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Sommario/riassunto	<p>The ascetic, devotional sect of the Mahanubhavs -Those of the great experience - arose, like the much more popular bhakti movement of the Varkaris centred in Pandharpur, in thirteenth century Maharashtra. If in the beginning the Mahanubhavs had a fairly rapid expansion, especially in the northern and eastern regions of Maharashtra, around the end of the fourteenth century their movement went underground aiming at a defensive isolation from the larger Hindu context. They centred themselves in remote areas and villages. Although the prominent leaders among the early Mahanubhavs were brahmins (often converts from the prevailing advaita vaishnavism), their followers were and are mostly non-brahmins, that is, low caste people and even untouchables. Outside of their own closed circles Mahanubhavs were met with prejudice and distrust, at least up to the beginning of the twentieth century. In this volume the author offers an overview of the origins and main religious and doctrinal characteristics of the Mahanubhavs, discussing those aspects which appear especially revealing of their difference and nonconformity.</p>