

THE IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS ON CONSUMERS' BEHAVIOUR AND FOOD PRODUCTS' CERTIFICATION

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Abstract

The paper aimed to present the impact of religious traditions on consumers' behaviour and food products certification. The Orthodox religion is specific to Romania, but also in other countries from ten Eastern and Southern Europe. The POST (to refrain you from eating food and beverages containing animal protein and form sins) products can play an extremely important role on the market segment represented by the voluntary quality certifications in the traditional - religious system, which is due to the numerous Christian-Orthodox believers, who strictly respect the customs and traditions mentioned in the specific documents of the religion. The number of quality schemes differs from country to country, depending on the importance they attach to them and to the products marketed.

Key words: products, post, quality, quality schemes

INTRODUCTION

In 2015, Christians held the highest share of all religious groups, with a share of 31.2% (Table 1.). [9]

Table 1. Situation of religious groups worldwide in 2015 [9]

Religion	Year 2015
	U.M: billions persons
Christians	2.3
Muslims	1.8
Unaffiliated	1.2
Hindus	1.1
Buddhists	0.5
Folk religions	0.4
Other religios	0.1
Jews	0.01

Source: Hackett, C., Mcclendon, D., 2017, Christians remain world's largest religious group, but they are declining in Europe.

Muslims also had a share of 24.1%, respectively Hindus of 15.1% of the total religious groups (Table 1.). [9]

Table 2. Situation of the religious groups in Romania [12]

Religion	Years			
	2002		2011	
	thousands	%	thousands	%
Total of which:	21,681.0	100	20,121.641	100
Orthodox	18,818.0	86.8	16,307,004	86.5
Roman-Catholic	1,026.4	4.7	870,774	4.6
Reformed	701.1	3.2	600,932	3.2
Pentecostal	324.5	1.5	362,314	1.9
Greek-Catholic	191.6	0.9	150,593	0.8

Source: Negruți, S., 2014, The evolution of the religious structure in Romania since 1859 to the present day, Revista de Statistica, Suplment No.6, 39-46.

At the level of 2011, the number of people whose religious orientation was orthodox stood at over 16 million, also holding 86.5%, followed by Roman Catholics, whose share was only 4.6% (Table 2) [12].

During the year, the Orthodox Christians guide their religious life according to certain holidays, considered smaller or higher depending on the importance of the event they bring for relocation and commemoration. In essence, these celebrations are nothing more than occasions for the encounter of man with God and the saints, as foreshadows and anticipations of the full communion to which we aim, in the Kingdom of Heaven, at the end of time. Taking into account this tension between the expectation of the full life of the "age to be" and its preparation from this stage of existence, the life of the Orthodox Christian is laid out, besides holidays and related to them, for periods or single days of fasting [2, 7].

Fasting, as a total or partial abstention from food and drink, for a longer or shorter time, but also as far as possible from sins, is the most appropriate means, found by the Church, to express the ephemerality of this life and the expectation to another, in full communion with God and with others. Thus, Christians, by fasting, express their status as pilgrims in this life, but also the state of dependence on God, from whom they are all. Besides this character, of manifesting the expectation of a meeting or an important event, the post (to refrain you from eating food and beverages containing animal protein and from sins) also has a cleaning purpose, both physically and soulfully, a role of managing, through braking, the capacities of the body and mind, but also a cultic role, by the way in which we show our honor to God or one of His saints.

Starting from the scriptural and patristic examples and words regarding the fasting, the Church has sought, since ancient times, from the apostolic period, to establish, according to needs, certain regulations regarding the practice of fasting. The ordinances established in the Church had and are intended to help the personal godliness of the believers so that it is not without some discipline and uniformity,

that, starting from a general rule, each, with the counsel of the spiritual, choose the position which is theirs most useful. This is why, from the Holy Apostles up to the present day, certain typical canons and guidelines regarding the position have been established in the Orthodox Church [5, 6].

A more thorough categorization of the job types can be achieved. Thus, taking into account his harshness, the post is of four types: [14, 17, 18, 19].

a) Integral (total) fasting or actual fasting, which consists in complete abstention from any kind of food and drink for a certain time (which obviously cannot be too long); it is the post held by Moses on Sinai [Exodus 24, 18], by the Prophet Elijah [III Kings 19, 8] and the Savior Jesus Christ before coming to preaching [Luke 4, 1-2]. It is about the full post which we have mentioned before and which must invariably precede the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, as can be seen from Canon 41 and 47 of the Cartagena Synod of 419;

b) The black, rough or dry fast (xirophagy), which allows only the consumption of dry or raw food: bread, seeds, fruits and vegetables, dried or raw. It is the position practiced by Saint John the Baptist [Matthew chap. 3; Mark head. 1], but also of the great ascents and Christian hermits;

c) The common (ordinary) station, in which the consumption of cooked foods, of vegetable origin (implicitly also the oil) is allowed, excluding any food of animal origin, called in the people "sweet" or "fruit" (meat, including fish, animal fat, eggs, milk and all its derivatives). It is the position practiced by most believers, usually;

d) Easy fasting, also called a breakdown (Greek = κατάλυσις, Slavic-Russian = razrazani), which allows the consumption of fish (including so-called "seafood"), wine, and oil, during periods when it is imposed on rough post. These kinds of disclosures are given for the larger holidays that fall during the fasting days, being regulated in detail in books that contain liturgical-typical ordinances, such as "Ceaslovul Mare", "Tipicul Mare", "Triodul" or mines.

Before making a more in-depth analysis of the foods to be relinquished to hold the post in good order, some essential clarifications must be made in the correct understanding of the principles that guide the phenomenon of fasting in the Orthodox Church. If we were to look after the canonical collections, in the Apostolic Canons, considered to be the earliest, before making any further details regarding the post, there are two references that regulate precisely how one should relate to the things that are subject to braking. It is about canons 51 and 53 Apostolic. This is the text of the first, the second being similar: "If any bishop or priest or deacon, or anyone in the priestly catalog (supper), is kept away (would abstain) from the wedding and from the flesh and wine, not for braking, but out of the bush, overlooking (forgetting) that all is very good and that man and woman God made man, but blaspheming, would raise the creature, either to straighten, or to cure and to straighten out of the Church (to get tired). As well as the layman" [3].

The fish meat has a more special status, taking into account that, at certain major holidays, there is a reluctance to eat and such (see, for example, Canon 5 of Nichifor the Confessor). As a rule, these disclosures are mentioned in the church calendars, being more widely organized in the Great Typical or in the various pravs that have appeared over time [13].

Also, a problem that some raise is the status of the so-called "seafood", considering that, in the context of increasing globalization, they become accessible also in areas where they are not naturally found. However, this is a false problem, generated by the misleading name under which these foods are known, but also by a certain practice, in the Greek space, of eating these "seafood" in all, or almost all, days. by post. In fact, it is not about fruits, but about aquatic life, molluscs or crustaceans, which makes them have the same regime as fish or fish [4].

Fasting represents total or partial withholding of certain foods and beverages, for a longer or shorter time, for religious-moral purposes. This restraint from food and drink must,

however, be accompanied by restraint from thoughts, cravings, passions, and evil deeds, which means that the bodily posture must be accompanied by a spiritual fasting. The fast is of divine origin and institution, which is why we find it practiced since ancient times, meeting it in almost all religions and all peoples. According to some Holy Fathers such as: Basil the Great, John the Golden Mouth and others, he has his origin in heaven, by forbidding God forbid our parents to eat from the stopped tree [8, 15].

Starting from the official position of the Romanian Orthodox Church (BOR), we consider that the optional quality scheme can verify compliance with the technical aspect of food production / processing, without being able to intervene on the spiritual component of the Christian-Orthodox Lent.

In the case of the post products, the referential will belong to the BOR and will be promoted and coordinated by it. The distinctive marks applied on the certified / certified products will belong to BOR and will be registered with OSIM as a trademark and industrial design.

Applicants for the voluntary food quality certification system of Post will introduce in the HACCP programs procedures aimed at controlling the composition of the products, so that, during all stages of the technological process, the product is not "contaminated" with raw materials / auxiliary materials. not allowed (sweet) in the diet of those who "fast" [11].

The certification benchmark will include the list of prohibited ingredients for use in fast food products, as well as the methods of analysis used to verify product conformity.

The specialized department within the MADR directly or by delegation to a specialized body, will verify that the product meets the requirements of the certification referential and in case of product conformity will issue the Post product certification. The certification reference and the list of approved inspection and certification bodies for the delegation of competence will be published on the MADR website.

An extremely important role in the functioning of the proposed quality scheme will be played by the veterinary sanitary laboratories. Laboratory services will be used both for self-inspections initiated by the producers and for the official controls exercised by the competent authorities [10]. The register of products certified by Post will be published and updated online on the MADR website at the specific section of the quality scheme.

As in the case of the certifications of the products obtained in the LSAA system, transparency in the communication of irregularities to the consumer will be maintained through the website [1, 16].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For writing job descriptions, various writings of a religious nature were analyzed, starting from the origin of the post. Also, the number of quality schemes at the level of the European Union, as well as the number of believers were analyzed, thus representing the sales market for the job products.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

European manufacturers can continue to offer a diverse range of quality products only if they are adequately rewarded for their efforts. This implies that they have the ability to inform buyers and consumers about the characteristics of their own products, under conditions of fair competition. It also means that producers can correctly identify their products on the market. The quality and diversity of the agri-food production in the European Union is one of its strengths, in recent years it represents a competitive advantage for the Union producers and significantly contributes to its current cultural and gastronomic heritage. This is due to the competences and determination of the farmers and producers in the Union, who kept alive the traditions and, at the same time, took into account the new production methods and materials.

The study conducted by the Commission in 2010 [Arete - Inventory of certification

schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs marketed in the EU Member States] finds an important diversification of voluntary certification systems for agricultural and food products. The Commission's inventory for 2010 lists 441 different schemes (including sub-schemes), 424 EU and 17 non-EU ones (Fig. 1.).

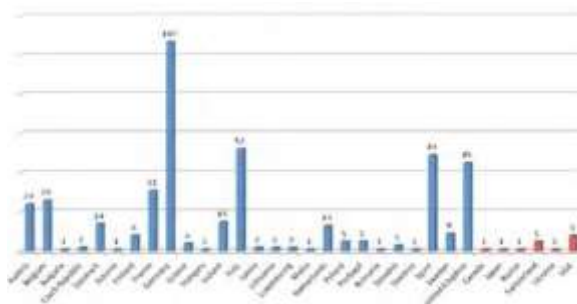


Fig. 1. Number of schemes, by country of origin (total number of schemes = 441 (including sub-schemes), EU schemes = 424, non-EU schemes = 17)

Source: study Arete– Inventory of certification schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs marketed in the EU Member States.

In this European socio-economic context, in which the certified quality represents an advantage of the farmer and a request of the consumer, Romania has not introduced in the national strategy of rural development the European measures regarding the Quality and Promotion of the agri-food products [1].

According to the data presented by The Pew Research Center in December 2011, there are approximately 2,184,060,000 Christians worldwide, representing 31.7% of the world's population. (In the second place are Muslims with 23% of the population of the world, followed by Hindus with 15%). Roman Catholics represent about 50% of the total number of Christians, being about 1,094,610,000. Most of them live in Brazil (over 133 million), Mexico (over 96 million) and the Philippines (nearly 76 million). Protestants of different denominations (including neo-Protestants) represent approximately 36.7% of the total number of Christians, ie about 800,640,000 people. More than a third of them live in the two Americas, and 12.6% in Europe.

Eastern Christians (orthodox and Monophysite, calculated together by this

institute) represent 11.9% of the total number of Christians, ie approx. 260,380,000 believers. Most monophysite Christians are in Ethiopia (about 36 million) and Egypt (about 3.5 million), and others in Armenia, Syria and Lebanon.

Table 3. Ranking of the countries with the most Orthodox Christians in 2018

No. Crt.	Country	Number	Weight from no. Totally Orthodox
1.	Russia	101,450,000	39%
2.	Ukraine	34,850,000	13.4%
3.	Romania	18,750,000	7.2 %
4.	Greece	10,030,000	3.9%
5.	Serbia	6,730,000	-
6.	Bulgaria	6,220,000	-
7.	Belarus	5,900,000	-
8.	Georgia	3,820,000	-
9.	Republic of Moldova	3,270,000	-

Source: Wikipedia.org

Most Orthodox Christians are found in Russia (over 100 million), followed by Ukraine (about 35 million) and Romania with about 19 million Orthodox (Table 3.).

According to the number of believers belonging to the Autocephalous Churches, almost 60% of all Orthodox in the world belong to the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate). Next are the Romanian Orthodox Church (2nd place), Elada Orthodox Church (3rd place) and the others. Not all Orthodox in the world are part of one of the 15 Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, but there is an insignificant percentage of followers of some schismatic Orthodox groups. About 80% of all Orthodox people live in Europe.



Fig. 2. Symbols used for HALAL certified products
 Source: Master course support control and experience of ecological food, halal and kosher, Prof. dr. Constantin Necula.

Over the course of two years, these data have changed little, especially in the majority Muslim countries, where the number of Christians is steadily decreasing [6].



Fig. 3. Symbols used for KOSHER certified products
 Source: Master course support control and experience of ecological food, halal and kosher, Prof. dr. Constantin Necula.

Figure 3 shows a series of symbols for KOSHER certified products (Fig. 3.).



Photo 1. Label on the shelf with post products
 Source: The most healthy fast food products, Elena Oceanu.

In Romania, fast food products are usually labeled according to the image above (Photo 1).

CONCLUSIONS

Starting from the presented statistical information, it can be concluded as a certification of the Post product, it will be addressed to a total population of over 260 million, and in Romania over 16 million consumers will be targeted. By setting the basis for a certification standard for Post products, Romania will be able to add

religious certification schemes HALAL and Kosher, the product of Post. The expected effects are both economic, as well as emotional - national, positioning the Romanian certified product in the attention of the European Christian-Orthodox consumer.

The certification of Orthodox Christian fast food products is extremely important, given that the specific products of other religions have already been made, and the fast food market is extremely attractive.

Romania can become the first country that standardizes in a quality certification scheme the religious reference. The biggest advantage of the certification standard is that it can be easily introduced in national and international normative acts on food safety, animal welfare, thus ending disputes between veterinary health authorities and representatives of religious cults (Muslim, Mosaic, Christian-Orthodox).) owners of certification standards. The market for HALAL products in 2017 was \$ 2.1 billion and the development potential according to Statista.com is forecast for 2023 at \$ 3 billion.

The market for kosher products is estimated at \$ 24 billion per year with growth potential of 11.5% by 2025. Statistics show that over 40 million people prefer these foods, with most consumers in the US, Israel and Australia.

Statistics shows that about 44% of the kosher production - food, drink, spices and others - is bought by Jews, 19% by Muslims, and the difference of 37% by those without religious affiliation, but who attach great importance to the style of food.

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