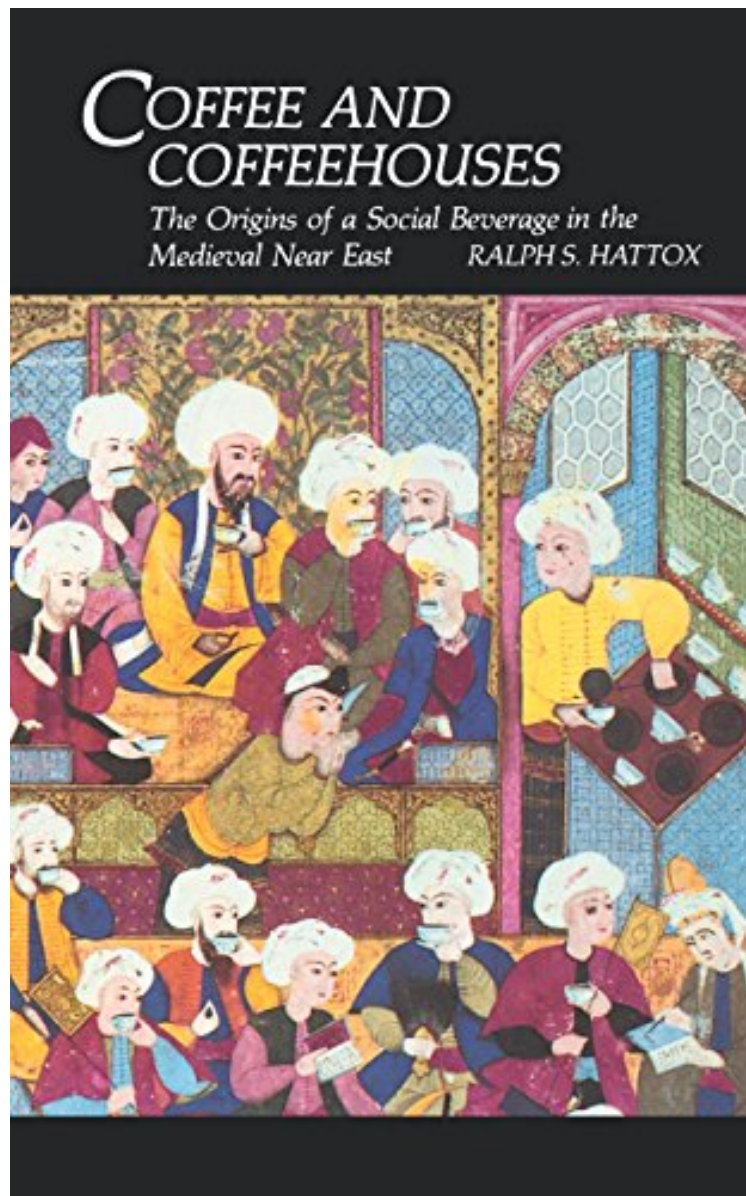


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Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East (Publications on the Near East)

Ralph S. Hattox

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If you are a coffee enthusiast and history-buff, this book will make you squeal in delight. As a historian and coffee snob, I sat down with a cup of coffee and read this book cover to cover in one sitting. It's exciting, informative, and very well-written. I plan to buy more copies for other coffee-loving friends.
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This book presents a history of coffee and controversies related to it within the Arab world, especially the Arabian peninsula, Egypt, and Turkey. It includes 16 historical illustrations, depicting various serving implements for coffee and coffee establishments covering approximately 300 years. The scholarly style of the text may not be easy to follow for the general reader, especially readers who are not familiar with some basic Arabic naming conventions and structure. However, the research seems to be exceedingly well done and documented. The focus on coffee-related controversies can be somewhat disorienting, since the author assumes from the beginning that the reader will have some idea of the extent of the controversies and may even be able to speculate on their causes. The description of the legal opinions concerning coffee is quite clear, and could even help readers develop an understanding of more general questions of Islamic law. The author's comments on social change are also very lucid and worth reading for anyone interested in material culture.

Drawing on the accounts of early European travelers, original Arabic sources on jurisprudence and etiquette, and treatises on coffee from the period, the author recounts the colorful early history of the spread of coffee and the influence of coffeehouses in the medieval Near East. Detailed descriptions of the design, atmosphere, management, and patrons of early coffeehouses make fascinating reading for anyone interested in the history of coffee and the unique institution of the coffeehouse in urban Muslim society

"Coffee and its 'house' became a noticeable and long-lasting fixture in Muslim society and arguably a historical force to be reckoned with..How it all began can be learned from this short book, which is written with great care and full, reliable documentation."
American Historical From the Back Cover
The early history of coffee, from its use in Sufi rituals to its widespread consumption in medieval Muslim coffeehouses, makes fascinating reading. Drawing on original Arabic sources and the accounts of early European travelers, Hattox describes the colorful history of coffee and the birth of the unique institution of the coffeehouse in urban Muslim society.