

Beliefs in Auspicious Materials of Shop Entrepreneurs in Maung Hat Yai, Thailand

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Abstract : This research aimed to study the beliefs in auspicious materials of entrepreneurs in Muang Hat Yai. The data were collected via documentary research and field work including interviews, observations shops in Hat Yai which used auspicious materials to bring lucks to the shops. The results were as follows. The beliefs in auspicious materials that the entrepreneurs had were of three areas: 1) The auspicious materials could correct the improperness of the shop location, for example, the shop situated opposite a branch road, a shrine, or a bank. The owner usually corrected it by putting Chinese auspicious materials in front of or in the shop, for example, a lion holding a sword in his mouth, or a mirror, etc. 2) The auspicious materials could bring in more income. The owner of the shop usually put the auspicious materials such as a cat beckoning and a bamboo fish trap believed to trap money in front of or inside the shop. 3) The auspicious materials like turtles, paired fish and a monster holding the moon in his mouth could solve life problems including health, family, and safety problems. The use of these auspicious materials showed the blending of the beliefs of the Chinese shop entrepreneurs with the Thai folk beliefs. What is interesting is that Hat Yai is located near the three southern border provinces which are the unrest area and this may cause the number of tourists to decline. This prompted them to build a mechanism in adjusting themselves both to save their lives and to increase the number of customers. Auspicious materials can make them feel more confident.

Keywords : belief, auspicious materials, shop, entrepreneur, Maung Hat Yai

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