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**TÍTULO:** Comercialización de la religiosidad entre los "étnicos" y los musulmanes observadores en la República de Tatarstán.

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**RESUMEN:** Como resultado del resurgimiento de la religiosidad en los territorios habitados por musulmanes en Rusia, ha surgido una economía especial de la vida cotidiana musulmana, expresada en la oferta y demanda de bienes y servicios halal, y de prácticas laborales y de consumo de los musulmanes; por lo tanto, se hace necesario un análisis de la observancia de las normas y prohibiciones religiosas, los gastos habituales en bienes y servicios religiosos, y la interacción del individuo con el medio ambiente se convierten en una tarea urgente de investigación. Este artículo revela el mundo de la vida cotidiana de los musulmanes, teniendo en cuenta las similitudes y diferencias, las orientaciones y opciones de observación y los musulmanes "étnicos".

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** actitudes religiosas, prácticas de consumo, musulmanes, República de Tatarstán, productos halal.

**TITLE:** Commercialization of religiosity among the "Ethnic" and Observing Muslims in the Republic of Tatarstan.

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**ABSTRACT:** As a result of the resurgence of religiosity in territories inhabited by Muslims in Russia, a special economy of Muslim daily life has emerged, expressed in the supply and demand of halal goods and services, and of labor and consumption practices of Muslims; therefore, an analysis of the observance of religious norms and prohibitions is necessary, the usual expenses in religious goods and services, and the interaction of the individual with the environment become an urgent research task. This article reveals the world of the daily life of the Muslims, taking into account the similarities and differences, the orientations and observation options and the "ethnic" Muslims.

**KEY WORDS:** religious attitudes, consumer practices, Muslims, Republic of Tatarstan, halal goods.

**INTRODUCTION.**

Commercialization as a broad social process; on the one hand, includes the activities of entrepreneurs, who use religious norms and symbols to gain greater profits; on the other hand, commercialization also covers demand from Muslims, as the consumers of goods and services, created for them.

The activity of the owners of companies proceeds within the framework of thirteen areas: the production of clothing, food, namaz goods; the production of cosmetics, hygiene products and pharmacological preparations; educational and informational services; slaughter services; services rendered in mosques; medical and funeral services; organization of pilgrimage; banking services; and charity; separate category of specific services (A. Garayeva, 2018). In this research, we want to consider the economic practices of Muslims in the framework of these thirteen areas.

**DEVELOPMENT.**

The differences in the degree and principles of religiosity allowed us to identify the categories of observing Muslims and "ethnic" Muslims. The first category includes people, who observe the basic canons of faith and religion. "Ethnic" Muslims are adherent to Islam by inertia, due to the Tatar ethnic tradition, but they are not always coherent in their actions and attitudes. First of all, we qualify as observing Muslims those people, who regularly make namaz, since there may be exceptions, when fulfilling other norms of Islam; for example, it is the duty to observe a fast (sawm) only with good health. The "ethnic" Muslims include those who consider themselves as Muslim by birth (i.e., because the parents are Muslims), or those who identify themselves as followers of Islam, because of their ethnicity as Tatars, since they are historically refers to the peoples, professing Islam.

**Methods.**

The data was obtained from the author's research, using the semi-formalized interview method, conducted in the year 2017 in the cities and villages of the Republic of Tatarstan. 46 Muslims were surveyed, of whom 23 are observing believers, and 23 informants are categorized as "ethnic" Muslims.

The basis of the study consists of the theories of social change; first of all, the concept of M. Weber and his ideas about the connection of religious sphere with other subsystems of society, in particular the influence of the values of professed religion on economic activity (M. Weber, 1994). The basis of the chosen research strategy is also the works of P. Bourdieu on the social space, where the subjects interact as actors of religious and economic practices (P. Bourdieu, 2005).

**Results and Discussion.**

There are four main categories among the goods, produced with the reference to Muslim norms: food, namaz goods, cosmetics and medicines, and clothing. Among food products, "ethnic" Muslims acquire only meat and semi-finished products with varying degrees of regularity. The reasons why

they don't buy other food are different: they don't know about the existence of such goods, they don't trust the quality of halal products, and finally, they don't see the difference between halal and usual product without marking. It is also possible the perception of marking as an advertising thing of the manufacturer.

Observing Muslims note the importance of availability and development of food production, due to the need of choice, both for those who buy "ordinary" products and for those, who want to eat according to the canons of religion. The choice is important for those, who understand the certification system, who understand the differences between halal food and unmarked food, with the first being preferred. However, not all observing Muslims buy something besides meat, explaining it with the same arguments as "ethnic" Muslims, for example: *"Some people look at the ingredients, at the labels, this is not paramount. I only look at the meat, the rest is not important. For example, milk. Well, I do not consider myself so much with religion to split hairs"* [citation from the interview].

Nevertheless, the range of purchased food products, in addition to meat and semi-finished products is wider in observing Muslims: they buy halal bread, halal confectionery, halal tea, halal ice cream, halal on-board meals (those people, who have air travels). However, if meat products are bought regularly, the rest of food is in demand, as a rule, only for holidays.

Unlike "ethnic", observing Muslims have an understanding of the differences between common and halal products, they also have confidence in the halal brand, so the main reasons for the irregular purchase of such products are their lack in the convenience stores and their high prices. The factor of confidence in a particular product can be not only halal labelling, but also who is behind the counter, i.e., whether the seller is a Muslim.

During the interview, it turned out that all respondents had some of the religious attributes at home. There are mostly printed materials: calendars, shamails (paintings with sentences of Scripture in Arabic), Holy Scripture, prayer books, and amulets. There are various "scenarios" of appearance of such goods in the house: they are inherited from relatives, i.e. they are passed on from generation to

generation as family relics. In this case, the Muslim does not see the need in acquiring something new. In another case, an observing Muslim has a need to purchase goods for namaz (*“We need books, namazlik [prayer rug], skullcaps. This is the most necessary, paramount* (citation from the interview).

It is also possible that the “ethnic” Muslim believes in the protective properties of such products, and buys them home, or as a gift. Thus, not for all Muslims the attributes for namaz and home are the items of expenditure, both because of the lack of need to acquire them, and because of the availability of free products (in some villages, calendars are distributed free of charge in mosques). It turns out that, despite the wide range of products, offered by entrepreneurs, commercialization did not fully affect this field. However, when there is a need to purchase, both for themselves, and as a gift, Muslims are looking for opportunities to acquire the necessary; therefore, the sphere of production and sale of goods for namaz is characterized as demanded.

“Ethnic” Muslims, who do not observe the basic religious Muslim practices (such as namaz, sawm, visiting the mosque), showed a selective inclusion with regard to other religious norms. As a rule, this concerned the externals of the religion: celebration of holidays, participation in ceremonies (nikah, naming), decoration of the house with religious attributes, and sacrifice on Kurban Bayram. The attitude of informants to religious holidays is explained in the researches of G.I. Makarova. She studied modern practices of the Tatars and Russians. She notes that the holidays become “traditionally family” (G. Makarova, 2010); i.e., these are days on which you can visit relatives, cook traditional national dishes, etc. This explains the examples, when informants do not observe the fast (sawm), but at the same time, they celebrate Eid al-Fitr (the celebration of the end of fast). There are examples when the only manifestation of religiosity, in addition to self-identification with the Muslim Ummah, was the acquisition of prayer books for decoration of house and car.

All observing Muslims are aware of difference between common products and halal medicine and cosmetics. However, among the respondents there were no people, who purchased and regularly used such preparations: *“Somebody gave me halal cosmetics as a present, but I have not used it yet.*

*I did not buy it by myself ... I know that there are no animal fats or alcohol in it. But I do not see the point. I wasn't going to drink cosmetics*" (citation from the interview). In this example, the reason for the lack of interest in the purchase was the permissibility of using of common cosmetics. In addition to this circumstance, the respondents called the lack of such goods on the shelves of stores. Among the "ethnic" Muslims, there is a clear tendency to buy special Muslim clothing only for certain cases; for example, for holidays; and the wearing of these clothes is limited mainly by these cases. If observing Muslim women should wear certain clothes according to religious canons, then there are no such strict prescriptions for men's clothing. Therefore, in Muslim observing families, women's clothes are bought regularly, while men buy only a headdress - a skullcap (as an indispensable attribute of the participant's appearance on Friday prayer or religious ceremony).

When choosing a store to buy clothes, observing Muslim women adhere to two different strategies: some believe that it is more convenient to come and buy everything in one place, others believe that certain items can be bought in stores with secular clothes, such as hats or long dresses. Informants explained the lack of practice of wearing clothes for women according to the norms of Islam in different ways: the lack of Tatar traditions in wearing closed attire, unwillingness to hide a spouse, and Muslim women themselves appeal to the principles of secularism and freedom of choice; for example: *"I am against Muslim clothes. Everyone must decide voluntarily"* (citation from the interview). The sphere of production of men's and women's clothing is assessed by Muslims as developed. It has not become a problem for anyone to search for a necessary item of clothing, according to the religious canon.

Among the services, rendered to Muslims, the following main categories can be singled out: educational and informational services, slaughter services, medical services, organization of pilgrimages, funeral and banking services.

Observing Muslims suffer from a shortage of religious educational institutions. They note the lack of a sufficient number of educational institutions at all levels of Russian education. As the main reasons for the current situation, they note the high cost of training, and the complex manner of

presenting information by teachers. That is the lack of developed and effective teaching methodology, which is mainly associated with the lack of demand for existing educational institutions.

“Ethnic” Muslims do not feel a shortage of educational institutions. They give the examples of how their relatives attended educational courses for Muslims. They believe that everything is good with additional education for older generation in the Republic.

Both "ethnic" and observing Muslims know about mobile applications for Muslims and Muslim Internet portals. Only observing Muslims downloaded and used such applications; for example, they used the application to determine the direction of reading namaz, to determine the time of namaz, and to receive news about the life of ummah.

The use of specialized Internet portals to search for the necessary information is a phenomenon more widespread among Muslims, than the use of applications in phones or tablets. Muslims note the diversity of sites, dedicated to the subject of Islam, as well as the availability of online stores, where, if desired, you can order everything you need. According to the interviews, Muslims share the opinion of Malaysian scientists, who conducted a large-scale study of the role of media and the Internet in the development and promotion of the elements of Islamic economy, including the halal industry. Sociologists came to the conclusion that the creation of Internet portal is a necessary element for any “Muslim” enterprise, as it ensures the transparency of pricing policy, and provides complete information on the quality and characteristics of the product (A. Machfud, A. Dahlan, J. Khatib, A. Haji-Ahmed, 2011).

All Muslims, as those who read namaz and observe a sawm, and non-observing "ethnic" Muslims, make sacrifices on the holiday of Kurban-bayram. Slaughter of sacrificial cattle in the republic is performed at mosques, on special farms and at small private farms. Private farms offer for sale mainly sheep and cows. The cheapest variant is a sheep, the average cost is cattle, and the most expensive is a camel (R. Kirillova, 2015). Surveyed Muslims chose a ram as an animal to be slaughtered. Among the informants, there were no examples of sacrifice of other allowed animals.

With regard to medical services, all respondents noted that when choosing a clinic and a specialist, the professionalism of a doctor is more important for them; his other characteristics (religion, gender) are secondary or irrelevant. As the reasons for not going to specialized medical centres, people cited their absence, high cost, and doubts about the quality of the services provided. In addition to professionalism of the doctor, the informants paid attention to the opinions of relatives and other people, who used the services of a particular clinic. It turns out, that for Muslims, both observing and ethnic Muslims, religious factors are not paramount, when seeking the medical services.

Commenting on medical services, none of informants could specify the differences between the services offered for Muslims, and services offered in “ordinary” clinics. This is explained by the fact, that they did not receive information about such services on any of three channels of receiving information (friends, preachers, mass media).

If a family buries a person, according to Muslim customs, organizes a funeral on its own, and the main expenses are the following:

- 1) expenses for all necessary documents.
- 2) attributes of the ritual, such as shroud, stretchers, etc.
- 3) alms to participants.
- 4) alms to clergyman.
- 5) payment for burial in the cemetery.
- 6) funeral banquet.

If the family applies for help to special centres for funeral organization, then all services are paid at a time.

Pilgrimage to the holy places - in Islam it is the hajj to Mecca - is one of the Pillars of Islam, and is considered to be the duty of the faithful Muslim. Observing Muslims either performed a hajj or would like to perform it. As problematic issues, they note the complexity of conditions and the

availability of quotas for the number of pilgrims, but the main difficulty is the lack of financial means to make the trip.

The question of a survey on the concept content of "Islamic economy" clearly showed the discrepancy between the discourse in scientific community and middle-brow understanding of the term. If modern researchers, for example, R.R. Bianchi (2013), G. Hofstede (1994), B. Hearn & Piesse (2012) speak about the "Islamic economy" as an economic model, and about Islamic banks as one of its elements, then for ordinary Muslims "Islamic economy" is limited only by banks.

The sphere of banking and financial services was called a new sphere, the appearance of which for most informants was unexpected. All informants or members of their families had to take an interest loan in traditional banking institutions, at least once in their life. According to the research of B. B. Podgorny, carried out in Kursk region, 30% of population in the region consider themselves Muslims and have a negative attitude to transactions in the stock market, and 70% of respondents consider such operations admissible and acceptable (B. Podgorny, 2012). It turns out, that Muslims demonstrate a low interest in specific Islamic economic products.

"Ethnic" Muslims demonstrate a lack of knowledge about the differences between the services of Islamic banks and the services of "ordinary" banks, although they may have heard about the existence of such organizations. During the interview, observing Muslims showed their awareness of the peculiarities of Islamic banking system, and the fact, that they had to use an interest loan, was explained differently. Someone say that when he took out a loan, he did not know that it was forbidden in Islam. For some people, credit is a new opportunity for personal growth, for example, *"I know that riba is a sin. I avoid borrowing money, but once I took a laptop on credit. At the trainings on economic growth, the teachers advise you to go through it at least once, psychologically, to see how you can cope with it"* (citation from interview).

Other tools, offered to Muslims, seem difficult to understand. However, the most frequent reason for refusing to use the services of Islamic financial institutions was the disadvantage of such loans, in comparison with traditional banks.

Both “ethnic” and observing Muslims showed the least interest in goods and services from the spheres of production and sale of cosmetic, hygienic and pharmacological products, the provision of medical services, pilgrimage, banking and financial services, and the production of specific goods and services for Muslims.

Commercialization, with its regular differentiation of goods and services range, faced with a lack of understanding and rejection of some new structures by consumers, such as, for example, Islamic banks. This is a consequence of the presence of the distinction between religious and secular issues in the attitudes of "ethnic" Muslims: the propensity for reproduction of familiar, customary patterns of economic behaviour does not accord with the religious norms, to which the manufacturers of halal products apply.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

The discordance of opinions, attitudes and practices of observing Muslims, on the one hand, and hesitant and formal "ethnic" Muslims, on the other hand, shows the heterogeneity of Muslim community in the republic, as a consumer of religious goods and services.

In spite of non-observance of such norms as reading namaz, observance of a sawm, wearing Muslim headdresses, etc., “ethnic” Muslims are ready to buy or already acquire some types of Muslim goods: halal meat, namaz goods, slaughter and funeral services. Observing Muslims don’t feel the need to purchase cosmetic, hygienic and pharmacological products, medical services, banking and financial services. Thus, not all Muslims demonstrate a willingness to abandon the usual forms of behaviour, and that may affect the lack of demand for specially created products. Such heterogeneity is certainly important for the further research of religious and economic practices of Muslims.

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