

WHEN TEA LEAF MEETS COFFEE BEAN: STARBUCKS®
IN CHINA AND THE CIRCUIT OF CULTURE

By

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A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN MASS COMMUNICATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2012

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To my mom and dad, for their unwavering encouragement and support

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

At the end of any project like this, the list of names that have assisted or guided or opined (helpfully) is frequently longer than the paper itself! That said, there are a few individuals who deserve special thanks, as without their input I've little doubt that this paper would never have come together at all.

I would like to thank my chair, Dr. Lisa Duke Cornell, my committee members, Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda and Dr. Michael Leslie, and Professor John Kaplan, for their time and effort in this thesis. Dr. Lisa Duke Cornell's interest and knowledge in qualitative research encouraged my own interest in the area. I am also grateful for her amazing guidance and patience, without which none of this would have been possible. I would like to thank Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda for his thought-provoking feedback and assistance, which helped me navigate the treacherous waters of theory tremendously. I would also like to thank Dr. Michael Leslie, who provided me valuable mentor and support during my master's study. I would further like to thank Professor John Kaplan for his incredible kindness and flexibility in assisting with my defense and in guiding my final revisions.

I would also like to thank Jody Hedge for her patience and kindness in offering assistance and answering my countless questions during my master's work. I thank Jonathan Borden, who has always been patient and available and has offered help in the writing and revision process. I would further like to thank all of my friends, home and abroad, for their encouragement and support during the process. Last but not least, I am grateful to my parents, who have been so patient and supportive of my graduate study.

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Mass Communication

WHEN TEA LEAF MEETS COFFEE BEAN: STARBUCKS® IN CHINA AND THE
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May 2012

Chair: Lisa Duke Cornell
Major: Mass Communication

Under the circuit of culture framework, this qualitative study provides an understanding of the formation of coffee culture in China from Chinese consumers' perspective. The circuit of culture, including production, consumption, identity, representation and regulation, is a circuit of five interrelated moments that may influence the formation of culture generated by transnational corporations in a foreign country. Specifically, the study examined how Chinese coffee consumers perceive coffee culture as opposed to tea culture, as well as what Starbucks® brandscape is according to Chinese consumers and how it could fit into the circuit of culture framework.

In total, four focus groups and 13 in-depth interviews, including 33 participants, were conducted. Altogether seven themes emerged from the data. Results show that Chinese consumers generally associate coffee culture, Starbucks® coffee culture in particular, with cosmopolitan, socialization, novelty, fast-paced lifestyle, a sign to dived age, class and profession, as well as the petty bourgeois lifestyle. The themes fit well into the circuit of culture framework, which shows that the cultural nuances involving how consumers perceive their own identity as a Starbucks® consumer and how they

interpret the representation of the brand have a great impact on how they would consume the product and the culture formation process. Implications and limitations of this study, as well as recommendations for future research are discussed.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The past decade has seen a significant growth of popularity of coffee in China. Both the production and the consumption of coffee in China have been increasing. Despite high taxes, domestic and international companies are planning major expansions to keep up with the 15 to 20 percent of China coffee consumption's annual growth (Zheng & Pardomuan, 2011).

In the case of Starbucks[®], the numbers are astonishing. Since it opened its first coffee shop in Beijing in 1999, nearly 500 Starbucks[®] coffee shops sprung up in the street corners on the China mainland over the past decade. China is seen as the next key market after the United States as the company plans to open “thousands of stores over time” (Sanchata, 2010; Andreiczak, 2011). Starting from a single store in Seattle in 1971, the coffee chain has expanded exponentially in the past decades. As of July 3, 2011, the corporation is operating in 56 countries worldwide and has opened 17,018 stores (“Starbucks[®] Company Profile,” 2011). Among many of the early coffee brands entering the Chinese market, Starbucks[®] opened its first store in Taiwan in 1998, then in Mainland China in Beijing in 1999 and has since then set up nearly 500 stores in China. China is also seen as “the most important, and potentially the largest, market for Starbucks[®] outside North America” (“Starbucks[®] China Backgrounder,” 2011).

Starbucks[®], the ubiquitous coffee chain store worldwide, can be an excellent case in point in terms of the creation of their own brand concept as well as the local coffee culture. Emphasizing the notion of individual experience and a “third space” for its consumers, Starbucks[®] is selling not only coffee, but also a corporate culture (Moore,

2006). Starbucks® coffee culture has influenced more than just consumers in the U.S., it also appeals to Chinese consumers who were used to only tea drinking. However, it would be hard to predict how Chinese consumers interpret the cultural images Starbucks® creates. As the company states in its Chinese website, Starbucks® “inspirational, progressive, professional and intellectual image has been widely accepted by a variety of the Chinese customers including, but not limited to, a rising upper-middle class ‘modern Chinese’, white collar workers, college students, etc.” (“Starbucks® China Backgrounder,” 2011).

It is the first time that coffee culture in China has ever gained “an upper hand” in comparison to the traditional Chinese tea culture. Although the coffee plantation has a relatively long history in China (in Southeast Yunnan Province), it has never had the same status as tea. Jesuits first introduced coffee into China in the late 1800s. However, this significant move did not take coffee drinking into the mainstream in this ancient country. It was not until the 1980s than the government started mass production of coffee in the same area (Arnold, 2008). Still, Chinese coffee, particularly the one kind in the Yunnan Province, did not open the Chinese market for coffee consumption, nor did it stir the people’s love for coffee. Coffee, then, was just another ordinary drink, without any cultural substance.

A new Chinese coffee culture has been created with the infiltration of Western culture. Chinese consumers started to differentiate between instant coffee of Nestle® and Maxwell and from Starbucks®. Earlier images associated with coffee were created through advertisements, featuring hard-working professionals taking their coffee break on the job. Starbucks® entrance into the China market has given the coffee image

another connotation, placing them into various media products as well as the stylish coffee shops in the most modern and busy sections of the major cities. The commercialization of media content has made the coffee culture even more widespread in China. The outcome is therefore a new cultural phenomenon, having its special place in contemporary Chinese society. It is, as a result, also noteworthy to examine how Chinese perceive the new coffee culture and their own identities as coffee consumers, how they balance their new identities with the old ones and what influences their perception.

Coffee Culture and the Circuit of Culture. The study of culture, media and identity has been the focus of the Birmingham School. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies was established at the Birmingham University in the U.K. in the 1960s. Although the school ceased to exist now, it had been a very influential institute in spreading British Cultural Studies worldwide (Barker, 2000). Led by cultural theorist Stuart Hall, the school incorporates concepts from Marxism, post-structuralism as well as critical-cultural and postmodern perspectives to study the reciprocity of cultural contexts, media, mass-produced products and consumers. It emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach, including both sociology and ethnography. Dynamic and flexible, cultural theories such as encoding/decoding and circuit of culture developed by Birmingham School scholars were best suited for analyzing cultural phenomena in a complex and global context. The circuit of culture theory attempts to explain the phenomena from the aspects of production, consumption, identity, representation and regulation. It will be further analyzed in the literature review chapter.

Therefore, this paper employed the circuit of culture theory in analyzing the

formation of coffee culture in contemporary China in the case of Starbucks® and its reciprocal relationships with mass media, representation, identity as well as the larger social and global contexts. Focus groups and in-depth interviews were used as primary method exploring Chinese consumers' perception of coffee culture, in particular, Starbucks® coffee culture.

The research is significant because, first of all, it is the first study to analyze coffee culture as a cultural phenomenon and relate it with identity and cultural studies in a developing country. The dynamics of mass media and globalization have altered the way new cultures and identities are formed. The case of Starbucks® is also significant since Starbucks® is now trying to make an even bigger impact among Chinese consumers (Andreiczak, 2011). With the interpretation of this new phenomenon, the study also contributes to the development of theory as well as various related sensitizing concepts. More specifically, this study seeks to provide insights into the application of and further extension of the circuit of culture. It also seeks to offer evidence to support a revision of concepts such as consumer brandscape in a new environment.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The Circuit of Culture

Studies conducted under the discipline of Birmingham School traditionally focuses on the interplay among concepts of culture, ideology and identity. Stuart Hall argued that cultures were practices with interpretive meanings that penetrate all societies. He also contended that audiences of ideologically coded mass media content have the ability to decode cultural messages and interpret the embedded meanings. The audience identities are therefore shaped by the mass media, or the hegemonic forces (Hall, 1997). However, the critiques maintained that his analysis of culture over-concentrated on ideology, which ignores other decisive factors such as mass media and corporate ownership (Stevenson, 1995). Following the Birmingham School tradition, du Gay and Pryke (2000) proposed the concept of cultural economy, which stated that culture was holding an increasingly important position in economic or business lives in contemporary society. Incorporating concepts in the economic aspect such as regulation, consumption and production into the circuit as well as other cultural intermediaries, the concept of cultural representations and identities can be better analyzed (du Gay, 1997). Emerging initially as a theory for cultural studies, the circuit of culture has also been employed in numerous other fields in communication studies. The theory is especially useful in complex global contexts where different cultures interact. Curtin and Gaither (2005) have suggested a public relations theory based on the circuit of culture in order for international public relation practices to better reflect the global and cultural dynamics.

The five essential moments in producing culture, identity, representation, regulation, consumption and production, intermingled with each other continually in a complex circuit (du Gay et al., 1997). Regulation denotes the institutional controls under which cultural practices and productions take place. It can affect cultural formation in different levels, varying from organizational to local and to global. Influenced by economic factors and power structures, regulation is also constantly changing, subjecting to different circumstances (Thompson, 1997). On a local level, it not only encompasses controls over laws, policies and rules, but also defines the cultural norms, what is right or wrong, ethical or unethical within a cultural context (Curtin & Gaither, 2005). A multinational corporation's entry into a local market and its activities in the local market is largely restricted to the local regulations. By distinguishing regulation as a single moment in the circuit, the model recognized the local interventions in both the cultural production and the consumption process.

Representation, as defined in the model of circuit of culture, is the "signifying practices and symbolic systems through which meanings are produced" (Woodward, 1997, pp. 14). It is the meanings generated in or given in the process of cultural and economic practices. Its "discursive formation" (Curtin & Gaither, 2005, p. 99) is either purposefully constructed within a social context or unconsciously formed in minds of the social members. The constantly changing cultural codes and social interactions in a society influences how a representation is interpreted. The representation of, or the symbolic meanings attached to a cultural practice such as coffee consumption, affects how people consume as well as how their identity is formed.

Production and consumption are two unrepeatably moments in the circuit of

culture. Production examines the process in which representations are formed and by which social identities are constructed. In contrast to production, consumption encompasses the practice of consuming, or deconstructing the created meanings. It constitutes, as Curtin & Gaither (2005) argued, a role as important as production when it comes to cultural meaning construction. Consumption, to a certain extent, reflects how the consumers negotiate the symbolic meanings of the representation as well as their cultural identities.

Identity, the final moment in the circuit and the most complicated and dynamic one, “comprises a multitude of socially constructed meanings and practices, such as class, ethnicity, nationality, and gender” (Curtin & Gaither, 2005, p. 102). The moments are fragmented and are in a state of constant flux. Therefore, identity must be analyzed with the consideration of all the other four moments. It is through the meanings produced by representational systems that people can make sense of their own experiences and their identities.

Stuart Hall defined two positions from which to examine the term cultural identity. The first position interprets cultural identity as shared by people from one collective culture, one history or ancestry. While the first position recognizes cultural identity as a singular entity over time and emphasizes the similarities among the cultural group, the second position also observes the differences and views cultural identity as entities that are constantly changing under the interplay of time, culture and power. Questions of identity have become more prevalent with the phenomenon of globalization. Scholars described globalization as a process of “increasing ‘transnationalization of economic and cultural life’” (Hall, 1997, pp. 16). This is especially true when production and

consumption patterns in a certain society changes, thereby producing new shared identities among a cultural group. While globalization tends to promote cultural homogeneity, it may also lead to resistance from local cultures (Hall, 1997).

Social identities for consumers are about both personal and social and about both similarities and differences. Identities are subjective concepts individuals have of themselves and will constantly compare it with others within the same society. Among the multiple identities a person hold, according to Dittmar (2008), material and bodily identities are the two important domains. Consumers are constantly pursuing the desired lifestyle and the perfect body portrayed in the advertisements and altering their own identities accordingly.

In the following literature review, a detailed examination of two of the five moments in the circuit of culture, the production of culture and the consumption of culture, is provided.

The Production of Culture

The production of culture is one of the five interrelated moments in the theory of circuit of culture. In *Production of Culture/ Cultures of Production*, du Gay (1997) approached the production of culture through two perspectives: the macro, “which stresses social and organizational structures and economic relationships” and micro, “which focuses on everyday human agency and the making of cultural meanings” (p. 69).

It is usually through large global corporations, according to du Gay (1997), that consumer culture is produced. For example, the process of this mass production of American Walt Disney culture is systematically structured and distributed around the world, from mass media in form of motion pictures and television programs to an entire

industry including theme parks and other consumer products. This global strategy has successfully brought American popular culture everywhere, in spite of differences in cultural tastes.

However, despite the integrated production line, culture is formed at least in the interaction among its subjects, the people who consume culture. People actively construct their cultural world by creating and interpreting their daily experiences. The production of culture is, therefore, based on these consumption activities. du Gay (1997) also argued that the meanings were understood by both production and practices and that the particular cultural phenomena should be placed in the broader and more sophisticated social contexts.

The Consumption of Culture

The consumption of culture is another moment in the circuit of culture model that examines and interprets the culture through the consumers' perspectives. It encompasses a "family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings" (Arnold & Thompson, 2005, pp. 868). Examining the role of symbolic, experiential, and socio-cultural dimensions of consumption has been the focus of many studies in the social science discipline. Similarly, many scholars would study the connections between specific consumer cultures and the larger socio-economic structures (Dittmar, 2008b). With focus groups and in-depth interviews as primary means to examine consumer culture, the symbolic, experiential and socio-cultural meanings of a certain product can be understood and analyzed. In some industries, marketplace ideologies convey messages to the consumers, telling them how to live their lives and to construct their identities through symbols and representations in consumer culture (Dittmar, 2008b). In

order to live up to the ideal image or perfect lifestyle portrait by the consumer culture, consumers will aspire to the kind of cultivated lifestyle, influencing their own identity and lifestyle. Furthermore, the globalization process, accelerated by mass media, makes this element more prominent since the imported consumer culture not only enters, but also interacts with the local culture. Therefore an analysis from the consumer's perspective is deemed crucial in understanding the dynamics of the formation of a culture.

The circuit of culture provides a useful framework to examine the local cultural formation as a result of globalization and multinational corporations. In a single circuit, it accurately depicts the ongoing movements of the five discrete but interactive moments. Taking in perspectives from both the production and the consumption sides, the framework allows a panoramic view of the moments that affect the interactions between the local and the global. Therefore, it provides a well-rounded theoretical framework for analyzing how Chinese coffee culture is formed in a global context and how Chinese perceive the cultural practice. The coffee culture in China also provides an insightful case since the culture is produced within an existing traditional tea culture. Additionally, by applying the circuit of culture to analyze the coffee culture in China, this study also contributes to the circuit of culture model by discussing related concepts such as brandscape, glocalization and cultural imperialism in a global setting.

Global Media and the Circuit of Culture

Mass media, particularly in the form of advertising and marketing, has played a key role in connecting production and consumption, or the circulation of culture. Indeed, advertisements do more than just inform consumers of production information. Rather, they also convey cultural messages that teach consumers to define themselves with

particular cultural roles and values (Frith, 1997). The consumption decisions are made mostly based on these cultural values and meanings attached to the products. The cultural representations in advertisements has a direct impact on the creation of cultural meanings and economy:

Consumer culture through advertising, the media and techniques of display of goods, is able to destabilize the original notion of use or meaning of goods and attach to them new images and signs which can summon up a whole range of associated feelings and desires...Hence within consumer culture the tendency is to push culture towards the centre of social life (McFall, 2002, p. 151).

Media regulation, be it in the country importing culture or in the country exporting culture, has been playing an indispensable role in the circuit of culture. Global media (television) networks and programs nowadays constitute an important portion of China's media. A number of original Western programs were made directly available to Chinese audiences, others purchased by local Chinese media and broadcasted nationwide (Chan, 2005; Su, 2011). Other sources of global media such as illegal but prevalent pirated media products also made it easy for Chinese consumers to access global media content (Miyazaki, Rodriguez & Langenderfer, 2009). The exposure to Western media content, according to Paek and Pan (2004), has resulted in the formation of new consumerist values among Chinese urban audiences. The consumerist values based on cultural distinction and social status, innovative and quality consumption, are proportional to the amount of exposure to Western media content. The mass media, therefore, are a channel for the dissemination of global consumer culture.

Specifically, a number of studies have recognized the mass media or the television industry as the first venue to study the production of culture. Lotz's (2007a, 2007b) studies suggested the important roles that upfront presentations played in

shaping the promotional cultures in the production of culture circuit. She argued for an organizational or industrial perspective to view the process of cultural production in order to better balance between cultural practices and the inherent power. Adding to her conclusion of emphasizing the deciding power in hands of the media controllers, other studies have extended the cultural formation into a global context (Havens, 2002, 2003). From a production perspective, Peterson and Anand (2004) also acknowledged the systems that created and shaped the cultural components. They maintained that the authenticities in real life are in fact intentionally fabricated by the dominated. The traditions, or the collective memories that the people of a nation shared are merely cultivated symbolic cultures.

Brandscape and Glocalization

The coffee culture phenomena can be better fit into a larger global picture where global iconic brands extend their services to oversea markets. Inevitably, the formation of the unique coffee culture was accompanied by the entrance of coffee brands in the Asian and Chinese markets. From the corporate perspective, brand concept management is an important part of a brand's marketing strategy. Gardner and Levy (1955) maintained that it is essential for a brand to select a meaning and build up its reputation before entering the target market. A normative framework of strategic brand concept management was proposed by Park, Jaworski and MacInnis (1986) to manage "the sequential process of selecting, introducing, elaborating and fortifying a brand concept" (p. 135). The act of selecting a concept and maintaining it throughout the life of a product is a conscious and intentional process. To introduce a brand with symbolic concepts into a new market requires an emphasis on "the brand's relationship to group membership or self-identification" (p. 140). It is essential to cultivate a subculture with

distinct features, interests and beliefs within the larger culture. By giving the product a premium price, limiting its distributing outlets and devising a special language that are known only to the subgroup or targeted consumers, a brand creates a unique subculture associated with the brand concept (Park, Jaworski & MacInnis, 1986). Other tactics also include creating a concept associated with targeted consumers' motives such as the tendency to mirror those with higher social status and pursuing higher social aspirations (Gardner & Levy, 1955).

Constructing a brand reputation may produce favorable results that go beyond just a given symbol and personality to the brand. It may also trigger consumers' thoughts and feelings associated with the brand and what consumers think is closely related to the brand (Gardner & Levy, 1955). A brandscape is defined as "consumers' active constructions of personal meanings and lifestyle orientations from the symbolic resources provided by an array of brands" (Thompson and Arsel, 2004, p. 632). The hegemonic brandscape, usually consisting of "a cultural system of servicescape that are linked together and structured by discursive, symbolic, and competitive relationships to a dominant (market-driving) experiential brand", also "shapes consumer lifestyles and identities by functioning as a cultural model that consumers act, think, and feel through" (Thompson and Arsel, 2004, p. 632). The brandscape and the creation of brand reputation would have significant impacts on the local coffee culture. As an important step in the process of cultural branding, cultural knowledge, including identifying cultural contradictions and developing corresponding projections and interpretations is essential to the creation of cultural associations of a certain brand (Holt, 2003). Vice versa, the

international coffee brands' brandscape and glocalization are instrumental to the formation of a new coffee culture in foreign lands.

Thompson and Arsel (2004) studied Starbucks[®], brandscape and how local consumers responded to their experiences of globalization. Employing phenomenological interviewing as well as participant observation methods in local Starbucks[®] stores in metropolitan cities and small towns respectively, data of the participants' experiences and perceptions of the Starbucks[®] stores were collected. The "third-place" experiences that Starbucks[®] created reshaped the ideal coffee shop image in the consumers' minds (Thompson & Arsel, 2004). Starbucks[®], existence as a product of gloclaization also stirred emotions of anticorporate consumers, to whom the coffee shop's omnipresence were "aesthetic, social, and political alternatives to corporate hegemony" and "provides a symbolic anodyne for the feelings of cynicism, alienation, disenchantment, and disempowerment" (p. 639).

Servicescape, a related concept, is broadly defined as the physical environment built for the purpose of creating certain consumer behavior (Venkatraman & Nelson, 2008). The design of a servicescape involves three factors, namely, the aesthetic (e.g., color and style), functional (e.g., layout and furnishings) and social factors (e.g. interactions among consumers and service providers). Consumers, as an important component of this constructed service space, are viewed as active contributors to the servicescape of a brand (Aubert-Gamet, 1997). When consumers construct the servicescape, relating their own life stories with relevant cultural rituals and representations in a negotiating way (Venkatraman & Nelson, 2008), they are converting it into a consumptionscape. The concept of servicescape is especially

relevant to Starbucks since creating a “third space” experience for its consumers is one of their core strategies. Following previous studies on brandscape and servicescape, Venkatraman and Nelson (2008) elaborated the concept of servicescape in a more detailed and contextual fashion, situating it in contemporary China. They conducted a study using photo-elicitation and in-depth interviews with young urban Chinese Starbucks® consumers. While the researchers found that places could shape local servicescape, consumers were active interpreters and would consciously fit the meanings of global brands into their own cultural context. Results from the interviews suggested that the Starbucks® experience to them had multiple meanings: “the paradox of Starbucks® parallels the tension between the excitement of constructing new identities as modern, Western-looking professionals and the traditional pull of maintaining their role as dutiful, Chinese family members” (p. 1022). Indeed, there is an inextricable link between brandscapes and consumer identities. Under different contextual situations and cultural environments, consumers may associate certain brands with specific cultural meanings and use them as means to assert their own identities (Dong & Tian, 2009). Apart from the perfect integrations of Starbucks®, globalization strategies, there are also disharmonious conflicts. Based on the circuit of culture model, Han and Zhang (2009) analyzed an Internet-based public relations campaign by netizens in China against Starbucks®. The complexities concerning Starbucks’ global representation and Chinese netizens’ national identities were interpreted from both the cultural perspective and the public relations perspective. Differing from what Thompson and Arsel (2004) called the hegemonic brandscape in local culture and their analysis of the two anti-Starbucks® discourse, Han and Zhang

(2009)'s study provided insights into an exception of the hegemonic corporate culture. In order to survive in a culture quite distinct from its own, global brands needs to add local elements and blend them in. The culture that is hence created can be quite different than the original one.

A Re-interpretation of Cultural Imperialism

Despite evidence of global media and advertisements' great influences on local cultural formation, the literature suggests a re-interpretation of cultural imperialism (Straubhaar, 1991; Chadha & Kavoori, 2000; Jin, 2007; Su, 2011). Widely accepted during the 1960s and 1970s, the concept of cultural imperialism has been criticized by numerous scholars since the 1980s. They argued that the global media effects might not necessarily result in a Western cultural dominance or imperialism because of governmental regulations, audience choice and interpretations. While some ideology changes may occur with the exposure to a global culture, the local people are merely taking what they need from the media content and are making sense of their own national identities (Su, 2011).

Kraidy (2005) proposed the concept of "hybridity" to understand the complexities of cultural exchange and production within the international communication field. Instead of completely discarding cultural imperialism, Kraidy (2005) still recognized it as "a critical paradigm whose proponents have exposed power imbalances between the industrialized West and the developing world" and considered "hybridities as practices of hegemony" (p. 335). However, he also suggested that the concept of hybridity addresses and explains issues such as context and representation within the field of intercultural and international communication.

Numerous studies have been conducted in this respect arguing for a re-interpretation, examining the culture and identity formations as a result of the global media flow. In a series of studies, Biltereyst (1991, 1992, 1995) suggested that the characteristics of American TV's major cultural impact should be revisited in international reception studies. Against the backdrop of debates on the issue, he argued not only for a consideration of the complexities and differences of the studies, but also for a multi-method approach. Furthermore, Sengupta & Frith (1997) looked into the cultures generated by the multinational corporation's advertisements/commercials in India. In light of the Western cultural imperialism, they found that people the degree of importance people attached to both Indian and Western cultural values varied. In other words, the cultural complexities in India can no longer be explained by a single term cultural imperialism. In a similar study, Jory (1999) examined the Thai identities formed on the basis of Thai-themed advertisements. He argued that the new orders and systems brought forth by globalization have potentially altered the way Thai identities are formed, from an emphasis on national security to a commercial strategy through the advertising industry. However, he recognized that other factors other than Westernization must have also contributed to the identity formation.

On Coffee Culture

Coffee, as with many other global products, applies to the theory. The popularity of coffee is not only a unique phenomenon in China, but also worldwide. Even with the economic recession, the amount of coffee consumed worldwide has only soared rather than dropped in the past years (Tucker, 2011). Tucker (2011) attributed its global popularity to the social and cultural dimensions coffee encompasses: The symbolic meanings that allow people to express their identities, social status and cultural values.

It can be easily incorporated into local contexts. Tucker (2011) defined coffee culture as “the ideas, practices, technology, meanings, and associations regarding coffee” (p. 7).

The symbolic meaning of food, coffee included, is multifold. Besides its function in socializing, gathering people together to form a sense of community, it also helps obtaining and balancing power relationships among social groups (Fedorak, 2009). The meaning of food never stays the same. It changes consistently over time. The success in many of the world’s coffee markets (especially in those tea-drinking Asian countries), owes largely to how the coffee product is associated with various local social values and meanings shared by people with different social status (Tucker, 2011). As Bourdieu (1984) pointed out decades ago, class differences and the taste of the privileged were influential in consumers’ decision-making process. Tucker (2011) compared four major coffee production-consumption countries’ (German, Britain, Brazil and Colombia) national identification with coffee. The associations and symbolic meanings of coffee and coffee culture vary greatly from country to country. “The formation of national identity is an ongoing process, which typically entails a variety of components (e.g., meaningful symbols, ideas, values, attributes) that can encompass multiple meanings and interpretation, and nonetheless create a sense of shared experience” (Tucker, 2011, p. 58).

Coffee Culture in the U.S.

Coffee has been associated with a number of nouns as heritages of historical moments. It is not only a representation of power, conquest, debate, fight and struggle, but also connotes alliance and supports from families and friends. Even though the practice of coffee drinking has widely accepted global understandings, it also takes on specific cultural connotations when examined with local experiences. (Tucker, 2011).

For the most part of the world, tea is still the main beverage; the U.S. is the world's largest coffee consumer, taking up 20 percent of the total coffee consumption worldwide. Research shows that 82 percent of the U.S. adults consume coffee and the average consumption rate is about three cups per day (Tucker, 2011). The unique coffee culture in the U.S. can be traced back to the 17th century and was gradually incorporated as part of American life. Since its introduction to the North American land, coffee has transformed from an elite beverage representative of national identity during the Revolutionary War to an everyday household necessity nowadays. Coffee is, as Tucker (2011) pointed out, omnipresent in Americans' daily life. It is the most commonly prepared beverage at home in the morning, easily available in offices and an indispensable part in social settings such as public gatherings, church events, meetings, businesses, etc.

Coffee and Media

The expansion of coffee culture worldwide is the result of a number of factors. The globalization of consumer culture, mass media, as well as introduction of chained coffee brands all contributed to its expansion and popularity. Prevalent coffee images in media also constitute an influential factor in its expansion. The mass media, be it television shows, movies, news or advertisements, have played an essential role in spreading coffee culture and have contributed to its popularity worldwide (Fry, 2000; Zhang, 2011). Coffee companies worldwide have been using mass media for the "maintenance of class-based habitus" (Fry, 2000, p. 177). Through a limited number of Starbucks® television commercials and print advertisements, the company has been

building on promotion of its brand concept using product placements and store decorations (Zhang, 2011).

However, there has been a disconnection between media representations and what coffee really is. According to Tucker (2011), the media representation of coffee has always been in contrast with the reality of coffee origins. For media representations in Western countries, the indigenous and exotic sceneries of foreign coffee plantations shown in commercials and advertisements are in sharp contrast with that of the reality (Fry, 2000; Tucker, 2011). In a research to develop sensory attribute pools of brewed coffee in South Korea, Seo, Lee and Hwang (2009) chose mass media, advertisements and previous literatures as one of their three sources for the collection of descriptors for coffee sensory attributes. A wide range of descriptors associate with brewed coffee unveiled after the experiment, showing that a number of factors might influence consumers' perceived attributes, including culture, language and context.

Coffee Culture in Asia

In Asian countries where tea culture has been dominated for thousands of years, coffee culture is still a relatively new phenomenon. Both tea drinking and coffee drinking are cultural practices associated with deep cultural connotations. Besides intangible cultural traditions such as tea ceremonies, the tradition of tea drinking practices has shaped Asian cultures tremendously. The importance of tea in Chinese people's life is beyond doubt since tea is viewed as one of the seven daily necessities (Du, 2010). The cultural meanings imbedded in tea drinking are manifold. Not only does it signify the "harmonious unity of human beings with nature", it also represents "[non-] aggressive, pleasant [and] low-key" personality ("Tea Culture," 2011). Tea was once the beverage for the rich and privileged yet has now become the most common beverage for the

ordinary. As compared with tea culture, coffee culture draws a completely different picture. While Chinese tea culture expressed “togetherness” and a sense of “politeness” (Kramer, 1994, pp.59), coffee culture, Starbucks® in particular, is associated with individual consumer experiences (Moore, 2006).

Even though the topic has been extensively covered in news reports, little scholarly literature has addressed this cultural phenomenon. Studies on coffee culture in Asian countries mostly focus on changing patterns of beverage consumption in countries such as Japan and South Korea. Earlier studies on McDonald’s influence on Japanese culture identified a changing diet as well as social patterns that contribute to a unique Japanese culture as part of the global process (Traphagan & Brown, 2002; Ritzer, 2008). The combination of local and global food was considered to be a new Japanese culture rather than the clash between the east and the west. It therefore produces a new coffee culture, unique to Japan with a feature emphasizing middle class and white collar culture in metropolis.

Weinberg and Bealer (2001) examined the constantly changing caffeine cultures in the world and gave a detailed account to Japan’s traditional tea culture as well as the newly introduced coffee culture. As a representation of Asian culture, Japan’s tea culture is featured by the art of the tea ceremony, which is deeply rooted in history and manifested in Japanese’s manners, arts and architectures. However, the contemporary caffeine culture, which comprises the “twin affection” (Weinberg & Bealer, 2001, p. 133) for both tea and coffee, started with the commerce of coffee to Japan. Specifically, Japan is Starbucks®’ first overseas target market and Starbucks® coffee shops introduced a new concept of lifestyle, which, according to the authors, is truly what

coffeehouse culture is like elsewhere in the world. In addition, the unique Japanese coffee culture was considered an enjoyment of precious personal space in a crowded and busy city (Weinberg & Bealer, 2001).

Studies on coffee culture in South Korea suggested similar results. Bak (2005) studied the coffee drinking behaviors among Koreans and concluded that meanings associated with coffee reflect Koreans' self-identification with both their national and global identities. Coffee drinking was considered a consumption of Western (or American) culture and lifestyle, in opposition to the indigenous Korean lifestyle. Starbucks® in Korea was also analyzed as a social phenomenon, one that contradicts to the traditional Korean culture. Highly individualized products, together with the relaxing atmosphere, associate Starbucks® with youth culture, global culture and new social relationships in the contemporary Korean society.

Yi-Ping and Cheng-Heng (2010) examined the history of coffee culture in Taiwan and their results resonate with previous findings in South Korea and Japan. Built upon an ameliorated modernity and post-colonialism theoretical background (from the non-Western perspective), they argued that coffee in post-colonial Taiwan is more than just a foreign beverage but also "a cultural code and a material emblem of modernity" (p. 446) as well as a connection between the global and the local. Collins (2008) stated that consuming coffee was an important sign for lifestyle changing, which manifests the consumers' dilemma between a global and a local identity. Another study on Starbucks®-consumer relationship in Taiwan revealed that most Taiwan consumers are satisfied with the unique lifestyle provided by Starbucks®, even without influences from advertisements (Lin & Roberts, 2007). This satisfaction, in part, was due to "feelings of

sophistication” (p. 87), or in other words, an elevation of one’s social status. From a cultural perspective, Su, Chiou and Chang (2006) examined the coffee culture in Taiwan in the case of Starbucks®. Coffee consumption in Taiwan was interpreted as an adoration of Western culture and the adoption of different foreign values. Similarly, Lu (2002) maintained that the city of Shanghai in China, another city with deep colonial past, also has seen an increasing revival of coffee consumption. The emergence of the new coffee culture in Shanghai was interpreted as a mood caught between the “re-appreciation” (p. 175) of the colonial past and the joyful anticipation of the modernization future. The love of a particular beverage in a particular period of time was often within a time period of transition or a change in the contextual and historical environment and was also closely associated with people re-establishing their new identity.

Starbucks® in China

Even when Starbucks®’ business in its home market slipped in 2008, its growth in China was still strong. As Schultz (2011) stated, the Chinese market has become a priority for the company and is expected to grow into its largest market outside of the U.S. Early success in the North American market had prepared Starbucks® for its international debut. Starbucks®, global expansion began in Tokyo, Japan in 1996 and then in 1999, Starbucks® opened its first store in the Chinese mainland in Beijing (“Starbucks® history,” 2012).

Starbucks® is known for providing for consumers a “third place” experience, which is a relaxing social space between home and workplace. The company has emphasized making the beverage with heart, providing consumers with passion and

respect, and the community with responsibility and authenticity. Schultz (2011) believed that the “third place” experience Starbucks® nurtured in the U.S. for a universal appeal to consumers worldwide, including Chinese consumers. In order to better blend in the local culture, the company attends to details that are culturally sensitive and locally connected. Schultz (2011) noted that “making Starbucks® locally relevant without diluting the brand is an ongoing issue” that the company has to address. Instead of presenting itself as purely an American or Western brand, Starbucks® has tried to create a local reputation by reflecting local tastes and offering relevant products that appeal to local consumers while preserving its authenticity.

The coffee market in China is predominately controlled by multinational corporations. Despite late entrance into the Chinese market and increasing competition from other Western coffee brands, Starbucks® is the first and among the few that present themselves as the gourmet authentic coffee that embodies a urban modern lifestyle and the affluent, professional class (Bantiwalu & Demisse, 2011). Nescafe by Nestle® was the first multinational coffee brands established in China, most notably known for its instant coffee targeting at office workers. Nestle® accounted for 46% of the retail value sales in the Chinese market in 2002, followed by Maxwell House by Kraft, which is also devoted into the instant coffee sector. However, Starbucks® has had dramatic growth in unit sales, up by 814% during the decade since its first store in 1999 (Bantiwalu & Demisse, 2011). Its presence in China also redefined China’s coffee culture and coffeehouse culture.

Starbucks® stores are strategically located in order to present the brand as a symbol of the affluent class, a beverage not all can afford. Starbucks® stores are

located in first-tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, where most coffee drinkers reside. In the metropolis, Starbucks® stores are highly concentrated in areas within the business districts, shopping malls, famous tourist spots and busy street corners (Pons, Jin & Puel, 2006). Even though the price of a tall American coffee is the equivalent of that in the U.S., the price range is still considered high for average Chinese consumer; therefore, Starbucks® is not something they would consume on a daily basis.

The introduction of Starbucks® coffee changed Chinese people's perception of coffee in China. For Chinese consumers coffee started to come in a great variety of styles and flavors, replacing their old impression of instant coffee being the only kind of coffee.

The rise of another coffee giant, Costa coffee from the U.K., has intensified the coffee war. Like Starbucks®, Costa established itself as a high-end coffee brand (Fang, 2011). However, one strategy that distinguished Starbucks® from the other coffee brands was its local and global integration. While keeping its loyal customer basis, Starbucks® also reached out to their potential Chinese consumers through innovation. New beverages were created, blending in local ingredients such as black sesame and green tea into their coffee drinks. The coffee company also added original Chinese tea into their menu, targeting at China's 200 million regular tea drinkers (Beaton, 2010).

Research Questions

While previous literature provides an overall account of the coffee culture in Asian countries, few focused on consumer perceptions and what influences these perceptions. The majority of previous research employed large-scale quantitative

surveys as means in collecting data while others relied on textual analysis of historical documents or other forms of information. As this topic involves culture and values, a qualitative in-depth analysis is more appropriate and may provide valuable insights into the issue. The production of coffee culture in China is a special case because the production of the new cultural representation and identity is built upon an existing and dominating culture that conveys contradictory cultural messages. Therefore, this study contributed to the previous literature by examining coffee culture from a Chinese perspective. By seeking to establish the connection between cultural representations and consumers interpretations. Therefore, this study examined coffee culture in China by exploring the meanings Chinese consumers associate with Starbucks[®] coffee culture and learning more about their perception through the five moments in the circuit of culture.

Based on the above literature review, this study proposed:

RQ1: How is the coffee culture in China produced based on the circuit of culture in the case of Starbucks?

RQ1a: How do Chinese perceive the practice of coffee drinking as opposed to tea drinking?

RQ1b: What is Starbucks[®], brandscape according to Chinese consumers?

CHAPTER 3 METHOD

Focus Group and In-depth Interview

Focus groups and in-depth interviews were used as primary data collection means. The lived cultures can sometimes be hard to grasp, as many scholars in social science has discovered. McRobbie (1992) argued for a new paradigm in cultural studies, one that could tear down the wall between text and the lived culture as well as the media and the social reality.

This study took a qualitative approach toward the examination of the coffee culture in China. Qualitative research is a research paradigm that “describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group” (Creswell, 2007, p.68). Data collection of this approach involves fieldworks such as participant observations and interviews. However, researchers have proposed multiple data collection methods including surveys, focus groups as well as textual analysis of secondary data (Gray, 2003; Creswell, 2007). Contrary to what quantitative research proposes, qualitative approach is not based on statistical analysis or any means of quantification. This interpretive approach emphasizes on understanding and analyzing the meanings people attach to certain phenomena and their surrounding social reality.

In order to obtain rich information and to maximize the results, this study collected data by conducting both focus groups and in-depth interviews. The focus group is a data collection process that consists of “a carefully planned series of discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest” (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 2). Participants in a focus group usually share common characteristics

in relation to the topic under discussion. The interactions among the participants in a focus group enrich the content. Most importantly, with the interaction in the group discussion, individual responses may become more refined, leading the conversation to a deeper level. As participants interact with each other rather than with the researcher, the participants have a greater chance of framing the subject matter in their own terms, thus producing desirable results (Finch & Lewis, 2003).

The size of a typical focus group varies from four to 10 participants (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Large focus groups, with eight or more people, may limit the opportunities of each participant to share their experiences and ideas and thus render the qualities of the information produced. Small focus groups, on the other hand, may limit the range of experiences. Therefore, the focus groups in this research have an average size of five to six participants.

In-depth interview is another commonly used data collection method in qualitative research. According to Kvale (1996), the qualitative research interview is a conversation process where knowledge is constructed. The in-depth interview is normally unconstructed or semi-structured; the researcher's role is to lead and guide the subjects. The knowledge produced in in-depth interviews is therefore negotiated during the interview process rather than solely offered by the subject. The depth of the answers is achieved by a series of probes and follow up questions during the interview (Legard, Keegan & Ward, 2003).

A number of studies on mass media's influences on culture and identity formation have employed qualitative interviews as data gathering methods and have produced rich data (Buckingham, 1993; Gillespie, 1995; Gray, 1995; Seiter, 1995; Mankerkar,

1999). These scholars, besides conducting the interviews, took into consideration the broader socioeconomic environments and national policies when examining how mass media influences social identity. In addition to examining culture and identity formation under the mass media influence, qualitative approach has also been extensively employed in the field of advertising and marketing (Gardner & Levy, 1955; Morrison, Haley, Sheehan & Taylor, 2007). Qualitative research, especially lengthy and small-sample interviews that allow companies gaining insights into individual consumer's feelings and attitudes toward a certain product and brand (Gardner & Levy, 1955). One of such interview techniques, according to Gardner and Levy (1955), is the thematic analysis of storytelling. In other words, participants are told to tell stories "with a good deal of individuality of associations and experiences" (p. 36). Therefore this study chose focus group and in-depth interview with similar techniques as primary data collection means to investigate on Starbucks® consumer culture and identity.

Qualitative interviews through digital or virtual means have been increasingly popular for its cost-effectiveness and its ability to conduct interviews despite of the geographical distance. Videoconference as an alternative means for in-person or telephone interviews is recommended by many scholars for its convenience and low-cost. However, disadvantages of videoconferencing include technology problems that may affect clear understanding and difficulties in establishing rapport between the participants and the researcher, especially with sensitive topics (Booth, 2008; Kazmer & Xie, 2008; Sedgwick & Spiers, 2009). While Skype has been recommended as an effective videoconferencing tool for conducting qualitative research by many scholars (Booth 2008; Kartzmer & Xie, 2008), many participants in this research do not have the

software installed in their computers. Therefore, the choice of instant message tool was based on the participant's preference and convenience. As many participants prefer using QQ, the most popular Chinese instant messaging tool, both Skype and QQ were utilized in conducting the in-depth interviews in this research.

Participants

The sampling strategies of this study were purposefully designed. Both homogeneous and theoretical sampling strategies were employed in this study. Homogeneous samples, according to Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003), are for the purpose of providing a comprehensive view on a particular topic within a specific demographic and social context. Theoretical sampling is the sampling strategy in which participants are sampled according to their contribution to the construction of the theory (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003). Furthermore, the data collection process is determined by whether the data has reached saturation, or to the extent where no new themes emerge.

Previous literature shows that coffee is particularly popular in major cities in China and that its primary consumers are the younger generation ("China's Emerging Coffee Culture," 2010). In addition, Starbucks[®], targeted consumers in China, as stated in its company profile, are the "rising upper-middle class 'modern Chinese', white collar workers, college students, etc." ("Starbucks[®] China Backgrounder," 2011). In qualitative research, participants are selected based on their relevance to the study. A homogeneous sample reflects Starbucks[®], target population. Therefore, this study only focuses on the Chinese younger generation, typically those matching the above professions. Participants in this study meet the following criteria: (1) Young Chinese

people aged 20-30; (2) Currently reside in China's major cities with access to Starbucks® coffee; (3) Regular coffee drinkers and Starbucks® consumers. Participants for the focus groups were recruited from Beijing Foreign Studies University's students and alumni listserv.

The informed consent form (Appendix A & Appendix B) and the interview guides (Appendix E & Appendix F) were sent to the listserv with the recruiting message. The focus groups consisted of university students, both graduate students and undergraduate students as well as young professionals. The sampling technique for the in-depth interviews was snowball sampling. Participants were told to recommend their friends of their age who are also regular coffee drinkers and frequent Starbucks® consumers. This sampling strategy produced a more homogeneous group that could better represent Starbucks®, target population. As participants viewed socialization as part of their coffee experience, this approach also offered more insights. The in-depth interviews were conducted via videoconference means such as Skype. IRB approval for this study was granted on June 1, 2011. It is valid through May 31, 2012.

Creswell (2007) stated that the purpose of a qualitative study is not to generalize the information collected, but rather to unveil the specific and to uncover the extensiveness and richness of the individual cases. Although Scholars have recommended three to four focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2009) or six to eight interviews (Guest & Johnson, 2006) for a homogeneous sample in a typical research, the sample size for cultural studies is determined by whether the data has reached saturation.

The researcher in this study conducted four focus groups and 13 in-depth interviews, continuing data collection until the data reached saturation. Each focus group lasted around two hours while the in-depth interviews lasted about one hour.

Interviewing people whose first language is not English can sometimes be challenging given their ability to express their views in a foreign language. Issues such as anxiety and misunderstanding may occur in the process (Birks, Chapman & Francis, 2007). Therefore in this study, both the focus groups and the in-depth interviews were conducted in Chinese. The interview and focus group guides were available in both English (Appendix C & Appendix D) and Chinese (Appendix E & Appendix F).

Data Analysis

“Data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the evidence, to address the initial propositions of a study” (Yin, 1984, p. 99). The analysis of both focus groups and in-depth interviews in this study was transcription based. In other words, the researcher analyzed the unabridged transcripts by developing categories of emerging themes. The transcriptions were analyzed in Chinese, the language it was conducted in, and the themes were also developed in Chinese then were translated into English. In a qualitative research, the data analysis is driven by the purpose of the study. Therefore the data concerning the research question was elaborated while the unrelated data were considered but ultimately disconnected (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

After data transcription, the major themes and subthemes were identified and analyzed. Preliminary codes were identified based on the focus groups transcription and prior theoretical basis, including previous literature. Techniques of theme identification proposed by Ryan and Bernard (2003) were used in this study, where important key

phrases, repetitions, local terms, metaphors and analogies, transitions, similarities and contrasts, theory-related material were underlined to develop preliminary codes.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Altogether, four focus groups and 13 in-depth interviews were conducted, with 20 participants in the focus groups and 13 participants in the in-depth interviews. In total, there were one undergraduate student, 19 graduate students and 13 professionals such as media workers, sales representatives, public relations practitioners and bank personnel. The participants were aged between 22 and 28. While focus groups participants perceived themselves to be coffee drinkers, in-depth interview participants defined themselves as both coffee drinkers and frequent Starbucks® customers. For the purpose of confidentiality, the participants in this research were given pseudonyms in the following section when their quotations were cited.

General Impression and Attitudes towards Coffee Culture

Chinese consumers have two general impressions in terms of their experiences and attitudes towards coffee culture. In the first impression, coffee remained a functional beverage. The participants, most of whom were born between 1980 and 1990, grew up with the coffee culture in China. When Nescafé was first introduced in China, they were still in school. Thus Nestle® instant coffee was their first memory of coffee and the coffee that represented student life. Many participants expressed that the first coffee experience wasn't so pleasant, or at least, did not leave them with a positive memory. However, they became frequent coffee drinkers during this time, when they turned to caffeine for help under pressure from exams and homework deadlines. Coffee in this stage was primarily utilitarian, and acted as the alternative for energy drinks.

I started drinking [coffee] when I was in high school, when I was studying for the politics test. I was so sleepy that I made some [instant coffee]. Can't seem to think of it when there were no exams. And then when I was in college and had to

stay up late, I would also have some. Now that I started working, I would need a can of instant coffee whenever I'm on night shift...I use it only to give myself a lift, didn't feel much about its culture. (Z. Xiao, focus group, July 14, 2011)

The second impression was the introduction of coffee houses such as Starbucks[®]. These coffee houses reversed Chinese coffee consumers' initial impression of coffee as being a solely functional beverage. It was also the first time Chinese consumers encountered authentic, freshly brewed coffee. Coffee as well as coffee houses fulfilled a number of other functions besides as an energy drink. Chinese consumers started to attach cultural meanings to coffee and associated it with a variety of cultural connotations. Generally speaking, participants mentioned customer service, environment (servicescape), derivative products, localization and personal connections when talking about their experiences in Starbucks[®].

I remember going to Starbucks[®] with my friends after watching the movie My Blueberry Nights. That was my first time having Starbucks[®]. It was probably frappuccino, I thought it was expensive and taste so-so. But the environment was romantic. It was Christmas and Starbucks[®] was playing Christmas songs and the decoration looks great. (C. Liao, focus group, July 14, 2011)

Types of Starbucks[®] Consumers

The Starbucks[®] consumer types were an additional finding while analyzing the emerging themes. They provide better understanding of the consumer perspectives. Based on their consumption behaviors and attitudes towards the brand, Starbucks[®] consumers can be generally divided into four types. The four types fall into the consumer typologies Dittmar (2008a) identified based on buying motives: the functional, social-experiential, emotional, and efficiency.

Dittmar (2008a) identified three major dimensions of consumer typologies and buying motives: the functional, the emotional and the identity related motives. While the

functional motives, including the economic and the instrumental motives, make up a large proportion, other specific categories such as identity, efficiency, social-experiential and emotional are also deemed important. Both social-experiential experience and emotional motives fall under the emotional dimension. Whereas the social-experiential motive emphasizes a good feeling of and direct contact with the actual consumption social environment, the emotional motive is relatively more personal and related to individual pleasure. Identity motives, identified by Dittmar (2008a), refer to the consumption motive consumers have in order to impress others or achieve recognition in terms of their own status. These consumer typologies and motives are important in understanding how consumers interpret the culture according to their own consuming behaviors.

The first type (the functional) consumes Starbucks® for functional reasons. They consume Starbucks® coffee merely for the coffee. As they couldn't find alternative replacement for the coffee Starbucks® provided, they became frequent visitors. They are attracted to either the freshly brewed coffee, or the special drinks Starbucks® offers for a limited time. This kind of consumer is not particularly interested in the cultural meanings attached to coffee, nor what the brand represents. They go to Starbucks® for more practical reasons and pay more attention to coffee's function and its authentic tastes. For example, one participant said: "Sometimes I just need some black coffee after lunch or some milk after I'm off work so I just go for some" (W. Yang, in-depth interview, February 10).

The second type of consumers (the social-experiential) stresses the social-experiential experience. In other words, this type of consumers goes to Starbucks® for

the environment, or its servicescape. They emphasize the location, interior design and service of the coffee store more than anything else. This kind of consumer takes advantage of the “third space” Starbucks[®] provides. In their understanding, they are consuming not only the coffee, but more importantly the space.

I remember it had a very special interior design. One side of the store was under a staircase and its ceiling was therefore slightly slope and was covered with mirrors. It also had other decorations. It gave you the feeling of the petty bourgeois and an affective tone. Also, I went there with my friend, so I feel really good in general. It didn't matter what we ordered. (Y. Zheng, focus group, July 14, 2011)

The third type of consumers (the emotional) attaches a personal and emotional connection to the brand itself. They like what is associated with the brand and like to be part of the culture. On one hand, they may be attracted to the brand image and the corporate culture. On the other, they have unique, personal anecdotes related to Starbucks[®], making it more appealing than other brands.

Personally, I think it's because of the brand effect. Because I have always been aware of the fact that Starbucks[®] is the most famous brand and has the most stores. I don't have much impression on the other coffee brand Costa[®]. Yes, I think it's because it has a long history. (W. Wang, in-depth interview, February 8, 2012)

The fourth type of consumers (the efficiency) falls into the efficiency category. They do not have personal preference towards Starbucks[®], but are influenced by external factors. The ubiquity of Starbucks[®] in urban China has made it a particularly convenient location for those seeking efficiency. The presence of Starbucks[®] stores on their way to work, in the shopping malls and in their work places makes it a popular spot to take a rest, grab a cup of coffee and meet friends. They see Starbucks[®] as a convenient location to meet with their friends and to have refreshment.

Basically every time my friends and I went out, we would choose Starbucks® to meet. For example, if we are going to meet at Renmin Square, we won't meet under this tower or that one, it will always be at Starbucks®. Because we're coming from all directions. Some will take longer time on the bus. We will always drink something and have some small talk before heading out for shopping or for dining. (Q. Tian, in-depth interview, January 26, 2011)

It should be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive. Some individuals may have started to consume Starbucks® as one type and then gradually gained personal affection and turned into another type of consumer. One consumer may also possess several characteristics. In general, most consumers belong to the last three types. Identity related motives are not categorized as a consumer type in this study since participants expressed their identity elevation as a result of the Starbucks® consumption regardless of their initial buying motives. It will be discussed in the following section.

Themes

Overall seven themes were identified in this study. The findings are presented by analyzing the identified themes respectively since breaking up each moment in the circuit of culture model will render understanding the movement of the entire circuit impossible. Nonetheless, the moments in the circuit of culture will be discussed with the relevant themes. While most themes reflect identity and representation, they are produced through the consumption and the production moments of the coffee culture in China.

Theme 1: The Watershed

Identity, according to Woodward (1997), is first and foremost defined by difference. In other words, people define their own identities by distinguishing themselves from others. Identity also depends on how people interpret different signs

and representations. The coffee culture in China as a watershed of different identities offers an illustration of how identities are negotiated and defined in terms of what tea culture is not. Whereas Starbucks® initially created its representation by defining its target population as the rising middle class and students (“Starbucks® China Backgrounder,” 2011), this representation was being negotiated with consumers’ identification with the brand. Accompanying the consumption moment, the identification process ultimately altered the regulation of how personal identities such as generation and social status should be culturally defined.

Findings show that the practice of coffee drinking, including Starbucks® consumption, has been seen as a dividing line to separate people of different generations, social classes, and professionals. The participants, who defined themselves as coffee drinkers perceived coffee as a beverage to be consumed by mostly the young generation in China. In contrast, the older generations are seen to be tea drinkers. Even though most participants admitted that they still drink tea frequently, they see coffee as a distinct beverage for the young generation. Besides age and generation, social class and professional status are two other factors that coffee drinkers are classified into a group of people who are well educated and well-established, mostly intellectuals or white-collar workers working in foreign corporations.

I think relatively they are more knowledgeable, or it belongs to the lifestyle of people from an upper social level in the society. They have certain knowledge and culture, and thus it is easier for them to accept new things in life. (D. Ying, in-depth interview, February 8, 2012)

The watershed has two meanings for the participants. First, influences from their friends, social circles and the larger society, including how coffee brands represent them, have defined what it means to be in a generation, social class or occupation. In

this aspect both production and consumption moments, both Starbucks[®] and its consumers, have contributed to this representation. Second, by consuming the beverage distinct to a certain social group, the participants express their own identity, or what they strive to be in life. This function of coffee consumption is realized since the consumers' interpretation process have not only refined the representation, but have also set the rules of what it requires to be a certain generation, social status or profession. The consumption itself can distinguish them from others. In other words, whereas the consumers' interpretations of the representations influence their identity formation, they use consumption as a means to achieve the desired identity. The coffee culture is therefore produced as cultural symbol that signifies different generations and occupations.

Theme 2 “Superficial”

Representation is the moment in the circuit of culture where cultural meanings are generated. It is subjective and depends on different circumstances and contexts. However, this cultural meaning may in turn influence how culture is produced and consumed. “Superficial”, one of the themes, reflects how Chinese consumers interpret the representation of coffee culture and tea culture in the contemporary era. The situational differences result in a representation that is not entirely enforced by the corporation but is actively shaped by the consumers.

I think ten years ago my understanding of coffee was just Nestle[®] instant coffee and now it was just Starbucks[®] coffee. This is the difference, I think. (F. Li, focus group, August 2, 2011)

I think coffee culture in China is still on the surface. That said, Chinese people don't distinguish between instant coffee and fresh ground coffee, we don't think much about coffee. (Y. Zhang, in-depth interview, January 20, 2012)

According to both focus groups and in-depth interviews, the participants felt they were generally less savvy and less erudite when it comes to coffee culture, compared with Western coffee drinkers. In other words, Chinese consumers only know the superficialities of coffee culture, rather than the essence. Instead of knowing the different kinds of coffee beans or brewing processes, coffee exists in their lives as brand names such as Starbucks[®], Costa[®] or Nestle[®]. In their understanding, people originally from coffee drinking cultures treat coffee brewing and coffee drinking as an art and study coffee and its culture. On the other hand, the participants agree that this superficiality in coffee culture contrasts with Chinese tea culture. This theme reflects participants' dilemma between the old and the new culture and their representations respectively. Perceiving coffee culture as an imported culture, they are reluctant to learn more about it. Even though coffee remains an important part of the participants' lives, they didn't attach the same significance to coffee as they did to tea in terms of culture. Whereas tea was seen as classical and historical, coffee is considered to be modern and commercial. This general impression not only influences how they consume the product, but also affects the production of coffee culture in China. Coffee consumption, in this case, may be interpreted as a temporary fever. This suggests coffee culture is more of a popular culture and will therefore be more difficult to ingrain deeply in Chinese culture.

But at least I think the vast majority of people...if your understanding of tea culture, I am relatively more conservative about this, if you don't penetrate the profundities of tea culture, how can you say you really know about coffee culture? Unless you are studying it. Or you can just merely consume coffee and don't bother about its culture. You don't even understand your own culture, right? Sometimes we shouldn't complicate things. (R. Dong, in-depth interview, February 3, 2012)

Despite the fact that coffee companies such as Starbucks® have been trying to attach historical origins to their own corporate representations, the attempts haven't changed how it is being interpreted. In general, participants expressed that they were not particularly interested in learning the coffee history, knowledge, nor the different coffee beans that Starbucks® introduced. This is partially due to the traditional customs established by the Chinese people through long social practices. Historically, tea culture has had a major function and position in China. Its representation is deeply ingrained in Chinese consumers' mind. This predominant impression, acting as the regulation in the circuit of culture, restricts how the representation is being produced.

Theme 3 Socialization

In the circuit of culture, the five moments are inseparable. The moment of production is considered complete only when the meanings are contested and negotiated through the consumption moment. Consumption in this sense becomes part of the production process. The theme of socialization illustrates how the two moments interact via representation and identity.

"Friends", or "friendships" are the words the participants associated most with coffee, coffee culture and Starbucks®. It is the beverage they will consume when they are with their friends. One of the most suitable locations for coffee consumption, according to the participants, is the coffee house. On the one hand, participants see coffee as a kind of "occasional beverage." In other words, coffee is a kind of beverage that is consumed with certain people and under certain circumstances. Coffee and coffee houses, including Starbucks®, represent an important social part of their lives. This representation also influences how they consume coffee.

I will only drink it [Starbucks® coffee] in certain occasions, for example if everyone is drinking it at that time, then I would also feel like having it, but I wouldn't choose it on my own. (J. Chen, in-depth interview, February 5, 2012)

On the other hand, the practice of coffee drinking and Starbucks® coffee house culture has in some way served a social function for the Chinese. The teahouse has long been the social gathering space for Chinese people. It has been a tradition for larger Chinese families to gather at restaurants or teahouses to have casual talk. Teahouses in China may vary from high-end ones with individual rooms to lower-end ones with a singular public space. While the high-end teahouses and restaurants are still the top choice for business meetings, they are generally deemed to be too expensive and formal for the public, especially the younger generation. Conversely, lower-end teahouses are often noisy and unpleasant.

However, the introduction of coffee houses, with more comfortable and spacious environment, as well as quieter surroundings, offers a perfect alternative for the young Chinese who would not want to be like their parents. In addition, coffee is not only more affordable, but more importantly, less formal than tea. Places for socialization are no longer confined to places like dining tables or teahouses but have extended to coffee houses.

If a group of people wanted to get together, say, in the 1980s or 1990s, families and friends wanted to get together, to have small talks or something, they would do it surrounding the dining tables. It would just be gathering together to have a meal and then do other things afterwards aside of the dining table. But when coffee houses like Starbucks® came to China, when this kind of leisure places came to China, places for people to discuss, or to have leisure talk are not limited to just dining tables, but are instead shifted to the side of coffee tables. They will go to coffee houses to get together, replacing eating together like before. (W. Wang, in-depth interview, February 8, 2012)

Starbucks[®], advocating the concept of “third space”, a space between home and workplace, fills in the gap for the young Chinese people by performing this social function in places other than teahouses and dining tables. Compared with traditional teahouses and restaurants, the fact that Starbucks[®] stores are non-smoking and provide free Wi-Fi also has an advantage. According to participants, this was one of the reasons they chose Starbucks[®] as a primary socialization place. Consequently, Starbucks[®] provides the younger generation a space to distinguish themselves from the older generation, who would consider teahouse as a primary choice for social gatherings.

Freedom, relaxation and leisure. Mostly I would be with friends when I was in Starbucks[®], it would seldom be only one or two people, but it would normally be more than two. And we would chat and the atmospheres were very free, you can be very casual, lying on the sofa, I would feel really unrestrained. (D. Ying, in-depth interview, February 8, 2012)

As is suggested by the previous literature, the mass media also play a very important role in the transition process. Cultural meanings associated with coffee houses are being conveyed by the mass media. In addition to the participants' own personal experiences and functional motives, images and plots in TV shows and movies have further enhanced this impression.

In TV shows they seldom meet in teahouses, usually it's in coffee houses, that's the rule ...They will give you a kind of concept, for example if you want to find a place to chat, coffee shop would be the first place that pop up in your mind, you will then think of going to have a cup of coffee, because in TV shows they will always say something like, let's go, have some coffee and talk. This gives you the first concept, and also a clear orientation: the place to chat is coffee shop, rather than teahouse or some other places. (S. Li, focus group, July 29, 2011)

Even though this theme is primarily the functional aspect of coffee houses and Starbucks[®], it suggests the consumption behavior and consumers' interpretation of the

representation of coffee culture and Starbucks® coffee culture. The consumption moment suggests that coffee culture in China, including Starbucks® coffee culture, is produced and defined as a social culture. However, this social culture differs from the “third space” culture originated from America. Instead of enjoying individual and personal space, Chinese consumers, in a collectivistic society and with a teahouse tradition, interpret the “third space” as a collective and social space. The negotiated meanings are therefore produced.

Theme 4: Novelty

Meaning in the circuit of culture system is inherently shaped through socially constructed symbols. The theme novelty is one of such symbols representing the coffee culture in China. Coffee is and will probably continue to be a novelty to the Chinese people. Initially the participants were mostly drawn by curiosity to taste the beverage when they were kids. Some were intrigued by the early advertisements and commercials, some by early movies and cartoons and some others by the influence of families and friends. The rarity of coffee at the time when the participants first encountered coffee gave them the impression that coffee is a rare and exotic product. The novelty of coffee, as well as the exotic images and stories, was alluring to them.

I remember I was watching the cartoon Nowara Shinnosuke. One episode was about the protagonist drinking coffee. He drank a lot of coffee and couldn't go to sleep. This was my first impression, and then coffee appeared in a lot of cartoons, so I just wanted to have a try. (H. Bai, focus group, July 14, 2011)

Starbucks® coffee gave rise to another wave of curiosity in coffee. While Nestle® brought instant coffee to China and gained popularity, Starbucks® was among one of the few coffee chain stores that started to offer authentic coffee, or the freshly brewed coffee. From store interior design to the ordering process, Starbucks® provided a new

experience for its consumers. It even comes up with special terms referring to its coffee and its cup sizes that would only make sense within its stores. Although Starbucks® has opened a number of stores in major cities such as Beijing in the past decade and expanded, in recent years, to second-tier cities where consumers have less purchasing power (Gao & Wang, 2012).

When the first Starbucks® opened in Jinan, a lot of people went to wait in line for a cup of coffee till ten at night ... I think it's probably because people want to have new experiences when the first one opened, it's very outlandish, so people would all like to have a try. (W. Wang, in-depth interview, February 8, 2012)

After all, Starbucks® fostered and enhanced the concept of freshly brewed coffee. Before that China is under the instant coffee's rule. Everyone started to get to learn more about coffee culture only after Starbucks® came in. This is a good thing. It's always nice to learn something new. (G. Zhou, in-depth interview, February 4, 2012)

This theme reflects the representation of coffee culture in China. Representation and production in this case have formed a reciprocal relationship. Meanings are produced not solely by the corporations but are given to and negotiated by the consumers in certain contexts. Novelty was not something Starbucks® brought with itself when it entered the Chinese market, nor was it the representation Starbucks® intended to associate its brand with. But Starbucks' presence in the China and the current Chinese social environment determines how this meaning is created. It is a society that is opening to the outside world and starting to accept difference. As this representation is generated by situational social contexts, it is subject to change once the larger social climate alters.

Theme 5: Cosmopolitanism

According to the circuit of culture model, meanings are produced through signifying practices and constructed by power relations that decide who is included and

who is not in a certain cultural group (Woodward, 1997). Identity exists at individual, national and organizational levels (Curtin & Gaither, 2005). The circuit of culture model defines identity as a dynamic moment that interacts with and is influenced by all other moments. The theme cosmopolitanism reflects the vigorous process in which identity is formed.

While participants debated whether or not coffee culture has localized in China, one common view was that coffee culture is one of the most important representations of the Western culture and lifestyle. Therefore consuming coffee also means consuming a Western and modern lifestyle. Cosmopolitanism is one of the many consequences of the global cultural flows that spread the Western lifestyle to diverse cultures worldwide as symbols and products via the mass media (Barker, 2000). Starbucks[®] coffee is a medium through which people may feel that they are connected to the world and becoming a citizen of the world. When asked about what life would be like without coffee, one participant answered:

I think my life will go backwards. It feels like it will retrogress to a pure ... like the era when I was in elementary school ... to a state where there was less communication with the outside world and being very ignorant and ill-informed ... coffee is just like a kind of communication medium with the outside world, a modern lifestyle. (C. Liao, focus group, July 14, 2011)

Starbucks[®] represents coffee culture; it also represents the American corporate culture. For many Chinese people, Starbucks[®] corporate identity is more salient than the coffee it is selling. Furthermore, with Starbucks[®] locating most of its stores in the business districts and busy traveling spots, it not only attracts Chinese consumers but also foreign consumers. This further intensifies its image as a brand representing

Western culture. Another participant expressed his feelings of consuming an international brand.

One of my strong impressions was also in Starbucks®. It was the Starbucks® in terminal 3 of the airport. It was my first time having caramel macchiato. Before that, I had always thought that coffee tasted just ok, not good, but just so-so. The first time I had caramel macchiato, I thought it was really good. Maybe it is because of this, but the environment was also very good. The Starbucks® in terminal 3, like you just mentioned the culture, that store had a really good interior design. I was surrounded by a lot of foreigners and all I heard was also foreign languages. At one time I thought I was not in China. That felt really special. (D. Chen, focus group, July 14, 2011)

However, excessively imitating the Western lifestyle also draws criticisms. Coffee drinkers are sometimes being labeled as blindly worshipping foreign goods. While the participants disagreed on whether there is a unique Chinese coffee culture, they concur with the view that they are deeply influenced by the Western culture. In the meantime, Starbucks® has been trying to adapt to the local culture. The glocalization strategy has not only put Chinese tea and Chinese desserts on the menu but also provided development of Chinese flavored coffee drinks that were sold only on special occasions such as Chinese traditional holidays. There are also derivative products such as coffee cups featuring Chinese folklore figures. While the participants felt ambivalent about traditional Chinese tea, they seemed generally positive about the special customized and seasonal drinks that reflected Chinese folklore. For example, one participant remembered the Peach Blossom Latte she had in Starbucks®. The Peach Blossom Latte was based on the Chinese belief that the consumption of peach blossoms will improve one's luck in romantic relationships.

The Peach Blossom Latte. It was a while ago, they don't have it now. It was one of the special seasonal drinks, for just one month ... it tasted awful, it was just peach blossom flavored tea with milk. So it was said online that if you ordered this drink in Starbucks®, they would ask you whether you have a boyfriend or a girlfriend. If

you said no, then they would add more peach blossom syrup in it. A lot of people went to try. It was really interesting. They know how to do business here, making up stories to make you happy. And they also have many new drinks. I really like that. (R. Dong, in-depth interview, February 3, 2012)

This theme described how identities are formed through the other four moments. On the organizational level, Starbucks[®] originally possesses a global identity, one that represents its corporate culture. Upon entering the Chinese market, Starbucks[®] was being portrayed as a Western brand, selling Western beverages and representing Western lifestyle. However, with the Chinese consumers' participation in the production process, the negotiated meanings, such as a changed identity and their readings of the representation, are therefore produced. The production of this negotiated new identity for the corporation involves compromises on the corporation's side and a mixture of both global and local culture. This process is accompanied by the identity formation on the individual and the national level. The consumption moment for the consumers involves recognizing the corporate culture (i.e., accepting what Starbucks[®] stands for) and acknowledging their own personal as well as national identities. For individual consumers, it is conciliation between their new identity as a global citizen (i.e., personal level) and their old identity as Chinese (i.e., national level). The three identity levels and the meanings thereby produced respectively are continuously changing. Therefore, it will be an important issue for Starbucks to manage their cosmopolitan identity as well as balancing between the global and the local.

Theme 6: Rhythm of life

Similar to the theme novelty, where newness is composed of cultural symbols through the circuit of culture, the theme rhythm of life is also one of such representations. Coffee culture is also perceived to be a symbol of a fast-paced lifestyle,

as compared with what tea culture represented in China. In addition to the casual and relaxing coffee house environment for social functions, coffee is most often seen as a kind of fast consumption good, especially for the office workers. Despite the fact that sitting on a sunny balcony with a cup of coffee and a book in hand is many people's ideal of how to spend their idle time, coffee was seen more as a kind of fast food by participants. It represented the bustle and hustle city life and a productive work life.

I think two lifestyles are associated with coffee. One is the kind they just mentioned, having a cup of coffee and reading a book in the afternoon, which is more leisurely and carefree. Another kind exists among the office workers. It is the painful lifestyle where you hold a cup of coffee and rush to your office in the morning. It's very tough and not leisure at all. (C. Liao, focus group, July 14, 2011)

Fast-pace in my understanding means the people consuming coffee are mainly highly efficient. I think they are only drinking coffee when they need to relax moderately in their high efficient lives. It would never be a slow or completely relaxed lifestyle. But I think tea is for idle hours. (J. Chen, in-depth interview, February 5, 2012)

In sharp contrast, tea culture is perceived to be more time consuming and sedate. The participants frequently mentioned the Kongfu tea ceremony, which literally means to "make tea with efforts." The ceremony is seen as a form of art that requires equanimity and leisure time. This perception of the representation of tea culture and coffee culture, therefore, has a huge impact on Chinese consumers' changing lifestyle.

The circuit of culture model is often analyzed in the larger social context. The coffee culture is among the many other phenomena in this era marked by fast speed and efficiency. The fast-paced lifestyle, therefore, might not be a concept Starbucks® would intend to associate its brand with. With the "third space" concept, the corporation hopes to create an atmosphere of relaxation and leisure. While, admittedly, this atmosphere is manifested in its socialization function, the cultural symbol must be

understood within the social context. It is deeply influenced by the larger socio-economic environment in China, where the developing pressure places higher demands in all aspects of the society.

Theme 7: Xiaozi

The circuit of culture framework allows an examination of the production of culture through both the global and the local lenses. Local regulations, or the informal cultural controls over the cultural norms and expectations (Curtin & Gaither, 2005), govern how imported ideas and meanings are reshaped by the local cultural nuances. The theme Xiaozi demonstrates how imported culture adapts to the local environment.

Xiaozi is the most frequently occurring word during both the focus groups and the in-depth interviews. Literately meaning “the petty bourgeois sentiment,” it is a popular term in the Chinese public discourse in recent years. Generally, Xiaozi refers a group of youth in the contemporary Chinese society: “As far as vocation or economic status is concerned, petty bourgeois are by and large current white collars, although they also include ‘reservist’ white collars and psychological white collars” (Zhang, Rao, Feng, & Peng, 2011, p.111). With regard to ideological tendencies, the petty bourgeois are the liberals who are more willing to try out and accept new things in life. The petty bourgeois are satisfied with their current living and working status, representing the new Chinese middle class. Their lives and lifestyles are also the most desired among Chinese youth. The Xiaozi phenomenon is closely related to the Chinese market segmentation and branding strategies in China. For example, Wang (2008) identified the “bourgeois bohemians” and the “neo-tribes” and discussed how people in the lower tiers of the social pyramid emulate what and how people sitting at the top consume to elevate their social status.

Not surprisingly, the practice of coffee drinking has become one of the symbols of being a petty bourgeois. Furthermore, drinking coffee has become popular among Chinese youth who strive to be in the higher social status since it is an act that can be easily emulated. Even though there was no agreed definition of the term, the explanations the participants give were more or less the same.

I feel like, it is a kind of pursuit that has broken away from the daily lives and daily concerns, that has gone beyond merely getting sufficient food and clothing. Something like a pleasure, or a kind of fulfillment or achievement approved by others, maybe something like this. It is a lifestyle that will make you feel comfortable and distinct. (D. Ying, in-depth interview, February 8, 2012)

Ever since its entry into the Chinese market, Starbucks[®] has slowly become the representation of being a petty bourgeois. The green logo, the environment, the service, the interior design and its derivative products are all associated with the petty bourgeois lifestyle. A typical impression of Starbucks[®] coffee house, according to the participants, would be spacious and cozy, with dim light and leisurely music in the background. While the description is generally neutral, it also bears a negative connotation. Together with coffee culture in general, Starbucks[®] is criticized for positioning itself as a high-end product in China. Chinese consumers are well aware of the fact that the coffee is overpriced and the brand image purposefully built. Nonetheless, even with the continually rising price, Starbucks[®] is still gaining popularity.

When I was in college, a new Starbucks[®] opened in the neighborhood. It was the first Starbucks[®] store in Wuhan, with outdoor seats. Wuhan's air condition was even worse than Beijing's and there's thick traffic nearby. But a lot of people still choose to sit outside while there were empty seats inside. Personally, I can't figure out why people would attach the label *Xiaozi* to coffee, since it is merely a kind of beverage ...On Weibo and other social network sites. Some would flaunt their pictures online with all kinds of coffee cups, showing off that they went to Starbucks[®] or Costa[®]. So I didn't come up with that impression spontaneously, it is really just the general trends nowadays. (G. Zhou, in-depth interview, February 4, 2012)

Similar to the previous theme cosmopolitanism, this theme also involves several moments in the circuit of culture model. The corporation positioned itself as a high-end product targeting at a particular social group. The brand brought to China its coffee and the concept associated with luxury and pretentiousness. However, given China's own social context and cultural norms, consumers interpret this representation as Xiaozhi, or the petty bourgeois lifestyle. Thompson (1997) stated that regulation in the circuit of culture model depends on both social power structures as well as the active contributions from individuals. Xiaozhi is a term created within and unique to the Chinese society. By consuming Starbucks[®] products, they also try to alter their own identity so as to live up to the status of what is suggested by the representation. Consequently, all the above moments contributed to the production of coffee culture in China as represented by the petty bourgeois lifestyle.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study seeks to understand the production of coffee culture in China based on the framework of the circuit of culture and through the consumers' perspectives. Focus groups and in-depth interviews were conducted to collect consumer perceptions and readings of the culture as well as the coffee chain Starbucks[®], brand image. The following sections involve a brief summary of the findings in answering the research questions as well as discussion and interpretation of the results under the circuit of culture framework.

Summary of Findings

Altogether seven themes emerged from the focus groups and in-depth interviews: the watershed, “superficial”, socialization, novelty, cosmopolitanism, rhythm of life and Xiaozi. The participants attached cultural meanings to the practice of coffee drinking. The practice of coffee drinking, including Starbucks[®] consumption, is, first and foremost, a behavioral sign to distinguish between generations and between different occupations. Second, coffee culture in China exists primarily as the coffee brand names and the superficialities. Third, for the Chinese young generation, coffee houses have replaced teahouses and restaurants as primary choice for socialization. Fourth, coffee culture reflects Chinese consumers' curiosity of novelty. Moreover, coffee culture represents a Western and cosmopolitan lifestyle. Furthermore, it also symbolizes the frenetic pace of modern city life. Last but not least, the new coffee craze embodied Chinese young generation's petty bourgeois sentiment, or the desire to strive for a higher status in the society.

Research Question 1a asked how Chinese perceive the practice of coffee drinking as opposed to tea drinking. Results revealed that even though the participants defined themselves as coffee drinkers, they also drink tea regularly. In addition, while coffee is seen as a functional beverage that provides caffeine, tea is more likely to be treated as an alternative or replacement of water. In terms of flavor, tea is generally weak and light, compared with the strong flavor coffee has. From the cultural perspective, tea drinking is considered to be a common practice that has dissolved in their daily lives and is seldom thought about. Coffee, however, is the unconventional and exotic refreshment imported from the West. As was shown in the themes, even though the two beverages coexisted in Chinese people's lives, coffee is considered to be the opposite of tea in terms of not only its production and consumption, but also its representation and identity. Coffee is considered to be the beverage of the young and professionals; tea is for the old and retired. While coffee is "superficial", new, international and busy, tea is profound, historical, domestic and idle.

How Chinese perceive coffee drinking and tea drinking reflects their understandings of the representation of the two different cultures and their own identity, thereby influencing their consuming behaviors. The predominant Chinese culture is seeing a paradigm shift from tea culture to coffee culture. However, this shift is accompanied by ambivalence, confusion and dilemma among the new generation. On the one hand, the novelty, convenience, efficiency and global connection coffee culture represents appeals to them. They feel like their identity can be better manifested and represented through the culture and ideas coffee culture stands for. On the other hand, with coffee culture being labeled as Westernization and the petty bourgeois lifestyle,

they feel like the act of coffee drinking and advocating the lifestyle it embodies is a sellout of their own Chinese identity, which they don't wish to abandon. The choice of tea or coffee may seem insignificant when it comes to discussing the larger terms such as national identity and cultural imperialism. But when drinking habits are closely associated with social construction, people's mentality and everyday lives, the importance of it is then incontestable. In the case of this study, the choice has a direct impact on how foreign coffee brands such as Starbucks[®] should position itself.

Nonetheless, views on whether a distinct Chinese coffee culture exists or not vary. Many considered the present Chinese coffee culture to be directly borrowed and copied from the West. However, participants in this study, as stated above, belong to the young generation in China. Their behaviors, perceptions and attitudes determine the future of Chinese culture. Even though the vast majority of Chinese people still consumes tea, it will be hard to tell whether this will still be the case in ten or twenty years. As one participant pointed out, the habits of this generation may have greater influence on the formation of a unique coffee culture in China in the near future.

Research question 1b asked what is Starbucks[®], brandscape according to Chinese consumers. As a transnational corporation, Starbucks[®] inevitably faces the issue of expanding or localize its brandscape so as to accommodate to the local culture while maintaining its original corporate identity. It stands in a difficult dilemma between preserving the corporation's core value and cultivating a positive image among the local consumers. Chinese Starbucks[®] consumers' personal lifestyles and identities are constructed surrounding what Starbucks[®] is stand for. Therefore their interpretation and perceptions of the brandscape is extremely important for the corporation.

With regard to the functional experience it provided to its consumers, the corporation hopes to bring its concept of “third space” to the consumers in the Chinese market. The concept fits in well with contemporary China’s situation, where the young generation is looking for alternatives to show their uniqueness from the rest. It also satisfied their growing demands. The old style traditional Chinese teahouse, which is either too noisy and clamorous or too expensive and formal, is obsolete for the current demands. Many Chinese consumers prefer Starbucks® because of its quietness, spaciousness, casualness and convenience. According to the participants, in addition to its in-door and out-door environment as well as decorations, Starbucks® is a non-smoking public space that not only offers free Wi-Fi, but also provides great customer service. To the Chinese consumers who need their own social space, Starbucks gives them an alternative choice.

Additionally, emphasizing authenticity, freshly brewed coffee and coffee drinks that are customized on the spot, Starbucks brings entirely new experience to Chinese consumers who have tired of drinking instant coffee. As one of the first few coffee brands that entered the Chinese market, the fact that many participants associate coffee immediately with the brand perfectly illustrates the favorable impressions brand brings to the consumers.

As many other foreign brands, Starbucks® positioned itself as a high-end brand with superior quality for only a subgroup of people on a certain social level when it entered the Chinese market. This orientation, however, has drawn more consumers than it had intended to. It has sent an unequivocal message to the upwardly mobile and aspirational young generation that it represents the comfortable lifestyle that the higher

social class possesses. Representing the petty bourgeois lifestyle, however, bring about another issue when the upscale orientation suggests a negative connotation. While a part of the population is in pursuit of the ideal lifestyle it represents, they are at the same time being criticized for consuming something over their price range. The participants, during the focus groups and in-depth interviews, expressed guilt of such act and being in the situation. Despite being frequent coffee drinkers and Starbucks® consumers themselves, they also see excessive attachment to the brand and undue imitation of the lifestyle as inappropriate.

However, despite the great experiences and fulfillment of specific social functions, Chinese consumers still see Starbucks® as a foreign and profiting corporation. The act of consuming Starbucks® and associating themselves with a foreign brand intensifies the conflict between their traditional identity and the new identity they are looking for. While consuming Starbucks makes them feel like being the citizen of the world and keeping up with contemporary, the representation of a Western lifestyle discourages the thought. Emulating the Western lifestyle or the lifestyle of a petty bourgeois, though not condemned, is not encouraged in the public opinion. Some participants ridiculed themselves for being subservient to foreign goods when talking about their personal habits and preference. They are aware of the fact that it is justifiable as an individual preference but requires discretion when it involves collective identity. The incident in 2007 in the Forbidden City was a most prominent example of the intensification of the conflict. Rui Chenggang, a Chinese news anchor started an online campaign to remove the Starbucks® store opened in the Forbidden City. The Forbidden City, situated at the center of Beijing, was the royal palace of 24 emperors in the imperial China and a

representation of China's past glory and traditional Chinese culture. Though the store was opened initially at the invitation of the palace managers in 2000, the presence of Starbucks® was interpreted as an American corporation eroding traditional Chinese culture. The tension was magnified and strengthened when the debate entered the public sphere. Under public pressure, the palace managers closed down the Starbucks store inside the palace (Han & Zhang, 2009). Participants in the in-depth interviews were asked about their opinions on this incident (Appendix D & Appendix F). Whereas they acknowledged the contradiction between the two represented cultures, they did not relate the incident to their personal lives.

While it is almost impossible to conceal its Western identity, it is wise to reconcile and accommodate itself to the local culture. The localization strategies Starbucks® applied won some consumers' ears. By borrowing traditional Chinese folklores and figures into the derivative products and combining Chinese foods with coffee drinks, Starbucks® did draw a lot of attention. However, there is still an extent. When talking about the traditional Chinese tea products Starbucks® put on its menu, participants do not seem to appreciate the effort. Most found it discordant with the overall tone of the brand since it was still perceived to be a Western brand. Consequently, it is important for the brand to avoid any disingenuous image exposure that contradicts too much from its original representation.

The Starbucks® coffee culture fits well into the circuit of culture model, which comprises the interactions among the five moments of production, consumption, representation, identity and regulation. As is discussed in the section above, the production of Starbucks® coffee culture is closely related with the other four moments.

Even though the circuit is continuously changing and the moments are constantly intertwined and overlap with each other, it will be analyzed in a chorological fashion, from beginning to end.

The circuit starts with Starbucks[®] positioning itself as a coffee brand that represents the middle class, upscale and international lifestyle as well as a comfortable “third space” for the busy city-dwellers. These images are presented mainly by the omnipresent Starbucks[®] stores in busy street corners of every business district and many upper-class residential districts and are reinforced by images in various mass media portraits. The chic and relaxing interior design and comfortable servicescape also add to the establishment of this initial brand image of a new coffee chain that provides good quality coffee.

However, with the interaction of consumption, identity and representation, the production of culture twisted a bit. To fulfill the missing gap in their social life, the Chinese consumers utilize the concept of “third space”, reconstructing the culture with their own personal experiences. It is then not only a space between home and work place, but also a substitute for their antiquated lifestyles. Similarly, the high-end orientation attracts consumers that are not in the targeted segment, who nonetheless redirected the culture by adding their own interpretations. As more and more young professionals and students are attracted to the ideal concept, consuming the brand itself become a manifestation of who they are and what they do. Whether or not they have reached that social status they desired, their consumption behaviors have nonetheless altered the initial image. In addition to its representation of novelty and cosmopolitanism, Chinese consumers begin to interpret it as the Western and the petty

bourgeois lifestyle as well as the bustle and hustle city lives. All these perceptions constructed Starbucks[®], present brandscape. They also determine Starbucks[®], future developing direction in China.

With these consumer perceptions of its coffee culture, Starbucks[®] aims at integrating into the local culture. Chinese desserts, Chinese tea product and various traditional folklore and holiday related derivative products appeared on Starbucks[®], shelf. The strategy of bringing in more local related elements intends to increase its “Chineseness” and to conceal its Western identity. To have a sustainable future, the ultimate goal for Starbucks[®] is still to retain its original corporate identity as a standardized corporate chain store that makes gourmet coffee. The localization process Starbucks[®] is undertaking now is only a small step to creating a glocalized brand image. When the ubiquity of Starbucks[®] stores and coffee consumption commonplace and accepted in China, it will then establish its foothold in the country and its culture.

Regulation provides a premise for the meaning constructions in each moment. On the organizational level, the corporations were able to enter the local market with local government’s policy. Open policies within the Chinese market also allowed Starbucks[®] to form joint venture in Yunnan province, China’s only coffee bean producing region (Stynes, 2012). The joint venture enables Starbucks[®] to use and export the region’s coffee, thus speeding up the localization process. Being able to brew and sell locally produced coffee again diminishes its Western identity, further changing its representation and cultural formation. On the local and cultural level, however, regulation controls the cultural flow and provides a lens through which the cultural meanings are negotiated and created.

Implications

This study examines the relationships among all the moments in the circuit of culture by analyzing the production of coffee culture in China, a phenomenon that is culturally sensitive and meaningful. Conclusions drawn from the qualitative data suggest how consumers view the cultural nuances between tea and coffee and as well as the construction of Starbucks® brandscape from a cultural perspective. These cultural perceptions, particularly the themes, have practical implications for coffee corporations such as Starbucks® as well as other Western corporations who wish to do business in China.

In Starbucks®, case specifically, the cultural perceptions determine both its brandscape and the corporation's level of glocalization. As Starbucks® is trying to expand in China, transferring from first-tier cities to second-tier cities where buying power is lower and more traditional culture is preserved, it will need to take into account of the cultural nuances. While consumers in the second-tier cities may be more willing to purchase initially due to its novelty and global characteristics, as well as their own petty bourgeois sentiment, they may be more culturally sensitive than their counterparts in major cities. The theme novelty suggests that Starbucks® consumers were initially intrigued by the newness of the coffee brand. However, this meaning is negotiated and informed by the contexts. It is therefore not static and subject to change in the future. This poses a potential challenge for Starbucks once the consumers pass the first phase of reading the brand as a novelty. Though Starbucks® is now attempting to expand to the second-tier cities where consumers still view it as a novelty, it will inevitably have to

face the phase when Starbucks® become the status quo in the Chinese market. It will then have to refine its strategies accordingly.

Furthermore, the theme rhythm of life suggests that Chinese consumers perceive Starbucks® to be part of the fast-food chains, which makes it even more difficult to position itself. The relaxation and leisure lifestyle reflected in the theme socialization contradicts with the fast-paced lifestyle shown in the theme rhythm of life. Chinese consumers wish to enjoy freedom and leisurely social time in Starbucks®; they nonetheless feel the pressure from the outside world and include Starbucks® as part of their own busy lifestyle. This conflict of representation requires Starbucks to adjust how it presents itself in the future.

The cosmopolitan theme, revealing the three levels of identity, individual, organizational and national (Curtin & Gaither, 2005), indicates how Starbucks® should balance its own corporate identity as well as monitor how consumers will read it. Consumers' interpretation of the corporate identity, together with their own identity construction on a personal and a national level, may determine how they perceive and consume the brand. As is shown in the above discussion, introducing entirely localized beverages to the local menu may not be a wise decision since Starbucks® is nonetheless being viewed as a Western corporation. This preconception can hardly be decreased or repelled by bringing in traditional Chinese tea products, or by locating its stores in traditional districts. In fact, the act of combining Chinese folklores into its derivative products and Chinese ingredients into its coffee beverages seems to gain wide acceptance among the Chinese consumers. For example, although Chinese consumers responded favorably to Starbucks® "Peach Blossom Latte," they may

thoroughly reject the company's "Peach Blossom Tea." This dichotomy illustrates the delicate balance Starbucks® must strike in proffering products tailored to local tastes without making local consumers feel offended or manipulated by the corporation. After all, Starbucks® still represents an American corporation that sells customized fresh brewed coffee. This is an important part of Starbucks® corporate identity. Being too aggressive in its efforts to localize could be interpreted as disingenuous to the local consumers, who view Chinese nationality, represented by tea culture, as a crucial part of their personal identities. Conversely, being too passive in its efforts to localize could be interpreted as insensitive by consumers for whom 6,000 years of cultural heritage is a salient component of personal identity. Its expansion and localization process must therefore take into consideration the changing perceptions and identities of its consumers.

The theme Xiaozi, as a unique culture in the Chinese society, also yields some implications for Starbucks®. The petty bourgeois label attached to Starbucks® is a double-edged sword. While Starbucks® positioning as Xiaozi appeals to the younger Chinese generation as a statement of rebellion or distinctiveness, it bears negative connotations. As is shown in the findings, Starbucks® is criticized for positioning itself as a high-end product, and its prices are seen as excessive. As Starbucks® coffee prices in China continue to rise (Zheng & Pardomuan, 2011), this representation may potentially lead to anti-corporate sentiments. There is an extent to which consumers are willing to pay a premium to maintain their current lifestyles, but this willingness may be limited. It is a dilemma of whether Starbucks® should strengthen the concept of the petty bourgeois lifestyle or vice versa. To strengthen it, Starbucks® may have to come up with

new ways to keep its loyal consumers and to attract its potential consumers. To diminish it, though not a favorable option given the current situation, the corporation may have to reestablish its brand concept and reposition its products as more financially accessible. Either way, the corporation should pay attention to consumer reactions and take into consideration the social contexts.

Although this research primarily focuses on Starbucks® coffee culture in China, it may also provide insights for other transnational corporations seeking to establish business in China. The Starbucks® case brings up the issue of balancing between the corporations' global and local identity, a challenge that is faced by all transnational corporations. Whereas local consumers find the foreign concept appealing and incorporate it as part of their identities, they still consider their own national identities as a priority. Being Chinese and preserving the Chinese tradition takes up a large portion of their identity. Therefore, foreign brands that wish to appeal to Chinese consumers should also adjust their corporate identities accordingly. While introduction of a new product may attract consumers with its novelty, it also requires a Chinese identity in the long run. However, the "Chineseness" should be in check so as not to conceal its original corporate identity since the new identity (i.e., the glocalized identity) is what consumers aspire to. Furthermore, results of this research offer insights as to what kind of lifestyles the younger Chinese generations would like to be associated with. This is a social group that consumes products for the meanings attached, occasionally regardless of practical elements such as prices and utility. To enrich and nurture the meanings associated with a certain brand or product then becomes the key to grab this generation's attentions. With the circuit of culture framework, the findings in this

research may apply to other countries as well. The cultural nuances and the issue of glocalization is a permanent theme faced by all transnational corporations.

In addition to implications for the transnational corporations, this research also provides implications for the circuit of culture model. Building on previous research on the theory, this research also shows that the moments in the circuit of culture are difficult to be dismantled and compartmentalized when it comes to application and analysis. Besides, it is more difficult to distinguish among the moments since cultural meanings are created through all five moments and their interactions. However, this research indicates that it would be possible to analyze the meaning creation circuit as a whole in each theme. In general, the cultural contradiction, though seemingly minor, is extremely crucial for other transnational corporations trying to establish their brand concept and reputation in a foreign country. Investigating the subtle cultural distinctions of how consumers view Starbucks[®] coffee culture is crucial for the brand's future development in the country. Furthermore, the circuit of culture, utilizing the five moments to analyze the cultural perceptions associated with a brand, proves to be a very effective and productive analyzing tool.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

While the research offers insights into the production of coffee culture in China under the framework of circuit of culture, it has limitations regarding the method and sampling. First, the choice of focus groups and in-depth interviews as primary methods may yield some limitations. Whereas qualitative research methods could provide insightful and rich information regarding consumers' perceptions, the result cannot speak for the all coffee drinkers in China. Additionally, the study only focused on a

subgroup of population in China and thus their views and attitudes cannot represent the entire population. The discussions elicited from the focus groups and the individual quotations from the in-depth interview are based on participants' unique personal experiences. Furthermore, given the nature of focus groups, participants may be influenced by each other's opinions. The tendency may be more prominent in this study since avoiding conflicts and different opinions are stressed in Chinese culture, especially among strangers. Therefore, participants may simply swell with the chorus during the focus group discussions even when they are holding different opinions, thus concealing different voices and disagreements. Using instant communication tools such as Skype for the interviews also yields some issues. Since most participants chose to do the interview with only voice chat, it compromised important non-verbal cues during the interview.

Additionally, this study only examined one small segment of the booming Chinese market and its consumers. As far as marketing and branding is concerned, cultural nuance is always an important issue for transnational corporations trying to establish business in foreign lands. Besides, the case in China is particularly noteworthy for Western corporations. Wang (2008), in the preface of her book on branding and marketing in China, suggested that the future advertising research in China should challenge the conventional content analysis approach and focus more on production and consumption, since advertisements nowadays are "increasingly made for target audiences to which the academic interpreter does not belong" (pp. xii). Additionally, she proposed a break through of the traditional dichotomies existed between local and global as well as consumers and producers, bringing cultural studies into advertising

research. The framework of the circuit of culture, as a cultural model, brings together all the interactive moments both global and local, consumers and producers in the loop, including the corporate sector, media and consumers. Therefore this study also shed light on how qualitative cultural studies can be utilized for transnational corporations. As culture is becoming increasingly important in branding and marketing activities of transnational corporations, future research could look into other culturally sensitive areas by employing the models of cultural studies.

Conclusion

Despite focusing primarily on the coffee culture phenomenon in contemporary China, this study investigates the production of culture through the perspectives from advertising, corporation and cultural studies. The issue under study is placed within the intersection of all sectors, including media, corporation, advertising industry as well as the consumers. Relating all the above concepts, this study intended to provide a better understanding of the production of coffee culture from the consumption's perspective.

Findings showed that Chinese consumers generally see coffee culture as young, social, foreign, unconventional, representing the fast rhythm of city life and bourgeois lifestyle and closely related with the few coffee brands. Starbucks[®], as a highly acknowledged coffee brand among the Chinese consumers, creates a brandscape that fits well into the circuit of culture model. This is to say that Starbucks' branding has been so powerful that it has become both "cause" in that it shapes Chinese coffee consumer expectations of coffee culture, and "effect" in that it has profited as a product from meeting the expectations that it has created. Additionally, results also showed that

consumers' perceptions on the corporation's representation and identity, as well as their own identity in consuming the product have a greater impact on the formation of culture.

All in all, this study intended to examine the production of coffee culture in China with the five moments in the circuit of culture model. By analyzing the production of culture, this study indicated that cultural studies could be well integrated into advertising research. It also sought to motivate corporations to look more into the cultural nuances and take the consumers' perspectives into consider when it comes to marketing and branding in a foreign country.

APPENDIX A
FOCUS GROUP INFORMED CONSENT

Participation Consent

Dear Participants:

I am a graduate student at the University of Florida. As part of my coursework I am conducting a focus group study, the purpose of which is to learn about how Chinese perceive coffee culture. Interviewees will be asked to participate in a group discussion lasting no longer than 2 hours. The schedule of questions is enclosed with this letter. The discussion and interview will be conducted in Chinese. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. With your permission I would like to record this focus group discussion. Only I will have access to the tape, which I will personally transcribe, removing any identifiers during transcription. The recorded data will then be erased. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this focus group. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate and may discontinue your participation in the interview at any time without consequence.

If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at 1-(352)-213-7909 or my faculty supervisor, Lisa Duke Cornell, 1-(352) 392-0447.

Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant rights may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611; (352) 392-0433.

Please sign and return this copy of the letter in the enclosed envelope. A second copy is provided for your records. By signing this letter, you give me permission to

report your responses anonymously in the final manuscript to be submitted to my faculty supervisor as part of my course work.

Xiaochen Zhang _____

I have read the procedure described above for the independent study. I voluntarily agree to participate in the focus group and I have received a copy of this description.

_____ Signature of participant _____ Date

I would like to receive a copy of the final "interview" manuscript submitted to the instructor. YES / NO

APPENDIX B
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW INFORMED CONSENT

Participation Consent

Dear Participants:

I am a graduate student at the University of Florida. As part of my coursework I am conducting an in-depth interview study, the purpose of which is to learn about how Chinese perceive coffee culture. Interviewees will be invited to a personal interview lasting no longer than 1 hour. The schedule of questions is enclosed with this letter. The interview will be conducted in Chinese. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. With your permission I would like to record this interview. Only I will have access to the tape, which I will personally transcribe, removing any identifiers during transcription. The recorded data will then be erased. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this interview. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate and may discontinue your participation in the interview at any time without consequence.

If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at 1-(352)-213-7909 or my faculty supervisor, Lisa Duke Cornell, 1-(352) 392-0447. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant rights may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611; (352) 392-0433.

Please sign and return this copy of the letter in the enclosed envelope. A second copy is provided for your records. By signing this letter, you give me permission to

report your responses anonymously in the final manuscript to be submitted to my faculty supervisor as part of my course work.

Xiaochen Zhang _____

I have read the procedure described above for the independent study. I voluntarily agree to participate in the focus group and I have received a copy of this description.

_____ Signature of participant _____ Date

I would like to receive a copy of the final "interview" manuscript submitted to the instructor. YES / NO

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW GUIDE: FOCUS GROUP (ENGLISH)

Question 1 Please tell us your name and a bit about yourself (e.g., your major, what you enjoy doing in spare time, etc.).

Question 2 What is the first image/picture that come to your mind when talking about coffee culture? (Can you remember what it was that influenced this perception?)

Question 3 What was your first coffee experience? What happened?

Question 4 Can you describe a negative or positive coffee experience that was most memorable? (What do you enjoy most about coffee, or vice versa?)

Question 5 How do you think coffee has changed your life? (What would your life be like without coffee?)

Question 6 Describe a lifestyle associate with coffee.

Question 7 [If time allows, repeat question 2-6, change coffee into tea] What do you think of coffee culture when comparing with tea culture? (If mentioning the difference) What do you think is the difference in values? Would you address coffee as a “foreign” drink?

Question 8 What do you think of the coffee culture in China nowadays compared with that of ten years ago? If there’s any change, what do you think influences it?

Question 9 [Moderator gives a brief summary of the discussion] Did I correctly described what was said?

Question 10 Is there anything that we should have talked about but didn’t?

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW GUIDE: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW (ENGLISH)

Question 1 What is the first image/picture that come to your mind when talking about coffee culture?

1.1 Can you give a more detailed description of that?

1.2 Can you remember what it was that influenced this perception?

Question 2 What was your first coffee experience? What happened?

2.2 How did you feel about it then?

Question 3 What is your favorite kind of coffee?

3.1 (If there is) You mentioned... when do you drink it? Where? what do you like about it?

3.2 (If there isn't) What kind do you usually drink? What kind would you most likely to try out?

Question 4 What would your life be like without coffee?

Question 5 What do you think of coffee culture when comparing with tea culture?

5.1 When do you usually have tea and coffee?

5.2 Can you elaborate that further in detail?

5.3 (If mentioning the difference) What do you think is the difference in values?

5.4 Would you address coffee as a "foreign" drink?

Question 6 What kind of people would be most likely to consume coffee? Could you describe?

6.1 What kind of environment would it be?

Question 7 What do you think of Starbucks?

7.1 (If positive view) What do you like about it in particular?

7.2 (If negative view) Where did you get that view?

Question 8 Describe one of your Starbucks experience (either negative or positive).

Question 9 What would you most likely to associate Starbucks with?

9.1 What kind of people would be most likely to consume Starbucks coffee? Could you describe?

9.2 What kind of environment would it be?

Question 10 Have you heard of the Starbucks boycott incident in the Forbidden City in Beijing in 2007? What do you think of it?

Question 11 Anything else you would like to share? Do you have any comments?

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW GUIDE: FOCUS GROUP (CHINESE)

采访提纲 (焦点小组)

问题 1 首先请大家先作一下自我介绍 (例如 , 你的专业、你的爱好等)

问题 2 谈到咖啡文化 , 你首先想到的是什么 ? (是什么让你有这种感觉 ?)

问题 3 能谈谈你第一次喝咖啡时的情景吗 ? 是怎样的 ? 发生了什么 ?

问题 4 能谈谈你印象最深的一次咖啡体验吗 ? (你最喜欢或最不喜欢哪什么 ?)

问题 5 没有咖啡的话你的生活将会是什么样子 ?

问题 6 请描述一个跟咖啡相关的生活方式。

问题 7 [若时间允许 , 重复问题 1 - 2 , 将咖啡换成茶]与茶文化相比 , 你怎么看待咖啡文化 ? (如果谈及区别) 你觉得在价值观上有什么区别吗 ? 你会将咖啡看作一种“西方”的饮料吗 ?

问题 8 相比较十年前 , 你怎么看中国现在的咖啡文化 ? 若有变化 , 你认为是什么影响的 ?

问题 9 [简略总结讨论内容] 我刚刚概括的是否准确 ?

问题 10 还有没有我们应该谈论而没有提及的方面 ?

APPENDIX F
INTERVIEW GUIDE: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW (CHINESE)

采访提纲 主要问题：中国人怎样看待咖啡文化？

问题 1 谈到咖啡文化，你首先想到的是什么？

1.1 能详细描述一下吗？

1.2 是什么让你有这种感觉？

问题 2 能谈谈你第一次喝咖啡时的情景吗？是怎样的？发生了什么？

2.2 你当时是什么感觉？

问题 3 你最喜欢哪种咖啡？

3.1 (若有)你提到...你一般什么时候喝？在哪里？你喜欢它的什么？

3.2 (若没有)你一般喜欢喝什么？你最想尝试哪种？

问题 4 没有咖啡的话你的生活将会是什么样子？

问题 5 与茶文化相比，你怎么看待咖啡文化？

5.1 一般什么时候喝茶或者咖啡？

5.2 能具体一些吗？

5.3 (如果谈及区别)你觉得在价值观上有什么区别吗？

5.4 你会将咖啡看作一种“西方”的饮料吗？

问题 6 你认为什么样的人喝咖啡？能描述一下吗？

6.1 在何种环境下？

问题 7 你怎么看待星巴克？

7.1 (若正面印象)你喜欢它的什么？

7.2 (若负面印象)你从哪里得来的印象？

问题 8 请描述一个你的星巴克体验 (正面或者负面).

问题 9 你最容易将星巴克与什么相联系？

9.1 你认为什么样的人 would 喝星巴克咖啡？能描述一下吗？

9.2 在何种环境下？

问题 10 你听说过 2007 年星巴克在故宫的事情吗？你怎么看待那件事？

问题 11 你还想说点什么吗？有什么评论吗？

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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