

วัฒนธรรมกาเพ่: ความหมายในสังคมบริโภคนิยมเวียดนาม



นางสาวพิชว์ลิตี ธเนศสกุลวัฒนา

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต  
สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา (สหสาขาวิชา)

บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

ปีการศึกษา 2552

ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

THE COFFEE CULTURE:  
MEANINGS IN THE SPHERE OF VIETNAMESE CONSUMERISM



Ms Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts Program in Southeast Asian Studies

(Interdisciplinary Program)

Graduate School

Chulalongkorn University


Academic Year 2009

Copyright of Chulalongkorn University


Thesis Title THE COFFEE CULTURE: MEANINGS IN THE SPHERE OF VIETNAMESE CONSUMERISM  
By Miss Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana  
Field of Study Southeast Asian Studies  
Thesis Advisor Assistant Professor Montira Rato, Ph.D.


---

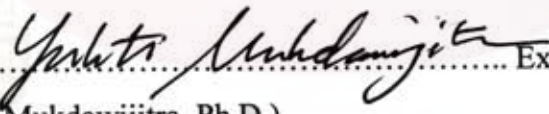
Accepted by the Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree

  
..... Dean of the Graduate School  
(Associate Professor Pornpote Piumsomboon, Ph.D.)

THESIS COMMITTEE

  
..... Chairman  
(Assistant Professor Theera Nuchpiam, Ph.D.)

  
..... Thesis Advisor  
(Assistant Professor Montira Rato, Ph.D.)

  
..... External Examiner  
(Yukti Mukdawijitra, Ph.D.)

ศูนย์วิทยุทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

พิธวีศิริ ธเนศสกุลวัฒนา: วัฒนธรรมกาแฟ: ความหมายในสังคมนิยมเวียดนาม. (THE COFFEE CULTURE: MEANINGS IN THE SPHERE OF VIETNAMESE CONSUMERISM) อ.ที่ปรึกษา  
วิทยานิพนธ์หลัก: ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. มนธิรา ราโท, 92 หน้า.

วิทยานิพนธ์เล่มนี้ศึกษาว่าความหมายของวัฒนธรรมกาแฟเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างไรในสังคมเวียดนามตั้งแต่ยุคอาณานิคมฝรั่งเศสจนถึงยุคปัจจุบัน และพยายามศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างสังคมเวียดนามที่กำลังเปลี่ยนแปลงและการบริโภคกาแฟในบริบทของการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ในกระแสวิวัฒนธรรมบริโภคนิยม การเข้าร้านกาแฟเป็นกิจกรรมต้นทนาการรูปแบบหนึ่งที่ได้รับค่านิยมมากที่สุดในเวียดนามขณะนี้ ดังนั้น การเลือกร้านกาแฟจึงสามารถบ่งบอกถึงชนชั้นหรือกลุ่มสังคมของผู้บริโภค ยี่ห้อกาแฟกลายเป็นสัญลักษณ์บ่งชี้ซึ่งสามารถสะท้อนผ่านการบริโภค ความหมายและคุณค่าทางสังคมของร้านกาแฟแสดงให้เห็นถึงความเชื่อมโยงระหว่างยี่ห้อกาแฟและกลุ่มสังคมต่างๆ ดังนั้น จึงอาจกล่าวได้ว่าผู้บริโภคชาวเวียดนามไม่ได้จ่ายเงินออกไปเพียงเพื่อราคาของกาแฟเท่านั้นแต่ยังจ่ายเงินเพื่อราคาของยี่ห้อกาแฟซึ่งบ่งบอกถึงภาพลักษณ์หรือเชื่อมโยงกับสถานภาพ วิถีชีวิต และรสนิยมของผู้บริโภค ผู้วิจัยจึงเลือกกรณีศึกษาของกาแฟไฮแลนด์เนื่องจากเป็นยี่ห้อกาแฟที่รู้จักกันอย่างกว้างขวางว่าเป็นยี่ห้อกาแฟที่มีชื่อเสียงของเวียดนาม ทั้งนี้เพื่อทำความเข้าใจถึงความหมายของการบริโภคกาแฟยี่ห้อนี้ ผู้วิจัยดำเนินการศึกษาค้นคว้าที่เมืองโฮจิมินห์ซิตี้ซึ่งเป็นเมืองใหญ่ที่สุดในเวียดนาม งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้เป็นงานวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพและการวิเคราะห์มาจากข้อมูลระดับทุติยภูมิ ข้อมูลภาคสนาม และการสัมภาษณ์

งานวิจัยค้นพบว่าการดื่มกาแฟได้รับความนิยมจากผู้คนทุกชนชั้นในเมืองโฮจิมินห์ เป็นที่สังเกตได้ว่าลูกค้าของกาแฟไฮแลนด์เป็นชนชั้นกลางในเขตเมืองและคุ้นเคยกับวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก นอกจากนี้ ร้านกาแฟไฮแลนด์ยังจัดพื้นที่ทางสังคมให้กับลูกค้าได้พักผ่อนและปลีกตัวจากชีวิตวุ่นวายในเมืองใหญ่ และเป็นสถานที่สำหรับการพูดคุยและแลกเปลี่ยนความคิดเห็นต่างๆ ในกรณีนี้ ร้านกาแฟไฮแลนด์ได้ดำเนินการตามรูปแบบของร้านกาแฟในยุโรปที่มีมานานกว่าศตวรรษ และได้นำเสนอรูปแบบร้านกาแฟแบบใหม่นี้ให้กับคนรุ่นใหม่ของเวียดนามด้วยกลยุทธ์การตลาดที่ดี นอกจากนี้ยังเห็นได้ว่าการเข้าร้านกาแฟเป็นกิจกรรมที่แพร่หลาย แต่แตกต่างกันไปตามกลุ่มสังคมหรือชนชั้นที่ต่างกัน ดังที่เห็นได้จากความหลากหลายของร้านกาแฟในเมืองโฮจิมินห์ซิตี้ แม้ว่าชนชั้นยังคงเป็นปัจจัยหลักในการกำหนดรูปแบบทางวัฒนธรรมร่วมสมัยของเวียดนาม แต่การศึกษาก็ได้ค้นพบว่ายังมีปัจจัยอื่นๆ ในการตัดสินใจเลือกร้านกาแฟของผู้คนในสังคมเวียดนามด้วยเช่นกัน

สาขาวิชา เอเชียนตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา

ลายมือชื่อนิสิต..... Bidthsiri T.

ปีการศึกษา 2552

ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก..... Manthira Rato

##5087590720: MAJOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

KEYWORDS: CONSUMERISM/ COFFEE CULTURE/ HIGHLANDS COFFEE/  
HO CHI MINH CITY

BIDTHSIRI TANETSAKULWATANA: THE COFFEE CULTURE:  
MEANINGS IN THE SPHERE OF VIETNAMESE CONSUMERISM.  
THESIS ADVISOR: ASST. PROF. MONTIRA RATO, Ph.D., 92 pp.

This thesis studies how the meaning of coffee culture has changed in Vietnamese society from the French colonial period up to the present and attempts to identify the relationship between changing Vietnamese society and coffee consuming in the context of identity formation in consumerism culture. Going to coffeehouses is one of the most popular leisure activities in the present day Vietnam. Therefore the coffeehouse that a Vietnamese consumer chooses could possibly show which group or class that he or she belongs to. Coffee brands are converted into distinctive signs. These signs of distinction can be perceived through the consumption. Social meaning and value of the chosen coffeehouse will also illustrate the link between the coffee brands and social groups. Thus, it can be assumed that Vietnamese consumers spend money not only for the price of the coffee but also for the brand value which is implied to images or linkages to status, lifestyles, and taste. Highlands Coffee, widely known as a strong Vietnamese coffee brand, is chosen as a case study with the attempts to understand meanings behind its consumption. The research is conducted in Ho Chi Minh City, the largest city in Vietnam. This research is qualitative in approach and employs the analysis of secondary data, fieldwork observation, and interviews.

It is found that drinking coffee is popular among all social classes in Ho Chi Minh City. It can be observed that Highlands Coffee's customers are urban-based middle class who are acquainted with western lifestyle. Additionally, Highlands Coffee offers a social space for customers to experience indulgence, a break from the busy city life, and a place for discussions. In this case, Highlands Coffee discovered what European coffeehouses had done for centuries and brought it to Vietnamese young consumers by good marketing strategy. It is noticeable that going to coffeehouse is a widespread activity but it is different by social groups or by social classes as seen through various styles of coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City. Although class remains a central factor in the structuring of contemporary cultural practices in Vietnam, it is also found in this research that there are still other various factors for a Vietnamese to choose his or her favorite coffeehouse.

Field of Study: Southeast Asian Studies

Student's Signature: Bidthsiri T.

Academic Year: 2009

Advisor's Signature: Montira Rato

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank my family and friends for their support and love. Without them, it would not be possible to complete this thesis. They deserve most of the credit for any success I have. Their encouragement, given motivation and willingness to listen has been invaluable. Special thanks to my dear friends, Paweena and Nat for their warmest friendships and for being with me all along the way no matter what I have been through.

My advisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Montira Rato, gave me guidance needed to finish my tasks. Her kind understanding and patience are highly appreciated. The staffs in the Southeast Asian Studies office, at numerous times of helping me through the course of study, have gone above and beyond their duties. Especially Khun Panya, I could not have met the requirements for this thesis without his kind assistance.

Finally, I would like to thank Southeast Asian Studies Program and Chulalongkorn University for giving this privileged opportunity to gain a network of friends and learn more about this prosperous region.

ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

# CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT (THAI) .....	iv
ABSTRACT (ENGLISH).....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	vi
CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>10</b>
1. Rationale and Background.....	11
2. Objectives .....	12
3. Major Argument.....	13
4. Scope of study.....	13
5. Methodology .....	14
7. Literature Review.....	15
<b>CHAPTER II FROM AFRICA TO VIETNAM.....</b>	<b>21</b>
1. Introduction.....	21
2. The History of Coffee .....	21
2.1 Coffee and Religion.....	21
2.2 The Social Drink.....	23
2.3 Revolution by the Cup.....	26
3. French Introduction of Coffee into Vietnam .....	28
3.1 The Spread of the Bean and the Journey to Vietnam .....	28
3.2 Coffeehouses: the French legacy .....	29
3.3 The Development of Coffee Industry in Vietnam.....	31

	Page
4. Vietnam in New Context .....	33
4.1 The Impact of Doi Moi reform .....	35
4.2 The rise of Consumerism in Vietnam .....	37
<b>CHAPTER III THE CASE STUDY OF HIGHLANDS COFFEE.....</b>	<b>39</b>
1. Introduction.....	39
2. Recent Development of Coffeehouse Business in Vietnam .....	39
3. A Case Study of Highlands Coffee.....	40
3.1 The Background of Highlands Coffee.....	40
3.2 Field Observation.....	45
3.3 Highlands Coffee and its Space in Vietnamese Society.....	54
<b>CHAPTER IV OTHER COFFEEHOUSES IN HO CHI MINH CITY .....</b>	<b>58</b>
1. Introduction.....	58
2. Coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City .....	60
3. Coffee Culture and the Emergence of Social Inequality .....	71
<b>CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>73</b>
REFERENCES .....	78
APPENDICES .....	85
APPENDIX A.....	86
APPENDIX B .....	90
APPENDIX C .....	91
BIOGRAPHY .....	93



## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Picture 1 David Thai and his wife, the founder of Highlands Coffee and the VTI.....	41
Picture 2 Highlands Coffee’s Blends corner.....	44
Picture 3 ‘ca phe phin’ in brewing coffee.....	46
Picture 4 Free Internet access, one of the facilities that Highlands Coffee provides .....	47
Picture 5 Breakfast set at Highlands Coffee .....	48
Picture 6 Saigon Trade Center Branch .....	49
Picture 7 Highlands Coffee at the Manor Tower I.....	50
Picture 8 Inside the Highlands’ Saigon Center branch .....	51
Picture 9 Outdoor area of Highlands’ General Library branch .....	52
Picture 10 Summer Chè Campaign.....	53
Picture 11 Saigon’s Opera House Branch.....	54
Picture 12 Customers of Cà Phê “Bệt” sitting on newspaper all around the park.....	62
Picture 13 a Cà Phê “Bệt” seller delivering her customers’ orders .....	63
Picture 14 The elegant decorations of Window’s Coffee Park View .....	64
Picture 15 The indoor section with air-conditioner of Ca Phe Them Xua .....	65
Picture 16 The ground floor garden view of Ca Phe Them Xua .....	66
Picture 17 A Small Sidewalk Café and Its Customers.....	66
Picture 18 an outside view of Le’s Café .....	68
Picture 19 The live piano solo at AQ Café .....	69
Picture 20 A latté at Bobby Brewer Coffee .....	70

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

A small red, sometimes yellow, seeds from fruit that grows on plants with the size between shrub and tree was consumed, in many ways, by human for more than hundred years. These extraordinary seeds seem to provide an extra energy for men to work or stay awake longer than they normally do. The ways to consume these seeds are fascinating. One is to grind and blend coffee beans into small fine grain and let hot water pass through to absorb its ingredients. Then, it will look heavily brown, and sometimes black, solution with a unique taste and good smell, called coffee<sup>\*</sup>. Coffee seeds, or usually called coffee beans, have been transferred or traded around the world for a long time. It creates such a divine phenomenon around the world. For example, Ethiopian hunter eats it for extra energy<sup>1</sup>, French scholars drink it as pleasure<sup>2</sup>, and Muslim monk used to drink it for spiritual reasons<sup>3</sup>. In the sense of uniqueness of Vietnamese consumerism and culture, Vietnamese also developed their coffee culture like other regions around the world. This thesis will attempt to study the recent development of Vietnamese coffee culture in various angles.

In the first chapter, the background of coffee in Vietnam will be provided. It is followed by the objectives of the thesis and how the thesis will be carried out. And finally, some relevant research documents will be summarized in the literature review section.

---

\* The first reference to "coffee" in the English language, in the form chaoua, dates to 1598. In other European languages, coffee derives from the Ottoman Turkish kahve, via the Italian caffè. The Turkish word in turn was borrowed from the Arabic: qahwah. Arab lexicographers maintain that qahwah originally referred to a type of wine, and gave its etymology, in turn, to the verb qahiya, signifying "to have no appetite". As quoted in *The complete glossary of Coffee Terms* by Peter Baskerville.

<sup>1</sup> Weinberg, B.A., and Bealer, B.K., The world of caffeine : The Science and Culture of the World's Most Popular Drug (London : Routledge, 2001), p. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Ukers, W.H., All About Coffee (New York : The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal, 1935), p. 742-745.

<sup>3</sup> Pendergrast, M., Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World (London : Texere publishing, 2001), p. 5.

## 1. Rationale and Background

In 1986, the Vietnamese Communist Party has implemented an economic reform, *Đổi Mới*. It has gradually decentralized decision-making, replaced a central planning of markets and prices, and made the economy tremendously expanded due to fewer strains and fewer regulations from the government's law.<sup>4</sup> For instance, in agriculture, chronic food-deficits turned into the large export surpluses. Industrial development accelerated when individual firms, mainly state-owned enterprises (SOEs), were allowed to determine their own price and production. Since then, Vietnamese economy maintains a rapid growth rate supported by robust exports, rising consumption, and investment.<sup>5</sup> In addition, membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since January 2007 has added impetus to development and market-oriented reforms, which resulted in powerful domestic demand.<sup>6</sup>

In large cities, especially in Ho Chi Minh City, the most important financial hub of Vietnam, there has emerged the new urban rich who are members of the three advantaged groups<sup>7</sup>: people in positions of administrative power, people who control economic capital, and people with education, experience, and employable skills. The economic reform has had a significant effect on social development. A Vietnamese urban middle class has emerged with a lifestyle closer to the global urban middle class than to their fellow citizens in the countryside. In particular, there has been a substantial increase in the desire to purchase modern consumer goods, especially the leisure activities.<sup>8</sup>

A remarkable activity that has been developed along with growing consumerism in post-war Vietnam is going to a coffeehouse which has become more attracted to

---

<sup>4</sup> SarDesai, Vietnam, past and present (Colorado : Westview Press, 2005), p. 137.

<sup>5</sup> Yuen, N.C., Freeman, N.J., and Huynh, F.H., State-owned enterprise reform in Vietnam: lessons from Asia (Singapore : Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996), p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Salazar, L.C., Southeast Asian Affairs 2007 (Singapore : Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007), p. 398.

<sup>7</sup> King, V.T., Nguyen, P.A., and Minh, N.H., Professional Middle Class Youth in Post-Reform Vietnam: Identity, Continuity and Change (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> University of California, Asia yearbook (California : Far Eastern Economic Review, 1997), p. 266.

Vietnamese people<sup>9</sup>, particularly in Ho Chi Minh City. This is not only influenced by consumers' behaviors, but also by the policy of government and provincial authorities. It can be seen by advertisement and promotion of domestic coffee consumption found in shopping areas. Moreover, frequent annual fair of Vietnamese coffee supported by the government, has created such a great impact on the domestic coffee brand value and impressed foreign visitors.

There are two interrelated factors for the accomplishment of the coffee industry in Vietnam: the taste and the space. The taste of coffee draws attention from drinkers and the coffee-drinking space itself neatly filled a yawning void in modern life. Coffeehouse is a very antiquated idea, but in the consumerist landscape of today they offer '*small indulgences*' for the customers<sup>10</sup>. This is because they provide a quick and cheap space for a break from hectic modern way of life. Furthermore, coffeehouses heartened the clients to hang out, to idle away the daylight, and to do so without paying much money; just for the price of a cup of coffee. Therefore, Vietnamese customers come for the atmosphere and camaraderie in coffeehouses where they can make appointments with friends, hold meetings, or strike up conversations with other regulars. In this case, coffeehouses provide a place with the non-home, non-work atmosphere. Now Ho Chi Minh City becomes reddish with coffeehouses in every shopping mall, and almost on every street corner.

## 2. Objectives

- 1) To understand how coffee culture has changed in Vietnamese society from the French colonial period up to the present.
- 2) To study the relationship between Vietnamese and the coffee brand they choose in the context of identity formation in consumerism culture.

---

<sup>9</sup> University of California, Asia yearbook (California : Far Eastern Economic Review, 1997), p. 266.

<sup>10</sup> Winston, J.B., and Ollier, L.C.-P., Of Vietnam: Identities in Dialogue (New York : PALGRAVE, 2001), p. 26.

### **3. Major Argument**

The major argument here is the chosen coffeehouses by Vietnamese customers could possibly show which group or class they belong to. Since coffee brands are converted into distinctive signs, which may be signs of distinction but also of vulgarity, as soon as they are perceived rationally through the consumption. This implies a practical anticipation of what the social meaning and value of the chosen coffeehouse will probably be in social space with the correspondence between the coffee brands and groups. Besides, it can be assumed that Vietnamese consumers spend money not only for the price of the coffee but also for the brand value which might be found in the images or linkages to social status, lifestyles, and taste.

According to fieldwork research and findings, it can be assumed that the customers of Highlands Coffee are the middle class, urban-based and well-educated people. Because of the image of premium brand and significant coffeehouse business growth in a major city like Ho Chi Minh City, Highlands Coffee was chosen as a case study for this research.

### **4. Scope of study**

In this research, Highlands Coffee in Ho Chi Minh City is chosen as a case study with the attempts to understand the cultural meanings behind its consumption. This is because Highlands Coffee is the most visible coffeehouse in Vietnam with its 32 stores out of 59 stores (in 2009) located in Ho Chi Minh City alone. Additionally, among many coffeehouses that have grown rapidly in Ho Chi Minh City, Highlands Coffee provides the standard for its products as well as the services which attract great number of the customers to their shops around the city.

At the present, there are a remarkable number of coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City. Thus, it can be concluded that visiting a coffeehouse is significantly growing in popularity. Moreover, a survey conducted by the Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD) reveals that people in Ho Chi Minh City drink more coffee than people in the capital, Hanoi. In 2007, coffee consumption in Ho Chi Minh City had increased by 21%. Furthermore, the number of people drinking coffee at coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi is remarkably different. Nearly

50% of people in Ho Chi Minh City prefer to go to cafés to have a cup of coffee whereas the rate in Hanoi is much lower.<sup>11</sup> This may imply that people in Hanoi prefer to have tea than have coffee or they have coffee at home rather than going to coffeehouses. Therefore, this study will focus only on Ho Chi Minh City and its vicinity.

## 5. Methodology

This thesis will use a qualitative approach supported by the field research and employ the following methodologies:

1) An analysis of secondary documents from extensive literature reviews of articles and books that already have conducted in the relevant topics. The summary of secondary source reviews will be placed at the end of this chapter.

2) Field research is conducted in Ho Chi Minh City and its vicinity for one month to observe different branches of Highlands Coffeehouse and other distinct coffeehouses in order to understand the relationships among and between people, contexts, ideas, norms, and atmosphere in each coffeehouse.

3) In-depth interviews and informal interviews with Vietnamese scholars, coffeehouse staffs and customers in the selected coffeehouses will be conducted in either English or Vietnamese language depending on the comfort of interviewee (the interviewer, the conductor, has knowledge of both languages with intermediate level) with the purpose to study the coffeehouse customers' behaviors and activities – what they do, how often, and with whom.

4) An analysis in the cultural meaning and the relationship between Vietnamese and the coffee brand from observations and interviews will be included. Collected data from documentary and field research will be discussed in Chapter IV.

---

<sup>11</sup> Van, H., "The Saigonese Coffee Culture," The Saigon Times Weekly (20 May 2007), p. 45.

## **6. Significance/ Usefulness of the research**

1. This thesis will provide a better understanding of the consumer society in Vietnam, especially in the post-economic reform period.
2. This research will demonstrate how the coffee consumer, consumerism and the structure of identity are connected.
3. This study will be a reference for further research on Vietnamese studies.

## **7. Literature Review**

Information regarding coffee plantation and coffee consumption from its early beginnings in Vietnam was not available in large quantities. Relatively few research works have directly addressed the cultural aspects of the coffee consumption in details. However, the way Vietnamese people consume coffee and the various types of coffeehouse that they prefer to visit have made the consumer culture in the present day Vietnam unique from other countries in Southeast Asian region. The following is the literatures that touch upon the topic of coffee consumption, food and culture and aspects of Vietnamese society. Although there is no research work dealing directly with coffee culture in Vietnam. The investigation of documentary sources leads to an assumption that consumption, culture and social context are interrelated.

The changes reflecting a shift in social values in Vietnam today, especially among younger generation, from a collective to a more individual orientation and the result of a market economy that emphasizes competition, image and consumerism are shown in Mark Ashwill's book *Vietnam Today: A Guide to a Nation at a Crossroads* (2005). The author points out that the consumer economy has arrived with a vengeance in Vietnam, particularly in the cities. In the present day Vietnam, especially among members of the urban elite, the trend is to show off one's financial well-being. There are some interesting points that the author has made. For instance, there is a marked French influence remaining in Vietnam's architecture and cuisine (e.g., dripping-coffee, baguettes, croissants, sauces), this may attribute to a Vietnamese tendency toward selective cultural borrowing-retaining only what they like most, and represented as a shared café culture. He also highlights the fact that, in Vietnam, every person has his

place within the family, the village, and the larger society. One's placing determines one's duties, responsibilities, and privileges.

Interesting information about Vietnamese society in the present day can be found in the book *Vietnam, Now: A Reporter Returns* (2002) by experienced reporter David Lamb. The book reveals the author's impressions of the people and society of the present day Vietnam in the aftermath of the Vietnam-American War. He investigates a wide-ranging multitude of topics, including the increased migration into the cities, and the return of the many Vietnamese, who left after the war, the Viet Kieu, who are still connected to their families in Vietnam, and who came back to Vietnam with ideas and money for investment.

The role of Viet Kieu mentioned in David Lamb's book is comparable to the case of Highlands Coffee owner, David Thai, who was born in Southern Vietnam by the Northern Vietnamese parents. In 1987, David Thai moved to Seattle where series of entrepreneurial ventures at an early age combined with witnessing the rise of Starbucks, inspired David to move to Vietnam and start coffee business. In addition, this book also provides the wide-range of information on Vietnamese's attitude toward Americans.

Although there are few works dealing with coffee culture in Vietnam, Sirinthorn Ratcharoenkhajorn (2001) studies the case of Starbucks coffee in Thai society. This thesis draws much of its conceptual framework from Jean Baudrillard's theory. It indicates a number of points which are directly relevant to the coffee consumption in the context of sign communication and identities formation in consumerism culture. Sirinthorn identifies that coffee are bought and displayed as much for their sign-value as their use-value, and that the phenomenon of conspicuous consumption has become an essential constituent of the coffee brand and the coffee consumption in the consumer society. This thesis reveals that the customers themselves have created their own sign of perception. It concerns to the coffeehouse, as they would like it to be through the wide variety of social meanings and values from the advertisement they have perceived. She further provided the reader with the history of coffee in the introduction part which revealed that coffee drinking had been a part of elite culture before passing to the middle-class and then spread all over the society eventually.

In her conclusion, it is highlights in the summary that, in consumerism culture, man and commodities are related through signs consisted of social values and meanings.



The middle class people consume the sign value from the coffee brand, to emphasize both their personal and their social identities. In short, this thesis supports the idea that mass media advertises have brought consumers to the end of the dialectic signifier and signified (of the linear dimension of discourse), which permitted the accumulation of knowledge and of meaning. However, there are many criticisms toward Baudrillard's hyper-reality and nihilistic concepts, suggesting that instead of focusing on the apocalyptic implications alone, we must also observe how the mechanisms of sign value reproduce itself in the sphere of sign consumption.

However in the West, there are a number of studies on cultural aspects of coffee consumption. An interesting example is Tom Standage's book, *A History of the World in 6 Glasses* published in 2005. This book presents many aspects of coffee and coffeehouses including their functions in society. In this book, Standage argues that coffee had a surprisingly pervasive influence on the course of history. It became the defining drink during a pivotal historical period. In his opinion, coffee is a kind of technology, a catalyst for advancing culture by which he demonstrated the intricate interplay of different civilizations; from the origin in Africa to the Ottoman Empire in Arab then later spread to Europe and its colonies.

The author also proposes that coffee was the great soberer, the drink of clear-headedness, the epitome of modernity and progress; the ideal beverage of the "Age of Reason". He also pointed out that, European coffeehouses in the 18<sup>th</sup> century provided a more relaxed atmosphere which encouraged discussion, consideration, and ideas exchanging. As a result, they have become centers of self-education, literary and philosophical speculation, commercial innovation, and in some cases, political fermentation. But above all, they were clearinghouses for the news, and ideas innovation, linked by the circulation of customers, publications, and information from one establishment to the next formation. Collectively, Europe's coffeehouses functioned as "the Internet of the Age of Reason". Finally, he concludes that coffee remains the drink over which people meet to discuss, develop, and exchange ideas and information from academic conferences to business meetings without the risk of the loss of self-control associated with alcohol.

Apart from the books dealing with Vietnam and coffee culture, it is also useful to explore theoretical framework on food and culture. The ideas on how food and

identity are relevant in the consumer society can be found in many areas of studies such as in cultural studies and sociology. Massimo Montanari's book, *Food is Culture* (2006) can be a good example. In it, Mantanari explains that the organ of taste is not the tongue, but the brain, a culturally determined organ through which are transmitted and learned the criteria for evaluations; "good to eat" or rather "fit to eat". Therefore, the criteria vary in space and time. He identifies the term "taste" as follows:

i) It is understood as flavor, as the individual sensation of the tongue and palate.

ii) Taste can also mean knowledge: it is the sensorial assessment of what is good or bad, pleasing or displeasing. And the evaluation begins in the brain before it reaches the palate.

From this perspective, taste is not in fact subjective and in communicable but rather collective and eminently communicative. It is a cultural experience transmitted to us from birth, along with other variables that together define the values of a society. He then states that people eat certain kind of food because the ideas that they have formed of those food makes them feel good and that it is the mark of social distinction. The author also touches upon the topic of coffee and the localization that coffee is drunk throughout the world, but in every region it is prepared in a different way. In this case, he defines food as an exquisitely cultural reality, not only with respect to nutritive sustenance itself but to the way in which it is consumed, and to everything around it and pertaining to it. Finally, the author concludes that in all societies the food system is organized as a linguistic code bearing 'add-on' values.

Another interesting example on this subject is Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984). This book carries certain concepts in sociology which have relevance to the consumer society. It concerns the operation of taste in French society which is based on a large survey carried out in 1963 and 1967-8. In this survey, people were asked to specify their preferences in a huge range of things, for example, in cuisine, music, art, theatre, home decor, social pastimes, literature, and so on. Also they responded to questions regarding to their knowledge.

There are three axioms in this book concerning: the cultural capital, the homology across fields, and the reproduction and inheritance. Firstly, regarding Pierre Bourdieu's cultural capital, this concept refers to the role those distinctive kinds of

cultural tastes, knowledge and abilities play in relation to the processes of class formations in contemporary societies. It has been particularly influential in sociological accounts of the ways in which the middle classes distinguish themselves from the working classes through their distinctive cultural tastes, knowledge and competencies. Besides, there is a powerful divide between high and low culture. However, Bourdieu resisted a simple unitary definition of cultural capital, recognizing that it can take different forms, and more particularly that two rather varying visions compete with each other. On the one hand lies what he called the 'pure' aesthetic, characterized by the modernist concern with the dominance of form over function, and a highly abstract orientation.

Secondly, according to the homology across fields, Bourdieu argued that each cultural field (literature, visual arts, journalism, cuisine, etc.) has its own autonomy, and can only be understood in terms of the relationship that are internal to it. In *Distinction*, of the social space of lifestyles, this was made up of the relations between a large number of different fields-raging across fashion, interior design, sport, culinary pursuits, holidays choices as well as, literature, music, the arts and the media-each of which had its own dynamics and its own distinctive ways of organizing and marking differences. Nonetheless, Bourdieu's central analytical wager was that the operation of these varied systems for producing and registering social distinctions interacted with one another to yield homologous sets of distinctions across them. He was able to show that diverse cultural fields had similar properties, and that they also overlaid each other, so that those who aspired to 'intellectual' positions with respect to culinary pursuit might take up similar positions with respect to the music, visual arts, sporting preferences and home décor, is central to his argument that advantage and privilege accumulate in the overlaps and homologies between differentiated fields.

Finally, concerning the reproduction and inheritance, Bourdieu indicated that this reproduction circuit associated with schooling and formal education. Those parents equipped with cultural capital are able to drill their children in the cultural forms that predispose them to perform well in the educational system through their ability to handle 'abstract' and 'formal' categories. These children are able to turn their cultural capital into credentials, which can be used to acquire advantaged positions themselves. In this way, a circle of cultural reproduction, which is also social reproduction, exists. Bourdieu's claim is that even within apparently dynamic, fast-moving cultural fields,

one can detect the reproduction of the ‘ever-same’. The same kind of dominant classes are able to remake themselves, and their children, in remarkably persistent ways.

The idea could be drawn from Bourdieu’s theoretical framework that culture, which understood as a form of capital and as an asset, is central to the constitution of class relationships. This thesis also starts with this point by proposing that choices of coffeehouses are mainly related to customers’ social class. Nonetheless, based on the research findings, an early remark is that class is not only factor forming an individual’s identity. Individuals might acquire heterogeneous tastes and dispositions through their exposure to cultural training and discourses that are not necessarily connected to their class position. Moreover, the distinction in contemporary Vietnam could also be seen through forms for knowingness and self-reflection rather than differentiating themselves from the working class by their command of a fixed cultural canon.

The survey of the literature gives us a clearer picture of the study of coffee and shows how consumption and culture are closely connected. Thus, it is interesting to explore the meaning of coffee in Vietnamese society and the significance of the rise of coffee culture in the Vietnamese postwar society. It can be seen from the literature review that previous studies on the topic of coffee culture in Vietnam is limited and sporadic. Based on the information from secondary source, fieldwork and interviews conducted in Ho Chi Minh City, this research will try to fill this gap.



ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร

จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## CHAPTER II

### FROM AFRICA TO VIETNAM

#### 1. Introduction

In this chapter, the history of coffee from its Ethiopian origin, its consumption and its journey to Vietnam will be presented. Coffee was first introduced into Vietnam by the French missionaries. Soon after that the first coffee plantation was developed and spread throughout the country. As a result, coffeehouses and the Vietnamese habit of drinking coffee can be regarded as French's legacy and as a shared café culture. This chapter aims at exploring the development of coffee culture and how it is introduced to Vietnamese people. Besides, the effect of the economic reform in postwar society and the rise of Vietnamese consumerism will be discussed in the final part of this chapter.

#### 2. The History of Coffee

##### 2.1 Coffee and Religion

Coffee was discovered for a very long time, perhaps, even before the stone ages. Usually, Coffee is popular in various parts of Africa. The most common species of coffee can be found in Harrar<sup>\*</sup> where it appears to be most likely origin of coffee as many as people believe. But there is no official record about when human first consume the coffee. However, as far as history is concerned, an Arabic texts from around the year 800 C.E. does given a cite reference that coffee was being trade as a merchandise at the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

---

\* Harrar (var. Harar, Hārer, Harer; Somali: Adari) is an eastern city in Ethiopia, and the capital of the modern Harari ethno-political division (or kilil) of Ethiopia. The city is located on a hilltop, in the eastern extension of the Ethiopian highlands about five hundred kilometers from Addis Ababa with an elevation of 1885 meters.

<sup>1</sup> McNeill, W.H., Christian, D., and Bentley, J., Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History (Great Barrington, MA : Berkshire Publishing Group, 2005), p. 370.

Coffee's stimulating effect had been known about for sometime in the Africa region where the coffee originated. It used traditionally by the local and nomadic mountain warriors of the Galla tribe<sup>\*</sup> in Ethiopia, where the plant is indigenous, coffee was first eaten as a food sometime between 575 and 850 C.E. -long before it was made into a hot beverage in 1000-1300 C.E.<sup>2</sup> Originally, coffee beans ground were crushed into a ball shape of animal fat and used for a quick energy boost during long treks and warfare. The fat combined with high protein of raw coffee, was an early type of an energy bar.

One famous legend has it that coffee was discovered by a young Ethiopian goatherd named Kaldi, who noticed his goats behaving frenetically after eating red berries from the nearby bush. Curious and hoping to energize himself, Kaldi tried some. To his delight, his tiredness quickly faded into a fresh burst of energy, and he began dancing about excitedly with his goats. The daily habit that Kaldi soon developed was noticed by a monk from a local monastery<sup>\*\*</sup>. The monk tried some himself, and, noticing the effect, came upon the idea of boiling the berries to make a drink to help the monks stay awake during long religious services. News of the berries spread rapidly throughout all the monasteries in the kingdom; the more zealous monks drank it to spend a longer time praying.

Another story tells of a man named Omar, who was condemned to die of starvation in a desert outside Mocha, a city in Yemen, on the southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula. A vision guided him to a coffee tree, whereupon he ate some of its berries. This gave him sufficient strength to return to Mocha, where his survival was taken as a sign that God had spared him in order to pass along to humankind knowledge

---

<sup>\*</sup> The origin of the Galla there is a diversity of opinion. Some declare them to be Meccan Arabs, who settled on the western coast of the Red Sea at a remote epoch. According to Abyssinians, however, and there is little to find fault with their theory, the Gallas are descended from a princess of the country, who was given in marriage to a slave from the country south of Gurage. She bore seven sons who became might robbers and founders of tribes. Their progenitors obtained the name of Gallas after the river Gala, in Gurage where they gained a decisive victory over their kinsmen from the Abyssinians.

<sup>2</sup> Luttinger, N., and Dicum, G., The Coffee Book: Anatomy of an Industry from Crop to the Last Drop (New York : The New Press, 2006), p. 2.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Ethiopia's presence in the region was already established about 1000 B.C. possibly through land grant to the visiting Queen, and that later transformation into Ethiopian Orthodox Christian monastery is an extension of that same property.

of coffee, which then became a popular drink in Mocha.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, another legend is linked to Islam holds that the Angel Gabriel came to a sickly Mohammed in a dream, showing him the berry and telling the prophet of its potential to heal and to stimulate the prayers of his followers. In fact, Islam and the coffee bean seem to have spread through the Arabian Peninsula during the same period.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.2 The Social Drink

Becoming a recurring pattern of introduction, early users valued coffee as a medicament more than as a beverage. Although some authorities date coffee's first cultivation back to 575 C.E.<sup>5</sup> in Yemen, it was not until the tenth century that the bean was described in writing, first by the philosopher and astronomer Rhazes<sup>\*</sup>, then by the philosopher and physician Avicenna of Bukhara. Referring to a drink called *bunchum*, which many believe to be a coffee. Avicenna described it as a clean skin and excellent smell seed.<sup>6</sup> By the late sixteenth century, a German physician and botanist, Leonhard Rauwolf wrote in his journal about the Middle East. It told the Arab have a very good drink called Chube, coffee, a drink which black as ink and can be used for treating an illness related to the stomach. It also described that the Arab drink it every morning out of china cups when it still very hot by sipping it.<sup>7</sup>

The cheering effect of coffee helped it to become an increasingly popular substitute in Islamic countries, particularly Turkey. During the sixteenth century most coffee beans were procured from southern Yemen, although a limited amount came from Ceylon, where the Arabs had apparently been cultivating it since about 1500.

---

<sup>3</sup> Standage, T., A History Of The World In Six Glasses (New York : Walker & Company, 2006), p. 137.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Luttinger, N., and Dicum, G., The Coffee Book: Anatomy of an Industry from Crop to the Last Drop (New York : The New Press, 2006), p. 2.

<sup>\*</sup> Muhammad ibn Zakarīya Rāzi (Rhazes) wrote the Comprehensive Book of Medicine in the 9th century. The Large Comprehensive was the most sought after of all his compositions, in which Rhazes recorded clinical cases of his own experience and provided very useful recordings of various diseases. The Comprehensive Book of Medicine, with its introduction of measles and smallpox, was very influential in Europe.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

Mocha, on the Red Sea in Yemen, and Jidda, the port of Mecca, were the main ports for coffee export. Under the expansive Ottoman Empire<sup>\*</sup> of the Middle Age, coffee, increasingly celebrated for more than its medical wonders, continued to grow in popularity and to reach a wider area. The drink came to be considered as important as bread and water and declared to be nutritive, refreshing weary Turkish soldiers and easing the labor pains of women, who were allowed to drink it. In fact, a Turkish law was eventually passed making it grounds for divorce if a husband refused his wife coffee. Eventually, the Turkish word *kaveh* gave rise to the English *coffee* as well as the French *café* and the Italian *caffè*.

Coffee shook off its original religious associations and became a social drink, sold by the cup on the street and in the market square. By the mid-sixteenth century the drink had become very popular that drinkers in Constantinople, Cairo, and Mecca<sup>8</sup> formed special areas in which to drink it: the world's first coffeehouses<sup>\*\*</sup>. Such establishments became centers for playing chess and other games, discussing the news of the day, singing, dancing, playing music, and of course drinking coffee. Known as "school of the cultured" these gathering places became popular with all classes and increased in number quickly.

A coffee historian William Ukers described that the coffeehouse became a common place for any kind of people who interested in gaining social contact, some conversations, and even a scandal gossip.<sup>9</sup> Coffeehouses, unlike the illicit taverns that sold alcohol, were places where respectable people could afford to be seen. Also once coffee was in Europe, news of it spread, inspiring enterprising travelers and recent immigrants to import the bean. The first English coffeehouse opened in 1650, in the

---

\* The Ottoman Empire or Ottoman State, Modern Turkish: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu or Osmanlı Devleti), also known by its contemporaries as the Turkish Empire or Turkey was an Islamic empire that lasted from 1299 to November 1, 1922 (as an imperial monarchy) or July 24, 1923 (de jure, as a state). It was succeeded by the Republic of Turkey, which was officially proclaimed on October 29, 1923.

<sup>8</sup> Lewis, B., *Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire* (Norman, Oklahoma : University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), p. 132.

\*\* Various legends involving the introduction of coffee to Istanbul at a "Kiva Han" in the late 15th century circulate in culinary tradition, but with no documentation.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.



University town of Oxford, apparently by a Jewish man named Jacob.<sup>10</sup> Increasingly popular among its natural constituency students, coffeehouses became regular meeting places for what were to become several of England's first social clubs. Indeed, coffeehouses were sometimes called "penny university," since anyone could enter and join the academic discussion for a penny or two, the price for a dish of coffee.<sup>11</sup>

English doctors were some of the early proponents of coffee, promoting the beverage for its supposed healing abilities. Some even considered coffee as a medical panacea, as demonstrated in a 1657 advertisement printed in the old English newspaper, *The Public Adviser*, it claimed that coffee is good for the stomach, help in digestion process, decrease in coughs or colds, reduce headache, and even gout.<sup>12</sup> Public knowledge of coffee's pharmacological qualities greatly facilitated acceptance of the new drink and made the frequenting of coffeehouses seem almost virtuous in contrast to their alternative, taverns.

If the English were swayed by the medical virtues of coffee and the sociability of their myriad coffeehouses, Parisians were finally won over for the sake of fashion, already a favorite in Marseilles, the drink only became popular in Paris during the visit of a Turkish ambassador. Suleyman Aga spent 1669 at the court of Louis XIV<sup>13</sup> and was apparently single-handedly responsible for the French allowing coffee to take its place alongside wine as part of the daily intake. When he arrived in Paris, he brought a sizable amount of coffee, and he introduced Turkish-style coffee to the numerous Parisians he entertained. During that year, the *haute société* of Paris fell under the spell of "*Turkomania*"—everything Turkish came into vogue. Of that period in Paris, Isaac D'Israeli wrote a complimentary about how a Turkish ambassador made an impressive welcome. Turkish slave gesture toward women guest was remarkable by knee down to present the seat for them.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Luttinger, *The Coffee Book: Anatomy of an Industry from Crop to the Last Drop*, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup> Standage, *A History Of The World In Six Glasses*, p. 158.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Although several small coffee establishments had opened in Paris earlier, Café de Procope was France's first enduring coffeehouse. Originally from Italy, Procopio Cultelli opened Café de Procope in 1689,<sup>15</sup> directly opposite the recently established Comédie Française\* in Paris. The location proved successful; the café instantly became the meeting ground for actors, writers, dramatists, and musician of the time. Even though in its heyday it had regularly hosted such famous patrons as Voltaire, Rousseau, Beaumarchais, and Diderot, the café lost much of its literary reputation after the French Revolution.<sup>16</sup>

In fact, regardless of how coffee entered into use in a country as medicine, as vogue trend, as social happening, as stimulating drug, as temperance beverage, as exotic drink, as war booty-and regardless of the cultural norms and attitudes that it challenged, it always persisted and grew into a central part of day-to-day life. Once introduced, the popularity of coffeehouses and their proliferation served to institutionalize the coffee ritual and firmly establish its presence in Europe society.

### 2.3 Revolution by the Cup

While coffeehouses served as the early social clubs of the time, the drink itself has seemingly galvanized drinkers to develop and act upon their own convictions. It was, for instance, from the Café Foy in 1789 that Camille Desmoulins led the mob that, two days later, brought down the Bastille<sup>17</sup>. It was in a Boston coffeehouse in 1773 that American dissidents planned the Boston Tea Party\*\*. And it was in a New York coffeehouse at the dawn of the American Revolution that citizens convened a mass meeting in response to the battles at Lexington and Concord. “*One of the most interesting facts in the history of the coffee drink,*” asserts the coffee partisan Ukers is

---

<sup>15</sup> Standage, A History Of The World In Six Glasses, p. 15.

\* The Comédie-Française or Théâtre-Français is one of the few state theaters in France. It is the only state theater to have its own troupe of actors.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

\*\* The Boston Tea Party was a direct action by colonists in Boston, a town in the British colony of Massachusetts, against the British government. On December 16, 1773, after officials in Boston refused to return three shiploads of taxed tea to Britain, a group of colonists boarded the ships and destroyed the tea by throwing it into Boston Harbor. The incident remains an iconic event of American history, and reference is often made to it in other political protests.

that wherever it has been introduced it has spelled revolution. It has been the world's most radical drink in that its function has always been to make people think. And when the people began to think, they became dangerous to tyrants and to foes of liberty of thought and action.<sup>18</sup>

It is not hard to see why any widely popular substance that made people clearly see their situation and the condition of their people was bound to become suspect to national and religious authorities. Coffee inevitably triggered a backlash. Even at the dawn of the first coffeehouses in sixteenth-century Islamic countries, pious Muslims began to protest because they felt the mosques were too empty and the coffeehouses too full. During this era distrust and uncertainty about the drink's effects, the freely spoken political and religious discussion, and the merry carryings-on at coffeehouses provoked the mufti in Constantinople to forbid drinking coffee by law. Still, coffee drinking continued in secret, and coffeehouses were slowly reestablished.

The early rise of coffee consumption in Europe in some ways resembled the tortuous path to acceptance that it had taken in the Middle East: religious fanaticism also briefly threatened coffee's future in Christendom and spawned its own semi-mythical appropriation of the bean. A legend holds that long before the first coffeehouse had opened in Italy in 1645<sup>19</sup> a group of priests in Rome appealed to Pope Clement VIII to prohibit Christians from drinking coffee, calling it an invention of Satan. The priests claimed that coffee was given to Satan's followers, the Muslims, as a substitute for forbidden wine, and that Christians who drank it might lose their souls to Satan. Their plan thwarted, however, by Pope Clement's discriminating palate. Tasting his first cup of coffee, Clement found the flavor quite agreeable and, reasoning that such an appealing elixir could not possibly be the work of Satan, opted instead to baptize it and make it a Christian drink. By the 1670s coffeehouses had become quite common in the port city, and coffee drinking had risen dramatically.<sup>20</sup> Ironically, civil authorities often issued coffeehouse prohibitions claiming that they bred riotous mobs, when in fact the bans themselves created widespread public unrest. Strong public protests following any ban on coffee or coffeehouses always eventually won out; coffee was here to stay.

---

<sup>18</sup> Standage, *A History Of The World In Six Glasses*, p. 16.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

### 3. French Introduction of Coffee into Vietnam

#### 3.1 The Spread of the Bean and the Journey to Vietnam

In the early 1700s, under the control of a handful of colonial powers, coffee cultivation increased dramatically throughout the tropics over the ensuing centuries. For most European colonial powers, coffee was a dream crop: a habit-forming, high value tropical product with a ready market back home. Coffee production assumed a significant role in early colonial period. As for the French, they planted coffee in the Caribbean, South America, and later, in their colonies in Southeast Asia.

Coffee has been introduced and grown in Vietnam for over a century. According to Yves Henry, the author of *“Indo-Chinese Agricultural Economics”*, Catholic missionaries were the first who introduced coffee tree to Quang Binh-Quang Tri province in 1857.<sup>21</sup> Formerly, coffee beverage was served to Western officials and priests and clergymen in monasteries. Thirty years after coffee trees were brought into Vietnam, they were expanded on a large scale. In 1888, the French colonist established its first coffee plantations in Vietnam.<sup>22</sup> Especially after the Second World War, the French put Indochina\* on its list of ‘colonies for exploitation’ and started to invest more in growing coffee in order to supply the French consumption back in their motherland. The high quality coffee output was mainly exported to France via Le Havres port under the label “Arabica du Tonkin” as quoted in *Vietnamese Coffee Industry on its way to International Integration and Development* by the Vietnam Coffee - Cocoa Association.

---

<sup>21</sup> Vietnam Coffee - Cocoa Association. *Vietnamese Coffee Industry on its way to International Integration and Development* (Hanoi : Labour and Social Affairs Publishing House, 2007), p. 214.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p.215.

\* French Indochina was part of the French colonial empire in Southeast Asia. A federation of the three Vietnamese regions, Tonkin (North), Annam (Central), and Cochinchina (South), as well as Cambodia, and Laos. As quoted in *Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858-1954* by Pierre Brocheux.

### 3.2 Coffeeshouses: the French legacy

There was no record of when and where the first coffeeshouse in Vietnam was built. However, there were some traces of coffee drinking and coffeeshouses in Saigon\* during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In *People and Wildlife in and around Saigon (1872-1873)*, it is revealed a very early view of what Saigon was like. The author mentioned in his journal that “I installed myself outside the hotel close to one of the small tables on which the coffee and sweet liqueurs were place. After that I went to one of those numerous cafés which border the quay and drank a bottle of Norwegian pale-ale to my happiness”.<sup>23</sup>

Another account of Pierre Barreton provides a succinct history of Saigon as he saw it in 1892-1893 after more than thirty years of colonial work. Through his essay, Saigon is portrayed as the *Paris of the Far East* and as one of the splendid trading ports.<sup>24</sup> We can assume from what Pierre Barreton wrote in his essay that a city had seen several decades of French *colons* operating their business and plying export trade with the locals. He suggested that in Saigon, trade and industry took a considerable place. The industry was more or less completely in hands of Europeans while the trade and the bank mainly belong to the Chinese and the Malays.<sup>25</sup>

Besides, in the chapter *Monumental Saigon-Street and boulevards*, Barreton complimented Saigon’s architecture as followed;

“...the public monuments have been built that would embellish whichever city in the world. Magnificent avenues with tamarind and mango trees throw a salutary shade over wide and well-built roads... Many cafés were situated on one and the other side of the avenue and they opened their great gaily-lit

---

\* Saigon is the former name of Ho Chi Minh City.

<sup>23</sup> Morice, A., *People and wildlife in and around Saigon, 1872-1873* (Bangkok : White Lotus Press, 1997), p. 3-4.

<sup>24</sup> Barreton, P., *Cities of nineteenth century colonial Vietnam: Hanoi, Saigon, Hue and the Champa ruins* (Bangkok : White Lotus Press, 1999), p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

verandas to the boulevard.”<sup>26</sup>

Saigon stirred the French passions like no other of their colonial cities did since the rue Catinat was allegedly a copy of the rue de la Paix in Paris, and terraces to sip imported wine. It was a tropical version of the beloved capital of France. *It is said that in such a charming city, one must not be surprised to meet all that current fashion requires. Many provincial towns and of the not so provincial would envy Saigon for its luxury, comfort and the exquisite taste of the day.*<sup>27</sup> According to Vietnam Coffee – Cocoa Association, drinking coffee in the past was only scattered in some upstream cities before it gradually spreads all over the country.<sup>28</sup>

In other words, coffee was originally consumed by French missionaries and French officials in Vietnam and then it became a colonial product. After that, European tastes slowly worked their way from colonial elites to the rising urban middle class. Vietnamese parents even urged their children to go much further in adapting to the French than the parents had done themselves with the hope of a possible career in the colonial administration. Regardless of one’s race, breakfast at the most prestigious high school in Saigon consisted of coffee and bread, and not rice soup<sup>29</sup>, which represented class distinction, and new upwardly mobile identities were carved into a younger Vietnamese generation.

Moreover, there was an increase of French food purchases including instant coffee, during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as we could see from the advertisements in Vietnamese newspaper such as in the Gia Dinh Báo and Luc Tinh Tân Van<sup>30</sup> which implied that French companies had specially tailored their advertisements to the Vietnamese consumers, indicating a perception of the growing importance of that market, especially in Saigon where trade took a considerable number. Since, Saigon was

---

<sup>26</sup> Barreton, P., Cities of nineteenth century colonial Vietnam: Hanoi, Saigon, Hue and the Champa ruins, p. 57.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>28</sup> Vietnam Coffee – Cocoa Association, Vietnamese Coffee Industry on its way to International Integration and Development, p.289.

<sup>29</sup> Winston, J.B., and Ollier, L.C.-P., Of Vietnam: Identities in Dialogue. (New York : PALGRAVE, 2001), p. 26.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

the port where all the commercial operations would be centralized and the shipping movements of this port were closely linked with the prosperity of the regions (in French Indochina) for which it served as the outlet.<sup>31</sup>

In the present day Vietnam, drinking coffee has reemerged recently as an object of distinction in the age of specialty coffee. It is part of the cuisine which is an activity of everyday life that provided an opportunity for Vietnamese people to play with complex of fluid identities and expectations.

### 3.3 The Development of Coffee Industry in Vietnam

Although, the first coffee tree was introduced to Vietnam in 1857, it was not until 1910 or 1911 did people expand coffee plantation in different places with business target.<sup>32</sup> After a very long trial period of studying the potential of coffee growing in Vietnam, the coffee industry of Vietnam in the last few years has been characterized by its rapid developing speed. From a country with low levels of coffee production, Vietnam became the second largest coffee exporter in the world, after Brazil.<sup>33</sup> Coffee is therefore classified as one of the main agricultural products, second in importance after rice. Besides, the coffee industry also has a large workforce and has created many jobs in both service sector and manufacturing sector in rural areas.

According to the speech by Mr. Doan Trieu Nhan, the Executive Director of Vietnam Coffee-Cocoa Association at an International Coffee Conference; since 1975, Vietnam has been conducting the coffee development program in Western Highland provinces such as DakLak, Gia Lai, Kontum, Lam Dong, and in some Southeastern provinces, for example, Dong Nai, Ba Ria –Vung Tau, Binh Phuoc, as well as some Central Coastal areas. The coffee planted in Vietnam is mainly Robusta (*Canephora*) and it is grown on basaltic red soil with high natural fertility and thick soil layers. This

---

<sup>31</sup> Barreton, P., Cities of nineteenth century colonial Vietnam: Hanoi, Saigon, Hue and the Champa ruins. (Bangkok : White Lotus Press, 1999), p. 18, p. 92.

<sup>32</sup> Doan, T.N., International Coffee Conference, **Orientations of Vietnam Coffee Industry** [Online], October 16, 2009, Available from: [http://www.ico.org/event\\_pdfs/nhan.pdf](http://www.ico.org/event_pdfs/nhan.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Doan, T.N. Vietnam Coffee-Cocoa Association, **Development of and prospects for the Vietnamese coffee industry** [Online], July 14, 2009, Available from: [http://www.ico.org/show\\_document.asp?id=682](http://www.ico.org/show_document.asp?id=682)

is because, these areas are under hot and moisture climate, which is very suitable for growing Robusta coffee.

Furthermore, as indicated in the *Orientations of Vietnam Coffee Industry*, the common climate of Western Highland is mountainous tropical with most of coffee plantations on the altitude of 500 to 700 meters and the differentials between temperatures of day and night are considerably high. Hence, it is a very good condition for the accumulations of coffee which resulted in high quality and good aromatic flavor. This is why Western Highland Robusta coffee is found attractive and preferable. The coffee is generally called “*Buon Me Thuot Coffee*”. The name, Buon Me Thuot is derived from the name of the central city of Western Highland, which is similar to the famous Mocca coffee, with its name taken from Mocca Port on the Pink Sea.

Beside Robusta coffee grown in the South, Vietnam has a very great potential of growing Arabica coffee in the North. The borderline between the North and the South is

Hai Van Mountain pass of over 1,000 meters high on the 16°14' North latitude. Hai Van Mountain pass, starting from the end of the North Truong Son range in the South of Thua Thien Hue province, leading toward the sea, is a huge wall to prevent the Northeastern monsoon, and splits Vietnam into two different climate areas. The South, belongs to the hot and moisture tropical climate, is suitable for Robusta cultivation; and the North, with cold winter and showers, is suitable for Arabica cultivation. However, the output of Arabica is still making up a very small part in the total production, which results in the product structure imbalance.<sup>34</sup>

As cited by Mr. Doan Trieu Nhan, policies made by Vietnamese Government have been radically innovated with the view to facilitate the developments of coffee production and trading. Some important policies include multi-section economy orientation and shifting; allowing house-holds and small farm-owners to have their own coffee plantations; handling land usage right to farmers; and many new investment and loan policies along with national socio-economic programs such as accommodation and cultivation settlement, hungry elimination and poverty reduction, as well as forestation.

---

<sup>34</sup> Doan, T.N., International Coffee Conference, **Orientations of Vietnam Coffee Industry** [Online], October 16, 2009, Available from: [http://www.ico.org/event\\_pdfs/nhan.pdf](http://www.ico.org/event_pdfs/nhan.pdf)



Vietnam Government has also taken steps to encourage foreign investors to put their money into production and trading in Vietnam by providing favorable conditions. Recently, the Vietnamese Government and Dak Lak provincial authorities have been advertising and promoting Vietnamese coffee by holding annual fairs, for instance the 2005 Boun Ma Thout Coffee Festival and the 2007 Coffee Culture Week in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, with the hope to boost the consumption of Vietnamese coffee both at home and abroad. These innovative policies and the government's supports are seen as the advantages for the rapid development of coffee industry over the last few years.

Coffee is the world's second most traded commodity after petroleum.<sup>35</sup> Coffee industry attracts lots of labors and creates jobs for many people. In Vietnam, there is no statistics in the coffee consumption but the coffee consumption has heightened for recent years, especially among the youth.<sup>36</sup> *"In Ho Chi Minh City, early in the morning, roadside cafes are so crowded. To many people, their daily habit is dropping in a café, taking a seat and enjoying a cup of coffee before going to work"* as quoted in *Vietnamese Coffee Industry on its way to International Integration and Development*. Up to now, along with the growth of national economy, coffee consumption is increasing. It has become a popular drink that coffeehouses are available everywhere, from big cities to towns and even in rural areas.

#### 4. Vietnam in New Context

Vietnam was historically exposed to the frequent foreign occupation. Its historical legacy has been one of constant colonization and warfare, which has significantly interrupted its social and economic development over the years. In addition, Vietnam suffered immensely in the period following World War II undergoing continual conflict from 1940 to 1975,<sup>37</sup> with only a short period of peace following the Geneva agreements of 1954. Millions of Vietnamese children grew up in that period carrying memories of bloodshed, terror, bombing and dislocation. Therefore, it was a

---

<sup>35</sup> Vietnam Coffee - Cocoa Association, *Vietnamese Coffee Industry on its way to International Integration and Development* (Hanoi : Labour and Social Affairs Publishing House, 2007) p. 197.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 283.

<sup>37</sup> SarDesai, *Vietnam, past and present*, p. 93.

great relief for millions of people to see the end of the Vietnamese conflict in 1975. The end of the war and the reunification of Vietnam hoped to usher in an era of peace and reconstruction to a war-ravaged country.

The communist leadership in Vietnam had not shown itself as adept at peace and reconstruction as it was at war and revolution. The bleak economic situation in Vietnam in the decade following the end of the war in 1975 may, in some substantial measure, be attributable to the particular conditions in the previous decade. The continued failure of the Vietnamese government to improve the economic condition of the common citizen is related to several other factors, including leadership which was divided between those who stood for ideological purity and insisted upon the immediate transformation of south Vietnamese economy to socialism and those pragmatists and moderates who saw no alternative to making concessions and offering capitalist incentives.

As cited in *Vietnam, past and present* by D.R. SarDesai, the socio-economic legacy of a long and devastating war; the special character of the U.S.-subsidized, war-oriented economy of South Vietnam; a succession of natural disasters such as droughts and floods between 1976 and 1978; wars with China and occupation of Cambodia; and the absence of expected foreign assistance all may be responsible for the failure to stabilize the economy and fulfill the people whose primary consumer needs had been denied for decades. In addition, the war's adverse effect on the economy of North Vietnam and on the society and economy of South Vietnam were incalculable. The war in the countryside had turned South Vietnam, formerly a leading exporter of rice, into an importer of grain to feed a large population that could not attend to agriculture, had been conscripted into the army, or had simply fled to urban centers.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, the war had created a false sense of prosperous economy, particularly in Saigon. The U.S.-sponsored "free enterprise" system and the large amounts of external funds pumped into the economy resulted in fluctuating inflation, impoverishing the middle class and people with fixed incomes. During the second Indochina war (1964-1975), the southern economy had thus become almost parasitical, dependent on external financial aids and on purchases by the U.S. armed forces of South Vietnamese goods and services.

---

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

The economic situation in Vietnam worsened in the mid-1980s with large scale levels of unemployment and miserable living conditions for the people. Besides, the inefficient allocation of resources and the artificially controlled prices used by the government contributed to the falling output and soaring inflation. Under such circumstances, the reformers in the Vietnamese Communist Party hierarchy held the upper hand at the Sixth Party Congress, which met in December 1986. Vo Van Kiet, leader of the reformist group, appealed to the assembled delegate to turn Indochina from a battlefield into a marketplace.<sup>39</sup> Hence, after nearly a decade under a centrally planned economy and subsequent economic deterioration, the government began a series of comprehensive reforms. The Sixth Congress approved “*doi moi*” with a succession of steps toward economic modification and administrative decentralization.<sup>40</sup>

#### 4.1 The Impact of Doi Moi reform

Among numerous countries currently undergoing the transition from central planning to a market orientated economy, Vietnam has proven to be a dynamic, and resilient country. Therefore, it is the third largest transition economy in terms of population only after China and Russia respectively.<sup>41</sup> The reform measures recognized the failure of a centrally planned economy and acknowledged that changes were necessary. The objectives of these reforms, according to Harvie, were “to develop the private sector, to increase and stabilize agricultural output, to shift the focus of investment from heavy to light industry, to reduce the role of state owned enterprises, to focus upon export-led growth, and to attract foreign direct investment.”<sup>42</sup> This was a profound shift that led Vietnam into a period of rapid economic growth.

*Doi Moi* or renovation aimed at promoting the integration of Vietnam into the world economy, creating a market-oriented economy and establishing a system of new institutions that are appropriate to the changing conditions of Vietnam’s socio-economy.

---

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>40</sup> Griffin, K., Economic Reform in Vietnam (Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), p. 2.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Harvie, C., and Hoa T.V., Vietnam’s Reforms and Economic Growth (London : Macmillan Press, 1997), p. 49.

Economic renovation in Vietnam has its own unique set of characteristics which can be identified as follows. Firstly, economic reforms began during a period of transition from war to peace. Secondly, economic reform was stimulated by economic conditions rather than political upheaval. Finally, Vietnam initiated the reform process during a period of political and economic isolation. Foreign support for the process has been small. On the other hand, compared to a number of countries undergoing reform, Vietnam has been successful in preserving its national unity.<sup>43</sup>

Since July 1988 when reform policies on the non-state economic sector were implemented, the private economy has boomed throughout Vietnam. As a result, the rise of the “new rich”, the return of urban culture and the development of private enterprises, can be clearly seen. Ho Chi Minh City, and the southern provinces have developed most rapidly. In Ho Chi Minh City, the number of private enterprises under the city’s control, with a capital (per unit) surpassing Vietnamese dong (VND) of 100 million and with a total labor force of 19,000 has now reached 170 million Vietnamese dong.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, other features of Vietnam’s private sector will be mentioned. First, in a relatively short period of time, the private sector has mobilized large amounts of gold and dong for productive investment has been responsible for the expansion of production for both domestic and export markets. Secondly, private enterprises are highly sensitive to the demands of the markets. Therefore, enterprises show a quick response to market changes, adopting appropriate measures to meet competition and opportunities. Thirdly, private enterprises are smaller and better organized than state enterprises, which increase private sector flexibility, reliability and productivity. Eventually, private enterprises possess full autonomy in their production, operational and distribution processes. This factor also increases their productivity, efficiency and profitability.

Furthermore, trade regulations with foreign countries has been relaxed over time after Vietnam has joined a number of organizations such as the Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) in 1995 and the US-Vietnam Bilateral 2007. As a result of these developments, trade restrictions have been greatly relaxed and followed by an open

---

<sup>43</sup> Noerlund, I., and Gates, C., Vietnam in a changing world (London : Curzon Press, 1995), p. 17-18.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

door policy. Vietnam joined the ASEAN in order to move forward economically and to be independent of any foreign assistance. Following this move, the relation between Vietnam and the United States was developed after years of animosity, removing many trade restrictions and temporarily gaining most-favored nation status. On January 11, 2007, Vietnam became the 150th member of the WTO, and permanent normalized trade relations were granted by the United States. Vietnam's entry into the WTO has had far reaching implications on Vietnam's reform process, as they have continually promoted trade by eliminating such barriers as tariffs, subsidies, and import quotas.

#### 4.2 The rise of Consumerism in Vietnam

In the present day, the country has experienced a high level of economic growth together with a boom in household food consumption. According to Muriel Figuié and Paule Moustier, the authors of *Market Appeal in an Emerging Economy: Supermarkets and Poor Consumers in Vietnam*, the eating patterns of Vietnamese households have changed considerably in urban areas. Their diet is more diversified and new products have become popular (vegetable oil, ice cream, coffee, etc.). Eating practices are also changing, for example more people eating out and snacking between meals. Besides, Vietnamese's attitudes towards foreign food are interesting. As a result of many foreign influences, Chinese, French, and American, the Vietnamese diet, at least in urban areas, was penetrated early on by imported products such as breads, cakes, pâté, dairy products and more recently, espresso coffee.<sup>45</sup>

Only a few years ago, the Vietnamese consumer was still absent from the social and economic landscape due to economic hardship and an ideology that condemned all forms of ostentatious consumption. Foreign goods were seen as a symbol of economic imperialism. It was not until 1991 that private advertising was permitted and this event marked the birth of the Vietnamese consumer.<sup>46</sup> Many foreign investors, including coffee chains, began to establish a foothold in a new market. However, according to Holbrook, the author of *Consumer Value: A Framework for Analysis and Research*, consumers are not necessarily only in search of the best possible value for money on

---

<sup>45</sup> Drummond, L.B.W., and Thomas, M., Consuming urban culture in contemporary Vietnam (London : Routledge Curzon, 2003), p.55.

<sup>46</sup> Figuié, M., and Moustier, P., "Market appeal in an emerging economy: Supermarkets and poor consumers in Vietnam," ELSEVIER (13 December 2008), p. 210.

their purchases. They may also want to enjoy themselves while spending money. The value of the product (including coffee) is therefore not limited to its utility and it is also derived from the interaction between the buyer, the product, the seller and the point of sale. All of these aspects are included in the “consumer value” and can provide what Muriel Figuié and Paule Moustier refer to as “retailtainment”.\*

It is, however, clearly seen that coffee consumption grows despite the long history of political struggles and social changes in Vietnamese society. Today, coffee is no longer an imported product reserved for only the French or high-ranking officials. Apart from being an important export product, it is now localized and enjoyed by Vietnamese people. Soon after the economic reform was announced in 1986, coffee consumption increased and many coffeehouses were built. Many Vietnamese coffee brands are developed and the most outstanding one is Highlands. The next chapter will explore how Highlands has established itself as a leading Vietnamese coffee brand, to review its marketing strategy and to study who are Highlands Coffee’s customers.



ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร

จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

---

\* Retailtainment is a term used to describe retail marketing as entertainment, with the use of ambience, emotion, sound and activity to get customers interested in the merchandise and in a mood to buy. In other words, it is a longer consumer brand interaction which creates loyalty and repeat purchase.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CASE STUDY OF HIGHLANDS COFFEE

#### 1. Introduction

In 2006, awarded a scholarship from the Greater Mekong Sub-Region's Committee, I had an opportunity to study Vietnamese language at Hong Bong University, Ho Chi Minh City for 2 months. Since then, I visited Vietnam several times and have witnessed that there were more and more coffeehouses mushrooming on almost every street corner in the city. In order to obtain primary data for this thesis, I went to Vietnam and spent time living in Ho Chi Minh City for a month to observe and make interviews with the key informants including Vietnamese scholars, coffeehouse staffs, and the customers. At the same time, I was also looking for more insight information concerning to coffee plantation and coffee expenditure in Vietnam from its early commencements. In this chapter, the field research findings from my observation in Highlands coffeehouses will be demonstrated and followed by relevant interview summary from selected key informants. Furthermore, the analysis of how Highlands Coffee is perceived by contemporary Vietnamese consumers in the context of sign communication will also be discussed in this chapter.

#### 2. Recent Development of Coffeehouse Business in Vietnam

The notion of “specialty coffee” is a new way to look at coffee as it was distinguished by a customer's attention to quality and freshness. During the 1970s and early 1980s, specialty coffee chains slowly began to build a loyal customer base and extending awareness of fine Arabica and darker roasts. In 1980s the specialty coffee industry became more organized and remained a strong growth in demand until the present.<sup>1</sup> Since then, coffee has been recasting as something more original, more

---

<sup>1</sup> Luttinger, N., and Dicum, G., The Coffee Book: Anatomy of an Industry from Crop to the Last Drop (New York: The New Press, 2006), p. 2.

traditional, diverse, and concerned with flavor and health than the mass-produced instant coffee. Currently, specialty coffee is undergoing a rapid evolution among competitive and flourishing market. Along with this global ‘specialty coffee’ expansion, Vietnam has jumped into this new trend to represent its own trade groups contending with its unique characteristics and lifestyle signifiers, which can be seen through a considerable number of various coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City.

### 3. A Case Study of Highlands Coffee

Highlands Coffee is a coffee brand and the cornerstone of the Viet Thai International Joint Stock Company or VTI with an impressive turnover for the past 4 years.<sup>2</sup> In 2009, it has 59 outlets throughout Vietnam which 32 of them are located in Ho Chi Minh City. Due to its ubiquitous coffeehouses and its outstanding coffee chain performance, Highlands Coffee has been selected as a case study for this research.

#### 3.1 The Background of Highlands Coffee

In 1978, David Thai, the founder of Highlands Coffee and the VTI had witnessed the series of entrepreneurial ventures and the rise of Starbucks in Seattle. It motivated him to move back to Vietnam and get into the coffee business.<sup>3</sup> As shown in an interview his wife made in 1996, David Thai came back to Vietnam to reconnect with his roots because he is an overseas Vietnamese or ‘Viet Kieu’. He joined, as a translator, a tour arranged for an international group of CEO to explore business opportunity in Vietnam. There he met an investor who had the same interest in coffeehouse business.

---

<sup>2</sup> AmCham Vietnam, **About AmCham Vietnam** [Online]. December 1, 2009. Available from <http://www.amchamvietnam.com/company/253/detail>

<sup>3</sup> Highlands Coffee, **About us** [Online], June 15, 2009. Available from [http://www.highlandscffee.com.vn/aboutus\\_whoare.html](http://www.highlandscffee.com.vn/aboutus_whoare.html)





**Picture 1 David Thai and his wife, the founder of Highlands Coffee and the VTI**

Source: <http://www.abdphoto.net/photographs/highlands.html>

This investor gave David Thai financial support to start the first coffeehouse, Au Lac Café, in Hanoi near Hoan Kiem Lake, which was a center for socializing and activity, fitting for the vision that David had. It was the beginning of his dream to start a coffee shop which combines the east and the west, the old and the new, inspired by the growth of Starbucks.<sup>4</sup> Together with his wife, they wanted to be a part of the modernization of the Vietnamese society, and create more awareness of Vietnam as a coffee producing country.

Despite the fact that Vietnam was the second largest producer of coffee in the world, the domestic coffee consumption is not considerable. After putting a lot of time and effort for the paper work, in 1998 the couple received their license to do business in Vietnam, not only in coffeehouse business, but in many other sectors, which later appeared to be useful. They registered as Viet Thai International Joint Stock Corporation with 100% Vietnamese shareholders. Later in 1999, they moved their

---

<sup>4</sup> Julie L. Rochelle, Highlands Café and Viet Thai International- Tuesday June 30, **THE HEC MONTRÉAL EXPERIENCE** [Online]. September 5, 2009. Available from [http://experience.hec.ca/campus\\_abroad\\_internationaux/2009/06/30/highlands-cafe-and-viet-thai-international-tuesday-june-30](http://experience.hec.ca/campus_abroad_internationaux/2009/06/30/highlands-cafe-and-viet-thai-international-tuesday-june-30)

headquarters from the political capital, Hanoi, to the business capital, Ho Chi Minh City, which was a strategic move, as the disposable income was growing faster among the public, to increase their market potential. In 2000, the brand Highlands Coffee was eventually born.

Highlands Coffee started by selling packaged coffee, which was sold through distributors, supermarkets, hotels, restaurants and cafés. This allowed them to gain their expertise and becoming a strong coffee brand. Following this success, in 2002 they opened their first coffeehouse in Ho Chi Minh City with assistance of a French investor who strongly believed in their passion and visions. The concept took off and filled the need of young urban Vietnamese, who was looking for a place to socialize outside, away from their homes. This is because most of them live with their extended family in a limited space.

They have recruited executive staffs from Coca Cola as well as Starbucks in order to deepen their knowledge and develop their brand identity.<sup>5</sup> They combine their competent international staff with local talent, which is a very rare case in Vietnam. Their goal was to have a better understanding of the coffee market and to deal with the complicated local bureaucracy and politics with the vision: *“bringing the best of the world to Vietnam and the best of Vietnam to the world”*. In addition to all Highlands Coffee’s commercial activity, they also acknowledged the large impact they have made on Vietnamese society. They wanted to use their well organized structure and good reputation to benefit Vietnamese people.

Therefore, as an active member of the local community, Highlands Coffee supported numerous charitable, cultural and sporting events such as Fun Run for Charity, International School Charity, Soccer for The Streets, Saigon Cycle Challenge and Saigon Ultimate Frisbee Tournament.<sup>6</sup> They try to participate in almost any community organizations and events, if approached. This participation is proven to be a win-win strategy since the brand receives greater exposure to the public.

---

<sup>5</sup> Julie L. Rochelle, Highlands Café and Viet Thai International- Tuesday June 30, **THE HEC MONTRÉAL EXPERIENCE** [Online]. September 5, 2009. Available from [http://experience.hec.ca/campus\\_abroad\\_internationaux/2009/06/30/highlands-cafe-and-viet-thai-international-tuesday-june-30](http://experience.hec.ca/campus_abroad_internationaux/2009/06/30/highlands-cafe-and-viet-thai-international-tuesday-june-30)

<sup>6</sup> Highlands Coffee, **Events** [Online], June 21, 2009. Available from <http://www.highlandscoffee.com.vn/events.html>

Highlands Coffee is considered as a lifestyle brand. Its commitment to quality started from the green bean selection process where they only work with suppliers having the finest beans. Samples from each batch are tested in their laboratory to reassure that they meet with their standards. Besides, once each batch arrives, any defective beans are carefully removed because only one inferior bean could spoil the whole batch of good coffee beans.

Storage is one of their major concerns. Coffee beans are stored in the proper condition, a cool and dry environment. In this case, there is a regular inspection in order to check if there is a moisture build-up. Since the improper coffee bean storage could lead to mould.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, during the roasting process, their master roasters combine the art of experience with the science of time and heat to produce consistently excellent beans.

In Highlands's coffeehouses, special coffee of both international blends and traditional Vietnamese blends are offered as follows;

**The international coffee blends:**

**Espresso-Full City Roast** is a lightly dark roast coffee blend of Arabica & Robusta beans that release a strong and tangy aroma.

**Espresso-Cinnamon Roast** is a lightly colored roast that imparts full coffee freshness with a light taste.

**Espresso-Arabica Supreme** is roasted to the same color as the Full-City Roast, this 100% Arabica coffee has an optimum smooth taste.

**Espresso-Decaffeinated** is the blend with less than 0.1% caffeine, providing light and soft taste.

**The traditional Vietnamese blends:**

**Gourmet Blend** combines the finest Arabica and Robusta beans roasted to their individual flavors, combined with selected flavors and aromatic sweetness.

---

<sup>7</sup> Highlands Coffee, **Our Products** [Online], June 21, 2009. Available from [http://www.highlandscoffee.com.vn/ourproducts\\_promise.html](http://www.highlandscoffee.com.vn/ourproducts_promise.html)

**Traditional Blend** is the blend of Arabica and Robusta beans, which perfectly captures the spirit of a traditional Vietnamese roast. By complementing the beans with selected flavors, the coffee delivers a bold taste and irresistible aroma, with hints of a rich buttery body.

**Heritage Blend** is processed similarly to the Traditional Blend, but using only Robusta beans.



**Picture 2 Highlands Coffee's Blends corner**

Source: <http://www.abdphoto.net/photographs/highlands.html>

Hence, the various gourmet coffee blends and the standard they offer, Highlands Coffee has distinguished itself from other coffee brands. Furthermore, to ensure the optimum quality by using the special lining packages which have only one-way valves in order to pull away the pollutants while keeping the freshness inside. Highlands's coffeehouses also provide a comfortable and vibrant environment for customers to meet and serve them with an impressive service. These are the promises that Highlands Coffee gives to its clients in order to remain distinctive Vietnamese coffee chain.

### 3.2 Field Observation

It is proved to be successful with the coffee brand of 59 stores spread all over Vietnam during the past 6 years since Highlands Coffee was first established. There are 32 Highlands coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City and its vicinity providing customers with the same Highlands Coffee standard of food and drinks, as well as services. Most of Highlands coffeehouses accommodate customers with both indoor and outdoor sections, the details of where and what type of store they are, together with their opening hours are included in the Appendix A.

The first Highlands coffeehouse I visited was the Liberty branch, located on Pham Ngu Lao Street where it is considered as the backpackers' area. Therefore, most of this Highlands Coffee's customers are foreigners but there were some local customers as well. This two-storeyed coffeehouse had an only indoor section where taking pictures and smoking in this air conditioning room was prohibited. Furnished with comfortable sofas, wooden tables and tiny red cloth lamps, this store provided customers with a relaxing and cozy atmosphere. Pastries and cakes were displayed in the glass case near the counter where customers could press their order there. The menu and their special promotions were shown on the wall behind the counter. Besides this counter, their own coffee blends were placed in a corner for customer's selection.

I arrived there in an early afternoon. A waiter showed up at my table and put the menu in front of me. A few minutes after my order was placed, he came back with the Vietnamese dripping black coffee and said 'please enjoy your drink'. While I was waiting for the coffee to be served, I looked around. Highlands Coffee waiters and waitress had a pretty good command of English. They were in their uniform, a red shirt with Highlands Coffee logo, a black tweed flat cap, a black apron and black trousers, whilst the branch supervisor was wearing a black shirt with a necktie. When the dripping stopped, I carefully removed the 'ca phe phin'<sup>\*</sup> (see Picture 3) or the coffee filter. After that, I stirred the condensed milk up to mix with my coffee. Considered as a very unique way of drinking coffee, Vietnamese usually prefer condensed milk in order to add the sweetness and use this simple 'ca phe phin' in brewing their coffee.

---

\* Ca phe phin is a Vietnamese simple drip coffee filter made of stainless steel.



**Picture 3 'ca phe phin' in brewing coffee**

Source: <http://www.abdphoto.net/photographs/highlands.html>

Once I got back to the observation again, a group of Asian tourists came in to relax and take a rest during the afternoon. Meanwhile, some foreigners and Vietnamese entrepreneurs were discussing their business matters. At another corner, a European family got in with their babies to have some food and smoothies next to the table of two white men who dressed up in a formal way and were chit-chatting. Hurriedly rushed in, a European man and a Vietnamese girl came in to escape from the heat outside of the coffeehouse, and then followed by a group of Vietnamese teenagers who brought their laptops along in order to use the internet since Highlands Coffee serviced their customers with free Wi-Fi\* access.

---

\* Wi-Fi stands for *wireless fidelity* and it is a wireless networking technology that uses radio waves to provide wireless high-speed Internet and network connections.



**Picture 4 Free Internet access, one of the facilities that Highlands Coffee provides**

Source: <http://www.abdphoto.net/photographs/highlands.html>

The next day at 9.30 in the morning, I arrived at another Highlands Coffeehouse, which was on the ground floor of the Saigon Trade Center on Ton Duc Thang Street. After the security guard helped my Vietnamese friend parked his motorcycle, we went inside the coffeehouse together. I noticed that the atmosphere was rather stimulating and dynamic. Tables were occupied by both foreign and Vietnamese businessmen who were reading newspapers while having their breakfast with a cup of coffee before rushing out to work.

After settled at a table, I skimmed through their variety of breakfast sets and placed the order. While I was waiting for my breakfast, I asked a waiter whether I could see the branch supervisor. He nervously reacted and asked if there was anything wrong with the service. Clarifying that everything was great but I could not find Highlands Coffee's headquarter because they had moved to the new office recently. To his relief, he came back with a breakfast set and the head office's telephone number. I then called the headquarters and my line was transferred to the marketing department. The appointment for an interview was arranged. Unfortunately, I was informed that David

Thai, the owner of the brand was on his business trip abroad. Still, they would try their best to find a person, in charge of the marketing for my interview. Pleased to know that they were willing to help, I was taking time and enjoyed the breakfast and the observation continued.



**Picture 5 Breakfast set at Highlands Coffee**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

Decorated with vintage pictures, small trees, brick walls and white umbrellas in the outdoor section, it is clearly seen that this Saigon Trade Centre branch imitated the European brick house style. Besides, furnished with comfortable sofas, wooden tables and chairs and many red cloth lamps together with the use of dark and red oak colors, it is considered to be the Highlands Coffee's interior design. At this Highlands coffeehouse, I started the first interview with the customers at the nearby table. By lunchtime, I left for an interview with a professor from Faculty of Cultural Studies, University of Social Sciences and Humanities.





**Picture 6 Saigon Trade Center Branch**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

The day after, I went to another Highlands coffeehouse on the first floor of The Manor Tower I where the head office is located. There, I had a chance to meet with 2 Highlands Coffee marketing executives, Ms. Tram and her supervisor, Ms. Han. They asked many questions concerning my research in order to make sure that my study was not the marketing research. After I had explained the purpose of this investigation, Ms. Tram agreed to be one of the key informants. Therefore, we planned to meet again at the Saigon Center Branch. Shortly, after they left, I had a small talk with a customer on

the next table, who appeared to be a Vietnamese model. She bought a serviced apartment on this Manor Tower and usually came to this Highlands coffeehouse because it was convenient and spacious.



**Picture 7 Highlands Coffee at the Manor Tower I**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

Located in the heart of the city, the Saigon Center, on Le Loi Street, is the venue for shopping and movie theatres. While was waiting for Ms. Tram, to my notice, this branch of Highlands Coffee was very crowded and packed with both locals and foreigners that customers had to wait to be seated. Once Ms Tram arrived, I was informed that this branch had proven to be the most popular and the most successful Highlands coffeehouse due to its strategic location. Besides, I was told that customers at the next table were Vietnamese actresses and models. This store was considered a place for celebrities and famous people to hang out. Suggested to go to another of Ms. Tram's favorite Highlands's coffeehouses, I was on my way to the General Library branch, on Le Thanh Ton Stree, after we finished the interview.



**Picture 8 Inside the Highlands' Saigon Center branch**

Source: <http://www.abdphoto.net/photographs/highlands.html>

It was lunchtime when I got there and this time I selected a seat in the outdoor area. Shaded by a very big white umbrella, I was looking through the variety of Vietnamese and European food, as well as other Asian dishes which Highlands Coffee offered. The price of the food was raging from 34,000-68,000 VND<sup>\*</sup> and 18,000-60,000 VND for the drink. Highlands Coffee also provided alcohol drinks and liqueur. After the order was delivered, a waiter came with some magazines and newspaper in his hands. The food and drink were served at my table. Once I finished them, I started the observation again. There were more local customers in this Highlands store and I made a few interviews. I further observed this Highlands Coffee's architecture. Uniquely decorated from other Highlands coffeehouses, this General Library branch was built in an old wood house style with the tiled roof and painted black all over the building.

---

\* VND stands for Vietnamese Dong which is the currency of Vietnam.

Later, in the late afternoon, I left there and headed to the University of Social Sciences and Humanities again to interview more professors.



**Picture 9 Outdoor area of Highlands' General Library branch**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

In the evening, I went to the newest department store, Parkson Hung Vuong Plaza in District 5. There were 4 Highlands stores; on the ground floor near the main entrance, 1st floor, 4th floor and on 7th floor next to the Megastar movie theater. Despite this, the last one was different from the others since it was only a small kiosk, and more focused on the “to go” orders. However, these four branches were not as popular as other Highlands coffeehouses that I had visited earlier. Although it provided customers with the same standard of food, drink and the services, these Parkson Hung Vuong Plaza branches seemed to be more quiet and empty even during the weekend.

I went to another of Highlands coffee branches at the Diamond Plaza in District 1. Decorated in an outdoor style with the park view, this café was more crowded at night than in the afternoon. The last Highlands coffeehouse that I visited was the

Saigon's Opera House branch. It was also an outdoor store, furnished in Highlands Coffee Style and decorated with beautiful flowers. This Highlands Coffee's branch was rather empty in the afternoon but completely full in the evening. At that time, they were promoting their 'Summer Chè'<sup>\*</sup> and a variety of moon cakes for the festival. The sound of a smooth jazz song reminded me of my first visit this iconic branch in the winter 2007. I was impressed by a jazz band performing in this Highlands Coffee branch.



**Picture 10 Summer Chè Campaign**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

---

\* Chè is a Vietnamese term that refers to any traditional Vietnamese sweet dessert soup or pudding. Chè are often prepared with one of a number of varieties of beans and/or glutinous rice, cooked in water and sweetened with sugar. Other ingredients may include tapioca starch, salt, and pandan leaf extract. From *Tuttle Compact Vietnamese Dictionary* by Phan Van Giuong.



**Picture 11 Saigon's Opera House Branch**

Source: <http://www.abdphoto.net/photographs/highlands.html>

### **3.3 Highlands Coffee and its Space in Vietnamese Society**

Highlands Coffee sways the cultural customs of Vietnamese toward espresso consumption and has inserted itself into the Vietnamese urban landscape more quickly and craftily than any other retail company with the outlets of 59 throughout the country. It offers a social space for customers to enjoy a small indulgence, a short vacation from the busy city life, and also a place where discussions are encouraged. Highlands Coffee discovered what European coffeehouses had done for centuries, but made it palatable to Vietnamese young professional, middle class\* by employing tactful marketing.

The breakthrough that made Highlands Coffee a stunning success was creating a coffeehouse's atmosphere where customers could hang out and consume an "experience" at a place that was neither home nor work. At Highlands Coffee, nothing

---

\* In this sense, middle class, are members of three advantaged groupings: people in positions of administrative power, people who control economic capital, and people with education, experience, and employable skills.

is accidental. Everything the customer interacts with, from store environment down to the ‘to go’ white paper cups, is deliberately shaped by market and psychological research.

For example Highlands Coffee recruited executive staff from Coca Cola as well as Starbucks in order to construct their brand identity. In fact, coffee is not the matter, the place is. Coffee itself is becoming less and less important. Highlands Coffee has become more of a lifestyle brand than simply a coffee company. According to one informant, Nguyen Quoc Toan,<sup>8</sup> most Vietnamese consumers are not very concerned about coffee, like its roast, aroma, and acidity, as long as the product tastes decent. Instead, they pay more attention to the atmosphere of relaxation, warmth, and luxury, and the social space that coffeehouses provide. In this case, coffeehouses focus not only on what people want to buy but how they want to feel when they buy it.

In addition to its standard hygienic food and beverages, Highlands’s coffeehouses provide a warm and cozy atmosphere. The stores are mainly furnished with comfortable sofas and in favor of natural materials like warm wood, earth tone colors. Espresso machine is always placed in the center front of the counter. Hence, the customer could see the barista work her magic which is what Howard Schultz, the owner of Starbucks Coffee refers to as “the pure coffee theater”.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the use of English advertisements and jazz music, rotating throughout the day, are implemented as part of its core marketing strategy. By following Starbucks’ path, Highlands has moved a coffee from being a commodity to an experience. With its carefully conceived mix of colors and textures, aromas and music, Highlands is to the age of aesthetics.

According to their marketing executive, Highlands Coffee focuses on high income urban professionals aged 18-45 and those customers who are acquainted with the western lifestyle.<sup>10</sup> Highlands Coffee is wisely achieved in selecting their coffeehouse locations. The scheme is the convenience with the highest visibility location such as street corners, intersections and usually in the metropolitan area surrounded by high income, high population, and high education potential customers.

---

<sup>8</sup> Nguyen Quoc Toan, 16/7/2008, Place of interview: Highlands Coffee Pham Ngu Lao.

<sup>9</sup> Clark, T., Starbucked: A Double Tall Tale of Caffeine, Commerce, and Culture (New York : Little, Brown and Company, 2008), p.103.

<sup>10</sup> Bui Le Bih Tram, 23/7/2008, Place of interview: Highlands Coffee Saigon center.

Moreover, their marketing campaign was usually tied to a local charity, which was more than just public relations. It is to draw a huge network of people.

Also, by combining ambience consumption and the possibility for consumers to choose coffee type, roast, and blend, Highlands Coffee managed to differentiate coffee commodity and sold coffee pre-packaged with lifestyle signifiers. Interestingly, the interviewees talked very little about the coffee itself, but rather about their feelings and store atmosphere. In fact, coffee itself is becoming less and less important than a lifestyle and experience. It can be said that Highlands Coffee trades on its ubiquity and on the carefully stewarded basket of social signifiers it embodies.

However, situated in many business towers and main street corners, Highlands Coffee is generally attached its brand to the “professional” customers. This could be seen from the key informants’ interviews that most of customers would go to Highlands’ coffeehouses when they have business deals to settle but not for their leisure.<sup>11</sup> It is in accordance with Nguyen Trung Kim’s interview that he sees Highlands Coffee as the coffeehouse for businessmen and it provides a more formal setting than a relaxing one.<sup>12</sup>

Although, Highlands Coffee offers their best in the standard of food and hygienic beverages as well as the services, Vietnamese customers do not consider it as a luxury coffeehouse. As mentioned by Nguyen Minh Ngoc, a government official, “*if in Hanoi, Highlands Coffee might be seen as a classy café but in Ho Chi Minh City, there are coffeehouses such as Coi Rieng, Rita Café and Window Café where rich people like to go because they are much more luxurious and fancy than Highlands Coffee.*”<sup>13</sup> Nguyen Thanh Tam also pointed out that, “*in order to show off, Vietnamese people will go to the coffeehouses in Saigon Trade Centre or the Winsor Plaza instead of Highlands Coffee, because of their elegance, and only a certain group of customers are willing to pay for the costly services.*”<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Pham Tan Thong, Nguyen Thi Xuan Thao, Huynh Ngoc Phi Giao, Nguyen Thi Bich Tram, 16/7/2008, Place of interview: Café Center 1.

<sup>12</sup> Nguyen Trung Kim, 11/7/2008, Place of interview: Café Hi-END.

<sup>13</sup> Nguyen Minh Ngoc, 16/7/2008, Place of interview: Café Rita.

<sup>14</sup> Nguyen Thanh Tam, 23/7/2008, Place of interview: Highlands Coffee General Library.



In this case, Highlands Coffee is served as an “informal work place” rather than a place to hang out and recharge. An informant’s view shown above clearly shows Vietnamese customers’ attitude towards Highlands Coffee. That is it establishes itself as a coffeehouse for business people and professionals. Young Vietnamese middle class choose Highlands’ coffeehouses when they want to communicate with others and represent themselves as “professional dealer”, especially when enrolling in business matters. On the other hand, they will go to other various coffeehouses when they need a refuge from crowded places and the hectic city environment. Thus, a coffeehouse is not a place to drink a coffee. This point will be more elaborated in the next chapter.



ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## CHAPTER IV

### OTHER COFFEEHOUSES IN HO CHI MINH CITY

#### 1. Introduction

As a result of the *Doi Moi* economic reform in 1986, there is now the “re-emergence” of Vietnamese middle class particularly as “new rich” who are rapidly adapting to new economic conditions and tend toward leisure activities. Therefore, it could be implied that the rise of this “new rich” people is corresponded to the growing of the coffee industry and the domestic consumption. In the contemporary Vietnam, going to a coffeehouse is one of most popular leisure activities. Choices of coffeehouses could be viewed as an indicator of social differentiation and distinction. The selection of coffeehouses can also demonstrate status and social mobility or a marker of elite status which are recognized and responded to by others.

Furthermore, the *Doi Moi* economic reforms are also resulted in an influx of poor rural families to Ho Chi Minh City seeking employment and skills training. This is because Ho Chi Minh City is a thriving metropolis and the leading economic centre of Vietnam. Drawing from the interviews, some of the teenager informants are not originally from Ho Chi Minh City. They come to the city for either study or for the future career. Therefore, these coffeehouses answer their need, providing the space with a warm and comforting atmosphere as “*coffeehouse could be a place for people who want to be alone, but need a company for it*”<sup>1</sup>, cited by Alfred Polgar in the *Starbucked*. Moreover, due to the soaring land prices because of the economic transition<sup>2</sup> and the limited space of houses which usually live with extended families, the Saigonese prefer

---

<sup>1</sup> Clark, T., Starbucked: A Double Tall Tale of Caffeine, Commerce, and Culture, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Vinh, N.Q., and Leaf, M., City life in the Village of Ghosts : A case study of popular housing in Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam: Habitat International, June 1996), p.186.

to ask their friends out to a coffeehouse instead of inviting them home as explained by Professor Nguyen Van Hue.<sup>3</sup>

Surprisingly, even for those who do not drink coffee, still they are fond of going to coffeehouses and order a fruit juice as revealed by Chi Tran<sup>4</sup> and Pham Anh Tuan.<sup>5</sup> Besides, coffeehouse can be a perfect setting for the first date. It involved less pressure and expense than the standard dinner or a movie. This is in accordance with what Schultz, the owner of Starbucks Coffee mentioned in his speech as “the romance of coffee”.

*“There are very few things you start your day with, and brushing your teeth just isn’t romantic,...There is something romantic and comforting about coffee...It is something you hold and you hold it every day.”<sup>6</sup>*

Interestingly, according to Nguyen Thi Xuan Thao,<sup>7</sup> Vietnamese teenagers view coffee drinking as a signal of maturity and trendy fashion. Therefore, coffee is also a kind of accessory. However, some customers are looking for “emotional satisfaction”. To have expensive products make them feel more accomplished and satisfied with their lives. Thus a new industry of luxury coffeehouses is aimed at the growing number of young professionals and middle class. The followings are some examples of coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City that I had visited. The social space of these coffeehouses and how Vietnamese customers perceived them will be elaborated and analyzed in this chapter.

---

<sup>3</sup> Professor Nguyen Van, 23/7/2008, Place of interview: University of Social Science and Humanities Hue.

<sup>4</sup> Chi Tran, 18/7/2008, Place of interview: Highlands Coffee Saigon Trade Center.

<sup>5</sup> Pham Anh Tuan, 18/7/2008, Place of interview: Highlands Coffee Saigon Trade Center.

<sup>6</sup> Clark, T., Starbucked: A Double Tall Tale of Caffeine, Commerce, and Culture, p. 76.

<sup>7</sup> Nguyen Thi Xuan Thao, 16/7/2008, Place of interview: Café Center 1.

## 2. Coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City

Apart from Highlands Coffee, there are a number of coffeehouses spreading all over Ho Chi Minh City. Although, these coffeehouses are various in styles, services and sizes, they also share some common characteristics. Generally, their opening hour usually starts from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m., which covers the period of 16 hours daily from the early morning until the almost end of the night. Each coffeehouse has its own characteristics, answering the need of a certain group of customers. Interestingly, most of the coffeehouses provide customers with free Wi-Fi access, which represents the widespread use of the Internet. In this sense, it could be implied that young urban-based middle classes are cultural consumers, who have resources to spend on leisure activities and they are usually interested in current affairs and in securing information.

As indicated in *Professional Middle Class Youth in Post-Reform Vietnam: Identity, Continuity and Change*, that numbers of the Internet use in large cities are significantly higher than in the smaller urban centers as well as the amount of time that young consumers spent on the Internet.<sup>8</sup> However, coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City can be mainly divided into three categories; luxury coffeehouses, regular coffeehouses and budget vendors due to their prices, decorations and the services they provide, as shown in the following parts of this chapter.

First, luxury coffeehouses are categorized according to their elegant exterior and interior decorations, and the costly price of their services which ranges from 45,000 VND to more than 400,000 VND. Focusing on the high income urban-based group, customers in these coffeehouses also displayed and expressed themselves in an elegant way. For example, they dressed neatly, used expensive belongings, and had showing off manners. Expensive cars such as Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, BMW, and Porsche were parked in front of the coffeehouse. Regarding the coffeehouse settings, they were very similar to bars and night clubs where they played very loud techno modern music, offered alcoholic drinks and as well as cigarettes. In addition, these coffeehouses offer their customers with what Taylor Clark refers as “affordable luxuries”.<sup>9</sup> Window’s

---

<sup>8</sup> King, V.T., Nguyen, P.A., and Minh, N.H., Professional Middle Class Youth in Post-Reform Vietnam: Identity, Continuity and Change (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Clark, T., Starbucked: A Double Tall Tale of Caffeine, Commerce, and Culture, p.75.

Coffee Park View, Café Rita, Cat Dang Coffee and Karaoke, and Zenta Café are the examples of coffeehouses in this luxury type.

Regular coffeehouses are also known as “garden type” coffeehouses. They were decorated with many trees and flowers. The regular coffeehouses can be defined by their service prices which were not very expensive and reasonable (ranging from 20,000 VND to around 60,000 VND) that most of the teenagers could afford to hang out there. Noticeably, coffeehouses in this group are very diverse in styles and decorations. The typical examples of coffeehouses in this group are Café Hi-END, Ca Phe Them Xua, Bobby Brewer Coffee, Ca Phe Vuon Xuan, Trung Nguyen Coffee, Jazz Café, AQ Café, Da Café and Le’s Café and Travel.

Finally, budget coffee vendors could be found plenty either on the sidewalk along the streets or public parks. They welcome people from all walks of life with affordable price from 12,000 VND to around 20,000 VND.

### **Locations**

Regarding the locations, luxury coffeehouses and regular coffeehouses are generally concentrated in the business center and downtown areas especially in District 1, District 3 and District 5 (see Appendix C). They are normally situated on the main streets where the traffic is always busy in order that people who pass by could easily notice them. On the other hand, small coffee vendors scatter around the city, for instance, located on small streets and alleys next to the markets or universities, and in the public parks. In this case, Cà Phê “Bệt” was chosen as an example of the budget coffee manner. From the field observation, this kind of coffee in the park was rather popular especially on weekend morning.

Cà Phê “Bệt” literally means ‘to drink coffee while sitting on the ground’. This kind of cheap and affordable coffee usually served in public parks, for example, in Công Viên 30 Tháng 4 where Saigon people normally take a walk and do other activities in this area. When you walk in the park, the seller will come to you and ask if you want to have a coffee or any other drinks. After that they will take your order and get your drink from a van which is parked near the park. According to Vietnamese law, this kind of business is considered illegal since parks are public spaces where no commerce is allowed. In the past, only small tables and chairs were provided. When the

policemen came, coffee sellers would have to pay fines and lose all their belongings. Later, the sellers developed a new strategy. Coffee sellers will provide newspaper for customers to put on the ground and sit on it. Now, if the police officers come, they do not have to lose their equipments and the name Cà Phê “Bệt” emerged.



**Picture 12 Customers of Cà Phê “Bệt” sitting on newspaper all around the park**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



**Picture 13 a Cà Phê “Bệt” seller delivering her customers’ orders**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

According to the interview with the artist, Le Tan Thanh,<sup>10</sup> every Saturday morning chopper collectors would gather together and have a cup of coffee and spend time catching up with one another. In this case, it could be implied that this kind of coffee also provides a space not only for the working class but also for the middle class who would like to absorb an easy-going atmosphere. Like the case of Thanh, he himself is also fond of this kind of coffee vendor.

### **Decorations**

As for the decorations, luxury coffeehouses are spacious and furnished with elegant modern furniture for example, Window’s Coffee Park View. It is a very spacious coffeehouse with 3 floors and an outdoor space. The air- conditioned rooms in the building were extremely loud with techno music; as a result, the outdoor section in front of the coffeehouse is more preferable. Window’s Coffee put many small lamps on the big tree in front of the café for the decoration providing the warm and cozy atmosphere. Many electric fans were provided for the customers in the terrace area in

<sup>10</sup> Le Tan Thanh, 26/7/2008, Place of interview: Công Viên 30 Tháng 4.

order to cool down the weather. The coffeehouse was also equipped with security cameras in every corner for safety reasons. Besides, they provide free Internet access and equipped with many wide screen monitors showing different channels, HBO (movie channel), ESPN (sports channel), MTV (music channel) and English news channel such as CNN, BBC News, Bloomberg and Channel News Asia of Singapore.

The customers of this coffeehouse seem to be as elegant as the café's appearance and tend to display their superior status. They neatly dressed up in smart casual dresses with expensive belongings, for instance, a branded handbag, an I-Phone, a Macbook or a Vaio. Interestingly, luxury coffeehouse staff park the luxurious motorbikes and cars right in front of the coffeehouse while the old-fashioned motorcycles are kept in the basement area. This could be implied that they would like other people to see that their customers are wealthy. Since the price of food and services is much more expensive than that of Highlands Coffee.



**Picture 14 The elegant decorations of Window's Coffee Park View**

Source: <http://lws.vox.com/library/photo/6a00cd978c74a0f9cc00e398d3cb630002.html>



While, luxury coffeehouses display themselves as high-end brands, regular coffeehouses furnished themselves with a more relaxing atmosphere. Their stores were decorated with many trees and beautiful flowers. Some coffeehouses even have small pools in the middle of the coffeehouse in order to provide the ‘close to the nature’ feeling and a short escape from the busy city life. The following is an example decoration of Ca Phe Them Xua which was decorated like an old house

This Ca Phe Them Xua is rather spacious. Therefore, it was separated into many parts, including outdoor the waterfall view, the garden view which has 2 sections on the ground floor and the second floor, the air conditioned room and another room for non smokers. Additionally, each section was furnished with different beautiful styles and equipped with comfortable sofas, wooden decorations, many flowers, paintings and lamps. The decoration provided customers with a very cozy and welcoming house-like café. Light music such as My Way, You Needed Me, The Sound of Silence, Perhaps Perhaps and Vietnamese easy listening songs were played.



**Picture 15 The indoor section with air-conditioner of Ca Phe Them Xua**

Source: <http://my.opera.com/kietpacific/blog/?startidx=10>



**Picture 16 The ground floor garden view of Ca Phe Them Xua**

Source: <http://my.opera.com/kietpacific/blog/?startidx=10>



**Picture 17 A Small Sidewalk Café and Its Customers**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

On the one hand, budget sidewalk cafés were only furnished with small simple tables and chairs. Still, there are packed with customers rotating throughout the day.

### **Variety of Choices**

Luxury coffeehouses and regular coffeehouses provide a wide range variety of food and beverages than those of the budget coffee vendors. They offer both local cuisine like Bun Bo Hue and other Asian dishes such as Yangzhou Fried Rice, Pad Thai Noodles and Nasi Goreng. Also, they provide their customers with various types of cakes, pastries and dessert including ice-cream. However, the traditional coffee that every coffeehouse offers as a basic item is “ca phe sua da” or Vietnamese iced coffee. The use of “ca phe phin” in brewing coffee is common in all types of coffeehouses and represents as a unique Vietnamese coffee culture. In this sense, it could be implied that, Vietnamese still preserve some of the practices in order to retain their national uniqueness even though, they are keeping up with the global community.

### **Special Services**

Coffeehouses in Ho Chi Minh City are very competitive that they try to distinguish themselves from the others. In doing so, they offer special services for customers for instance, Café Hi-END offers live jazz music, performing by a Vietnamese band in the evening. While, Le’s Café and Travel provides meeting rooms for conference together with the live music by rotating Filipino singers at 9 pm. every night.

ศูนย์วิทยุทรัพยากร

จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



**Picture 18 an outside view of Le's Café**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

Additionally, AQ Café on Dien Bien Phu Street was furnished with a home sweet home atmosphere. Although, there is no air conditioning room in this coffeehouse, still AQ Café provides customers with a warm and relaxing environment by performing live piano solo and plays easy-listening English songs from 8 to 10 o'clock in the evening.



**Picture 19 The live piano solo at AQ Café**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

Another interesting coffeehouse that offers special services is Bobby Brewer Coffee. This franchise coffee chain has 6 stores situated all around Ho Chi Minh City. This compact coffeehouse provides a very good service by the staff who could speak fluent English. This may be because they situated in the tourists' area. In addition to its delicious food and drinks, they offer a delivery service called "*Bobby Brewer Express*" within the District 1 area. On the third floor of this coffeehouse is a movie theatre where customers could have food and drink while watching movies. Different films are rotated throughout the week in this "Movie Lounge". Four movies were shown each day at different times at 12.20 p.m., 3.15 p.m., 5.30 p.m., and 8.05 pm. However, customers are asked to pay for a surcharge if they sit in the "Movie Lounge" area.



**Picture 20 A latté at Bobby Brewer Coffee**

Photo by Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana

### **Opening Hours**

Regarding the service hour, even if luxury coffeehouses and regular coffeehouses open from 7 o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock at night, they usually crowded in the evening when the weather cools down and have soft breeze. During the day time, both luxury coffeehouses and regular coffeehouses normally play light and easy listening music which allow customers to talk with one another, pass the time, use the Internet, read newspapers and watch cable TV on the wide screen monitor provided. When the night falls, they play very loud Dance and Techno music instead. This is because they would like to provide a more lively and energetic atmosphere. In this period of time, customers tend to display themselves in a showing off manner and watch the others. In this setting which similar to a night club, both young male and female customers are dressed up nicely as a spark of a relationship could possibly begin there, according to Nguyen Trung Kim.<sup>11</sup> On the one hand, the budget coffee vendors along

---

<sup>11</sup> Nguyen Trung Kim, 11/7/2008, Place of interview: Café Hi-END.

the streets are rather crowded early in the morning, after the siesta break<sup>12</sup> in the afternoon and right after working hours. This is because their convenient locations and affordable price that the customers could easily fetch up a cup of coffee before and/or after their work time. From the field observation, customers are in the course of reading newspaper, chatting with friends, and observe the others.

### 3. Coffee Culture and the Emergence of Social Inequality

Choices of coffeehouses could possibly represent the emergence of the social inequality as a consequence of the economic reform. In this sense, social inequality refers to differences between people in their material well-being, their social position, cultural standing, or ability to influence others. It also refers to disparities in people ability to ensure that they have a better future and that their children are secure, healthy, and have viable livelihoods. In contemporary Vietnam such inequalities are growing and becoming more visible.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, the inequalities within Vietnam have emerged in the context of widening global disparities that cut across national borders, and divide high-income professional, urban middle classes, and wealthy political elites from their poorer co-nationals in rural areas and low-income occupations. This could be seen through the gap between the total expenditure of the richest 20% of the population and the poorest 20% continues to widen.<sup>14</sup> In 1993, per capita expenditures of the richest households were five times that of the poorest households, this ratio rose to 6.3 in 2004. Accordingly, the share in the society's total expenditures of the richest group rose from 41.8% in 1993 to 44.7% in 2004, while that of the poorest group decreased from 8.4% to 7.1% during the same period.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> A siesta is a short nap taken in the early afternoon, often after the midday meal. In Vietnam the siesta break generally starts at 12 o'clock to 2 p.m. in the afternoon.

<sup>13</sup> Taylor, P., Social inequality in Vietnam and the challenges to reform (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004.), p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 214.

<sup>15</sup> World Bank, "Poverty and Poverty Reduction in Vietnam 1993-2004," Vietnam Poverty Update Report 2006 (Hanoi: World Bank, December 2006), p. 17.

Drawing from the field observation, in luxury coffeehouses and regular coffeehouses there is approximately the same ratio between male and female customers while most of the budget coffee customers are male. This could imply that working class females are still absent from the landscape of leisure activity as well as public sphere. Traditionally, Vietnamese women tended to work at home and they mainly occupied domestic space in the household like kitchen. This could explain why there are few female customers in the budget coffeehouses commonly found on street sidewalk. On the other hand, professional educated middle class women have a different status in the changing society of Vietnam.\*

In summary, generally the coffeehouses mentioned above provide customers with a more friendly and relaxing atmosphere if compared to Highlands Coffee. Each coffeehouse served as a social space and was equipped with different styles and services providing customers with variety of selections (although, choices of coffeehouse could be seen as a sign of social inequality). Class remains a central factor in the structuring of contemporary cultural practices in Vietnam. This investigation suggests that individuals might acquire heterogeneous tastes and dispositions through their exposure to cultural training and discourses that are not necessarily connected to their class position for example the Cà Phê “Bệt” case. However, class distinction might not be clear, but it is quite obviously seen that middle class people with higher income have more choices than the working class. Besides, the distinction could also be seen through forms for knowingness and self-reflection. Rather than differentiating themselves from the working class by their command of a fixed cultural canon, the educated Vietnamese middle class in the present days seeks to position themselves through demonstrating competence in handling a diversity of cultural products in a context where knowledge, information and media proliferation. Hence, social space of new lifestyle in Vietnam exhibits considerable diversity that it is difficult to identify a unifying logic construction. However, the openness to diversity and a cultivated agility with respect to individual preferences are its chief defining cultural features in Vietnam’s consumer society.

---

\* It is interesting that between 1998 and 2002, the overall illiteracy rate was reduced by 20.3%. Besides, interestingly, from the same period, females experienced a greater reduction in the illiteracy rate nationwide. Based on this statistics, women can gain more access to education which can help improve their status and gives them opportunity to work outside. Quoted in Taylor, P., *Social inequality in Vietnam and the challenges to reform*, p. 217.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

Both library research and interviews reveals how coffee culture has changed in Vietnamese society from the French colonial period up to the present day. Originally consumed by French missionaries and French officials in Vietnam, coffee became a colonial product. After that, it was passed on as a bourgeois treat, and then to reemerge recently as an object of distinction in the age of specialty coffee. Drinking coffee is a part of the cuisine which is an activity of everyday life that provided an opportunity for Vietnamese people to play with complex of fluid identities and expectations. Vietnamese people adopted colonial cuisine, changed some of the social practices (for example, from tea drinkers to coffee lovers) and started the process of Vietnamization. In doing so, they subtly subverted colonialism by breaking down the inflexible social divisions imposed by the French. In addition, culinary borrowings allowed individuals to experiment with cultural hybridity between French and Vietnamese. According to Professor Nguyen Van Lich,<sup>1</sup> under colonialism some Vietnamese upper-class gradually acquired a taste for Western food, often seen as a marker of their wealth and modernity. The desire for conspicuous consumption led an elite Vietnamese to eat foods imagined as French.

In the present day Vietnam, coffee drinking and the way coffee is prepared are the traces of French influence remaining in Vietnamese cuisine. Derived from the French, Vietnamese adopted the coffee drinking habit and localized the French dripping pot to the single-cup filter or “**ca phe phin**” in brewing their coffee with the use of sweet condensed milk, which is typically in lieu of cream and sugar both for a practical reason as it does not have to be refrigerated and for the thick creamy sweet taste.

---

<sup>1</sup> Professor Nguyen Van Lich, 23/7/2008, Place of interview: University of Social Science and Humanities.

Therefore, it is in accordance with Dr. Nguyen Van Hue's interview<sup>2</sup> that this localization may attribute to a Vietnamese tendency toward selective cultural borrowing and retaining only what they like most, and represented as a shared café culture and the unique way in brewing coffee. While, Vietnam's Economic Renovation has created a new middle-class and an increasingly complex and diverse social order in pursuit of consumer lifestyles, coffee consumption tends to increase as income rises.<sup>3</sup> Coffee consumption patterns have changed dramatically in the last 25 years. Coffee can be seen as a cornerstone of modern life in Vietnamese urban area like Ho Chi Minh City.

Moreover, according to field research observation, the key informants' interview and the research paper done by the Modern Asian Studies in 2007, it is indicated that a majority of urban interviewees used the Internet.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, almost all of the coffeehouses provide free Wi-Fi access, which implies that both young Vietnamese and those in their working age are now more connected with the global community and as seen through the "specialty coffee" trend.

Coffeehouses can be regarded as public gathering places for social connection as well as a space for self refuge. Hence, coffeehouses are places that provided and supported communal life in the city for particular group of customers. Besides, coffeehouses are comfortable and welcoming places where people are able to enjoy time alone or with others. In this sense, it could be seen through the varieties of coffeehouses, which are integrally connected to those "landscapes of leisure" where people with disposable income go to consume, display themselves and observe the others.

Coffeehouses also offer a place to hang out as a comfortable and safe community while offering an item that people could come in for everyday. According to the filed observation and Pham Phuc Huu's interview,<sup>5</sup> it can be implied that

---

<sup>2</sup> Professor Nguyen Van Hue, 23/7/2008, Place of interview: University of Social Science and Humanities.

<sup>3</sup> Benoit D., Ponte, S., The coffee paradox: global markets, commodity trade, and the elusive promise of development (Zed Books in association with the CTA, 2005), p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> Victor T. King, Nguyen H. Minh, and Phuong A. Nguyen, Professional Middle Class Youth in Post-Reform Vietnam: Identity, Continuity and Change, (Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Pham Phuc Huu, 12/7/2008, Place of interview: Ca Phe Them Xua.

coffeehouse is much similar to “a public living room” for those seeking a refuge from the world outside. The cup of coffee they bought was really just the price of admission to take part in the coffeehouse scene. Coffee was not the point but the place was. Since most consumers did not really focus on the coffee minutiae like flavor, and acidity, as long as the product taste decent. Instead, they craved a sensitive relaxation, warmth, and luxury within coffeehouse’s social sphere. That is to say, in a coffeehouse, it is not important for a customer what to buy, but how he or she would feel when money is paid.

Compared with other Southeast Asian countries over the past two decades or more, urban Vietnam is now developing. Contemporary urban Vietnamese are re-emerging into a social differentiated world via a pathway originating with mid-1980s economic reforms and continuing towards a more fully recognized social complexity. Within this changing urban landscape, “class” issues, like ethnic issues are establishing themselves in the forefront particularly in academic discussion. The difference of social status is related to social background, social position, and social aspiration whether through education, employment or kinship ties. Within the changing city, emergent social groups experiment with new ways of displaying their acquired social status and distinction through their choices of coffee brand.

Going to coffeehouse is one of the most popular of Vietnamese contemporary leisure activities. Paying expensive price for a cup of coffee is no longer an activity of a small rich minority but it is increasingly common to all strata of the population. Even though, it is still differentiated by social group or by social class and also represented as an inequality. From research findings, it is shown that Vietnamese consumers’ choice of coffeehouses may not be strictly connected to only class position but also cultural training and discourses. This investigation also indicates that Vietnamese consumers will go to Highlands Coffee when they have to discuss or settle business deals as Professor Nguyen Van Hue indicated that “neu co viec se di Highlands” (literally means if I have work, I will go to Highlands).<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, they will choose other coffeehouses providing a more relaxing atmosphere when they seek a refuge from the busy city life. Frequency of customers’ visit to the coffeehouse, their use of coffeehouse

---

<sup>6</sup> Professor Nguyen Van Hue, 23/7/2008, Place of interview: University of Social Science and Humanities.

resources and other factors for their preferences should be taken in account. These could be particularly seen through the appreciation of varieties of coffeehouses' styles. Customers have different reasons to choose their favorite coffeehouse.

Although, coffee industry and coffee consumption reveal an impressive constant growth in the urban landscape, there are some unfavorable consequences in the agricultural sector as could be seen from the unrest of land use conflict in Dak Lak Province.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the development of coffee production is out of the government's control and beyond the proposed limits.<sup>8</sup> As a result, it causes the imbalance in production of other crops, and intensive use of water and land resources. When coffee prices rise, farmers in many provinces destroy other kinds of trees, including rubber trees and even forests to grow coffee. On the one hand, when coffee prices are low, coffee trees are neglected and replaced by other trees. This is the biggest hindrance for the development of sustainable agriculture according to the Vietnam Coffee-Cocoa Association.

It is hoped that this study will throw light to an aspect of the growing consumer society in Vietnam through the increase in number and diversity of coffeehouses and customers' behaviors. However, this thesis has a number of limitations. To name a few, there is the language barrier for the interviews with local key informants. There were some difficulties in understanding the local language which took a long time for interpretation. The second limitation is the lack of primary data concerning coffee consumption in Vietnam. More source of Vietnamese coffee consumption could have helped the author to understand the motivations behind the creation of coffeehouses and adoption of coffee drinking habit in Vietnamese society. Another difficulty is the limited time and budget in conducting the field research which means the longer time spent for fieldwork might have been helpful in providing a more insightful of the contemporary Vietnamese coffee culture.

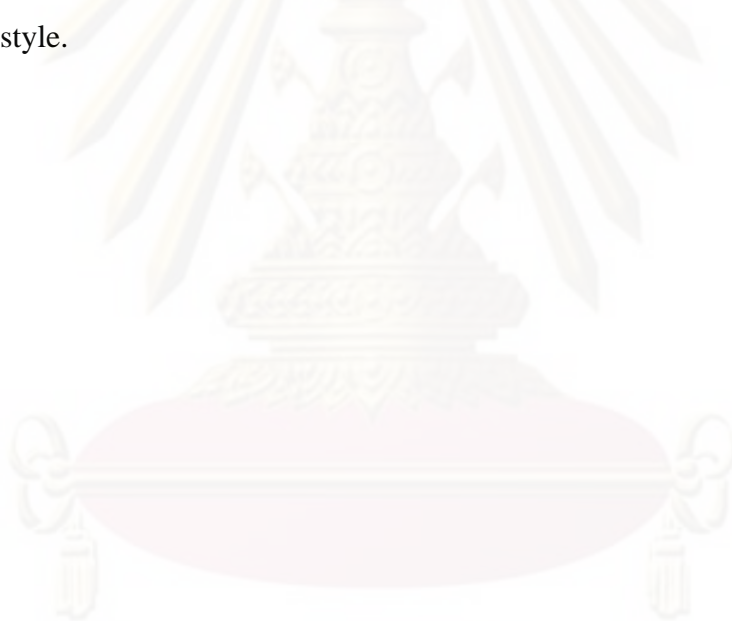
In this case, a further study of cultural preferences and practices in Vietnamese society is strongly encouraged. It is a central feature of developing a contemporary

---

<sup>7</sup> Johnson, K., **Brewing Discord** [online], April 2, 2001, Available from: <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,103845,00.html>

<sup>8</sup> Doan, T.N. Vietnam Coffee-Cocoa Association, **Development of and prospects for the Vietnamese coffee industry** [Online], July 14, 2009, Available from: [http://www.ico.org/show\\_document.asp?id=682](http://www.ico.org/show_document.asp?id=682)

account of cultural capital. That is to say, it is worth looking at preferences and practices that diverse groups may share, as well as those that appear to set them apart. Furthermore, the regular consumption of luxury is one factor in determining that an urbanite has achieved social distance. Social distance can also be produced via new ways of spending in the community. In contemporary Ho Chi Minh City, many educated urbanites are able to experience lifestyle by gaining access to appropriate conditions and environments via their workplaces, peer groups, or social networks. Having individual prestige recognized by a group enables an urbanite to acquire status via the production of social distance. Lifestyle in this case is not only about demonstrating wealth by displaying style and taste, but requires an investment of time and application to cultivate appropriate ways of behaving and consuming through direct sensory experiences. As for the professional middle class, leisure choices create opportunities for new strategies to display and also to produce status and distinction through lifestyle.



ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## REFERENCES

- AmCham Vietnam. About AmCham Vietnam. [Online]. 2002-10. Available from: <http://www.amchamvietnam.com/company/253/detail> [2009, December 1]
- Ashwill, M.A., and Diep, T.N. Vietnam today : a Guide to a Nation at a Crossroads. Maine : Intercultural Press, 2005.
- Barrelon, P. Cities of nineteenth century colonial Vietnam: Hanoi, Saigon, Hue and the Champa ruins. Bangkok : White Lotus Press, 1999.
- Baskerville, P. The complete glossary of Coffee Terms. Australia : Knol Publishing Guild, 2009.
- Bozeman, T.D. The precisianist strain: disciplinary religion & antinomian backlash in Puritanism to 1638. North Carolina : The university of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Bourdieu, P. Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste. by Richard Nice. Massachusetts : Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Brocheux, P., and Hémery, D. Indochina: An Ambiguous Colonization, 1858-1954. New Jersey : University of California Press, 2009.
- Burnett, J. Liquid Pleasures : a Social History of Drinks in Modern Britain. London : Routledge, 1999.
- Catterall, C. Food : Design and Culture. London : Laurence King in association with Glasgow, 1999.
- Cheung, S., and Chee-beng, T. Food and foodways in Asia : Resource, Tradition and Cooking. Oxford : Routledge, 2007.
- Civitello, L. Cuisine and Culture : a History of Food and People. New Jersey : John Wiley & Sons, 2007.

- Clark, T. Starbucked: A Double Tall Tale of Caffeine, Commerce, and Culture. New York : Little, Brown and Company, 2008.
- Corfield, J. The history of Vietnam. Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 2008
- Counihan, C., and Esterik, P.V. Food and Culture : A Reader. London : Routledge, 1997.
- Cowan, B.W. The Social Life of Coffee : The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse. Connecticut : Yale University, 2005.
- Davids, K. Coffee : a guide to buying, brewing & enjoying. New York : 101 Productions, 1994.
- Daviron, B., and Ponte, S. The Coffee Paradox : global markets, commodity trade, and the elusive promise of development. London : Zed Books in association with the CTA, 2005.
- Doan, T.N. International Coffee Conference Orientations of Vietnam Coffee Industry [Online] 2001. Available from: [http://www.ico.org/event\\_pdfs/nhan.pdf](http://www.ico.org/event_pdfs/nhan.pdf) [2009, October 16]
- Doan, T.N. Vietnam Coffee-Cocoa Association. Development of and prospects for the Vietnamese coffee industry [Online] 2005. Available from: [http://www.ico.org/show\\_document.asp?id=682](http://www.ico.org/show_document.asp?id=682) [2009, July 14]
- Döring, T., Heide, M., and Mühleisen, S. Eating culture : the poetics and politics of food. Massachusetts : Winter, 2003.
- Drummond, L.B.W., and Thomas, M.. Consuming urban culture in contemporary Vietnam. London : Routledge Curzon, 2003.
- Figuié, M., and Moustier, P. Market appeal in an emerging economy: Supermarkets and poor consumers in Vietnam. ELSEVIER (13 December 2008): 210-217.
- Finkel, C. Osman's Dream : The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923. New York : Basic Books, 2006.

- Giuong, P.V. Tuttle Compact Vietnamese Dictionary. Singapore : Tuttle Publishing, 2007.
- Gray, A. Over the Black Coffee. New York : The Baker and Taylor, 1902.
- Griffin, K.. Economic Reform in Vietnam. Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 1998.
- Harvie, C., and Hoa T.V. Vietnam's Reforms and Economic Growth. London : Macmillan Press, 1997.
- Heise, U. Coffee and Coffeehouses. Pennsylvania : Schiffer Publishing, 1997.
- Highlands Coffee. About us. [Online]. 2007. Available from: [http://www.highlandcoffee.com.vn/aboutus\\_whoare.html](http://www.highlandcoffee.com.vn/aboutus_whoare.html) [2009, June 15]
- Highlands Coffee. Events. [Online]. 2007. Available from: <http://www.highlandcoffee.com.vn/events.html> [2009, June 21]
- Highlands Coffee. Our Products. [Online]. 2007. Available from: [http://www.highlandcoffee.com.vn/ourproducts\\_promise.html](http://www.highlandcoffee.com.vn/ourproducts_promise.html) [2009, June 21]
- Ho, V.N. The Effect of a Transition to a Market Economy on a Centrally Planned Government. Senior Honors Thesis, Department of Economics, University of California, Berkeley, 2008.
- Holbrook, M. Consumer Value: A Framework for Analysis and Research. London : Routledge, 1999.
- Howes, D. Cross-Cultural Consumption. : global markets, local realities. London : Routledge, 1996.
- Jacob, H.E.. Coffee, the Epic of a Commodity. New York : Viking Press, 1935.
- Johnson, K., Brewing Discord [online], 2001. Available from: <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,103845,00.html> [2010, May 9]
- King, V.T., Nguyen, P.A., and Minh, N.H. Professional Middle Class Youth in Post-Reform Vietnam: Identity, Continuity and Change. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2007.



- Kokko, A. Vietnam : 20 years of Doi Moi. Hanoi : The Gioi Publishers, 2008.
- Korsmeyer, C. The Taste Culture Reader : Experiencing Food and Drink. Oxford : Berg, 2005.
- Lamb, D. Vietnam, Now: A Reporter Returns. New York : Public Affairs, 2002.
- Laurier, E., and Philo, C. The Cappuccino Community: cafés and civic life in the contemporary city.” Department of Geography & Topographic Science, University of Glasgow, Glasgow. 2004
- Levenstein, H.. Paradox of plenty : a Social History of Eating in Modern America. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Lewis, B. Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire. Norman, Oklahoma : University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.
- Lupton, D. Food, the body, and the self. London : SAGE, 1996.
- Luttinger, N., and Dicum, G. The Coffee Book: Anatomy of an Industry from Crop to the Last Drop. New York : The New Press, 2006.
- McNeill, W.H., Christian, D., and Bentley, J. Berkshire Encyclopedia of World History. Great Barrington, MA : Berkshire Publishing Group, 2005.
- Mennell, S.J., Mercott, A., and Otterloo, A.H.V. The sociology of food : eating, diet, and culture. California : Sage, 1992.
- Miller, F.P., Vandome, A.F., and McBrewster J. Muhammad Ibn Zakariya Al-Razi. Beau Bassin, Mauritius : Alphascript Publishing, 2009.
- Mish, F.C. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. Massachusetts : Merriam-Webster, 2003.
- Montanari, M. Food is culture. New York : Columbia University Press, 2006.
- Morice, A.. People and wildlife in and around Saigon, 1872-1873. Bangkok : White Lotus Press, 1997.

- Noerlund, I., and Gates, C. Vietnam in a changing world. London : Curzon Press, 1995.
- Pendergrast, M.. Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London : Texere publishing, 2001.
- Pham, X.T. Department of Planning, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Vietnam. Opportunities and Challenges for International Integration of Vietnamese Agricultural Products: The case of Rice, Coffee and Tea [Online]. 2007. Available from: [http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/smemarket\\_pham.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/smemarket_pham.pdf) [2009,December 20]
- Robinson, E.F. The Early history of coffee houses in England: with some account of the first use of coffee and a bibliography of the subject. London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1893.
- Rochelle, J.L. Highlands Café and Viet Thai International. The HEC Montreal Experience [Online]. 2002. Available from: [http://experience.hec.ca/campus\\_abroad\\_internationaux/2009/06/30/highlands-cafe-and-viet-thai-international-tuesday-june-30/](http://experience.hec.ca/campus_abroad_internationaux/2009/06/30/highlands-cafe-and-viet-thai-international-tuesday-june-30/) [2009, September 5]
- Salazar, L.C. Southeast Asian Affairs 2007. Singapore : Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007.
- SarDesai. Vietnam, past and present. Colorado : Westview Press, 2005.
- Scapp, R., and Seitz, B. Eating culture. New York : State University of New York Press, 1998.
- Schivelbusch, W. Tastes of paradise : a social history of spices, stimulants, and intoxicants. by David Jacobson. New York : Vintage Books, 1993.
- Simpson, J., and Weiner, E. Oxford English dictionary. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, Gloucestershire(UK) : Clarendon Press, 1983.
- Sirinthorn Ratcharoenkajorn. Coffeehouse: meanings in the cultural sphere of Thai consumerism. Master's Thesis, Department of Sociology Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology Thammasat University, 2001.

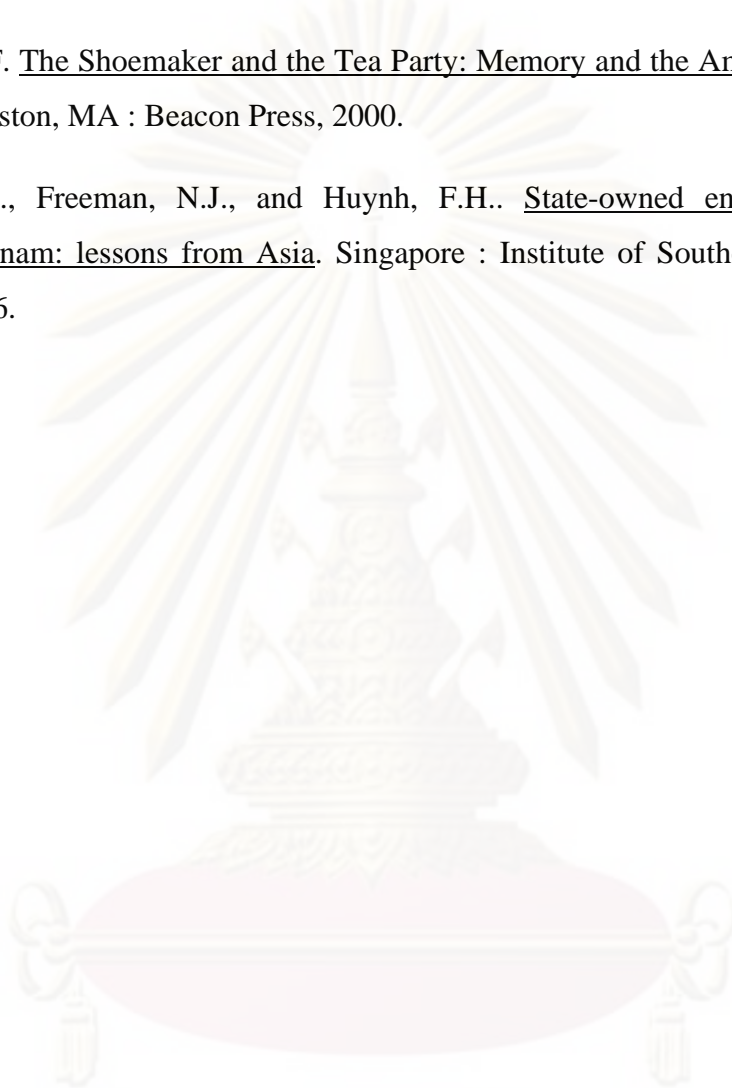
- Smith, D.D., and Dixon, C. Sustainable Urbanization in Vietnam. Geoforum (February 1997), 21-38.
- Smith, W.D. Consumption and the making of respectability, 1600-1800. New York : Routledge, 2002.
- Standage, T. A History Of The World In Six Glasses. New York : Walker & Company, 2006.
- Taylor, P. Social inequality in Vietnam and the challenges to reform. Singapore : Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004.
- Toussaint-Samat, M.. A history of food. by Anthea Bell. Oxford : Blackwell publishing, 1992.
- Ukers, W.H. All About Coffee. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York : The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal, 1935.
- University of California. Asia yearbook. California : Far Eastern Economic Review, 1997.
- Van, H. The Saigonese Coffee Culture. The Saigon Times Weekly (20 May 2007): 45.
- Vietnam Coffee - Cocoa Association. Vietnamese Coffee Industry on its way to International Integration and Development. Hanoi : Labour and Social Affairs Publishing House, 2007.
- Vinh, N.Q., and Leaf, M. City life in the Village of Ghosts : A case study of popular housing in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Habitat International, (June 1996), 175-190.
- Warde, A., and Martens, L. Eating out : social differentiation, consumption, and pleasure. Cambridge(UK) : Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Weinberg, B.A., and Bealer, B.K. The world of caffeine : The Science and Culture of the World's Most Popular Drug. London : Routledge, 2001.
- Wild, A. Coffee: A Dark History. Hammersmith, London : Fourth Estate, 2004.
- Wilson, T.M. Food, drink and identity in Europe. Amsterdam : Rodopi, 2006.

Winston, J.B., and Ollier, L.C.-P. Of Vietnam: Identities in Dialogue. New York : Palgrave, 2001.

World Bank. “Poverty and Poverty Reduction in Vietnam 1993-2004.” Vietnam Poverty Update Report 2006. Hanoi, World Bank. December 2006.

Young, A.F. The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution. : Boston, MA : Beacon Press, 2000.

Yuen, N.C., Freeman, N.J., and Huynh, F.H.. State-owned enterprise reform in Vietnam: lessons from Asia. Singapore : Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996.



ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



**APPENDICES**

ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## APPENDIX A

### HIGHLANDS COFFEE OUTLETS

No STT	Name of Outlet Địa điểm quán	Address Địa chỉ	District Quận	Opening Time Giờ mở cửa	Closing Time Giờ đóng cửa	Tel Điện thoại	Kind of Outlet Loại Hình Quán		Note
							Standard Store	Express Store	
<b>HCM city</b>									
1	Tax1	Gr fl, 135 Nguyễn Huệ	1	7h 00'	21h 30'	9143634		Indoor	
2	Tax 2	2 fl, 135 Nguyễn Huệ	1	9h 00'	21h 30'	9143634	Indoor		
3	Tax 3 & Tax 4	3 fl, 135 Nguyễn Huệ	1	6h 30'	23h 00'	9144991	Indoor		
4	Opera House	7 Công Trường Lam Sơn	1	6h 30'	23h 00'	8225017	Outdoor		
5	Saigon Trade	37 Tôn Đức Thắng	1	6h 30'	23h 00'	9105689	Outdoor & Indoor		
6	Saigon South	152 Nguyễn Lương Bằng	7	7h 00'	23h 00'	4135100	Outdoor & Indoor		
7	RMIT	RMIT university, 702 Nguyễn Văn Linh, P. Tân Phong	7	6h 30'	18h 00'	7761381		Indoor	
8	Metro Dist 2	Metro An Phú, P. An Phú	2	7h 00'	21h 00'	5190122		Indoor	
9	Metro Dist 6	Metro Bình Phú	6	7h 00'	21h 00'	8768960		Indoor	
10	Metro 12	Metro Hiệp Phú, P. Tân Thới Hiệp	12	7h 00'	21h 00'	7172631		Indoor	
11	Diamond 1	Gr fl, 34 Lê Duẩn	1	6h 30'	23h 00'	4041873	Outdoor		
12	Parkson 3	3 fl, 35-45bis Lê Thánh Tôn	1	10h00	23h 00	8231679		Indoor	
13	Saigon Center	65 Lê Lợi	1	7h 00'	23h 00'	9143282	Outdoor & Indoor		
14	Bitexco	19-25 Nguyen Hue St, Dist1, HCMC	1	7h 00'	23h 00'	8213291		Indoor	
15	The Manor	94 Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh	Bình Thạnh	6h 30'	23h 00'	5143198	Outdoor & Indoor		

16	Sai Gon Tower	29 Lê Duẩn	1	6h 30'	18h 00'	8241380		Indoor	
17	Big C Hoang Van Thu	202B Hoàng Văn Thụ	Tân Bình	6h 30'	23h 00'	8447802	Outdoor & Indoor		
18	Etown 2	364 Cộng Hòa	Tân Bình	6h 30'	18h 00'	8125631		Indoor	
19	Hung Vuong_megastar	Parkson Hung Vuong Plaza, Lầu 7, 126 Hùng Vương	5	9h 00'	23h 00'			Indoor	
20	Hung Vuong Ground Fl	Parkson Hung Vuong Plaza, Tầng Trệt, 126 Hùng Vương	5	9h 00'	23h 00'	2220264	Indoor		
21	Hung Vuong 1st Floor	Parkson Hung Vuong Plaza, Lầu 1, 126 Hùng Vương	5	9h 00'	23h 00'	2220272		Indoor	
22	Hung Vuong 4th Floor	Parkson Hung Vuong Plaza, Lầu 4, 126 Hùng Vương	5	9h 00'	23h 00'			Indoor	
23	An Dong Plaza	18 An Dương Vương	5	6h 30'	23h 00'	8323288, Ext: 2294	Outdoor		
24	H3 Building	202 Hoang Dieu	4	7h 00'	23h 00'		Indoor		
25	Somerset	21-23 Nguyen Thi Minh Khai	1	7h 00'	23h 00'		Outdoor & Indoor		
26	General Library	96B Le Thanh Ton	1	7h 00'	23h 00'		Outdoor & Indoor		
27	Megastar Paragon	District 7	7	7h 00'	23h 00'		Indoor		
28	AQ	Mac Dinh Chi	1	7h 00'	23h 00'		Outdoor & Indoor		
29	Citi Plaza - Food court	60A Trường Sơn	Tân Bình	9h 00'	22h 00'		Outdoor		
30	CiTT Plaza - Megastar	60A Trường Sơn	Tân Bình						
31	Liberty	187 Phạm Ngũ Lão	1	7h 00'	23h 00'		Indoor		
32	Lotte mart	Load U_ Him Lam Zone - Tan Hung - Dist.7 - HCMC	7				Indoor		
	<b>TOTAL</b>								
	<b>Biên Hòa-Đồng Nai</b>								
32	Megarstar _ Bien Hoa	121 Quoc Lộ 15, P. Tân Tiến, Biên Hoà	Bien Hoa	9h 00'	21h 00'	061 2607483		Indoor	

	<b>TOTAL</b>								
	<b>Vung Tau city</b>								
33	Imperial	159-163 Thùy Vân	Vũng Tàu	6h 30'	23h 00'	064 526 311	Outdoor & Indoor		
	<b>TOTAL</b>								
	<b>Da nang city</b>								
34	Metro C&C	Cách Mạng Tháng 8, Khuê Trung	Hải Châu	9h 00'	21h 00'	0511 3696203		Indoor	
35	Big C Da Nang	255 Hung Vuong,	Hai Chau	7h 00'	23h 00'	0511 3666203	Outdoor & Indoor		
36	Indochina	74 Bach Dang	Hai Chau	7h 00'	23h 00'		Outdoor & Indoor		
37	Megastar Vinh Trung	90 Bach Đàng	Hai Chau	7h 00'	23h 00'		Express Store		
	<b>TOTAL</b>								
	<b>Hanoi city</b>								
38	Boat	34 Thanh Niên	Tây Hồ	6h30	23h 00'	8292140	Outdoor & Indoor		
39	Flag Tower	28A Dien Bien Phu	Ba Đình	7h 00'	23h 00'	8233339	Outdoor & Indoor		
40	Ho Guom Plaza	1-3-5 Đinh Tiên Hoàng	Hoàn Kiếm	7h 00'	23h 00'	9363228	Outdoor & Indoor		
41	Vincom Ground Floor	Tầng trệt, 191 Bà Triệu	Hai Bà Trưng	7h 00'	23h 00'	2200216	Outdoor & Indoor		
42	Vincom 5	Tầng 5, 191 Bà Triệu	Hai Bà Trưng	9h 00'	21h 00'	2200216			
43	Big C	222 Trần Duy Hưng	Cầu Giấy	7h 00'	23h 00'	7830845			
44	Starbow (Kim Lien)	2B Phạm Ngọc Thạch, Trung Tự	Đống Đa	7h 00'	23h 00'	5745391	Outdoor		
45	Metro C&C Hanoi	Metro Thăng Long, Co Nhue	Từ Liêm	7h 00'	21h 00'	9024008		Indoor	
46	Megastar	Vincom City Tower - 191 Bà Triệu	Hai Bà Trưng	8h 00'	23h 00'	2200216	Indoor		
47	Tung Shing Tower	2 Ngô Quyền	Hoàn Kiếm	6h 30'	23h 00'	9351541		Indoor	



48	Hanoi Tower	49 Hai Bà Trưng	Ba Đình	6h 30'	23h 00'	9364677	Outdoor & Indoor		
49	Trang Tien 3	24 Hai Bà Trưng	Hoàn Kiếm	6h 30'	23h 00'	9367018	Indoor		
50	Opera House Garden		Hoàn Kiếm				Outdoor		
51	Pacific place	83B Lý Thường Kiệt	Hoàn Kiếm				Outdoor & Indoor		
52	Syrena Plaza	51B Xuan Dieu	Tây Hồ				Outdoor & Indoor		
53	Asia Tower	6, Pho Nha Tho					Indoor		
54	The Manor Hanoi	Me Tri Ward - Ha Noi		7h 00'	23h 00'		Outdoor & Indoor		
55	Somerset	106, Hoang Quoc Viet	Ba Đình	7h 00'	23h 00'		Indoor		
<b>TOTAL</b>									
<b>Hai Phong city</b>									
56	TD Plaza	Lô 1/20 Lê Hồng Phong, Ngã Năm Sân Bay Cát Bi	Hồng Bàng	9h 00'	23h 00'	0313 852539	Indoor		
57	Big C Hai Phong	Lô 1/20A Lê Hồng Phong, Ngã Năm Sân Bay Cát Bi	Hồng Bàng	9h 00'	23h 00'	0313 852759	Outdoor & Indoor		
58	Metro C&C Hai Phong	Đường 2A- Sở Dầu	Hồng Bàng	9h 00'	21h 00'	0313 528148		Indoor	
59	Megastar Hai Phong	Đường 2A- Sở Dầu	Hồng Bàng	9h 00'	21h 00'			Indoor	
	Total								

## APPENDIX B

### List of key informants

No.	Name	Age	Occupation	Date	Place
1	Nguyen Trung Kim	25	MBA Student	11/7/2008	Café Hi-END
2	Nguyen Thanh Tam	25	Engineer	11/7/2008	Café Hi-END
3	Pham Phuc Huu	25	Engineer	12/7/2008	Ca Phe Them Xua
4	Nguyen Quoc Toan	32	Researcher	16/7/2008	Highlands Coffee Pham Ngu Lao
5	Nguyen Minh Ngoc	35	Gov. officer	16/7/2008	Café Rita
6	Pham Tan Thong	26	PR Executive	16/7/2008	Café Center 1
7	Nguyen Thi Xuan Thao	25	Secretary	16/7/2008	Café Center 1
8	Huynh Ngoc Phi Giao	25	Consultant	16/7/2008	Café Center 1
9	Nguyen Thi Bich Tram	27	Secretary	16/7/2008	Café Center 1
10	Prof. Tran Ngoc Them		Researcher	17/7/2008	University of Social Sciences and Humanities
11	Chi Tran	39	Freelance	18/7/2008	Highlands Coffee Saigon Trade Center
12	Pham Anh Tuan		Business owner	18/7/2008	Highlands Coffee Saigon Trade Center
13	Le Tan Thanh	25	Artist	26/7/2008	Công Viên 30 Tháng 4
14	Phan Thi Phuong Nhung	25	Communication officer	23/7/2008	Highlands Coffee Saigon Center
15	Prof. Nguyen Van Hue		Dean of Faculty	31/7/2008	University of Social Sciences and Humanities
16	Prof. Nguyen Van Lich		Retired	31/7/2008	University of Social Sciences and Humanities
17	Ha Minh Man	31	Engineer	23/7/2008	Highlands Coffee Saigon Center
18	Bui Le Bih Tram	26	Marketing Executive	23/7/2008	Highlands Coffee Saigon Center

## APPENDIX C

### List of selected coffeehouses

No.	Coffeehouse Name	Location	Type	Space	Unique Features
1	Café Hi-END	217 Nguyen Van Thu- Q.1	Regular	Indoor	Decorated as a recording studio with Once upon a time theme
2	Cat Dang Coffee and Karaoke	905 Tran Hung Dao, P.1, Q.5	Luxury	Indoor Outdoor	Karaoke, Artificial waterfall, and provide a cable TV
3	Ca Phe Them Xua	371 D1 Nguyen Canh Chan, Nguyen Cu Trinh Ward, Q.1	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Decorated as an old house with gardens
4	Café Rita	211 Nguyen Van Cu, Q.5	Luxury	Indoor Outdoor	Decorated with modern and colorful furnitures and provide a cable TV
5	Bobby Brewer Coffee	45 Bui Viet St., Pham Ngu Lao Ward, Q.1	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Provide a movie theater
6	Café Center 1	115 Nguyen Hue St., Ben Nghe Ward, Q.1	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Decorated with colorful light and the outdoor section is more popular
7	Ca Phe Vuon Xuan	98 Huynh Van Banh F12 Q. Phu Nhuat	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Decorated as a brick house
8	Trung Nguyen Coffee	Opposite to Diamond Plaza 1, Q.1	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Decorated with a Coffee Cup entrance
9	Window's Coffee Park View	12 Alexandre De Rhodes, Q.1	Luxury	Indoor Outdoor	Decorated with luxury furniture, cable TV, and play Techno music
10	Star Coffee	5 Pham Ngoc Thach, Q.3	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Most customers are young high school students
11	Jazz Café	97 Bis Suong Nguyet Anh St., Ben Thanh	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Play Jazz music. Decorated in black and

		Q.1			white theme
12	AQ Café	387 Dien Bien Phu, Q. 3	Regular	Indoor	Live piano. Decorated as home style
13	Cà Phê “Bệt	Cà Phê Công Viên 30 Tháng 4	Budget	Outdoor	The venue is in a park. Customers sit on the ground
14	Da Café	Alexandre De Rhodes, Ben Thanh Ward, Q.1	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Furnished with illuminating furniture
15	Zenta Café	41 Mac Dinh Chi, Da Kao Ward, Q.1	Luxury	Indoor Outdoor	Modern decoration and cable TV
16	Le’s Café and Travel	47 Le Quy Don, Ward 7, Q.3	Regular	Indoor Outdoor	Old house style café with live music by Filipino singer

ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

## BIOGRAPHY

Bidthsiri Tanetsakulwatana was born in Chiang Rai, Thailand, in 1984. She graduated from Thammasat University, Bangkok with a Bachelor degree of Arts (2<sup>nd</sup> honor) in Southeast Asian Studies in 2007 and enrolled in the Master Degree in Southeast Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand in the same year. She was awarded the Chula Petcharat scholarship under the royal patronage during her study there.



ศูนย์วิทยทรัพยากร  
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย