

CHINESE NEW YEAR CANDLE BUSINESS IN TANAH GOCAP TANGERANG

BISNIS LILIN TAHUN BARU CINA DI TANAH GOCAP TANGERANG

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Abstract

This article discusses Chinese ethnic culture in Lilin Ong business in Tanah Gocap, Tangerang. The author uses qualitative research methods, namely collecting data from the library, as well as observations and interviews with the owner of Lilin "Ong", namely Mr Antonius. Chinese New Year candles are a work of Chinese ethnicity which is considered a characteristic of cultural traditions and shows Chinese identity in Indonesia. Apart from that, the author also explains the Chinese business culture that Lilin Ong maintains. When carrying out ceremonies in Chinese cultural traditions, food is always offered, and candles are needed to perform the prayer.

Keywords: Chinese New Year Candle; business culture; Tanah Gocap

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Chinese ceremonies always use candles as a means of worship. Candles symbolize that humans must be lights for other humans and symbolize the nature of eternity, such as the meaning of *shen* 'eternal'. In general, the meaning is the nature of the oneness and eternity of God. All houses during Chinese New Year, always have lanterns to decorate the room to make it look more festive and also to light it up from the darkness so that people celebrating Chinese New Year are pleased and happy.

In celebrating Chinese New Year, ethnic Chinese cannot be separated from various kinds of accessories, clothing, decorations, envelopes, and so on. In Chinese New Year celebrations, ethnic Chinese are very synonymous with the red color, especially the candles used in Chinese New Year celebrations are very important because candles are really needed by everyone as a light. Candles symbolize one of the Chinese ethnic traditions which is known not only as a source of light, but also as an activity in Chinese ethnic prayer which is symbolic in tradition and used as a religious ritual. Candles are also used to attract people's attention as a complement to commemorating the celebration of an event



during the Chinese New Year celebration. (Nilotama, Sangayu Ketut Laksemi and Rezilia Noviyanda, 2016 :2).

The location of the Lilin Ong production site, Tangerang, was chosen as the research location because based on the research survey, Lilin Ong was an ethnic Chinese trader who was in the realm of trading in the goods business who made candles as a tradition of worship for the Tangerang Chinese ethnic group and had an important role in the candle business as a complement to Chinese New Year celebrations.

2. METHOD

The research begins with observation, documentation and interviews and continues with literature studies related to the research material which is expected to be able to solve problems and find solutions in solving the problems. This research uses a qualitative research method where the research carried out is descriptive, namely conducting direct field observations to find out or describe the reality of the event being studied based on the views of the data source, not the researcher's view. The researcher then interviewed the sources using an interview type to obtain maximum data and make it easier for the researcher to obtain objective data, as well as carry out preliminary studies to find out and understand the observed phenomena. (Sugiyono. 2013 :230).

The author uses Interview Method. In the interview session, the researcher conducted a question and answer session with someone as the resource person. The sources interviewed by the researchers were:Tangerang historian and cultural observer at the Boen Tek Bio Temple, the Chair of RW 03 Tanah Gocap which is the research object, the closest relative of Lilin Ong Tangerang's successor, one of the employees who works at Lilin Ong,one of the consumers of Lilin Ong. Observation Method. In the observation session, the researcher conducted research at a candle manufacturer, namely Lilin ong, which is in the Tanah Gocap area, Tangerang, when making red candles, then made observations in the Tanah Gocap residential area, Tangerang, and during the Chinese New Year celebration, the researcher also made observations at the Boen Tek Temple. Bio Tangerang which is one of the oldest temples in Tangerang.

3. RESULT

3.1 Chinese New Year Candle in Tangerang

Since ancient times, candles have been functionally a lighting tool that was used before the existence of lamps and to this day candles are still used as a lighting tool. On the other hand, candles are also often used by Chinese ethnic groups as attributes in various traditional and traditional ceremonies, one of which is the red candle. The color red is very synonymous with Chinese culture and can be said to bring good luck to Chinese people. This can be seen from the various ornaments in Chinese New Year celebrations which are dominated by the color red. The color red is symbolized as happiness, luck and hope in life. (Aliya, Alya, 2020: 7).

By looking at Chinese ethnic prayer traditions, this makes candles a cultural tradition because they produce light. When carrying out a religious prayer tradition, candles are always used. With candles, it is a means of worship and has a history that is in accordance with Chinese ethnic traditions. Candles are used on religious ceremony, mass mourning, and so on. In literary works, candles have a symbolic meaning of sacrifice and devotion.

Candle in Mandarin is called *làzhú* (蜡烛), Candles were used slightly more often during the Northern Dynasty and Southern Dynasty, especially among the upper classes compared to ordinary people. After the Ming and Qing Dynasties, candles gradually began to be used by ordinary people. In everyday life people also used candles more as a source of light. (<https://zhidao.baidu.com/question>).

Chinese New Year candles in Mandarin are called *long lazhu* (龙蜡烛), while in Hokkien they are called *liong cek*. Two pairs of long and large candles are usually always identical to the image of a dragon, an animal that is considered a myth for ethnic Chinese and is considered influential in the lives of ethnic Chinese people. The image of a dragon on wax symbolizes strength, goodness and so on which at that time made the dragon a symbol in the Chinese empire at that time. (Siregar, Feby Yoana. 6-7 : 2017).

Chinese New Year ceremony at temples are marked by placing Chinese New Year candles. The burning candle itself is a symbol of information for that person, good luck, soul mate, and for the safety of their home and loved ones (Safari, Hartati, 2019). The Chinese also use candles as a medium to hang a wish, such as at the Boen Tek Bio Tangerang Temple, there are many candles ranging from small to large which are used as a wish for the person.

Candles in prayer are very important for the Chinese because they are used for lighting, and also as a part of the traditions and customs in carrying out worship. Candles are mainly placed next to the altar or other rooms which are usually used as places of worship. In a temple, the position of the candles is regulated by the temple administrators. However, as seen in the picture above, the position of the candle is adjusted to the height and weight of the candle itself. The large candle is placed at the back and the small candle is placed at the front.



Figure 1 Candles are placed beside the altar Figure 2. arrangement of candles by size

3.2 The Ong Candle

A fairly well-known candle maker in the Karawaci area is the "Ong (王)" candle brand. Because the owner of the "Ong" candle, namely Mr Haryanto, has the surname "Ong (王)" which means king or nobleman, in Tangerang most people with the name "Ong" are landowners. However, after Mr. Haryanto died, his nephew, Mr. Antonius, replaced his business.

The "Ong" candle started as a hobby and creativity in candles. This business was started in the 1990s. He was interested in Lilin Ong because it is a tradition in Chinese ethnic celebrations. However, at that time Mr. Haryanto only had a hobby of playing with candles and had no skills in making candles and did not understand the ingredients and tools for making candles. After that, there was also encouragement from the surrounding community and the need for prayers from the temple. Finally, slowly, Mr. Haryanto tried to make candles. At that time his employees were local people who lived in the area where he lived. The ingredients for making candles consist of palm waek, paraffin and steric.

Orders for candles are increasing day by day. Those who come from the temple congregation, they know this Ong candle because they saw it from the temples where they worship. When Mr. Haryanto first opened a candle business in Tanah Gocap, Mr Haryanto tried to add to his sales by selling white candles and trying new things. However, judging from the interest of buyers at that time, in the end he focused more on making red candles. However, they still make white candles if a buyer orders them.

Ong's candle loyal customers come from various regions, not only Tangerang City but Tangerang Regency, South Tangerang, Jakarta and Bangka Belitung. Those who visit Tangerang to meet relatives or worship at the temple do not hesitate to approach Ong candle which is located in Tanah Gocap, Tangerang. The promotion only looks at the shape of the candles used by the Temple when people are praying and from word of mouth, and people see the Ong Candles for themselves.

The characteristic of Ong candles can be seen in the image of a pair of dragons made from hand painting, then the processing must be in accordance with the specified measurements and the quality of the candles also has a big influence on the printing of the candles so that the candles don't crack and break. The meaning of the dragon symbolizes kinship and health that everyone hopes for. Candles in a person's life are interpreted as a light in their life that provides a sense of warmth in a family, and provides health for everyone.



Figure 3. the image of a pair of dragons is the characteristic of the Ong candle

3.3 Chinese Business Ethics Culture in “Ong” Candle

In trading business ethics, Chinese people have high ethics, namely they are not allowed to bring down or cause losses to other traders. Since childhood, Chinese people have been instilled and implemented in their lives on how not to depend on other people and they must try to use their skills to survive and must not be pessimistic in running their business. (Seng, Ann Wan. 2006 : 31,32,48).

Honesty is one of the most important Chinese business ethics, especially in the fields of trade and production. Because maintaining quality, goods that are easy to get and cheap is not easy because honesty is needed in building a business. A dishonest businessman or trader is a fraud. The services provided by traders to consumers will create quality, good service and low prices. For example, we can see the habits between traders and consumers with bargaining activities in traditional markets and other places. (Zhong, Wastu Pragantha. 1996: 48).

Even though the Chinese can not speak Chinese fluently, they still adhere to the values of their cultural traditions which are a tradition of the Chinese ethnicity. From this, it can be seen from the persistence of their efforts in building a business, the existence of a tradition and a close relationship between Ong candle and the temples, which to this day, this tradition will not be lost forever because of the existence of candles which give people light in living their lives. Even though Mr. Haryanto cannot speak Chinese, the character, traits and principles of Chinese culture, which have been taught to him since childhood by his parents, mean that they still uphold the values of Chinese culture.

In Chinese cultural tradition, it does not eliminate a person's identity as an Chinese. The values that are still firmly adhered to in the Ong candle business are that one cannot usurp other people's property rights in order to advance one's own business, because according to him, this kind of attitude should not be applied in building one's business. Since childhood, Mr. Haryanto has been instilled in his thinking not to depend on other people to bring down other people's businesses. They must have the ability and potential to prove that they are involved in building their business, not to usurp other people's rights. Candles are a tradition and custom that has been passed down from generation to generation by ethnic Chinese ancestors.

Service quality is a form of comparing the services provided with the services received by them or what they feel. describing customer conditions in the form of service from previous experiences, promoting by word of mouth, and advertising with advertisements. Quality in service is an expected level of excellence and control over this level of excellence to meet customer needs. (Gulla, Rendy. 2015 : 3). Besides that the quality of materials and goods. The durability of Ong candles can last up to 5 months depending on size and care.

Chinese business ethics culture heavily influenced by Confucian thought. Confucianism aims to educate and emphasize that humans can serve the country and society. To understand the teachings of Confucius is necessary understood the Book of *Daxue* (Great Teachings) contains teachings about ethics, family, society and state ethics.

Confucianism as a philosophical idea emphasizes in the social and ethical order that has for thousands of years been rooted and fused become one in the institutions of Chinese society. Confucian values are deeply rooted in every important ritual in the family and kinship group. The basis structure of the family

from *jia* 家 (family) to *zu* 祖 (clan) is the basis of success of Confucianism. The whole life and behavior of the family, customs, rituals, social networks of integrated society in political, economic and social institutions Confucianism is organized according to the Great Teachings. (Hartati, 2012).

To maintain the development of the "Ong" candle always applies that running a business must be aggressive, resilient, never give up, work hard, dare to take risks and not let go of opportunities. There must be an emphasis on price, quality and easy availability of the product, as well as principles in a business. Because principles are a determining factor in building a business. Honesty, tenacity, painstaking, being punctual, keeping promises and being trustworthy are the most important principles for maintaining integrity in successfully maintaining a business venture in any field.

4. CONCLUSION

One of the Chinese traditions is Chinese new year candles. Candles are the work of Chinese which are considered a characteristic of the cultural traditions of an ethnic group and show the identity of society in Indonesia. In general, candles are used as a symbol of light for everyone. However, in Chinese, candles are a tradition passed down from ancestors and are very important objects in individual and group worship activities in a house or temples worship. One of the candle makers is Ong candle, which is located in Tanah Gocap, Tangerang. In general, a candle is an oval-shaped object with a wick on top of which there is a wick for lighting. The wick on a candle is made from a suitcase wick which can be lit with fire, the candle will produce light from the flame. Every day lilin ong can produce 50 candles according to the quantity, size and orders from consumers.

For Chinese people, candles are used as a Chinese tradition that has been taught and practiced from generation to generation. This makes candles a cultural object because they produce light because in carrying out a religious prayer tradition, candles are always used. With candles, it is a means of worship and has a history that is in accordance with Chinese traditions. Candles are used on religious holidays, mass mourning, and so on. In literary works, candles have a symbolic meaning of sacrifice and devotion. The meaning of red for Chinese is that it symbolizes happiness, every Chinese prays to hope for happiness in their life. Every ritual held needs candles to perform the prayer.

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