



## Pandita Ramabai: Life and landmark writings

By Meera Kosambi

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This book looks at the life of Pandita Ramabai, one of the major social reformers of 19th-century India. Her unique life trajectory spanned across a pan-Indian, orthodox Hindu mould to being part of Brahma Samaj and Prarthana Samaj, and further to Christianity. At the age of 30 she had travelled widely within India and across the world, from USA and UK in the West to Japan in the Far East. She reported these fascinating journeys to international friends and fellow Maharashtrians in both English and Marathi. Fighting conservatism and marginalization she set up several projects to empower women, notably, the Sharada Sadan in Mumbai and the Mukti Mission in Kedgaon near Pune in Maharashtra.

This work locates Pandita Ramabai within her liminal social milieu and discursive networks during various phases of her life, and traces her diverse ideological routes along with her critical writings, some of which have been retrieved and/or presented in English translation here for the first time, including *The High-Caste Hindu Woman* and the newly discovered *Voyage to England*. Offering a comprehensive insight into aspects of 19th-century Indian society — religion and reform, women's rights and feminism, social movements, poverty, and colonialism — this book will greatly interest researchers and students of South Asian history, sociology, and gender studies.

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### Editorial Review

About the Author

**Meera Kosambi** was a sociologist and retired as Professor and Director, Research Centre for Women's Studies, SNDT University, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. She was trained in India, Sweden and the USA, and specialized in urban studies and women's studies. She has contributed research-based writings and delivered lectures in many countries. Her publications include *Gender, Culture and Performance: Marathi Theatre and Cinema before Independence* (2015, Routledge); *Crossing Thresholds* (2007); *Women Writing Gender* (2012); and *Mahatma Gandhi and Prema Kantak* (2013).

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