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The concept of traditionality for food products

Food companies often meet problems when they innovate on traditional products. The apprehension on consumer's perception of a food product's traditional character remains unclear despite the research conducted in marketing. The barriers to innovation for this type of product could be identified through the definition of traditionality perceived by the consumer. The purpose of this research is to define the concept of perceived traditionality one hand and, secondly, to distinguish the traditionality from other concepts such as typicality, authenticity or local produce. From a literature review conducted by systematic research on different databases, we propose a concept of traditionality. This concept of traditionality combines the ritual and the object.

Keywords: tradition, traditionality, food products, food industry, innovation

Le concept de traditionnalité pour les produits alimentaires

Les entreprises agroalimentaires rencontrent souvent des problèmes quand elles innover sur des produits traditionnels. L'appréhension de la perception du caractère traditionnel d'un produit alimentaire par les consommateurs reste floue malgré les recherches conduites en marketing. Les barrières à l'innovation pour ce type de produit pourraient être identifiées à travers la définition de la traditionnalité perçue par le consommateur. L'objet de cette recherche est de définir le concept de traditionnalité perçue d'une part et, d'autre part, de distinguer la traditionnalité d'autres concepts tels que la typicalité, l'authenticité ou les produits du terroir. A partir d'une revue de littérature effectuée par une recherche systématique sur différentes bases de données, nous proposons un concept de traditionnalité. Ce concept de traditionnalité associe le rituel et l'objet.

Mots clefs : tradition, traditionnalité, produit alimentaire, industrie agroalimentaire, innovation

Introduction

Traditional products are the "new" trends for food products. Brands fight to show their traditionality through packaging and advertising. TV shows are devoted to "traditional" products. In fact, sales of "traditional" food products are increasing today and they are involved in the economic development of food companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (Todericiu & Muscalu, 2012) ; (Vanhonacker et al., 2013). These kind of products are considered part of the heritage of the European Union because they are vectors of culture and history they represent (Bérard & Marchenay, 2000) ; (Todericiu & Muscalu, 2012).

However, in food marketing in particular, the researches on traditional food products cannot say whether a product is perceived by consumers as traditional or not (Pantin-Sohier, Lancelot Miltgen, & Camus, 2015). The definition of traditional product offered today remains ambiguous and imprecise (Diop, 2013) ; (Hamon & Joffre, 2008). *« The "traditional sector" appears as a generic term, the lack of commonly accepted definition seems ... So far there is no consensus on what is covered by the traditional sectors. Thus, these terms are commonly used in often different meanings ... Finally, it is true that the lack of a precise definition does not promote its legitimization by researchers »* (Dumoulin & Simon, 2008, pp. 25–26). L'INAO (Institut National de l'Origine et de la Qualité, is the French organization responsible for regulating French agricultural products with Protected Designations of Origin) offers a *"Guaranteed Traditional Speciality"* label. This label, focused on agricultural and food products, aims to support traditional products. It defines a regulatory level as, "an existing product on the Community market for at least a generation. A minimum duration higher than 25 years." In other words, any type of product, whose existence is more than 25 years in the market, is legally a traditional product. The aim of this research is to propose a concept of traditionality. The suffix – ity – is used to form the noun referring to the state, property, or quality, in this case tradition. But what do we really understand by tradition? Can we talk about traditional products, traditionality products, perceived traditionality or traditional consumer? Why is it important to understand tradition? The difficulty, in understanding what is perceived as traditional, results in firms difficulty to innovate by revisiting the traditional products they manufacture (Dumoulin et Simon, 2008a ; (Celhay & Cusin, 2010) ; (Gailly & Lesueur, 2010) ; Pantin-Sohier, Lancelot Miltgen et Camus, 2015). Through a systematic documentary research in different areas, in five databases with the same filters, we investigate the concept of tradition. Firstly, we present the concept of tradition in different domains: theology, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and food sciences. Next, we propose the concept of traditionality. Finally, we discuss the academic and managerial implications and further researches.

Literature review

We talk about tradition in marketing. However, tradition is few studied. The researchers who talk about tradition do not define tradition, or they do not precise clearly which elements are making the concept of tradition. Tradition is a construct in consumer's imaginary (Diop 2013). The researcher had to do a study of tradition in Africa. In fact, the research is focused on clothes considered as a traditional product. Bougeard Delfosse (2009) research, the so-called traditional regional products are opposed to so-called not traditional regional products. The author explains what a regional product is. Nevertheless, the researcher has not sought to define what a traditional product is (Bougeard Delfosse, 2009, p. 353). Sometimes tradition is measured by the time since the belief or the object exist (Smith, 2009). Tradition is interpreted by something old, and is opposite of new (Drayer, Stotlar, & Irwin, 2008). But tradition is *"as*

the set of beliefs and values, rituals, and practices, formal and informal, explicit and implicit, which are held by and constitute a culture. Because tradition constitutes social meaning, though, it is the vehicle by which oppressive beliefs and desires are formed" (Cudd, 2015, p. 765). However we do not know how tradition is created. How tradition can be modified? For a product, to be perceived as traditional, is it required to have a relationship with terroir? Is it necessary to be consumed during specific celebrations? The innovation in traditional products is always complicated. When firms innovate in this kind of product, consumers think the product is not traditional anymore. A real challenge would be to give some keys to innovate without disturbing the consumer's perception. Therefore, firms could innovate while maintaining the traditionality. If firms understand how the tradition is created, then firms will be able to innovate easily in food products. The aim of this research is to identify some elements allowing the modification of tradition. We intend to go further through a documentary research.

Method

In order to submit a proposal of the concept of traditionality, a systematic literature search was performed on five databases (EBSCO, Jstor, ScienceDirect, Cairn, Google Scholar). The same filters are applied for each database. Filters were used to identify first articles on tradition in the management sciences.

The first filter is related to the type of journal. Indeed, only scientific peer reviewed academic journals are retained. A second filter selects only the journals in management, business, and marketing. A limited number of articles are offered with the keyword "concept of tradition" (4), "tradition" (5) and "tradición" (6). We are looking for articles in French, English and Spanish. We seek the definition of tradition in each article. This accuracy is rarely offered. The literature review was then extended to other disciplines that heavily treated the subject, including anthropology and sociology. Ascending searches are performed on the main quotes. Then a downward search is performed on certain items. The downward search is performed using Google Scholar. The selection criterion is the impact of the publication in relation to the number of citations. After reading, some articles treat about tradition in other areas, including philosophy and theology, which leads to perform a second bottom-up research in order to present various fields where the tradition has been processed. We also seek the definition of tradition on historical dictionaries in three languages, French, English and Spanish. The purpose of choosing these three languages is to make a comparison and look if there are differences regarding tradition in these languages. We also consult dictionaries of synonyms and antonyms to make a cultural comparison.

Findings

The concept of tradition: a multidisciplinary approach

The concept of tradition has interested several disciplines of social sciences and food science. The research on this concept in these areas helps to provide perspectives for marketing research.

The origins of tradition

The Latin root of tradition *traditio* derive from supine (*traditum*) of *tradare*, *trans* (→ *trans*) and *dare* "give" (→ *date*) *to pass to another, deliver* ". *Traditio* means transmit or deliver. These early definitions date back to the late twelfth century (Godefroy 1881, Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous les dialectes du IX^{ème} au XV^{ème} siècle, Talbut et al. 1966, The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology.). Indeed, the first definition of

tradition dates back to 1291. At that time, tradition is mainly used as a law entitled to receive the heritage of one's ancestors (Alan, John, & bibliographe, 2009), (Godefroy, 1881).

In the origins, the definition of tradition is limited to material delivery, transmission, delivery of an inheritance by one's ancestors. Then the transmission goes beyond the material and relates to the transmission of beliefs. These concepts send us back to the notion of flow, to something tangible or intangible that goes without retention through time, from one generation to another. The non-material transmission is regularly associated with theseer. This association could be explained by the fact that the transmission of the theological tradition is regularly made orally like the prophets.

After consensus in three reference dictionaries in three different languages, tradition is being explained at the present time as the transmission of material and immaterial objects. These definitions allow us, at first, to distinguish two fields of transmission: the object transmitted, and transmitted beliefs.

Tradition in philosophy

According to the Aristotelian tradition, tradition does not move, it remains intact (Elders, 1999). It is a passive transmission (Boulnois & Solère, 2002). It is a question of receiving and transmitting without changing what already exists. The Aristotelian tradition says that only God has absolute knowledge and he can modify. Regiomontanus and Galileo proposed a humanistic tradition: respect for the old, to what is already done, and so that the new generation can change what could be considered as to improve in the present. This proposal was accepted by the Church (Bedouelle et al., 2005). It is possible to accept a tradition uncritically or without even being aware. In many cases, we face a tradition without thinking. Eg. "*Wearing the watch on the left wrist, perhaps unconsciously, is the acceptance of tradition*". Another possibility is to have a critical attitude towards tradition. This attitude can lead to acceptance, rejection, or perhaps to a compromise towards tradition. Having this attitude requires oneself to be aware that it is a tradition, to understand it before rejecting or accepting it (Popper, 2014). Tradition is different from teaching, communication or information because tradition lives in the transmitter; it is a feeling or belief that is transmitted (Pieper, 1958). Finally, tradition is adaption to its contemporary environment. That is why tradition is always present and it would be what is essential to continue to live (Popper, 2014).

Tradition in theology

Tradition is a way to make perpetuity, it is linked to history and reality (Biès et al. 2004 ; Bedouelle et al. 2005 ; (Bonardel, 2003). The history of tradition plays a facilitating role in the acceptance of that same tradition (Bonardel, 2003). In order to transmit the tradition, it is necessary to have a transmitter, a communication channel and a receiver. In its origins, the Christian tradition was transmitted mainly orally (Glenn, 2009), through images, through paintings which describe the biblical passages (Faure, 2003).

The transmitter transmits to the receiver, which in turn will become master. It is in this way that the tradition becomes perpetual. Tradition is a mark that allows the joint gathering of any form of human culture, and because of this, tradition is the guarantor of the identity and its permanency (Bedouelle et al., 2005).

The tradition in theology separates the object from the ritual. The ritual is intangible and refers to the manner and how the social group behaves. It is through the ritual that the tradition is transmitted. The object is the good transmitted which reminds the ritual and allows

transmission. To make tradition exist, object and ritual are necessary (Bedouelle et al., 2005). Tradition means more than transmitting techniques: its purpose is to enable future generations to continue to exist (Mathonière, 2003). The transmission of tradition is the transmission of values that will allow adapting oneself to their new environment.

The anthropological tradition

To set the tradition, it is necessary to accept that it exists (Pouillon, 1975). The tradition seems to be the most natural (Bauman, 2001); (Bronner, 2000); (Bronner, 2013); (Hobsbawm, Ranger, & Vivier, 2012); (Turner, 1997). Tradition refers to the collective heritage, especially to the people, culture, society, group, or community. It appears as the referent of a collective identity (Bauman, 2001); (Hobsbawm et al., 2012); (Turner, 1997); (Tursyn, Aktolkyn, Gulmira, Dinara, & Amanbaevna, 2013). From the anthropological point of view, everything is tradition (Turner, 1997) and all traditions are invented. This term of invented traditions reflects traditions that are deliberately invented and traditions for which it is difficult to find their origin (Hobsbawm et al., 2012); (Turner, 1997). Indeed, the culture itself is an invention, in the sense that it is a product of deliberate experiment with recombination of symbolic elements present in the actors' repertoire (Bronner, 2013); (Tursyn et al., 2013).

The invented tradition implies a practice group headed by rules freely or tacitly accepted, ritual or symbolic in nature, seeking to embed certain values and standards of behavior through repetition. Thus, the systematic repetition automatically implies continuity with the past in order to establish a link with a historically appropriate past (Hobsbawm et al., 2012). These repetitions create rituals that are part of the tradition (Lee, 2013); (Trumpbour, 2007). Invented traditions meet new situations. They simulate old situations to build their own past through the rigorous rehearsal (Bauman, 2001); (Bronner, 2000); (Bronner, 2013); (Hobsbawm et al., 2012). It is because the community wants to put order in social life and keep immutable parts that tradition is invented. Three types of invented traditions exist: 1) Those that symbolize social cohesion or belonging to a group; 2) Those that will legitimize an institution, or in connection with the authority and 3) those whose main objective is socialization, or to anchor beliefs related to behavior (Hobsbawm et al., 2012).

Tradition is based on history to be more easily accepted. Tradition seeks to change practices or behaviors. Its purpose is to legitimize a system, to control behaviors or to create social cohesion (Hobsbawm et al., 2012). It is through the created past and repetitiveness that tradition takes the inherent character of the past (Bauman, 2001). To better understand the past of tradition, it is preferable to analyze it from the present to the past (Pouillon, 1975). In this way, normatively and the idea that tradition enjoins conformity can be explained. However, the strength of the tradition comes from the force of the previous habit's routine quality of replicated practice (Bauman, 2001). This normativity, habits and routines develop psychological pressure and moral weight of opinion within the group practice. This phenomenon makes that the pressure is growing stronger, as the power of a coercive apparatus of external sanctions suffered by sacred mandate (as ancestors) and intensified by a ritual text (Bauman, 2001).

However, the concepts of tradition and innovation are correlated with various layers such as culture and the history of humanity. Culture inherits the elements of tradition, ideas, customs, values, perception of a preserved and passed world, transmitted from generation to generation. Culture cannot exist without innovation. With creativity and adaptation to its

environment, changes are part of social development. Tradition and innovation, together, are a universal description of any culture. The various relations of culture creativity of culture are given by traditional and innovative ways, even if the tradition first tries to control the creativity through repetitiveness (Tursyn et al., 2013).

Tradition is fluid because it always reflects the needs to adaptation to the present. It is a series of essential things that continually change. Tradition is a process with aspects from the past and from a social life. Tradition is a process of interpretation of a past drawn to define a present identity. The tradition is always changing, rejecting the idea of a genuine and invented tradition (Turner, 1997).

Tradition in sociology

The old sociology creates a contrast between traditional society and modern society (Tiryakian, 2001). The contemporary sociologists say that in every society there are traditions (Langlois, 2001). They are transmitted from past to present but it is the present that makes them live (Lenclud, 1987). Traditions are transmitted by a transmitter, a receiver and a channel (Parizot, 2014). The creation of rituals and symbols facilitates their adoption. This is also through the ritual that objects become traditional. The tradition seeks a social cohesion, a social gathering, to create an identity (Shils, 2006) and to improve itself through its emitter. It is necessary to distinguish between "tradition" and "traditionalism". Traditionalism is the acceptance of traditional norms because they are old and they are not contested, they are not questioned. Traditionalism is like an ideology that supports these standards because they are seen as a kind of precious and inherited wealth. Traditionalism does not accept change (Gosselin, 1975); (Lenclud, 1987).

Tradition and innovation are complementary to structure society (Tiryakian, 2001). In fact, all societies have traditions. Because tradition is in a human, ethnic, social, economic, religious, or gender group, tradition allows to join a social, cultural or religious group (Arévalo, 2004). The simplest way to explain tradition is the transmission from past to present (Arévalo, 2004); (Campo-Ruiz, 2015); (Jacobs & Tregenza, 2014); (Jacobs, 2007); (Lenclud, 1987); (Parizot, 2014); (Susen & Turner, 2011); (Shils, 1971); (Shils, 2006); (Tiryakian, 2001); (Vail, 2014)). Tradition can be an object, or a cultural construction (Shils, 2006).

Tradition can legitimize the existence of order, status, institutions or authority (Langlois, 2001); (Shils, 2006). The tradition is based on real or fictitious history in order to tie individuals together to the same sense of belonging (Vail, 2014). Traditions such as ceremonies and rituals are not transmitted inertly by ancestors. It is the transmitter that made traditions change by adapting them to their new environment. Traditions are active through contemporary issuers who, perhaps, invent new aims (Tiryakian, 2001).

Tradition is fluid, it is moving, it does not remain fixed, it adapts to new needs (Lenclud, 1987); (Parizot, 2014); (Shils, 1971). Endogenous and exogenous factors are changing the tradition. An endogenous factor is when the social group that practices the tradition evolved. Exogenous factors also are changing the tradition. When two different cultures mix, traditions evolve (Shils, 2006). The tradition acts as a filter that selects what will remain from the past. Tradition is linked to continuity, change and past. It's not the past that produced the present of tradition, but rather the contrary, it is the present that chooses what remains from the past, and that past is adapted to the present. The reception of the tradition is affected by receiver, through his perceptions and personal experience which makes also change the tradition at the time of transmission (Arévalo, 2004); (Campo-Ruiz, 2015); (Jacobs & Tregenza,

2014) ;(Jacobs, 2007) ;(Lenclud, 1987) ;(Parizot, 2014) ;(Susen & Turner, 2011) ;(Shils, 1971);(Shils, 2006) ;(Tiryakian, 2001) ;(Vail, 2014)).

Tradition is more than a simple idea, it is a belief who is alive. Tradition begins in the family, the concept itself, its members, its customs, and its habits. Traditional objects take a traditional sense because they are transmitted from the past with rituals and customs. Without ritual or custom, an object is not traditional (Jacobs, 2007). Tradition is a way to perpetuate. Indeed, the cycle of transmitting and receiving objects and beliefs is an immortal cycle. Thus, an object, a business or organization can sustain (Lenclud, 1987) ;(Parizot, 2014).

Tradition in food science

The studies in this field show that a product frequently consumed or associated with specific celebrations or seasons, passed from one generation to another, made with precision, specifically according to the gastronomic heritage, with little or no treatment and / or manipulation, distinguished and known because of its sensory properties and associated to a certain area, region or country, is perceived as traditional (Guerrero et al., 2009). Traditional products are defined as a "representation" of a group. Individuals belong to a defined space, and they are part of culture. This involves the cooperation of individuals operating in the territory, at a national, regional or local level. To be a traditional product, it is necessary to have a strong link with history, culture and territory. These products are part of the traditions to ensure continuity in time(Jordana, 2000) ; (Conter et al., 2008); (Kühne, Vanhonacker, Gellynck, & Verbeke, 2010).

Traditional products are authentic in their recipe (mixing of ingredients), the origin of the raw material and / or production processes. They are perceived as less harmful to the environment (Conter et al., 2008) ;(Kühne et al., 2010). Traditional food products are products whose main production steps are carried out in a specific way. They are commercially available for about 50 years and are part of gastronomic heritage. The majority of these traditional foods do not have a form of original label (Kühne et al., 2010).

Three consumer groups perceive tradition differently: those who perceive the traditional product as usual; those who think that the product is a traditional heritage and those who see it as familiar (Vanhonacker et al., 2010). In France, Spain and Italy, the concept of a traditional food product is very wide. Three consumer groups are represented and mixed. This is perhaps due to the fact that in these countries, traditional products are part of everyday life. The study suggests significant associations between regional cuisine and daily food. Traditional products of the past are now consumed on special occasions(Belgium, Norway and Poland)(Vanhonacker et al., 2010).

However, despite all these studies, a clear definition of "traditional food" is problematic and highly dependent on context. The context is often institutionalized and subjected to a multitude of contradictory discourses by different actors. Contemporary food markets are frequently based on the concept seemingly oxymoronic of innovation through tradition, perhaps a way to deal with an environmental threat of globalization and change(Amilien & Hegnes, 2013); (Amilien & Hegnes, 2013) ; (Leroy, Scholliers, & Amilien, 2014).

Proposal of the concept and definition of the concept traditionality

Definition of traditionality

Tradition is a way to continue to exist through time (Bedouelle et al., 2005) ;(Bonardel, 2003). But it is the present that acts as a filter and which decides what will remain of the past (Arévalo, 2004) ;(Campo-Ruiz, 2015) ; (Jacobs& Tregenza, 2014) ;(Jacobs, 2007) ;(Lenclud, 1987) ;(Parizot, 2014) ;(Susen & Turner, 2011) ; (Shils, 1971) ;(Tiryakian, 2001) ;(Vail, 2014). However, to continue in the transmission cycle, it is essential for tradition to have a transmitter, channel and receiver. The tradition exists in one that transmits (Laurant, 2003) ; (Bedouelle et al., 2005) ; (Parizot, 2014).

Traditions are invented. They seek to build a common identity(Bronner, 2013) ; (Hobsbawm et al., 2012) ; (Turner, 1997) ; (Tursyn et al., 2013). The invention of tradition can be spontaneous (Shils, 2006) or deliberate (Hobsbawm et al., 2012). For tradition to be accepted, it must be based on a history and be repetitive. Indeed, the tradition is more easily accepted if it has a history (Bonardel, 2003). The history refers to the collective heritage and represents the common identity (Bauman, 2001) ;(Hobsbawm et al., 2012) ; (Turner, 1997) ;(Tursyn et al., 2013). This common identity, social cohesionand gathering refer to a notion of belonging to a group. This group belonging and solidarity allow to control groups(Hobsbawm et al., 2012);(Shils, 2006);(Jacobs, 2007);(Jacobs & Tregenza, 2014). Tradition can be created in one season or several years, although it will be consolidated as of the third generation (Shils, 2006).

Tradition is what seems essential for the human being. This is why tradition is still there. Tradition is innovative and is based on the past to innovate (Arévalo, 2004) ; (Lenclud, 1987) ;(Shils, 2006). Culture as tradition is innovative because they adapt to new contexts (Tursyn et al., 2013). The tradition innovatesfrom its interior because of social group practices that making tradition change(Shils, 2006). Tradition is innovative because of the experiences of the issuer and because of its adaptation to its current context (Arévalo, 2004);(Jacobs&Tregenza, 2014) ;(Jacobs, 2007) ;(Lenclud, 1987) ; (Parizot, 2014) ;(Susen & Turner, 2011) ; (Shils, 1971) ;(Tiryakian, 2001) ;(Vail, 2014).

It is necessary to make a first distinction between a traditional object and ritual or a traditional custom(Bedouelle et al., 2005) ;(Bronner, 2013);(Hobsbawm et al., 2012); (Turner, 1997) ; (Tursyn et al., 2013)and then, between perceived traditionality and traditionality.Traditionality is the association of an object and a ritual, both coming from the past. The traditionality exists at present by the existence of the emitter and the recipient. This receiver becomes master in turn. The ritual is the way the product is consumed or used (Rook, 1984). The ritual is repetitive and it is by repetition that history is created. The object associated to ritual seeks a common identity. The object becomes a symbol of traditionality. Perceived traditionality is the association of an object and a ritual, both coming from the past,to which we addthe perception. This perception is an individual representation. It is formed by personal or collective experiences of the past. It determines a reference (Camus, 2004). From this element, the traditionality is perceived differently for each consumer.

Delimitation of the concept of traditionality

Traditionality and local products (terroir products)

The term local products proposed by Fort & Fort, 2006 refers to the territorial base of the product. This anchoring gives an improvement in the assessment of product attributes. It favours the product image and territorial origin (Aurier, Fort, & Sirieix, 2004). Local products

are sold in markets rather than supermarkets. Indeed, markets are good places because the supply is done directly from the producer (Fort, 2012).

If local products can be traditional, a traditional product is not necessarily anchored to a territorial place. Repeatability of consumption and transmission are necessary to be traditional, but not sales location. However local products can facilitate the perception of traditionality.

Traditionality and authenticity

Perceived authenticity in the merchant field (Camus, 2004) integrates three dimensions: projection, origin and singularity. By projection individuals display and identify social belonging through authentic object. The origin dimension deals with producing natural anchorage and the manufacturing method. The singularity dimension is being unique, its customization and differentiation. Perceived authenticity in the merchant field is different from traditionality because, firstly, authenticity does not include the notion of transmission, because the projection dimension refers to oneself and not to collective identity. Secondly, the transmission is an essential part of the tradition. The cohesion, or social gathering, is an important part of tradition (Hobsbawm et al., 2012); (Shils, 2006). However, authenticity can increase the perception of the traditionality of a traditional product (Pantin-Sohier et al., 2015).

Traditionality and typicality

Typicality is a judgment made by the consumer. This judgment is consolidated by information from the environment, but also information stored in memory and used especially in situations of uncertainty (Ladwein, 1995). Typical products are the most representative products in their class (Pantin-Sohier & Lancelot Miltgen, 2012). Conter et al., (2008) say typical products are strongly attached to a place of origin, produced in a non-industrial environment, characterized by small batch production with limited mechanization system. The product typicality influences positively the attitude of the consumer (Pantin-Sohier & Lancelot Miltgen, 2012). The traditionality differs from the typicality in a sense that the notion of belonging to a group or/and the notion of transmission do not appear in the notion of typicality.

Conclusion

Traditionality

Traditionality would be an invention that is transmitted, which would be based on a history, and that would be sustainable. But to ensure its sustainability, it would need a transmitter and a receiver, it would create a sense of belonging, it would be symbolized by an object and there would be a repetitive ritual with the object. The authenticity, typicality, the specific expertise, seniority, territorial roots, habit and familiarity are the elements that promote the perception of the tradition of a food product. These latter characteristics are not essential for a product to be traditional but they would favor its perceived traditionality.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to propose a definition of the concepts of traditionality. We looked through a literature review to understand what is in the tradition and what the consumer perceives as traditional. It shows that the ritual of consumption and group membership are major constitutive elements of a traditional product. The evolution of the

social group rituals would then be taken into account in the implementation of innovation strategies for products perceived as traditional. The separation of the ritual and the object allows structuring the tradition and observing what is essential to maintain while innovating.

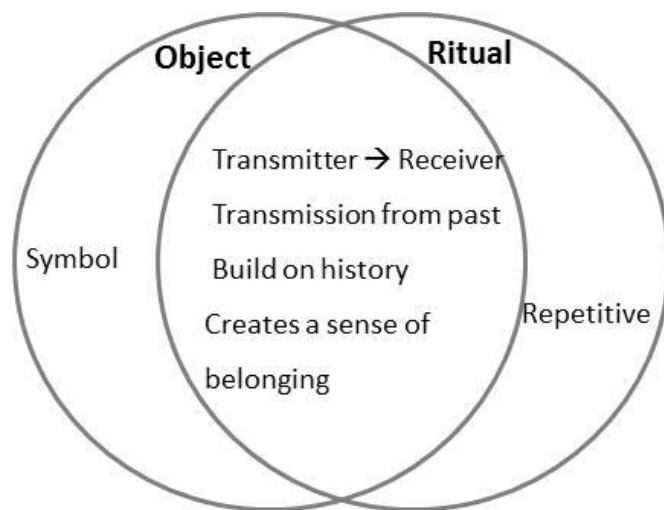


Fig. 1 Traditionality

From a managerial point of view, it is important for companies to observe consumer rituals and create new rituals in order to position their 'traditional food products' on different niches. The ritual dimension is essential to innovate. When the people practice a ritual and need something different, then the ritual changes. In this situation, a new tradition is created. The major contribution of this paper is a proposal of a precise concept of traditionality. However, some limitations should be highlighted. First, the creation of this concept of traditionality has been made only through a literature review. The elements of perceived traditionality have been selected within elements presented in other researches. This set of elements has not been tested yet. In further research, we will verify if this set of elements represents traditionality. We will investigate if the association between ritual and product can create a new perception of traditionality for food products. We will study how to create a new ritual and observe in how much time a new perceived traditionality is created. Tradition is a complex issue. The understanding of tradition and traditionality is important as it can help firms to innovate and to propose a competitive and relevant product in the market.

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