



The Travels of Dean Mahomet: An Eighteenth-Century Journey through India

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This unusual study combines two books in one: the 1794 autobiographical travel narrative of an Indian, Dean Mahomet, recalling his years as camp-follower, servant, and subaltern officer in the East India Company's army (1769 to 1784); and Michael H. Fisher's portrayal of Mahomet's sojourn as an insider/outsider in India, Ireland, and England. Emigrating to Britain and living there for over half a century, Mahomet started what was probably the first Indian restaurant in England and then enjoyed a distinguished career as a practitioner of "oriental" medicine, i.e., therapeutic massage and herbal steam bath, in London and the seaside resort of Brighton. This is a fascinating account of life in late eighteenth-century India—the first book written in English by an Indian—framed by a mini-biography of a remarkably versatile entrepreneur.

Travels presents an Indian's view of the British conquest of India and conveys the vital role taken by Indians in the colonial process, especially as they negotiated relations with Britons both in the colonial periphery and the imperial metropole.

Connoisseurs of unusual travel narratives, historians of England, Ireland, and British India, as well as literary scholars of autobiography and colonial discourse will find much in this book. But it also offers an engaging biography of a resourceful, multidimensional individual.

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