colourful stained-glass mosaics like in the Grand Palace
5. Traditional Thai architecture like temples or wooden houses on stilts
6. Buddhist objects and symbols such as lotuses and temple bell
7. Traditional Thai objects like potteries, triangle pillows
8. Thai animals like elephants and monkeys

Table 3.2 List of Thai Heritage Examples to Observe in Both Case Studies
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Even as a retail developer myself, sometimes I am not certain what design features are truly permanent or temporary. As a result, more than one observation was required for each case study. For ICONSIAM, the research received official acknowledgment from the management of Siam Piwat, the developer and operator of ICONSIAM, on 7th April 2022 and a total of six observations were completed, as seen in Table 3.3 below.

Observation No.	Date	Occasion and Remarks
1 st Observation	14 th April, 2022	The middle of the Thai New Year's holiday
2 nd Observation	22 nd July, 2022	A week before King Rama X's birthday, the current King of Thailand
3 rd Observation	10 th August, 2022	A special event for Thai textiles
4 th Observation	5 th November, 2022	Three days before Loy Krathong Festival ¹¹
5 th Observation	20 th January, 2023	Two days before the Chinese New Year ¹²
6 th Observation	31 st March, 2023	No specific occasion, as per the request of the examiners of the progression reviews to have an observation on a day with no special seasonal festivity

Table 3.3 List of Dates and Occasions for Each Observation of Case Study 1
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

¹¹ Thai national festival that pays tribute to the goddess of the river. On the day of this festival, people go to rivers, canals and lakes to float an object called a Krathong, a small vessel filled with flowers, folded banana leaves and candles into the water as a form of thanksgiving and prayer. Furthermore, the decorations for Christmas and the New Year were also already installed.

¹² Chinese New Year may not sound Thai but Chinese culture represents a very important DNA of Bangkok's history and identity since Bangkok used to be a port city for Chinese merchants. Bangkok's Chinatown, Chinese shrines and historic Chinese-style mansions are all located within close proximity to ICONSIAM.

For Central Ayutthaya, this research received official acknowledgment three months after ICONSIAM. This delay derived from the difficulty in obtaining the official acknowledgment. After receiving ethics approval, I immediately tried to contact individuals who may introduce me to anyone from Central Ayutthaya who can officially acknowledge and allow the conduct of direct observations. One individual set up a meeting with an individual from the management of Central Ayutthaya, and I went in to introduce myself as a PhD student and clarified why I had to conduct the research and take the photos myself. I also provided a research information sheet on why Central Ayutthaya was chosen and what would happen during the observation. After this meeting with the individual from the management of Central Ayutthaya, I waited two weeks and no email with the official acknowledgement came, so I contacted them again to follow up, and the answer I got was that they were in the deliberation process. After two more weeks, I followed up again and got the same answer. During my supervisory meeting, my supervisors advised me to try to set up another meeting because Central Ayutthaya might require further clarifications, but I was not given the time for this. Without another meeting, I had to find a different route to get the official acknowledgement by utilising my personal connection with an individual from the management of an entity that often worked with Central Group. This individual also went to the same school as an individual from the management of Central Pattana, the parent company of Central Ayutthaya. From this personal connection and through the parent company of Central Ayutthaya, the official acknowledgement from Central Ayutthaya arrived on 4th July 2022 and a total of six observations were also made for this case study, as shown in Table 3.4 below:

Observation No.	Date	Occasion and Remarks
1 st Observation	28 th July, 2022	The day of King Rama X's birthday
2 nd Observation	7 th November, 2022	One day before Loy Krathong festival
3 rd Observation	8 th December, 2022	Christmas and the New Year
4 th Observation	18 th January, 2023	Four days before Chinese New Year
5 th Observation	15 th March, 2023	No specific occasion
6 th Observation	12 th April, 2023	One day before the start of Thai New Year's Holiday

Table 3.4 List of Dates and Occasions for Each Observation of Case Study 2
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In summary, for the direct observation, six observations were conducted for each case study. Observations for both case studies occurred during similar timing for similar occasions, with the exception of the Thai New Year that took place one year apart between the two case studies due to the three-month delay in obtaining acknowledgement from Central Ayutthaya. Finally, it is important to note that only the first observation of ICONSIAM took place in the middle of the festivity. During this observation, the task of taking photos without any people became profoundly difficult, as the luxury retail developments were packed with shoppers for the celebratory period. As a result, all of the other observations took place a few days before the actual festivity, where fewer people were in the developments to allow more photos. Although the observations took place a few days before the actual day of the celebration, design features related to seasonal festivity were already observable, as they were already incorporated in the space for the occasion. Finally, as both case studies were located in different cities, no observation was made on the same day as another observation. Despite the grand total of 12 observations, the research still requires further insights from the developers for the Secondspace, and this necessity leads to the next section on in-depth interviews.

3.4 In-depth Interviews with Key Individuals who Developed the Case Studies: The Secondspace

An in-depth interview constitutes an important way to collect data for a case study, as it allows insights and a depth of information (Tellis, 1997), such as local knowledge, the meaning of the creation and the actions taken to understand a complex phenomenon. For urban analysis, semi-structured interviews with a prepared list of open-ended questions can obtain informative and comprehensive answers from interviewees. Furthermore, the research should also have a range of interviewees of about 5-25 people (Osborne & Grant-Smith, 2021).

This research conducted a total of 20 one-on-one online interviews between two case studies: 15 for ICONSIAM and five for Central Ayutthaya. The discrepancy in the number of interviews between the two case studies derives from the scale of the development and the way that the company of each case study normally develops its luxury retail developments. On the official websites of ICONSIAM, ICONSIAM has claimed a total investment of 55 billion Thai Baht or roughly 1.25 billion GBP (ICONSIAM). On the other hand, Central has claimed on its website that it has invested 6.2 billion Thai Baht or about 142 million GBP, in Central Ayutthaya (Central, 2021).

Therefore, the scale of development differs greatly between the two case studies. A larger scale also means more spaces to decorate and fill with Thai heritage, which may also lead to the requirement of higher manpower. At ICONSIAM, Thai heritage manifests not only in the architecture and the interior but also in special zones dedicated to Thai products and curated Thai art pieces. Moreover, every time Siam Piwat develops a retail project, the project is usually designed from scratch. This way of producing a retail development is very different from Central Group, which, as the biggest retail developer in Thailand, usually has a template and an array of department stores and retail brands under its own group that are used in nearly every development. There is no right or wrong in either way of producing a retail development. In terms of business management, Siam Piwat's approach means more cost and more manpower required, but it also means higher differentiation from other retail developments. In contrast, Central's approach equals lower costs and less manpower required. However, this way of Central resulted in higher similarities between retail developments. The differentiation of Central's developments usually comes mainly from exterior and interior decorations and special features that are limited to a certain development. All of these reasons have caused ICONSIAM to require more people in the development and this has been reflected proportionally in the numbers of interviews.

3.4.1 Anonymity of Interview Participants

The anonymity of participants constitutes the utmost important element for one-on-one in-depth interviews because anonymity ensures the quality and honest data from the interview participants. Furthermore, anonymity safeguards the career of every participant by preventing a company from identifying the participant. As part of anonymity, the researcher also chose not to enquire about or specify the name, age, gender and position/former position of any participant. Only the field of expertise and the participants' years of experience working in retail development, not the age or the years working for the company of the retail development, were inquired in the interview because an individual may have worked for a different industry or another retail developer beforehand. Instead of a name, each participant was assigned a code. The system for the code is as follows:

1. IS or CA, as in ICONSIAM or Central Ayutthaya, followed by
2. A one-digit or two-digit number that represents the chronological order of the interview with each participant in each case study.

The research conducted all the interviews via Microsoft's MS Teams due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Online interviews also benefitted the anonymity of the participants even further because the interviewer and the participant did not have to meet in public to conduct the interview and prevented acquaintances of both the interviewer and the participant from accidentally seeing the participant with the interviewer and vice versa. Another benefit of the online interview was the digital recording of the interview via the recording function of the MS Teams. Every participant granted permission for the audio of the interview to be recorded via MS Teams. Despite the use of anonymity for the assurance of honest answers from the participants, it has been noted that participants who are still working for the case study in question at the time of the interview tend to provide less criticism than those who no longer work for the retail developer of the case study. Participants who had resigned from the retail case study also provided more direct criticism of the design, inspiration and ideals involved in the development of the space.

3.4.2 Interview Participants

The participants comprised of individuals who worked on the development of either ICONSIAM or Central Ayutthaya. Individuals who joined ICONSIAM or Central Ayutthaya after the grand opening were not included since they played no role in the production of the case study. Furthermore, participants also came from a variety of fields of expertise, such as architecture, interior design, business development, merchandising, marketing and event organisation. The inclusion of participants from the field of event organisation was necessary because symbols of Thai heritage have been observed in design features not just in the permanent architectural and interior design but also in the temporary decorations, events, communications and merchandise. This choice of recruiting interview participants beyond the expertise of architecture and interior design also links back to Lefebvre's (1991) idea that a space does not constitute just an object to hold things. Apart from the myriad of expertise, participants also have different years of experience working in retail development, ranging from several decades of work experience to people who have just worked in this industry for several years.

From the interviews conducted, the research found that some participants from both case studies possessed more than one expertise that contributed to the development of their luxury retail developments. For instance, for the case study of ICONSIAM, IS4 possessed an education in both architecture and mass communication, which were used in the development of ICONSIAM, while IS6 studied marketing but worked in procuring merchandise for the retail store operated and

owned by ICONSIAM and marketed these merchandises to the consumers. Similar to participant IS6, participant CA2 of Central Ayutthaya also graduated with a degree in marketing and worked on the development of narrative for Central Ayutthaya while also doing the visual merchandising, the displays of Central Ayutthaya. Finally, it is important to note that out of all the participants with an education in architecture interviewed for this research, only one participant actually specialised in interior design, too, and this constitutes participant CA3. Moreover, for both case studies, architects represented about half of the participants, with seven out of 15 participants for ICONSIAM and three out of five for Central Ayutthaya. The rest of the participants have backgrounds in other fields such as business development, marketing and others. Table 3.5 below depicts all the participants of the in-depth interviews with their years of experience working in retail development and their professional expertise.

Participant Code	Years in Retail Development	Expertise
Case Study 1: ICONSIAM		
IS1	11	Marketing
IS2	10	Marketing
IS3	10	Business Development
IS4	10	Architecture & Marketing
IS5	25	Architecture
IS6	5	Merchandising & Marketing
IS7	10	Architecture
IS8	8	Marketing
IS9	18	Architecture
IS10	10	Architecture
IS11	8	Curator
IS12	9	Architecture
IS13	5	Architecture
IS14	7	Business Development
IS15	10	Marketing
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya		
CA1	2	Architecture
CA2	12	Visual Merchandising & Marketing
CA3	16	Architecture & Interior Design
CA4	10	Business Development
CA5	15	Architecture

Table 3.5 In-depth Interview Participants of the Two Case Studies
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

In terms of the years of experience working in retail development, the years range from two years to 25 years, with an average of 10.5 years for both case studies. For ICONSIAM, the range starts from five years to 25 years, with an average of 10.4 years. For Central Ayutthaya, the range begins from two years and ends with 15 years, with an average of 11 years. It is very important to reiterate that the number of years working in retail development does not necessarily mean the total number of years that each participant has worked in their lifetime, nor does it imply their age. For example, participant IS5 and CA1 both have qualifications in architecture, but participant IS5 has worked longer in retail development than CA1, who has only worked in this industry for two years despite a long architectural career producing other types of spaces that are not shopping malls. The range of years of working in retail developments also provided different kinds of insights. For instance, CA1 talked about the vast spatial difference in creating a luxury retail development compared to other architectural spaces. Such insights will be discussed further in the findings of this research. Finally, the recruited participants demonstrate a fair and unbiased balance between the two case studies, with similarity in the average years in retail development and the proportion not relying solely on individuals with an architectural background.

3.4.3 Recruitment and Interview Process of Participants

Since I worked full-time on the development of ICONSIAM before the commencement of the PhD research, all of the participants from the case study of ICONSIAM were my work colleagues. I contacted each participant via his/her mobile number, which I personally possessed from my years working on ICONSIAM. I called each participant to inform him/her briefly about the research and asked for his/her personal email. I emailed each participant the participant information sheet (Appendix A) and the consent form (Appendix B) from my university email. The utilisation of personal contacts may raise issues of collecting biased data and affect the research's academic integrity, but this research has been designed to prevent biased findings through multiple layers of iterations, which this research has addressed and discussed further in Section 3.7 on Access and Assurance of Unbiased Findings.

For the case study of Central Ayutthaya, the world of retail development actually consists of small circles of individuals who sometimes move around between competing retail developers, especially for some particular projects. I contacted colleagues who have either moved to Central Group or worked for Central Group to connect me with individuals who played a role in the development of Central Ayutthaya. These colleagues provided me with the emails of the

participants, and I repeated the process in the same manner as the participants from ICONSIAM by sending each potential participant the participant information sheet and the consent form via my university email. Each participant was informed that the interview would take approximately one hour to conduct. The actual durations of the interviews predominantly ranged from approximately 45 minutes to one hour, depending on the talking speed of the participant and the quantity of examples each participant could give on a particular subject. Very few interviews went slightly above the one-hour mark by about five minutes. During the interview process, I was the interviewer. I also conducted the interviews in Thai to allow more data to come out from the participants because the Thai language represents the mother tongue of the participants. Each participant was given a set of open-ended questions, with the main questions as follows:

List of Open-Ended Questions
1. Can you tell me about your career, your work experience and your expertise?
2. How long have you worked in retail development?
3. In your opinion, what factors make a successful retail development?
4. Can you explain your roles and responsibilities in the development of ICONSIAM/ Central Ayutthaya?
5. From these roles and responsibilities, which of these did you have to include Thainess ¹³ and Thai culture in your work?
6. Of all the very long history of Thailand, there are many kinds of Thainess. What came to your mind? Why did you choose to incorporate this kind of Thainess into your work?
7. Putting budget and time constraints aside, are there any other kinds of Thainess that you would have liked to include in your work and why?
8. Can you please tell us the process from starting with the conceptual to the finished work that incorporates Thainess? We can go one step at a time.
9. After the grand opening of (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya) and seeing the completed development, what did you feel and think about the project and why?
10. Now, putting your own work and budget aside, would you like to change anything about (ICONSIAM or Central Ayutthaya) in terms of the design and the experience? This can be anything in the project.
11. Finally, what did you learn from this experience of developing a retail establishment that incorporates Thainess?

Table 3.6 List of Main Open-Ended Questions for the In-depth Interview
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

¹³ Thainess is used instead of heritage because Thai language does not have an exact word that means heritage like in English, and we often use Thainess when we speak. However, for heritage sites, we use the word “cultural inheritance” in Thai. There is a physical idea of heritage but not an abstract idea of heritage.

The full interview schedule for the one-on-one in-depth interview with the full set of questions can be seen in Appendix C.

After I contacted each potential participant, the potential participant had approximately one month to decide. After I sent the email, I would wait for two weeks if the participant did not get back to me. When I did not receive a reply within two weeks, I resent the email one more time as a reminder, and when no reply came back after two more weeks, I did not contact the potential participant again. Although 20 interviews were conducted, the number of attempts at recruiting potential participants was higher than the number of interviews conducted. Many prospective participants from both case studies did not reply with the signed consent form within the given time frame, and some even declined participation outright despite personal connections. Therefore, the recruitment process and the securing of appointments for each interview took a great deal of time. Some participants could not provide a free time directly for the interview, and some participants allocated a week, two weeks, or even a month after sending the signed consent form for the interview. The first interview was conducted on 11th May, 2022 and the last interview occurred on the 17th March, 2023. Therefore, this research took about 10 months to recruit participants and conduct interviews.

3.5 Focus Groups with Consumers: Validation of the Firstspace and the Secondspace

As mentioned in section 3.2, despite the initial reservation to conduct research on consumers due to the research's focus on production, I decided that data from consumers should be used to validate findings and especially to ensure unbiased observational discoveries made through my analyses. Data from consumers also led to unexpected findings that may enrich the idea of the Utopolis further. In order to obtain data from consumers of both case studies, the focus group was chosen as the research method. A focus group is more than just putting people together in the same interview. Therefore, it is not just a group interview because research participants should discuss, interact and respond with one another about a certain topic in order to classify as a focus group (Morgan, 1996; Gibbs, 1997). Moreover, the interviewer should also encourage discussions among participants to obtain not only personal insights but also a group's consensus on the research's phenomenon (Morgan, 1996). For the number of people in a focus group, Morgan (1996) recommended between six and ten participants. As a result, the focus group

constitutes a form of qualitative research method that is well suited to the social constructivist approach of this research as it provides understanding of a specific social context (Morgan, 1996; Gibbs, 1997; Denise Threlfall, 1999) through the participants' experiences (Gibbs, 1997). Moreover, the focus group should be used in conjunction with other research methods, as collected data should go through data triangulation (Morgan, 1996; Denise Threlfall, 1999). The focus group can also be used for consumer-related research where the data obtained goes through an inductive mode of reasonings (Denise Threlfall, 1999). For instance, in consumer-based research with subjects similar to this research, Shahid et al. (2022) used focus groups with consumers to understand their experiences at stores of luxury brands, while Lee et al. (2020) also conducted focus groups with young luxury consumers to comprehend their inclination to purchase a certain type of luxury goods in a specific environment, online and offline. For all of these reasons, the focus group represents the most appropriate method for collecting data from consumers because this method fulfils all the criteria of this research design, from being a qualitative research method through social constructivist inductive reasonings that require data triangulation.

Another reason for utilising a focus group for consumers derives from the less stringent requirement of anonymity for consumers. Unlike in-depth interviews with participants who have developed the case studies, the utmost anonymity was required for the protection of the participants and for the most honest answers, while consumers do not require the same level of anonymity from a one-on-one interview. Discussion in a group provides more benefits for obtaining insights than a one-on-one interview. Nevertheless, the research still guaranteed confidentiality to the participants of the focus groups to create a safer environment for open discussion. All the focus group participants understood that anonymity could not be guaranteed in the discussion forum, but the researcher kept any information collected confidential, and participants were asked to keep the discussions confidential.

3.5.1 Focus Groups Research Participants

In determining the consumers specific to luxury retail developments, the research intentionally chose visitors over shoppers. The main focus of the focus group lies in the need to find insights and perceptions on design features of Thai heritage in luxury retail development from people who have visited and experienced one of the case studies first-hand. Therefore, the participants did not need to have purchased anything before. Another required decision in defining visitors is

choosing locals or tourists. As discussed earlier in the literature review, this research focuses on the local population's usage of local heritage in the creation of a Utopolis, a different kind of luxury moment from the exoticism that tourists experience. The data collection from consumers must also focus on visitors who are locals. Diving deeper into the notion of local consumers, the research also specified that the participants must be residents, as in living long-term in the same city as in the case study. The residency requirement comprises two main reasons. The first reason derives from the subjective and personal nature of perceiving luxury. It would not be fair to have Thai people living in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, discuss the design of a luxury retail development in the province such as Central Ayutthaya because residents of Bangkok are more accustomed to bigger retail developments with bigger investments in the capital. The second main reason stems from the proposed idea of the Utopolis, because every city, real or imagined, contains local inhabitants. Furthermore, this research may focus on the overall use of Thai national heritage in designing a luxury retail development, but there is certain heritage specific to the city and the region that local inhabitants may have a better understanding of and knowledge of. As a result, visitors who are residents of the same city as the case study represent the main focus of this research.

Aside from the local inhabitants, the focus group participant requirements have been designed to contain balances between genders, generations and visits. This allows the obtainment of the general perception rather than focusing on a particular gender, generation or people who visit often or hardly visit at all. Each participant has visited the case study at least once in the past year, since there is no substitution for the first-hand experience of visiting a space. With regard to age and generation, the research was open to anyone over the age of 18 to comply with the ethics policy of the university. In total, 12 participants were recruited, six participants for each case study. The determination of participants into a specific generation has its own dilemma because of the lack of agreed consensus due to the slight variations for the beginning and ending years for each generation. In order to solve this dilemma, the research specifically chose the time frame determined by the Pew Research Center, which has allocated the following years for each generation: Baby Boomers, 1946–1964; Gen X, 1965–1980; Gen Y, 1981–1996; Gen Z, 1997–2012 (Dimock, 2022). This means that as of 2023, the year of the conduct of the focus groups, each generation belongs to the following age range: Baby Boomers, 77–59; Gen X, 58–43; Gen Y, 42–27; Gen Z, 26–11. The details of the participants of ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya can be seen in Table 3.7 on the next page.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM				
Participant	Gender	Age (at the time of the interview)	Generation	Approximate Number of Visits in the past 1 year
1	Female	18	Gen Z	12
2	Male	35	Gen Y	6
3	Female	63	Baby Boomer	1
4	Male	25	Gen Z	5
5	Male	44	Gen X	3
6	Female	34	Gen Y	2

Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya				
Participant	Gender	Age (at the time of the interview)	Generation	Approximate Number of Visits in the past 1 year
1	Male	50	Gen X	3
2	Female	48	Gen X	10
3	Male	40	Gen Y	1
4	Female	29	Gen Y	1
5	Female	59	Baby Boomer	4
6	Male	39	Gen Y	3

Table 3.7 Focus Group Participants of the Two Case Studies
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In Table 3.7 above, it can be seen that the research has attempted to find a balance between the two case studies. In both case studies, three male and three female participants took part in the focus group for each case study. The participants of both case studies are also from multiple generations, with Case Study 1 containing four generations from Baby Boomers to Gen Z, ranging from the age of 18 to 63, with an average of 36.5 years of age. The range for the approximate number of visits in the past year starts from one time to 12 times, with an average of five visits in

the past year. Although Case Study 2 carries some minor discrepancies from Case Study 1, the demographics remain similar. Case Study 2 contains three generations, from Baby Boomers to Gen Y, with Gen Z missing. As a result of the missing Gen Z, the range starts at 29 and finishes at 59 years of age. On the other hand, the average age is 44 years of age, only about seven years, different from the average of Case Study 1. The range for the approximate number of visits in the past one year starts from one time to 10 times, with an average of four visits in the past one year, only one visit difference from Case Study 1.

3.5.2 Recruitment and Interview Process of Focus Groups' Participants

The minor discrepancies between the recruited participants in the two case studies derive from another kind of difficulty in recruiting the focus group participants, which differs from the one-on-one in-depth interview. In the recruitment process of the focus group, I relied on friends, family members, non-retail-development-related work colleagues and other acquaintances to share E-posters with their contacts via text messaging applications such as WhatsApp and LINE. As a result, unlike the participants of the in-depth interviews for Case Study 1 ICONSIAM, I do not know the participants of the focus group on a personal level because all participants have either a second or third degree of separation from myself. After receiving an email from a potential research participant, I sent the potential participant the focus group participant information sheet (Appendix D) and the focus group consent form (Appendix E). After the potential participant sent back the signed consent form, I arranged the time for the one-hour online focus group.

As one focus group relied on the available time of six potential participants, unlike the flexibility of one-on-one interviews where I could conduct the interview anytime, as long as the time was convenient for the participant, I had to set up a date several weeks in advance after receiving the signed consent forms. The focus groups were usually held on weekdays in the evening after work to maximise the chance of availability for all potential participants. Despite this choice of timing, I could not acquire the exact match between participants of the two case studies, as not every consented potential participant was available at the allocated time. In the end, I managed to arrange the focus group for Case Study 2 first on 10th March 2023, while the focus group for Case Study 1 happened on 23rd March 2023. The main reason for the recruitment and the conduction of Case Study 2 first arose from the basics of statistics. Bangkok, as the capital and the economic heart of Thailand, possesses far more residents than other provinces, including Ayutthaya. Therefore, the recruitment of Bangkok citizens for the focus group of Case Study 1 is statistically

easier than enlisting citizens of Ayutthaya for the focus group of Case Study 2. To ensure that the focus group of Case Study 2 was conducted, the researcher had to place the recruitment and interview time allocation as the first priority before Case Study 1.

In terms of the focus group interview process, each focus group was conducted online for one hour via MS Teams by myself. This research chose to conduct the focus group online due to the Covid-19 pandemic and two reasons of convenience. The first reason of convenience came from the recording function of MS Teams. The second reason of convenience came from the fact that six participants did not have to meet one another in a physical space and this further ensured the confidentiality of each participant even further because they did not have to physically meet one another. Both focus groups took approximately one hour to conduct within the time frame. Hence, the chosen number of six participants per focus group correlated with the allocated one hour for the group discussion. Each case study was shown a set of photographs of design features taken from the observation of the case study and asked a set of open-ended questions, with the main questions in Table 3.8 below. The full interview schedule for the focus group with the full set of questions can be seen in Appendix F at the end of the thesis.

List of Main Open-Ended Questions for the Focus Group	
1.	Firstly, can you please tell me your nickname, how old you are and how many times you have visited (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya) in the past one year and for what reasons?
2.	When you see a retail development designed with Thai heritage such as (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya), how do you feel?
3.	Do you feel that a retail development designed with Thai heritage provides a different experience from other retail developments in your city?
4.	Can you please tell me what you feel when you see this design? (Images shown)
5.	As a customer of (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya), are there any experiences that this retail development does not have that you would like it to have?

Table 3.8 List of the Main Open-Ended Questions for the Focus Group
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

For question 4, participants of the focus group of Case Study 1 were shown 17 sets of images, while participants of the focus group of Case Study 2 were presented with 14 sets of photographs. Ideally, I would like to have shown the same number of design features, but in reality, this was impossible because ICONSIAM is a lot larger than Central Ayutthaya with more design features

that incorporate heritage. The research has also already edited down the number of images to 17 sets of images for ICONSIAM and to make the research as fair as possible for Case Study 2, too. For questions 1, 2, 3 and 5, I asked every participant for their answers and I also enquired if any other participants agreed or disagreed with a particular answer to promote a discussion among the focus group. For question 4, which was repeated in correspondence to the sets of images, I asked about two to three participants per set of images for their personal opinions on the design feature. Then, I asked the group if they agreed or disagreed with these opinions and why. For each set of images, I also tried to switch around the two to three participants that I asked. Finally, I would ask participants who hardly discussed the previous design feature for their opinions on the next design feature.

3.5.3 The Unexpected Benefits of the Focus Group

The addition of the focus group to the research methods represents one of the best decisions made for the thesis. Despite the additional time required, the results have been tremendously rewarding. The findings from the focus group validated the observational findings and ensured impartiality in my analyses by confirming that I didn't see or think about a specific issue alone. Moreover, I didn't superficially create the Firstspace in Chapter 4. Apart from validation of observational findings, the focus groups also provided different perspectives on the design of the case studies, which improved and refined the research further. The undertaking of a PhD research also represents a learning process and I felt that I have learnt more new things from the focus groups than from the observations and the in-depth interviews. As a developer myself, sometimes we all need a point of view from outside the bubble that we are immersed in. Lastly, the data from the focus groups allowed a stronger triangulation of data for further prevention of biased research.

3.5.4 Translation and Transcription of the In-depth Interviews and the Focus Groups

Throughout the whole PhD journey the translation and transcription of the in-depth interviews and the focus groups took the most time and effort. From the recorded audio via MS Teams, I had to translate and transcribe the interviews as raw data for the research. This translation and the transcription process was the most tedious and the most time-consuming of all the data collection process, where one interview took an average of a week or two to translate and transcribe, especially because of the difficulty in translating culturally specific words, phrases and idioms that

are not easily translatable with just a dictionary. I had to do further desk research and even enquire with other Thai people with more experience in Thailand than me¹⁴ and more knowledge on certain words and idioms to get the most accurate and appropriate definitions for these culturally specific terminologies. Furthermore, sometimes English words or phrases were used in the interview, but the usage was actually in Thai cultural context or Thai language so I could not just use the same word in the transcript but had to find the appropriate words in proper English to convey the same meaning. Wongranu (2017) also claimed that the most common translation mistake from Thai to English was semantic errors where the chosen word for a translation may seem related to the original word in Thai but not able to convey the true meaning. The translator needs to take precautions when it comes to choosing the right word for the context. Wongseree (2021) also mentioned that the translation of culturally specific words/expressions may need to find substituted words that may replace the culturally specific words with the same impact. When a substitution could not be made, the translator can also loan the word into the English language, but the translator will need to do more work by not just translating but also providing explanations of the word. This often happened with the translation of many words from Thai to English in this research.

In the first interview, I wrote down what each participant said in Thai, and then I did the translation in English. However, it took more than two weeks, since this was equivalent to doing double the work. By the time of the last few interviews, the transcription took about one week, because I decided to skip the transcription in Thai and directly translate the Thai audio into an English transcription straight away in my head. The transcription had to be conducted in this manner to allow enough time for the completion of the thesis. Finally, a transcription programme was not used for the Thai recording because of the low-quality Thai language transcription generated by the available programmes. Several programmes were tried out, but the transcription and the results were far from the actual audio recording because the Thai language is a tonal language where the tone, pitch and intonation of a word will convey different meanings to a word that may sound the same to speakers of non-tonal languages. For instance, the word 'ma' in Thai can either mean a mother, to come, a horse or a dog depending on the tone used. Moreover, in the Thai language, several words may sound similar, but they all have different ways to write the word with different alphabets because some Thai alphabets have the same sound but with a different pitch, either low, medium or high. For instance, there are many alphabets for the

¹⁴ I have lived abroad for about half of my life.

'T' sound that have different pitches. Thus, the words for a mother, to come, a horse and a dog are all spelt differently with different sets of alphabets. As a result of the spelling and tonal complexity in the Thai language, the results from the transcription programs became incomprehensible. I also made enquiries with acquaintances who are professors at Thai universities and all of them mentioned the same thing that they all used their assistants or students to do the transcript for their interviews. Lastly, all audio recordings were deleted after the completion of the transcripts to comply with the university's ethics policy and protect the identities of the participants.

3.6 Documentation

Finally, documentation constitutes the final data collection method for this research. Documentation means the gathering of various existing data sources, such as websites, newspapers and reports, into a database. Data from documentation is primarily used to support data collected from other methods and research (Tellis, 1997). For the documentation of this research, I searched through websites and social media of both case studies that may further validate findings from the interviews and direct observations. Furthermore, publicly accessible writings on the case studies by third parties such as online news media, magazines and blogs may also be employed for further validations of interviews, focus groups and direct-observations. More importantly, the research did not interview any senior management, such as CEO or Board of Directors of both case studies, since interviews and press releases made with the press by members of both senior managements are available online, and such data is utilised to further provide more comprehensive findings of the Secondspace to support the validation of the developer's ideals and imaginations.

3.7 Access and Assurance of Unbiased Findings

As mentioned in section 3.4.3, I know all of the people who played a role in the development of ICONSIAM personally since I used to work full-time on the development of ICONSIAM. This also means that slightly biased data might be collected for the interview of Case Study 1. Although I used to work on one of the case studies and know every participant of this case study personally, the research has been designed to prevent biased findings through multiple layers of iterations. Firstly, the findings of one case study rely on iterations from at least three types of data, rather

than just one, from interview transcripts, photographs and a focus group transcript. Other materials via documentation, if necessary, are also used in an extra and final iteration. The addition of the focus group also added data from the perspective of consumers, which helped to counter the possibility of biased findings from the in-depth interviews of the case studies. Furthermore, the findings of ICONSIAM are further iterated and cross-validated by findings from Central Ayutthaya. Central Ayutthaya also possesses its own set of data from interview transcripts, photographs, a focus group transcript, and other materials via documentation. Moreover, I have no sentimental history with Central Ayutthaya nor know any of these participants first-hand. The research was also specifically executed to ensure a fair balance between the two case studies. This can be seen from the similar proportion of expertise between interview participants, the exact same numbers of observations for the same occasions, and the similarity in demographics between the participants of the two focus groups.

It is also important to mention that knowing people personally also provides the researcher with several benefits. Firstly, the direct observation and the interview may not have taken place without my personal connections. Even the official acknowledgement for the observation of Central Ayutthaya required a non-retail-related personal acquaintance to help out. Reflecting back on the interviews conducted, participants from ICONSIAM who all know me personally were willing to provide personal opinions of the overall development and not just on their works. On the other hand, some participants from Central Ayutthaya were not so willing to comment on the overall design/design features unrelated to their work. One even stated that it would not be appropriate to discuss the work of others. As a result, more data came out from some participants that I personally know.

3.8 Scope and Limitations of Research Methods

With the social constructivist research methodology and the various research methods, the research focuses mainly on the production and design of luxury retail developments with heritage, as established since Chapter 1. In this focus on production to answer the main research questions relating to the proposed theoretical framework of the Utopolis, the research had to focus its assets, especially in terms of time, on the main data required for the Firstspace and Secondspace. As a result, the research gave more time allocation and prioritisation towards observations and the in-depth interviews and this may cause the data collection on the consumption side to be preliminary and disproportionate to other data collected. With more

time, the research would have like to gather more data from more consumers with other techniques that may test, enrich and validate the proposed theoretical framework, the principles of the Utopolis, and the design features influenced by the Utopolis further. However, just like other PhD programmes, I am required to finish the investigation and submit the thesis under a predetermined time frame and this had made more data collection from consumers not possible. Moreover, since the focus group requires photographs taken during the observation for the discussion with participants, the focus group also had to happen after an observation, which led to further time constraints. Even with a limited timeframe and one person to conduct the research alone, I managed to gather approximately 112,000 words of interview and focus group transcripts, which equals 18.6 hours of transcript, a feat of academic research commitment on its own. I have also travelled over 900 km from my home to observe the two case studies in more than a year, which approximately equals a drive from London to Munich. Lastly, the next chapter focuses on findings from thematic analysed data collected from the endeavour of these observational visits that were compiled to over 900 km to reveal the Firstspace.

Chapter 4 Analysis & Findings of the Firstspace

Chapter 4 socially constructs the Firstspace, the observable tangibility of the luxury retail developments, into findings that the thesis will use in Chapter 6 to construct the Heterotopia, the Thirdspace and the Utopolis, the Fourthspace. The findings represent iterations in design features observed in the two case studies that I analysed through my social interpretations as a Thai retail developer. Moreover, data from the focus group also validates the social interpretation for a concrete of the Firstspace. Data from documentation is also utilised if deemed necessary. Thus, this chapter mainly focuses on the Firstspace that has been socially constructed with data from direct observations, focus groups and documentation, as highlighted in yellow in theoretical framework in Figure 4.1 below. The light yellow represents the data that leads to the darker yellow, the Firstspace.

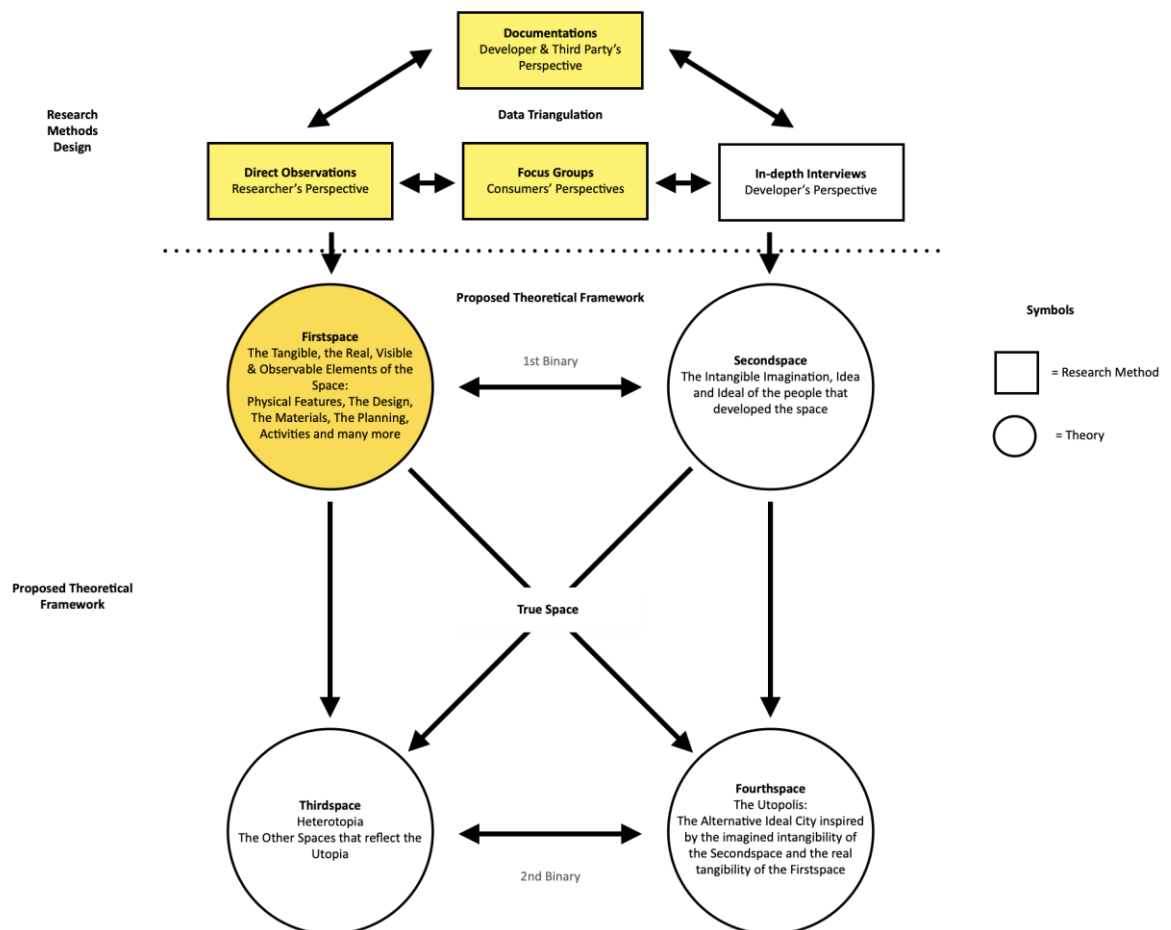


Figure 4.1 Chapter 4's Focus on the Proposed Theoretical Framework

(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Before this research can dive into the analysis and key findings of the Firstspace, this chapter begins with an overview of the design of each case study. The design overviews of both case studies first allow the reader to visualise the space and fully understand the discussions made on certain design features from the observations in this chapter, the in-depth interviews in the next chapter, and the focus groups in both chapters. The design overviews of the two case studies, Section 4.1 for Case Study 1 ICONSIAM and Section 4.2 for Case Study 2 Central Ayutthaya, provide descriptions of spaces, locations of each space, the key tenants occupying the spaces, and most importantly, the key design features that incorporated Thai heritage. This design exploration begins with ICONSIAM.

4.1 Design Overview of Case Study 1: ICONSIAM

When it comes to understanding the design of a luxury retail development, one must start with the location of the land where the property sits, because certain geographical features may affect the design of the development. This can be observed from the location of ICONSIAM. ICONSIAM is situated on the west bank of Bangkok on a side called Thonburi. The city of Bangkok has a river called the Chao Phraya River, running primarily across from north to south. The land of ICONSIAM has access to the main road called Charoen Nakhon Road in the west. Furthermore, ICONSIAM has access to a monorail station over Charoen Nakhon Road that links to the BTS (Bangkok Mass Transit System). People can access ICONSIAM from the west by car, monorail or simply walking. On ICONSIAM's east side, the development directly faces the Chao Phraya River, with several piers from which people can get off the public ferries that crisscross other public piers along the Chao Phraya River. From the journey on the public ferry to ICONSIAM, the location of ICONSIAM represents an out-of-place choice by the developer, since no other luxury retail developments exist along the river journey. In Figure 4.2 on the next page, the black arrow points to the location of ICONSIAM in Bangkok via Google Maps. All luxury retail developments mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.2, on Luxury Retail Developments in Thailand are marked with stars, and they are all located on the same road running east to west on the eastern side of the figure. On the contrary, on the way to ICONSIAM by boat, one will pass by heritage sites along the river, including palaces, temples, historic mansions and embassies of early trading partners of Thailand that all face the water. The hearts represent these heritage sites in Figure 4.2. Therefore, ICONSIAM draws upon proximity to heritage rather than proximity to other luxury retail developments to build a space of luxury. This proximity to heritage also corresponds with the idea of Karlstrom (2013), where the spirit of the land and its heritage can transpire and reincarnate into a new space and reinforces

the notion that the employment of heritage can produce luxury, as established in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2.

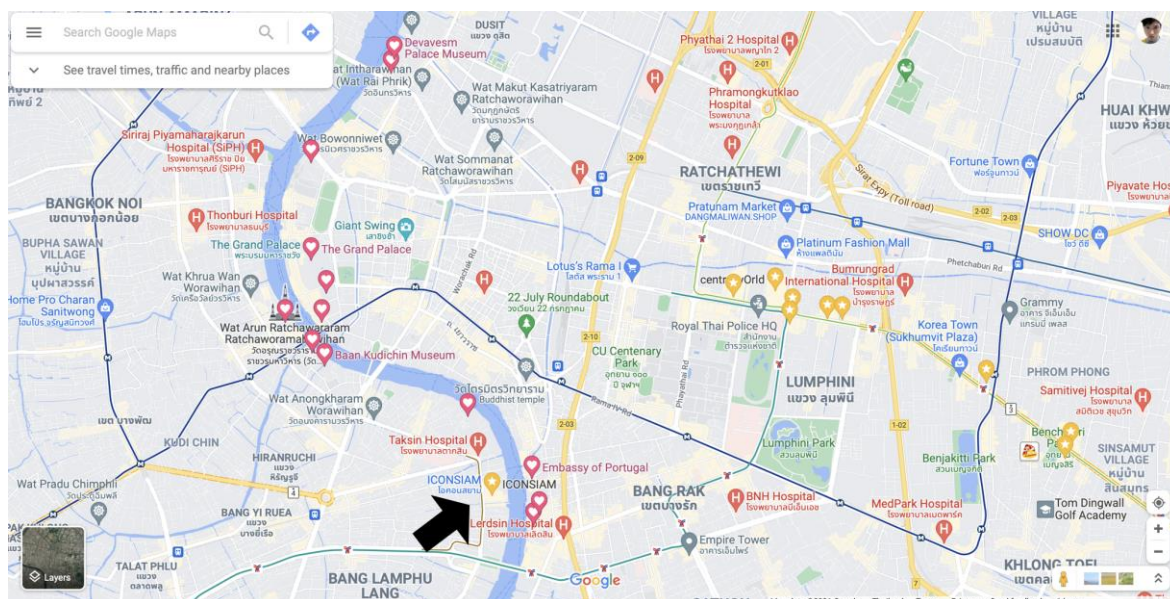


Figure 4.2 ICONSIAM on the Map of Bangkok

For an easy comprehension of zones and observed features with Thai heritage in ICONSIAM, this research has created a cross section of ICONSIAM, as shown in Figure 4.3 on the next page. Figure 4.3 reveals the main retail building of ICONSIAM. The left of the figure corresponds to the west of the land where the main road is located and vice versa, where the east faces the river on the right. The two residential towers exist to the north of the retail building, as dotted navy lines in the back. The research created an outline of the retail building with black lines and used black dotted lines to separate all the major key areas. Finally, the researcher assigned each zone an identification code on the bottom left of each zone for easier navigation of the cross section. Zones start with the alphabet 'A' from the left and end with the letter 'E'. Furthermore, a number was assigned behind each alphabet to signify the starting floor level from the ground up, with the ground floor as +1. As a result, the research designated the underground carpark as A-1. The floor-level system created by this research for this cross-section does not correlate with the actual floor name inside ICONSIAM used by the developer because ICONSIAM uses a system where the first floor equals the G floor and the second floor is referred to as the M floor instead. From the M floor, ICONSIAM designated each floor with a number starting with one, which ascended all the way to eight. The floor naming and numbering system of ICONSIAM has not been used to make a reader who has never visited the physical space understand and follow the research more easily.

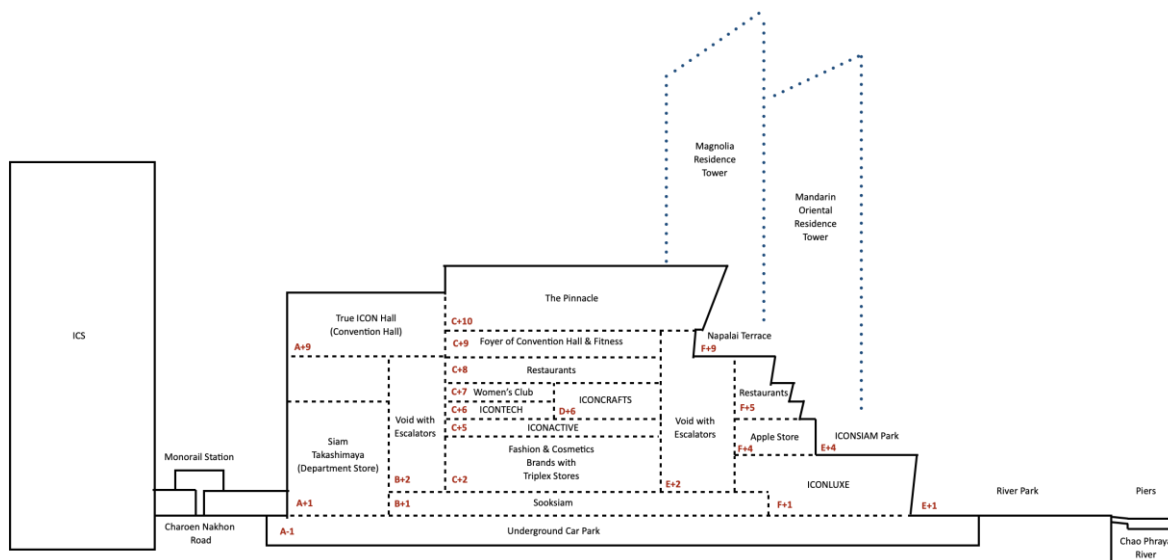


Figure 4.3 Cross-Section Diagram of ICONSIAM and its Main Zones
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

For the explanation of the zones in the following subsections, some zones may be grouped together for more comprehensive insight into the space. Starting with E-1, despite the name, River Park itself contains more characteristics of a public square or plaza than a park because of the lack of lush green trees. A vast open and outdoor square exists between the river and ICONLUXE (F+1). The open square has a shallow pond of water close by the river that hides nozzles for automated water fountain performances that are synchronised with music. Apart from the dancing fountain, River Park acts as the main venue for temporary festivities such as Christmas, New Year's countdown, Chinese New Year, and Loy Krathong. From the River Park, visitors enter ICONLUXE (F+1), the luxury wing of ICONSIAM. ICONLUXE represents a glass building that faces the river with two entrances: a southern entrance and a northern entrance. Upon entering from the south entrance, visitors immediately reach a restaurant zone called the Verandah. The Verandah features a variety of cuisines, from Thai to Chinese to Western. The restaurants next to the glass façade also have an alfresco terrace to enjoy the festivities, the fountain and the river. At the northern entrance, visitors face retail stores of luxury brands straight away, with a glimpse of the restaurant zone. Some luxury brands, such as Hermès and Patek Philippe, are located on the ground floor. The northern entrance also faces directly towards an escalator that leads up to a floor with a passage flanked on two sides by all the other stores of major luxury brands such as Cartier, Dior, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi, Gucci, Tiffany & Co., Prada and so forth. This passage also leads to another escalator that takes people up another floor that features a fine-dining Michelin-starred restaurant called Blue by the internationally renowned French chef, Alain Ducasse, and even showrooms for supercars like Maserati. Hence, ICONLUXE

has three floors. The exterior of ICONSIAM can be seen in Figure 4.4 below, while Figure 4.5 reveals ICONLUXE's interior on the floor with boutiques of the major luxury brands.



Figure 4.4 ICONLUXE and its Two Residential Towers from the River Park
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

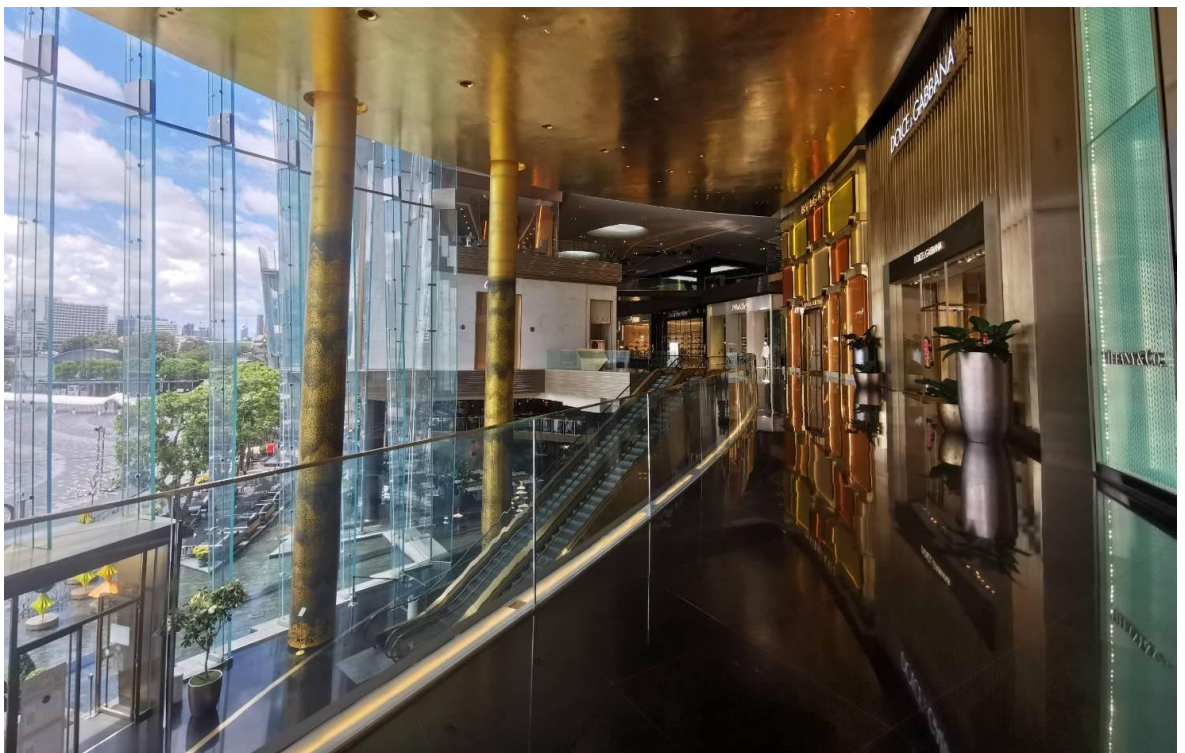


Figure 4.5 ICONLUXE's Interior
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From the Verandah, the restaurant zone of ICONLUXE also connects to Sooksiam (B+1), the main attraction of ICONSIAM. 'Sook' in Thai means happiness, and with the word 'Siam', the former official country name of Thailand. Therefore, the name implies a happy Thailand. Sooksiam is an unticketed, open-access theme park separated into four zones: Central, Northern, North-Eastern, and Southern, which are the four main geographic regions of Thailand. Each Thai region also has its own distinctive Thai subcultures and lifestyles that result in architecture, food, crafts and even language that differ from other regions. The developer selected the distinctive cultural features of each region into each zone, which can be seen in Figure 4.6 below.



Figure 4.6 Sooksiam and its Zoning
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

By walking through Sooksiam from ICONLUXE, visitors reach the entrance of ICONSIAM, which faces the main road. This section features a department store called Siam Takashimaya (A+1), a joint venture business between the developer of ICONSIAM and Takashimaya, a department store brand from Japan. Siam Takashimaya possesses seven floors, with each floor being a different department in the following order from the ground floor up: Japanese foods (a Japanese grocer, takeaway, Japanese food court); sweets; cosmetics; womenswear (two floors); menswear; and

home and living. The home and living floor also have a section with different Japanese fine dining restaurants.

From Sooksiam, two sets of exceedingly high escalators take visitors up to two main open voids of sheer height (B+2 and E+2). These two voids also exist at two polarising ends of ICONSIAM: the eastern river-facing side and the Western road-facing side. The eastern void also connects to ICONLUXE. At the bottom of these two open voids, ICONSIAM uses these spaces to host temporary events and pop-ups by retail brands. These two voids reach all the way to the roof of ICONSIAM, where a skylight provides natural light that penetrates down nine floors. The main escalators also exist at these two main voids for people to navigate between each floor. Moreover, people can also see glimpses of the different retail zones stacked above one another on each floor for even easier navigation. Figure 4.7 below shows the eastern void of ICONSIAM, with part of the skylight and sets of escalators.



Figure 4.7 Eastern Main Void of ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Chapter 4

In order to manoeuvre between the two voids of escalators, ICONSIAM has created a circular walkway connecting the two voids. Special retail concepts or designs exist within the circular path of each floor, while traditional retail stores that one may see at other conventional malls line the external circular path. From below to above, ICONSIAM features: 1) a three-storey glass structure as triplexes for retail stores (C+2); 2) ICONACTIVE, a zone for athleisure and sports gear (C+5); 3) ICONTECH, a zone for gadgets (C+6); 4) ICONCRAFTS, a retail space for Thai crafts (D+6); Women's Club, a space combining merchandises related to women's hobbies and interests; and finally, a floor filled with a variety of restaurants (C+8).

ICONSIAM also contains additional recreational spatial features for the enjoyment of visitors beyond shopping. Outside the Apple Store (F+4), ICONSIAM placed a park called ICONSIAM Park right above the roof of ICONLUXE. ICONSIAM Park contains more features of a traditional park with trees, benches and art installations than River Park below. Figure 4.8 below reveals ICONSIAM Park taken from the south, facing towards the two residential towers on the left image, while the right image was taken from the north.



Figure 4.8 ICONSIAM Park on top of ICONLUXE

(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Another zone that constitutes recreation beyond retail is the restaurant floor (C+8), ICONSIAM placed a cinema and an exhibition hall for temporary exhibitions on this floor. During the year-

long observation, the exhibition hall hosted a digital experience about the K-pop girl band Blackpink¹⁵ and an immersive art exhibition inspired by the masterpieces of Vincent van Gogh. Moreover, right above the restaurant floor, ICONSIAM also has a conventional hall for live concerts, expositions and trade fairs. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the conventional hall also acted as a free vaccination centre for the public. The space for extra-circular does not end just here because, above the conventional hall, ICONSIAM also has another space called the Pinnacle, the highest place a visitor can freely access at ICONSIAM. The Pinnacle has not been fully completed yet, but a part of the space has been utilised for art and cultural exhibitions, such as floral paintings, Thai textiles, and even an interactive dinosaur experience. Even without its completion, Louis Vuitton used the Pinnacle for a temporary spin-off fashion show for the autumn/winter 2022 collection honouring Virgil Abloh, Louis Vuitton's Men's Artistic Director, who passed away at the end of 2021 (Leitch, 2022). Hermès also chose the Pinnacle for an exhibition showcasing its craftsmanship (Chanasongkram, 2023).

The Pinnacle was not the only unfinished aspect of ICONSIAM. During early observations, ICONSIAM was working on another building called ICS, right across the street from ICONSIAM. ICS was only opened to the public around the time of the fifth observation. ICS constitutes another mixed-use building. The underground floor features a premium supermarket called Lotus Privé by Lotus, a major chain of supermarkets in Thailand that decided to add more luxury and exclusivity to its brand, with a French word meaning private. The ground floor above the supermarket offers more restaurants and takeaway foods, while the upper floor offers more retail spaces. During the fifth observation, not all of the retail floors had been opened to the public. By the time of the final or sixth observation, ICS's retail space had not yet been fully opened because of the construction of Siriraj Solutions by Siriraj Hospital on the top floor of the retail space. Siriraj Hospital is one of the major public hospitals in Thailand, up the river from ICONSIAM. On the construction hoarding, Siriraj Solutions claimed to be a centre for preventive medicine and wellness. ICS also planned to open a hotel by the Hilton Group, which was under construction at the time of the final observation. Figure 4.9 on the next page shows the ICS building from the monorail station. ICS completes the design overview of ICONSIAM, and the research now goes into the design overview for Case Study 2, Central Ayutthaya.

¹⁵ one of the four singers is a Thai national



Figure 4.9 ICS Building of ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

4.2 Design Overview of Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya

As in Section 4.1, the true understanding of the overall design of Central Ayutthaya also starts with its location. Figure 4.10 shows a map of the city of Ayutthaya.

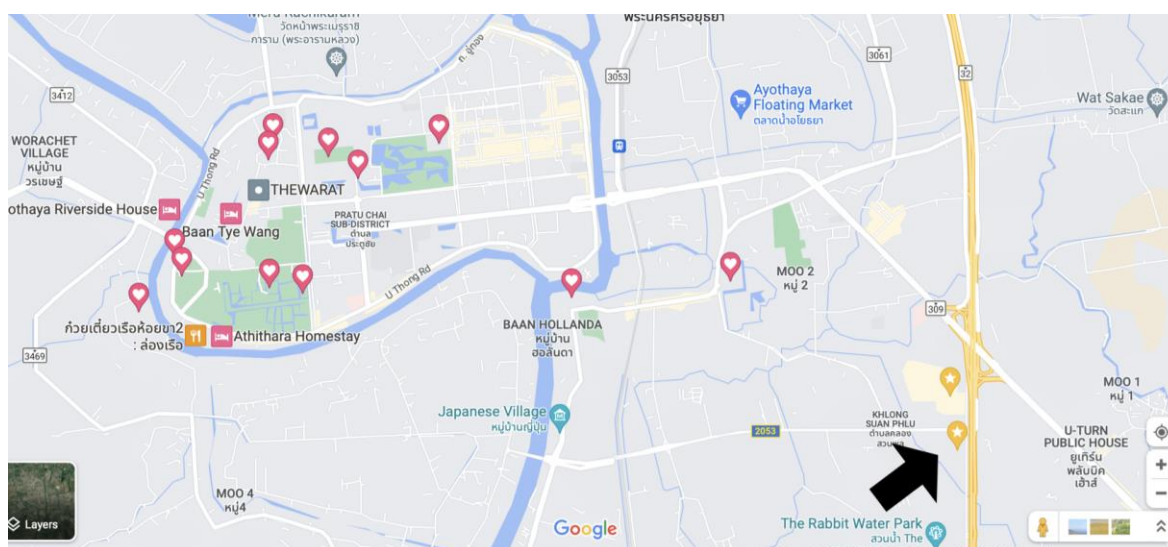


Figure 4.10 Central Ayutthaya on the Map of Ayutthaya

The black arrow points towards Central Ayutthaya, and the luxury retail developments in Ayutthaya have been assigned the star symbol. The yellow road on the east of Central Ayutthaya, which runs north and south, represents the main road, the motorway that connects Bangkok in the south to other provinces in the north. Another smaller local road that runs east and west, intersecting with the main road, is situated on the northern side of Central Ayutthaya. The Provincial Hall of Ayutthaya sits opposite Central Ayutthaya from this local road. Moreover, two retail developments flank the Provincial Hall of Ayutthaya on both sides: Central Ayutthaya to the south and another mall called 'Ayutthaya City Park' to the north. From this location, Central Ayutthaya locates itself in proximity to another retail development, unlike ICONSIAM. For a project that claimed itself as the 'Capital of Wonders' and featured the splendour of a city with World Heritage sites (Bangkok Post, 2021), Central Ayutthaya is actually located far away from other heritage sites in the historic heart of Ayutthaya, marked with hearts in Figure 4.10. The historic city of Ayutthaya is actually located on an island where two rivers merge into one, as can be seen with the cluster of hearts on the map. In addition, green spaces on the island represent UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Therefore, the situation in Central Ayutthaya is the opposite of ICONSIAM, where many heritage sites exist in proximity to the development. The developer of Central Ayutthaya had to build up new heritage on land in an area not usually associated with the historical heritage sites of the city.

From its location with two roads, Central Ayutthaya contains two main entrances facing east and north. Each main zone has been designated an alphabet starting with 'A' and ending with 'G' from left to right, as in Figure 4.2 of ICONSIAM. Central Ayutthaya has four floors, one underground car park and three floors from the ground up. The three floors above ground contain the same layout in general, with minor discrepancies. As a result, for the diagram of Central Ayutthaya in Figure 4.11 on the next page, the researcher chose the top view rather than a cross-section view for an easy understanding of the space and the design of Central Ayutthaya. Moreover, the local road in the north has been placed at the top of the diagram, while the main road in the east is on the right in correspondence to their cardinal directions for easier comprehension. In front of both entrances, Central placed open public squares (C and G). After passing through either entrance, visitors are welcomed into grand halls that rise up three floors (B and F). From either one of these grand halls, visitors navigate by walking around a circular main corridor (D). This circular layout is repeated on the second and third floors. Inside the circle of the corridor, a department store called Robinson exists on the first and second floors, while a food court sits inside this circle on the third floor. Around the circular corridor, Central has placed stores of tenants from fashion, electronics, lifestyle products, restaurants, banks, etc. For further explanations of Central

Ayutthaya and the locations of design features that incorporated Thai heritage, this research starts with the main entrance from the main road at G.

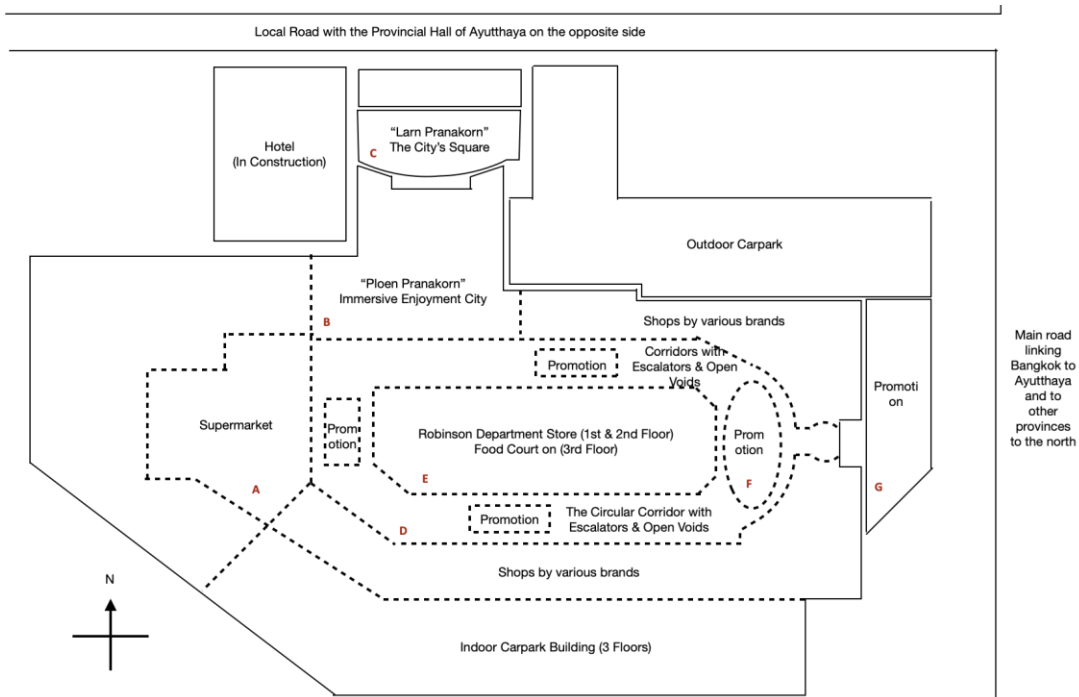


Figure 4.11 Top View Diagram of Central Ayutthaya and its Main Zones
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Starting with the main entrance from the main road (G), Central Ayutthaya appears as a rectangular white and golden box with curved edges. From the outermost white exterior, the façade is indented inward with another layer of rectangular, golden-textured façade that leads to the main entrance with two main sliding glass doors. The glass doors open directly to the main hall (F). Figure 4.12 below depicts the main façade of Central Ayutthaya.



Figure 4.12 Main Façade and Entrance of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Upon entering the main entrance, a three-storey hall (F) with an oval void welcomes visitors. In the directory, Central Ayutthaya christened the space 'Promotion'.¹⁶ This hall serves as the main space for temporary indoor seasonal celebrations and festivities of Central Ayutthaya. Around the second- and third-floor balconies, Central Ayutthaya attached two enormous golden decorations that rise up from the floor of the second floor to slightly above the ceiling of the third floor. This decoration will be further discussed in Section 4.6.3. Aside from the golden structures, Central Ayutthaya also equipped the three LED screens around the balconies in these voids: two screens on the third-floor balcony and one screen on the balcony of the second floor. On the ceiling, Central Ayutthaya decorated the space with white rhombuses. This entrance hall can be seen in Figure 4.13 below.



Figure 4.13 The Main Hall of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

¹⁶ The name may sound confusing in English, as this represents the use of an English word for a Thai understanding. Promotion actually refers to the use of the space for promotional events such as pop-up stores, seasonal celebrations, themed fairs, and clearance sales.

By going around from the main entrance to the side entrance (C), this entrance portrays a totally different and contrasting design from the main entrance of Central Ayutthaya. Instead of the glaring white and golden design, Central Ayutthaya has emblazoned this entire entrance with red bricks. Next to the road, Central Ayutthaya has turned several terrace houses into a gateway that visitors have to go through. From the gateway, a red brick public square with trees and a pond welcomes visitors. The main retail building of Central Ayutthaya exists right opposite the square from the terrace houses. Central Ayutthaya also covered the entire façade of this side in red bricks, like the public square on the horizontal plain. On the Western side of the public square, or on the right when viewing from the terrace houses, Central Ayutthaya has placed a hotel. During the year-long observations, the hotel was unfinished, and the height of the hotel gradually rose with each visit. Figure 4.14 below shows the subsidiary entrance of Central Ayutthaya from under the gateway of the terrace house facing towards the retail complex of Central Ayutthaya, with the uncompleted hotel on the right.



Figure 4.14 The Subsidiary Entrance of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Upon entering the entrance from the red brick façade side, a grand three-storey hall with a skylight that houses a village immerses the visitor (B). Central Ayutthaya has named this hall

‘Ploen Pranakorn’. The word ‘Ploen’ represents a very specific verb in Thai that means enjoying and immersing oneself to the point of losing track of time and forgetting other things in life. For example, an individual can ‘Ploen’ when doing a hobby that he/she enjoys so much that he/she does not care about his/her actual environment or time. ‘Ploen’ also corresponds with the literature review in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1, where escapism from losing track of time constitutes a form of luxury. As for the word ‘Pranakorn’, this represents one of the words for ‘city’ in Thai. However, this word is archaic; people in contemporary times do not use this word to refer to a city anymore. Apart from meaning city, Pranakorn can also mean the capital city because, in the old days, when people said that they were heading to Pranakorn, it often meant either going to Ayutthaya or Bangkok, depending on the year that the speech took place. Thus, the name ‘Ploen Pranakorn’ means to immerse in the former capital city for amusement. At Ploen Pranakorn, Central Ayutthaya decided to design an artificial village that offers local goods to visitors. Figure 4.15 below shows Ploen Pranakorn after entering from the red brick square, and the research will discuss the in-depth details of this zone further in Section 4.4.

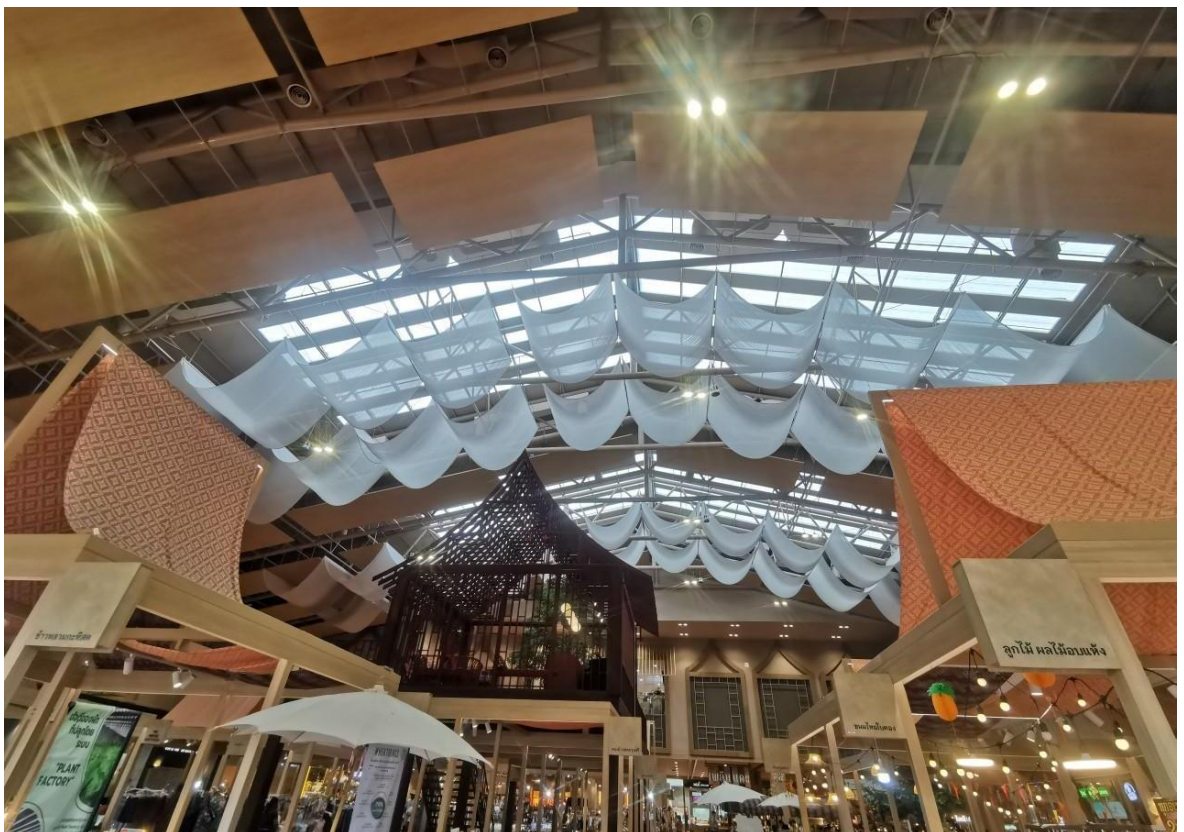


Figure 4.15 Ploen Pranakorn Hall
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From the two entrance halls of Central Ayutthaya, visitors manoeuvre around Central Ayutthaya in a circular oval shape that leads to other retail stores mainly consisting of fast fashion brands such as Uniqlo and sportswear brands such as Adidas, a supermarket (A), and Robinson Department Store (E) inside the circle. Robinson on this floor offers cosmetics, skincare, womenswear and shoes. Once visitors go up one floor, Robinson contains departments for childrenswear, toys, home decorations, and appliances. The retail shops outside the department store on this floor mainly consist of mobile phone brands, telecommunication providers, computers, and skin and beauty clinics. Going up one more floor to the highest and final floor, a food court replaces the inner circular space occupied by the Robinson on the two floors underneath. Apart from the food court, Central Ayutthaya also features various chains of restaurants featuring a myriad of international cuisines, including Japanese, Korean, Western Steakhouse, Vietnamese and many more. Apart from dining, visitors can also visit branches of leading banks in Thailand to complete financial transactions. Moreover, the government has also set up an office for people to renew their national identity card or register their official address in accordance with the district in which they live. The highest floor also features a cinema and a convention hall for hosting expositions, fairs and even clearance sales. Lastly, outside of Central Ayutthaya's retail building, the parking lot also served as a safe haven for flood victims to save their cars from the seasonal monsoon flood (Central Ayutthaya, 2022). This concludes the spatial summary of the two case studies and the thesis now goes into the design process observed from the described spaces.

4.3 Idealised Heritage-Copying

For both case studies, design features that are straightforward copies of heritage were observed. In this situation, a traditional design seen in historical buildings or local objects used and passed down through generations comes into luxury retail developments as authentically as it could be, without major alteration, distortion or adaptation. The size, the level of detailed intricacy or the material may pertain to a degree of difference from the actual original, but a local visitor should be able to instantly recognise the chosen heritage in the design feature. Finally, the act of transferring a design of heritage that is as explicitly and recognisably similar as possible to the original also aligns with Dion's (2022) concept of heritage-copying, employed by luxury brands.

At ICONSIAM, Sooksiam (B+1) features designs that correspond with heritage-copying. In the creation of an immersive Thai cultural theme park, ICONSIAM chose to install architectural

structures that would be instantly recognisable to a Thai person in each zone, based on the geographical region of Thailand. For the Central region, ICONSIAM placed traditional Central Thai wooden stilt houses with triangle gables that suited the region's flat floodplain, rivers and canals. To bring out this geography, ICONSIAM created shallow ponds around these stilt houses and filled them with wooden boats where merchants could sell Thai snacks, imitating a floating market, a Thai cultural space specific to the central region of Thailand. In addition, in one gazebo next to a stilt house, an image of the Buddha has been placed for people to worship, donate money for good merit, and even learn about the history of this particular image. Figure 4.16 below reveals the gazebo with the central Thai gable and a miniature gazebo underneath that house an image of the Buddha. The column on the left in the image and left to a stilt house is also wrapped by a canvas depicting the scenery of the stilt houses next to a river or a canal with wooden boats, emphasising the common landscape and lifestyle of central Thailand. Everything seen in Figure 4.16, apart from the column and the exhibition board, can still be seen at other heritage sites in Bangkok. The gazebo, the gong, the miniature gazebo, the image of the Buddha, and the donation box can still be seen in temples, while the wooden stilt houses can also be seen at former homes of the elite that have been turned into museums, such as the Suan Pakkad Palace and Mom Rajawongse Kukrit Pramoj's Heritage House, the residence of a former Thai prime minister.

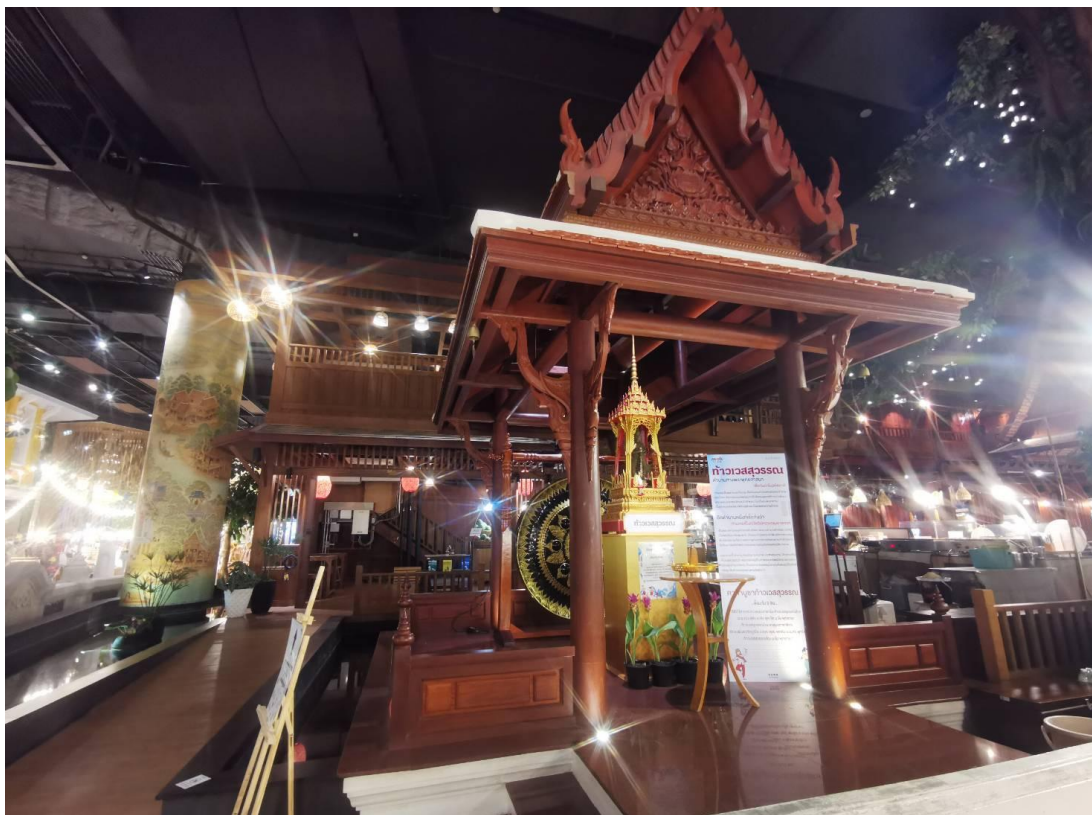


Figure 4.16 Sooksiam's Central Region
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Clockwise to the Central Region, ICONSIAM designed the Northern Region of Thailand. The northern region of Thailand contains the most mountainous geography in Thailand and ICONSIAM played with height and elevation by selecting a distinctive feature found in many northern Thai temples. In the north, many temples dignify mountain tops, and this has caused temples to commonly have steep stairs to reach the temple. These stairs are also often flanked by Nagas, mythical serpents that protect the Buddha and slide down from the top to the bottom of the stairs. For the escalators in this zone, ICONSIAM also placed two Nagas, one on each side of the escalator, in the same manner as a northern temple. Ironically, instead of leading to a temple, the escalators lead people to Siam Takashimaya department store, a space described by Crossick & Jaumain (2019) as a cathedral of consumption. These Nagas are exact replicas of what people can see in the north, and Figure 4.17 below reveals the northern zone with this pair of Nagas protecting the escalators.



Figure 4.17 Sooksiam's Northern Zone
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

More interestingly, the figure also reveals that these Nagas represent more than just themed decorations. People still offer objects such as artificial flower garlands on the head and in front of both serpents. Trays were also used to place other-worldly material offerings in the front, even though these Nagas are replicas for a retail development rather than a temple. Figure 4.17 also shows hanging lanterns specific to the north on the right. Underneath these lanterns, artificial floral orchid decorations can be seen, creating a perpetual blossom. The north of Thailand is also infamous for its flowers due to its cooler climate, which accommodates a wider variety of flower

cultivation. On the left, northern-style houses can also be partially seen. Northern Thai houses differ slightly from houses in the central region in the shape of the roof and the gable.

Clockwise from the Northern Region, and right opposite the Central Region at Sooksiam, is the Southern Region of Thailand. The south geographically provides Thailand with access to maritime trade and promotes cultural exchange. This allowed the south to have an architecture style known as Sino-Portuguese, a combination of China and Portugal that came with trading vessels of these two cultures. Sino-Portuguese houses are actually not made of wood but require masonry work. Instead of actually building with brick and mortar and creating stand-alone structures like the Central and Northern Thai stilt houses, ICONSIAM chose to mock up the façade. The mock façade imitates the Sino-Portuguese terrace houses once owned by Southern merchants. The façade stands right from the floor to the ceiling of Sooksiam, and this caused the façade to actually be taller than the original buildings in the south. Despite the discrepancy in height from the original, the heritage copied remains culturally distinguishable. Behind the façade, ICONSIAM placed various shops and restaurants, staying true to the original function of these terrace houses. Figure 4.18 below shows the Sino-Portuguese terrace house in the Southern Zone of Sooksiam.



Figure 4.18 Southern Zone and North-Eastern Zone of Sooksiam
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

In front of the Sino-Portuguese façade, ICONSIAM placed tables and chairs on the street for people to relax or enjoy the food that they had bought inside Sooksiam. This represents an imaginary and ideal situation, contrary to the reality of these terrace houses, because a busy,

bustling street filled with cars would be located in front of these houses. As in the Northern Region, lanterns can be seen again in the Southern zone, but to emphasise the influence of China on the region, Chinese lanterns were hung instead. Finally, the final zone represents north-eastern Thailand. This region represents the driest and least developed region in Thailand, and this can also be seen with the simple wooden houses with less ornamentations, flatter roofs, and simple wooden panels for the side of the house. This type of house can be seen in the right image of Figure 4.18 on the previous page. The image also reveals woven basketry goods made from bamboo, which can also be seen on sale in front of a house. This is another reminder that although Sooksiam seems like a theme park, it still functions as a retail space for people to see and consume local traditional goods.

From the observations of every region, Sooksiam takes people away from reality through the combination of the sacred and the divine. Apart from the images of the Buddha and Nagas in the Central and Northern regions, Sooksiam scatters sculptures and images of divine creatures in Thai and Asian cultures throughout the entire space, from a tunnel with a red and golden mural of mythical swans to a sculpture of a white elephant to an image of a pair of angels commonly seen in murals of Thai temples descending from the sky. These examples are also used to show that these divine creatures can appear in all sorts of formats, from the ceiling, a sculpture standing upright, or even an unused wall that leads to bathrooms and elevators. In the same manner as the Nagas in the Northern Zone, people also provided white elephants with offerings of flowers, a bottle of soft drink, and fresh food. Figure 4.19 below shows these three examples. However, Sooksiam contains many more mythical creatures and divine beings.



Figure 4.19 Examples of Divine Creatures at Sooksiam

Left: White Elephant, Centre: Mythical Swans, Right: Angels
(Sombunajroen, 2022)

Apart from featuring heavenly creatures, the developer can also think of imitating the ideal season and time. Just like the eternally blooming flowers in the northern zone, a controlled environment such as Sooksiam can create an atmosphere for any season, and different zones may juxtapose different ideal seasons and the celebration of those seasons together at one time to create an eternal paradise for visitors to delight in. Therefore, for the design of a luxury retail development that wants to replicate heritage in its design without any adaptation, a developer must not just heritage-copy but idealise heritage-copy. If a developer is going to create an ideal world for people to escape to, they should go all in and not hold back.

There are certain precautions to take when idealising heritage-copying. Firstly, the idealised heritage-copying would not work if the developer featured international brands and sold non-local goods. This would create a situation similar to retail developments, such as the Venetian casino in Las Vegas, where Sharr (2017) mentioned the use of scenography to create a luxury experience. A developer should not allow any brands to sit behind a façade that appropriates another culture for commercial purposes, just like Marin's (1984) criticism of Disneyland as an empty shell for commercial purposes and Harvey's (2000) comparison of Marin's comment on Disneyland to other shopping malls. In retrospect, ICONSIAM did not create a space with an empty shell at Sooksiam. Sooksiam promotes and sells local merchandise, and a retail developer should provide opportunities and spaces for locals to sell their goods. A luxury retail development should not be a just space for international brands to sell to local markets like in the past. In this example, the developer may have created just a Thai zone, but Thai heritage is not confined to this zone because it is manifested in other parts of the retail development as well. Moreover, from the developer's point of view, the project sacrificed prime leasable ground-floor space, which could have generated higher rents from international retailers. These retailers could have also invested in the decorations themselves, rather than the developer using their own capital to create the space. In terms of investments, the developer had to pay local architects, builders, and craftsmen to create traditional Thai structures, objects, and decorations for the space. As a result, more investment capital was directed towards those who do not typically benefit from the development of a retail property, rather than just construction material companies or suppliers of international brands. Lastly, ICONSIAM filled Sooksiam with activities, beliefs and values of Thai people, even things that would normally be just decorations in a theme park, such as the worship of Nagas and white elephants. The issue with elephants will be discussed later in Section 4.5.3 of this chapter.

Finally, the developer also has to consider the target group for an immersive heritage-copied space. In the focus group of ICONSIAM, participants had an overall consensus that Sooksiam felt the most Thai out of all the other spaces in ICONSIAM. For instance, Participant 4 mentioned,

“It's (ICONSIAM) just like any other retail development. Some decorations are not that outstanding, but the floating market zone (Sooksiam) really stands out from the rest.”

There is also an irony in the quotation above: Participant 4 was not the only participant who referred to Sooksiam as a floating market. Out of all six participants, only one participant used its official name, and the rest just called it a floating market. Therefore, the participants perceived Sooksiam as a public space, akin to the traditional Thai floating market on the public canals, even though Sooksiam is actually a pseudo-public space. Moreover, the statement also ironically reveals the tendency of a city in Central Thailand to claim suzerainty over the rest of Thailand, as the floating market represents a distinctly Central Thai cultural space. There is a cultural dominance of central Thailand, especially Bangkok, where ICONSIAM is located, even among the local population. Despite Sooksiam's claim to incorporate the four cultural regions of Thailand and help ICONSIAM's claim that the best of Thailand meets the best of the world, the sense of the city within is strong to the point of overshadowing the rest of the country.

Although the participants agreed that Sooksiam stood out, they also thought that the space was meant for foreigners rather than locals and that heritage-copying was an easy and obvious way to design a luxury retail development. Participant 1 mentioned this clearly by stating that,

*“I think this (Sooksiam) is **too obvious**. I like taking photos for my Instagram. If you ask me if I want to take some in this zone, I will say no. **Because if I want this feel, I can go outdoors to temples and stuff that is more pretty. But this one seems like it's trying to copy something, like copy and paste design without any adaptations. I don't think it goes with a retail development, maybe, maybe not.** And there's so much stuff for sale here that it's not nice to take photos, but **foreigners get excited by this, but personally, I don't like the Thainess in this zone.**”*

Thus, locals do not want to come to a place like Sooksiam to experience something they can get at real heritage sites. They prefer Thainess that has not been heritage-copied. A Thainess that has been adapted and even never seen before at a luxury retail development. A never-before-seen Thainess may be hard to comprehend, but this idea of unseen Thainess can also be illustrated by the example of Pierce Brosnan's Thai-inspired beachfront mansion discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.8 The Adopter to the Adapter to the Producer of Luxury. Central Ayutthaya's Ploen Pranakorn (B) also serves as a space that promotes and sells local traditional goods. However, Central took a different approach by not idealising heritage-copy but by employing retro-heritagisation, where the past is adapted for the modern-day context. This approach aligns with Dion's (2022) concept of retro-branding, Kapferer's (2014) idea of propelling brand heritage into the future, and Pierce Brosnan's house, where elements of Thai heritage are adapted for the modern home (Montes, 2020).

4.4 Retro-Heritagisation

Ploen Pranakorn is conceptually contrary to ICONSIAM's Sooksiam, because it only features the central Thai architectural style. It is also important to note that the space is much smaller, where the image of Ploen Pranakorn can be taken as a whole in just one image from the balcony that overlooks Ploen Pranakorn from the second floor. For the design of Ploen Pranakorn, Central did not reinstall authentic stilt houses nor 100 per cent copy a traditional design from Thai history. Central re-created a central Thai village by using other materials conventionally not associated with the construction of a traditional Thai house and forming them into the central Thai village filled with triangle gables, an instantly recognisable shape in central Thai architecture. Figure 4.20 on the next page reveals the entire Ploen Pranakorn hall.



Figure 4.20 Overview of Ploen Pranakorn
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

For the majority of the structures, Central decided to create houses with wooden frames. These wooden frames on the ground floor contain a middle section that protrudes higher into the air. Over these wooden frames, Central hung earth-tone fabric with Thai patterns to create a roof that resembles the central Thai gable. This wooden frame with the textile roof was then copied and appeared in a random scattered placement throughout the entire space. The random placement resulted in the impression of a village without having to really make one with real traditional wooden houses. All of these fabric-roofed structures are also one-storey houses with different stores of local goods and services underneath, from traditional Thai outfits to traditional Thai foot massages.

Around the tall walls that enclosed the hall, Central also attached more wooden frames with the Thai gable on three walls to enlarge the illusion of a village even further. Right in the centre of the hall, Central created a skeleton of the traditional two-storey stilt house by welding steel together and painting it over with brown paint to mimic the natural dark wood colour seen in Thai houses.

With the steel structure, visitors can walk up to the top and sit and relax on the provided chairs. The two-storey steel Thai house also acts as the centrepiece and the main focal point of Ploen Pranakorn. Above the village, Central also used white fabrics as white clouds that screen the harsh, tropical Thai sunlight from the skylight above. In this village, Central has also put in a few artificial trees, with one biggest next to the centre steel house and another on the left of Figure 4.20. On the left of the figure, stalls with half-cylinder textile roofs can also be seen.

In praise of Central, Central has been able to create a new imagined Thai village never seen before by choosing the right shape and using other materials for the construction. Moreover, a consistency between shape, texture and colour also exists and harmonises the entire environment of Ploen Pranakorn. In addition, with the different elevations of the re-created 'permanent structure', Central has been able to capture a more egalitarian representation of a Thai village where the buildings were not overwhelming possessions of the social elites. The two-storey steel house in the centre and the surrounding two-storey frames would have belonged to people of means, but other one-storey structures would have constituted the realm of the common people in the past. Apart from the more democratic representation, Ploen Pranakorn also contains activities of the Thai people, from the traditional game of scooping fish usually played at local fairs or even Thai massages. These activities also give a sense of the Thai spirit, and design does not merely work as just decorations or an empty shell.

Every participant in the focus group of Central Ayutthaya also commended the design of Ploen Pranakorn and the developer's ability to represent the scenery of the city of Ayutthaya, especially the use of textiles. Table 4.1 on the next page reveals the overwhelming compliments for the retro-heritagisation of Ploen Pranakorn.

Participant	Remarks on Ploen Pranakorn
Participant 1	<i>I am amazed by it because fabrics are used as roofing material, and the pattern of Thai textile is incorporated. It is a light gable roof by having fabrics as an element in a retail development to make it flow, not too stiff, yet Ayutthaya's identity is displayed incredibly well.</i>
Participant 2	<i>Thainess is clearly presented here. Wood is also incorporated here, which is bringing back something that is disappearing to showcase Ayutthaya's identity. Beautiful.</i>
Participant 3	<i>This space in real life is even more beautiful, the photos (including Figure 4.20) don't do it justice, as it might look a bit overwhelming. But I must give it to the design team for their application of the Thai gable roof. The gable is pretty clear at the bottom, for the fabrics, it can be interpreted as the flow of water, which represents Ayutthaya as the breadbasket, or just a gable roof. This corner is pretty.</i>
Participant 5	<i>A very subtle presentation of Thai textiles in a beautiful and meaningful manner. If Thai fabrics were hung or decorated in a different way, they might not be as appealing. This way of making it a part of the gable roof works as it shows the full extent of the beauty of the textile. I really like it. I like all the features here. I'm very impressed by all the tiny little details they have here. Very impressive.</i>

Table 4.1 Focus Group on the Retro-Heritagisation of Ploen Phranakorn, Case Study 2
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The research also asked the focus group participants of Case Study 2, what if Central installed authentic traditional wooden Thai houses to find a consensus, and nearly every participant provided negative feedback on heritage-copying in the same manner as participants of Case Study 1 on Sooksiam. They agreed that the installation of traditional Thai houses would have been an easy way out and out of place with the rest of the design. Moreover, they could find these houses somewhere else. Table 4.2 on the next page reveals the discussion made by the participants.

Participant	Discussion on installing a real Thai house at Ploen Pranakorn
Participant 5	<i>Too heavy, I think. And very common, you can find Thai houses anywhere. This way, you can appreciate the textile and the shape of Thai roofing. This is a very nice mixture. A very good design.</i>
Participant 3	<i>I'd like to add to what Participant 5 said that it is easy to install a Thai house, but of course, it's too dull and doesn't show the idea of the designer.</i>
Participant 2	<i>I'd also like to add that if a Thai house was installed here, it wouldn't be soft and flowy. I agree with Participant 5 that this design offers dimensions and another level of beauty.</i>
Participant 1	<i>That's true. If a whole house was placed here, it would be like an exhibition in a museum of ancient houses. It doesn't suit the quality of a retail development or the overall picture. In this manner, we get to experience life as if we were in a local market, shopping for local products with villagers under the concept, but in a lighter way. I prefer this.</i>

Table 4.2 Focus Group on What if Ploen Phranakorn (Case Study 2) was Heritage-Copied (Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Participant 5 mentioned the word 'common'. The notion of something that is generic and easily found contradicts the idea of exclusivity in luxury as discussed in the literature review. However, the process of retro-heritagisation can turn something common or ordinary into an original creation that is exclusive to the property and extraordinary. This is the power of retro-heritagisation in creating a luxury experience. So far, the research has only analysed and provided findings on Sooksiam of Case Study 1 and Ploen Pranakorn of Case Study 2. These two spaces are both immersive Thai heritage-themed spaces that retail local products and services. However, in the following section, the research reveals the power of retro-heritagisation further because retro-heritagisation allows the developer to incorporate heritage into modern construction techniques.

4.5 Retro-Heritagisation and the Modern-Day Construction

With heritage-copying, the methods, techniques and materials of the past may not accommodate the architecture and engineering of the modern world. Looking back at Sooksiam, it was a space where the developer mainly placed traditional structures in an enclosed hall, and the developer

built this enclosed hall with contemporary construction techniques. As a result, just from images of Sooksiam, it can be seen that a modern construction can dwarf and engulf an entire village of traditional constructions. As the literature review discussed the prerequisite of sheer size in the creation of a luxury space, a luxury retail development that tries to design with heritage still must utilise modern construction techniques to create grand spaces. However, modern construction does not mean that heritage has to go away. Heritage can still inspire the appearance of buildings to create luxury buildings like never before. This use of heritage as inspiration also constitutes another way of retro-heritagisation as can be seen in the façades of both case studies.

4.5.1 ICONSIAM's Glass Façade and the Embodiment of Heritage

From the observation of the entire complex of ICONSIAM, the case study is without doubt a modern-day development with its glass façade and its two residential skyscrapers. Heritage-copying would not have made such a creation possible. This is not just about the engineering required to build the tallest building in the country or to uphold the glass façade. No buildings in this form existed at heritage sites in Thailand. The developer could not just copy everything, but they had to adapt inspirations from Thai heritage and infuse them into construction. From Figure 4.21 on the next page, when one overlooks modernity and scrutinises tiny details, one starts to notice some characteristics seen in Thai cultural heritage. The most visible of these features of Thai heritage is the colour gold, and Figure 4.21 reveals gold glistening in the sunlight the top of the residential tower down towards the perpendicular lines of the tower and the golden columns behind the glass façade of ICONLUXE. There is a conceptual linkage to the golden palaces and temples but not a direct imitation of blindingly plastered gold seen in heritage spaces. Another linkage is the golden fin over the tower, pointing towards the sky. As discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.2, Dutch traders noticed the golden gilded spires of the palace complex of Ayutthaya when they sailed into the city (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2016). In the present day, when visitors pass through ICONSIAM from the river, the fin still serves as a noticeable part of the complex in the same manner as traders in the past.



Figure 4.21 ICONSIAM's Façade and the Reflection
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The more subdued usage of gold may be visible, but the heritage behind the glass of ICONLUXE is more implicit. Behind the glass façade, ICONSIAM provides a QR code so that visitors can learn about the façade. From the scan of the QR code, ICONSIAM claims that the 'sabai'¹⁷ as the inspiration for the design of this façade. As a result, no single piece of glass sits exactly vertically at 90 degrees from the ground, as all of them slant a little to mimic a flowing pleated piece of textile. The tallest piece of glass measures up to 24 metres, and the combined total length is 323 metres. Despite telling the inspiration for the façade, the QR code did not explain why the shape of the 'sabai' was incorporated into the design of the façade. From the observation, there is no clear logical connection to why a piece of fabric worn should become a façade of a luxury building. The reason behind choosing 'sabai' will be discussed in the next chapter in Section 5.2.1, after the answer is obtained from the in-depth interviews.

¹⁷ A piece of textile commonly pleated and used by Thai women in the past to wrap around the breast and over one shoulder (See Figure 1.8)

ICONSIAM also states that the façade represents a collaboration between Urban Architects, a Thai architectural firm, and Seele, an expert in glass façades from Germany. ICONSIAM actually employed the latest architectural innovation from Seele at the time, where the façade required no metal structure to support the weight of the glass. The attached panels of glass can support their own weight at their height. Apart from the golden columns behind the façade, ICONSIAM was able to provide no obstruction to the view of the river. This design adheres to Condello's (2014) luxury characteristics in architecture, with the latest innovation imported from Germany, which also permits a vast space. This example of using a German firm to create a new form of Thai heritage also corresponds to the literature review's idea of heritagisation and retail space as a cultural exchange. Western ideas, design and innovation can still be embraced to create new designs for Thai people, such as this glass façade. Another characteristic of the façade that came with the utilisation of foreigners deals with the reflection of the river and the opposite view seen across the façade in Figure 4.21. This idea of reflection, a Thai feature that was picked up and invoked by foreigners, will also be discussed in Chapter 5 Section 5.6. Lastly, it is important to note that the PhD research has been a learning process; this idea of the reflection would not have been observed or captured as an image without insights from the in-depth interviews that were conducted in parallel to the observations. The image in Figure 4.21 with the reflection was only taken during the fifth observation.

Summarising the retro-heritagisation of ICONSIAM's exterior, the developer has chosen to desaturate the use of gold, a colour commonly seen as associated with Thai heritage sites. More importantly, the developer used a cultural object specific to the Thai people to design the appearance of the glass façade. The exterior of ICONSIAM may not seem as directly and noticeably Thai to a Thai person as in the previous investigations of Sooksiam and Ploen Pranakorn, but there is a Thai spirit that is implicitly imbued in the design. Participant 5 of ICONSIAM's focus group has also resonated with this idea of the implicit Thainess hidden within by stating,

*"I can't see the direct inspiration behind it...
I see it as a whole, I feel some Thainess,
but in detail, I can't see how it was inspired by Sabai...
But overall, it conveys Thainess and is beautiful."*

It is important to note that the participant did not know that Sabai was the inspiration for the façade, despite having visited ICONSIAM three times within one year, until the actual inspiration was revealed during the discussion among the participants, leading to this comment. Thus, in the retro-heritagisation process, a design does not always need to explicitly portray the appearance of Thai heritage, as long as locals can sense the heritage emerging from the environment. This is achieved because the design employs a logic familiar to the local population, such as the repetition of shapes seen in traditional Thai heritage. Therefore, the appearance may not be strictly Thai, but it still embodies a logic or design thinking that is familiarly Thai. The difficulty of retro-heritagisation lies in the balance between explicit recognisability to the point of heritage-copying and implicit demureness to the point that visitors no longer sense the spirit of the culture within the design.

Although in Section 4.3 on Idealised Heritage-Copying, the research critiqued the limitation of heritage-copying and promoted the use of retro-heritagisation in creating a retail development, there are situations where heritage-copy may assist with retro-heritagisation. A space has many compositions and features that a visitor may observe. If a developer is concerned that a design created through retro-heritagisation may seem too demure to attain a sense of heritage, the developer can also add heritage-copy features to the space in order to find the right balance. A designer does not need to follow just one approach or another to design a space with heritage. This situation happened inside ICONLUXE, with the golden columns and the ceiling behind the glass façade.



Figure 4.22 Detail of One of the Golden Columns inside ICONLUXE
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Figure 4.22 above shows a golden column with a clearly traditional Thai pattern. The pattern rises from the ground floor to the golden-gilded ceiling to cover the entirety of the column. Beyond the image, ICONSIAM showcases four of these Thai columns at ICONLUXE. Visitors can scan a QR code to find more information about the mural on the columns. The columns are actually black lacquer gilded with gold by Professor Preecha Thaonthong, a Thai national artist¹⁸. The columns depict Thai patterns passed down through the ages, from the early days of Thailand before it was an independent nation to when Ayutthaya was the capital of Thailand to Rattanakosin, the early days of Bangkok. These columns also represent an example of heritage-copying, since they would not be out of place if they were placed inside historical buildings. As an observer, ICONLUXE benefitted from the extra-flair of features with saturated heritage that these golden columns provided. This also resulted in a more balanced representation of modernity and heritage that is not discreet. More intriguingly, the focus group participants also considered these patterns as traditional heritage by comparing them to the temple but complained that the pattern was too discreet. For them, the pattern itself was too intricately small in comparison to the sheer height of

¹⁸ National artist is a title with a pension granted by the Thai government for individuals who have contributed to the arts, including fine arts, literature, drama, crafts and so forth.

the hall. They actually saw these columns overall as gold rather than noticing the pattern, as seen in Table 4.3 below.

Participant	Remarks on golden columns at ICONLUXE
Participant 5	<i>I like it because there are a lot of corners for photographing, like when there's a zone with this design of a gold temple... but it's indeed too small. I agree with the other participants...</i>
Participant 6	<i>The pattern is really small, it's bad that we can't get a closer look, but it is really extravagant, especially in the evening when the lighting reflects the gold colour, creating the same feeling when I walk inside a temple with gold interior.</i>

Table 4.3 Focus Group's Comments on the Golden Columns
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

However, in defence of these golden columns, Participant 2 ended the discussion by saying that,

*"I see the meticulousness in creating this place, the meticulousness in creating an experience for visitors. This is my perspective, **actually, the size of the pattern isn't an issue. These details don't have to be showy, but once you're inside, these little details add up to the feelings visitors have about how meticulous the decoration is.**"*

This statement again shows the importance of how the developer has to discerningly consider all the components together as one cohesive space and how each feature works and balances one another in the same manner as the explicit golden columns inside ICONLUXE and the implicit glass façade inspired by a Thai object that covers these columns. More interestingly, the pattern was heritage-copied, but the columns were much taller than traditional columns found in a temple. To enhance the visibility of heritage and Thainess, the pattern could have been proportionally enlarged to match the increased height of the columns. Thus, every design feature that incorporates heritage inside the same space emits a different degree of heritage visibility, and the developer has to look at the proportion of this heritage visibility to the whole space to find the ideal balance between modern-day construction and heritage design. In terms of the visibility of

heritage, Central has also been able to make the heritage explicit in both entrances despite utilising retro-heritagisation in the design process.

4.5.2 Central Ayutthaya's Exterior and the Restoration of Glory

In an identical manner to the glass façade of ICONSIAM, Central also uses the past as inspiration in the modern-day construction of its exterior façades. Before the research goes into the discussion of two exterior façades of Central Ayutthaya, it is important to reiterate the history of Ayutthaya from Chapter 1, Section 1.3, on Thailand and its idea of luxury. The real present-day city of Ayutthaya contains many desolate ruins of palaces, temples and pagodas. Figure 4.23 on the next page is a photograph of Phra Si Sanphet Temple, a temple in the former palace complex of Ayutthaya and one of the historical ruins. The pagodas are exposed, with no ornamentation or decoration befitting a royal temple. Between the pagodas, only the red brick foundations of the lost buildings remain. The surrounding walls are also crumbling, with only red bricks remaining. These historical ruins act as a reminder of the city's ruination by the Burmese in 1767 (London, 2009; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Smith, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). In the past, temples such as this would have been covered with gold (Chakrabongse, 2019).



Figure 4.23 Phra Si Sanphet Temple in the Compound of the Old Palace in Ayutthaya (Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Contrary to the current reality of Ayutthaya, the façade of Central Ayutthaya stands out with its sheer and grand usage of white and gold. Therefore, gold and white constitute an ideal representation of the city of Ayutthaya rather than a realistic representation of the contemporary city. At Central Ayutthaya, it seems that history has taken a different turn. Thai people have long been taught that Ayutthaya was a lost city of gold, and the return of the blindingly golden and white architecture to the city's landscape can be viewed as a restoration of its former golden glory. Apart from the revival of the glorious past, Central also created a new Thainess by incorporating repetitive lines in two different patterns: one for the white façade and another for the golden façade. The outermost white façade contains a repetition of vertical lines. However, the inner golden layers showcase reoccurrences of triangular edges that point outward towards the street. The height of these triangle edges also decreases as they head down towards the floor, creating a golden-textured gradient never seen before in traditional Thai architecture. Normally, a Thai pattern would have a repetition of the same geometric shapes of the same size but not in a gradient-like fashion. Unlike ICONSIAM, Central did not provide any information about the design inspiration or construction technique behind the design of this façade during the observations. The construction technique, material and inspiration will be discussed further in the next chapter. The details of the main white and golden façade can be seen in Figure 4.24 below.



Figure 4.24 Close-up of the Main Entrance Façade of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Despite not knowing the inspiration or the actual material during these observations, just from the observation of the façade alone, the façade does not just look Thai but also feels Thai in a modern way. Moreover, the developer imbued the façade with an implicit ideal of the restoration of the city that invokes the emotions of local Thais rather than just designing something that has a Thai appearance. The focus group participants of Central Ayutthaya also concurred with this analysis. Participants talked about how the extravagance of Ayutthaya in the past has been turned into a modern creation. The comments of the focus group participants can be seen in Table 4.4 below.

Participant	Discussion on main façade of Central Ayutthaya
Participant 1	<i>I really love this spot right there as it conveys Ayutthaya's glorious days. When we mention Ayutthaya, we usually think of gold, the golden age of the Ayutthaya era. I think this corner is very extravagant. I liked it when I walked to this space, I had to take a selfie here. The gold colour is very glistening, which represents Ayutthaya's identity. This corner is breathtaking. I love it.</i>
Participant 4	<i>To me, I think the design is well executed, as the traditional culture is mixed with the modern design in a nice combination. I feel that it is very exquisite and extravagant.</i>
Participant 5	<i>It is indeed extravagant, like Participant 4 said. The glory of Ayutthaya, everything has its details and meanings, from the colours to every little detail, they didn't miss anything. Everything has its representation in its space. When I see it, I find it to be very beautiful. On top of that, its meaning is also beautiful.</i>
Participant 2	<i>The first thing I notice is the wickerwork pattern, which is what Ayutthaya is well-known for. It is designed with a more luxurious colour, which resulted in something extraordinary with its dimensions.</i>

Table 4.4 Focus Group's Discussion on the Main Façade of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

From Table 4.4, the statement of Participant 5 also revealed that a design can showcase both explicit and implicit heritage at the same time. The participant not only saw the visible incorporated heritage on the façade but also thought how beautiful it was. The participant also thought that the hidden meaning within the design was appealing. It must also be noted that the visibility of heritage in a design does not necessarily lead to a participant knowing the actual

inspiration chosen from the history of Thailand. Participant 2 thought that the developer incorporated the pattern seen in the traditional basket that the city is known for and was impressed by this. Hence, in retro-heritagisation, where the incorporated heritage becomes more abstract for the modern-day context, the design becomes more open to visitors' personal interpretation. This open interpretation of heritage requires visitors to have cultural knowledge in order to associate the abstract design with certain inspirations drawn from Thai history. Therefore, the developer should invoke a heritage that most people have cultural knowledge of. This can be seen in the employment of red bricks in the secondary entrance façade of Central Ayutthaya.

4.5.3 Central Ayutthaya's Red Brick Façade and the Romanticisation of War

As a Thai person, a retail developer, and a PhD candidate, I had bittersweet thoughts every time I observed Central Ayutthaya's red brick side entrance. These love-hate thoughts derived from the glorification of red bricks. The scenery of the city of Ayutthaya today is synonymous with the red brick ruins, as seen in Figure 4.23. Most Thai people today instantly associate red bricks as a construction material distinctive from the city's cultural landscape. As a result, Central has been able to create a space where a modern-day Thai person would instantly register and think of the location as Ayutthaya, even without a big sign stating the location. In terms of the use of bricks in construction, bricklaying is nothing new, and it is still utilised in contemporary construction. The ingenuity of Central was its ability to adapt the simple brick into a new, instantly visible design infused with heritage. See the red brick façade in Figure 4.25 on the next page.



Figure 4.25 Close-up of the Red Brick Façade of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From first glance from afar, the brick wing of Central Ayutthaya not just a simple rectangular box like the main white and golden façade because it incorporated the Thai gable onto the side view, creating a long-elongated triangle with two curved lines on the top that mimic the roof line of a traditional Thai house. Upon closer inspection, Central Ayutthaya pushed the limit of the rectangular box further by laying the bricks of the façade in a curved line rather than a straight line. This slightly curved façade resulted in a concave line that embraces the red public square right in front of it. Moreover, the bricks used for the façade are not ordinary rectangular bricks but oval-shaped. The oval shape creates a repeated geometric pattern not previously seen in traditional Thai architecture, but through this repeated geometry, a characteristic approach in traditional Thai design, a sense of Thainess is invoked, even though the direct inspiration cannot be pinpointed. Central again did not provide any information about the inspiration behind this façade. Nevertheless, a visitor can both see and feel the heritage. Central also pushed the

boundaries of the retail development industry, where Kern (2008) mentioned a common convention for building rectangular boxes to host the retail experience.

Upon a deeper analysis of the history of the city, the use of the red bricks presents a more ironic, cynical, and dark ideal of the past within the design. The city of Ayutthaya in the present may have been synonymous with red bricks for the living Thai people, but the city was not a vibrant red city of bricks in the past. The real scenery of Ayutthaya would have been identical to the historical sites of Bangkok because King Rama I of Thailand built palaces and temples to replicate the image of Ayutthaya (Bunnag et al., 1984; Suksri & Freeman, 1996; Baker & Phongpaichit, 2017; Chakrabongse, 2019). When people walk around the historic centre of Bangkok with its grand palace, walls and forts, people cannot see any red bricks since they are all hidden underneath white plaster.¹⁹ If the city of Ayutthaya survived into the present without being sacked, the red brick scenery would not be part of the current image of the city in people's minds. As a result, Central's choice for the red brick represents the scar of war, which ironically resulted in an ideal celebratory space for people to enjoy in the present without any in-depth consideration of history. Coleman (2014) thought that utopianism created from the ideal past should alleviate cultural amnesia in a globalised world, but unfortunately, the destruction of Ayutthaya has also faded away into the past with this space.

The focus group participants of Central Ayutthaya also praised the space for the design's ability to link the history of the city to the surface without actually considering the in-depth truth about the red bricks that they see at historical sites in the city. The discussion of the focus group can be seen in Table 4.5 on the next page.

¹⁹ See Figure 1.4 in Chapter 1

Participant	Discussion on Red Brick Façade of Central Ayutthaya
Participant 1	<i>This square takes us to the ancient squares of Ayutthaya's historical sites. The main feature of a lotus pond with a bridge and a boat represents the lifestyle of people in Ayutthaya's flood plain, where historical sites, rivers and water transportation can be found. This space also shows Ayutthaya's identity perfectly.</i>
Participant 2	<i>At first glance at the brick, it reminds me right away of the old city, of the history, like we could go back in time to the Ayutthaya era with this time-travelling design.</i>
Participant 5	<i>The red bricks are used for a very modern design, so it's a spot that's worthy of a check-in, very beautiful and worthy of being an Ayutthaya element. The red bricks, as everybody said, always remind people of ancient history, are well designed with modernity in combination with other compositions in the space, including the bridge and the boat, as Participant 1 said. It's wholesome.</i>
Participant 3	<i>This corner is one of the highlights of Central Ayutthaya. I saw this on Instagram and really wanted to go there and take photos... The use of this colour (red brick), of course, reminds me of the old city of Ayutthaya, as the bricks are in an orange tone like this.</i>
Participant 2	<i>Ayutthaya is known for its material production, such as construction bricks, red bricks and ancient bricks. They are the most famous here. Local products are brought out and supported, making them more popular.</i>

Table 4.5 Focus Group's Discussion on the Subsidiary Façade of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Every participant either associated the space or the red brick with ancient Ayutthaya without really thinking of the fact that the city had been sacked and the red bricks would not have been a dominant, integral and visible part of the cityscape of the bygone ancient Ayutthaya. This may be a downside to the heritagisation of a luxury retail development. The developer has to choose a heritage that people today understand and associate with the past, but present-day people may not really think deeply about the design and only see the history on the surface.

In reference to the warfare during the Ayutthaya era, Central actually had a heritage-copied installation depicting a war elephant, a wall, and a cannon together in one corner of the red brick square. This installation was observed during the first three visits in 2022, but by 2023, the war

elephant had vanished from this space and from Central Ayutthaya altogether. In later observations, the now vacant spaces were used for temporary shops and activities during seasonal celebrations, further promoting consumption. This installation can be seen in Figure 4.26 below.



Figure 4.26 War Elephant Sculpture at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Central chose to show a true likeness of what a war elephant looked like in the past, where the elephant was dressed with a caparison, a piece of gold and crimson cloth that decorated the animal. This elephant was located next to a replica city wall. This city wall was completely white, which was a historically accurate representation. The ancient walls would have appeared like this in the past. Although every piece of this installation appeared more historically correct, the sizes between the three pieces were disproportionate to reality. The elephant should have been taller, and the white walls should have been much taller than the war elephant.

This installation represented the most confusing design feature that incorporated Thai heritage at Central Ayutthaya because it was out of place and lacked a function. This installation was also one

of the very few heritage-copied design features observed at Central Ayutthaya. Despite the research's criticism of the use of the red brick and how it incorporated the destruction of the city into the creation of an ideal space, the public red brick square actually did not require the war elephant to remind visitors of warfare at all. Central also did not need this war elephant to create a sense of heritage in the space. Central was already able to make the heritage instantly visible with the red brick façade, the square, the bridge and the pond. This is not the same situation as in ICONLUXE, where the heritage-copied golden columns assist with the visibility of heritage and balance out the modernity of the glass façade. In addition, unlike the white elephant sculpture inside Sooksiam at ICONSIAM, where people worship the sculpture, the war elephant at Central Ayutthaya served merely as a decoration. A war elephant, the highest art of warfare in Thai culture, lacks the dignity it deserves in Thai society.

One of the most vivid and interesting discussions during the focus group interview for Central Ayutthaya also happened when the participants saw Figure 4.26. Overall, Central Ayutthaya received overwhelming praise and positive feedback for its retro-heritagisation ability in adapting Thai heritage for a modern retail establishment. On the other hand, in contrast to other features, the war elephant became the subject of debate among the participants. A part of the discussion on the war elephant can be seen in Table 4.6 on the next page.

Participant	Discussion on the War Elephant
Participant 1	<i>I was displeased when I saw this because it's too obvious with a realistic elephant figure being installed. I think if they used an elephant made of rattan as its structure or something, not a realistic one like this, it might be more minimalistic and go better with the other design elements. This is my personal view.</i>
Interviewer	<i>Does anybody disagree or agree with Participant 1?</i>
Participant 5	<i>I think this part is meant to show the history, which is the only realistic design feature at Central Ayutthaya. If the elephant was too cute, it couldn't be a war elephant, it may cause some drama. Maybe that's why a realistic elephant figure is in use, but it works, as my foreign friends asked me what it was. I had to explain to them the story behind it.</i>
Participant 3	<i>If this was inside the building, it would be weird. When it is outside, with the surrounding context, they kind of go together. It's good to see something realistic for once. I think the design team did their research on how Ayutthaya is famous for battle with war elephants. If you have seen the movie <i>The Legend of Suriyothai</i>, you know that Thung Makham Yong in Ayutthaya was the battlefield. It is ok in this outside setting. It's nice to see some realistic things.</i>
Participant 2	<i>However, in my opinion, the elephant figure does not seem to fit with the space, it does not blend in smoothly. It would be even weirder if it's inside, where it wouldn't go with anything.</i>

Table 4.6 Focus Group's Discussion on the War Elephant at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Firstly, this discussion revealed a similarity between the two focus groups in that they both contain participants who criticised heritage-copied designs in either one of the case studies. Regarding the issue of the war elephant, the focus group could not reach a consensus on whether the war elephant should be directly imitated or not. Participant 5 also pointed out that some public backlash would have arisen from the retro-heritagisation of the war elephant if it had been adapted into something cute instead. Participant 5 also showed that, in the selection of Thai heritage for a retro-heritage design, not everything can and should be made into something new. Cultural objects of reverence, such as elephants, may need to be kept in their traditional forms. Apart from keeping an object of reverence in its realistic shape, Central actually should have invested in the grandeur of a heritage-copied design, not to belittle the object by making it to the point of tackiness. Furthermore, the discussion also revealed that it was not so much about the

issue of heritage-copying versus retro-heritagisation. Some participants were open to seeing heritage-copied features in combination with new design from retro-heritagisation, but the invocation of the war elephants raised an ambivalent consensus among the participants. In this circumstance, the saying 'when in doubt, kick it out' may apply to the retail developer. If the selection of a certain heritage, such as the elephant, may lead to a doubtful situation, it might be best to never use it in the beginning, as the research has claimed that the overall environment does not change with or without the war elephant. Central had done the right thing by ridding itself of this war elephant.

4.6 Idealised Heritage-Copying and Retro-Heritagisation of the City Within

So far, this chapter has analysed, discussed and provided findings on the design of two types of spaces: 1) immersive heritage spaces such as Sooksiam and Ploen Pranakorn, and 2) the construction of the exterior with retro-heritagisation. Now, the research dives into the interior of luxury retail developments and how heritage is manifested explicitly and implicitly. As established from the spatial analysis of ICONLUXE and the focus group's discussions, design features that went either through the process of heritage-copying or retro-heritagisation may co-exist together in one space, and it is about finding the right observable balance between modern retail development and invoked heritage. To comprehend the manifestation of heritage within a retail space, the research will first go through the basic design characteristics of the retail developments observed in the two case studies and how these characteristics correlate to features of the city.

The first and most important notion to understand about luxury retail developments derives from the fact that the developer does not design 100 percent of the internal space. A retail development is not like a hotel or a public government building, where one entity can create a total design. The interior of a retail development represents an amalgamation of identities from the developer itself, the tenants and even the organiser of the temporary event that the space hosts. The developer leases spaces out to various brands for their retail stores, and as a result, the developer loses direct control over the design of the leased space. The developer can only make direct design decisions regarding shared features and facilities that tenants and visitors need to use. This can be seen in both case studies, where the most visible manifestation of heritage occurs in public walkways, bathrooms, and other spaces where people can gather and socialise. As the

tenants design their own stores, the visible degree of heritage varies among the various brands. This synergy of designs by the various parties also makes retail development feel like a miniature city where different stakeholders play different roles. The developer acts as the municipal government with direct control of the public roads and other services, such as waste management. The tenants serve as citizens who reside permanently inside the space where their shops resemble privately owned infrastructures of different sizes, such as houses. The government may have a city planning policy that may affect the design of the houses, but at the end of the day, the citizens designed their own homes, which resulted in variations in the designs and expressions of heritage. Just like any other city, a house may fit in with the surroundings and architectural style of the city or stand out because it may also have a contrasting design direction that differs from the city. Lastly, visitors and temporary event organisers serve as tourists who visit the city for just a moment and then leave. For the discussion on the design features that incorporated heritage inside the luxury retail development, this research will start with the public space of the developer.

4.6.1 The City Planning and the Public Space of the Developer

When it comes to designing a heritage feature, the developer actually has limited space to invoke elements from the nation's history inside a retail complex, because most of the walls, the vertical plain of the space, are occupied by the stores of the tenants. Imagine a visitor walking through a walkway and browsing through stores' windows to see the display and merchandise. The developer cannot obstruct the tenants' shop fronts, who serve as the primary income provider for the development, the taxpayer to the miniature city. As a result, the developer has to come up with creative ways to feature heritage under the limitations, and both case studies take varying approaches.

4.6.2 ICONSIAM's Heavenly Hanging Installations

Starting with ICONSIAM, the developer took to the sky to feature Thai heritage. Aside from decorating columns that reach great heights with Thai motifs, such as the golden columns at both entrances and inside Sooksiam, ICONSIAM decided to incorporate Thai heritage into hanging art installations and chandeliers. Two of the most distinguished hanging pieces exist inside ICONLUXE. Another space that consists of a large number of hanging pieces and even a waterfall is the restaurant floor (C+8). The dominance of certain zones that feature heritage, such as ICONLUXE

and the restaurant floors, also showed that a big development such as ICONSIAM, with its 10 floors, may not invest in heritage in every single space. The development has to focus and allocate its assets in the most appropriate space.

Inside ICONLUXE, the two hanging installations actually exist in close proximity to one another. When visitors walk from the triplex (C+2) towards ICONLUXE, they witness a grand luminescent chandelier hanging over the entrance hallway of ICONLUXE. This narrow, tall hallway of ICONLUXE contains windows and advertisements of luxury brands, such as Fendi, Dior and even Jim Thompson. The chandelier hangs over a gilded ceiling. Each light hangs on its own, directly from the ceiling. The pieces of light bulbs contain a round shape with a tail like a comet. The round heads of the light bulbs face one another in a circle, and this circle is repeated all over in two waves. Figure 4.27 on the left depicts this chandelier.

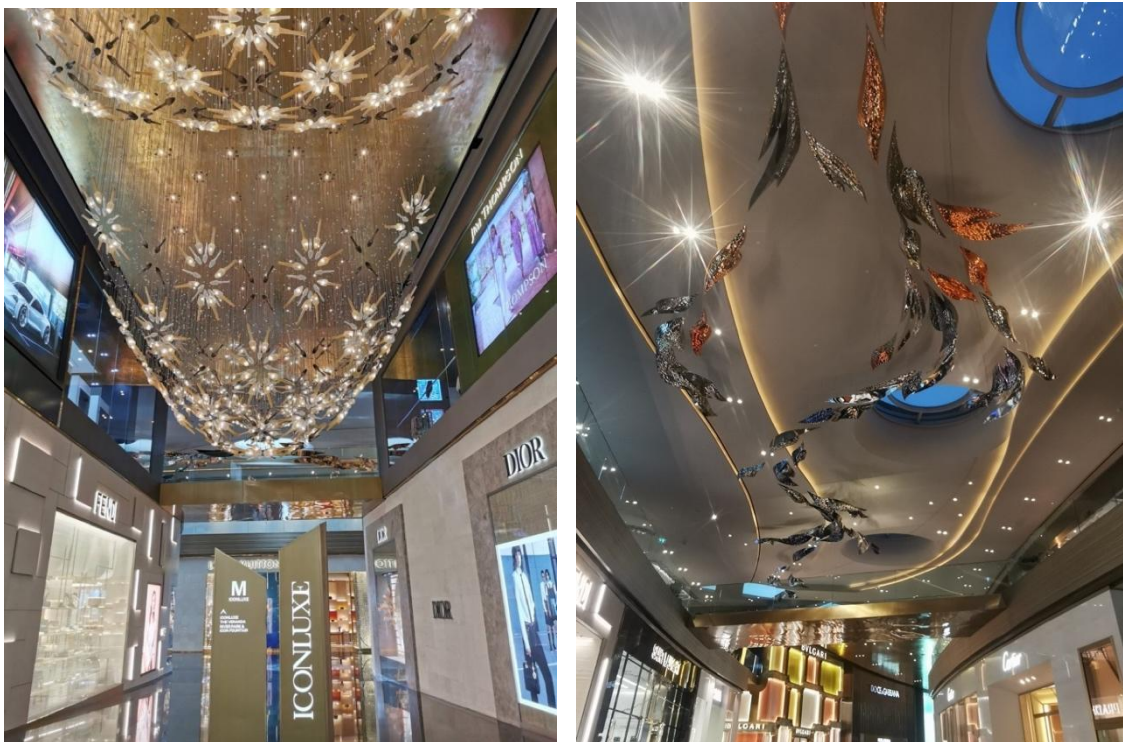


Figure 4.27 Two Hanging Installations of ICONLUXE
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

The actual heritage inspiration behind the chandelier required a bit of time to reflect on and consider, because no Thai object is exactly like this in reality. Therefore, this chandelier becomes subject to the personal interpretations of visitors. This ambiguity in design may also lead to an absurd interpretation. For instance, a foreign doctor who is a personal friend of mine mentioned

to me that he thought a group of sperm swimming towards an egg was the design inspiration for this chandelier. As a retail developer, the owner would probably not use sperm as inspiration, because it has to be accessible for the open public of all ages. Nevertheless, the public has the right to openly interpret the design based on their general knowledge and not just cultural knowledge in the same manner as Focus Group's Participant 2 of Central Ayutthaya, who thought the pattern of the white and golden main façade was inspired by Thai wickerwork. Thus, a developer also has to consider whether the adapted abstracted heritage design has other resemblances to other commonly recognised global objects to prevent an absurd interpretation, such as the sperm chandelier. According to the official website of ICONSIAM, ICONSIAM claimed that the chandelier was designed by a Czech design firm called Lasvit. Lasvit used the 'Malai'²⁰, as the inspiration for the design because it is traditionally used to welcome visitors and a symbol for Thai hospitality (ICONSIAM). The example of Lasvit may initially seem like Orientalism, where a Western design firm chose a Thai oriental symbol as inspiration for the design. However, Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.2 The Reinterpretation of Function, will reveal that the local developer intentionally selected the Malai for this space as a gesture to welcome visitors. In choosing the Malai as the inspiration for the chandelier, ICONSIAM intentionally not only used a distinctive form in Thai culture to make a new design, but also conveyed the garland's symbolism of hospitality to the chandelier. A developer has to understand that a chosen object may have social meaning within it, just like the garland. Sometimes, the hidden meaning may not be thought through well enough, like the red brick façade of Central Ayutthaya.

It must be remembered that people must also be able to recognise the Thai heritage chosen for the design to comprehend the hidden meaning within. The explanation by ICONSIAM actually took for granted that people may link the shape of the jasmine flower to an individual bulb. Most of the world imagines a blooming jasmine flower, while Thai people actually use jasmine buds that have not bloomed yet to make the Malai. Therefore, there is a pitfall in using a shape that most people do not associate with the common imagery of the object, such as the jasmine. Even Thai people found it hard to connect this chandelier to the Malai. During the focus group discussions, three participants talked about this design. One thought the chandelier was inspired by the fireworks, a less R-rated interpretation than my doctor friend's and more appropriate for the festive feeling of a mall. Another participant mentioned the true inspiration, but the participant stated that the inspiration did not come right away at first glance. The participants had

²⁰ a Thai garland usually made from many jasmine buds used religious ceremonies and to pay respect to elders. It can also be used as an apology.

to take some time to observe the design. Lastly, one more participant was totally in the dark and could not recall any Thai objects from the top of their mind. This proves the difficulty of choosing and adapting a heritage to the public, especially if the developer wants to convey a social meaning with the chosen heritage.

In the left image of Figure 4.27, another installation in bronze hanging perpendicular to the chandelier can actually be seen in the back. This installation represents the hanging installation in the image to the right of Figure 4.27. This installation hangs close to the ceiling, with many pieces of abstract pointed oval shapes in gold, silver and bronze flowing together down the ceiling of the walkway. It is flanked by luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton, Dior, Fendi and Cartier. According to the website of ICONSIAM, a British studio called Haberdashery designed this installation called 'Mae Nam'²¹ where the studio used dazzling metallic gold, silver and bronze to mimic the reflection of the water surface. Each of the metallic pieces represents a three-dimensional form of the 'Kanok Peo', a traditional Thai pattern (ICONSIAM). The story of hanging artwork on ICONSIAM's website juxtaposes many conceptual features from Thai heritage, city landscape, modernity and even the divine in one art piece. The idea of the river certainly does not belong exclusively to Thailand, but it is an integral part of the central Thai lifestyle, the city and the cultural landscape of Bangkok. The 'Kanok Peo' pattern represents Thai heritage that has been adapted into 3D. The traditional two-dimensional 'Kanok Peo' pattern can actually be seen in Figure 4.22 on the golden column inside ICONLUXE with its pointed shape. Finally, the gold, silver and nark²², another colour combination in Thai heritage, as discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.2, elevate artwork to the semi-divine realm of Thai royalties. A river of gold, silver and bronze streaming down in the sky also sounds heavenly mythical.

When asked about the use of a Western design firm to design this installation, Participant 3 provided a comment to support this research's stand on heritagisation where foreigners can be employed not be viewed antagonistically as the other side, like in orientalism. Participant 3 of the focus group stated,

²¹ Mae Nam means River in Thai

²² an alloy of bronze, gold and silver, a color that is bronze led with a hint of gold

*“Actually, it is like the play or the movie *The King and I*, where **we can’t really ask for 100% Thainess from a foreigner’s perspective**. What can come out of it is the inspiration for how Thai dancing or other Thai performances have been adapted from the movie, which was made 40–50 years ago. **Thai works nowadays have been modified to be more modern. I like that it’s pretty modern. I like it.**”*

This remark revealed that a foreign firm can assist in the retro-heritagisation process because the result would not be 100 percent traditional Thai design right away. This adaptation by foreigners allowed the design to possess more modern qualities. This modernisation of heritage can also appeal to visitors, such as Participant 3.

4.6.3 Central Ayutthaya’s Semi-Transparent Designs and the Spirit Town

In comparison to ICONSIAM, Central Ayutthaya did not create majestic hanging installations, but the developer decided to take a different approach by creating semi-transparent design features that did not obstruct the tenants’ storefronts. As an observer, these skeletal, see-through features also provided the illusion of a spiritual fantasy town hidden within the space of luxury retail development. The first design feature is the golden installation attached to the side of the main hall after entering from the main entrance. Seen in the right image of Figure 4.28 on the next page.



Figure 4.28 Real Phan Phum on the Left and the Reinterpreted Design at Central Ayutthaya (Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From first glance, this feature possessed a cone shape as a whole. Due to its sheer size, rising up from the second floor to nearly the third floor's ceiling, it was initially thought that the design was a re-interpretation of a pagoda, since Central used a pagoda as the 'A' in their logos that can be seen from the façade before entering the hall. Upon closer and longer inspections, the feature contained protruding angles and edges not seen in the pagodas. It resembled an extremely over-enlarged Phan Phum²³. Figure 4.28 on the left shows an authentic Phan Phum. Instead of creating a completely solid and opaque Phan Phum, Central deconstructed the shape into a golden skeletal frame. This outline also allows visitors to see through to the shops behind them. Central also attached most of the designs, the opaque elements, to the side of the floor and the railing of the balcony. More transparent design portions exist between the top of the railing and the ceiling to avoid blocking the stores.

With a side-by-side comparison of the inspiration and the actual design, a resemblance can be seen. Without real inspiration at the site, the developer again relies on the personal interpretation of the visitors. In the case of the Phan Phum, the design should not have other

²³ Another object used as a symbol of worship and respect, like the Malai, flower garland.

shape resemblances to other cultural objects, such as the pagoda. During the focus group discussion, one participant also thought the design was inspired by the Thai pagoda and, upon closer inspection, thought the round, pointy design attached to the railing of the second floor was a Krathong²⁴, which also possesses a similar appearance with spiky folded banana leaves like the Phan Phum. Although both cultural objects may have similar appearances, they can have different cultural meanings. A Krathong represents gratitude for the year's harvest to the goddess of the river, while a Phan Phum represents gratuity, too, but it can also symbolise a greeting and respect in Thai society, which makes more sense for the entrance hall.

During the first observation, the content on the screen constantly changed with various commercials, but a short movie of interest by the developer was shown on the big LED screens next to the Phan Phum. In this movie, a mythical swan, like a phoenix, wakes up from her sleep and flies over the ruins of Ayutthaya. During this flight, the swan sprinkles magic dust of gold to revive the city to its previous state. The swan then flies to modern-day Central Ayutthaya, and the movie ends with the caption "Capital of Wonders". The scenes from this movie are shown in Figure 4.29 on the next page.

²⁴ A small vessel filled with flowers, folded banana leaves, and candles, that people float into the water as a form of thanksgiving and prayer for Loy Krathong Festival.



Figure 4.29 Scenes from the Screen Showing a Movie about Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

This movie also features several characteristics seen in the design features of ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya discussed earlier in this chapter. Firstly, the swan with the magic to revive a ghost town portrays an element of the divine in the utopian city. Moreover, it also reveals a connection between the imagery of lost city of Ayutthaya hidden and the real physical retail development. Upon walking around the circular corridor of Central Ayutthaya, Central Ayutthaya again makes this imaginary revived Thai city illusion come out with the use of partially see-through frames that reinterpret the roofline of a traditional village.

Walking along the circular path of Central Ayutthaya, it created a vaulted ceiling that imitates what a person may witness inside a traditional Thai house rather than decorating the ceiling with

hanging installations like ICONSIAM. This vaulted ceiling does not represent an exact copy of the original ceiling inside a traditional home but possesses the same instantly recognisable form because Central has enlarged and elongated this ceiling for the sheer scale of its development. Moreover, the vaulted ceiling contains no opaque roof tiles right above, only the frame that normally upholds the tiles. This allows natural light to come through to the floor. This space can be seen in the left image of Figure 4.30 below. Aside from the vaulted ceiling on the vertical plain, Central has decorated the side of the balcony with wooden frames of traditional Thai houses. Instead of making frames of entire houses like Ploen Pranakorn Hall, Central made half-shaped houses that they attached to the side balconies of the second and third floors. These transparent houses again allow visitors to see the stores on the other side, while also reminding them of a conceptual city that exists in a building with a vaulted Thai ceiling. In addition to the almost transparent houses on the side, Central has also decorated the bulkheads, the visible vertical wall between the floors and the geometric wooden tiles that one normally sees on the traditional roof. Moreover, the three-storey corridors also contain bridges between the two sides, Central has decorated the sides of these bridges with wooden frames that imitate the shape of suspension bridges, another reminder and symbol of a city. Despite the bright sunlight flowing down from the vaulted ceiling, Central still decorated the bridge with strings of LED lights that created a sense of perpetual festivity.

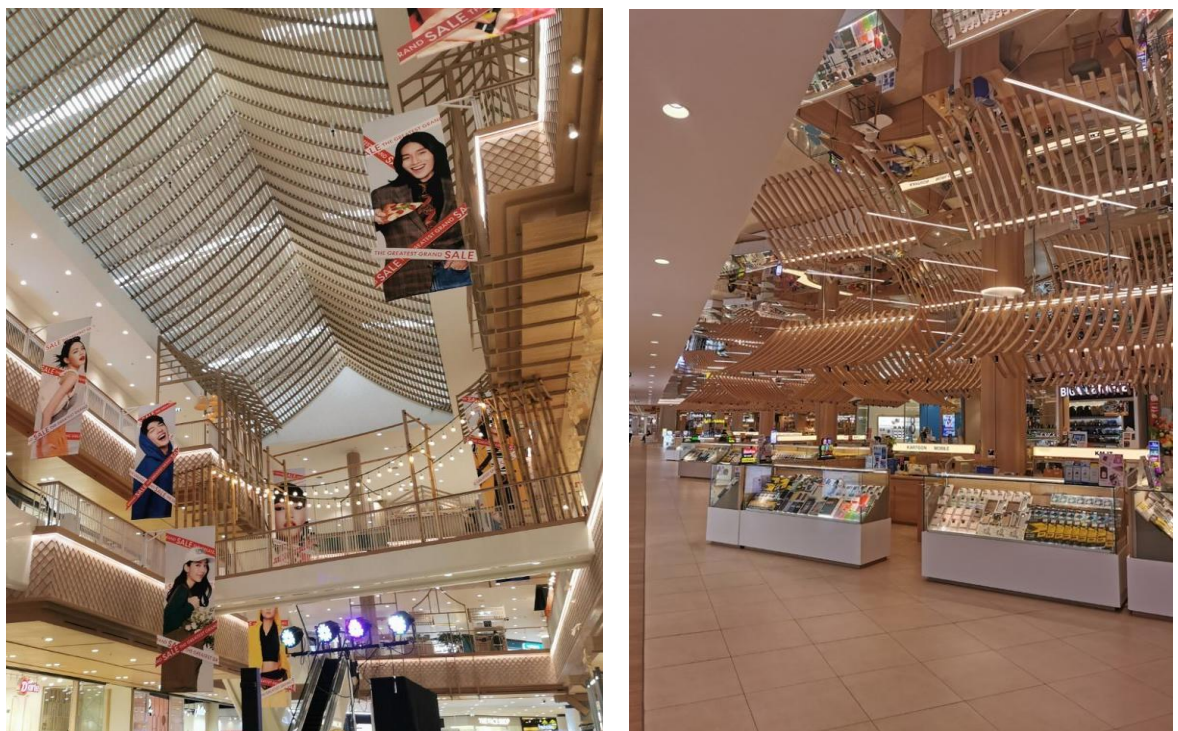


Figure 4.30 Frames of Traditional Thai Village around the Circular Corridor of Central Ayutthaya (Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Walking further around the corridor, some sections contain only the height of one floor, but the reminder of the imaginary city does not disappear. On the second floor, where many retail booths for mobile phones and mobile accessories exist in the middle, Central has also created another mirage of a village with wooden frames and Thai roofs. This zone can be seen in the right image of Figure 4.30. Rather than attaching the roof frames to the sides or letting them stand on columns, Central has hung these roof frames from the ceiling with two metal rods for each roof. This allows Central to provide the shops under these roofs with bars of LED light by wiring the electricity cables through these rods. Apart from the functional benefit of the shop underneath, the light also makes the village appear even more ethereal and futuristic at the same time. Central also covered the ceiling with a reflective surface similar to a mirror. This mirrored ceiling makes the space more fantastically surreal, with the upside-down duplication of the village. In the same manner as the TV screen with the restored city coming alive at Central Ayutthaya, the reflective ceiling also works like a bridge that connects the idealised city to explicit external reality.

Aside from the semi-transparent traditional villages to remind visitors of Thai heritage and the city of Ayutthaya, Central has also created moveable installations and seatings with see-through sections that portray local Thai sceneries. For one set of installations, Central has depicted the aquatic river lifestyle of the central Thai people with wooden boats and artificial lotus leaves that grow magically from these boats. A school of Java Barb fish, a common fish in the rivers of central Thailand, swims over these boats. See Figure 4.31 below.



Figure 4.31 Moveable Installation Depicting the River Scenery at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaoren, 2023)

Central also made two tall, oversized bamboo fish traps that people could sit inside. This design constitutes retro-heritagisation because a traditional object was adapted for the context of people who may need to sit inside a retail development. Moreover, Central did not just place a boat but created a new design by adding other elements of the Thai scenery together into one installation. The installation in Figure 4.31 was originally located on the first floor but moved up to the second floor after the first-floor space was filled with retail stalls to further promote consumption. This demonstrates that the space within a retail development needs to be dynamic. A luxury retail development should not only focus on designing permanent fixtures while overlooking moveable features that depict Thai heritage. Ultimately, a retail development must generate revenue, and this is predominantly achieved through leasing space. The flexibility to accommodate retailers with the desired space increases the likelihood of enhancing revenue. The installation with the scenery of the river is not the only example in Central Ayutthaya. Central has also featured another moveable installation with seating that portrays the scenery of the rice field on the ground floor. This installation possesses a pile of haystacks made from textiles, one enormous water buffalo and a baby water buffalo in front of a cart filled with golden harvested rice in the back. The water buffalo possesses no true likeness to the real animal apart from its shape, constructed with metal wire. Central covered the metal wire-shaped buffalo with fabric, and the use of fabric made them look like gigantic stuffed animal dolls. This installation of the water buffaloes can be seen in Figure 4.32 below.

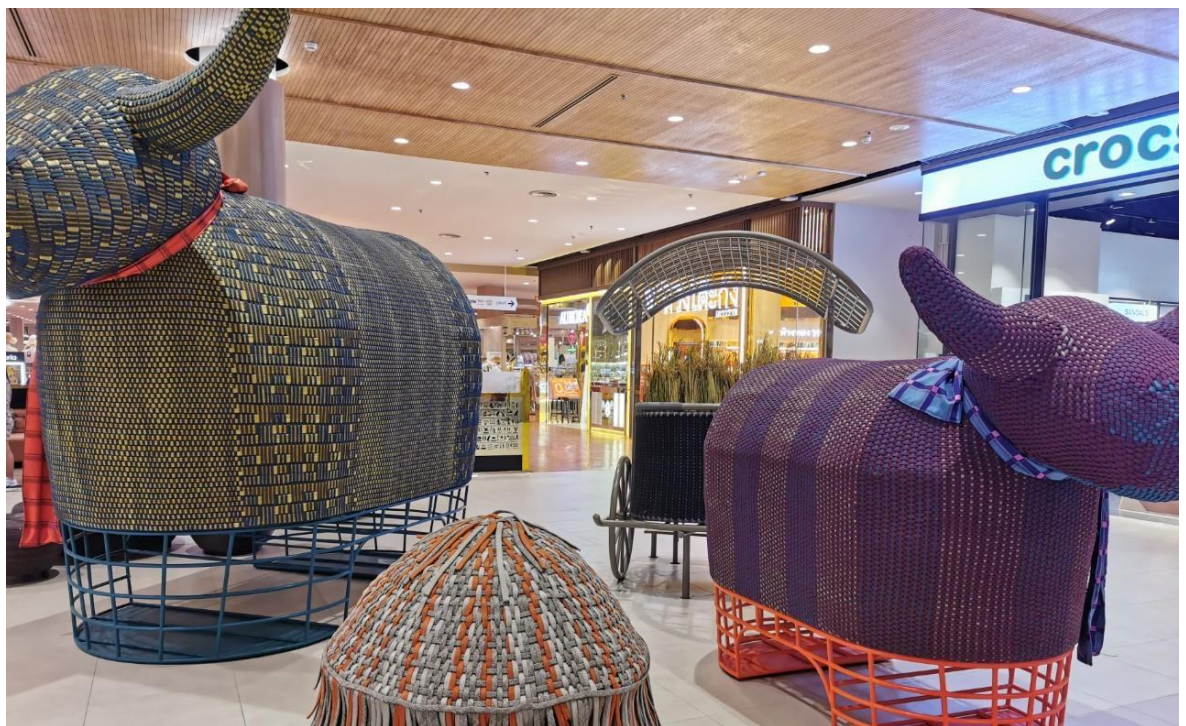


Figure 4.32 Water Buffalo Installation Inside Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

In contrast to the war elephant sculpture, the focus group participants praised these two installations in Central Ayutthaya, appreciating their depiction of the city's farming and fishing lifestyle. One participant linked them to the city's abundant harvest, abundance is also a key aspect of luxury's paradoxical nature. The participants also showed a preference for retro-heritagisation. The discussion of these installations is presented in Table 4.7 below.

Participant	Discussion on the two moveable installations
Interviewer	<i>How about a corner like this? (Fish Trap Installation)</i>
Participant 1	<i>This shows the abundance of Ayutthaya really well. Before working, I usually went there to sit under the traditional fish trap, where there are also lotus plants and a boat. It was as if I was sitting by a river in Ayutthaya and seeing the way of life of the locals doing fishing, which is a simple way of life by the river. This is also another corner I like.</i>
Participant 2	<i>This is how Ayutthaya official slogan is directly portrayed as the breadbasket. This demonstrates Ayutthaya's identity.</i>
Participant 3	<i>Beautiful. It shows the concept of Ayutthaya as the breadbasket, like Participant 2 said. This corner also serves quite a number of purposes, such as relaxing and taking photographs. It is beautiful.</i>
Interviewer	<i>How about a corner like this? (Water Buffalo Installation)</i>
Participant 1	<i>This clearly represents rice farming with a haystack. I like how the water buffalo is made of fabric so it's much cuter than a real-life water buffalo figure which could turn out to be a different style. It'd be too obvious. A cart and a haystack are applied like this, presenting minimalism which is very creative.</i>
Participant 3	<i>This corner is cute. I agree with Participant 1. What they are trying to convey is the Ayutthaya way of life which is rice farming, as well as what is incorporated in the design, including wickerwork and others, making it a perfect combination.</i>
Participant 4	<i>I think this design is really cute. Even though we don't see the buffalo's face, it's still very cute. Kids love it, I went with my young relatives there, and they still recognised that this is a buffalo.</i>
Participant 2	<i>This clearly shows Ayutthaya's agricultural way of life, mainly rice farming. Local products are used here beautifully and harmoniously.</i>

Table 4.7 Focus Group Discussion's Moveable Installation Depicting Thai Sceneries
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Participants 1, 2 and 3 all thought about and agreed on the portrayal of abundance, or Ayutthaya as the breadbasket. They also thought that both scenes reminded them of the traditional local way of life. Furthermore, Participant 1 also spoke about the design adaptation of both scenes for the context of the retail space. In contrast to the debate about the war elephant, the participants preferred that the developer adapt local scenery that reminded people of the traditional lifestyle in the past for retail development.

4.6.4 Fantastical Food Spaces

In the previous section, a retail development may take a different approach from another to design a public space filled with retailers, but for the main dining areas of both case studies, the two developers allocated their assets to immerse the dining environment in heritage. On the floor, mainly comprised of restaurants at ICONSIAM (C+8), a scene of a rice field and aquatic abundances also transpire through hanging installations and partially opaque design features. This scene exists in the vast open space in the middle of the floor, surrounded by restaurants of tenants with their own identities in the outermost spaces next to the enclosed walls. In the middle of the created rice field, some restaurants also exist, but ICONSIAM has forced these tenants to use a design made by ICONSIAM. Each restaurant leased a semi-transparent dome with a shape similar to an enlarged bamboo fish trap. The tenants' identities are only their logos attached to these bamboo domes, which are scattered throughout the open space. Moreover, each restaurant also possesses seating outside these semi-transparent domes, giving a sense of alfresco dining in a fantasy garden while they are actually inside in a controlled environment with air conditioning.

Apart from the fish trap domes, ICONSIAM also places several water features to remind people of the aquatic scenery. On the side facing the river, the space contains a two-storey height where a water feature falls from the ceiling. On the other side, towards the main road, the floor only contains one-storey height, but ICONSIAM still placed transparent tubes from the ceiling to the floor with water running outside these tubes, which created the illusion of water running down in perfect non-natural strings. The floor also contains several shallow ponds of water that exist around the periphery of the domes and the side of the walkway. Vegetation and animals also thrive in this dining area scenery. Under the waterfall, a semi-transparent water buffalo made of metal wires grazes in a garden of lush green vegetation and blossoming flowers. Several aquatic birds made from wires also exist next to the water buffalo and other areas. From the ceiling,

ICONSIAM has also hung many pieces of colourful, enlarged see-through guppy fish made from bamboo. These fishes also promoted a sense of heavenly surrealism, with fish flying above the sky over the water buffalo and birds. A view of the dining space's landscape taken from the eastern side with the back facing the river can be seen in Figure 4.33 below.



Figure 4.33 The Local Scenery of ICONSIAM's Dining Space
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Although the scenery is based on the traditional aquatic landscape of Thailand, one must think deeper to realise that a landscape like this does not exist in reality. Flowers cannot bloom perpetually. Fish cannot survive above land animals. Creatures stuck in fish traps would actually be eaten rather than dine. ICONSIAM may be inspired by the real landscape specific to central Thailand, where Bangkok is located, but the ideal of the developer has inadvertently created a fantasy garden that cannot and does not exist in reality through retro-heritagisation.

When asked to give an opinion about this dining space, Participant 1 of the ICONSIAM's focus group also stated,

“Much prettier. It looks more modern with Thainess in it. I prefer this kind of design to the one at the floating market.”

This statement also revealed a preference for retro-heritagisation over heritage-copying downstairs at Sooksiam. At the end of the day, visitors prefer to escape to an imaginary land based on their culture, rather than escaping to another imitation of a heritage site that they may visit in reality.

For the dining floor of Central Ayutthaya, Central also has an area that is decorated in the centre, while other surrounding tenants' restaurants still possess their own identities. In this centre, Central made a Thai kitchen-themed food court by immersing the environment with traditional objects seen in the historic Thai kitchen. The notion of invoking the history of the kitchen for the food court may not be groundbreaking, but the way Central did it required the attention of this research. Central also used both heritage-copying and retro-heritagisation when it came to invoking Thai kitchen items. More importantly, one of the main design features inside the food zone does not merely serve as decoration, but also functions as tables and chairs for people to dine on. So far, throughout this entire chapter, the Nagas escalator in the north zone of Sooksiam represents the sole example of a heritage design that serves a function where people can interact. The interaction also correlates with the original function of the heritage invoked. Other features may have also come with a function, but their modern-day usage in the development does not correspond to the original historical function. For example, in the case of the fish trap, Central used the design for people to sit in, while ICONSIAM used it for restaurants to occupy. These interpretations possessed no interconnection with how and why the fish trap was initially used. The only exception was ICONSIAM's lease of the bamboo dome to a sushi restaurant. The example of the Nagas also represented just the replacement of the stairs with escalators, but Central took another step further with its reinterpretation of the Benjarong for the contemporary food court.

Upon walking into the food court of Central Ayutthaya, the first thing that people would notice straight away were three oversized, colourful Benjarong bowls. Upon closer inspection, each bowl contains a small entrance on the side for people to get in. Inside the middle of the bowl, a round table rises up. Therefore, instead of dining **with** Benjarong bowls, people can dine **inside** the bowl instead. The image of these table seating bowls can be seen in Figure 4.34 on the next page.



Figure 4.34 Benjarong Bowls at the Food Court of Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From the image in Figure 4.34, the bowls may appear to be like the tea cups inside the Alice in Wonderland attraction at Disneyland, and this raised the issue of an empty shell and the commercialisation of the culture again. In defence of these bowls, the invocation of this porcelain represented a great decision by Central because of its origin in the royal court of Ayutthaya. Central used a luxury item once reserved for royalties and aristocrats as an experience to create special moments that anyone can enjoy. These bowls also received overwhelming praise from the focus group participants. The discussion can be seen in Table 4.8 on the next page.

Participant	Discussion on the Food Court
Participant 1	<i>This is very extravagant, dining inside Benjarong porcelains with hanging installations and on-ground decorations. I have to admit, it's very extravagant. The grandest food court. Aside from the beautiful design, it also indicates that Ayutthaya was once a prosperous land with international trades, as this Thai porcelain is created from the introduction of Chinese porcelain, which is ideal for this zone.</i>
Participant 2	<i>The design team didn't overlook tiny details, they tried to bring everything into the mixture of local items, which were applied for their aesthetic and functional purposes. Yet, what needs to remain is there to show the identity here.</i>
Participant 5	<i>This may be the only food court in the world with this level of beauty and Thainess. It's an adorable idea to have people dine inside the bowls. Pretty novel.</i>
Participant 1	<i>It's cool and fun, and it's also creative. Who would have thought that a bowl used as a food container could also contain people inside? It is quite an interesting idea.</i>
Participant 4	<i>I like it, too. Being in the food court made me feel like I was in an old kitchen. When I look up at the ceiling, I notice threshing baskets, which is a nice detail, as the previous participant mentioned, we go there to eat, but who would have guessed that we'd end up in the bowl ourselves? That is quite surprising.</i>
Participant 1	<i>It's very classic. Like the other participants said, there is ceiling decoration of threshing baskets and standing decoration of porcelain surrounding the dining area. You can look above and enjoy the way of life filled with different arts and cultures, like Participant 4 said.</i>

Table 4.8 Focus Group Discussion on the Food Court at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Participants 1 and 5 talked about the extravagance of the only food court in the world. Moreover, participants discussed the correlation of the original usage to the present-day context and how this redesign made it an interesting, fun and creative novelty. This represented a new experience that they cannot get in other food courts but only at Central Ayutthaya due to the retro-heritagisation of function for the modern-day context. The participants also discussed the repetition of traditional threshing baskets as hanging installations over bowls. Apart from these baskets hanging in the ceiling, Central has also decorated the shelves above the counter of each food court's vendors with other objects that one sees in the Thai kitchen of the past. This usage of exact cultural items without adaptation in the food court further validates the idea that a space can have both heritage-copied designs and features with retro-heritagisation in the same manner as ICONLUXE. Another great example of the adaptation of a cultural object's function for the modern day can also be seen in the bathrooms of ICONSIAM.

4.6.5 Thematic Toilets and Teleportation Tunnel Entrances

Besides the restaurant zones in both case studies, developers have total control when it comes to incorporating heritage into the design of the bathrooms. As a luxury retail development may contain many bathrooms, due to cost management, some bathrooms may be more imbued with heritage. This also applied to both case studies, and the researcher chose the most prime bathroom designed with heritage from each development for the discussion. Another aspect of this discussion is the entrance way of the bathroom because most of the bathrooms in both case studies are hidden away in the back with narrow alleyways to access. Narrow alleyways also contain empty walls for the developer to decorate with images of Thailand, which transforms the dark alleyway into an escapism tunnel into a bathroom. The natural relief of oneself can also become a luxurious, special moment.

In the ground floor's bathrooms of Sooksiam, ICONSIAM went all out when it came to the incorporation of heritage. In one of these bathrooms, the scenery of rivers, lotuses, traditional wooden stilt houses, and people cover all the walls from the ground up all the way to the ceiling, creating an immersive toilet experience. The artistic two-dimensional drawings of the scenery contain the same artistic style that one may find in the murals of Thai temples. Moreover, instead of procuring conventional wash basins found in other toilets, ICONSIAM adapted Thai earthen jars as wash basins instead. In historic Thai houses without plumbing, Thai people usually keep big, tall earthen jars to collect rainwater for drinking and washing themselves. These jars also have lids to

protect the water from dust and other contaminants. ICONSIAM innovated these earthen jars with modern plumbing and wash basins on top as a replacement for the lid so that people could wash their hands instead. Visitors can also scan a QR code to learn about these jars and their makers. Similar to the Benjarong porcelain table at the food court of Central Ayutthaya, the use of these earthen jars also represents another great example of retro-heritagisation where the original function of the cultural objects has been adapted for the modern lifestyle. Furthermore, ICONSIAM also claimed in the QR code that these earthen jars came from Ratchaburi province, which is known for its local production of earthen jars. As a result, the money spent to create this bathroom went to a rural province outside of Bangkok, rather than to major companies supplying bathroom fixtures in Bangkok. Another important aspect to mention is that retro-heritagisation can happen without changing the traditional appearance. In this bathroom, the murals and appearance of the sink possess imitations of heritage that people may see elsewhere, but the utilisation of a cultural object for another purpose that still correlates with its original purpose represents a novel idea. This bathroom can be seen in the left image of Figure 4.35.



Figure 4.35 Bathrooms of ICONSIAM on the Ground Floor
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

At the entrances of one of these bathrooms on the ground floor, ICONSIAM also decorated the walls, leading to the bathrooms with murals depicting scenes of the various regions of Thailand. In front of one bathroom, a mural portrays the scenery of the south of Thailand with the façade of the Sino-Portuguese terrace house. In front of the terrace house, two Muslim men can be seen

interacting with one another at the table. The research was able to identify the faith of these men from the Taqiyah²⁵. In front of this mural, ICONSIAM has again provided a QR code and titled this mural “Happiness of the South.” This mural possesses a disturbingly authoritative characteristic that arises from Utopia. Muslims represent a minority in Thailand, with most of them living in the southernmost provinces next to Malaysia. The three southernmost provinces also contain the most constant terrorist violence in the country, with bombings. As of 2023, the three southern provinces were still plagued by terrorist attacks and bombings (Benjakat, 2023). Some parts of the South may certainly be happy with their beach resorts, but not all of the South can say the same. The luxury retail development may be a space of constant celebration, but the escapism shouldn’t go far to the point of being out of touch with reality outside, like this mural. As a space designed to create special moments and entice consumption, a retail development may prefer to avoid showcasing harsh realities and violence. However, given the long history of a nation, there are many other aspects of heritage to choose from that do not alienate certain groups, especially minorities, or reflect the Central Thai tendency to control every aspect of life from the capital in Central Thailand. A developer must be cautious about the fallacy of making the space festive without any consideration for the violence and hardship that people may have to face outside the development. Lastly, this research does not claim that the developer intended disrespect, but this example represents the unintended consequence that may arise from the Utopolis and the heterotopia.

Central too decorated empty walls in front of the bathrooms with imagined scenes of the past by adopting and adapting the drawing technique with distinctive black lines and flat two-dimensionality seen in murals of Thai temples. The mural showcases an imagined city of Ayutthaya with a white city gate. Behind the white walls, a white and golden temple with trees can be seen. As the temple is still golden and the walls are still white, the city has not yet been destroyed. In front of the walls, figures of people can be seen on horseback and on foot. Apart from horses, elephants can also be seen. Upon closer and longer investigation, the mural takes visitors to the past because of the hairstyle and fashion. At the bottom of the image, a woman with a bun in her hair can be seen carrying various baskets. Women in Ayutthaya wore long hair, and after the sack of Ayutthaya, Thai women started to wear it short like men to make it indistinguishable from men’s. Short hair, like that of men, prevented the Burmese from identifying them and taking them hostage by grabbing the hair. On the left side of the image, a

²⁵ A traditional round skull cap worn by Muslim men.

foreigner on a white horse can also be seen. This foreigner also came from the past with a powdered wig, a feather plume hat, a court jacket and breeches in the fashion of Louis XIV's France, with whom Thailand established official diplomatic ties. The man between the foreigner on horseback and the woman with the bun also represents a Chinese man with a queue, a half-shaved head and a braid from Imperial Qing China. The mural may depict an elephant, a respected animal in Thai culture, and people, but the drawings make the people less relatable and the elephant less realistic. The discussed mural can be seen in Figure 4.36 below.



Figure 4.36 Mural in Front of the One of the Bathrooms at Central Ayutthaya

(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

The bathrooms at Central Ayutthaya also used retro-heritagisation in the design process. Most of them contain the Thai gable over the mirrors of the washbasins, consistently connecting the bathroom to the decorations around the circular void. On the ground floor of a bathroom near Ploen Pranakorn, Central has created a separate bathroom for children with retro-heritagisation through the reinterpretation of a symbolic meaning. Central has decorated the entrance façade and interior walls with paintings of hens, a symbolically motherly figure. The hens were drawn in a way similar to the hen figures seen in traditional Thai bowls still commonly used by people today. Central also made the connection to the original inspiration clear by drawing bowls onto the

walls. The washbasins and mirrors also contain shapes similar to eggs to create a strong, cohesive, immersive design concept and story relating to the hen. Central raised a design seen in common cultural objects to elevate the bathroom of a luxury retail development. In addition, Central made the design inspiration clear and employed a social meaning that most people were aware of. Even many cultures globally understand the context of this children's bathroom, where the mother hens protect the children like one of their chicks. Lastly, the observation of this bathroom also again revealed the dynamic characteristic of retail development because, during the first few observations, this bathroom had not been in existence or was under construction. It was not until later observations that this bathroom was opened to the public. The children's bathroom can be seen in Figure 4.37.



Figure 4.37 Children's Bathroom at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

From the findings in this chapter, since Section 4.6.1 alone, it can be seen that the developer actually had limitations when it came to designing the interior of the development's retail section with heritage due to the storefronts of the tenants. The developer had to create semi-transparent designs or hanging installations to feature heritage instead. The developer could control only some zones, such as the dining zone and the bathroom. For the retail zone, the developer also had to rely on the tenants to get heritage across in their stores.

4.6.6 The Residence of the Tenants and Their Expression of Heritage

For retail store designs, this research investigates a few prime examples from both case studies in order for the developer who may be reading this research to understand that the tenants too can play a role in creating an environment filled with heritage. The developer may not be able to convince every brand to incorporate local heritage into their own design, but the examples discussed in this section can be employed as pioneering examples to persuade retailers. It is also crucial to mention that heritage cannot be observed or experienced at every store. Only a few stores stood out from the rest in both places, and retailers should learn from the great and not-so-great decisions made by these brands, too. Major international brands have their own recognisable identities, and this may result in a reluctance to incorporate local heritage, but the heritagisation process can make their store one of a kind compared to other stores around the world. The exclusive uniqueness among the masses also constitutes a form of luxury.

4.6.6.1 ICONSIAM's Luxury Brands and Their Contextualisation of Thainess

For ICONSIAM, the research focuses on luxury brand stores. The luxury brand boutiques at ICONSIAM broke conventions and contradicted existing knowledge on the standardisation of luxury store design, which has caused luxury stores from the same brand to generally possess the same environment across the globe (Thomas, 2008; Moore et al., 2010). Moore et al. (2010) also mentioned that the flagship store represented the only form of luxury store that could differentiate in terms of design through the employment of architects to design the store with uniqueness. However, the luxury brand stores at ICONSIAM do not correspond with the current defining characteristics of the flagship store because the biggest luxury stores at ICONSIAM only go up to about 400 sq. m. (Petrachaianan, 2018), only about half of the required 700-1,000 sq. m. of an international luxury flagship store (Nobbs et al., 2012). The research specifically chose the stores of Cartier and Louis Vuitton for their incorporation of Thai heritage to invoke a sense of luxury over the utilisation of a sheer, grand, spacious retail space. According to Petrachaianan (2018), ICONSIAM's Cartier shop presents furniture upholstered with Thai silk and golden chandeliers inspired by the lotus flower, while Louis Vuitton installed Thai silk with golden brocade, a fabric once associated with royalty (Chakrabongse, 2016; Petcharaburanin & Saisavetvaree, 2018), to mimic glistening light reflecting from the ripple of the river seen through the glass façade from the store (Petrachaianan, 2018).

For the design features that incorporated Thai culture, Cartier chose the retro-heritagisation approach for everything, and this resulted in a dilution of heritage visibility, as discussed in the glass façade and hanging installations of ICONLUXE. From the storefront of ICONSIAM, the store may seem like any other Cartier store around the world, but upon closer inspection, redesigned Thai luxuries started to emerge. Like the columns of Sooksiam and ICONLUXE, Cartier also chose to decorate their columns with Thai heritage. Instead of wrapping the columns around 360 degrees, as in the previous examples, Cartier hung a piece of semi-transparent perforated textile over each column from floor to ceiling. Above each fabric, Cartier also installed lighting to highlight the textile and its semi-transparent quality. Even though each textile was highlighted with the extra light, it was so demure that it took a while to recognise its resemblance to traditional Thai silk. Upon peering through the glass window, two sets of golden chandeliers with five pieces per set right in the centre of the store stood out. The façade of the Cartier store can be seen in Figure 4.38.



Figure 4.38 Façade of Cartier at ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Although Petrachaianan (2018) claimed that the golden chandeliers were inspired by the lotus, the shape of each golden piece hanging was so refined and altered to the point of containing no

resemblance to the initial inspiration of the lotus anymore, neither flower nor leaf. As an observer, the shape contained more correlation to a drop of water, and the most and only noticeable and assumable heritage of the chandelier was its golden colour. Inside the store, on the side table next to a set of orange velvet sofas, Cartier has also placed a lamp decorated with cut yellow, green and red stained glass in a repetitive geometric pattern, comparable to stained glass mosaics on the walls of Thai temples. Figure 4.39 on the left reveals the oversimplified golden lotus chandeliers, and the right reveals the lamp with the stained-glass mosaic on the next page.



Figure 4.39 Chandelier on the Left and Lamp on the Right at ICONSIAM's Cartier
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

The perforated textiles over the columns, the golden chandeliers and the mosaic lamp all represent a form of retro-heritagisation. The textiles over the columns represent an interpretation of Thai silk. The golden chandelier simplified the shape of the lotus, and the lamp incorporated traditional material into a modern-day object that did not exist in the past. However, no design feature stood out as remarkably and visibly Thai. In contrast to Cartier, Louis Vuitton used retro-heritagisation and heritage-copying in their design features to find the balance of explicit and implicit heritage. This can be seen with just one image taken from inside the store in Figure 4.40 on the next page. From the top of the image, the colourful and golden installation of silk can be seen. The silk has been draped with a ripple to mimic the water, as Petrachaianan

(2018) has claimed. Even without knowing the design reference of the water, the ceiling silk stands out straight away as a design that feels very Thai, with a modern interpretation of Thai people. On the left side of the image, traditional wooden lanterns can also be seen hanging over a vintage Louis Vuitton trunk. Louis Vuitton adapted these traditional lanterns by painting over the horizontal lines of the lantern with vermillion red, a colour that matches the ceiling on the right. Louis Vuitton has also placed artificial banana trees in traditional turquoise-glazed earthen jars that Thai people may use to hold water or grow plants. The ceiling silk installation and the lantern constitute retro-heritagisation, while the banana trees and their turquoise potteries constitute heritage-copying. In the same manner as the interior of ICONLUXE outside Louis Vuitton, the interior of Louis Vuitton also showed that heritage-copying should not always be disregarded but employed to create the right balance between heritage and modernity. Without these banana leaves, the overall sense of heritage in the environment would not have been as explicit. In addition, and in contrast to Cartier, Louis Vuitton has shown that the scale and visibility of the design features that incorporate Thai heritage in proportion to the size of the overall space matter in the design process.



Figure 4.40 Louis Vuitton at ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

In the focus group discussion, the participants also mentioned that the design of Louis Vuitton was obvious when it came to Thainess over Cartier. Participant 4 made this point of view clear by stating,

"I think this shop's (Cartier's) details aren't as good as the previous one. The previous one (Louis Vuitton) is more obvious due to its colours and the banana trees, but this one (Cartier) only has glass and small lamps as decoration. Not that much Thainess, only in little details."

Therefore, a developer has a responsibility to advise their retail partners when it comes to designing their own stores that a brand must also look at the overall picture of the store with combined design features that allow heritage to come alive, and heritage-copying may be required for the overall design of the space. Lastly, the example of Cartier and Louis Vuitton represents the first time in this research that foreign entities use an exotic culture for their commercial purposes instead of the local population using their own culture in the heritagisation process. In defence of these luxury brands, the investment in the store also benefited local Thai producers, such as makers of lanterns, silk, and earthen jars, thereby providing income to the local Thai community rather than just conventional suppliers of the brand. Traditional Thai luxuries may benefit from promotion inside the stores of luxury brands. Its association with the luxury industry may also lead others to consider such items as luxury, but foreign brands may also provide benefits to the advancement of local luxuries. Luxury brands can also be of assistance to local brands, such as Jim Thompson.

During the first four observations, the Louis Vuitton store consisted of just one floor, but by the final observation, Louis Vuitton had opened and expanded onto the higher floor right above its original store in ICONLUXE. Louis Vuitton itself had turned into a duplex store. As a result of transforming into a duplex, the higher storefront of Louis Vuitton faced directly opposite the Jim Thompson Store. From the garland chandelier, Jim Thompson can also be seen with Dior right underneath. The proximity of Jim Thompson to the auras of other luxuries also benefitted the image of a local Thai brand, such as Jim Thompson. Imagine a visitor walking through the boulevard of luxury brands. One might not know a local brand such as Jim Thompson, but one may also consider Jim Thompson a luxury brand due to the visibility of other surrounding recognisable luxury brands next to Jim Thompson. Therefore, through the heritagisation of luxury retail development, it is a noble cause for the developer to promote local brands to the level of international luxury by allowing them to associate with other major foreign brands.

Figure 4.41 on the next page shows the Jim Thompson store at ICONSIAM, where the fine silk of Thailand in the forms of bags, hats, neck ties and apparel can be seen. As an observer, there was a sense of pride that these silk goods could exist right opposite Louis Vuitton's fine leather goods. A visitor could shop at Louis Vuitton and then walk out to support the local industry, too. In essence, the developer also provided an opportunity for local brands, making retail development in Thailand more inclusive and not just for major international brands.



Figure 4.41 Jim Thompson's Store at ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In regard to the interior design, Jim Thompson completely took the route of retro-heritagisation. In the store, none of the decorations can be seen as instantly as Thai. Thai figures can only appear as prints on various merchandise. The store may not emerge explicitly Thai, but still a sense of Thainess can be felt from the curtain wall with a repetitive pattern in a tropical green, a colour commonly seen among plants like the banana tree. The floor also contains traces of strips of gold, like a very toned-down mosaic. The wooden stands also possess a colour tone like teak, a luxurious type of wood found in Thailand and other parts of Southeast Asia. Participant 2 of the focus group also spoke about Jim Thompson's shop when discussing the Cartier store, even though images of the Jim Thompson store were not shown to the participant during the discussion. Participant 2 stated,

*“Personally, this Cartier shop is just like any other Cartier shop. I would like to go back to Jim Thompson. Jim Thompson really matches my personal taste, and I think **Jim Thompson represents what we call Thainess very well**. I think what Jim Thompson nails is how they don’t convey serenity through their decoration. Decoration is still one of the things that contributes, but through feelings of serenity. For example, if we look at modern Thai architecture or structure, one place that represents modern Thainess very well is the Sukhothai Hotel, where there’s serenity, calmness, minimalism with wooden décor, and a diamond shape. The whole decoration contributes to the atmosphere they offer. This Cartier shop has some elements with (Thai) attribution, such as Thai silk and Thai perforated design, but as a whole, it doesn’t contribute to that atmosphere.”*

The statement by Participant 2 re-emphasises the findings from the observations of Cartier and Louis Vuitton at ICONSIAM. Rather than focusing on tiny elements, the developer should advise its tenants to look at the overall picture in order to obtain the right balance in conveying heritage. The environment has to feel implicitly local or Thai. However, when talking about the perfect balance, the store of Jim Thompson may not need any heritage-copying in its interior because the products already contribute to the overall Thainess of the environment. In the case of Central Ayutthaya, the situation became vice versa, where the store design can be seen as Thai but the products possess no relevance to Thai culture at all.

4.6.6.2 Central Ayutthaya’s Retail Store and the Heritage City

At Central Ayutthaya, several international brands also complied with the Thai concept of the retail development. The researcher has chosen a lingerie brand called ‘Wacoal’ and a brand for prescription glasses called ‘Owndays’. Both of these brands originated in Japan. Both brands took the same approach by incorporating Thai heritage into the design that framed the storefront. Moreover, the chosen heritage also aligns with the design features chosen by the developer for the circular corridor that these stores face. In the case of Wacoal, the brand erected the gable on the storefront. When visitors enter the store, they need to go through the gable, like they are setting foot into a home. In addition, the refined shapes of the gable can also be seen on the interior walls of the store, where the store hangs and displays lingerie underneath. The Wacoal Store with the incorporation of the Thai gable can be seen in the left image of Figure 4.42 on the next page.



Figure 4.42 Stores inside Central Ayutthaya with Thainess
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

In the right image of Figure 4.42, the store of Owndays also created an entrance frame, but it chose to repeat wooden squares into a pattern to mimic the design of the bulkhead between the floors of the main circular corridor seen previously in Figure 4.30, rather than employing the gable. The entrance also possesses a screen that displays the sentence, “From Japan to Thailand.” This statement again reveals the juxtaposition of cultures and how a retail development that goes through heritagisation does not represent just monoculture but a myriad of cultures. The designs of these two stores have benefited the overall design of the development through consistency. However, as an observer, I really wonder if the tenants themselves received any benefits. The incorporated heritage did not make the stores any more luxuriously special or make any logical correlation to the type of products sold. Consistency with the retail developer represents a good benefit to overall development, but the tenants should also make their own designs by finding Thai heritage and stories that may correlate better to their merchandise. As this research cautioned against the use of heritage-copying, the tenants should not copy the designs of the developer if the heritage used contains relevancy to their brands. Tenants should find their own forms of retro-heritagisation instead.

One store in Central Ayutthaya, called JIB, actually attempted their own heritagisation without any imitation of the design features by Central, but its interpretation also possessed no relationship to their products. JIB is a Thai store that sells computers, laptops, mobile phones and electronic accessories from various major international IT and gadget brands from around the world. When one thinks of gadgets, one would think of the following characteristics: modern, futuristic, state-of-the-art, new and innovative. However, JIB created a polarising design that contradicted these values by hanging traditional lanterns from the ceiling, decorating columns with a golden traditional pattern, attaching a temple bell to the column and installing an image of the ruin of a temple in Ayutthaya through an artificial window lined with red LED. The discussed design features can all be seen in Figure 4.43.



Figure 4.43 JIB Store at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From the storefront of JIB, there was no denial regarding the attempt to incorporate Thainess, but the design inspiration contained no relevancy to the innovative world of IT goods. Should a visitor ring the temple bell at the entrance and wish for a new laptop or mobile phone, a luxury for some people? What does the image of the temple ruin mean to the store? The temple used was the temple of victory in Ayutthaya; maybe the purchase of goods at the store may lead to more

victories in life? All of these interpretations seemed very far-fetched, but the main issue lay in the open interpretation of the heritage used in the context of the store. An innovative store should apply Thainess through retro-heritagisation to achieve a modernised heritage. Maybe an electronic futurist-shaped temple bell that provided visitors with the chance of a lucky draw to win some prizes after a purchase or an augmented reality or VR headset to explore a historical ruin and view what it looked like in the past before its destruction. A store should also try to provide an experience to create a special moment for visitors to achieve a sense of luxury. This topic of special moments also leads to temporary events in both case studies.

4.6.7 The Ethereal Events by Both Case Studies and the Constant Celebration

Before going through the special festivities chosen from the year-long observations, it must be noted that both case studies constantly had special occasions to visit throughout the year. For the observations of designated spaces that hosted temporary events, it turned out that these spaces were never empty, and when these spaces did not host an event, people set up stages, equipment and decorations for upcoming celebrations. For instance, in Figure 4.4 on ICONLUXE and its Two Residential Towers from the River Park, an unfinished stage for the next event can be seen on the River Park. Central Ayutthaya also conveyed to visitors very clearly about the perpetual celebration, with a big rectangular billboard rising from the ground that informed them about all the special events throughout the month. Figure 4.44 on the next page depicts one of these billboards during the sixth observation of the Thai New Year. The Thai New Year is only from the 13th to the 15th of April every year, but Central extended this holiday from the 10th to the 16th. This can be seen in the left yellow box in the middle row. Apart from the Thai New Year Festival, Central filled the other days with other events, including a cosplay event, a coffee fair, a music festival, a chance to meet celebrities, and even hanging out with avian creatures. Within this calendar, the third of April represented the only day without an event.



Figure 4.44 A Billboard at Central Ayutthaya with all the Events for the Month
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

ICONSIAM, too, created a celebratory space for the Thai New Year that went beyond the 13th to the 15th of April. At River Park, ICONSIAM chose to magically fill the empty open square with a field of golden rice and a barricaded zone for people to fly their kites. In the field of golden rice, many rice stalks sat on golden strips and wavy platforms with different levels of elevation, creating layers and layers of rice for visitors to immerse themselves in, like a small and navigation-friendly maze. Moreover, the shape of the artificial rice plant represented fully grown and ready-to-harvest rice. On top of the highest platform, ICONSIAM placed a gazebo with tiers of Thai gables brightly lit with dotted LEDs. Both sides of the gazebo were also flanked by LED lights shaped in round traditional Thai motifs. Visitors could stand inside the gazebo and look down on the golden rice field and the zone-to-fly kites. This field of golden rice can be seen in Figure 4.45 on the next page.



Figure 4.45 The Golden Rice Field during Thai New Year
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

Figure 4.45 alone portrays various peculiarities of Thai heritage. Firstly, the gazebo may feature a traditional Thai form, but it also possesses modernity with its LED lighting, a juxtaposition of the old and new. No traditional Thai gazebo like this existed before; one cannot simply go out to buy one. Furthermore, the rice field has beyond-natural characteristics. The metallic golden colour represents the first unnatural feature. Moreover, rice normally grows on fully flat plains in Thailand, but at ICONSIAM, rice can miraculously grow on a hilly landscape like a terrace farm in foreign countries. The ready-to-harvest rice was also out of season because the end of the rainy season is around October, when water is most abundant, rather than in the midst of the Thai summer in April, which is associated with the rice harvest. This golden rice field at ICONSIAM could either amazingly grow out of season in a national sense or actually personify the central region of Thailand because of the central region's ability to grow rice all year round, despite ICONSIAM claiming itself to be the best of Thailand and meeting the best of the world. Lastly, real rice fields may also contain many dangerous creatures, including snakes, rodents and leeches. However, here, the rice field of ICONSIAM became a safe environment for the amusement of visitors. All these beyond-natural characteristics create a sense of an ethereal paradise.

With regard to the end of the rainy season, on the day of the first full moon around the end of October or early November, Thai people celebrate Loy Krathong.²⁶ For the Loy Krathong festival, ICONSIAM combined Christmas with Loy Krathong for a two-month-long celebration. For the main centrepiece of the decoration, ICONSIAM created a Christmas tree inspired by Krathong. A Krathong, like the Phan Phum, consists of folded banana leaves shaped with triangular spikes all around. For the Christmas tree, ICONSIAM simplified the shape of the Krathong and stacked them up into a column. With the biggest Krathong as the base and the size of each Krathong minimised as they rose up to form a cone shape that resembled a Christmas tree. This Krathong Christmas Tree was also installed with lines of LED light to accentuate the repetitive geometric rhombus pattern commonly found in Thai motifs. The top of the tree also contained strings of dotted LEDs and came down to an artificial and temporary circular colonnade to further form a semi-circle tent, creating a festive mood. The exhibition board next to the Christmas tree claimed that the Christmas tree and the LED decorations consumed electricity generated from the solar panels installed on the roof of ICONSIAM. As a result, visitors indulged in the experience without the guilt of unsustainable power consumption. Visitors become social role models by consuming through sustainable initiatives and promoting sustainability. This tree can be seen in Figure 4.46 below.



Figure 4.46 Krathong Christmas Tree at ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

²⁶ a Thai national festival that pays tribute to the goddess of the river. On the day of this festival, people go to rivers, canals, and lakes to float an object called a Krathong, a small vessel filled with flowers, folded banana leaves, and candles, into the water as a form of thanksgiving and prayer

This Christmas tree again juxtaposes heritage with modernity and Thailand with the West. The heritage derived from Krathong and solar electricity constitutes a modern aspect of the current world. The Loy Krathong Festival, in combination with Christmas, also combined a Thai festival and a Western celebration into a new ritual that is unique to this Utopolis and is not celebrated elsewhere. The amalgamation of the West with Thai heritage in the Christmas tree reiterates again the decision to term the incorporation of Thai heritage into the design of luxury retail development as heritagisation rather than re-orientalising. A developer can combine elements from the West with their local culture to create a new design that elevates the experience for visitors and makes the development even more luxurious.



Figure 4.47 Krathong Exhibition at ICONLUXE
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

The Loy Krathong festival in 2022 coincided with the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Annual Ministerial Meeting hosted by Thailand. ICONSIAM also combined the APEC Meeting with the Loy Krathong Festival by hosting an exhibition of artificial Krathong installations designed by APEC members right in the middle of the boulevard of luxury brands inside ICONLUX, as seen in the left image of Figure 4.47 above. ICONSIAM created a golden stand and the base for each Krathong and each country had to fill the top of each Krathong with a design that symbolises their

country. One of the members of APEC is Russia, and out of all the vast Russian icons to use, such as Russian dolls, orthodox churches, or even Kokoshnik tiaras and Faberge eggs, to befit the luxury of ICONLUXE, the Russians decided to decorate the Krathong with a cargo ship filled with bundles of wheat. Under the ship, the Russians placed a sturgeon with a tin of caviar. The Russians claimed to use the cargo ship with wheat and caviar to represent Russia's significant role in world food production. The Russian Krathong can be viewed in the right image of Figure 4.47.

The Krathong by Russia again portrayed the authoritative nature hidden within the retail space. The year 2022 also coincided with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The invasion led to a global food crisis due to Ukraine's inability to export its grains and the trade embargo on Russia, but the Russians still had the audacity to design a Krathong, an auspicious object in Thai culture that represents gratitude, harvest and abundance, with a design that contradicted these values in a Thai festival.²⁷ As a researcher, I could not neglect the sad irony of the design of this Krathong and the insensitivity of the Russians to the global situation, where a country that was supposed to represent the breadbasket of the world actually instigated and caused a global food crisis. This disregard of the world's reality outside development for the perpetually festive and happy nature of Utopolis again highlights the problematic authoritative nature of the Utopia hidden within, similar to the entrance of the bathroom with the 'Happiness of the South' mural.

Going back to the power of the LED lights for festive decorations, the signage also claimed that the same technology would be used for the Chinese New Year celebration, approximately two months after Loy Krathong. For the Chinese New Year celebration, ICONSIAM intelligently adapted the structures and layout of the Loy Krathong and Christmas by replacing the Christmas tree with a tall, translucent, pink five-tiered Chinese pagoda that heavenly glowed with internal lighting. Each point of the tiered roof was also hung with a red Chinese lantern. Strings of Chinese lanterns were also hung from the lowest tiered roof to a colonnade that was originally used to hang strings of LED lighting for the Christmas tree. Moreover, ICONSIAM placed a Chinese roof over this colonnade to refresh the structure for visitors. In River Park, where the research noted a lack of trees, ICONSIAM designed artificial Chinese willow trees with pink LED bulbs that replaced the leaves. The pink bulb leaves also contained similarities to the plum blossom, another Chinese

²⁷ This statement does not reflect the political view of the developer, the overall Thai people, or the Thai nation, but that of the researcher. As a national host, Thailand may have to diplomatically host Russia, and ICONSIAM, as a private entity, may also need to comply with the government of Thailand and other diplomatic protocols.

symbol. The design of this event also combined retro-heritagisation with heritage-copying. The Chinese lanterns represent heritage-copying. On the other hand, ICONSIAM may have imitated the exact form of the Chinese pagoda and the willow tree, but it incorporated the LED light, a modern innovation, to create an original design and experience. As a result of all of these figures from the pagodas, lanterns and trees that all glowed, ICONSIAM created an out-of-this-world paradise garden for people to experience special moments, an ethereal event for the attainment of luxury, similar to the golden rice field for the Thai New Year. An image of this heavenly Chinese New Year garden at River Park can be viewed in Figure 4.48 below.



Figure 4.48 Chinese New Year at ICONSIAM
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In parallel to ICONSIAM, Central Ayutthaya also created special fantastical scenes for the creation of special moments by making original designs for their events and seasonal decorations. During the first observation, Central Ayutthaya organised an event in the main entrance hall for the launch of a Thai movie based on a popular Thai period TV drama set during the reign of King Narai in Ayutthaya, which was a major hit in Thailand a few years prior to this event. Central had many booths featuring traditional foods and products. The booths were roofed with traditional Thai gables draped with Thai textiles, creating a sense of a temporary traditional Thai village similar to

the permanent Ploen Pranakorn Hall. Central had specially designed and commissioned frames with Thai gables that could be assembled into booths when required. Once a booth was assembled, Central hung fabrics with Thai patterns over the roof of some of these frame structures. By not hanging textiles on every booth, Central created more open spaces and made the marketplace appear less packed. Moreover, for this particular event, visitors were also encouraged to purchase and wear Thai national costumes to become ideal Thai citizens who supported and promoted Thai culture. The temporal Thai village can be seen in Figure 4.49.



Figure 4.49 Temporary Thai Village for an Event at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From viewing Figure 4.49, one may question the luxuriousness of the event in comparison to previous events hosted by ICONSIAM. However, it must be remembered again that Central Ayutthaya represents a retail development in the province that possesses a different space for their events. The budget may also differ. Moreover, as mentioned in the literature review, people have different perceptions and standards when it comes to luxury. Central actually had to make a special design for a booth by incorporating Thai heritage, and this booth represents a noteworthy effort by Central in elevating and uplifting what would be a common marketplace with standardised booths that visitors could see in any other marketplace. A marketplace that belongs

exclusively to Central Ayutthaya for people to experience and feel more special than going to competitors' fairs and markets.

In regard to the idea of ethereal events where a developer can create temporary heavenly scenery that is beyond reality for people to enjoy, this can be seen with the Loy Krathong festival and Chinese New Year. Although Central has no access to rivers or canals, Central decided to host the Loy Krathong Festival at the outdoor red brick plaza of the side entrance with the pond. At this pond, Central inflated a giant balloon behind the bridge to represent the full moon, the celestial body that dictates the day of Loy Krathong every year. In the centre of the pond, Central enlarged a crimson Krathong radiating with LED lighting as an installation. Next to the crimson Krathong, Central placed a miniature white pagoda, one of the symbols of Ayutthaya. The white pagoda appeared to float above the water, a view not usually seen in Thai temples. With just three temporary design features, Central created a set design that often fosters escapist moments. However, beyond the conventional escape to an exotic land, the design also felt celestial, as the scenery portrayed elements reminiscent of myths or divine texts, offering an escape to a sacred motherland instead. This special scenery from Loy Krathong can be seen in the left image of Figure 4.50 below.



Figure 4.50 Loy Krathong (Left) and Chinese New Year (Right) at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen 2022; Sombunjaroen 2023)

Upon closer inspection of the pagoda used for the Loy Krathong, the pagoda reflected the scars of war, like the red brick square. Most pagodas in Thailand are gold, and while some white pagodas exist, they have other decorations on them, rather than being left plain like this Loy Krathong Pagoda. Moreover, Central intentionally chose to show signs of distress with fading white to reveal paint that resembled red bricks underneath. A non-Thai person might think that the pagoda is old or weathered, but in reality, especially in a temple in the capital or former capital, a pagoda would be routinely restored rather than left to desolation, unlike ruins caused by war. This may be done to maintain material consistency with the overall environment of this red brick square, but Central again played on the questionable romanticisation of warfare.

In the right image of Figure 4.50 on the previous page, Central also created another fantastical scene for the Chinese New Year. As the Chinese zodiac for 2023 was the rabbit, Central made oversized rabbit dolls with red fabric. This fabric actually contained a golden print of a traditional pattern seen on Thai silk with a golden brocade.²⁸ Although these rabbit dolls were not made from authentic golden brocade silk, they possessed a reference to a Thai luxury once reserved for royalties to become 'Royal Silk Bunnies'. These rabbit dolls, like the Thai gable booth, also represented a unique design that Central had to create for the attainment of a special experience. Around the bunny dolls during the Chinese New Year, Central also created gigantic artificial red peonies, a flower in Chinese motif, for people to enjoy. Moreover, not seen in the right image of Figure 4.53, Central also placed a one-storey Chinese pagoda with the image of the Chinese deity Guan Yin, the goddess of mercy. As a result, Central again encouraged people to pray and donate money to charity, an ideal behaviour like the wearing of traditional Thai outfits. Finally, like all the previously discussed events, the festivity for the Chinese New Year also extended beyond the actual days of celebration in the lunar calendar, further validating the idea of perpetual celebration. Apart from the notion of perpetual celebration, the observation also led to one more concept related to the promotion of local luxuries and the local population.

4.7 The Promotion of Local Luxuries and Local People

One more quintessential observation was made regarding the role of luxury retail development in promoting local people and local crafts. This was initially observed in the example of ICONSIAM's

²⁸ See Figure 1.7 for the original authentic Thai silk with golden brocade

Sooksiam, discussed prior. However, ICONSIAM overall excelled at advocating local people and crafts, and this can be observed in various other touchpoints aside from Sooksiam.

ICONSIAM events also promoted Thai people of significance. For example, during the Thai New Year, the hottest time of the year in Thailand, Thai people celebrated by splashing water at one another to cool down from the heat. However, for the observation in April 2022, the splashing of water did not happen due to restrictions from the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result of this restriction, ICONSIAM replaced the water festival with a playground to fly kites next to the golden rice field, because kite flying was another summer pastime of Thais in the past. On the left side of Figure 4.51 below, ICONSIAM chose to feature a traditional yellow-and-black kite from the south of Thailand called the ‘Wongduan’ kite, made by a master craftsman. Next to the kite, ICONSIAM also featured a poster that functions similarly to an exhibition board to tell the name of the kite, the region, the unique characteristics of the kite, and the profile of the master craftsman for this kite, with a quotation from this craftsman. The centre image in Figure 4.51 shows the poster with information about the kite and the craftsman. Therefore, ICONSIAM also chose to promote a Thai individual related to Thai heritage; it did not create just an ethereal enjoyment space but also an educational space for visitors to learn about Thai culture.

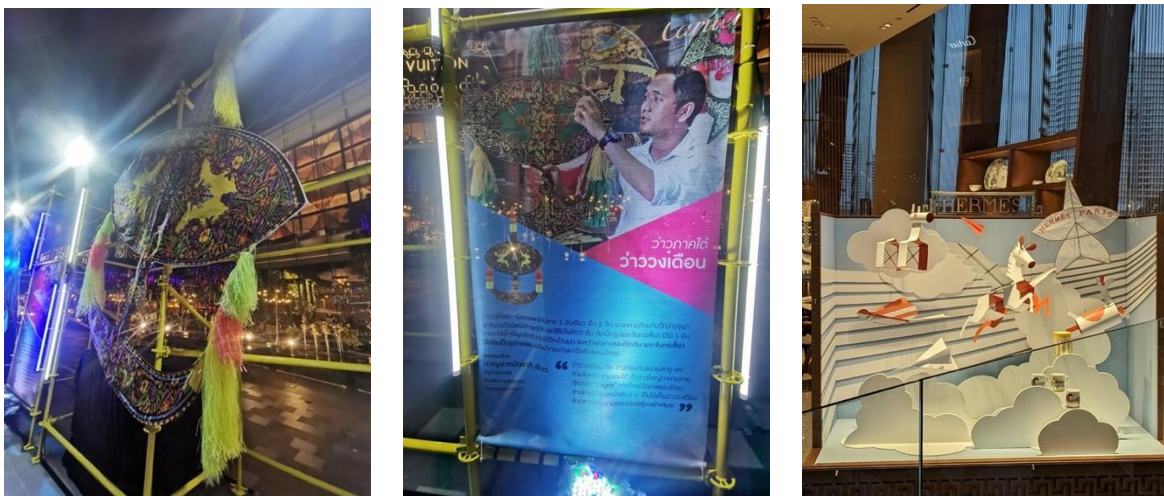


Figure 4.51 Traditional Thai Kites

(Sombunjaroen, 2022; Sombunjaroen, 2022; Sombunjaroen, 2023)

About one year after this kite playground, during the final observation, which took place about two weeks before the Thai New Year in 2023, the Hermès store in ICONLUXE featured a window with clouds, paper aeroplanes and a kite. This kite was also in the shape of a traditional Thai kite. There was no clear direct evidence that the promotion of the traditional kite the year before led to Hermès picking up a Thai kite for its window display the year after, but ICONSIAM provided a

platform that promoted the Thai kite, and the kite's association with a luxury retail development, such as ICONSIAM, also improved its image. This association and the improved image also increased the chance of being used elsewhere or even picked up by another luxury brand. During this final observation, there was a small, pleasant sense of joy from national pride invoked by seeing the Thai kite in the window of Hermès. The Hermès window display can be seen in the right image of Figure 4.51.



Figure 4.52 Thai Textile Fashion at ICONCRAFT
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

For the advocacy of local craftsmen and their crafts, ICONSIAM has also dedicated a two-storey space called ICONCRAFT (D+6). ICONCRAFT features traditional Thai crafts seen in Sooksiam but also products by new generations of artists and artisans who are creatively modernising their crafts for the present day. For instance, ICONCRAFT sells pieces of Thai silk that Thai people would need to drape around the body as garments in the traditional Thai way, but it also features modern-day apparel made with Thai textiles. For an event called “Thai Textile Heroes,” ICONCRAFT even invited contemporary Thai designers to collaborate and work with traditional Thai textile weavers to come up with a new design. Dresses, suits, jackets and trousers for both women and men became emblazoned with traditional Thai textiles, including silk, batik and indigo dye. A curatorial display of these special collaborations can be seen in Figure 4.52 above.

Apart from Thai silk, ICONSIAM also displayed traditional Benjarong with a maximal golden and colourful pattern next to the reinterpreted Benjarong with a minimalised design with less colour and less coverage of the golden pattern on the porcelain. It also featured traditional gold jewellery that should be worn with Thai outfits, like a bejewelled and gold belt that tightens and holds up a draped piece of silk that acts as a skirt. In contrast to this traditional belt, ICONSIAM also showcases costume jewellery with Thai designs that can be worn on a daily basis. Throughout the space of ICONCRAFT, there were also exhibition boards to tell the stories of the various artisans. In essence, ICONCRAFT represents a permanent space with temporary showcases that highlight a particular category of craftsmen at the time.

The promotion of local Thai people does not just end with ICONCRAFT, on the restaurant floor with the fantastic scenery of the rice field. ICONSIAM also installed interactive screens, similar to a museum, for people to learn about topics related to Thai rice. On one of these screens, ICONSIAM featured several Thai individuals who contributed to the Thai rice industry. Visitors can touch each person to read about their life stories and achievements. The discussed screen can be seen in Figure 4.53 below.

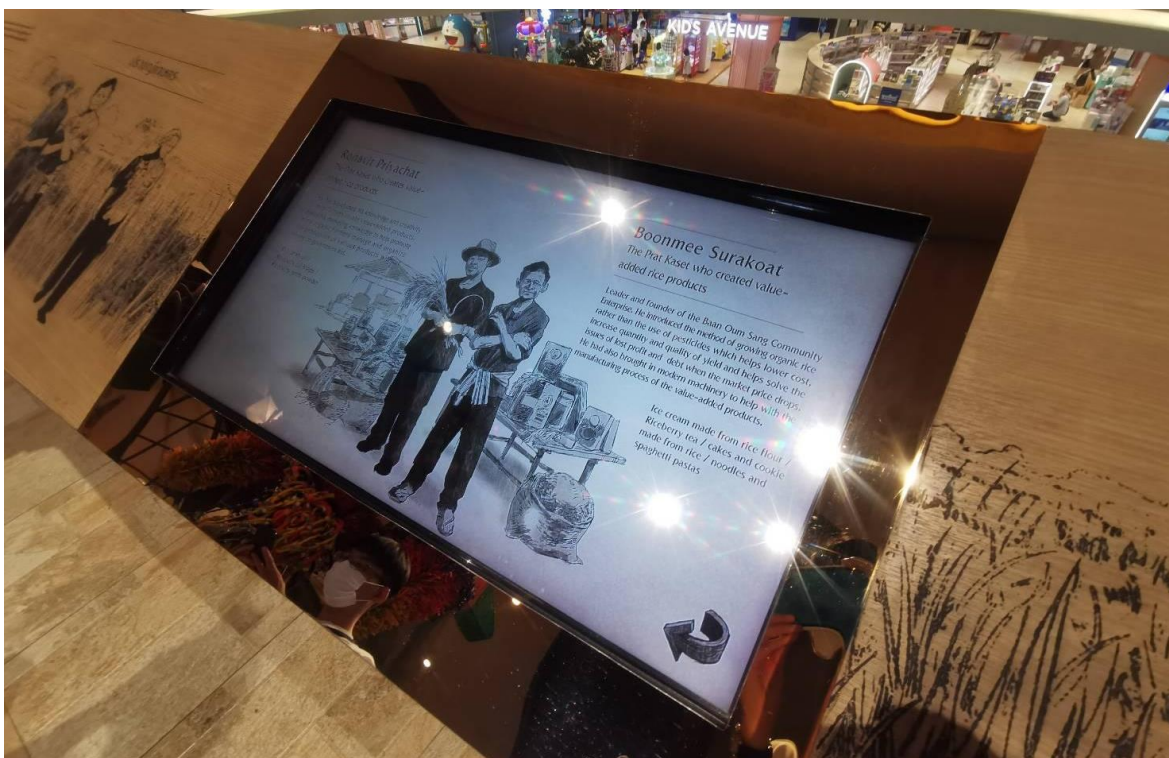


Figure 4.53 Interactive Screen on the Restaurant Floor Displaying Thai Individuals
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

The developer has allowed visitors to learn about other Thai individuals who also deserve recognition beyond the monarchs, noblemen and prime ministers taught in the history textbook. Other individuals who have contributed to their nation could also become deified and immortalised with their stories of achievement and live within the Utopolis of luxury retail development. Thus, heritagisation has also allowed local luxuries and individuals to thrive in luxury retail space development, a space once reserved for foreign luxuries in Thailand. The luxury retail development also becomes more egalitarian in this way. Central Ayutthaya should learn from ICONSIAM regarding the advocacy of local people and their stories, too.

Throughout the year-long observation at Central Ayutthaya, no features could be seen that boasted stories of local Thai individuals, especially of people in Ayutthaya. During the fourth observation, Central had a temporary semi-outdoor exhibition for Siamese Chintz underneath the entrance gateway inside the renovated terrace house that led to the red brick public square of the subsidiary entrance. For this exhibition, Central created a wooden square structural frame from which pieces of Chintz were hung from. However, Central did not procure authentic traditional Siamese Chintz, but got the traditional Chintz industrially printed on a white fabric instead. Central also placed an exhibition board with the headline “Example of Thai Textile, Heritage of Amazing Ayutthaya” and its historical information underneath. This Siamese Chintz exhibition can be seen in Figure 4.54.



Figure 4.54 Siamese Chintz Exhibition at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

This exhibition contained several problems arising from the issue that Central should not have done an exhibition on a Siamese Chintz, neither wholeheartedly nor without the respect that the craft deserves. First, this exhibition should have been inside and at a more prime location. It should not have been outside. Even underneath the terrace house, the area contained no doors to protect the exhibition from rain during a heavy storm. Next to the exhibition, there was even a sign on the floor telling visitors not to park their motorcycles at this location. Moreover, Central could have collaborated with Thai artisans who are still making Siamese Chintz in modern times and procured authentic Siamese Chintz for the exhibition. It could even have provided an opportunity for Siamese Chintz artisans to sell their fabric to visitors. The stories of these Thai artisans should have and could have been promoted, too. Heritage-copying of the Siamese Chintz also created a low-grade printed fabric without the vivid and vivacious colour that real Siamese Chintz possesses. For visitors to be interested in the exhibition, the object of the exhibition should also be of quality to attract and ignite curiosity to learn more. In the sad turn of events for these artificial Siamese Chintz, Central took this exhibition out and used these pieces of fake Chintz to roof the booths of an Ayutthaya textile fair at the main entrance hall, as witnessed during the fifth observation. Central should play a role in honouring local people, especially the residents of Ayutthaya, in their developments, too, like ICONSIAM. Central should not fall into Marin's (1984) and Harvey's (2000) criticism on the use of culture just for a commercial purpose that turns a space into an empty shell; the luxury retail development could counter this with the advocacy from authentic Thai luxuries and local individuals of significance. Advocacy for local people and luxuries represents the final major idea induced from observations of the two case studies. This idea of promoting local people is also very important in alleviating Baudrillard's (1998) critique on heroes of consumption. Luxury retail developments usually feature heroes of consumption, such as models and celebrities attending events or appearing in advertisements for international brands, or influencers creating content on the experiences offered. However, in the case of luxury retail developments that invoke local heritage, local heroes beyond the conventional heroes of consumption can also be promoted within these developments. The promotion of local heroes still perpetuates consumption, but the money goes towards the local communities. This research now goes into a summary of the Firstspace and the relevant ideas that will be used for the social construction of the Thirdspace and the Fourthspace.

4.8 The Firstspace's Revelation of the Utopolis

Throughout this chapter, the findings represent induced iterated data from observations between the two case studies, with supporting data from focus groups. From these observations, the

research has established two types of heritagisation: 1) Heritage-copying and 2) Retro-heritagisation. These two heritagisation techniques go hand in hand with one another to create a balance between the visibility of heritage in the modern luxury retail development. In Heritage-copying, the developer has to imitate the true likeness of the heritage as much as possible for instant cultural recognition. For luxury retail development, it is even more than just heritage-copying but idealised heritage-copying where the developer creates the best version of the original beyond true likeness. On the other hand, in retro-heritagisation, the developers adapt the invoked heritage into the modern-day spatial context as original creations for the attainment of luxury. For the adaptation of heritage, developers extract the physical appearance of the heritage into the space as a design feature. Some design features don't just manifest the explicit external appearance of heritage but also convey the internal cultural meaning. Furthermore, the developer can even adapt historical functions for contemporary lifestyle in luxury retail development. Lastly, retro-heritagisation permits the existence of heritage in a myriad of tangible features from exterior construction to interior design, such as walls, columns, ceilings, temporary decorations and even seasonal events. These spaces to feature heritage also come with limitations and these limitations resulted in the luxury retail development possessing a likeness to a city imbued with fantastical ideal sceneries.

The resemblances to the city derive from three main factors: 1) urban planning; 2) cultural exchange; and 3) dynamism. The first factor involves the lease of spaces and the shared responsibility by various stakeholders in completing the design of the luxury retail development together that make the process similar to urban planning. The resemblance to urban planning arises from the developer's direct authority in designing the public spaces from the shopping passages, bathrooms, public squares, and immersive culturally themed attraction. On the other hand, the tenants (who lease spaces from the developer) produce their own designs that comply with the developer's design concept in varying degrees. The lease of spaces also gave the luxury retail development the appearance of a city because of the variety of indulgences and civic offerings other than retail stores and restaurants. ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya have altogether revealed convention halls, exhibition spaces, a government office, hotels, condominiums, banks and even hospital wellness.

The next two metropolitan factors correlate with Backes' (1997) claims of luxury retail development as a cultural exchange and a dynamic space. For the idea of cultural exchange, both case studies showcase an amalgamation of multiple cultures despite their focus on Thai heritage,

from the international name department stores to the plethora of Thai and international cuisines to local and imported merchandises. More importantly, the heritagisation process can also entail the incorporation of Thai heritage with foreign cultures. This can be seen in the employment of foreign designers or techniques to create new designs. The stores of international brands that attempted to fuse their foreign identities with Thai cultural heritage also showcase examples of multicultural heritagisation. Cultural amalgamation also makes the retail space dynamic by making it come alive with new ideas. Another dynamic aspect revolves around the notion of constant change. One must not think of a luxury retail development as a permanent static space, but rather as a dynamic space where many components change throughout the year, from temporary events and seasonal celebrations to non-permanent exhibitions. Stores that seem permanent may also change within a year. Thus, ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya possess dynamism similar to a city that also constantly changes and evolves with time. They are also constantly building new spaces, such as hotels. Some design features discussed in this chapter's findings are actually not permanent but temporary.

The metropolitan spatiality becomes etherealised when developers imbue the design features with their ideal heritage. Examples of ideal include the scenes of abundance and nature at its prime. Apart from nature existing in a state of constant best like eternal blossom and golden rice ready for harvest, the retail space is also under perpetual celebrations with celebratory decorations, lightings, lanterns and elongated festivities. Ideal heritage also means the selection of the best cultural objects once reserved for the social elites in the past as inspirations to create design features for the people of today to access and experience. Through the created experience, the visitors may also have to behave in certain ideal manners, such as making good merits through prayers and donations, dressing up in traditional Thai outfits or even learning about Thai crafts and craftsmen. In ICONSIAM, Thai people of significance are also featured in permanent and temporary design features, such as the exhibition panel on Thai rice farmers and the poster of the Thai kite master craftsman during the Thai New Year festival. Apart from distinguished humans, both case studies also bestowed their realms with local divine creatures from angels, Nagas, elephants, mythical swans and so forth. The space has become so ideal that it has also become a safe sanctuary for people to get their pandemic vaccines or park their cars during a flood.

When combining all the aspects together, one starts to see the scenery of the Utopolis. This utopian city constitutes a sanctuary of natural paradise inhabited by highly esteemed local

individuals and spiritual creatures who live under constant celebration and are enriched with worldly material goods, such as traditional houses and the finest crafts. Moreover, this scenery comes out even more ethereal because of the spatial limitations of luxury retail development, with its floating hanging fixtures and semi-transparent installations that give a sense of a fantastical spirit city appearing in the physical tangible reality, the Firstspace. Thus, the developer actually induced many ideals that took the visitors away from the real world, like the portal to the Utopolis. Even the entrances to the bathrooms become magical tunnels for visitors to escape a part of the Utopian city. The seasonal events and decorations also greatly play a role in promoting escapism from reality to the Utopolis. Lastly and the most intriguing of all, anyone can just come to the luxury retail development to escape from their reality to the Utopian scenery discussed above.

Despite the accessibility to scenery of a blessed semi-divine city, Firstspace already reveals an authoritative force that lurks within the luxury retail development. Coleman (2014) discussed one of the Utopia's potential abilities to alleviate cultural amnesia and the heritagisation process has served this purpose. However, it also exacerbates the amnesia for life's sufferings, the reality outside retail developments. This can be seen in the entrance of the bathroom depicting southern Thailand and the Krathong designed by Russia. Upon deeper thought and analysis, another disturbing authority within the luxury retail development lies the dominance of local elitism. The heritagisation process may have allowed Thai luxuries to thrive and to be seen in a space conventionally restricted to international luxuries, but the majority of these luxuries historically belonged to the Thai social elites such as royalty, nobility or the Sangha (the Buddhist clergy). For instance, looking aside whether heritage-copied or retro-heritagisation, only royalties, aristocrats or people of considerable wealth would have owned the two-storey traditional Thai houses. Many of the common people would have lived in one-storey structures. Many of the luxury goods from golden objects, fine textiles, porcelain and intricate flower offerings would also have been mainly consumed by the royal court or the Sangha. The dominance of the elites goes in line with criticism of the elite's control over cultural heritage production, as argued by Walsh (1992), Anderson (2006) and Carter et al. (2020). For instance, the utilisation of the grand architecture and fine luxuries once reserved for the lucky few may allow anyone to access these luxuries, live in an idealised world, and make these luxuries more democratic. Nevertheless, the developer should not impose the realm of the rich on everyone and forget the rest of society in their design. Some of the best examples of design features with heritage observed in this chapter are actually common day items that have been elevated up, such as the earthen jars once found in every Thai house in the past and now used in ICONSIAM's bathrooms. The water buffalo once used by

farmers to plough the rice field, seen as retro-water buffalo in both case studies, also received positive praise from both focus groups and triumphed over the majestic elephants. To make luxury retail development even more egalitarian, more can be done in promoting the common day cultural objects to the world of luxury. Thai luxuries don't have to just come from palaces and temples.

The dominance of the elites also comes with the problem of enforcing certain social norms and values by collectively pressuring people to partake in a certain activity, such as the donation of money in front of the Buddha images for the attainment of good merits. The donation of money doesn't necessarily represent a bad action, but in a society that values charity and compassion, people sometimes absurdly donate beyond their means. An example of this phenomenon revealed itself in November 2023, when news broke about the arrest of an organised group of Chinese beggars in Bangkok who made at least 10,000 Baht (approx. 225 GBP) per day from the donation of Thai people (Petpailin, 2023), while the average salary for a person with a university degree was about 27,000 Baht per month in 2023 (Estrellado, 2023). This incident was in Bangkok overall, but in a capitalist space such as the retail development that embodies a city, certain cultural norms and values become much more tangibly visible and the space enforces these values onto the visitors. I have imagined this context in other cultural settings, and absurdity came with the imagination. For instance, it sounds bizarre if a shopping mall in Rome fills itself with holy crosses, images of the Virgin Mary and holy relics to promote donation for the Catholic Church. Back to Thailand, all of the paragraphs in the final section of this chapter represent findings from the observations alone, and the research has summarised the main key ideas discussed in this section as discovery of the Firstspace in the form of Table 4.9 on the next page:

Firstspace		
Heritagisation	Heritage Copying	Partially taking a form of a heritage Conveying cultural meanings Reinterpretation of Function
	Retro-Heritagisation	
Utopolis	The City	Urban Planning through the Lease of Space Cultural Exchange Dynamism Abundance Best Cultural Objects Nature at its Prime Divine Creatures Local Individuals of Significance Sanctuary Constant Celebration
	The Utopia	
Miscellaneous	Authoritative Force	Oblivion of Reality Dominance of the Elite Enforcement of Ideals, Values and Norms

Table 4.9 Key Ideas from the Firstspace
(Sombunjaroen, 2024)

The key ideas in Table 4.9 on the previous page represent deconstructed bricks from the Firstspace that this research will use in Chapter 6 to socially construct the Heterotopia and the Utopolis. As established in Figure 4.1, the social construction of the heterotopia and the Utopolis also requires idea bricks from the Secondspace, iterated data from people who developed the space. Hence, the research now moves on from the Firstspace to the Secondspace, the main focus of Chapter 5, the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Analysis and Findings of the Secondspace

Chapter 5 focuses on the analysis of data from the in-depth interviews of both case studies through iterations into key findings to socially construct the Secondspace, the ideal realm of the developers. Through social construction, noteworthy non-repeated data from the interview and data from documentation are also utilised if deemed necessary. The research also analyses the data from the focus group, the consumer, to validate the ideal of the developer. In addition, the consumer may also have disparate views of the producer of the space. Therefore, this chapter socially constructs the Secondspace with data from in-depth interviews, focus groups and documentations, as emphasised in yellow in the theoretical framework in Figure 5.1 below. In the same manner as in Figure 4.1, the light yellow constitutes the data that produces the Secondspace, the darker yellow.

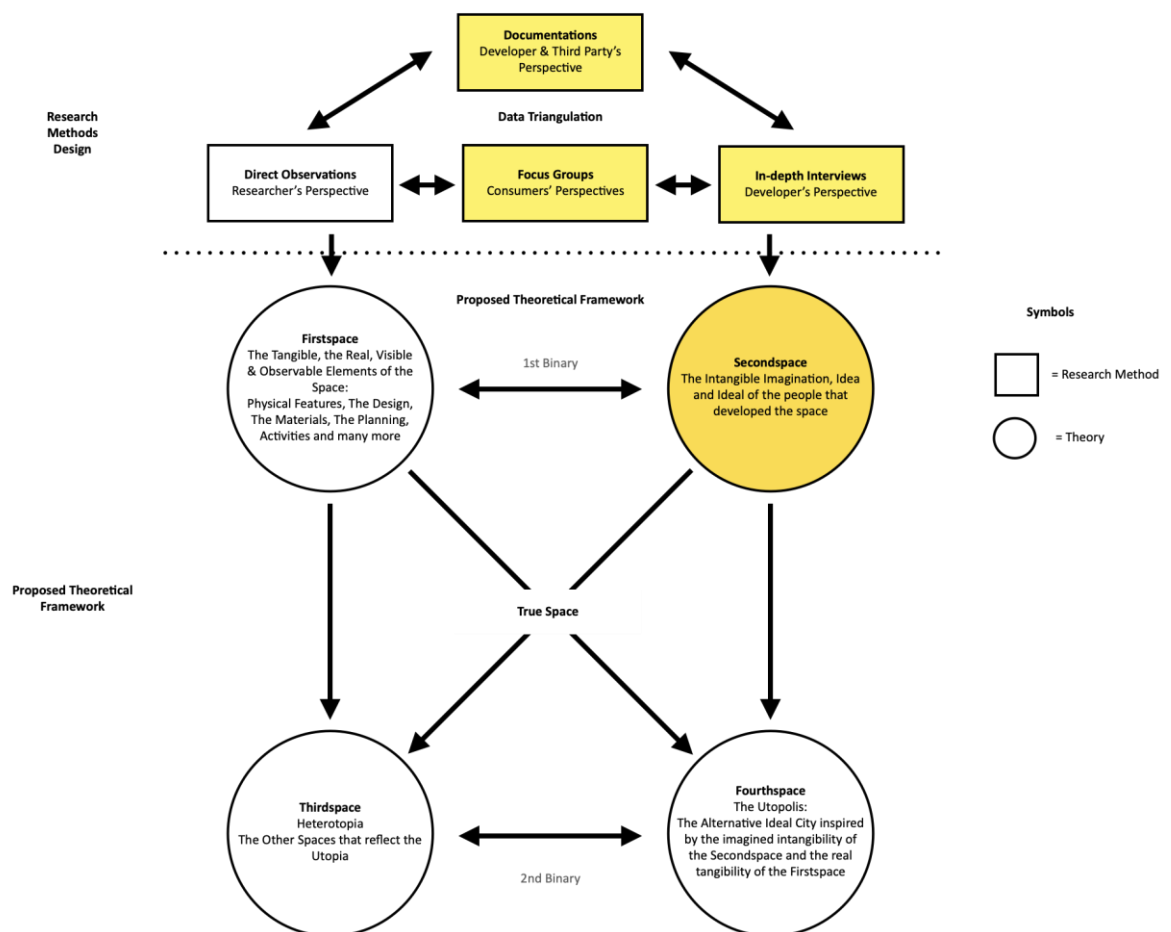


Figure 5.1 Chapter 5's Focus on the Proposed Theoretical Framework (Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Through the analyses of iterated data, many themes relating to heritagisation arose and this chapter begins with the theme of the Imagination of Modern Heritage.

5.1 The Imagination of Modern Heritage

In correlation with the literature review's definition of heritagisation, the invocation of the past for the modern-day context, the developers incorporated heritage, not to create an escapist space into the past. The heritagisation process was based on an ideal to re-imagine the past in a new way for present-day retail development. This action also invertedly resulted in a new world based on the past from the creative desire of the developer. Consumers also expect modern designs through heritagisation from the developer, and this research has termed this ideal behind the heritagisation process "*the Imagination of Modern Heritage*," the first main theme from the inductive analysis of quotations by both developers and consumers regarding time. This theme comprises two subthemes: 1) Retail Development as a Modern Space and 2) The Imagined Past in the Present.

5.1.1 Retail Development as a Modern Space

Firstly, the research has revealed that the luxury retail development still represents a space that idealises modernity. Developers of both case studies desired a space housed by modern-day architecture with elements that constantly have to change to be updated with the times. Moreover, developers want people to come to luxury retail developments so that they can update themselves on the latest trends. At the end of the day, retail development still has to represent modernity by being updated with the times in the eyes of both the developers and the consumers. A list of selected quotes and codes from the data analysis that constitute the subtheme of Retail Development as Modern Space can be seen in Table 5.1 below, while the full analysis table can be found in Appendix G.

Thematic Analysis with Developers for the Subtheme of Retail Development as a Modern Space

Case Study	Quotations (Participant Code)	Code	List of Codes and Key Phrases Related to the Code
Case Study 1: ICONSIAM	Even... brands that are <i>fast-changing trends, we must also have these brands in as quickly as possible...</i> So, a retail development is also <i>fast-changing because trends</i> come and go very quickly, but <i>a retail development must be updated on new trends all the time.</i> (IS2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the Present with Trends - Dynamic (Fast-Changing) 	Dynamic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated all the time - Fast-Changing - Constant Changes - Always Changing - Changes during and after development In the Present with Trends

Case Study	Quotations (Participant Code)	Code	List of Codes and Key Phrases Related to the Code
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must have brands and change because of trends - Place to see new trends - Updating on trends - Key purpose of a retail development <p>Modern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A retail development has to be modern - Modern for consumers - Modernity in design and architecture
	Any retail building goes through <u>constant changes</u> and adaptations to <u>suit the period and season.</u> (IS7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamic (Constant change) 	
	A shopping mall is also a place where people go to <u>see new trends, so it has to be modern.</u> (IS14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the Present with Trends - Modern 	
	There's <u>modernity</u> in ICONSIAM in terms of <u>architecture</u> , featuring key anchor tenants such as <u>luxury brands.</u> (IS11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern (Architecture) 	
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya	For <u>locals</u> , they don't really care as they know and they are accustomed to real historical sites close by, but if we want to attract locals too, we have to <u>turn their content into something modern</u> for them. (CA2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern (for locals) 	
	We want our customers to clearly see when they are exploring, <u>updating on trends</u> , and doing their shopping, which are the <u>key purposes of customers' trips to retail development.</u> (CA3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the Present with Trends 	
	Mostly, the <u>design was always changing during the construction</u> ; things are not always as we planned. In the end, there were many changes during the process, as the <u>retail industry is quite dynamic. Trends also change all the time.</u> (CA4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamic (Constant change) - In the Present with Trends 	

Case Study	Quotations (Participant Code)	Code	List of Codes and Key Phrases Related to the Code
	If we had gone with traditional architecture, it wouldn't have been suited for the <i>context of a retail development</i> , so the Thai identity of Ayutthaya is selected to be told in a <i>modern design</i> . (CA5)	- Modern (Design)	

Table 5.1 Developer Ideal for Retail Development as a Modern Space
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

From in-depth interviews, it can be seen that, in the minds of the developers, they still consider a retail development a modern-day space, despite the incorporation of the past into the design. They still see the architecture created with heritage as modern because the past has to be transformed into a modern design for present-day shoppers. Developers also believe that consumers expect retail space to be modern. One of the key purposes of retail development for consumers is to become a destination to see and update on new trends. In order to be on trend, the developer also has to find new brands and product offerings for their space and lead constant changes within the space of retail development. Changes happen all the time before a retail development is opened to the public and after the grand opening. Modernity, trends and dynamism are also characteristics of a city. In regards to the developers' belief in the need to create a modern space for consumers, consumers also recognise the modernity of retail development. Participant 6 of Case Study 1 also revealed the expectation for modernity in the evaluation of Sooksiam by stating,

*"I also think a lot of potential is in SOOKSIAM, on the upper ground floor, where there's an amulet zone that's **super traditional Thai** and targets Thai people. If it wasn't here, it's **not different from roadside amulet shops selling** on the ground. This can be turned into a zone for 'Sai Mu' (superstition worshipping) in **modern style**, which is widely popular now. I saw the shop Harmenstone selling Sai Mu sacred item bracelets."*

This statement reveals the pitfall of heritage-copying in a retail development and the expectation for modernity in such a retail development. Participant 6 doesn't want to purchase traditional amulets that can be bought elsewhere, but she wants to consume modernised good luck charms

that are currently in trend and can be incorporated with contemporary style. Participant 5 of Case Study 2 also mentioned,

*“Retail developments of the **present days**, they have to think **10-20 years ahead** so that they **won’t be out of style too soon.**”*

This participant showed an understanding on the consumer’s side that retail development represents contemporary times, and moreover, it should not become a space that is out of trend. During the discussion about the golden Phan Phum in the entrance hall of Central Ayutthaya, Participant 4 also argued that,

*“I think if Central had done the **traditional Phan Phum design**, it **would not have matched the retail development.** What they did makes it **light and easy on the eyes.**”*

This opinion also shows the denotation of modernity that comes with retail development in the consumer’s eyes. As a result, in designing a retail development, other developers should also never forget the modernity that exists in the minds of consumers.

5.1.2 The Imagined Past in the Present

The mindset of retail development as a modern space in congruence with the heritagisation process also forces the developer to **imagine the past in the present**, the second subtheme. The heritagisation process results in a retail development that not only represents modernity but also juxtaposes the past. Both the developers and the consumers also used two polarising terms between the past and modernity to describe the two case studies. This fusion of time also results in the necessity to re-imagine the past for the modern day, and the developers and consumers also described this reimagination as never-before-seen heritage. Quotes reflecting this subtheme and their codes can be seen in Table 5.2 on the next page.

Thematic Analysis with Developers for the Imagined Past in the Present

Case Study	Quotations (Participant Code)	Code	List of Codes and key phrases related to the Code
Case Study 1: ICONSIAM	We wanted <i>the new Thainess</i> , not the <i>old Thainess</i> . We saw it as the <i>'future Thai'</i> . So, the <i>Thai heritage</i> had to be <i>combined with international-ness or something new which had never been done anywhere else before</i> in order to deliver our story of <i>'future Thai'</i> . (IS10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage and Modernity - Unseen Thai Space (new and never been done before) 	<u>Heritage and Modernity</u> Heritage: Ancient, Past, Old, Recognisable, Thai, Thainess, Traditional Modernity: Future, Global, International, New, Modern, Modern Twist, Present Examples of Juxtaposition: Future Thai, Thai Twist, Past to the Present
	For ICONSIAM, we want the design to be <i>recognisable</i> that it is <i>Thai</i> , but with a <i>modern twist</i> . (IS5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage and Modernity - Unseen Thai Space (Twisting the Recognisable) 	<u>Unseen Thai Space</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Something New - Never Been Done Before - Unrecognisable - Unlike other projects/developments - New/Retold Stories
	Thainess should not be <i>ancient Thailand</i> , to make it <i>world-class</i> ... That was the overall mood and tone of the story. <i>Past, Present, ICONSIAM, Global Destination</i> (IS1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage and Modernity - Unseen Thai Space (World-Class, Global Thainess) 	

Case Study	Quotations (Participant Code)	Code	List of Codes and key phrases related to the Code
	<p>There was always a need for connecting what we're doing as a <u>world-class</u> development to the <u>culture and the people of Thailand</u>. So this was a world-class project with world-class tenants, but it was designed in a way that once you stepped on the project, <u>you knew this project was in Thailand</u>. <u>This was not something to look like a project in Tokyo or London or Paris</u>. (IS13)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage and Modernity (Thailand vs. World-Class) - Unseen Thai Space (unlike other world-class projects) 	
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya	<p>We want to modify and create a <u>new Thainess</u>, we <u>don't want to paste traditional elements</u>. So these golden elements that you see here (main façade of Central Ayutthaya) <u>cannot be found in temples or traditional Thai architecture</u>. However, the curves are derived from traditional Thai architecture. (CA1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage and Modernity - Unseen Thai Space (not found in traditional Thai architecture) 	
	<p>We wanted to <u>retell</u> the story of <u>Ayutthaya's prosperous past</u>. All the designs refer to <u>Ayutthaya's prosperity in a modern context</u> with contemporary materials, but when you look at them, you know it's Ayutthaya. It's what we call a <u>Thai twist</u>. (CA5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage and Modernity - Unseen Thai Space (retell the past) 	
	<p>The context we have <u>isn't literally Thai</u>. We extracted ideas from traditional materials, but we turned them to be <u>more international</u>... we use the materials of the temple that are commonly used and seen in Ayutthaya. We turned them into a <u>new</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage and Modernity (Thai vs. International) - Unseen Thai Space (new story, not literal) 	

Case Study	Quotations (Participant Code)	Code	List of Codes and key phrases related to the Code
	<u>story-telling which is more modernised.</u> (CA2)		
	If you see the front of the project from the expressway, we assumed that people <u>would feel the revival of Ayutthaya's former glory</u> and prosperity. This is like bringing the <u>past back to the present.</u> (CA3)	- Heritage and Modernity	

Table 5.2 Developers' Imagination of the Past in the Present
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

From going through the 20 transcripts, developers also often used words such as 'mixed together', 'mixture', 'combination' and 'combined' with the contradictory descriptions between heritage and modernity. Other examples of these contradictions also include 'new Thainess', 'Thailand nowadays', 'heritage to the future', 'Thailand and innovation' and 'modernity and the ancient'. With this contrasting ideal of modernity and heritage, developers are propelling heritage forward into the modern day. This propulsion of heritage does not represent an existing Thai heritage that has existed in contemporary time, but a new and never-before-seen creation for the world, unlike anything before, by the imagination of the developer and beyond cultural stereotypes such as the Thai temples. Consumers also observed the two polarising qualities and expressed how they had never witnessed such a design before in the focus group discussions of both case studies. Selected statements by the consumers regarding the imagined past for the present can be seen in Table 5.3 on the next page.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
This is what you <u>can't find at other retail developments</u> , especially with the river in the background, there's <u>no place like this</u> . It's a <u>mixture of modernity, the ancient</u> , and the river, together creating an <u>interesting combination</u> . (Participant 1)
(ICONSIAM) <u>preserves the old design of Thainess</u> and <u>offers me a new experience</u> that is <u>different from other retail developments</u> . (Participant 3)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
Personally, I appreciate <u>Thainess</u> , from the Thai way of life to Thai art and culture. Central Ayutthaya has <u>applied local Ayutthaya identity</u> , which is very <u>distinguishing and distinctive, to modern design</u> . (Participant 3)
They can design their retail development <u>to</u> be this beautiful, with a <u>perfect blend between Thainess and modernity</u> . It's like minimal Thainess, how can I put this? It is cute, <u>it's not 100% traditional Thai</u> . (Participant 5)

Table 5.3 Consumers' Acknowledgement of the Imagination of the Past in the Present
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Therefore, a developer must not stick to the past and dare to imagine a new heritage for the present day when it comes to designing a luxury retail development with heritage. Consumers recognise the combination of modernity with heritage and how it offers a new unique design or experience.

In combining the subtheme of **Retail Development as a Modern Space** that affiliated retail development with modernity, trends and dynamism with the subtheme of **the Imagined Past in the Present** and the juxtaposition of modernity and heritage in creating an unseen design, the research has formulated the theme of **the Imagination of Modern Heritage**. This theme means that in the heritagisation process, the developer does not take the consumer to the past, nor does the developer take the genuine past in accordance with history to the present. The developer modernises the past with modern ideals to create a newly imagined alternative reality to the current modern world, a world where the cultural amnesia from modernisation does not take place but where heritage becomes adapted to the times and thrives in a modern contextual setting. This leads to the next theme, **the Adaptation of the Past for the Present**.

5.2 The Adaptation of the Past for the Present

As established in the previous theme of ‘the Imagination of Modern Heritage’, in designing a luxury retail development with heritage, the developer must re-imagine heritage into a new creation for the present. From the in-depth interviews, this creation of modernised heritage by the developer relies on two processes: 1) the selection of cultural elements as connectors to the past; and 2) the adaptation of the cultural elements for the present. The first process deals with the inspirations from the past – the what – that the developers chose to invoke. The latter process constitutes the ways – the how – that a developer may take in redesigning heritage in the modern context. These two processes also present subthemes constructed from various codes from iterated data.

5.2.1 The Selection of Cultural Elements as Connectors to the Past

From the long history and vast local heritage of a nation, there are many cultural elements that can be chosen, but there are three main categories of cultural elements that developers handpicked for the design of a luxury retail developer:

- 1) Local Landscape
- 2) Architectural Features
- 3) Cultural Objects

The local landscape involves drawing inspiration from natural and geographical features specific to the city, such as rivers and rice fields. The landscape also comprises plants such as lotuses or the Cassia fistula tree with the golden blossom. Beyond the employment of natural features, developers can also incorporate living beings native to the landscape, such as the Siamese fighting fish and water buffalo. Examples of quotes relating to the local landscape can be seen in Figure 5.4 on the next page, while the full table for the thematic analysis can be found in Appendix H.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
It (the river) also brings this <i>Thainess back to us</i> . In the past, we had to commute with the water. Which was a good thing. Culture also filled both sides of the river, from temples to historic communities. (IS1)
The design is inspired by the <i>lotus leaf</i> , which <i>links to the river and the Thai way of life</i> . (IS9)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
We have <i>rice</i> , boats, <i>water buffalos</i> , chedis, which are <i>the city's context</i> . It's an <i>old story</i> to be told <i>in a new way</i> . It's Ayutthaya's story being told in the <i>present-day context</i> . (CA2)
We did the initial brief on what we found from the research on what <i>Ayutthaya is famous for</i> , such as Thai dessert, fruit, <i>rice field</i> , traditional Thai house, boat, <i>canal</i> ... (CA4)

Table 5.4 Quotes Related to the Cultural Landscape
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The two quotes from Central Ayutthaya came from two different participants, but they provided a repeated and nearly identical list of chosen cultural elements. From the observations of the case studies, as discussed throughout Chapter 4, Central was able to provide a consistent design throughout the entirety of its development that even permeated the stores of their tenants. The developer should also come up with a list of cultural elements that may even be ingrained in the memory of these participants to benefit the design consistency of the spaces within one development. Within this list, the participants also discussed the pagoda and traditional Thai houses, the second category of Architecture Features in the selection of cultural elements.

In the production of an ideal scenery of the past, the developer also needs to rely on traditional architectural features apart from the natural local landscape. The research has termed architectural features because the developer specifically chose unique and culturally distinguishable features from Thai heritage sites. For instance, golden spires of temples and palaces, lines found in Thai pagodas and gables from traditional Thai houses. Moreover, construction materials synonymous with Thai heritage sites, such as gold and red brick, also represent another subset of architectural features. Selected quotes in Table 5.5 on the next page illustrate the category of Architectural Features.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
In the past, whether palaces or temples , <u><i>the top spire would be the most golden</i></u> , most precious while the body of the building might not have anything (detail), just a normal concrete building. <u><i>The top is very important, and it got incorporated into the design of ICONSIAM.</i></u> You can see this in the top of the buildings, like <u><i>the residential buildings with the golden spire</i></u> . The top of the retail building also stood out with a big piece (of design) that people will notice. (IS3)
We need to choose <u><i>a shape and form</i></u> that can <u><i>convey both Thainess and modernity</i></u> . For instance, <u><i>the Thai gable</i></u> , it has that unique triangle that <u><i>you can recognise instantly</i></u> . (IS4)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
For example, we use <u><i>bricks</i></u> , which represent <u><i>material from the old days of Ayutthaya</i></u> ... We <u><i>turned</i></u> them <u><i>into a new story-telling</i></u> which is more modernised. (CA2)
(Job Hae) It is a <u><i>Thai curve</i></u> derived from <u><i>the curve of the traditional Thai fishing net when you pull it out of the water</i></u> . The <u><i>silhouette is used in pagodas</i></u> . We modified it to create sections (of the façade of the main entrance). (CA1)

Table 5.5 Quotes Related to the Architectural Features
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The first quote reflects and validates the observation made in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1, where the golden spires of the two residential towers were noticeable from the river, such as how foreign merchants would have seen palaces and temples in the past. Moreover, the second quote shows the importance of selecting a heritage that would be immediately understood by consumers, as discussed in the previous chapter. When a developer adapts a chosen architectural feature, the design becomes subjected to a visitor's interpretation based on common knowledge and not just cultural knowledge, like the design of the main entrance façade of Central Ayutthaya discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2, where one focus group participant thought the Thai wickerwork pattern was the inspiration of the façade. However, as revealed by the final quote in Table 5.5, the developer used a line seen in Thai pagodas as the inspiration, and this line was again inspired by the shape of the fishing net. As the developer, the story of this line represents a story that Central could have promoted and allowed visitors to learn about a cultural element that most people would not be aware of when viewing the façade. The discussion about the fishing net and wicker basket also leads to the subtheme of Cultural Objects, the final category of incorporating cultural elements into a design.

Apart from filling the alternative imagined world of modernised heritage with buildings, a developer can also reapply cultural objects into the spatial design. Cultural objects constitute goods produced by people that are specific to a culture, such as Pham Phum, Malai flower garland, Sabai and the Benjarong porcelain. In addition, cultural objects often come with functions and cultural meanings in society, and a developer has to consider this factor in the incorporation of a cultural object in the design. Repetitive quotes that demonstrate the category of Cultural Objects can be viewed in Table 5.6 below.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
If you see the front façade that looks like <u>glass Sabai wrapping ICONLUXE</u> . This represents <u>how people in the old days used the Sabai to also wrap their precious belongings. We see ICONLUXE as the precious thing, so we had to wrap it with the Sabai.</u> (IS10)
The <u>Malai</u> is a gesture that <u>we offer to guests coming in Thailand like a welcoming gesture</u> . We used this <u>story to be at the entrance of the luxury zone</u> (the chandelier at ICONLUXE) (IS10)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
When (the specially made red brick) it is shaped like a half circle, once the <u>bricks are laid, they would look like a weaving pattern</u> . If you look at the photograph, you will see a weaving pattern. Actually, <u>it looks local, like local handicraft basketry. This side of the building looks more local because it has the market.</u>
The bricks are laid so that the façade looks like <u>a weaving pattern</u> . (CA1)
For us, <u>intricacy</u> can be represented through <u>craftsmanship like flower garlands</u> with long needles and threads and the act of repeated assembling into shapes and forms for <u>certain purposes, mostly for worshipping and decorations. It is an item</u> that can represent everything within itself: <u>beauty, grandeur, and intricacy</u> . It is a decorative item with an untwisted meaning of its function. <u>Phan Phum</u> is being presented straightforwardly. (CA3)

Table 5.6 Quotes Related to Cultural Objects
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In the first quotation, the participant revealed the subsidiary function that the Sabai served in encasing valuable items. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1, the Sabai's main function is a modesty fabric that wraps around the breasts of women. This main reason why the Sabai was chosen for the façade of ICONLUXE was not clear, and ICONSIAM should have stated

the side-function of the Sabai to make visitors understand and aware if the developer planned to use a specific cultural knowledge that even most locals would not recall or associate with the object on the surface. ICONSIAM used the function of the Sabai to have a symbolic meaning. This was also the case with the second quotation, when ICONSIAM selected the Malai flower garland. ICONSIAM is not literally giving flower garlands to visitors, but transpires the function to welcome guests by conveying a message of hospitality through the chandelier.

In the case of the Central Ayutthaya, the reasons behind the selection of cultural objects reveal dilemmas in connecting the function or symbolic meaning of the cultural objects to the design of the space. The third quote in the previous table ironically shows that the inspiration behind the side façade was actually a wickerwork pattern, not the main façade. The developer chose the pattern of the basket for a domesticated appearance to connect to the market of Ploen Pranakron behind the façade. However, this represented a far-fetched interpretation of an object, and it felt as if the developer had to come up with a meaning to justify the incorporation of a certain object. The participant was also asked why the Thai gable had been incorporated into this façade, and the participant took a long time to reply to this question and simply replied that it was part of the Thai architectural vernacular. The participant was not able to provide a reason. Sometimes, a local designer may choose things that they are so accustomed to in their local culture, which leads to a lack of logic in choosing a certain heritage when it comes to function and cultural meaning. The basket and the gable were incorporated just for the Thai appearance.

Regarding the final quotation about the Phan Phum and its representation of intricacy for the grandeur of the main hall, Central originally wanted to create pagodas inside the space, not the Phan Phum. Participant CA3, who was quoted in this statement, was upset when I referred to the design as a pagoda and said the design was inspired by the Phan Phum, but did not reveal that the inspiration had been changed from a pagoda. Participant CA2 before CA3 did not mention the Phan Phum and went along with my referral to the design as a pagoda. Then, interviews with participants CA4 and CA5 revealed that the idea of the pagoda had been scrapped midway due to the culturally sensitive religious function of the pagoda in storing relics of the dead. Although the pagoda constitutes a heritage synonymous with the city of Ayutthaya, the team did not think of the true meaning of the pagoda in the initial design and had to find another heritage that possessed a shape similar to the pagoda, which led to the Phan Phum as a replacement. The team also had to rejustify the new inspiration for the space. More interestingly, Participant CA5 also revealed that Central designated each zone of Central Ayutthaya with a type of space in the city of

Ayutthaya. The main entrance hall actually represented the palace, the grandest space for the entire development. The choice of the Phan Phum made sense with the palace, since it was an object commonly made by ladies-in-waiting inside the palace. The Phan Phum would also be seen in the palace, as it was also used by individuals in the palace for ceremonial functions. Central should have communicated this story to the public in the space.

The pagoda was not the only zone that Central had to change halfway through the construction. Central conducted research to select historically correct heritage for its development. Participant CA4 revealed that on the restaurant floor, Central had a Japanese village built to replicate the historic Japanese settlement in Ayutthaya. After the construction of this Japanese village was completed, the team decided to demolish this zone and come up with a different design because it was not coherent with the Thai heritage of the other zones, despite its historical accuracy. The heritagisation process invokes the past, but this past may accurately belong to the city of the development. However, it might not truly correlate with the main cultural focus, which is Thai culture in this case. The Japanese settlement was also not the only situation in which Central Ayutthaya chose a foreign cultural element that was historically correct. Again, on the restaurant floor, Central also had a table that featured enlarged blue and white porcelains over a table next to the food court. Participant CA5 disclosed that the blue and white porcelain was inspired by authentic porcelain discovered and excavated in Ayutthaya, based on the historical research conducted. When enquired about the true cultural source for this type of porcelain, Participant CA5 also admitted it was China with its maritime trade with Thailand. In the focus group discussion, the consumers also reached a consensus that they could not associate this porcelain with the city of Ayutthaya. Thus, historical accuracy does not always mean the right choice for the heritagisation process; the developer has to really think of the true cultural mastermind behind the heritage and people's awareness. This blue and white chinaware can be seen in Figure 5.2 on the next page.



Figure 5.2 Blue and White China Installation at Central Ayutthaya
(Sombunjaroen, 2022)

From this discussion, in the reasoning for the selection of a specific cultural element, a developer needs to consider the factors of appearance (the explicit), function and symbolism (the implicit) in choosing a cultural element. Appearance refers to the shape, colour, pattern and texture of the heritage that may invoke a sense of Thainess. Function refers to how people used the cultural element in the past, and symbolism refers to how the cultural element represents its cultural meaning to the local people. In consideration of appearance, function or symbolism, the developer also needs to think about social awareness of the cultural element selected. It is important to choose a heritage that most people know and understand. If a deeper meaning exists beyond common cultural knowledge, such as the Sabai, the developer should tell this story to remind visitors of the forgotten past. Lastly, the selection of a cultural element does not have to stick to a cultural element that still exists in the city until the present day. For example, the rice farm and the water buffalo no longer commonly exist in modern Bangkok, but this does not mean that they cannot be selected in the heritagisation process. The heritagisation process can restore cultural elements lost through time to the modern day. Lastly, the factors of appearance, function and symbolism also lead to and relate to the next subtheme of the adaptation of the cultural elements for the present.

5.2.2 The Adaptation of the Cultural Elements for the Present

From the iterated data of the in-depth interviews, several codes arose that corresponded to the approach that the developers possessed in their minds when it comes to the adaptation of the cultural elements for the present. This notion of altering a cultural element in the modern context also corresponded to the idea of retro-heritagisation, as observed in Chapter 4, Section 4.4.

Before going through all the ways of retro-heritagisation discovered, it is important to note that heritage-copying does not represent the ideal way to design a retail development with heritage in the mindset of the producer. Every single participant mentioned different ways to modify heritage for the modernity of the retail development. Some even directly argued against heritage-copying.

Participant IS7 interestingly provided a personal opinion on why heritage-copying should not be employed and why the participant's point should be taken seriously into consideration. IS7 stated,

*"For example, when I was working abroad, if someone wanted me to design a Thai shop and they wanted a "Ka-lae"²⁹ on the facade, or asked me to incorporate Thai elements into the shop design, I always tell them that these things are like our teachers. The original ones are extremely intricate and beautiful. **If we want to copy it, but create a lesser version, we should come up with a better idea instead.**"*

When the participant viewed an original heritage design as 'teachers', this has to be put in the Thai socio-cultural perspective. The simile of 'teachers' denotes respect and reverence because of a myriad of professions that educate other people, not just actual teachers or professors. Even craftsmen are referred to courteously as teachers in society. With respect for a heritage design, which is like a masterpiece, the designer should not replicate if they could not re-create the same or even a higher quality work. This was the same issue as the statue of the war elephant at Central Ayutthaya, as discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3. The truth also lies in the fact that the time limitation of opening a retail development contrasts with the vast amount of time that traditional craftsmanship may require. Moreover, modern construction workers may not possess the skill and training required to produce a specific traditional masterpiece. Participant CA5 also

²⁹ A "Ka-lae" is a carved wood decorative piece on the upper part of the gable of the roof, prominent in Lanna (Northern Thai) architecture. Its sharp top serves as a deterrent for birds, such as crows or vultures.

disclosed that for the centrepiece Thai house made with steel at Ploen Pranakorn, Central had initially planned to purchase a dilapidated old Thai house, move it to Central Ayutthaya and restore it. However, this plan was not possible due to time constraints, and the team had to come up with a quick solution by welding steel to make the Thai house. The aversion to heritage-copying and the preference for retro-heritagisation also apply to Central Ayutthaya. Participant CA4 slighted its competitor, ICONSIAM, by saying,

*“**Not copying**, for example, we use wooden structure, the balcony where the Thai house is, unlike SOOKSIAM’s **Thainess which is very ‘themey’**. **What the original is like, and they just put the original in**. We don’t focus on the theme, but more on the materials, such as wood, applying the roof texture to be graphic around the hall, applying gable in the line of sight, the gable is still there, but its material has changed or in a more minimal form.”*

ICONSIAM, with its Sook Siam, opened before the Central Ayutthaya, and it seemed like the team of Central studied and used it as one of their case studies of the development of their own projects. In the same manner as the focus group participant of ICONSIAM, as mentioned in Chapter 4, Section 4.3, the developer also has a disinclination for heritage-copying done by ICONSIAM at Sooksiam. This statement also reveals several methods of retro-heritagisation by minimalising and changing the materials of the original inspiration. In total, the repeated data for the in-depth interviews have revealed five methods to adapt a cultural element, starting with the simplification of heritage.

5.2.2.1 Simplification

Simplification refers to the process of minimalising, refining, diluting and toning down the design of the cultural element to get an air, a sense, a glimpse or a trace of the cultural element so that it would come as the whole thing and not be explicit nor exact. Examples of simplification can be seen in Figure 4.15 with the skeletal frames of traditional Thai houses in Ploen Pranakorn, Figure 4.27 with the refined shape of the Malai, the flower garland in the chandelier of ICONLUXE, and Figure 4.28 with the see-through Phan Phum of Central Ayutthaya’s main entrance hall. Sample key quotes that lead to simplification can be seen in Table 5.7 on the next page.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
If you ask me, they don't need to know (the inspiration). Sometimes, it's a good thing to <u>have some traces of Thainess</u> in the designs that people can see, or maybe they can't... <u>Thainess doesn't have to be said out loud or explicitly</u> . I don't like it when something is too definite, too exact. I prefer just <u>some hints or traces that we can assume</u> from. (IS9)
Normally, when we talk about <u>Thainess</u> , we think of patterns and drawings inside a temple, or the "Kanok" Thai pattern. These things are <u>too traditional</u> . We had to <u>dilute and simplify down the level of heritage</u> so that we can become <u>more appealing to a younger and a newer generation of consumers</u> . (IS4)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
At Central Ayutthaya, around the void, <u>carved-wooden panels in shapes of traditional Thai- styled houses are refined down to their outlines</u> . If we used the actual ones, over time, people would get bored. When you <u>drop it down</u> to outlines to tell the story, <u>everything is lighter</u> , it does not overwhelm tenants inside the mall. It is blended into the environment when you pass, you almost <u>don't feel it. It isn't in-your-face</u> . (CA2)
<u>Lines and materials and colours are not used in the whole context</u> , we don't use the whole "chedi" or temple, but we use the materials of the temple that are commonly used and seen in Ayutthaya. (CA2)

Table 5.7 Quotes Related to the Process of Simplification
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The first quotation in the table also reveals the problem of assumptions that come with simplification, as discussed in Chapter 4. The hints and traces should be clear for visitors to assume, and the developer also has to think if the minimalisation process made the initial inspiration resemble other common and worldly objects with which most people would associate the diluted design, especially in terms of shapes and forms. As a result, the process of simplification should be conducted with the utmost precaution and discernment. Apart from the simplification of heritage that deals with the appearance of heritage, the developer can also reinterpret the function that comes within the heritage.

5.2.2.2 The Reinterpretation of Function

Many cultural elements also come with a specific function, depending on how they were used in the past, and the developer has to interpret this past function for the modern-day context. The function in the past can be reinterpreted into contemporary usage, such as the earthen jars in the bathroom at ICONSIAM (Figure 4.35) and the Benjarong tables in the food court of Central Ayutthaya (Figure 4.34). This represents an explicit way to retransform the function that people may recognise and interact with. In contrast, a developer can incorporate the symbolic meaning of the function into the new design. This constitutes the implicit way to adapt a function into a design. This can be seen with Malai, the flower garland used to welcome people and pay respect as a chandelier to welcome people (Figure 4.27), and Sabai, a pleated piece of fabric used to wrap precious objects for the exterior glass façade that encloses around luxury brands of ICONLUXE (Figure 4.4). This symbolic meaning of the function may also disregard a purpose like the replacement of the pagodas with the Phan Phum, as discussed in Section 5.2.1. Quotes associated with the reinterpretation of function can be viewed in Table 5.8 below.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
(The process in adapting Thainess to fit the modern-day context better) I think the first aspect is the <u>function</u> . What elements would we use? <u>What were their functions in the past? How do they serve the people in the past vs. in the present?</u> How we execute the design depends on so many things. (IS7)
(Inspiration of the Chandelier by Lasvit) The <u>Malai is a gesture that we offer to guests</u> coming in Thailand like <u>a welcoming gesture</u> . <u>We used this story to be at the entrance of the luxury zone</u> . (IS10)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
We have to <u>honour the functions and use them in a modern context</u> , but the key function remains the same. This is the core application. This can also be seen <u>with Benjarong porcelain in the food court. Thai nobles once used them to eat in the past, and</u> this is applied in the food court, <u>where everyone can come to eat</u> . (CA3)
<u>Chedis (pagodas)</u> are associated with temples and <u>function as a cinerarium</u> . I understand that in the past, chedis were created to commemorate Buddha and his virtue, to keep his relic, and to function as places of Buddha worship. They were afraid that <u>some religious people would think that having chedis inside a retail development is disrespectful and offensive</u> . So, we had to <u>change to something with a similar form to chedi but with a meaning that could go with it</u> . (CA5)

Table 5.8 Quotes Related to the Reinterpretation of Function
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The third quotation of the Benjarong porcelain for the mass, an egalitarian by-product of the heritagisation, also corresponds to and validates the observation made in Section 4.6.4 regarding open access to luxuries once reserved for the elites. Finally, in this section, the research establishes that a function may also come with a symbolic meaning like Malai flower garland as a symbol of Thai hospitality. However, function is not the only way to provide a symbolic meaning; traditional materials can also convey cultural meanings in society. This leads to the next process of creating new designs with traditional materials.

5.2.2.3 New Designs with Traditional Materials

This method deals with the creation of new designs through the utilisation of traditional materials used or seen in cultural elements. Traditional materials also imply a tangible matter that existed in the past that the local population would have used in the old days. This process can be seen with examples such as Thai traditional fabric to make an installation in the ceiling of Louis Vuitton (Figure 4.40) or the redesign of the traditional rectangular red brick used in temple construction into an oval brick layering in a way to mimic the pattern of Thai basketry (Figure 4.25). Table 5.9 below consists of selected key quotes relating to the employment of traditional materials in a new modern design.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
For those brands with a modern creativity combination... such as a furniture brand by Saran Yen Panya. He is perfect in <u>bringing old materials to create furniture that combines modern creativity</u> . His work has uniqueness and <u>compatibility for the space</u> , which is a <u>perfect harmony of the traditional and the contemporary blend</u> . (IS6)
In the future, maybe <u>a roof structure innovation that uses wooden material or joint structure methods that are local to Thailand</u> . This could be good. Of course, we must put safety as the first consideration and if it works, we can showcase <u>Thainess with modern innovation</u> . (IS9)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
Modernisation is to be <u>extracted from the local materials</u> . For example, we use <u>bricks</u> , which represent a <u>material from the old days of Ayutthaya</u> . (CA2)
We have tried to insert these things into our building, but like <u>a wooden structure isn't really suitable for a public gigantic architecture like ours</u> . For <u>decorative materials</u> , we can do it, and we try to do it in order <u>to</u>

<p><u>develop passed-down knowledge.</u> For instance, <u>people don't really use red bricks anymore,</u> lightweight construction materials are more commonly used in mass production. Other <i>materials</i> with knowledge value that aren't appreciated <u>are revived and encouraged and expressed in the modern context, which people can understand and relate to.</u> (CA3)</p>

Table 5.9 Quotes Related to the New Designs with Traditional Materials
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The first statement in Table 5.9 again shows the developer’s perception of the juxtaposition of modernity and heritage in the retail space. Traditional materials can be made into modern-day furniture for development. The second and fourth quotations also validate the finding in Chapter 4, Section 4.5, that the past cannot build a modern-day development, and participants from both case studies understood the limitation of traditional materials in modern-day construction. Despite the limitations, the second quote participant still dreamed of a way to employ traditional materials and techniques in retail development. The last remark also validates the findings in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.2, where traditional, unmodified cultural goods can also be used in the design process as “decorations.” The two last remarks by participants of Central also show that specific materials synonymous with the past may also convey a social meaning, like the red bricks of Ayutthaya and the revival of its “good old days”. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3, if analysed with historical accuracy, the red brick does not represent the good old days but actually its destruction. A developer must really think about what a material truly means in local history and not just employ it simply because of its contemporary association with heritage in the minds of people today. All of these statements show the notion of producing modern designs with traditional materials. In vice versa, developers can also use modern-day materials to create traditional forms.

5.2.2.4 The Formulation of Heritage with Contemporary Materials

This method represents the complete opposite of the previous method discussed in the previous section of adapting local materials into a new design. The developer creates shapes and forms that have been inspired by or referenced a cultural element by using present-day materials that would not have existed in the past. This can be seen with the glass façade of ICONSIAM inspired by the repeated pleats of the Sabai (Figure 4.21), the welding of steel into a skeleton, a frame of a traditional Thai house (Figure 4.15), or the creation of Thai lines and patterns seen in the corners

of pagodas as precast panels for the exterior façade (Figure 4.24). Important statements revolving around the illustration of heritage with present-day materials can be seen in Table 5.10 below.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
Like the <u>glass facade</u> of ICONLUXE. I have to speak frankly. It is <u>not really Thai</u> . But it is able to reflect a way of thinking that is Thai... What happened with the glass facade of ICONLUXE, it has <u>an important key element of Thai art. This is repetition</u> . Repetition in Thai architecture and art is very visible, from making the flower garland with the same tiny flowers to the “Phan Phum” to the mosaic on the pagodas of Grand Palace... The glass facade of ICONSIAM is very reflective of this element. (IS3)
The motion that you see in <u>the facade that sort of mimics something</u> that is very... <u>that's very unique to the river and the location</u> ... If you look <u>at the river facade and the angles</u> and what was achieved with the glass there. You wouldn't do something like that in China. I believe because in China and Feng shui, there's some very certain cultural aversion to angles and sharpness. (IS13)
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
Usually, with Central, we will have a layer of precast panel, and that would stick on as a layer over the facade. For the white facade, <u>we designed the precast with Thai curves inspired by with a "Jom Hae..."</u> <u>We used computers</u> to calculate the distance, so it shows a pattern within the gold colour... (CA1)
We thought it was better to form <u>a new house using the form and shape</u> , which are toned down to a clean version while still retaining Thainess. <u>We use steel because the construction takes less time. Wood is hard to find</u> . (CA5)

Table 5.10 Quotes Related to Traditional Forms with Modern Materials
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In the first two reflections on the glass façade, the participants also showed that a design with contemporary material does not have to contain an exact and explicit appearance of the heritage alone. A design may also possess a way of thinking, the implicit, that reflects the distinctive local cultural mindset, such as the repetition and spiky shapes commonly found in Thai culture that cause the design to feel Thai. In the third quotation, the participant also revealed that modern-day tools, such as the computer, can also be used in the design process. Retro-heritagisation does mean sticking to the original equipment and techniques used in the past. Moreover, the final statement also revealed the benefit of time efficiency from the usage of modern-day materials

and a problem relating to the previous process of creating new designs with traditional materials. Sometimes, a material once commonly used in the past may not be abundant in the present, a luxury of rarity. Rarity may also lead to time constraints from the necessity to search for the material and, more importantly, a higher cost than present-day mass materials. Time and cost also limit the method of using traditional materials in a modern design. The final remarks also talked about form and shape, and this led to the final methods of altering a key physical feature in a culture element for a design.

5.2.2.5 Alteration of Key Physical Feature

The last method discovered through inductive thematic analysis deals with the identification and modification of a prominent and distinctive feature of a cultural element. In the first identification process, the developer has to select a unique observable physical characteristic from a cultural element such as shape, colour or pattern that can instantly remind people of their cultural past. In the incorporation of the identified unique cultural feature, the developer has to modify, enlarge or re-imagine the selected key feature into a new design. Examples of the alteration of key physical features include the enlargement of the pleats in the Sabai as a glass façade (Figure 4.21), the interior design of Cartier with the modern textile with Thai pattern (Figure 4.38) and the lamp with Thai stained-glass mosaic (Figure 4.39). Designs of Central Ayutthaya that altered a key Thai feature include examples such as the golden façade that redesigned a distinctive line found in temples (Figure 4.24) and the see-through houses with Thai gables scattered around the circular walkway (Figure 4.30). Key statements that demonstrate the main idea of this process can be seen in Table 5.11 below.

Case Study 1: ICONSIAM
We can use <u>triangle (of the Thai gable) and make it visible straight away</u> . For instance, we use a big <u>scale to bold it</u> and <u>make it very recognisable</u> from the side straight away... The side next to the river is the most important side. So, on that side, the <u>Thai gable should like 50% of the overall design</u> , protruding out. (IS4)
Everyone was always very interested to see what Thainess is and how <u>Thainess could be incorporated into the retail design</u> . So that that was always embraced by the brands. From my opinion, I think Thai design, especially Thai contemporary design, is very <u>unique in its use of patterns and colours</u> , very engaging their environment. (IS13)

Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya
We usually <u>pick out the forms and the lines</u> to work with. We don't just use traditional things and paste it onto the work. We utilised lines and curves found in Thai design and architecture. But <u>we don't paste</u> Prajamyam ³⁰ patterns onto the design. (CA1)
Thai heritage is applied in this construction by <u>incorporating corners and lines seen in Thai architecture</u> that have been <u>transformed into a modern design</u> . (CA3)

Table 5.11 Quotes Related to Alteration of a Key Physical Feature
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The first remark in Table 5.11 represents an unrealised ideal for the façade of ICONSIAM. The participant actually hoped for a key feature of a cultural element, such as the gable in the Thai house, to become a prominent and memorable feature of the façade. In the second quotation, the participant also revealed that tenants of ICONSIAM usually selected key colours and patterns of Thai culture for their retail stores, validating the observations made on tenants' designs in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.6. The third and final quotations again show the aversion to heritage-copying. The developer should not just select a key feature from a cultural element; they also need to adapt the key feature to the context of their new creation.

5.2.2.6 Overview of the Five Methods in Adapting a Cultural Element

In summary, from the in-depth interviews, developers possess five ideal methods for transforming a heritage into a contemporary design in terms of retro-heritagisation. A summary of the five methods can be seen in Table 5.12 on the next page.

³⁰ The "Prajamyam" pattern is a basic traditional Thai pattern in the shape of diagonal squares with leaf detailing that is used as a base for other intricate patterns.

Methods	Key Production Idea
1. Simplification	The minimalisation/dilution of a cultural element to obtain just an air of the original design and not the exact whole
2. Reinterpretation of Function	The reinterpretation of the original function into a new and yet related usage in the modern-day context or the transpiration of a social meaning derived from the original function into a new unrelated design
3. New Design with Traditional Materials	The utilisation of a traditional material commonly seen in a cultural element into a new creation
4. Formulation of Heritage with Contemporary Materials	The creation of traditional forms with modern-day materials to reference a cultural element or a cultural way of thinking
5. Alteration of Key Physical Feature	The identification of a noticeable key physical feature of a cultural element and the incorporation of the identified key physical feature into a modern spatial context

Table 5.12 Overview of the Five Methods of Retro-Heritagisation

(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

From the specification of cultural element adaptation methods through examples of design features from both case studies, as discussed in the five previous sections, a design may employ more than just one method in the design process. For example, the glass façade of ICONLUXE is actually composed of three methods: a) 2. Reinterpretation of Function; b) 4. Formulation of Heritage with Contemporary Materials and; c) 5. Alteration of Key Physical Feature. There is no exact right or wrong when it comes to the choice of methods for a design, but the developer should take into consideration the remaining noticeability of the heritage, the explicit and the social/symbolic meaning within that comes with the heritage, the implicit. Similar to heritage-

copying, the third method of creating new designs with traditional materials may not be applicable for every design to construction technicalities. Lastly, section 5.2 The Adaptation of the Cultural Elements represents the ideal ‘how’ for the developers in designing a retail development with heritage, while section 5.1 constitutes the ‘what’ in the minds of the developers. The next section deals with the theme of people, the ‘whom’ of luxury retail development.

5.3 Present-Day People

In the same manner as the developers’ notion of retail development as a modern space, both developers repeatedly spoke about designing the retail space for people living in the present and not long-gone lives in the past. The developer has to take into consideration the contemporary way of life and the relevancy of heritage to this modern-day lifestyle. Furthermore, the people in the present must also be able to comprehend the design that incorporates heritage. Selected key quotes can be seen in Table 5.13 below, while the full analysis can be seen in Appendix I.

Thematic Analysis with Developers for Present-Day People

Case Study	Quotations	Code	List of Codes and key phrases related to the Code
Case Study 1: ICONSIAM	It is impossible to <u>create something for people in the present by just using everything from the past.</u> Therefore, when we brief, we must also <u>focus on the contemporary life too.</u> But <u>with the history</u> , you will also be able to see <u>how our contemporary life was created</u> because of what. It came from what? Where our contemporary life derived from? More importantly we also <u>need to know who are our customers, the people in the present.</u> (IS3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People's Contemporary Lifestyle - The Desire of the People in the Present 	<p><u>People's Contemporary Lifestyle</u></p> <p>Contemporary life, contemporary lifestyle, people in the present, all age groups, younger generations, meet customers' desire, want, expectation</p>
	We should be able to twist this Thainess into something that looks more modern. We <u>twist this Thainess so that more</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehension by People Today (more people will understand) 	<p><u>Comprehension of Heritage by People Today</u></p>

Case Study	Quotations	Code	List of Codes and key phrases related to the Code
	<u>people will be able to understand it and access it.</u> (IS4)		- Understand the Thainess - Relate to the design - Recognise
	<u>We want to target all age groups.</u> Each age group has their own style preference. If you go to a section in a department store that sells traditional Thai souvenirs, you will find Benjarong and goldware, which are old. When you want to shop for the new generations, you wouldn't want to go in this department, as it's too traditional. Shops are no different from Pattaya Floating Market, where the products are all traditional. If we offer modern-style products, we can target <u>younger-generation customers</u> because they can still <u>relate to the design, decoration, and products that are not too traditional.</u> (IS14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People's Contemporary Lifestyle (all age groups, younger generations) - Comprehension by People Today (people can relate to) 	
	(When asked about Heritage to Future) Let's say we set our proposition as a <u>heritage Thai shopping centre. We can do that. But do we want to have this target group?</u> <u>Not so much.</u> As I've said before, we target tourists and Thai people. If we wanted to build an ancient city and only focus on Thainess and heritage, would our target consumers want to visit? Both Thais and foreigners, how many occasions are there for them to visit us?... <u>When we say heritage to future, it meets the consumer segment we've</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People's Contemporary Lifestyle (all age groups, younger generations) - Comprehension by People Today (people can relate to) 	

Case Study	Quotations	Code	List of Codes and key phrases related to the Code
	<u>targeted</u> since the beginning. (IS15)		
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya	We wanted to honour the city's culture and <u>make people of the city proud</u> by applying traditional Ayutthaya art and culture <u>in a more modern way and to be the centre of the community, a centre of life.</u> (CA4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People's Contemporary Lifestyle (all age groups, younger generations) - Comprehension by People Today (people can relate to) 	
	For locals, they don't really care as they know and they are accustomed to real historical sites close by, but if we want to attract locals too, we have to <u>turn their content into something modern for them.</u> For them, it's not that exciting if we just copied the original things, we use modernity to interpret the context of Ayutthaya context to attract the locals and to get them excited... (CA2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modification for People Today (Relevancy) - People's Contemporary Lifestyle 	
	Other materials with knowledge value that aren't appreciated are revived and encouraged and expressed in the <u>modern context which people can understand and relate to.</u> (CA3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehension by People Today (people can understand) 	
	We asked for something that people could <u>take photos with, and they can recognise right away</u> that this is Central Ayutthaya. Without the logo, people can tell that it is Central Ayutthaya. (CA5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehension by People Today (people can recognise) 	

Table 5.13 Developers' Ideal for People in the Present
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

In the Contemporary Comprehension of Heritage, the chosen heritage must be a cultural element passed down to the modern day, where living people can understand. People must be able to relate to the cultural element. This further validates the discussion at the end of Section 5.2.1 about choosing the appropriate cultural element. In addition, the consumer's understanding should also be taken into consideration with regard to the relevancy of heritage in modern times. For instance, IS1 stated,

“When we created a theme, we also need to look if there are any incident around that time, like when the Siamese Fighting Fish was made the aquatic animal of Thailand.”

Siamese Fighting Fish represents a great example of choosing a relevant heritage at the right time for seasonal decorations. The Siamese Fighting Fish, as the name clearly states, is a fish native to Thailand. This fish has a distinctive tail, has been a part of Thai history and exists to this day. However, for people in the past, this fish might not have been a special animal in the Thai historical context, unlike the elephant. However, at the time of the interview, the Thai government just made this fish the national aquatic animal of Thailand, and as a result, the Siamese Fighting Fish had more significance to the people in the present than people in the past who would have thought of this fish as common. The comprehension and relevancy of heritage also interconnects with the contemporary lifestyle of present-day people. Developers often spoke about targeting newer or younger generations. The younger generations do not necessarily mean a specific generation because some participants still talked about a luxury retail development as a destination for everyone, but the younger generations more imply the idea of a modern lifestyle, the desire of the people in the present, and how consumers can interpret and engage with the chosen invoked heritage and even incorporate heritage in their everyday life.

Similar to developers, consumers also discuss the need for the developer to fulfil the lifestyles of people today, especially the younger generations. Moreover, luxury retail development also has to consider things that are popular with people today, and it would be even better if this could be a heritage that is in popularity right now, such as the Siamese Fighting Fish. Consumers may also not understand why a certain heritage is featured, even though the chosen heritage is historically correct, such as the blue and white porcelain design features discussed in Section 5.2.1. Developers must also consider the contemporary comprehension of heritage by present-day

people. Participant CA1 of Central Ayutthaya mentioned the retail development's necessity to cater to the people by clearly stating,

"In reality, if ***the design was traditional Thai, it'd be too out-of-touch for the new generations***. People of the older generations might like it, but if you imagine walking inside and seeing a thatched roof or ***something traditional Thai, some people might think it's a temple, not a retail development, but if it's applied Thainess***, it does fulfil the retail industry. Thainess can be found in historical sites or temples. ***This is a shopping mall, a retail development, it's built for people to go in for the facilities***, so modernity must be incorporated."

This very statement by the participant clearly summarises and captures the essences of the three themes discussed in Sections 5.1 to 5.3: 1) the Imagination of Modern Heritage; 2) the Adaptation of the Past for the Present; and 3) the Present-Day People. The first sentence also shows the focus on the contemporary lifestyle of the new generation, which correlates with the theme of the Present-Day People. The second sentence discusses the need to apply Thainess and not copy heritage, which corresponds to the second theme of adapting the past to the present. Finally, the last sentence touches on the notion of a mall as a modern space and the juxtaposition of the past and present-day people in the overall statement, which correlates with the first and third themes. All of these themes are interconnected in the ideal Secondspace of the developers. The research has provided findings on the first theme (what?), the second theme (how?), and the third theme (for whom?), but the research still needs to understand when developers have to consider these three themes in the design process, which leads to the next section.

5.4 The Process of Designing a Retail Development with Heritage

During the in-depth interviews, every participant was asked to briefly explain the process from start to finish in designing a development. Every participant provided overwhelmingly nearly identical steps required in the production of a retail space. From the analysis, all the steps mainly fall into two categories: 1) the Ideation and 2) the Execution. The ideation represents the beginning, and the conceptual masterplan dictates the execution. The execution also represents the implementation of the ideation. Thus, ideation represents the creation of the intangible, while execution constitutes the transformation of the intangible into the tangible.

5.4.1 The Ideation

Starting with the Imagination of Modern Heritage, the developer must think of combining the modernity of retail development and the heritage of the city into a story. This is where concept-defining phrases such as ICONSIAM's "The Best of Thailand Meets the Best World" and Central Ayutthaya's "Capital of Wonder" must be created. For modernity, the developer has to consider contemporary trends to incorporate. For heritage, the developer has to conduct research on history to invoke in this ideation phase to start with. In this research, the developer needs to create a story based on the past. The developer has to start filling the stories with images of cultural elements from the local landscape, architectural features, and cultural objects to create ideal scenery. For ICONSIAM, the developer chose the story of the river and the traditional aquatic lifestyle next to the water of the Thai people. This story can be seen in the façade that faces the water, the golden columns in ICONLUXE that mimic other heritage sites along the river (Figure 4.4), the golden flowing hanging ceiling installation inside ICONLUXE (Figure 4.27), and aquatic scenery with fishes, fish traps, and water features on the restaurant floor (Figure 4.33). In the case of Central Ayutthaya, the story revolves around the restoration of Ayutthaya's glory into the modern retail space, and this story is represented through design features, such as the two façades (Figure 4.24 and Figure 4.25), the restored villages of re-interpreted traditional Thai houses (Figure 4.30), and the Benjarong tables in the food court (Figure 4.34). In an ideal situation for ideation, the developer should come up with a list of cultural elements for the conceptual story based on the past. It would be great if all the chosen cultural elements correlated to the concocted story. However, both case studies also contain invoked heritage with no clear direct correlation to their main stories, such as the Sabai of ICONLUXE and the replacement of the pagoda with the Phan Phum for Central Ayutthaya.

In the ideation phase, the theme of **Present-Day People** also came in at this stage because every participant discussed the need for retail development to consider the target group or target segment right away. As a retail development represents a commercial building, the developer has to investigate groups of people who will and can come to visit frequently, not just on the weekends but also on weekdays, the loyal customers who represent the citizenry. Various groups of people may also have different lifestyles and needs. The developer has to ultimately fulfil the desires of their target customers, a prerequisite for attaining a sense of luxury. In order to fulfil the desire, the developer has to plan key offerings of the retail development in the ideation phase, such as the wish list of various brands that the development would like to lease out their spaces to, the types of dining opportunities, attractions such as cinemas, indoor kids'

playgrounds, immersive local markets, etc. The offerings based on the target market will affect the overall design of the property in terms of size, the number of levels, and the amount of floor space in the masterplan. With the masterplan based on the consumer's needs and the story that incorporates the past, the developer goes into the execution phase.

5.4.2 The Execution

The execution phase constitutes the transformation of the masterplan and the conceptual story into a tangible reality. From the masterplan with various types of spaces, the developer needs to consider what cultural elements to incorporate into the different types of spaces by utilising one of the five methods from the theme of the **Adaptation of the Past for the Present**. When choosing a cultural element, the participants often spoke about finding a cultural element(s) that may fit or blend into the physical space. In terms of how to fit the cultural element, participants usually mentioned ways that corresponded to one of the five methods. When incorporating a cultural element into a space, many participants from both case studies spoke about the consumers' line of sight. The line of sight constitutes the most prominent area from the perspective of consumers, where they notice and see things the most. As a result, most of the designs with Thai heritage take place as decorations on columns, installations hanging from ceilings and murals or textures on walls for the highest visibility. From the concept, the developer will have an idea of what heritage to invoke and where the conceptual design leads into a schematic design – an image of how a space may turn out in reality. From the schematic design, the team starts to go into the design development, which includes the quintessential details required in materialising the design, such as the measurement, the material, the weight, and the construction technique. With design development, the developer then needs to start creating the design by finding and hiring various suppliers who can really make the design a reality. The suppliers can be a construction company, an engineering company, artisans, artists and so forth.

From schematic design to design development to actual production, the ideal of the developer started to fall apart, where some designs could not be realised into reality in correlation to the literature review in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3, where the materialisation shatters the utopia. Many participants from both case studies mentioned the need to find the quickest way possible to produce a design in order to open the development on time. This may lead to the final design not meeting the aspirations and expectations of the developer. Designs had to change and compromise for the sake of time, because the supplier could not make the design in time or had

to turn a blind eye to some imperfections made by the supplier. In addition, the participants of both developments also contained recollections of having to constantly change the design halfway through or even after the production of the design had been completed. The reasons came in a variety of forms, such as the personal decision of the management, the inability to acquire the right materials, the production cost, the difficulty of the production technique and even a completed design not feeling right to the team. As a result, the execution phase is not always a linear process from start to finish; the developer may have to go back through the various stages again, such as the reselection of the cultural element and the adaptation methods. Even after completion, the design may still change due to maintenance or a change in the function of the space, such as the relocation of the fish trap seating in Central Ayutthaya to a higher floor to accommodate more tenants.

5.5 Overview of the Secondspace

From an easy and complete comprehension of the Secondspace, the research has summarised the three main themes from Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 and combined these themes with the design process from Section 5.4 into a thematic map, as shown in Figure 5.3 on the next page.

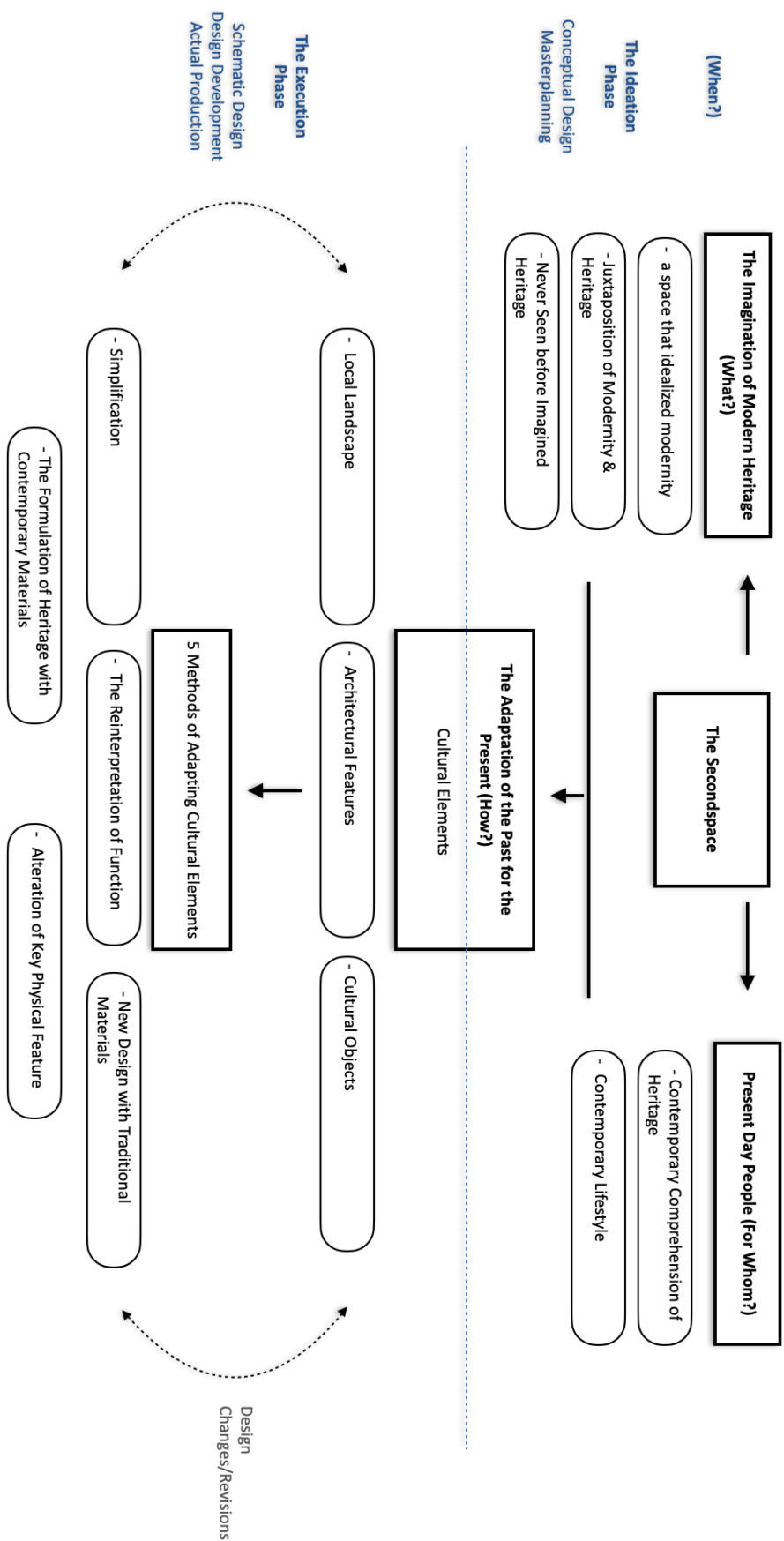


Figure 5.3 Thematic Map of the Secondspace (Sombunjaoren, 2023)

From the thematic map, it can be seen that from the ideation phase, the developer considers the themes of the **Imagination of Modern Heritage** and **Present-Day People** into their conceptual design with their stories and masterplanning of the development. The concept that incorporates the two themes should also guide the developer to the cultural elements in the first part of the theme of **the Adaptation of the Past for the Present**, which also takes the developer to the execution phase. Then, the developer has to transform the cultural elements through at least one of the five adaptation methods: 1) Simplification; 2) the Reinterpretation of Function; 3) New Design with Traditional Materials; 4) the Formulation of Heritage with Contemporary Materials; and 5) Alteration of Key Physical Feature. The developer may have to change the cultural element or the adaptation method by revising the schematic design, the design development and the actual production in the execution phase. In the next chapter, the research will incorporate key observable findings from the previous chapter into a revised thematic map to understand the heritagisation process.

Apart from providing the comprehension of the heritagisation process in designing a luxury retail development, Figure 5.3 also reveals key findings in regard to the Utopolis. The top of the figure represents the saturated Utopolis, while the bottom represents the dilution of the Utopolis. As observed in the previous chapter and further validated by the iterated data from the in-depth interviews, the Utopolis consists of cultural elements that can be combined into a scenography of the Utopolis from the geographical landscape, natural abundance and architectural structures to cultural objects used by locals. Moreover, the in-depth interviews also bring to light key ideas unobservable in the tangible Firstspace, the themes of the Imagination of Modern Heritage and Present-Day People. These key ideas within these two themes will be deconstructed and then reconstructed with the key findings from the Firstspace in the previous chapter to reach the Utopolis and the Heterotopia. Thus, the section from the top to the cultural elements symbolises a part of the abstract Thirdspace and Fourthspace. In contrast, the bottom half of the figure reflects the tangible reality and the design process behind the key design features observed in the previous chapter. More importantly, the bottom half also validates the idea established in the literature review that the materialisation of the Utopia leads to its demise. Despite all the methods attempted at tangibly producing the ideal Utopia, there will always be physical limitations in the design process that either decrease physical observability or the quality of the abstract ideal. The previous chapter discussed the spatial limitation, while this chapter unfolds the limitation of time. Space and time make the physical materialisation of Utopolis impossible.

Before heading to the next chapter, the research will also discuss two more non-repetitive findings of importance from the interview data that will also have an implication for the revision of the thematic map and the idea of the Utopolis in the next chapter.

5.6 Internationalisation

There is one particular theme noticed from the familiarisation of data, and this deals with the desire for international quality that relates to the idea of the multicultural amalgamation observed in the Firstspace. Especially among the participants of ICONSIAM, words like world-class, international standard and international-ness were also used to describe the development, while only one participant, CA2, from Central Ayutthaya, mentioned the desire to make traditional Thainess into a design that is more international. Despite both case studies containing many similarities observed in Chapter 4 and thematic analysis in Chapter 5, one key difference between the two developments was the employment of foreign designers. Many participants of ICONSIAM mentioned the recruitment of foreigners to design tangible touchpoints, such as the logo, the glass façade, and even hanging installations. Moreover, ICONSIAM boasted these collaborations with foreigners on their websites and at the physical site through information obtained through the scanning of QR codes. These design features made Thai heritage new through the process of internationalisation. On the other hand, Central Ayutthaya did not mention the use of foreign designers in their communication or in-depth interviews. From the interviews, some of the participants actually created some of the design features themselves. As a result, the data failed to provide enough iterations through both case studies in order to provide insight regarding this matter in the thematic map of the Secondspace. Thus, data from observations are required to codify the idea of internationalisation, which will happen in the next chapter with the revised thematic map.

Even just from the collected data from the interview, ICONSIAM has been able to provide rich data on internationalisation, and the greatest example was the flowing metallic golden chandelier hanging inside ICONLUXE by Haberdashery (Figure 4.27). Participant IS3 stated,

*“We had to **honour foreigners that could see this (the idea of reflection) as art and Thai architecture.** How they could think and come up with story of the repetition as the main element. They could then execute the work. At the same time, for the perspective of foreigners who helped us created chandeliers and mobile hanging*

*lightings. **These foreigners viewed reflection as a Thai element. If we asked about Thai artists, they might know about this or not know about this. They have been doing this for generations, and they kept doing the same thing without really thinking about it.** However, when we spoke with foreign artists and designers, they were able to pick up on the idea of the reflection. How the materials we use will change depending on the time of the day with different lighting. **We were able to see this foreign point of view from foreigners. A Thai person might create the same kind of artwork but there is a story behind it for the foreigners. They have a different way of thinking and a different way of approaching.***

Participant IS10 also provided a statement similar to IS3 by claiming,

*"I think **Thai people overlook certain things.** When we think of Thainess, Thai people think about Thai lines and Thai patterns, which are so traditional Thainess, but when we tell the story to foreigners, they see something like mirrors that are attached to the wall as cut-glass mosaics. **This is a Thai craftsmanship which they see very fascinating because of the geometry, as modern lines are applied to a traditional creation from a long time ago. Coincidentally, the use of mirrors is linked to the story of the river as they both portray the idea of reflection, which is also used in ICONSIAM.** Many components such as façades and pleated glass are to showcase this story of the reflection."*

These two statements reveal a possible fundamental flaw when local individuals try to incorporate their own local cultural heritage into a design. As the local population is born into a culture and sees this culture every day, people also become accustomed to many unique cultural features that have become common and a part of everyday life. In this respect, a local designer may have a type of knowledge that Roberts (2015) referred to as tacit knowledge, which is implicit, non-codified, and context-specific. The issue with tacit knowledge lies in the hidden nature of this knowledge within the culture, which may lead local people to overlook such knowledge. On the contrary, foreigners who have no familiarity with another culture may pick up a certain cultural characteristic that locals have been accustomed to in their research and codify their observations into a type of knowledge that Roberts (2015) referred to as explicit knowledge, which permits locals to see their own culture in a new light and see things that they would not normally pick up on. This was the same situation as the photography in Figure 4.21, where the

researcher would not have noticed and captured the reflection of the water in the glass façade of ICONLUXE without learning from the interviews. The beauty of this revelation originated with the employment of foreigners.

Another beauty of using foreigners lies in the sharing and fusion of knowledge for new creations. Participant IS10 also revealed the behind-the-scenes process in creating the flowing chandelier hanging inside ICONLUXE by Haberdashery (Figure 4.27) by stating,

*“We asked Prof. Preecha (Thaonthong) to **collaborate with Haberdashery by teaching Haberdashery how Thai patterns are drawn.** Haberdashery then **interpreted these Thai artistic strokes into an international art installation.** To me, this is something very special as it is the core of ICONSIAM, as we have the best of Thailand which is the national artist like Prof. Preecha, and the best of the world, like Haberdashery, an international artist based in England.”*

As discussed in Section 4.5.1, Professor Preecha Thaonthong was responsible for the golden columns with Thai patterns in ICONLUXE. ICONSIAM got a national artist to transfer the knowledge of how to draw Thai patterns to an English artist, and this artist could use their own knowledge (common knowledge and cultural knowledge of the artist) and experience to create a new version of Thai heritage. This act of sharing knowledge represents a long tradition in the production of luxuries in Thai culture, as discussed in Chapter 1 on Thai luxuries, where the royal court would commission foreign artisans, such as Indian Chintz makers or Chinese porcelain artisans, to create new luxuries at that time by teaching foreigners about Thai taste and Thai patterns. The sharing of knowledge also reflects the fundamental principle of culture argued by Bourdieu (1993) as the perpetual reproduction of passed-down knowledge throughout history.

The noticeability of tacit Thai cultural knowledge by foreigners and the opportunity to share cross-cultural knowledge all lead to the possibility of new luxuries, and these two factors again justify the reason for this research to not use the term ‘re-orientalising’ in the design of a luxury retail development with heritage. Foreigners can be employed and even appreciated rather than viewed negatively through the lens of orientalism. A city should also represent many cultures and not just one culture in an ideal situation. Aside from the internationalisation of a more

multicultural utopia, one more distinguishing non-iterated data lies in the idea of invoking national pride to attain a sense of luxury.

5.7 Our Land of Pride within the Secondspace

Throughout the data collected through in-depth interviews with producers of luxury retail spaces, many spoke about the sense of pride in successfully designing a luxury retail development with heritage. However, a few more participants from both case studies, including IS4, IS12, IS14, IS15, CA2 and CA4, went deeper by claiming that space invokes a sense of pride not just for the people who produced the space but also for the Thai people who may not even visit but think of the space. Participant IS12 frames this idea of national pride for the people thoughtfully by stating,

*“It wasn’t just about creating a beautiful building. **It was about creating an identity, creating feelings for people to feel proud of what we created, a symbol.** Even though people won’t get to visit the actual place (ICONSIAM), knowing that this place exists, **they can still feel a sense of pride about it. Like when we see something with Thainess in the media, this evokes a sense of nationals’ feelings that make us feel good.** Similarly, to athletes who compete in the name of Thailand and win some competitions, we feel proud even though we didn’t compete in the tournament ourselves.”*

IS12 is claiming that the heritagisation of the luxury retail development invokes national pride that caused Thai people to feel great from being in a state of proudness. This state of national pride also leads to the realisation of luxury in accordance with the literature review’s established idea that a special moment may result in attaining a sense of luxury. Participant CA2 also takes the idea of pride further with the following comment,

*“The way of shopping can be used to tell the history anywhere. **The pride of being Ayutthaya, being a local, being Thai and being the owner of historical heritage, a sense of community can be told through every design element.**”*

CA2 mentioned the shared sense of community created from the combination of design features that fuels national pride, a collective fulfilment of aspiration for the achievement of luxury. This sense of community also corresponded to and validated Austin & Sharr's (2020) idea of luxury based on shared values and the aspiration from the ideal home. The documentation of press releases made by the top management of both case studies also validates the intention to create a sense of national pride through the incorporation of heritage in the spatial design. In a news report, Chadatip Chutrakul, the CEO of Siam Piwat and the director of ICONSIAM stated,

*"ICONSIAM is a destination – not a mall or a mixed-use development – and it is born of a **joint creative effort** that has united the hearts of Thai people from many different walks of life. They include experts from many disciplines and from many countries who love Thailand and want to contribute to a new symbol of Thailand, making Thais proud while also making visitors from around the world fall deeper in love with Thailand and ICONSIAM was created by a collaboration of unprecedented scale between Thai artists and experts from around the world..." (Töre, 2018)*

For Central Ayutthaya, Preecha Ekkunagul, President and CEO of Central Pattana, the developer of Central Ayutthaya, also mentioned the idea of Thai pride by stating that,

"Central Ayutthaya... under the concept of 'Capital of Wonders'. This will showcase to the world Ayutthaya's magnificence as a UNESCO World Heritage site and the pride of Thai people." (Bangkok Post, 2021)

Therefore, the Secondspace of ideal has revealed the developer's agenda in utilising heritage to create special moments that fulfil the shared aspiration of the Thai people for an ideal nation. Moreover, this ideal land ignites national pride as a luxury experience. In essence, this finding supports the idea of replacing the luxury of an exotic land with the luxury of a shared communal homeland, as discussed in the literature review. The research views this ideal homeland of national pride as an integral part of the Utopolis. Nevertheless, more of the Utopolis still requires further social constructions from the binary of key findings from Firstspace, the previous chapter, and the Secondspace, this chapter. This social construction for the comprehensive revelation of Utopolis begins in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 The Heterotopia and The Utopolis in Binary

In accordance with the framework established since Chapter 2, the Literature Review, Figure 6.1 below shows Chapter 6's main focus on the Heterotopia and The Utopolis. In this chapter, the main findings from the Firstspace, Chapter 4, and Secondspace, Chapter 5, (represented in light yellow) are socially reconstructed into the Thirdspace, a heterotopia in accordance with Foucault's (1984) six principles discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1. The literature review also established that heterotopia mirrors the Utopolis, the Fourthspace, as a co-existence binary with the dark yellow highlight in Figure 6.1. As a result, the reflection of heterotopia's six principles in turn guides the research's social construction of the Utopolis. For the social construction, the selected and combined key findings from the Firstspace and the Secondspace for the Utopolis should relate to and even contradict a certain heterotopia's principle.

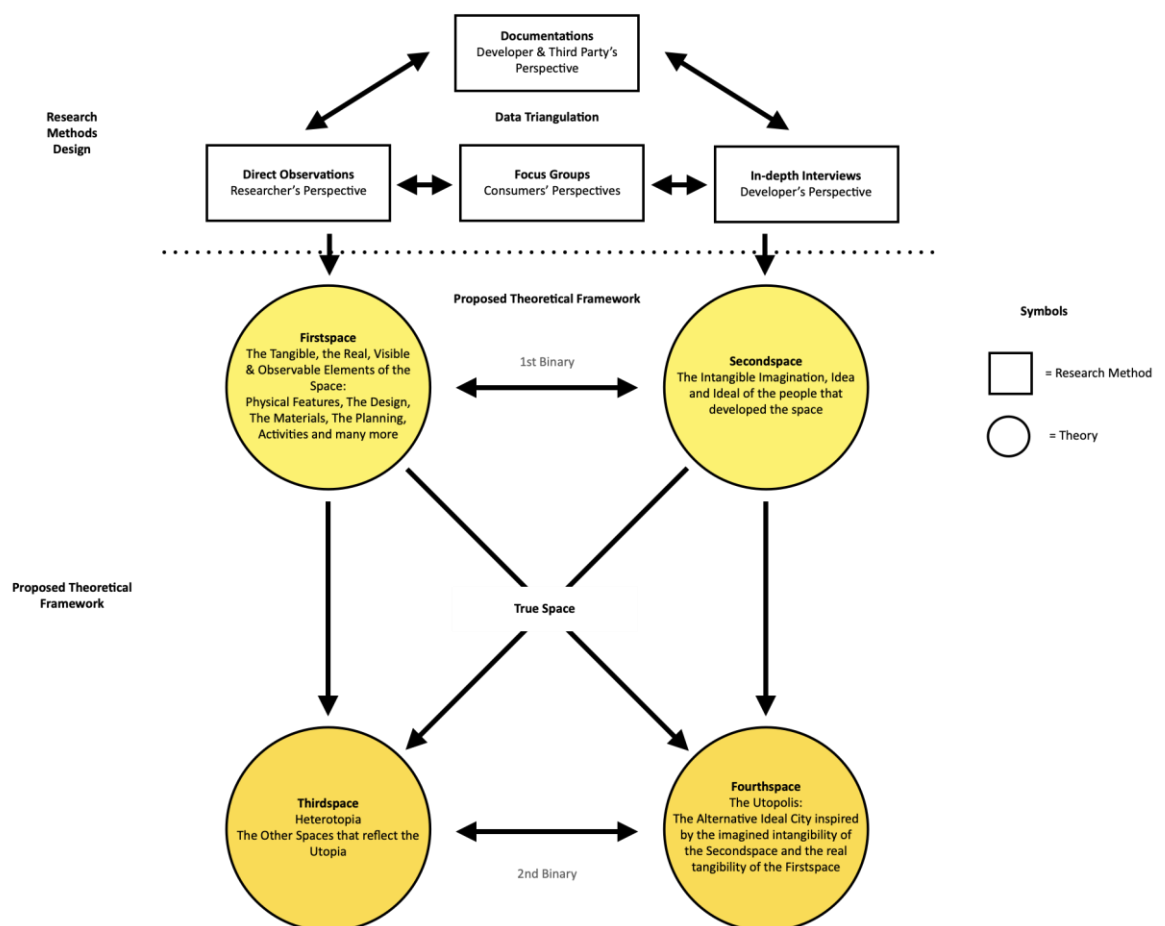


Figure 6.1 Chapter 6's Focus on the Proposed Theoretical Framework (Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Hence, the Utopolis also consists of six principles to answer the first research question, ***What are the principles of the Utopolis contrived from the Thai luxury retail developments?*** From the binary of heterotopia and the Utopolis, the research refines the thematic map of Secondspace (Figure 5.3) from Chapter 5 to provide a comprehensive understanding on how to design a luxury retail development with heritage and answers the second research, ***How can the Utopolis be used in designing a luxury retail development with Thai heritage?*** It is important to note that findings through each principle of Heterotopia and the Utopolis may overlap. The first section of this chapter begins with the first principle relating to culture.

6.1 The First Principle: The Mono-Culture Heterotopia and The Multicultural Utopolis

The first fundamental truth of the heterotopia relates to the simple fact that every culture in the world possesses its own heterotopia. A heterotopia exists in Thai retail developments in similarity to Muzzio & Muzzio-Rentas's (2008) West Edmonton Mall in Canada and Crossick & Jaumain's (2019) departments in various European countries. However, when viewing the heterotopia through this principle, the academic world also sometimes makes the heterotopia appear like a monoculture space. Even Foucault (1984) provided examples of investigated spaces that seemed to associate to a specific culture, such as the Persian garden, saunas in Scandinavian countries, and Djerba Huts in Tunisia. Through the heterotopian lens, a space such as a Thai retail development designed with Thai heritage may seem very Thai and monoculture. However, through a reversal of lens and as a contradictory reflection of this principle of the heterotopia, the Utopolis actually represents a multicultural space as thematically discovered through the observations in Chapter 4 and in-depth interviews in Chapter 5.

From Chapters 4 and 5, despite the two developments' claims of incorporating Thainess, the heritagisation process did not wash away other cultures to make a purely Thai retail space. As the city acts as a cultural exchange, heritagisation provides a focus on Thai culture, one culture that ultimately becomes fused with other cultures in order to create a new ideal land that embraces multiculturalism together. This idea of multiculturalism aligns with the idea of internationalisation discussed in Chapter 5 Section 5.6. In the case of ICONSIAM, many participants spoke about making a world-class development and Thailand more international. Even Participant CA2 talked about modernising Thai heritage to make it more international. Examples of multicultural design

features with a focus on Thai cultures can be seen in a myriad of forms throughout both case studies, from decorations by the developer, the store of the tenants, and even temporarily seasonal events.

At ICONSIAM, prime illustrations of multiculturalism include the hanging flowing installation inside ICONLUXE (Figure 4.27), which combined the traditional Thai lines taught by a Thai national artist with a re-interpretation by a British design studio, Thailand and Britain. The exterior glass façade of ICONLUXE (Figure 4.21) also showcased a design by a Thai designer that referenced the shape and function of the Sabai with German engineering. Inside ICONLUXE, the stores of Louis Vuitton (Figure 4.40) and Cartier (Figures 4.38 & 4.39) contained Thai-inspired decorations while still selling French luxury goods, a mixture of Thailand and France. It is true that travel luxury brands like Louis Vuitton often draw inspiration from many cultures around the world. However, before the opening of ICONSIAM, Thailand usually had only standardised luxury brand stores rather than flagship stores that differ from others (Thomas, 2008; Moore et al., 2010). This represents a significant moment for the luxury industry in Thailand, where major luxury brands chose to invoke Thai cultural heritage into the retail environment for the first time, also benefiting local makers of traditional Thai luxuries. In Louis Vuitton, the golden silk brocade hanging installations, traditional wooden lanterns and sculptures of tropical plants immerse the French fashion from trunks, leather goods and ready-to-wear. In the Cartier store, golden chandeliers inspired by the lotus, lamps with stained glass temple mosaic and furniture upholstered with Thai silk complement the dazzling fine jewellery and watches designed by the French jewellery house. The Christmas tree also features a multiculturalism with a focus on Thailand because of the employment of the Krathong as inspiration (Figure 4.46), which synergised a Thai object with a universally known Western icon originating in Germany.

For Central Ayutthaya, multiculturalism within the permanent design by the developer may seem less explicit than ICONSIAM, but this could be seen with the mural in front of the bathroom (Figure 4.38) depicting European and Chinese people together within the ideal city of Ayutthaya. Central Ayutthaya also contained other murals not shown in Chapter 4 that portrayed foreigners. Central could just have murals with only figures of Thai people, but they still added foreigners in. The store of the Japanese glasses brand Owndays at Central Ayutthaya (Figure 4.42) also fused Thailand with Japan by designing an entrance façade with a Thai pattern while the television displayed the statement 'Japan to Thailand'. Even the Chinese New Year celebration infused a Thai design not usually seen in traditional Chinese New Year festivities, such as rabbit dolls made

from printed textile that resembled Thai silk with golden brocade (Figure 4.50). These examples alone show the combination of Thai culture with either British, French, German, Japanese or Chinese culture.

In the multicultural utopian city, possibilities can be limitless when it comes to the synergy of a local culture with other foreign cultures. In alignment with Urbach (1998), Johnson (2006) and Beckett et al. (2016), who all discussed a local force repelling against a dominant culture, heritagisation allows the restoration of local culture that would usually disappear or become sidelined in a modern and highly connected world, a more culturally balanced and ideal parallel version of reality in contradiction to the white modern retail development that erased all cultures (Backes, 1997) with a utopia that prevents cultural amnesia (Coleman, 2014). The heritagisation also makes the luxury retail development more egalitarian by balancing out the authoritative internationally dominant culture through the opportunity for local culture to shine among others and to be seen as a luxury too. By accommodating more local cultural heritage into the space, the proximity of international brands to local culture also makes traditional Thai goods appear more luxurious than before. This approach promotes the consumption of local luxuries, directing capital to local communities rather than predominantly benefiting foreign corporations through the consumption of foreign luxuries. By elevating the local culture to a world-class status among international peers, for the context of this research, Thailand among the world, the luxury retail space evoked a sense of pride within the local population as special moments for the attainment of luxury. This represents the same type of pride that created a special moment for myself when I saw a Thai kite in the window display of Hermès (Figure 4.51). This may have promoted love for the Hermès brand, but in the end, not everyone has the capital to buy Hermès products. As a result, the first principle represents one of the most critical factors when it comes to the heritagisation of the luxury retail development. The developer must not just look at its own culture in the heritagisation process but also incorporate a myriad of other cultures for the creation of new luxury experiences and promote its local cultural heritage onto the world.

6.2 The Second Principle: Local Promoter and Transpiration of the Temple's Function

The second principle of the heterotopia deals with the changes in the specific function of a space over time. Foucault (1984) provided the example of the cemetery of churches in Western cities

where it was once the vibrant heart of the city, but by the end of the 18th Century, the cemetery started to slowly transform into a dark forsaken space associated with death and illness in modern-day culture. Through this principle, the function of the luxury retail development in Thailand has also changed over time. From the space that retailed mainly imported Western luxury goods to promote the idea of Westernisation and modernisation, as discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.2, to a shift in function where heritagisation also allows opportunities to retail local luxuries, promote local brands and make people embrace local heritage again. This shift in function was also seen in the mindset of the developers in Chapter 5, who discussed the need to promote and even pass down Thai culture in their establishments and even the reinterpretation of a cultural element's function to make people notice and use the cultural element.

Aside from the shift from the promoter of foreign modernisation to the promoter of Thai modernisation, the function of Thai luxury retail development also changed from just the place of consumption to a place where people live, a city. In alignment with Backes (1997) and Styhre's (2019) writings on the first shopping mall by Victor Gruen, these two case studies also included options for dining from morning till evening, banks for financial transactions even on weekends or national holidays, movie theatres, attractions, and even exhibition spaces. More interestingly, by the time of publishing this thesis, both projects will also boast new hotels, allowing people to spend the night and actually temporarily live within the retail development. ICONSIAM also features a luxury condominium for those who can afford to live permanently right next to the main retail building. ICONSIAM even features a wellness clinic for preventive medicine by a major hospital, while Central Ayutthaya has a government office, even though provincial hall exists right opposite from the development. In times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, ICONSIAM also became a place for people to get vaccinated. This transformation of function from just the seller of goods to a destination where people can live out their days also provides a reflection of the ideal city hidden within.

The new spectrum of functions within luxury retail development in contemporary times also leads to the notion of the Utopolis's role in transpiring an ideal heritage site. Instead of a space with function that gradually transforms over time through the lens of the heterotopia, the Utopolis in vice versa takes on a traditional function of an ideal socio-cultural site. Every culture contains a certain ideal historic site that people tend to think of that explicitly and implicitly symbolises a culture and gathers people together as a community. An ideal socio-cultural site also often represents or symbolises a city. For instance, a Roman city should have public baths, a

hippodrome or a forum. An English city should boast its churches, pubs and even private clubs. The imagination of a traditional Japanese city usually comes with a Japanese castle, tea houses, and temples with tiered pagodas. In the case of Thai culture, the participants in the two case studies often recall the temple, which has transpired to the Utopolis within both retail developments. The choice of the temple may seem stereotypical when it comes to Thai heritage, but sometimes certain well-known spaces are unavoidable. Participant IS3 explained and justified the choice in using the temple as an inspiration, despite personal reluctance, by stating,

*“In our society and in our history, **the best things, the most perfect things, we sent them to... or we created them for the temple.** Thai houses are starkly different from Western houses. Thai houses are very simple just made of wood. They are also not permanent if we compare to chateaus or mansions in Europe. This was our way of life. However, **if we wanted to do something special, we did it as offerings for the Buddha... So, when we brought over designers, if they want to see the best of Thailand and the best craftsmanship. We had to take them to temples...**”*

From this statement, developers may not avoid stereotypical heritage sites that epitomise the culture in the heritagisation process of luxury retail developments. Through the context of Thai culture, both case studies still contain many explicit visible design features that resemble the temple. ICONSIAM showcases the golden columns inside ICONLUXE (Figure 4.22), with its intricate patterns that could have similarly also existed in the pillars of a traditional temple. The main façade of Central Ayutthaya (Figure 4.24), the prime location and the first impression upon visit, also reinterpreted the traditional line seen in Thai temples into a new white and golden box that sparkles in the sunlight like a temple. Both case studies also contain many Buddhist objects, such as images of the Buddha, donation boxes, and temple bells. Aside from the explicit visible design features that referenced the temple, as discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.4.1, the temple doesn't merely act as a religious site in Thai culture but also a space for social gathering, learning and even refuge in times of trouble. The temple represents the heart of the city, and luxury retail developments have taken on this historical role of the temple in Thai society. This could be seen in the social gathering for national events such as Thai New Years and Loy Krathong, temporary exhibitions to teach people about Thai heritage such as the traditional Kite (Figure 4.51) at ICONSIAM. Even the criticised Siamese Chintz exhibition at Central Ayutthaya (Figure 4.54) also enforces an education in Thai history. Moreover, even though retail development is not a religious

site, people still pray to divine beings and provide donations in the same manner as temples. During the discussion of ICONSIAM's focus group about the similarity of ICONSIAM to the temple, Participant 6 even stated,

"In reality, temples in the past were places where people went to spend their time, apart from the religious context, to do their shopping and socialise as a community, so retail developments nowadays function similarly to temples, without the religious context."

The transpiration of an ideal heritage site to the Utopolis also takes Karlstrom's (2013) idea of the transpiration of heritage from an old site to a new site to the next level of philosophical thinking. Heritage sites don't just transpire to a new physical space but also to an abstract space, the Utopolis, within the physical space. When Crossick & Jaumain (2019) compared the department store to a cathedral or Dehaene & De Cauter's (2008) referral of the shopping mall as an agora, the examples of the cathedral and agora actually represent ideal spaces in society that constitute a part of the Utopolis and not the heterotopia. As a result of the second principle, the Utopolis always has an ideal socio-cultural heritage site gracing the scenery of the city. The scenery doesn't only include the external explicit architectural appearance of the heritage site that comes out to the tangible physical space but also the activities and functions associated with the space that bring people together. With people, the space also comes with customs, values, norms and the implicit. Lastly, the second principle also has consequences for the remaining principles.

6.3 The Third Principle: The Juxtaposition of the Best and the Accessible Paradise of Abundance

In the third principle, Foucault (1984) argued about the juxtapositions of many contradictory elements within the heterotopia and used an example of the Persian garden where the four rectangular gardens within the garden represent the four parts of the world in the Persian cultural belief. Moreover, the carpets inside the garden also represented a garden. Therefore, four parts of the world exist within one garden with more gardens within. From the findings made in the first and second principles, it can be seen that the heterotopia of the Thai luxury retail developments juxtaposes many cultures (First Principle, Section 6.1) and spaces (Second Principle, Section 6.2) together. The heritagisation process produces multiple juxtapositions, even about

time, which will be discussed further in the next principle, the Fourth principle. However, the most exceptional juxtaposition for this research exists in the form of the compilation of the best together in one space.

Both luxury retail developments have attempted to put the best of everything into and onto their respective spaces. In the Secondspace, ICONSIAM's ideal was that the best of Thailand meets the best of the world. The quotation from Participant IS3 in the previous section also revealed the idea of visiting the best cultural heritage sites for inspiration to design the retail space. The developers of Central Ayutthaya always thought about the best cultural heritage to symbolise the city. On the surface, the accumulation of the best may not seem contradictory, as the greatest, the foremost and the unrivalled are combined together into one space. However, upon deeper investigation through observations, many multiple layers of contradictions exist within the best alone. At ICONSIAM, the best of the real local people, such as national artists, craftsmen and scientists spiritually inhabit the Utopolis among legendary beings, another form of best, from deities, Buddha and heavenly beasts. For instance, in ICONSIAM, people who have advanced Thai rice appear through the exhibition panels (Figure 4.53), while a pair of angels can descend from heaven in Sooksiam through the wall at the same time (Figure 4.19). Another juxtaposition of the best can also be seen with food: visitors can purchase the best street foods of Thailand at Sooksiam. In contrast, visitors can also enjoy a Michelin-star fine dining experience by the French chef, Alain Ducasse, at ICONLUXE. In terms of shopping, a visitor can also buy a silk outfit from the various international luxury brands at ICONLUXE or a silk garment from the best Thai artisans and designers at ICONCRAFT or Jim Thompson. This multi-layered contradictory excellence also applies to Central Ayutthaya.

At Central Ayutthaya too, mythical creatures such as the phoenix swan on the screen roamed (Figure 4.29) alongside celebrities from a hit period drama (Figure 4.49 on the screen of the event). Moreover, everyday people can dine inside oversized Benjarong porcelain adorned with angels (Figure 4.34). The Benjarong porcelain may be replication/adaptation of an original, but it still represents one of the high arts in Thai culture that was once reserved exclusively for the best in society. Although Central Ayutthaya possesses no luxury brands, visitors could consume other types of luxury goods. Inside Ploen Pranakorn (Figure 4.20), visitors can even purchase traditional weapons, a rare uncommon item in modern times. Next to Ploen Pranakorn, along the circular walkway, Central leases spaces to gold shops for people's indulgences to purchase gold jewellery. In contrast to traditional Thai golden worldly material goods and weapons, visitors

can also buy the latest iPhone at the store of JIB (Figure 4.43) inside Central Ayutthaya at the same time. The examples from the two case studies used in the previous two paragraphs also reveal the juxtaposition of heritage and the future, tradition and innovation. This juxtaposition also correlates to the theme of the Imagination of Modern Heritage discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.1, where retail development always represents modernity despite its incorporation of the past. The paradoxical examples of juxtaposing the best can be limitless, but the whole idea lies in the fact that Utopolis caused the retail development to contain luxuries in nearly every corner, an abundance of luxuries. Even a visit to the bathroom can become a luxury experience with tunnels depicting murals of Thai sceneries (Figures 4.35 and 4.36) to the richly decorated bathrooms that teleport oneself to another realm.

This notion of abundance in luxuries also leads to the idea of Utopolis as a divine paradise filled with infinite luxuries that permeates out ethereally to the real physical retail development through the design features that incorporated heritage. Apart from luxuries goods, the paradise also consists of divine beings in congruent with individuals ennobled by the developer who exist among everyday people, the visitors. Some of the examples discussed above may require capital to purchase for the ownership of the luxury, but the luxury retail development also opens up some luxuries for people to come and experience/access the myriad of luxuries without having to pay for anything. ICONSIAM could have ticketed Sooksiam like other theme parks, but instead chose to open the space to any visitors. Visitors could also experience the view of the river and the city of Bangkok from the restaurants, cafes and elevated Park next to Apple. Normally, only people who can afford luxury condominiums along the river could have such a view. People could stay at one of the five-star hotels along the river, but they still need to pay a premium for a room with the river view, a luxury not everyone can bear the expense. Central Ayutthaya also provides open access to luxuries with semi-transparent installations designed to symbolise the aquatic scenery (Figure 4.31) or the rice field ready for harvest (Figure 4.32) for people to freely sit, relax and enjoy the cool air-conditioning away from tropical Thailand outside. Even at the porcelain bowl in the food court, visitors can sit or take photos without having to purchase any food from the food court. In some food courts in Thailand, a visitor has to go through an entrance and convert money into a voucher or a food court debit card first in order to compel the visitor to buy at least one thing, but Central did not take this path and open up the space. Moreover, next to the food court, Central also designed a table that was decorated with blue and white porcelain (Figure 5.2) for people to spend their free time. Thus, Central ultimately ended up designing extraordinary seats, chairs and benches for people to freely use.

This open access to abundance through the heritagisation process makes retail development more egalitarian and will be discussed further in Section 6.5, the fifth principle. This principle also represents an important principle in the visualisation of the Utopolis. The first principle, through the focus on one culture in amalgamation with others, still represents an abstract concept that requires a designer to design. The second principle with the transpiration of an ideal heritage site also reveals the inspiration, the temple in the context of this research, that also requires further reinterpretation, adaptation and incorporation into the space. The scenery of the Utopolis is not just the placement and replication of temples into the city. In regards to the third principle, the scenery of abundance with the best of everything, one can start to imagine so many things that need to be visible in the scenery of the Utopolis. From the findings in the Firstspace and the Secondspace, this scenery includes the best cultural objects, architectural features, local geographical landscape with nature at its Prime, divine creatures and local individuals of significance. Lastly, the best of everything also exists altogether at the same time at the Utopolis, and this leads to the next principle, dealing with time.

6.4 The Fourth Principle: The Temporal Festivity vs. the Parallel Present of Eternal Celebration

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1, the heterotopia disrupts the flow of time where the retail development's heterotopia creates a sense of a temporary festive occasion upon the visitor's entrance into the space. The flow of time returns to normal once the visitor exits the space. In a reflection of the temporal festivity to build the Utopolis, the heterotopia takes the visitor to a different time, but the question remains what is the time of the Utopolis. Moreover, as established in Chapter 5, Section 5.1, luxury retail development represents a juxtaposition of heritage and modernity. It is important again to emphasise that heterotopia and the heritagisation process don't take visitors to an ideal city in the past. The Utopolis actually represents an unseen alternative parallel imagination of the present inspired by the idealisation of the past to invoke pride through the conceptualisation of the developer. In this imagined parallel present, time also flows differently at the Utopolis.

From the observations of various events of both case studies, such as Thai New Years as explored in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.7, the Utopolis always contains a celebration going on. Moreover, each celebration is always extended and elongated beyond the true and actual duration of the holiday

outside the retail development. Even at spaces that did not host festivals or events, decorations of celebratory lighting and buntings were observed, such as the lanterns hanging in the Southern Zone of Sooksiam (Figure 4.18) and lightning on the bridge in the middle of the main circular walkway inside Central Ayutthaya (Figure 4.30). In addition, the Utopolis also celebrates the best of nature, which overlaps with the previous principle on the juxtaposition of the best. The best of nature represents the number-one ideal condition that the natural world can be in, such as flowers perpetually blooming, rice all golden and even schools of fishes all fully grown and ready for harvest. Moreover, these top-form occurrences of nature may happen out-of-season and all at the same time. As a result, in terms of time, Utopolis doesn't possess natural changing seasons like the reality outside; it is a space with just one season, the best season for any living beings from the natural world to be in their prime.

The fourth principle becomes more complicated when analysing the lack of a natural changing season with endless festivities. The developer's will to control and present nature at its ideal condition results in an artificial world with sceneries of crops ready for harvest, flowers blooming for eternity, and a myriad of creatures that grace the landscape to showcase a sublime, healthy ecosystem. This ecosystem comes through permanent design features from immersive themed marketplaces like Sooksiam and Ploen Pranakorn. The permanent decorations on the restaurant floor of ICONSIAM also represent another example with the water feature, the water buffalo among flowers and fish traps that host restaurants (Figure 4.33). For Central Ayutthaya, the examples again constitute semi-transparent installations with seating that either showcase the river or the rice field. On the other hand, the cultural festivals and celebrations variate with the seasons and the calendar in real life from the Chinese New Year, Thai New Year, Loy Krathong and Christmas. Changes still occur, but these celebrations take place for longer periods than the true date of the festival in calendar. Visitors witness and experience the festival in a specified area that constantly hosts a celebration, such as the River Park of ICONSIAM (Figure 4.4) and the main entrance hall with the golden Phan Phum inside Central Ayutthaya (Figure 4.13). Thus, when one envisions the Utopolis through the fourth principle, the Utopolis must showcase a geographical landscape with ideal unchanging conditions of nature that host an abundance of luxury objects (the third principle) and ideal living and celestial beings. However, the Utopolis also contains spaces like public squares that always host a celebration that became elongated in the true calendar.

In summary of the fourth principle, the heterotopia takes the visitor to Utopolis for temporary festivity at an ideal imagined parallel present of the development's city. However, the Utopolis constitutes a space of eternal celebration where people may come in and out, but the city's celebrations always carry on through a continuum of events, festive decorations and the best season for nature that never changes. This idea of the eternal celebration also affects people's behaviour, which leads to the fifth heterotopia on the subjugation of people to rituals.

6.5 The Fifth Principle: Subjugation into the Ideal Inhabitants

In the fifth principle, Foucault discussed the heterotopia's ability to deceive people into perceiving a space as fully accessible, even though the space actually contains entrances and exits. Behind the entrance, the heterotopia actually subjects visitors to certain rituals. The luxury retail development represents a great example of this principle because a development will always have entrances with operation hours that limit accessibility of the space, even though anyone can come in and indulge in the abundance of luxuries (the Third Principle) without having to purchase a single thing. Even in a retail development designed without heritagisation, the developers design with the line of sight of visitors in their minds, and this results in the subjugation of visitors to the agendas and priorities of the developers. The main example represents the location of the brand's logo on the store façade and the no-obstruction policy to the storefront window for the maximum opportunity for commercial exploitation, even if visitors don't really have to buy. It is also through this principle of the heterotopia that hidden authoritative forces, such as the entrance mural of the bathroom (Figure 4.35) and the Krathong designed by Russia (4.47), also come out, and developers should be cautious and keep this principle in mind when it comes to designing a retail development.

The heritagisation process adds another layer of interest to the subjugation of people to rituals because, as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2, cultural knowledge also comes with values and the developer enforces certain cultural values through rituals inside the retail space. Moreover, these values turn visitors into ideal inhabitants of the Utopolis. Ideal inhabitants of the Utopolis cannot be created without the heterotopia's authoritative force that subjugates the people that it reflects. For example, at ICONCRAFT, ICONSIAM makes people learn about a Thai textile weaver who specialises in the production of the traditional golden silk brocade once reserved for Thai royalties through the short documentary inside the exhibition dome and the visual merchandising signage on the easel. Through this indoctrination, visitors may, in turn, purchase a piece of Thai

silk with golden brocade to become like royalties themselves and support local craftsmen.

Moreover, at Sooksiam, visitors can imagine themselves as elite members of society through the traditional Thai houses, which also contain images of Buddha and donation boxes (Figure 4.16) for people to pray and make good merit, an ideal behaviour in Thai society. Therefore, the heritagisation process elevates everyday people to an ideal status in society and forces them to behave in an ideal manner. Moreover, these exalted everyday people live among the people of accomplishment, such as national artists, artisans, rice horticulturalists and even divine beings.

This exaltation of everyday people can also be seen at Central Ayutthaya. For instance, again the great design of the Benjarong bowl tables in the food court (Figure 4.34) elevates people in society where they dine like kings in the past among angels. At the event in Figure 4.49, people were also encouraged to come dressed in traditional Thai outfits. People who didn't own Thai outfits could even rent one from one of the stalls at the event. The stall also featured a spectrum of colour options for visitors. A vibrant colourful Thai outfit was once a luxury that only the elite could afford in the past and the wearing of these colourful Thai outfits again lifted anyone to a noble position in the feudal Thai social structure. In both case studies, these ennobled everyday people are also attended by 'subjects' from sale staff, security guards, cleaners and many more. The saying of 'customer is king' is very true in the luxury retail development that incorporated Thai heritage. For all of these reasons, the heterotopia subjects visitors into rituals that transform them into ideal inhabitants who are ironically attended by their own subjects at the Utopolis. The exaltation of every people by Utopolis also represents another special moment apart from the evocation of national pride that provided the retail development with a sense of luxury.

The fifth principle also relates to the Secondspace's theme of Present Day People, as discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.3. At the end of the day, the visitors, who become uplifted upon entering the Utopolis and return to normal after leaving, are people who are living in the present, not people from the past. The people in the past may permanently inhabit the Utopolis by the developer, but most of the people living today may never truly live in the Utopolis. Even store employees do not permanently live in the space. In addition, the developers always have ideal customers that they desire, despite claiming the retail development as a space for everyone. The luxury retail development can never belong to everyone due to the fifth principle of the heterotopia. Nevertheless, through the Utopolis, the developer can imagine rituals inspired by the past that every local person living in the present may enjoy, such as kite flying during the Thai New Year at

ICONSIAM (Figure 4.51). The consideration of activities also may affect the design of the luxury retail development by including additional spaces dedicated for temporary activities.

Finally, the fifth principle also constitutes the final jigsaw puzzle for the scenography of the Utopolis. As argued in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1, a place constitutes not just material tangibility, such as the temple or the cultural objects or that nature that can be seen in the Utopolis, but also the intangible activities, the soul of the space. Even without visiting a place, a person should be able to imagine the activities related to the space and this also applies to the Utopolis. The scenery of the Utopolis also must include people who act and behave through specific rituals for the complete imagination and comprehension of the Utopolis. A city must always have people and activities unique to the city. Lastly, the complete comprehension of the Utopolis also leads to true comprehension of the space, the final and sixth principle.

6.6 Sixth Principle: The True Comprehension of the Space

In the last principle, Foucault (1984) discussed the heterotopia's ability to reveal the true space and as illustrated throughout this chapter, the true space also consists of the Utopolis that reflects the heterotopia. From the true comprehension of the space, Figure 6.2 on the next page summarises all of the principles through the proposed theoretical framework.

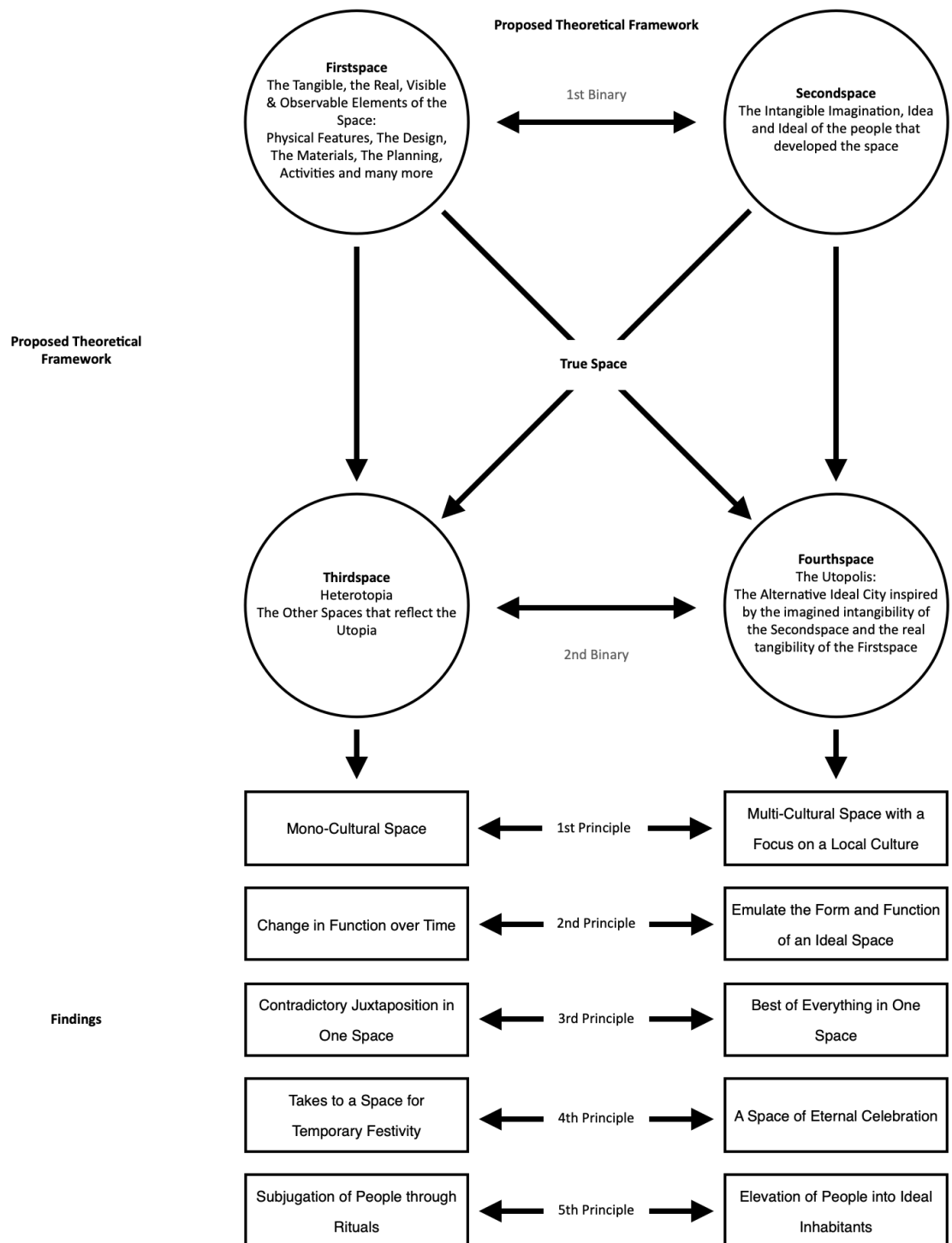


Figure 6.2 Heterotopia and the Utopolis through the Proposed Theoretical Framework (Sombunjaroen, 2023)

It can be seen that the Utopolis reflects the heterotopia and provides another dimension in understanding a space. Heterotopia looks at a space in a culture, but the Utopolis has many cultures in one space. Through heritagization, there is a focused culture among a myriad of other cultures. In the second principle, through the lens of heterotopia, one analyses the changing function of a space over time while the Utopolis takes on the forms and functions of another ideal

space in society. In the third principle, the heterotopia also contains many contradictory juxtapositions that somehow exist together within one space and this resulted in the Utopolis being blessed with the best of everything, a city of abundance. In addition, the heterotopia temporarily takes a visitor to a space for festivity through the fourth principle. This temporal space that visitors escape to represents the Utopolis, a space of infinitely changing perpetual celebrations under non-changing ideal natural circumstances. Lastly, in the fifth principle, the heterotopia also forces people into rituals and the ritual transforms people into ideal inhabitants of the Utopolis. In binary, the heterotopia represents the disturbance, the corruption, and the chaos within the space. On the other hand, the Utopolis constitutes harmony, divinity and indulgences specific to the space of the luxury retail development. A space is never just black or white and people need to view a space comprehensively and truthfully through both theoretical lenses. This paragraph and Figure 6.2 on the previous page also represent the answers to the first research question, ***What are the principles of the Utopolis contrived from the Thai luxury retail developments?***

The original findings of the Utopolis' five principles also allow for an understanding of the Utopolis' impact on spatial luxuriousness. Through the first principle, the Utopolis evokes a sense of national pride through the heritagisation process that uplifts the local cultural heritage onto the world stage. In the second principle, by taking on the forms and functions of an ideal cultural space, the Utopolis allows the retail development to become a space that is relevant to the local population and, most importantly, a space that people can aspire and look up to. As a consequence of the third principle, the Utopolis enriches the retail space with an abundance of local and traditional luxuries. Many of these luxuries are usually seen or used in the ideal cultural site of the second principle. Moreover, in the past, only the very few could use or afford such luxuries. Beyond tangible material worldly goods, the fourth principle of eternal celebration permits an intangible luxury in the form of special moments. Any time a person visits a luxury retail development, special moments can happen from either the never-ending, but yet alternating, festivities or the constant state of nature at its prime, a natural bliss. Finally, the sixth principle, similar to the fifth principle, also creates a special moment for visitors by elevating anyone to a member of the societal elite through the open access of luxuries from the third principle. All of these factors from the Utopolis allow retail development to feel luxurious without the need to feature luxury brands. Luxury brands become an addition to spatial luxury. Table 6.1 on the next page, summarises the key idea of luxury born from the Utopolis.

Principle	Utopolis	The Idea of Luxury through the Principles
1 st Principle	Multicultural Space with a Focus on a Local Culture	Evocation of national pride
2 nd Principle	Emulate Forms and Functions of an Ideal Space	A space that people aspire and look up to
3 rd Principle	Best of Everything in One Space	An abundance of traditional local luxuries
4 th Principle	A Space of Eternal Celebration	Special moments from festivities and natural bliss
5 th Principle	Elevation of People into Ideal Inhabitants	Special moments from open access to luxuries and the transformation into a social elite

Table 6.1 The Utopolis and the Idea of Luxury through the Five Principles
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Aside from the ability of five principles to reveal the key ideas of luxury produced by the Utopolis, the five principles also grant people the ability to socially construct the imagined scenery of a Utopian city for what the developer's fantasy for what the city of the retail development can be. For instance, the Utopolis of ICONSIAM constitutes a Bangkok with its nature intact where people still use golden, silver and nark³¹ waterways and not just the road. The water is blessed with fish, rice is still grown in some parts of the city and water buffaloes still plough the land. In this landscape of rivers, canals and rice fields, the city consists of a mixture of traditional Thai houses as seen in Sooksiam and modern buildings with exteriors that draw on the architectural key features of the temple, such as the golden spires, and glistening glass that reflects the water, creating a scene of the sparkling city on a metallic river. Many of the buildings, despite featuring Thai heritage, also incorporated foreign styles and engineering. Along these buildings, flowers perpetually bloom, and visitors are greeted and welcomed by a giant Malai³² flower garland upon entering. Visitors are encouraged to also use local crafts, pray to the image of the Buddha, donate

³¹ An alloy of bronze, gold and silver, a colour that is bronze led with a hint of gold.

³² A Thai garland usually made from many jasmine buds used in religious ceremonies and to pay respect to elders. It can also be used as an apology.

money, and learn about Thai cultures. In a public square next to the metallic river, the city always hosts foreign and Thai festivals for the delight of the visitors. Lastly, this city is inhabited by angels, mythical swans, white elephants, mythical serpents, national artists, master craftsmen and even rice innovators.

The Utopolis of Central Ayutthaya also shares many similarities to ICONSIAM as both cities exist on the central plain of Thailand. Nevertheless, Central Ayutthaya's Utopolis still contains its own unique features. Instead of existing on plain with surreal metallic waterways blessed with rice, water buffalo and fishes, the water at Ayutthaya contains its natural colour. The city also showcases buildings that represent a modern interpretation of the traditional Thai houses made either of modern-day steel or the traditional timbre. Prominent structures in the city come in white and gold that incorporate traditional lines seen in Thai temples. Some buildings are also made of red bricks. Red bricks also represent the material of choice for the streets and the public square. Therefore, the cityscape consists of buildings in white, gold, red and timbre on the water. Upon entering the city, the visitors are honoured with another form of floral arrangement, the Phan Phum³³, that elevate visitors to a revered status in society. From the murals scattered around Central Ayutthaya, the Utopolis are also inhabited with Westerners, Chinese and Japanese from the past who are dressed in traditional attires. Visitors are also encouraged to dress in traditional Thai outfits and dine in colourful Benjarong porcelains.

From the ability to conceptualise the Utopolis through its five principles, the research is now arguing that the design process of the luxury retail development that incorporates local heritage can start with the Utopolis for a cohesive spatial retail design. Throughout the investigations of ICONSIAM and Central Ayutthaya, both case studies contain design features that this research praises or criticises. Both case studies also contain design features or inspirations that do not fit in with other designs or the scenography of the Utopolis. The in-depth interviews also revealed that both case studies had to change many of their design features with different cultural inspirations.

³³ An object for worshipping or paying respect to important beings including the Buddha, the dharma (doctrine, or teaching), and the sangha (the monastic order, members of royal families and ancestors). 'Phan' is a round tray with a pedestal, usually in either gold or silver. 'Phum' means taper or lotus shape, similar to 'Phanom Mue', which is how Thai people put their palms together at chest level as an expression of greeting, respect, gratitude and apology. Nowadays, materials used to form 'Phum' consist of candles, silver and gold-coloured fabric. Traditionally, it would have been made with a repetition of flowers and folded leaves.

However, Central Ayutthaya has more consistency in design and cultural inspiration overall than ICONSIAM. The invoked heritage became so evident that even foreign brands could also be picked up and used in their stores, despite the research's criticism that the heritage used did not promote the narrative of the brand. Participant CA5 was the only participant to disclose that Central Ayutthaya actually created an image of a city to design of the real physical Central Ayutthaya, while no participant from ICONSIAM mentioned a similar measure. The imagine city of Central Ayutthaya still represents a traditional Thai city with no modernisation, unlike the scenography described in the previous paragraph. However, Central urban planned the retail development like a city. For example, Central drew a palace with a golden pagoda to represent the entrance hall that changed the golden pagodas to semi-transparent and golden Phan Phums. A red brick public square with a market to symbolise Ploen Pranakorn. Central even had a Japanese settlement that they chose to remove after its completion, as previously discussed Chapter 5 Section 5.2.1 The Selection of Cultural Elements as Connectors to the Past. In spite of the materialisation of the ideal city into reality resulting in the dilution and destruction of many ideals, Central was able to withhold a design consistency and this caused the research to argue that the design process should inversely begin with the visualisation of the Utopolis scenography.

From the Utopolis scenography and the five principles of the Utopolis, the research revised the thematic map (Figure 5.3) from Chapter 5, Section 5.5 into Figure 6.3 on the next page. Figure 6.3 acts as a diagram that completely shows the ways to design a luxury retail development through the process of heritagisation, with the Utopolis in mind.

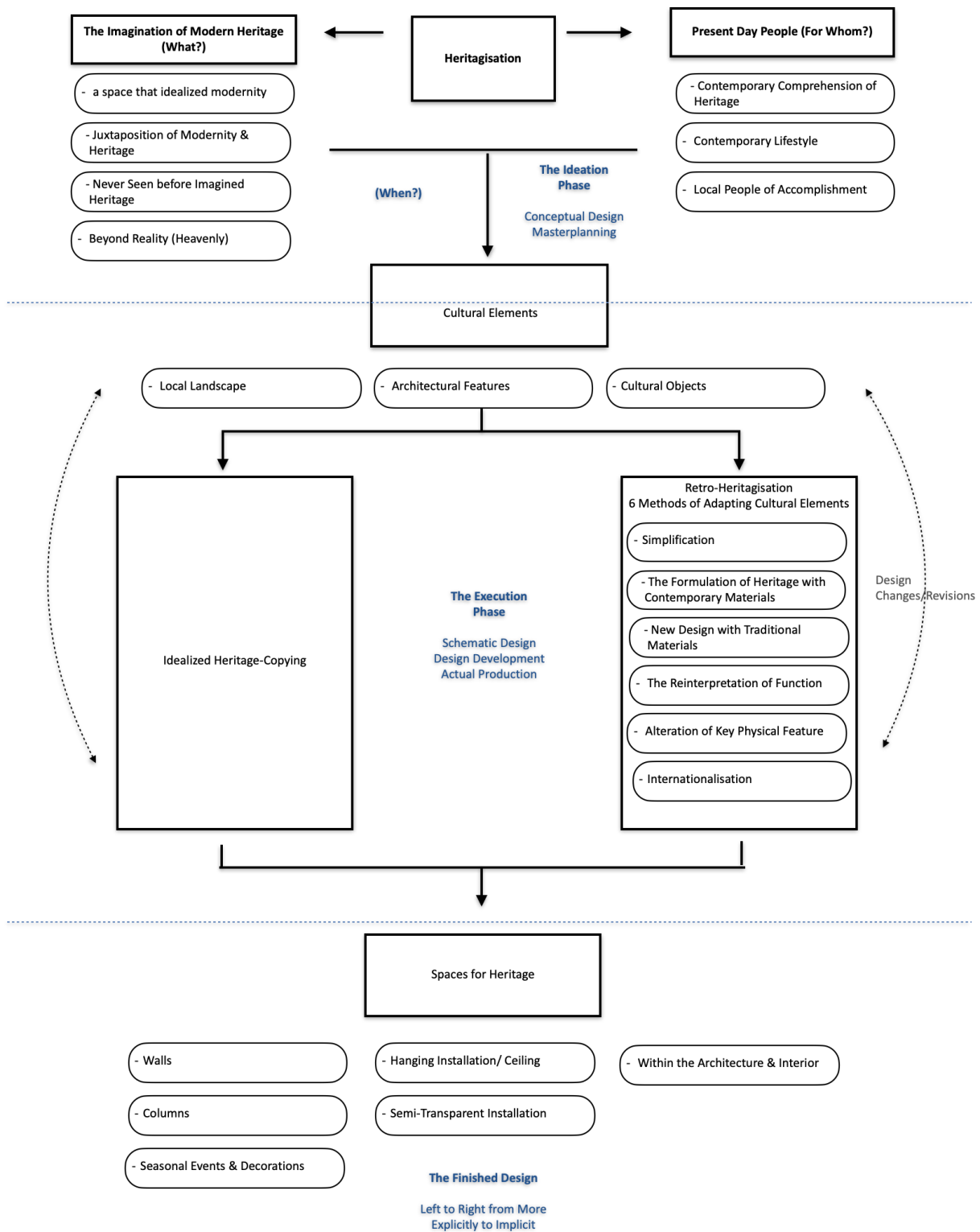


Figure 6.3 The Map for Designing a Luxury Retail Development with Heritage (Sombunjaroen, 2023)

Looking at Figure 6.3 in *the Imagination of Modern Heritage*, the idea of making space beyond reality, a heavenly space, has been added. The developers didn't directly say about making a

heavenly space, but the developers' ideals and the heritagisation process unintentionally created an ethereal environment that reflected the idea of the Utopolis. This means that a developer must not just stick to reality when it comes to conceptualising the space with heritage. When it comes to the theme of **the Imagination of Modern Heritage**, the developer can also think of the Utopolis' first principle where modernity is also derived from the fusion of other cultures with Thai design into a new, original and never seen before creations.

In the **Present Day People**, the research also added to the idea of the local people of accomplishment. The developer should not just consider the lifestyle of the people today alone, but they should also contemplate the individuals of significance in Thai culture who deserve recognition in society. Luxury retail development can be a platform for the local population. Moreover, the requirements in the selection of these local people will also reflect the social values that the Utopolis upholds. These values also elevate the customers of the developers to an elite status in society, a luxury experience for all from the Utopolis. As a result, in the theme of the **Present Day People**, the developer should take the Utopolis' fifth principle into account to plan rituals that elevate people into ideal inhabitants.

The section of the **Cultural Elements** has remained the same, but it is important to remind us that the combination of the cultural elements leads to a scenery of cultural abundance in the Utopolis. In vice versa, the developer can also start by imagining what the scenery of the Utopolis should look like to guide the developer in the selection of the cultural element by taking into consideration the Utopolis' second, third and fourth principles. The scenery of Utopolis should always represent the ideal and beyond realistic version of the city that retail development is located in by incorporating the past with the present. This scenery should include forms of idealised cultural heritage sites, an abundance of local luxuries and decorations for a permanent sense of celebrations unrelated to the changing festivals.

When it comes to the juxtaposition of the past and the present, at the end of the day, the developer cannot rely on retro-heritagisation alone. Idealised heritage-copying represents the creation of not just the exact imitation but a better version of the original like a Photoshop touch-up of an image to correspond to the Utopolis' third principle in juxtaposing the best. Heritage-copying is also required for the right balance between the explicit and implicit sense of heritage, despite the developers' general disapproval of the method. Within **Retro-heritagisation**, the

research added a sixth method called internationalisation for the adaptation of cultural elements. In internationalisation, the developer can adapt the cultural element to not be completely traditional by employing foreign designers or by fusing cultural elements from foreign cultures with local cultural elements, such as the Krathong Christmas Tree. Internationalisation is important in the heritagisation process because the Utopolis represents a multicultural space, the first principle.

Finally, the research added one more section after the retro-heritagisation for the spatial manifestation of heritage in luxury retail developments. Disregarding immersive heritage spaces like Sook Siam and Ploen Pranakorn, heritage is most explicit as decorations on permanent walls and columns. The walls and the columns are in the visitor's line of sight the most. A seasonal event is also where a visitor will witness the most heritage. This iterates the importance of events, and the developer needs to prepare the development for seasonal events from the very beginning, which affects the permanent design. The preparation for events also strengthens the fourth principle of the Utopolis in terms of eternal celebrations. Heritage can also manifest as hanging installations or decorations on the ceiling or as semi-transparent installations. Any features from the ceiling start to move away from the line of sight, and hence the design should have enough impact to catch the visitors' attention. For the semi-transparent design, recognisability of heritage also goes down with transparency; a developer has to make sure that the shape or material makes the heritage still noticeable. These decorations from the ceiling and semi-transparent installations also allow the heavenly scenery of the Utopolis to come out in real physical space. Lastly, heritage itself can become incorporated into modern day architecture and in this type of spatial manifestation, heritage may be the least visible, like the glass facade of ICONLUXE. The design might not appear Thai, but at least feel Thai.

In summary, the Utopolis affects and appears in every design process from the ideation phase all the way to the finished design. From the ideation phase and the selection of the cultural elements, principles such as multiculturalism, eternal celebration, accessible abundance of the best, and rituals to elevate everyday people should be taken into consideration to produce a luxury retail development that locals can aspire to and feel a sense of communal connection to the space like a historical ideal cultural space in the past, such as the temple. Developers may like or not like the idea of the Utopolis, but their actions in creating a luxury retail development with heritage always inadvertently results in the construction of the Utopolis. The developer might as well turn the process upside down by utilising the idea of the Utopolis from the very start to

create a more comprehensive luxury retail development designed with heritage. Finally, the past six paragraphs and Figure 6.3 represent the answers to the second research question, **How can the Utopolis be used in designing a luxury retail development with Thai heritage?** With the two research questions answered, the research heads to the conclusion, the final chapter of the thesis.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 In Reflection on the Utopolis and the Heritagisation of the Luxury Retail Development

In the very beginning, I started this thesis with my dissent for the ultra-white clean minimal luxury retail developments that could exist in anywhere in the world. Moreover, these white minimal developments also embodied a utopianism that washed away the past into a blank space to focus on the commercialisation of goods and services, the capitalist consumption and exploitation that many leftist theorists on space like Soja, and Harvey criticised. With the aim to investigate heritagisation of the luxury retail development and the embodiment of the Utopolis established in the introduction, this research has shed a new light on the new wave of luxury retail development that incorporated heritage that contrasted previous academic writings on the bright white retail developments.

Through the investigation of two Thai luxury retail developments that incorporated Thai heritage, the heritagisation process imbued with the ideal of the developer also revealed a utopianism specific to the culture, the lifestyle and the history of a city, the Utopolis. The Utopolis embraces the heritage of the city rather than eradicates the past and dominates through the universal modern-day culture. The Utopolis also elevates local design, products, and people rather than just forcing people to consume products from major multinational brands. I need to highlight again that multinational brands don't usually do anything special in the Thai market, let alone incorporate Thai heritage. Typically, Thai consumers receive the international standard, unlike in larger Asian markets like Japan or China, where multinational brands often create special localised campaigns or experiences due to the significant consumption power and demand in those markets. However, through store investment, multinational brands in Thailand now incorporate local heritage into the retail environment, which has consequently provided financial support to local producers of Thai cultural goods.

More interestingly, the Utopolis represents a new type of luxury built on the desire for an unseen ethereal city inspired by the local cultural past that evokes national pride, rather than the exoticism of foreign lands. Therefore, through the theoretical lens of Utopolis, the luxury retail development also represents a manifestation of an aspiration for the restoration of Thai heritage

in the present. In the same manner as the construction of Bangkok and its Grand Palace to represent a symbol of what could have been if Ayutthaya was not destroyed by the war, the luxury retail developments can also be built through heritagisation to embody what the city could have been if it wasn't consumed by the dominant force of globalisation, modernisation and Westernisation.

Despite praises for the Utopolis in exalting and reviving the city's cultural heritage in a new light and a more egalitarian utopianism than the white bright mall. It must also be remembered that the Utopolis should also be viewed in tandem with the heterotopia for a space is never ever truly perfect. There is always a dark side to a city. Moreover, an authoritative agenda lurks behind the façade of the ethereal city that even the developer may not even realise. Lastly, the research also repeats again that the materialisation of the physical retail development itself shatters the Utopolis, the developer has not created a literal physical utopian city but a representation of an ideal, the implicit, through the combination of design features that incorporated heritage into a tangible scenery, the explicit.

7.2 Theoretical Implication of this Research

From this research, I hope that other retail developers in Thailand apart from Siam Piwat and Central can learn from the Utopolis and the heritagisation process to break the conventions in producing the white bright development or spaces that just copied or draw on inspirations from foreign lands. Developers too can have a role in the advancement of the local cultural heritage. Moreover, this research also yearns to inspire other Thai businesses of great wealth beyond the retail and the hospitality industry to also attempt at the heritagisation of other types of buildings such as airports, private hospitals, private schools, gated housing communities and so forth. The development of other types of spaces apart from retail will also allow other academics to analyse through the framework as proposed and as conducted by this research with the deconstruction of the Firstspace and the Secondspace to reconstruct the heterotopia and the reflection of the heterotopia. In other types of spaces, the reflection of the heterotopia may not even lead to a Utopolis but other kinds of utopian spaces. Lastly, in terms of implications on the development of properties, I dream that this research will become one of the catalysts for retail developers in other parts of the world whose local heritage have been overpowered by the force of modernisation to ignite a golden age for the construction luxury retail developments around the world that are unique, specific and iconic to the city that hosts the development. A world of retail

where local cultures are revived into the context of the modern life and mixed together in a more multicultural manner where every culture is embraced.

In the world of academia, through the original contribution of the Utopolis, this research has provided another theoretical lens to view space. Moreover, this research also represents the continuation of the longstanding academic discussion on the interpretation of the relationship between the heterotopia and the utopia among scholars by validating the idea that the heterotopia constitutes the binary reflection of the Utopia. Furthermore, the idea of the Utopolis also contributes further to paradoxical theoretical sphere of luxury where the tangible materialisation of the luxury retail development with heritage leads to accessible special moments that fulfil the aspiration and the desire of the local population for their city and their culture. Finally, this research also confers more depth to the theories on heritagisation by codifying new knowledge on the ways to invoke and integrate the past into context of the modern-day luxury retail development. All of these contributions represent the legacy of this research to academia and mankind.

7.3 Summary of the Thesis' Accomplishments

The journey in completing this thesis has been one of the most challenging in my life but it has also been one of the most rewarding. Through this journey, I would also like to summarise and highlight the advancement to existing knowledge and the original contribution as the accomplishments of this thesis through the chapters in Table 7.1 on the next page.

Chapter	Accomplishments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of knowledge on the luxury retail development with the history of Thai luxury retail developments. • Contribution of knowledge on Thailand and its idea of luxury.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exploration of existing literatures to create to an original theoretical framework that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ provides the comprehensive understanding on the spatial design of the Thai luxury retail development; ○ builds a theory on the idea of the Utopolis.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The formulation of a research methodology and methods that correlate to the proposed theoretical framework
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on the tangible observable design features of the luxury retail development imbued in heritage
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on the intangible ideal of people who developed luxury retail developments with Thai heritage
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principles of the Utopolis through social construction from findings in Chapters 4 and 5. • A diagram, created through thematic social construction that constitutes the design process for the heritagisation of Thai luxury retail developments with the principles of the Utopolis taken into consideration.

Table 7.1 Research Accomplishments
(Sombunjaroen, 2023)

The accomplishments in the table above also correlate to the objectives discussed in Chapter 1. More importantly, the most distinguished accomplishment of this research constitutes the original contribution of the Utopolis as a theoretical lens and framework that is applicable to both the worlds of academia and retail developments. The proposed and validated theoretical framework, the methodology, the data collection methods, the principles of the Utopolis and the diagram showcasing the design process can be applied to other retail developments in other countries by researchers and developers. Apart from the novel idea of the Utopolis, this thesis also advances existing knowledge on retail development by providing new knowledge on the recent phenomenon of luxury retail developments designed with Thai heritage. This thesis represents the first academic writing on the heritagisation of Thai luxury retail developments

congruent with the physical tangible Thai luxury retail developments' embodiment of the abstract intangible Utopolis.

7.4 Limitations and Future Possibilities

As established in Chapter 1, Introduction, so far during the time of data collection for this research, only two major retail developments have opened to the public that overwhelmingly contain design features inspired by Thai heritage in various facets from exterior, interior, visual merchandising displays, seasonal decorations and so forth. As a result, the research investigated only two case studies. After more retail developments in Thailand that have claimed to incorporate Thai heritage such as Dusit Central Park and One Bangkok open to the public, it would be great if more case studies could be investigated to further enrich, refine and reevaluate the findings regarding the idea of the Utopolis and the heritagisation process. New developments may also lead to the discovery of new ways to adapt heritage to the retail space.

Apart from the required further research on future new retail developments in Thailand with local Thai heritage incorporated, retail business developers in China and Japan are also starting to incorporate their local heritages into their establishments. It must also be re-iterated that this recent phenomenon of designing luxury retail developments with local heritage is not limited to Thailand. It would be great if other academics trained in the local language and with connections to local retail developers in other countries could investigate more retail developments designed with local heritage in countries other than Thailand. Doing so may enrich our knowledge further in so many different ways from the different categories of cultural objects used to inspire the design of retail development to the ways to adapt heritage into tangible designs, and even how every Utopolis resembles or differs from other cities. The discovery of cultural differences represents an important part of the understanding of the multicultural Utopolis.

With regard to the consumption aspect of luxury retail developments designed with heritage, the conducted research remains preliminary. Other academics who are more focused on retail consumption rather than retail spatial production, like myself, can use the findings and the collected data of this research to explore deeper the realm of consumption by testing with other specific types of consumers, for instance, a specific generation, a certain age group, a particular gender or even an identified sexual orientation. In addition, the existing research only focuses on

finding the local population's perceptions of design with local heritage that are compared with the intention and ideal of the developers from the in-depth interviews. Consumer research that aims at understanding the perceptions of foreign tourists in Thailand against the intentions and ideals of local developers may also shed new discernment in the comprehension of heritage design that resonates with foreign tourists. Retail developers may find such research beneficial when it comes to designing a luxury retail development that primarily targets foreigners. Lastly, as this research defines consumers as visitors who reside long-term in the same city as the case study, academics may need to research further on consumers who are actually shoppers, as in the people that purchase some goods and services at the retail development and how the environment and features designed with local heritage may or may not promote the purchase of some particular categories of goods. These are the limitations and future potentials of this research.

7.5 Ending with the Utopia

I would like to end this research with a quote from Oscar Wilde's essay, *The Soul of Man under Socialism* (Wilde, 2009), originally published in 1891,

*"A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at,
for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing.
And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail.
Progress is the realisation of Utopias." (p. 27)*

This thesis represents progress in the realisation of Utopias through the original theoretical lens of the Utopolis.

Appendix A Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments & the Embodiment of the "Utopolis"

Researcher: Armaj Sombunjaroen
ERGO number: 71202

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

I'm currently a postgraduate researcher who is working toward completing my PhD in design at the Winchester School of Art under the University of Southampton. As a part of my PhD thesis, my research aims to investigate a recent phenomenon in Thailand where retail developers are intentionally and explicitly designing luxury retail developments with Thai heritage and culture, in contrary to the common industry practice of producing luxury retail establishments that try to emulate foreign lands. In order to find out and understand the consensus on this phenomenon, this research requires information from individuals who have worked in the development of a luxury retail establishment with Thai heritage the following questions:

1. Why developers are producing luxury retail developments with Thai heritage?
2. Why a particular Thai heritage or culture has been chosen or not chosen for a design?
3. How to adapt Thai heritage and culture into the space of the luxury retail development?

The analysis of data from the individuals who have experiences in the development of retail establishment with Thai heritage would lead to an in-depth understanding to view the luxury retail developments beyond just a shopping space. The data would also lead to the outcomes of guidelines and recommendations on how other developers can design a retail space with Thai heritage. This research also hopes to inspire developers in other nations to design luxury retail developments with their local heritage and use this research as a starting point by using the identified themes of heritage from this research that the developer may use in their culture.

This PhD research is fully funded by myself and no external party is funding this research.

Why have I been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because you have played a role in the development of a luxury retail property designed with Thai heritage and this research would like you to share your personal experience working on your project.

This research will include approximately 25 participants who have come from a variety of fields of expertise such as architecture, interior design, business development, merchandising, marketing, and event organisation because Thai heritage can be featured not just in the permanent architectural and interior design but also the temporary decorations, events, communications, and merchandises. Furthermore, participants will also have different levels of experience working in retail development from several decades of work experience to people who have just worked in this industry for several years.

As long as you have come up with ideas or implemented works with Thai heritage, you are qualified for this research.



What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part in this research, I will conduct 1 interview with you for approximately 1 hour. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the interview will not happen in person but will take place online via MS Teams where I will create a link for the meeting and send the invitation of the meeting from my university email to your personal email.

The interview will be conducted in Thai for your convenience. At the beginning of the interview, I will inform you that the interview will be recorded via the recording program of MS Teams. You can turn off your camera if you only want your voice to be recorded. This recording is required because I will not be able to write down everything you have said in the interview as I would need to focus on the discussion with you. I will then use the recording to translate everything you have said into English and transcribe as raw data of the thesis. The recording of your interview will not appear in the thesis nor in the archive of the university. This recording will also be immediately deleted once I have completed the transcription.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

There is no direct benefit for the participant such as a gift card, gift, or small payment. However, the participant will tremendously do a good deed by providing knowledge for the understanding of the phenomenon of this research. After my graduation, the participant will also get an executive summary of the study's findings in my thesis which may assist the participant in the development of future luxury retail property with Thai heritage.

Are there any risks involved?

All participants are guaranteed anonymity and your identity will not be revealed in the research in order to ensure an honest interview and the safety of your career. However, there is a still a possible risk if anything you have mentioned in the interview is very specific to your work and this could make you identifiable by your work colleagues or your company.

If you have mentioned anything that would make you identifiable, you must also let me know which information and I will pseudonymise this information in the published findings. For instance, if you are solely responsible for a particular design feature with a Thai heritage, I will refer to such a design feature in categorical way such as an art installation, an event, an advertisement without the specific detail that would make the design feature identifiable.

What data will be collected?

The following data will be collected from all participants:

1. Years of experience working in retail development
2. Expertise and your roles and responsibilities in the development of a luxury retail i.e., business management, marketing, architecture etc.
3. Personal Email
4. Work experience in making a luxury retail development with Thai heritage
5. Personal Ideas and thoughts on luxury retail developments with Thai heritage

All of the data will be collected and analysed solely by myself without any external third parties. Furthermore, all personal data and consent forms will be encrypted and password protected.

Will my participation be confidential?

Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only myself and responsible members of the University of Southampton such my PhD supervisors may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.



Your participation will be confidential where others will not know that you will take part because I will be contacting you directly with your personal email instead of your work email. The interview is one on one via MS teams, meaning that the meeting does not take place in a public location and no external party would see that you have had an interview with me. Furthermore, no name will be revealed if other participants ask who else would also participate in these interviews.

Your consent form will be kept as an electronic file with encryption and password protection. The consent form will be stored in the Microsoft OneDrive of my university email. All recordings will also be encrypted and protected by passwords and kept solely in my laptop which is also protected by password. All recordings will be permanently deleted once transcripts have been made and all transcripts will also be electronically kept with encryption and password protection. The transcripts will also be kept in the Microsoft OneDrive of my university email.

Your personal email will only be kept online in my university email contacts which is password protected. Once I graduate, I will send an executive summary of the study's findings in my thesis to your personal email again and then I will delete all of our correspondences and your personal email saved in my university email contacts.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected.

If you would like to withdraw, you must email A.Sombunjaroen@soton.ac.uk stating that you would like to withdraw. I will officially reply to confirm your withdrawal once I have destroyed your consent form, your recording or the transcript of your interview (depending on the time that you send the email). However, if your withdrawal email, came after the analysis of the data, it may not be possible to remove the data once your personal information is no longer linked to the data.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent.

The findings from this research will be written up and published as a part of my PhD thesis.

Where can I get more information?

If you have any further questions after reading this information sheet, please feel free email at A.Sombunjaroen@soton.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please also raise your concerns to me via A.Sombunjaroen@soton.ac.uk

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (+4423 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of

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identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/Is/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information – may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

Thank you very much for taking your time to read this information sheet and considering taking part in this research.

Appendix B Consent Form



CONSENT FORM

Study title: The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments & the Embodiment of the "Utopolis"

Researcher name: Armaj Sombunjaroen
ERGO number: 71202

Please initial the box(es) if you agree or disagree with the statement(s):

	Agree	Disagree
I have read and understood the information sheet (05/02/2022/version no.1) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.		
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.		
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw for any reason without my participation rights being affected.		
I agree to take part in the interview online via MS Teams for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet		
I agree to have the interview recorded via MS Teams and I have the right to turn off my camera if I do not want my face to be recorded.		
I understand that I will not be directly identified in any reports of the research.		
I understand that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified (e.g., that my name will not be used).		
I understand that my personal information collected about me such as my name not be shared beyond myself and my supervisors.		
I understand that special category information will be collected about me to achieve the objectives of the study. The special category information includes: 1) Years of experience working in retail development; 2) Expertise i.e., business management, marketing, architecture etc.; 3) Work experience in making a luxury retail development with Thai heritage; 4) Personal thoughts on luxury retail developments with Thai heritage		

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

Name of researcher (print name) Armaj Sombunjaroen

Signature of researcher

Date.....

[05/02/2022] [Version Number #1]

[Ethics/IRAS reference 71202]

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Appendix C Interview Schedule



Interview Schedule

Study Title: The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments & the Embodiment of the "Utopolis"

Interview Duration: 1 Hour

1. Can you tell me about your career, your work experience and your expertise?

2. Firstly, how long have you worked in retail development?

If the participant has a lot of experience?

2.1. Do you feel that the project of (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya) is different from previous project(s) you have developed before?

2.2. Yes or no, ask why?

2.3. Would you mind to explain more on why _____ makes the project so different?

If the participant 1st retail development is either ICONSIAM or Central Ayutthaya skip question 1.1 and ask

2.4. What made you decide to work on this project?

If the participant's answer is money or got assigned to work on the project?

2.5. Putting your assignment or money aside, are there any other factors that motivate you to work on this project?

2.6. What did you think about the project when you first heard of about it?

2.7. Can you elaborate on why you thought this particular way in the beginning?

2.8. In your opinion, what factors make a successful retail development?

2.9. Why this factor in particular? Go deeper if participant mentions about public space, how Thai retail development is always innovating with novel concepts, the idea of building a city

3. Can you explain your roles and responsibilities in the development of (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya)?

3.1. From these roles and responsibilities which of these did you have to include Thainess¹ and Thai culture in your work?

If the participant answer is everything?

3.2. Why did you have to include Thainess in all of works? What so important about it?

If the participant answer is some of their works

3.3. Why is it important for these works to incorporate Thainess and Thai culture?

3.4. Why didn't these works require the incorporation of Thainess and Thai culture?

3.5. If you can turn back time, would you like to include Thainess in the works that didn't incorporate Thainess as well and why?

¹ Thainess is used instead of heritage because Thai language doesn't have an exact word that means heritage like in English and we often use Thainess when we speak. However, for heritage site we use the word "cultural inheritance" in Thai. There is a physical idea of heritage but not an abstract idea of heritage in Thai culture.



4. At the start, when you had to incorporate Thainess and Thai culture into you work. From a very long history of Thailand, there are many kinds of Thainess, what came to your mind?

Write down the list mentioned by the participant

- 4.1. Why did these kinds of Thainess come to mind?
4.2. Which of these did you choose to incorporate into your work?

Tick of the list written down

- 4.3. Why did you choose to incorporate kind of Thainess in your work?
4.4. What are you trying to say by incorporating this kind of Thainess?

Repeat questions 4.3. and 4.4. for each kind of Thainess chosen

- 4.5. Why didn't you choose to incorporate kind of Thainess in your works?

Repeat questions 4.5. for each kind of Thainess not chosen

- 4.6. Looking back, putting budget and time constraint aside, are there any other kinds of Thainess that you would have like to include in your works and why?

- 4.7. Any regrets in choosing a particular kind of Thainess? Yes or no ask why?

If there are regrets ask

- 4.8. What would you have done differently?

- 4.9. What kind of Thainess would you choose instead?

5. Can you please tell us the process from starting with the conceptual to the finished work that incorporate Thainess? We can go one process at a time.

Let the participant speaks. I must write down bullet points especially on materials, who did he or she had to hire or go to, the medium where the Thainess appear i.e., wall, floor, art installation, columns, poster etc.

- 5.1. Ask why to all the written bullet points?

If the participant starts to speak too long and repeating the same thing in the same process, find an appropriate time to politely interrupt and say

- 5.2. From doing this _____, what is your next step?

- 5.3. Is it important to present Thainess in the most authentic way possible or can we adapt Thainess?

- 5.4. Again, if you can turn back time, would you execute Thainess into a visible work differently and why?

- 5.5. How does will this change improve your work and the retail development?

6. After the grand opening of (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya) and you have seen the complete development, what did you feel and think about the project?

Let the participant speaks and list bullet points and make sure to get answers for questions below

- 6.1. Why did you feel this way?

- 6.2. What makes you feel this way?

7. Now putting your own works and budget aside, would you like to change anything about (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya) in terms of the design and the experience? This can be anything in the project.

Let the participant speaks and list bullet points and make sure to get answers for questions below

- 7.1. Why would like to change _____ in particular?

- 7.2. How would it improve the project?

8. Finally, what did you learn from this experience of developing a retail establishment that incorporate Thainess?

Let the participant speaks and write down bullets of what the participant learnt ask

- 8.1. How would you use this knowledge _____ in your future retail development?

- 8.2. Why would this _____ help to make a better retail development?

Thank you

Appendix D Focus Group Participant Information Sheet



Focus Group Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments & the Embodiment of the "Utopolis"

Researcher: Armaj Sombunjaroen
ERGO number: 71202.A2

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

I'm currently a postgraduate researcher who is working toward completing my PhD in design at the Winchester School of Art under the University of Southampton. As a part of my PhD thesis, my research aims to investigate a recent phenomenon in Thailand where retail developers are intentionally and explicitly designing luxury retail developments with Thai heritage and culture, in contrary to the common industry practice of producing luxury retail establishments that try to emulate foreign lands. In order to find out and understand the consensus on this phenomenon, this research requires information from consumers who are living in the same city as a retail development designed with Thai heritage and have visited the retail development at least once in the past 1 year. The following are samples questions of the focus group:

1. What do you think of retail development with Thai heritage?
2. What do you think of this design feature with Thai heritage and why?

The analysis of data from the individuals who are consumers of retail establishment with Thai heritage would lead to an in-depth understanding to view the luxury retail developments beyond just a shopping space. The data would also lead to the outcomes of guidelines and recommendations on how other developers can design a retail space with Thai heritage. This research also hopes to inspire developers in other nations to design luxury retail developments with their local heritage and use this research as a starting point by using the identified themes of heritage from this research that the developer may use in their culture.

This PhD research is fully funded by myself and no external party is funding this research.

Why have I been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because you are a consumer of luxury retail development designed with Thai heritage and this research would like you to share your personal opinions on the design and the experience of visiting a specific retail development. Each focus group will include 4-6 participants. As long you live in the same city as the specified luxury retail development and have visited it once in the past 1 year, you are qualified for this research.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part in this research, I will conduct a focus group with you along with 3- 5 other participants for approximately 1 hour. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the focus group will not happen in person but will take place online via MS Teams where I will create a link for the meeting and send the invitation of the meeting from my university email to your personal email.

The focus group will be conducted in Thai for your convenience. At the beginning of the focus group, I will inform you that the focus group will be recorded via the recording program of MS Teams. You can turn off your camera if you only want your voice to be recorded. This recording is required because I will not be able to write down everything you have said in the focus group as I would need to focus on the discussion with you. I will then use the recording to translate everything

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[18/01/2023] [Version number #2]

[Ethics/IRAS number 71202.A2]



you have said into English and transcribe as raw data of the thesis. The recording of the focus group will not appear in the thesis nor in the archive of the university. This recording will also be immediately deleted once I have completed the transcription.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

There is no direct benefit for the participant such as a gift card, gift, or small payment. However, the participant will tremendously do a good deed by providing knowledge for the understanding of the phenomenon of this research.

Are there any risks involved?

Your anonymity cannot be guaranteed in *these discussion forums* but that any information collected by the researcher will be kept confidential and participants will be asked to keep the discussions confidential.

What data will be collected?

The following data will be collected from all participants:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Number of times visited either ICONSIAM or Central Ayutthaya within the past one year
4. Opinions on a luxury retail development with Thai heritage
5. Comments on design features inside a luxury retail development with Thai heritage

All of the data will be collected and analysed solely by myself without any external third parties. Furthermore, all personal data and consent forms will be encrypted and password protected.

Will my participation be confidential?

The information collected about you and from you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only myself and responsible members of the University of Southampton such as my PhD supervisors may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Your consent form will be kept as an electronic file with encryption and password protection. The consent form will be stored in the Microsoft OneDrive of my university email. All recordings will also be encrypted and protected by passwords and kept solely in my laptop which is also protected by password. All recordings will be permanently deleted once transcripts have been made and all transcripts will also be electronically kept with encryption and password protection. The transcripts will also be kept in the Microsoft OneDrive of my university email.

Your personal email will only be kept online in my university email contacts which is password protected. Once I graduate, I will send an executive summary of the study's findings in my thesis to your personal email again and then I will delete all of our correspondences and your personal email saved in my university email contacts.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected.

If you would like to withdraw, you must email A.Sombunjaroen@soton.ac.uk stating that you would like to withdraw. I will officially reply to confirm your withdrawal once I have destroyed your consent form, your recording or the transcript of the focus group (depending on the time that you send the email). However, if your withdrawal email, came after the analysis of the data, it may not be possible to remove the data once your personal information is no longer linked to the data.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent.

The findings from this research will be written up and published as a part of my PhD thesis.

Where can I get more information?

If you have any further questions after reading this information sheet, please feel free email at A.Sombunjaroen@soton.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please also raise your concerns to me via A.Sombunjaroen@soton.ac.uk

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (+4423 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/Is/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.



For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information – may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

Thank you very much for taking your time to read this information sheet and considering taking part in this research.

Appendix E Focus Group Consent Form



FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

Study title: The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments & the Embodiment of the "Utopolis"

Researcher name: Armaj Sombunjaroen

ERGO number: 71202.A2

Please initial the box(es) if you agree or disagree with the statement(s):

	Agree	Disagree
I have read and understood the focus group participant information sheet (18/01/2023/version no.2) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.		
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.		
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw for any reason without my participation rights being affected.		
I agree to take part in the discussion groups for the purposes set out in the focus group participation information sheet and understand that these will be recorded using MS Teams recording and hand written notes. I also understand that the MS Teams recording will be destroyed after the researcher has completed the transcription.		
I agree to have the focus group recorded via MS Teams and I have the right to turn off my camera if I do not want my face to be recorded.		
I understand that I will not be directly identified in any reports of the research.		
I understand that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified (e.g., that my name will not be used).		
I understand that my personal information collected about me such as my name not be shared beyond myself and my supervisors.		
I understand that my anonymity cannot be guaranteed in these discussion forums but that any information collected by the researcher will be kept confidential and I will keep the discussions confidential.		
I understand that the following categories of information will be collected about me to achieve the objectives of the study. The special category information includes: 1) Age; 2) Gender; 3) Number of times visited either ICONSIAM or Central Ayutthaya within the past one year; 4) Opinions on a luxury retail development with Thai heritage; 5 Comments on design features inside a luxury retail development with Thai heritage		

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

Name of researcher (print name) Armaj Sombunjaroen

Signature of researcher

Date.....

[18/01/2023] [Version Number #2]

[Ethics/IRAS reference 71202.A2]

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Appendix F Focus Group Interview Schedule



Focus Group Schedule

Study Title: The Heritagisation of Thai Luxury Retail Developments & the Embodiment of the "Utopolis"

Interview Duration: 1 Hour

1. Firstly, can you please tell me your nickname, how old are you and how many times you have visited (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya) in the past 1 year and for what reasons? Start from participant...
 - 1.1 How about you? (To make sure that every participant has answered)
 - 1.2 Why did you choose to visit (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya) for this reason?
 2. When you see a retail development designed with Thai heritage such as (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya), what do you feel?
 - 2.1. How about you? (To make sure that every participant has answered)
 - 2.2. Why did you feel this way?
 - 2.3. What do you think about this participant's comment on feeling this way? (To promote discussion)
 3. Do you feel that a retail development designed with Thai heritage provides a different experience from other retail developments in your city?
 - 3.1. How about you? (To make sure that every participant has answered)
 - Group participants together based on yes or no'
 - For Participants who answered "Yes"
 - 3.2. Ask the participants why do they think this way?
 - For Participants who answered "No"
 - 3.3. Ask the participants why do they think this way?
- Show a photo taken from the observation of a specific design feature with Thai heritage
4. Can you please tell me what you feel when you see this design?
 - 4.1. How about you? (To make sure that every participant has answered)
 - 4.2. Why do you feel this way?
- Show a photo taken from the observation of another specific design feature with Thai heritage
5. Can you please tell me what you feel when you see this design?
 - 5.1. How about you? (To make sure that every participant has answered)
 - 5.2. Why do you feel this way?
 - If there are discrepancies between previous design features
 - 5.3. Why do you feel differently from the earlier design feature(s)?
- Repeat 5 for other design features
- 10 minutes before the 1 hour is due, ask the final question
6. As a customer of (ICONSIAM/Central Ayutthaya), are there any experiences that this retail development doesn't have and you would like it to have?
 - 6.1. How about you? (To make sure that every participant has answered)
 - 6.2. Why do you want this experience?
 - 6.3. Ask another participant do you want this experience too? Yes or no and why?

Thank you

Appendix G Thematic Analysis of the Imagination of Modern Heritage

Time: The Parallel Present			
Case Study 1: ICONSIAM			
Interviews: Secondspace			
Quotation	Initial Code	Sub-Theme	Theme
Even... brands that are fast changing trends, we must also have these brands in as quickly as possible... So a retail development is also fast changing because trends come and go very quickly but a retail development must be updated on new trends all the time. (IS2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated with the Time In the Present with Trends Dynamic Quality like a City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Dynamism as a City-like Quality (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	<p><u>The Imagination of Modern Heritage</u></p> <p>Producer First and foremost, the research has revealed that the luxury retail development still represents a space that idealized modernity. Developers of both case studies still desire a space housed by modern day architecture with elements that constantly have to change to be updated with the time. Moreover, developers want people to come to luxury retail developments so they can update themselves on the latest trends.</p>
After the opening, I'm still taking care of the project. Now that it's fully functional, any retail building goes through constant changes and adaptations to suit the period and season. (IS7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated with the Time Dynamic Quality like a City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Dynamism as a City-like Quality (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	<p>This notion of the luxury retail development as modern space also resulted in a juxtaposition between modernity and heritage when developers chose to invoke and incorporate Thai heritage and Thai culture into the design. Developers don't want their creations to be seen as old fashioned and too traditional through the utilization of heritage. Therefore, in their ideals, every time they have to describe the concept of their design, they often used words such as 'mixed together', 'mixture', 'combination', 'combined' and contradictory descriptions between heritage and modernity such as 'new Thainess', 'Thailand nowadays', 'heritage to future', 'Thailand & innovation', 'past & present', 'future Thai', 'Thai twist', 'modernity & the ancient'. From this contrasting ideal of modernity and heritage, developers are propelling heritage forward to the modern day.</p>
A Shopping Mall is also a place where people go to see new trends so it has to be modern. (IS14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Present with Trends Retail as a Modern Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space 	<p>Finally, the propulsion of heritage to the modern day does not represent an existing Thai heritage that has existed in contemporary time but a new</p>
I really learned that I had to change my perception when it comes to designing a luxury retail development, Thainess or historical traditional stuff couldn't be mixed into retail design. I have to admit that I was wrong. They can be mixed together and the outcome exceeded my expectations. (IS9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (From what not said, luxury development used to be a modern space but now changed mind the past, heritage can be incorporated) Heritage and Modernity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present 	

<p>ICONSIAM's Thainess is stereotypical which we've seen all along in the promotion of our tourism. There's modernity in ICONSIAM in terms of architecture, featured key anchor tenants such as luxury brands, together they seem like modern Thainess. But overall, it is still what we see in generic tourism campaigns which still amazes tourists to a certain extent. I think modern Thainess in terms of Thai people's ability to manage new ways of presenting Thainess. (IS11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (Architecture, Luxury Brands) Heritage and Modernity (New Thainess) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present 	<p>and never before seen creation for the world unlike anything before by the imagination of the developer and beyond cultural stereotypes such as the Thai temples. A developer must not be stuck to the past and dare to imagine a new heritage for the present day when it comes to designing a luxury retail development with heritage.</p> <p>Consumer The ideal of the developer to imagine a modern heritage for their luxury retail development also resonates with the local consumers. Like the developer, consumers think that a luxury retail development as a modern space for trends and a contemporary way of life. Moreover, consumers can differentiate between traditional heritage in historical sites such as temples and modern heritage in luxury retail developments. Therefore, consumers expect developers to imagine new heritage never been seen before rather than copying existing traditional heritage for they don't want to a luxury retail development feel like they are at a historical site.</p>
<p>Tourists do not feel proud because first, it is not their nation, but they can feel that this is the real Thailand, they really come to Thailand not just Thailand with Tom Yum Goong in their faces, not just having Tom Yum Goong and they can say that they have been to Thailand. There are other aspects that they can feel about Thainess through sight, touch, or service. The use of service can be from welcoming by door opening, outfits, national costumes, four-region cultures, food, different cuisines, tastes of each region and different cooking ingredients. They would feel that Thailand doesn't only have Tom Yum Goong or Pad Thai that they can find as street food. They get a better sense of what Thailand is like nowadays. (IS12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thailand nowadays) Unseen Thai Space (Other aspects, sight, service, that feel Thai beyond the stereotypes, Tom Yum Goong, Pad Thai) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present 	
<p>It's hard to talk about heritage to the future. How do we extend it and keep the Thainess while bringing innovations? (IS15)</p>	<p>- Heritage and Modernity (Heritage, Future, Innovation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present 	
<p>Thainess should not be Ancient Thailand, to make it World class... That was the overall mood and tone of the story. Past, Present, ICONSIAM, Global Destination. (IS1)</p>	<p>- Heritage and Modernity - International Thainess ('World' is also contradictory to Thainess because it automatically means not just Thainess alone.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present <p>- International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too)</p>	
<p>As we wanted this to be the new landmark, we wanted the new Thainess, not the old Thainess. We saw it as the 'future Thai'. So the Thai heritage had to be combined with international-ness or something new which had never been done anywhere else before in order to deliver our story of 'future Thai'. (IS10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity International Thainess <p>- Unseen Thai Space (Other aspects, sight, service, that feel Thai beyond the stereotypes, Tom Yum Goong, Pad Thai)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present <p>- International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too)</p>	

<p>The big picture is when ICONSIAM was working on its own branding and we were assigned the key message of the branding that we must include Thai accent. We came up with the criteria, I'm not sure what it's called, and we had to communicate with the tenants about the design, which is required to be timeless with Thainess as a combination (IS14)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity ('Timeless' implies not stuck in the past alone) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present 	
<p>(Elaborate on "Li-kay") Actually, anything that's too much will look too force, and too intentional. For ICONSIAM, we want the design to be recognizable that it is Thai, but with a modern twist. Sometimes foreigners cannot distinguish between these fine lines. They do not understand the difference and it takes a bit of explaining. We mainly use examples and pictures because we can't be too blunt about it. It would be too harsh. So, we show them pictures of things that are too much. Tell them to soften the design element. We have a way in which we communicate with the designers. (IS5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thainess with modern twist, not forced and intentional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present 	
<p>I think we are quite lucky in that the designers understood what we wanted and it didn't look "Li-kay" ... and then become something completely unrelated. We might just catch an air of Thainess, or a glimpse of color that Thai. ("Li-kay" is a colloquial term for outdated and over the top. It literal means a type of Thai folk dance performance (Think Chinese Opera but Thai version) that has since been associated with old-fashionness, and poor taste. "Chada" is a Thai tiara/crown with a golden color used to be worn by royalties and now can be seen in costume for traditional Thai performances) (IS5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Old-fashion Simplification of Heritage (air of Thainess, glimpse of color) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
<p>The store (ICONCRAFT) must have an essence of Thainess without being so Thai that it's old fashioned. Normally, when we talk about Thainess, we think of pattern and drawings inside a temple or the "Kanok" Thai pattern. These things are too traditional. We had to dilute and simplify down the level of heritage so that we can become more appealing to a younger and a newer generation of consumers. So the interior design is quite modern but the choice of materials and the genteel curvatures still have a sense of Thainess. (IS4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thainess that is not old fashioned) Simplification of Heritage (dilute, simplify down, Sense of Thainess) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generation of consumers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	

There was always a need for connecting what we're doing as a world class development to the culture and the people of Thailand. So this was a world class project with world class tenants, but it was designed in a way that once you stepped on the project, you knew this project was in Thailand. This was not something to look like a project in Tokyo or London or Paris. There was definitely designs specifically to embody Thai architecture, Thai culture and how Thai people engage and shop at ICONSIAM. (IS13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unseen Thai Space (Never seen before Thainess unlike other places in the world) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Engage people of today who are living) • International Thainess (World Class Development) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Present Day People • International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
The modernisation of crafts broadens our target group. They buy our products for everyday use. They can mix and match items to be chic and unique. To modernise these products is to make them different and we expand our market to be even wider than before. Our pricing also varies from high, middle, low, which is more attainable to a wider range of customers who want to use these items. They wouldn't think that it's too old or out of touch for them. We can also convince people who think that people who use traditional Thai products are old-fashioned and conservative that Thai crafts don't necessarily mean old-fashioned. (IS6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity (Thai products that is not old fashioned) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Everyday Use) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Present Day People 	
We portrayed the Thainess through the products by finding products that are able to demonstrate the uniqueness of Thailand while innovative at the same. Products that can be used in the modern day life. Products that can fulfill the contemporary lifestyle of new generations of consumers. (IS4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity (Uniqueness of Thailand with Innovation) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Modern Day Life, and new generations of consumers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Present Day People 	
We want to target all age groups. Each age group has their own style preference. If you go to a section in a department store that sell traditional Thai souvenirs, you will find Benjarong and goldware, which are old. When you want to shop for the new generations, you wouldn't want to go in this department as it's too traditional. Shops are no different from Pattaya Floating Market, where the products are all traditional. If we offer modern-style products, we can target younger generation customers because they can still relate to the design, decoration and products that are not too traditional. They can still get a sense of Thainess as they are Thai handicrafts. (IS14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated with the Time (Modern-style, not traditional like a floating market) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (all age groups, younger generations) • Comprehension by People Today (People can relate to) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Development as a Modern Space • Present Day People 	
Focus Group: Validation of Secondspace			

<p>I'm not sure what it's called. It's gold columns with a perforated design in Thai patterns. This is what you can't find at other retail developments, especially with the river in the background, there's no place like this. It's a mixture of modernity, the ancient, and the river, together creating an interesting combination. (1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated with the Time Heritage and Modernity (modernity and the ancient) Unseen Thai Space (no other place like this) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (The river, gold columns with Thai pattern) <p>- Local Landscape (the river)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The River) <p>- Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
<p>I think it's (Golden Columns) pretty modern. It was different from other places I've been to. (4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (golden columns pretty modern) Unseen Thai Space (different from other places) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present 	
<p>I think it's like when we take a boat ride along the Chao Phraya River and we see a lot of historical sites and destinations along the way. I think ICONSIAM can continue the picture and be relevant to the surrounding atmosphere that I've seen in the past. (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (continuation of the past (to now)) <p>- Local Landscape (the river and temples and communities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present <p>- Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
<p>(Haberdashery installation) I think that this piece is more modern than the columns that look similar to those in a temple. This retail development offers three feels: modern here and at the Apple Store; traditional Thai and Japanese, all mixed together, which is novel. But this piece has a modern feel. (1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Traditional Thai, Modern, Japanese) Unseen Thai Space (novel) <p>- International Thainess (Japanese)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
<p>I like that it preserves the old design of Thainess and offers me a new experience that is different from other retail developments. It reminds me of the old days, when it was a garden and a part of the land was a Thai restaurant by the river where I used to dine. There is some experience from the old days that remains here. (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (old design with new experience) Unseen Thai Space (different from other retail development) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (actual experience that happened on the past on the same land) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Experience from Past) 	

<p>Thainess could be incorporated into with such things as Thai puppets, buffalo, or something with Thai elements in interactive activities. The dinosaur is to promote the exhibition on the top floor, but it'd be a good idea for ICONSIAM to have something of their own with movements apart from the decoration on the wall and building.</p> <p>Another zone that I also think has a lot of potential is in SOOKSIAM, on the upper ground floor, where there's an amulet zone that's super traditional Thai and targets Thai people. If it wasn't here, it's not different from roadside amulet shops selling on the ground. This can be turned into a zone for 'Sai Mu' (superstition worshipping) in modern style which is widely popular now. I saw the shop Harmentstone selling Sai Mu sacred item bracelets. (6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thainess with interactivity, amulet zone but more modern style) Unseen Thai Space (can be seen in other places if not modernized) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Thai puppets, buffalo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Not see but feel) 	
<p>(Haberdashery installation)</p> <p>Actually, it is like the play or the movie The King and I, where we can't really ask for 100% Thainess from a foreigner's perspective. What can come out of it is the inspiration for how Thai dancing or other Thai performances have been adapted from the movie, which was made 40–50 years ago. Thai works nowadays have been modified to be more modern. I like that it's pretty modern. I like it. (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thai and pretty modern (like it)) of the Past International Thainess (Foreigner Perspective, can't expect 100%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
<p>This zone is very futuristic, but I notice its inspiration might be from lotus leaves. (4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (futuristic lotus leaf) Might be from (Relate to simplification) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
<p>Much prettier. It (restaurant zone on 6th floor with water buffalo and rice field) looks more modern with Thainess in it. I prefer this kind of design to the one at the floating market. I (others agreed) (SookSiam)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Modern with Thainess) No Copy and Paste of Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya			
Interviews: Secondspace			
<p>We wanted to honour the city's culture and make people of the city proud by applying traditional Ayutthaya art and culture in a more modern way and to be the centre of the community, a centre of life. (CA4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Ayutthaya in a modern way) Retail as a Modern Space (Central Ayutthaya for a modern way of life) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Community, Center of Life) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Present Day People 	

<p>gold on the doors and things of that nature. So, we made the main facade on the highway side to be white and gold. Usually with Central, we will have a layer of precast panel and that would be stick on as a layer over the facade. For the white facade, we designed the precast with Thai curves inspired by with a "Jom Hae" (The "Prajamyam" pattern is a basic traditional Thai pattern in the shape of diagonal squares with leaf detailing that is used as a base for other intricate patterns, such as "Rak Roi", "Nah Kradaan" "Prajamyam Kaan Dang" or "Ratchawat" patterns. "Jom Hae" is a common silhouette used for the roof/spire/crown of structures in Thai architecture, such as the pagoda or the consisting of a concave triangular shape with a spire on top." (CA1)</p>			
<p>Modernisation is to be extracted from the local materials. For example, we use bricks which represent a material from the old days of Ayutthaya. For the design, we minimise it to create new design. We also wanted to use "kanok" lines, but we didn't use the whole kanok pattern, we zoomed in on certain lines which can be repeated like in the façade. By using the curves from the Kanok or the bricks, a history telling materials, we are telling a story in the modernised context. We refined such things to be simpler and more international. This is how we modernised Ayutthaya Thainess. The context we have isn't literally Thai. We extracted ideas from traditional materials, but we turned them to be more international. Lines and materials and colours are not used in the whole context, we don't use the whole "chedi" or temple, but we use the material of the temple that are commonly used and seen in Ayutthaya. We turned them into a new story-telling which is more modernised. (CA2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity • International Thainess • Simplification of Heritage (refine, not the whole thing) • Change of color, pattern and design • Past Material Symbolism in a Modern Context (Story from Local Material rather than using it directly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
<p>(Job Hae) It is a Thai curve derived from the curve of the traditional Thai fishing net when you pull it out of the water. The silhouette is used in pagodas. We modified it to create sections. The precast, which is usually flat, right? We use it instead of bricks and cement. We use the precast to display the surface outside, but we used the curve. If you look at the design, you will see a curve that is quintessentially Thai, reminding us of a traditional fishing net. When we look at the golden part, it also uses the same curve. From the facade. But the gold that we use out front, we employ a gradient and we created it on a computer. The pattern that is created will show a curve when you look at it from afar, a large curve. We used computers to calculate the distance so it shows a pattern within the gold color... Well, we</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity is (New Thainess) • Unseen Thai Space (Never seen before unlike traditional temples) • No Copy and Paste of Heritage • Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Computer to Design Precast with Thai pattern) • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Fish Net) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Fishnet inspired lines) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

As time changes, traditional materials cannot be used by themselves. It wouldn't be contemporary to be applied to a retail development where new products are displayed. If we had gone with traditional architecture, it wouldn't have suited for the context of a retail development, so the Thai identity of Ayutthaya is selected to be told in a modern design. (CA4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (modern design, context of a retail development) Heritage with Contemporary Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
We combined two aspects together. For the first aspect, if you see the front of the project from the express way, we assumed that people would feel the revival of Ayutthaya's former glory and prosperity. This is like bringing the past back to the present. Thai heritage is applied in this construction by incorporating corners and lines seen in Thai architecture that have been transformed into a modern design. (CA3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Ayutthaya's Past Glory to the Present) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Corners and Lines in Thai Architecture) Heritage Application in Modern Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Lines in Thai Architecture) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
We wanted to retell the story of Ayutthaya's prosperous past. All the designs refer to Ayutthaya's prosperity in a modern context with contemporary materials, but when you look at them, you know it's Ayutthaya. It's what we call a Thai twist. (CA5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Ayutthaya Prosperous Past in a modern context) Heritage with Contemporary Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
When we work, we usually pick out the forms and the lines to work with. We don't just use traditional things and paste it onto the work. We utilised lines and curves found in Thai design and architecture. But we don't paste on Prajamyam patterns onto the design. We started from the two sides: the side with the highway and local road. The highway side is more grand because you can look at it from afar. The materials we used are white and gold. The local road side, we were briefed that the space between the commercial building and the mall will be a market... In that zone, we used bricks to convey localness because bricks are very reminiscent of ancient Ayutthaya architecture. In Ayutthaya, the base of each ancient buildings, as we can see in the ruins, are made from raw bricks and the more elaborate temples would be plastered with cement. The most elaborate buildings, then, used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity No Copy and Paste of Heritage Local Landscape (red brick materials) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Red Brick) Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Precast with Thai Pattern) Past Material Symbolism in a Modern Context (White and gold in grandest building in the past on the grandest side) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Function in the Past for the Present <p>- Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	

<p>don't want anything that's ornamental or existing that can be copy and pasted onto the façade. We want to modify and create a new Thainess, we don't want to paste traditional elements. So these golden elements that you see here cannot be found in temples or traditional Thai architecture. However, the curves are derived from traditional Thai architecture. Furthermore, we try to create new spaces and new patterns that convey Thainess using the existing curves found in Thai architecture and design. (CA1)</p>			
<p>The word 'out-of-date' that I mean is over time, it can be out. It doesn't mean that when a designer presents their work, it is out-of-date. I have to correct it. It must be a timeless design. It shouldn't be attached to a certain era. To tell a story in the form of design features inside a mall has a high construction cost. It isn't a pop-up space that is decorated for a few months and is removed. Common areas of malls last 5-6 years up or even 10 years in some places. So every time customers walk past, it should not be over-telling its story. At Central Ayutthaya, around the void, carved-wooden panels in shapes traditional Thai- styled houses are refined down to their outlines. If we used the actual ones, over time, people would get bored. When you drop it down to outlines to tell the story, everything is lighter, it does not overwhelm tenants inside the mall. It is blended into the environment when you pass, you almost don't feel it. It isn't in-your-face. It is blended in our surroundings, almost unnoticeable. (CA2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail as a Modern Space (Not Out of Date) • Heritage and Modernity is (Timeless) • Simplification of Heritage (Refined down, outlines, lighter, not overwhelm, not over-telling, almost unnoticeable) • Dynamic Quality like a City (Changes 5-6 years) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Ideal Present • Retail Development as a Modern Space • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Wooden Panels in Thai Houses) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Dynamism as a City-like Quality (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
<p>For locals, they don't really care as they know and they are accustomed to real historical sites close by, but if we want to attract locals too, we have to turn their content into something modern for them. For them, it's not that exciting if we just copied the original things, we use modernity to interpret the context of Ayutthaya context to attract the locals and to get them excited... The design concept was simple which is to modernise Ayutthaya in the current fashion and context of mall design. (CA2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity • Modification for People today • People's Contemporary Lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	

<p>The Thainess that isn't out of date, disregarding foreign customers and tourists, as their perspective is different. We see it a lot in Japanese, Balinese or Vietnamese architecture, where local wisdom can be seen in the use of local materials and in the structures. They have developed the root of their regional culture or craftsmanship further. In Thailand, we see a lot of this in the northern region in the hotel industry, but not commonly applied to large scale architecture. We have tried to insert these things into our building, but like a wooden structure isn't really suitable for a public gigantic architecture like ours. For decorative materials, we can do it and we try to do it in order to develop passed down knowledge. For instance, people don't really use red bricks anymore, lightweight construction materials are more commonly used in mass production. Other materials with knowledge value that aren't appreciated are revived and encouraged and expressed in the modern context which people can understand and relate to. (CA3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retail as a Modern Space (Not Out of Date) ● Heritage and Modernity (Developed their roots) ● Enlargement of Traditional Design and (For large scale architecture) ● Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Local Traditional Material *Brick) applied in modern construction) ● Comprehension by People Today (people can understand) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Imagined Ideal Present ● Retail Development as a Modern Space ● Adaptation of the Past for the Present ● Present Day People 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People's Contemporary Lifestyle (new generations) 		
Focus Group: Validation of Secondspace			
Retail developments of the present days, they have to think 10-20 years ahead so that they won't be out of style too soon. Central Ayutthaya is genius for being able to design it 10-20 years ahead with Thainess incorporated which is amazing. This is the difference as everybody thinks modern retail developments must have modern design, but this is not and the team did a great job on it. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (present day, 10 - 20 years ahead with Thainess incorporated) Retail as a Modern Space (present day) Unseen Thai Space (not just a modern design but also with Thainess) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space 	
In reality, if the design was traditional Thai, it'd be too out-of-touch for the new generations. People of the older generations might like it, but if you imagine walking inside and seeing a thatched roof or something traditional Thai, some people might think it's a temple, not a retail development, but if it's applied Thainess, it does fulfill the retail industry. Thainess can be found in historical sites or temples. This is a shopping mall, a retail development, it's built for people to go in for the facilities, so modernity must be incorporated. (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Applied Thainess, not like a temple) Retail as a Modern Space (Retail must incorporate modernity) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (new generations) No Copy and Paste of Heritage (Don't want to see something traditional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
I think the lifestyle of the new generations has to be modern, but with blended elements of Thainess, which makes it cute. Like Participant 1 said, if it was traditional Thai, it might not gain much attention as there are already so many historical sites and places with traditional Thainess. With Central's perfect mixture of minimalism and Thainess, it has turned out cute. It suits the younger generation's lifestyle. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (minimalism and Thainess) Unseen Thai Space (gain attention to compete with real historical sites with traditional Thainess, being different) Simplification of Heritage (blending Thainess (not 100% traditional Thai) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People's Contemporary Lifestyle (new generations) 		
When they (local goods) are displayed in a major mall, more people get to see them. Therefore, demand for these types of products may increase. This is good support for local culture to be featured in the modern context by focusing more on a higher market. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (mall as a modern context) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (locals goods for people to see them in a modern context) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Present Day People 	
Personally, I appreciate Thainess, from the Thai way of life to Thai art and culture. Central Ayutthaya has applied local Ayutthaya identity, which is very distinguishing and distinctive, to modern design, resulting in a perfect balance. (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Applied Thainess, balance modern design) Unseen Thai Space (Distinguishing distinctive) <p>- A Traditional Way of Life (Thai way of life)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present <p>- An Ideal way of life in the past (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
I think the design is well executed, as the traditional culture is mixed with the modern design in a nice combination. I feel that it is very exquisite and extravagant. (Golden Facade Entrance Hall) (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (traditional culture with modern design) Unseen Thai Space (exquisite, extravagant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present 	
They can design their retail development to be this beautiful with a perfect blend between Thainess and modernity. It's like minimal Thainess, how can I put this? It is cute, it's not 100% traditional Thai, but a perfect mixture. It's suitable for the younger generations and for taking foreign friends or tourists to visit as a one-stop attraction where there's everything from food to lifestyle to Thainess on display for visitors to experience. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (blend of Thainess and modernity) Simplification of Heritage (not 100% traditional, minimal Thainess) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generations, friends and tourists) One stop attraction, offering everything like a city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People City-like Quality (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
That's true. If a whole house was placed here, it would be like an exhibition in a museum of ancient houses. It doesn't suit the quality of a retail development or the overall picture. In this manner, we get to experience life as if we were in a local market, shopping for local products with villagers under the concept, but in a lighter way. (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (traditional house not fit with the quality of the retail development) Simplification of Heritage (lighter way) <p>- A Traditional Way of Life (experience life in a local market)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present <p>- An Ideal way of life in the past (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
I think if Central had done the traditional Phan Phum design, it would not have matched the retail development. What they did makes it light and easy on the eyes (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (traditional design would not match a retail development) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum) Simplification of Heritage (light and easy on the eyes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

<p>(Phan Phum) It's a perfect harmony between an ancient element and a modern element. It is done well, not contrasting, beautiful and elegant, not a sore to the eyes. The younger generations can also be introduced to something of the old time, which is rarely found. (2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Heritage and Modernity (harmony between the ancient and the modern) ● Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum) ● Simplification of Heritage (not an eye sore) ● People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retail Development as a Modern Space ● Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum) ● Adaptation of the Past for the Present ● Present Day People 	
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Appendix H Thematic Analysis of the Adaptation of the Past for the Present

Time: The Parallel Present			
Case Study 1: ICONSIAM			
Interviews: Secondspace			
Quotation	Initial Code	Sub-Theme	Themes
I think we are quite lucky in that the designers understood what we wanted and it didn't look "Li-kay" ... and then become something completely unrelated. We might just catch an air of Thainess, or a glimpse of color that Thai. ("Li-kay" is a colloquial term for outdated and over the top. It literal means a type of Thai folk dance performance (Think Chinese Opera but Thai version) that has since been associated with old-fashionness, and poor taste. "Chada" is a Thai tiara/crown with a golden color used to be worn by royalties and now can be seen in costume for traditional Thai performances) (IS5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Old-fashion Simplification of Heritage (air of Thainess, glimpse of color) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	<p>The Adaptation of the Past for the Present</p> <p>Producer</p> <p>As established in the previous theme of 'The Imagination of Modern Heritage,' in designing a luxury retail development with heritage, the developer must create new heritage for the present. The creation of modern heritage relies on two processes:</p> <p>1. The selection of cultural elements as connectors to the past. From a long history and vast local heritage of a nation, there are many cultural elements that can be chosen but, there are three main categories of cultural elements that developers handpicked for the design of a luxury retail developer:</p> <p>1) Local Landscape (natural features specific to the city such as rivers, rice fields; animals such as Siamese fighting fish, water buffalos; plants such as from the lotus);</p> <p>2) Architectural Features from Historical Sites (spires, lines, gables, materials from Thai temples, pagodas, palaces, and traditional houses);</p> <p>3) Cultural Objects, items made by people that are specific to a culture (such as Pham Phum, Malai flowers garland, sabai, porcelain).</p> <p>2. The adaptation of the cultural elements for the present. There are many ways to modify a cultural elements for the design of a luxury retail development and the ways that the developers used can be categorized as the following:</p> <p>A) Simplification</p>
The river... also takes us back into the past. It also brings this Thainess back to us. In the past, we had to commute with the water. Which was a good thing. Culture also filled both sides of the river from temples to historic communities. (IS1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (The river) <p>- Local Landscape (the river and temples and communities)</p> <p>- A Traditional Way of Life (commuting and communities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The River) Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time) An Ideal way of life in the past (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time) 	
The study into Thai art and Thai architecture. Then there is the field trip to see and feel the real things. The real things include temple, palaces Thai houses etc. The real thing also include something that is current. They must also see the lifestyle of real people in the present, like street food, going into smaller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Palaces and Temples) People's Contemporary Lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The Palace & Temple) Present Day People 	

streets and alleys, food hub, how people consume, our markets. (IS3)			
Temples and palaces are our heritage, our roots. When they saw our roots, they had to understand these roots so they could modernize our roots that to be more interesting. If we had taken them to see modern buildings which tend to be Western, there's no point in doing so as they wouldn't have seen the core of Thainess. Sometimes, it's not just temples and palaces we took them to visit, we had to tell them stories as well about buddhism, about the kinds of lotuses: above the water or under the water. These are stories that can spark their ideas. Stories that they can be applied to their designs. (IS10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Palaces, Temples, lotus) • Modernisation of the Past • Symbolism in Local Stories as Design Inspiration (Lotuses under the water) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The Palace, Temple, Symbols in Stories) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
The area we call lotus leaf covers the third and fourth floor. The stem of the lotus leaf starts at the third floor acting as the pillar and the leaf expands as the floor for shops on the fourth floor. The shape is inspired by the lotus leaf where on the fourth floor you can see circular forms floating in the air while the lower third floor is the stem with retail space underneath the leaves. The walking customers would feel like something is floating above them in the space. Or like I mentioned earlier, it creates a new and unique experience for people. The design is inspired by the lotus leaf which links to the river and the Thai way of life. So this is my contribution regarding the Thainess for ICONSIAM, even though I'm not the designer, the lotus leaf was something I had a part in. (Lotus Leaf Design) I would change the stem to have more design. While we were working on it, there were many options in the conceptual and schematic designs, but the final outcome was far too minimal than I expected. There should have been more details on the stem or the form of the lotus leaf space which could have more design. (IS9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (lotus) • Simplification of Heritage (too minimal) • Symbolism in Local Stories as Design Inspiration (Lotuses under the water) • Enlargement of Traditional Design and (Lotus bigger where people and shops can locate on) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Lotus) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
(Inspiration of the Chandelier by Lasvit) the Malai is a gesture that we offer to guests coming in Thailand like a welcoming gesture. We used this story to be at the entrance of the luxury zone. (IS10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Malai, Thai Flower Gardland) • Symbolism in Local Stories as Design Inspiration (Cultural Meaning of the Malai in welcoming) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Lotus) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present <p>- Function in the Past for the Present</p>	

	(the function like the real Malai to welcome people)		
In the past, whether palaces or temples, the top spire would be the most golden, most precious while the body of the building might not have anything (detail), just a normal concrete building. The top is very important and it got incorporated into the design of ICONSIAM. You can see this in the top of the buildings like the residential buildings with the golden spire. The top of the retail building also stood out with a big piece (of design) that people will notice. (IS3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Palaces and Temples) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context (the function of the spire) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The Palace & Temple) - Function in the Past for the Present 	
If you see the front façade that looks like glass sabai wrapping ICONLUXE. This represents how people in the old days used the sabai to also wrap their precious belongings. We see ICONLUXE as the precious thing so we had to wrap it with the sabai. (Sabai' is a piece of textile, commonly pleated and used by women to wrap around the breast and over one shoulder.) (IS10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Sabai usage in the old days) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context (Sabai wrapping precious things and now wrapping luxury brands) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Sabai) • Function in the Past for the Present 	
We need to choose a shape and form that can convey both Thainess and modernity. For instance the Thai gable, it has that unique triangle that you can recognize instantly. We can use triangle and it make visible straight away. For instance, we use a big scale to bold it and make it very recognizable from the side straight away. Since we usually take photos from the river anyway. The side next to the river is the most important side. So on that side, the Thai gable should like 50% of the overall design, protruding out. Right now the gable is like only 10% of this side view with so many other design elements. Some are Thai. Some are not so Thai. So it really lacks a uniqueness. I would really like to fix this side view of ICONSIAM to make the architectural design much clearer. (IS4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (The Gable) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context (the function of the gable) • Enlargement of Traditional Design and (making gable bigger) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Thai Gable) • Function in the Past for the Present • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

<p>In the past, whether palaces or temples, the top spire would be the most golden, most precious while the body of the building might not have anything (detail), just a normal concrete building. The top is very important and it got incorporated into the design of ICONSIAM. You can see this in the top of the buildings like the residential buildings with the golden spire. The top of the retail building also stood out with a big piece (of design) that people will notice. (IS3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Palaces and Temples) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context (the function of the spire) 	<p>- Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The Palace & Temple) - Function in the Past for the Present</p>
<p>If you see the front façade that looks like glass sabai wrapping ICONLUXE. This represents how people in the old days used the sabai to also wrap their precious belongings. We see ICONLUXE as the precious thing so we had to wrap it with the sabai. (Sabai' is a piece of textile, commonly pleated and used by women to wrap around the breast and over one shoulder.) (IS10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Sabai usage in the old days) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context (Sabai wrapping precious things and now wrapping luxury brands) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Sabai) • Function in the Past for the Present
<p>We need to choose a shape and form that can convey both Thainess and modernity. For instance the Thai gable, it has that unique triangle that you can recognize instantly. We can use triangle and it make visible straight away. For instance, we use a big scale to bold it and make it very recognizable from the side straight away. Since we usually take photos from the river anyway. The side next to the river is the most important side. So on that side, the Thai gable should like 50% of the overall design, protruding out. Right now the gable is like only 10% of this side view with so many other design elements. Some are Thai. Some are not so Thai. So it really lacks a uniqueness. I would really like to fix this side view of ICONSIAM to make the architectural design much clearer. (IS4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (The Gable) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context (the function of the gable) • Enlargement of Traditional Design and (making gable bigger) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Thai Gable) • Function in the Past for the Present • Adaptation of the Past for the Present

For those brands with a modern creativity combination... such as a furniture brand by Saran Yen Panya. He is perfect in bringing old materials to create furniture that combines modern creativity. His work has uniqueness and compatibility for the space, which is a perfect harmony of the traditional and the contemporary blend. (IS6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Old materials) • Traditional Materials but with new design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (old materials) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
When we created a theme we also need look if there are any incident around that time like when the Siamese Fighting Fish was made the aquatic animal of Thailand. (IS1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Siamese Fighting Fish) • Modern Day People's usage of the Cultural Object (Fighting Fish just recently made the aquatic animal, meaning for people in the present) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Siamese Fighting Fish) • Present Day People 	
I don't want people to think of Thainess and have images of such temples, palaces. These are places that are so intricate and out of touch with every day people. We should be able to twist this Thainess into something that looks more modern. We twist this Thainess so that more people will be able to understand it and access it. (IS4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Palaces and Temples) • Modern Day People's usage of the Cultural Object • Twisting Heritage for Modernity <p>- Comprehension by People Today (More people will understand)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The Palace & Temple) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	

<p>(The process in adapting Thainess it to fit the modern day context better) I think the first aspect is the function. What elements would we use? What were their functions in the past? How do they serve the people in the past vs. in the present. How we execute the design depends on so many things. For example, technology is always changing. The customers and people who are hanging out in the shopping mall now have a different view. How do we do it? The team collaborates and help each other to brainstorm. For example, a bag that was made in the past... How was it used? How did it serve people? If we want to make it new, we would think about how to make the bag more modern, such as the design, the color, the pattern. How would the modern person use this bag? Also, what new technologies can we use to aid the production process? (IS7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past Function in a Modern Day Context • Change of color, pattern and design • Modern Day People's usage of the Cultural Object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Function in the Past for the Present • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	
<p>For example, when I was working abroad, if someone wanted me to design a Thai shop and they wanted a "Ka-lae" on the facade, or ask me to incorporate Thai elements into the shop design, I always tell them that these things are like our teachers. The original ones are extremely intricate and beautiful. If we want to copy it, but create a lesser version, we should come up with a better idea instead. Now, back to our project, for the parts that I was in charge of, such as the Thai elements in Takashimaya or ICONCRAFT, the things we chose, we don't just piggy back off of historical success. We adapt it to a new context. The way we choose... we don't exactly choose... We see what blends well with the existing design and we adapt it to fit the modern day context better and we create new ideas. (A "Ka-lae" is a carved wood decorative piece on the upper part of the gable of the roof, prominent in Lanna (Northern Thai) architecture. Its sharp top serves as a deterrent for birds, such as crows or vultures.) (IS7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Copy and Paste of Heritage • Past Function in a Modern Day Context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

<p>(Tenants) Everyone was always very interested to see what Thainess is and how Thainess could be incorporated into the retail design. So that that was always embraced by the brands. From my opinion I think Thai design, especially Thai contemporary design is very unique in its use of patterns and colours, very engaging their environment. (IS13)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of color, pattern and design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
<p>It is impossible to create something for people in the present by just using everything from the past. Therefore when we brief, we must also focus on the contemporary life too. But with the history, you will also be able to see how our contemporary life was created because of what. It came from what? where our contemporary life derived from? More importantly we also need to know who are our customers, the people in the present. What do they really want? (IS3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification for People today • People's Contemporary Lifestyle <p>- The Desire of the People in the Present</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	
<p>We can use the old methods of building construction to be a part of the retail development. This is good for spreading knowledge and design and construction inspiration for people in the country. On the other hand, we had world class innovations that were imported including glass and façade construction that Thailand doesn't have but were brought in to collaborate with the Thai construction team. It's like sharing knowledge and education, by sharing this, they can be applied to other phases or projects in the future. In the future, maybe a roof structure innovation that uses wooden material or joint structure methods that are local to Thailand. This could be good. Of course, we must put safety as the first consideration and if it works, we can showcase Thainess with modern innovation. (IS9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application in Construction as a Modern Design (old methods as part of retail development) • International Thainess (Imported World Class Innovation) • Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Local Traditional Material applied in modern construction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present <p>- International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too)</p>	

<p>If you ask me, they don't need to know. Sometimes, it's a good thing to have some traces of Thainess in the designs that people can see or maybe they can't. When I say that foreigners can refine Thainess, I mean Thainess doesn't have to be said out loud or explicitly. The work Haberdashery did for ICONSIAM, we don't see many designs or objects with Thainess like this before. I don't like it when something is too definite, too exact. I prefer just some hints or traces that we can assume from. I really learned that I had to change my perception when it comes to designing a luxury retail development, Thainess or historical traditional stuff couldn't be mixed into retail design. I have to admit that I was wrong. They can be mixed together and the outcome exceeded my expectations. (IS9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplification of Heritage (traces, not explicit, not definite nor exact) • International Thainess (Created by Foreigners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present <p>- International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too)</p>	
<p>Thainess in ICONCRAFT started when we first came up with the concept. We had to combine crafts from all over the country to showcase to Thais and foreigners, so they know the beauty of Thai craftsmanship and how what we selected were different from other crafts because we modernised them to be more in line with current market and contemporary lifestyle of consumers. (IS6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification for People today • People's Contemporary Lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	
<p>Thainess is applied in a more modern context so that people can easily get it, everything has been blended within the building. (IS12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification for People today • Comprehension by People Today (People can easily get it) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	

<p>The store (ICONCRAFT) must have an essence of Thainess without being so Thai that it's old fashioned. Normally, when we talk about Thainess, we think of pattern and drawings inside a temple or the "Kanok" Thai pattern. These things are too traditional. We had to dilute and simplify down the level of heritage so that we can become more appealing to a younger and a newer generation of consumers. So the interior design is quite modern but the choice of materials and the genteel curvatures still have a sense of Thainess. (IS4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thainess that is not old fashioned) Simplification of Heritage (dilute, simplify down, Sense of Thainess) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generation of consumers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
Focus Group: Validation of Secondspace			
<p>I'm not sure what it's called. It's gold columns with a perforated design in Thai patterns. This is what you can't find at other retail developments, especially with the river in the background, there's no place like this. It's a mixture of modernity, the ancient, and the river, together creating an interesting combination. (1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated with the Time Heritage and Modernity (modernity and the ancient) Unseen Thai Space (no other place like this) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (The river, gold columns with Thai pattern) <p>- Local Landscape (the river)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The River) <p>- Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
<p>I like that it preserves the old design of Thainess and offers me a new experience that is different from other retail developments. It reminds me of the old days, when it was a garden and a part of the land was a Thai restaurant by the river where I used to dine. There is some experience from the old days that remains here. (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (old design with new experience, like this) Unseen Thai Space (different from other retail development) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (actual experience that happened on the past on the same land) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Experience from Past) 	
<p>Thainess could be incorporated into with such things as Thai puppets, buffalo, or something with Thai elements in interactive activities. The dinosaur is to promote the exhibition on the top floor, but it'd be a good idea for ICONSIAM to have something of their own with movements apart from the decoration on the wall and building. Another zone that I also think has a lot of potential is in SOOKSIAM, on the upper ground floor, where there's an amulet zone that's super traditional Thai and targets Thai people. If it wasn't here, it's not different from roadside amulet shops selling on the ground. This can be turned into a zone for 'Sai Mu' (superstition worshipping) in modern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thainess with interactivity, amulet zone but more modern style) Unseen Thai Space (can be seen in other places if not modernized) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Thai puppets, buffalo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Not see but feel) 	

style which is widely popular now. I saw the shop Harmentstone selling Sai Mu sacred item bracelets. (6)			
(Haberdashery installation) Actually, it is like the play or the movie The King and I, where we can't really ask for 100% Thainess from a foreigner's perspective. What can come out of it is the inspiration for how Thai dancing or other Thai performances have been adapted from the movie, which was made 40–50 years ago. Thai works nowadays have been modified to be more modern. I like that it's pretty modern. I like it. (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thai and pretty modern (like it) of the Past International Thainess (Foreigner Perspective, can't expect 100%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
If we look at modern Thai architecture or structure, one place that represents modern Thainess very well is the Sukhothai Hotel, where there's serenity, calmness, minimalism with wooden décor, and a diamond shape. The whole decoration contributes to the atmosphere they offer. This Cartier shop has some elements with attribution, such as Thai silk and Thai perforated design, but as a whole, it doesn't contribute to that atmosphere. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplification of Heritage (calmness, minimalism) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Thai silk, perforated design) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of the Past for the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (That may not work) 	
I can't see the direction inspiration behind it (exterior of ICONSIAM). As a photographer, I see it as a whole, I feel some Thainess, but in detail, I can't see how it was inspired by Sabai or Phanom Mue. But overall, it conveys Thainess and is beautiful. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Sabai and Phanom Due) Feel Thainess but not see (Relate to Adaptation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Not see but feel) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
Yes, I see them as lotus leaves. Like we're underneath the lotus leaves. But it doesn't catch that much of my attention. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess See it but not catch my attention (Relate to simplification) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Not see but feel) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
This zone is very futuristic, but I notice its inspiration might be from lotus leaves. (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (futuristic lotus leaf) Might be from (Relate to simplification) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
(Asked if see the Thai inspiration behind the facade) I can feel it. I like when they show fireworks because there's a lot of space. What I like more are the details of the design in each zone inside the retail developments, which are different from other places, so when I walk past them, it's more interesting and beautiful. There are works from all regions of Thailand, which shows that the developer sees the value of all the good things our country has to offer in terms of presenting Thainess. (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can not feel Thainess (Relate to simplification) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

If you ask me if I want to take some in this zone (Sooksiam), I will say no. Because if I want this feel, I can go outdoors to temples and stuff that is more pretty. But this one seems like it's trying to copy something, like copy and paste design without any adaptations. I don't think it goes with a retail development, maybe, maybe not. And there's so much stuff for sale here that it's not nice to take photos, but foreigners get excited by this, but personally, I don't like the Thainess in this zone. (others agreed) (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Copy and Paste of Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
Much prettier. It (restaurant zone on 6th floor with water buffalo and rice field) looks more modern with Thainess in it. I prefer this kind of design to the one at the floating market. I (others agreed) (SookSiam)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Modern with Thainess) No Copy and Paste of Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
When I walked into the restroom, I noticed the jars, as there's no place for this design. I like that they use the jars as wash basins. Very outstanding. (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past Function in a Modern Day Context (Jars to keep water and used as wash basins instead) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of the Past for the Present Function in the Past for the Present 	
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya			
Interviews: Secondspace			
As time changes, traditional materials cannot be used by themselves. It wouldn't be contemporary to be applied to a retail development where new products are displayed. If we had gone with traditional architecture, it wouldn't have suited for the context of a retail development, so the Thai identity of Ayutthaya is selected to be told in a modern design. (CA4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (modern design, context of a retail development) Heritage with Contemporary Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
We combined two aspects together. For the first aspect, if you see the front of the project from the express way, we assumed that people would feel the revival of Ayutthaya's former glory and prosperity. This is like bringing the past back to the present. Thai heritage is applied in this construction by incorporating corners and lines seen in Thai architecture that have been transformed into a modern design. (CA3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Ayutthaya's Past Glory to the Present) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Corners and Lines in Thai Architecture) Heritage Application in Modern Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Lines in Thai Architecture) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

<p>We wanted to retell the story of Ayutthaya's prosperous past. All the designs refer to Ayutthaya's prosperity in a modern context with contemporary materials, but when you look at them, you know it's Ayutthaya. It's what we call a Thai twist. (CA5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Ayutthaya Prosperous Past in a modern context) Heritage with Contemporary Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
<p>When we work, we usually pick out the forms and the lines to work with. We don't just use traditional things and paste it onto the work. We utilised lines and curves found in Thai design and architecture. But we don't paste on Prajamyam patterns onto the design. We started from the two sides: the side with the highway and local road. The highway side is more grand because you can look at it from afar. The materials we used are white and gold. The local road side, we were briefed that the space between the commercial building and the mall will be a market... In that zone, we used bricks to convey localness because bricks are very reminiscent of ancient Ayutthaya architecture. In Ayutthaya, the base of each ancient buildings, as we can see in the ruins, are made from raw bricks and the more elaborate temples would be plastered with cement. The most elaborate buildings, then, used gold on the doors and things of that nature. So, we made the main facade on the highway side to be white and gold. Usually with Central, we will have a layer of precast panel and that would be stick on as a layer over the facade. For the white facade, we designed the precast with Thai curves inspired by with a "Jom Hae" (The "Prajamyam" pattern is a basic traditional Thai pattern in the shape of diagonal squares with leaf detailing that is used as a base for other intricate patterns, such as "Rak Roi", "Nah Kradaan" "Prajamyam Kaan Dang" or " Ratchawat" patterns. "Jom Hae" is a common silhouette used for the roof/spire/crown of structures in Thai architecture, such as the pagoda or the consisting of a concave triangular shape with a spire on top." (CA1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity No Copy and Paste of Heritage Local Landscape (red brick materials) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Red Brick) Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Precast with Thai Pattern) Past Material Symbolism in a Modern Context (White and gold in grandest building in the past on the grandest side) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Function in the Past for the Present <p>- Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
<p>Modernisation is to be extracted from the local materials. For example, we use bricks which represent a material from the old days of Ayutthaya. For the design, we minimise it to create new design. We also wanted to use "kanok" lines, but we didn't use the whole kanok pattern, we zoomed in on certain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity International Thainess Simplification of Heritage (refine, not the whole thing) Change of color, pattern and design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	

lines which can be repeated like in the façade. By using the curves from the Kanok or the bricks, a history telling materials, we are telling a story in the modernised context. We refined such things to be simpler and more international. This is how we modernised Ayutthaya Thainess. The context we have isn't literally Thai. We extracted ideas from traditional materials, but we turned them to be more international. Lines and materials and colours are not used in the whole context, we don't use the whole "chedi" or temple, but we use the material of the temple that are commonly used and seen in Ayutthaya. We turned them into a new story-telling which is more modernised. (CA2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past Material Symbolism in a Modern Context (Story from Local Material rather than using it directly) 		
(Job Hae) It is a Thai curve derived from the curve of the traditional Thai fishing net when you pull it out of the water. The silhouette is used in pagodas. We modified it to create sections. The precast, which is usually flat, right? We use it instead of bricks and cement. We use the precast to display the surface outside, but we used the curve. If you look at the design, you will see a curve that is quintessentially Thai, reminding us of a traditional fishing net. When we look at the golden part, it also uses the same curve. From the façade. But the gold that we use out front, we employ a gradient and we created it on a computer. The pattern that is created will show a curve when you look at it from afar, a large curve. We used computers to calculate the distance so it shows a pattern within the gold color... Well, we don't want anything that's ornamental or existing that can be copy and pasted onto the façade. We want to modify and create a new Thainess, we don't want to paste traditional elements. So these golden elements that you see here cannot be found in temples or traditional Thai architecture. However, the curves are derived from traditional Thai architecture. Furthermore, we try to create new spaces and new patterns that convey Thainess using the existing curves found in Thai architecture and design. (CA1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity is (New Thainess) Unseen Thai Space (Never seen before unlike traditional temples) No Copy and Paste of Heritage Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Computer to Design Precast with Thai pattern) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Fish Net) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Fishnet inspired lines) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
The word 'out-of-date' that I mean is over time, it can be out. It doesn't mean that when a designer presents their work, it is out-of-date. I have to correct it. It must be a timeless design. It shouldn't be attached to a certain era. To tell a story in the form of design features inside a mall has a high construction cost. It isn't a pop-up space that is decorated for a few months and is removed. Common areas of malls last 5-6 years up or even 10 years in some places. So every time customers walk past, it should not be over-telling its story. At Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (Not Out of Date) Heritage and Modernity is (Timeless) Simplification of Heritage (Refined down, outlines, lighter, not overwhelm, not over-telling, almost unnoticeable) Dynamic Quality like a City (Changes 5-6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Wooden Panels in Thai Houses) Adaptation of the Past for the Present Dynamism as a City-like Quality (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	

Ayutthaya, around the void, carved-wooden panels in shapes traditional Thai- styled houses are refined down to their outlines. If we used the actual ones, over time, people would get bored. When you drop it down to outlines to tell the story, everything is lighter, it does not overwhelm tenants inside the mall. It is blended into the environment when you pass, you almost don't feel it. It isn't in-your-face. It is blended in our surroundings, almost unnoticeable. (CA2)	years)		
We did the initial brief on what we found from the research on what Ayutthaya is famous for such as Thai dessert, fruit, rice field, traditional Thai house, boat, canal, the use of bricks, we wanted something with a twist. We didn't want it to be a perfect copy, we wanted art and modernisation. That's what we brief the designers (CA4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Thai dessert, fruit, rice field, traditional Thai house, boat, canal, the use of bricks) Local Landscape (Rice field, traditional Thai house, boat, canal, bricks) No Copy and Paste of Heritage (no perfect copy) Twisting Heritage for Modernity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Thai dessert, fruit, rice field, traditional Thai house, boat, canal, the use of bricks) Adaptation of the Past for the Present <p>- Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
(When asked about Thainess with a Twist) Not copying, for example, we use wooden structure, the balcony where the Thai house is, unlike SOOKSIAM's Thainess which is very themey. What the original is like and they just put the original in. We don't focus on the theme, but more on the materials such as wood, applying the roof texture to be graphic around the hall, applying gable in the line of sight, the gable is still there, but its material has changed or in a more minimal form. (CA4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Copy and Paste of Heritage (not copying, not put the original in) Simplification of Heritage (minimal form) Heritage with Contemporary Materials (change materials and in modern form) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
We have to honour the functions and use them in a modern context, but the key function remains the same. This is the core application. This can also be seen with benjarong porcelain in the food court. Thai nobles once used them to eat in the past and this is applied in the food court where everyone can come to eat. This can seen in the tradition Thai cooking tools and utensils seen in the area that sells food in front of the supermarket. (CA3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Benjarong Porcelain, utensils) Past Function in a Modern Day Context (Porcelain = Food Court. traditional utensils = in front of supermarket) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Thai dessert, fruit, rice field, traditional Thai house, boat, canal, the use of bricks) Function in the Past for the Present 	
When (especially made red brick) it is shaped like a half circle, once the bricks are lain, they would look like a weaving pattern. If you look at the photograph, you will see a weaving pattern. Actually, it looks local, like local handicraft basketry. This side of the building looks more local because it has the market. The bricks are lain so that the façade looks like a weaving pattern. (CA1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change of color, pattern and design (creating round shape brick) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (traditional basketry) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Basketry) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
We did study genuine Thai houses, but the scale they have for sale doesn't fit the space. Some are too small, while others are too big. It's a cluster of Thai houses. We thought it was better to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (traditional Thai house) Heritage with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Traditional Thai House) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

form a new house using the form and shape, which are toned down to a clean version while still retaining Thainess. We use steel because the construction takes less time. Wood is hard to find. The executives wanted to use old wooden Thai houses. We tried to source it, but there wasn't enough time. We use steel with wood finishing and colouring. (CA5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contemporary Materials (Steel) Simplification of Heritage (Tone Down) 		
When the design is diluted and modernized, this intricacy is even hard to get. For us, intricacy can be represented through craftsmanship like flower garlands with long needles and threads and the act of repeated assembling into shapes and forms for certain purposes, mostly for worshipping and decorations. It is an item that can represent everything within itself: beauty, grandeur and intricacy. It is a decorative item with an untwisted meaning of its function. Phan Phum is being presented straightforwardly. (CA3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum and Flower garland) Simplification of Heritage (dilute) Symbolism in Local Stories as Design Inspiration (Phan Phum and the emotion it evokes, beauty grandeur, intricacy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum and Flower garland) Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
The bell is an element of Thainess. We want to add some elements that can invoke memories of people, something people can relate to. We see bells in Thai temples and things. Things like lanterns and bells are things that people are familiar with. These things can be straight forward but the other elements of the design here are not that straight forward. (CA1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Temple Bells) Copy and Paste of Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Bells) Same in the Past, Same in the Present 	
For locals, they don't really care as they know and they are accustomed to real historical sites close by, but if we want to attract locals too, we have to turn their content into something modern for them. For them, it's not that exciting if we just copied the original things, we use modernity to interpret the context of Ayutthaya context to attract the locals and to get them excited... The design concept was simple which is to modernise Ayutthaya in the current fashion and context of mall design. (CA2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity Modification for People today People's Contemporary Lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
The Thainess that isn't out of date, disregarding foreign customers and tourists, as their perspective is different. We see it a lot in Japanese, Balinese or Vietnamese architecture, where local wisdom can be seen in the use of local materials and in the structures. They have developed the root of their regional culture or craftsmanship further. In Thailand, we see a lot of this in the northern region in the hotel industry, but not commonly applied to large scale architecture. We have tried to insert these things into our building, but like a wooden structure isn't really suitable for a public gigantic architecture like ours. For decorative materials, we can do it and we try to do it in order to develop passed down knowledge. For instance,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (Not Out of Date) Heritage and Modernity (Developed their roots) Enlargement of Traditional Design and (For large scale architecture) Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Local Traditional Material "Brick" applied in modern construction) Comprehension by People Today (people can understand) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	

people don't really use red bricks anymore, lightweight construction materials are more commonly used in mass production. Other materials with knowledge value that aren't appreciated are revived and encouraged and expressed in the modern context which people can understand and relate to. (CA3)			
Focus Group: Validation of Secondspace			
In reality, if the design was traditional Thai, it'd be too out-of-touch for the new generations. People of the older generations might like it, but if you imagine walking inside and seeing a thatched roof or something traditional Thai, some people might think it's a temple, not a retail development, but if it's applied Thainess, it does fulfill the retail industry. Thainess can be found in historical sites or temples. This is a shopping mall, a retail development, it's built for people to go in for the facilities, so modernity must be incorporated. (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Applied Thainess, not like a temple) Retail as a Modern Space (Retail must incorporate modernity) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (new generations) No Copy and Paste of Heritage (Don't want to see something traditional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
I think the lifestyle of the new generations has to be modern, but with blended elements of Thainess, which makes it cute. Like Participant 1 said, if it was traditional Thai, it might not gain much attention as there are already so many historical sites and places with traditional Thainess. With Central's perfect mixture of minimalism and Thainess, it has turned out cute. It suits the younger generation's lifestyle. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (minimalism and Thainess) Unseen Thai Space (gain attention to compete with real historical sites with traditional Thainess, being different) Simplification of Heritage (blending Thainess (not 100% traditional Thai) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (new generations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
They can design their retail development to be this beautiful with a perfect blend between Thainess and modernity. It's like minimal Thainess, how can I put this? It is cute, it's not 100% traditional Thai, but a perfect mixture. It's suitable for the younger generations and for taking foreign friends or tourists to visit as a one-stop attraction where there's everything from food to lifestyle to Thainess on display for visitors to experience. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (blend of Thainess and modernity) Simplification of Heritage (not 100% traditional, minimal Thainess) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generations, friends and tourists) One stop attraction, offering everything like a city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People City-like Quality (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	
That's true. If a whole house was placed here, it would be like an exhibition in a museum of ancient houses. It doesn't suit the quality of a retail development or the overall picture. In this manner, we get to experience life as if we were in a local market, shopping for local products with villagers under the concept, but in a lighter way. (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (traditional house not fit with the quality of the retail development) Simplification of Heritage (lighter way) <p>- A Traditional Way of Life (experience life in a local market)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present <p>- An Ideal way of life in the past (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)</p>	
It is easy to install a Thai house, but of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Copy and Paste of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of the Past for the 	

course, it's too dull and doesn't show the idea of the designer. (3)	Heritage (too easy to just put in a Thai house)	Present	
From what I see, it (Zone with modernized Thai house) is very similar to an actual local village, but the design helps to declutter the space. Different patterns are hidden next to the gable roof, with fabrics on top creating a soft touch mimicking the flows of the rivers in Ayutthaya. (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplification of Heritage (declutter) • Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Textile to mimic the gable of Thai houses or flows of the rivers) - Local Landscape (the river)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present - Local Landscape specific to Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time)	
if a Thai house was installed here, it wouldn't be soft and flowy. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Copy and Paste of Heritage (too easy to just put in a Thai house) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
I was displeased when I saw this (Imitated War Elephant Sculpture) because it's too obvious with a realistic elephant figure being installed. I think if they used an elephant made of rattan as its structure or something, not a realistic one like this, it might be more minimalistic and go better with the other design elements. This is my personal view. The elephant figure does not seem to fit with the space, it does not blend in smoothly. It would be even weirder if it's inside where it wouldn't go with anything. (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Copy and Paste of Heritage (don't want a copy and paste of a war elephant) • Simplification of Heritage (wanted minimalism) • Traditional Materials but with new design (rattan as a war elephant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
The red bricks are used for a very modern design, so it's a spot that's worthy of a check-in, very beautiful, and worthy of being an Ayutthaya element. The red bricks, as everybody said, always remind people of ancient history, are well designed with modernity, in combination with other compositions in the space, including the bridge and the boat, as Participant 1 said. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (red brick and ancient history) • Traditional Materials but with new design (red brick with modern designed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (red brick and ancient history) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
I can see (Oversized Blue and White Imitated Porcelains as Decorations over a table next to the food court) dimensions in the tableware installation, regardless of the fact that it might not belong to the Ayutthaya era. It was applied in an eye-catching design to convey that in the past these items were used so they could be preserved. (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (blue and white porcelain, although not belong to Ayutthaya) • Past Function in a Modern Day Context (tableware decoration in the present) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (blue and white porcelain) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
(Facade) It represents minimalism. Simple yet with a little bit of Thainess incorporated with its texture and tones, like the colour gold, which represents the glory days of the old capital city of Ayutthaya. In addition, the letters for Central Ayutthaya were redesigned. A tiny thing I notice in the letter A is how it portrays Ayutthaya's identity through the font. A look similar to chedi, which conveys Ayutthaya's identity. Overall, the design is beautiful. (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplification of Heritage (minimalism) • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (gold) • Symbolism in Local Stories as Design Inspiration (gold and the glory days of the former capital, 'A' as a chedi 'pagoda' into logo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (gold) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
The first thing I notice is the wickerwork pattern, which is what Ayutthaya is well-known for. (Golden Facade) (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Wickerwork pattern) • Heritage with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Wickerwork pattern) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	

	Contemporary Materials (believing in the inspiration is derived from the wickerwork that is well known in Ayutthaya for the modern precast facade)		
I like it as there are many details to the gold Phan Phum, which is the ancient floral Phan Phum we see, but if the whole Phan Phum had been placed here, it would have been too much. And it wouldn't go with other elements in the space, so some details were cut out, and it turned out to be chic. (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum) • Simplification of Heritage (whole thing would be too much, cut down some details) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
I think if Central had done the traditional Phan Phum design, it would not have matched the retail development. What they did makes it light and easy on the eyes (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail as a Modern Space (traditional design would not match a retail development) • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum) • Simplification of Heritage (light and easy on the eyes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Development as a Modern Space • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present 	
(Phan Phum) It's a perfect harmony between an ancient element and a modern element. It is done well, not contrasting, beautiful and elegant, not a sore to the eyes. The younger generations can also be introduced to something of the old time, which is rarely found. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity (harmony between the ancient and the modern) • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum) • Simplification of Heritage (not an eye sore) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Development as a Modern Space • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	

<p>(Phan Phum) It's a perfect harmony between an ancient element and a modern element. It is done well, not contrasting, beautiful and elegant, not a sore to the eyes. The younger generations can also be introduced to something of the old time, which is rarely found. (2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity (harmony between the ancient and the modern) • Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum) • Simplification of Heritage (not an eye sore) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Development as a Modern Space • Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum) • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People
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Appendix I Thematic Analysis of the Adaptation of the Past for the Present

Time: The Parallel Present			
Case Study 1: ICONSIAM			
Interviews: Secondspace			
Quotation	Initial Code	Sub-Theme	Themes
When we created a theme we also need look if there are any incident around that time like when the Siamese Fighting Fish was made the aquatic animal of Thailand. (IS1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Siamese Fighting Fish) Comprehension by People Today (Fighting Fish just recently made the aquatic animal, meaning for people in the present) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Siamese Fighting Fish) Present Day People 	<p><u>Present Day People</u></p> <p>Producer Developers design luxury retail developments for people in the present, not people from the past. When it comes to the selection, invocation and incorporation of heritage, developers think of the following factors for modern day consumers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contemporary Comprehension of Heritage, the chosen heritage must be a cultural element passed down to the modern day where living people can understand, easily get and relate to the cultural element. A great example is the usage of the Siamese Fighting Fish as an inspiration for seasonal decorations and as an event for people who adores this fish. The Siamese Fighting Fish, as the name clearly states, is a fish with a distinctive tail that is native to Thailand. This fish has been a part of Thai history and existed to the modern day. However, for the people in the past this fish might not be a special animal in the Thai historical context but at the time of the interview, the Thai government just made this fish the national aquatic animal of Thailand and as a result, the Siamese Fighting Fish would have more
I don't want people to think of Thainess and have images of such temples, palaces. These are places that are so intricate and out of touch with every day people. We should be able to twist this Thainess into something that looks more modern. We twist this Thainess so that more people will be able to understand it and access it. (IS4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Palaces and Temples) Modern Day People's usage of the Cultural Object Twisting Heritage for Modernity <p>- Comprehension by People Today (More people will understand)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (The Palace & Temple) Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	

<p>(The process in adapting Thainess it to fit the modern day context better) I think the first aspect is the function. What elements would we use? What were their functions in the past? How do they serve the people in the past vs. in the present. How we execute the design depends on so many things. For example, technology is always changing. The customers and people who are hanging out in the shopping mall now have a different view. How do we do it? The team collaborates and help each other to brainstorm. For example, a bag that was made in the past... How was it used? How did it serve people? If we want to make it new, we would think about how to make the bag more modern, such as the design, the color, the pattern. How would the modern person use this bag? Also, what new technologies can we use to aid the production process? (IS7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Past Function in a Modern Day Context ● Change of color, pattern and design ● Modern Day People's usage of the Cultural Object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Function in the Past for the Present ● Adaptation of the Past for the Present ● Present Day People 	<p>significance to the people of today.</p> <p>2. Relevance to the Contemporary Lifestyle, developers often spoke about targeting the newer or younger generations. The younger generations doesn't necessarily mean a specific generation because some participant still talked about a luxury retail development as a destination for everyone but the younger generations more implies the idea of a contemporary lifestyle, the desire of the people in the present and how consumers can engage with the chosen invoked heritage and even use it in every day life.</p> <p>Consumers Consumers in similarity to developers also discuss about the need of the luxury retail developer to fulfill the lifestyle of the people today especially the younger generations. Moreover, the luxury retail development also has to consider things that are popular with people today too and even better if this could be a heritage that is in popularity right now such as the Siamese Fighting Fish.</p>
<p>It is impossible to create something for people in the present by just using everything from the past. Therefore when we brief, we must also focus on the contemporary life too. But with the history, you will also be able to see how our contemporary life was created because of what. It came from what? where our contemporary life derived from? More importantly we also need to know who are our customers, the people in the present. What do they really want? (IS3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modification for People today ● People's Contemporary Lifestyle <p>- The Desire of the People in the Present</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adaptation of the Past for the Present ● Present Day People 	<p>Consumers may also not understand why a certain heritage is featured even though the chosen heritage is historically correct. For instance, during the research process conducted by the designers of Central Ayutthaya, the designers found out about the blue and white porcelain excavated from historical sites and decided to create enlarged replicas of the blue and white porcelain as a design feature in the food court. However, as historically accurate this blue and white porcelain may be, modern day consumers did not get why the blue and white China was chosen for Central Ayutthaya because present day people associated a different type of porcelain with the city of Ayutthaya over the blue and white porcelain. Developer must consider the contemporary comprehension of heritage by the present day people too.</p>
<p>Thainess in ICONCRAFT started when we first came up with the concept. We had to combine crafts from all over the country to showcase to Thais and foreigners, so they know the beauty of Thai craftsmanship and how what we selected were different from other crafts because we modernised them to be more in line with current market and contemporary lifestyle of consumers. (IS6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modification for People today ● People's Contemporary Lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adaptation of the Past for the Present ● Present Day People 	<p>Consumers may also not understand why a certain heritage is featured even though the chosen heritage is historically correct. For instance, during the research process conducted by the designers of Central Ayutthaya, the designers found out about the blue and white porcelain excavated from historical sites and decided to create enlarged replicas of the blue and white porcelain as a design feature in the food court. However, as historically accurate this blue and white porcelain may be, modern day consumers did not get why the blue and white China was chosen for Central Ayutthaya because present day people associated a different type of porcelain with the city of Ayutthaya over the blue and white porcelain. Developer must consider the contemporary comprehension of heritage by the present day people too.</p>

Thainess is applied in a more modern context so that people can easily get it, everything has been blended within the building. (IS12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modification for People today • Comprehension by People Today (People can easily get it) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	
The store (ICONCRAFT) must have an essence of Thainess without being so Thai that it's old fashioned. Normally, when we talk about Thainess, we think of pattern and drawings inside a temple or the "Kanok" Thai pattern. These things are too traditional. We had to dilute and simplify down the level of heritage so that we can become more appealing to a younger and a newer generation of consumers. So the interior design is quite modern but the choice of materials and the genteel curvatures still have a sense of Thainess. (IS4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity (Thainess that is not old fashioned) • Simplification of Heritage (dilute, simplify down, Sense of Thainess) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generation of consumers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Adaptation of the Past for the Present • Present Day People 	
There was always a need for connecting what we're doing as a world class development to the culture and the people of Thailand. So this was a world class project with world class tenants, but it was designed in a way that once you stepped on the project, you knew this project was in Thailand. This was not something to look like a project in Tokyo or London or Paris. There was definitely designs specifically to embody Thai architecture, Thai culture and how Thai people engage and shop at ICONSIAM. (IS13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unseen Thai Space (Never seen before Thainess unlike other places in the world) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Engage people of today who are living) • International Thainess (World Class Development) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Present Day People • International Thainess (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	

<p>The modernisation of crafts broadens our target group. They buy our products for everyday use. They can mix and match items to be chic and unique. To modernise these products is to make them different and we expand our market to be even wider than before. Our pricing also varies from high, middle, low, which is more attainable to a wider range of customers who want to use these items. They wouldn't think that it's too old or out of touch for them. We can also convince people who think that people who use traditional Thai products are old-fashioned and conservative that Thai crafts don't necessarily mean old-fashioned. (IS6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity (Thai products that is not old fashioned) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Everyday Use) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Present Day People 	
<p>We portrayed the Thainess through the products by finding products that are able to demonstrate the uniqueness of Thailand while innovative at the same. Products that can be used in the modern day life. Products that can fulfill the contemporary lifestyle of new generations of consumers. (IS4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage and Modernity (Uniqueness of Thailand with Innovation) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Modern Day Life, and new generations of consumers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Imagined Past in the Present • Present Day People 	
<p>We want to target all age groups. Each age group has their own style preference. If you go to a section in a department store that sell traditional Thai souvenirs, you will find Benjarong and goldware, which are old. When you want to shop for the new generations, you wouldn't want to go in this department as it's too traditional. Shops are no different from Pattaya Floating Market, where the products are all traditional. If we offer modern-style products, we can target younger generation customers because they can still relate to the design, decoration and products that are not too traditional. They can still get a sense of Thainess as they are Thai handicrafts. (IS14)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated with the Time (Modern-style, not traditional like a floating market) • People's Contemporary Lifestyle (all age groups, younger generations) • Comprehension by People Today (People can relate to) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail Development as a Modern Space • Present Day People 	

Well, if it's too traditional, it might turn off the new generations. When something is too traditional, then it's too ancient. What it (ICONSIAM) is now is a good combination which is enough to be contemporary. (IS8)	- People's Contemporary Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Present Day People	
This is something Thai that no other place in the world has. These legends of Thailand have been passed down through generations. (IS2)	- Comprehension by People Today (passed down to today not something in the past that people don't know)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Present Day People	
(When asked why modern and contemporary lifestyle is important for ICONSIAM?) ICONSIAM can also be a part of the alternative lifestyles of the younger generations who can grow with ICONSIAM too. We invested too much on the tourist already, but if we did this with ICONSIAM, I'm not sure if ICONSIAM could afford it. ICONSIAM already has an enormous burden of investment on tourists, just to cater to tourists. (IS11)	- People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Especially younger generations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Present Day People	
(When asked about Heritage to Future)Let's say we set our proposition as a heritage Thai shopping centre. We can do that. But do we want to have this target group? Not so much. As I've said before, we target tourists and Thai people. If we wanted to build an ancient city and only focus on Thainess and heritage, would our target consumers want to visit? Both Thais and foreigners, how many occasions are there for them to visit us? Secondly, how many of our B2B customers want to be on this platform? And how do we generate revenue for our organisation? The balance between brand offering and commercial lens is important. When we say heritage to future, it meets the consumer segment we've targeted since the beginning. (IS15)	- People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Target Consumers, not just ancientness that are not part of modern day life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Present Day People	
Focus Group: Validation of Secondspace			

<p>Thainess could be incorporated into with such things as Thai puppets, buffalo, or something with Thai elements in interactive activities. The dinosaur is to promote the exhibition on the top floor, but it'd be a good idea for ICONSIAM to have something of their own with movements apart from the decoration on the wall and building.</p> <p>Another zone that I also think has a lot of potential is in SOOKSIAM, on the upper ground floor, where there's an amulet zone that's super traditional Thai and targets Thai people. If it wasn't here, it's not different from roadside amulet shops selling on the ground. This can be turned into a zone for 'Sai Mu' (superstition worshipping) in modern style which is widely popular now. I saw the shop Harmentstone selling Sai Mu sacred item bracelets. (6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Thainess with interactivity, amulet zone but more modern style) Unseen Thai Space (can be seen in other places if not modernized) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Thai puppets, buffalo) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (popular with people now) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space The Imagined Past in the Present Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Not see but feel) Present Day People 	
Case Study 2: Central Ayutthaya			
Interviews: Secondspace			
<p>We wanted to honour the city's culture and make people of the city proud by applying traditional Ayutthaya art and culture in a more modern way and to be the centre of the community, a centre of life. (CA4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Ayutthaya in a modern way) Retail as a Modern Space (Central Ayutthaya for a modern way of life) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (Community, Center of Life) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Present Day People 	
<p>For locals, they don't really care as they know and they are accustomed to real historical sites close by, but if we want to attract locals too, we have to turn their content into something modern for them. For them, it's not that exciting if we just copied the original things, we use modernity to interpret the context of Ayutthaya context to attract the locals and to get them excited... The design concept was simple which is to modernise Ayutthaya in the current fashion and context of mall design. (CA2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity Modification for People today People's Contemporary Lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Past in the Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	

<p>The Thainess that isn't out of date, disregarding foreign customers and tourists, as their perspective is different. We see it a lot in Japanese, Balinese or Vietnamese architecture, where local wisdom can be seen in the use of local materials and in the structures. They have developed the root of their regional culture or craftsmanship further. In Thailand, we see a lot of this in the northern region in the hotel industry, but not commonly applied to large scale architecture. We have tried to insert these things into our building, but like a wooden structure isn't really suitable for a public gigantic architecture like ours. For decorative materials, we can do it and we try to do it in order to develop passed down knowledge. For instance, people don't really use red bricks anymore, lightweight construction materials are more commonly used in mass production. Other materials with knowledge value that aren't appreciated are revived and encouraged and expressed in the modern context which people can understand and relate to. (CA3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (Not Out of Date) Heritage and Modernity (Developed their roots) Enlargement of Traditional Design and (For large scale architecture) Application in Construction as a Modern Design (Local Traditional Material *Brick) applied in modern construction) Comprehension by People Today (people can understand) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
<p>We asked for something that people could take photos with, and they can recognise right away that this is Central Ayutthaya. Without the logo, people can tell that it is Central Ayutthaya. (CA5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehension by People Today (people can recognise) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present Day People 	
Focus Group: Validation of Secondspace			
<p>In reality, if the design was traditional Thai, it'd be too out-of-touch for the new generations. People of the older generations might like it, but if you imagine walking inside and seeing a thatched roof or something traditional Thai, some people might think it's a temple, not a retail development, but if it's applied Thainess, it does fulfill the retail industry. Thainess can be found in historical sites or temples. This is a shopping mall, a retail development, it's built for people to go in for the facilities, so modernity must be incorporated. (1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (Applied Thainess, not like a temple) Retail as a Modern Space (Retail must incorporate modernity) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (new generations) No Copy and Paste of Heritage (Don't want to see something traditional) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Retail Development as a Modern Space Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
<p>I think the lifestyle of the new generations has to be modern, but with blended elements of Thainess, which makes it cute. Like Participant 1 said, if it was traditional Thai, it might not gain much attention as there are already so many historical sites and places with traditional Thainess. With Central's perfect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (minimalism and Thainess) Unseen Thai Space (gain attention to compete with real historical sites with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	

mixture of minimalism and Thainess, it has turned out cute. It suits the younger generation's lifestyle. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> traditional Thainess, being different) Simplification of Heritage (blending Thainess (not 100% traditional Thai) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (new generations) 		
When they (local goods) are displayed in a major mall, more people get to see them. Therefore, demand for these types of products may increase. This is good support for local culture to be featured in the modern context by focusing more on a higher market. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail as a Modern Space (mall as a modern context) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (locals goods for people to see them in a modern context) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Present Day People 	
(Phan Phum) It's a perfect harmony between an ancient element and a modern element. It is done well, not contrasting, beautiful and elegant, not a sore to the eyes. The younger generations can also be introduced to something of the old time, which is rarely found. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (harmony between the ancient and the modern) Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (Phan Phum) Simplification of Heritage (not an eye sore) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Development as a Modern Space Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (Phan Phum) Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
I can see (Oversized Blue and White Imitated Porcelains as Decorations over a table next to the food court) dimensions in the tableware installation, regardless of the fact that it might not belong to the Ayutthaya era. It was applied in an eye-catching design to convey that in the past these items were used so they could be preserved. (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural feature as a link to the past and Thainess (blue and white porcelain, although not belong to Ayutthaya) Past Function in a Modern Day Context (tableware decoration in the present) Understanding by People today of heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Element as a Connector to the Past (blue and white porcelain) Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People 	
They can design their retail development to be this beautiful with a perfect blend between Thainess and modernity. It's like minimal Thainess, how can I put this? It is cute, it's not 100% traditional Thai, but a perfect mixture. It's suitable for the younger generations and for taking foreign friends or tourists to visit as a one-stop attraction where there's everything from food to lifestyle to Thainess on display for visitors to experience. (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage and Modernity (blend of Thainess and modernity) Simplification of Heritage (not 100% traditional, minimal Thainess) People's Contemporary Lifestyle (younger generations, friends and tourists) One stop attraction, offering everything like a city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Imagined Ideal Present Adaptation of the Past for the Present Present Day People City-like Quality (Applicable to other main themes unrelated to time too) 	

Glossary of Terms

Heritagisation	The invocation of the past in a modern context and this research's context of heritagisation revolves the incorporation of the past into the space of the modern-day luxury retail development.
Heritage-Copying	One of the two main approaches of heritagisation that deals with the direct and exact imitation, replication, reproduction of the past into the space.
Idealised Heritage-Copying..	A deviation of heritage-copying, where the imitation of the past doesn't have to correspond to exact historical accuracy by idealising the past to perfection, an extraordinary but recognisable version of reality.
Luxury Retail Developments	a space with the main purpose for recreation as shopping that has been imbued with a sense of luxury due to the space's sheer size, open access of luxury goods without the requisite of purchase, features of innovation and the ability to create special moments. Examples of a luxury retail development includes a department store, a shopping mall or mixed-used development with a retail wing or building(s).
Retro-Heritagisation	One of the two main approaches of heritagisation that deals with the adaptation of the past for the present-day through methods that include simplification, the reinterpretation of function, the creation of a new design with traditional materials, the formulation of heritage with contemporary materials, the alteration of a key physical feature of a heritage and internationalisation.
Utopolis.....	a combination of utopia and metropolis, the Utopolis constitutes an abstract space that exists within the luxury retail development. Through design features with heritagisation of the luxury retail development, the Utopolis permeates out from the physical space to represent an ideal parallel version of the luxury retail development's city

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