

Name: _____ Date: _____

Women, Caste and Reform

Q1. What do you know about Tarabai Shinde and Pandita Ramabai? What did they do for improving the condition of women?

Ans. _____

Q2. How did Jyotirao the reformers justify their criticism of caste inequality in society?

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Q1. What do you know about Tarabai Shinde and Pandita Ramabai? What did they do for improving the condition of women?

Ans. Tarabai Shinde, a woman educated at home at Poona, published a book, *Stripurushtulna*, (A Comparison between Women and Men), criticizing the social differences between men and women.

Pandita Ramabai, a great scholar of Sanskrit, felt that Hinduism was oppressive towards women, and wrote a book about the miserable lives of upper-caste Hindu women. She founded a widows' home at Poona to provide shelter to widows who had been treated badly by their husbands' relatives. Here women were trained so that they could support themselves economically.

Q2. How did Jyotirao the reformers justify their criticism of caste inequality in society?

Ans. Jyotirao developed his own ideas about the injustices of caste society. He did not accept the Brahmins' claim that they were superior to others, since they were Aryans. Phule argued that the Aryans were foreigners, who came from outside the subcontinent, and defeated and subjugated the true children of the country – those who had lived here from before the coming of the Aryans. As the Aryans established their dominance, they began looking at the defeated population as inferior, as lowcaste people. According to Phule, the "upper" castes had no right to their land and power: in reality, the land belonged to indigenous people, the so-called low castes.