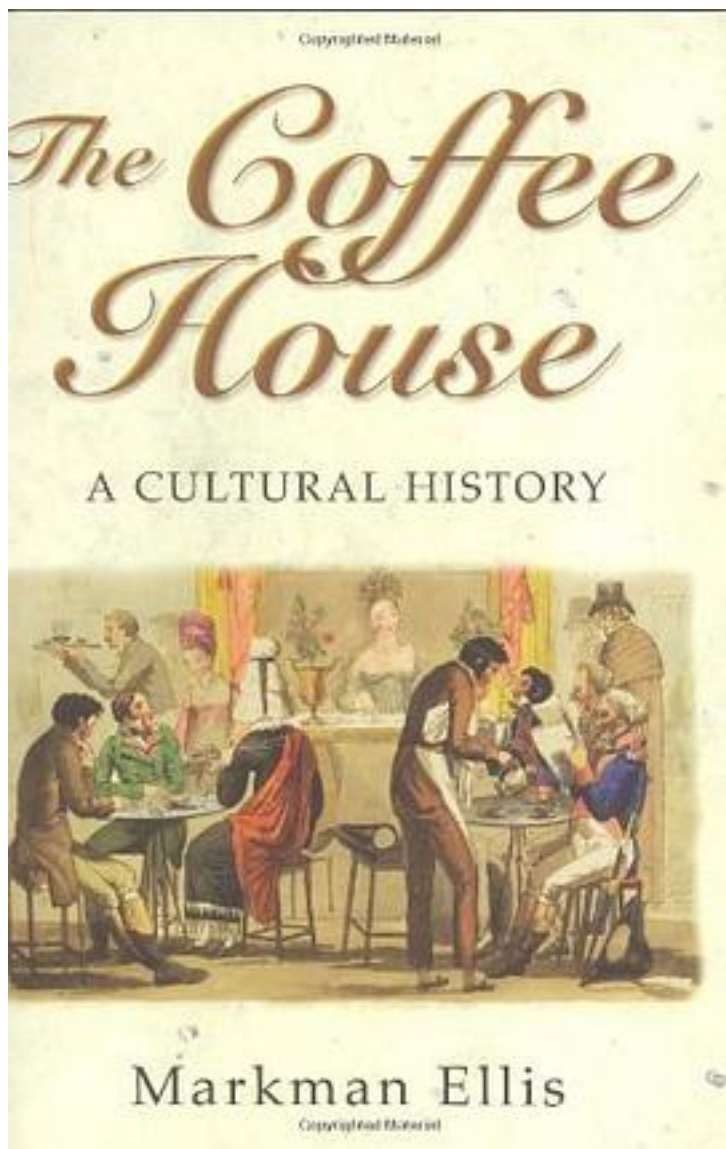


# The Coffee House



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When the first coffee-house opened in London in 1652, customers were bewildered by this strange new drink from Turkey - hot, bitter and black as soot. But those who tried coffee were soon won over. More coffee-houses were opened across London and, in the following decades, in America and Europe. For a hundred years the coffee-house occupied the centre of urban life, creating a distinctive social culture by treating all customers as equals. Gossip, dissent and sedition were exchanged and debated around their egalitarian tables. Merchants held auctions of goods, writers and poets conducted discussions, scientists demonstrated experiments and gave lectures, philanthropists deliberated reforms. Coffee-houses thus played a key role in the explosion of political, financial, scientific and literary change in the 18th century. The stock market, insurance companies, political parties and the scientific symposium had their birth in the coffee-house. In the 19th century the coffee-house declined, but the 1950s witnessed a dramatic revival in the popularity of coffee with the appearance of espresso machines and the coffee bar', and the 1990s saw the arrival of retail chains like Starbucks.

作者介绍:

Markman Ellis was educated at the universities of Auckland and Cambridge, and now teaches 18th-century literature and culture at Queen Mary, University of London. He has published books on the sentimental novel and gothic fiction, and articles on many topics in 18th-century studies, including georgic poetry, slavery, kangaroos and lap-dogs.

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