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**SAMIDHA: STEPS TOWARD THE SOCIAL WORKER**

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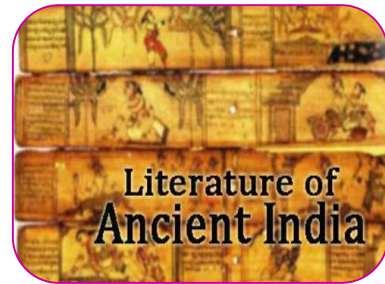
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**ABSTRACT :**

Indian literature comprises of epic, songs, sonnets, essays dramas, fictions and autobiographies. These genres talk about history, culture, politics, religion and gender, minority society, status of women in India, relationship between brother and sister, parents, beloved and education and so on. Epics talk about ancient Indian politics, culture society and religion etc. Other genres essays, dramas, fictions and autobiographies talk about recent Indian society, politics, culture and religion, status of women in India. How do Dalit's and tribes face the problems in India?



**KEYWORDS :** Indian literature , ancient Indian politics, culture society.

**INTRODUCTION :**

There are great social workers like Mahatma Gandhi, Mahatma Jyotiba Fule, Savitribai Fule, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Anna Hajare, Medha Patkar, and Baba Amte and Sadhana Amte etc. All these social workers loved mankind without discrimination of caste, creed, and religion. Mahatma Gandhi said once, 'There is one force in life and that is Truth, and there is but one love in life and that is the love of mankind, and there is but one god in life that is the God of all'. (Iyengar-35,36)

In this research paper Baba Amte and Sadhana Amte's early life and work will be focused. There is no fixed definition of a social worker. 'the person who works for the welfare of society throughout his or her life without deviating his or her path or principles', can be called social worker as such.

Baba Amte's name is Murlidhar Devidas Amte. *Samidha* is written in Marathi by Sadhanatai Amte, later on it is translated into English by Shobha Pawar.

Indu Ghule took birth in conservative Ghule family. Ghule family generation after generation worshipped the God. Indu's father died when she was ten years old. Her father worked in the secretariat. She was told to read religious books, she took primary education in the National Girls High School. She appeared for scholarship examination when she was in ninth class at that time Quiet Indian Movement was started by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. She was very shy and does not talk to men. She used to be happy with children. She was not told outdoor works. The Ghule family thought that Indu is unfit girl for doing outdoor jobs. She took part in Narmada Bacho Aandolan also.

Indu has compassion. She cannot see the tears in the eyes of poor and needy people. 'On such occasions I do not bother to find out whether they are true or false. It often talks me a while to discern pretensions. But the fact remains that tears disturb me a great deal even today'. (*Samidha*-8)

Indu used to give water and food to the harijans and beggars. It shows she is very kind and helping to backward people. Her brother also died of smallpox. This event shocked all the Ghule family. The time cannot heal such kind of wound. They worshipped the goddess and applied herbal medicine but it's of no use. Reading short stories, novels or any type of literature is not allowed. Family members were allowed to read the religious books only. Sadhana Amte has good housekeeping skills, cleverness and studiousness. 'Reading novels, short stories ad plays was strictly prohibited'. (*Samidha* -10)

Murlidhar Amte first visited the house of Indu in 1946. Govindndrao Paul brought Murlidhar Amte along with him. Indu's two sisters were married. Indu and her third sister was of marriageable age. There was discussion about marriage of Murlidhar Amte and her sister but their horoscope did not match. When Murlidhar Amte was young, he lived very simple life. He used to carry clothes and kumble, but he was rich person and has large estate, motor-car and a bungalow. He was involved in national thinking and welfare of the poor and needy.

When Murlidhar Amte meets Indu Ghule at the time he gave a long discourse on importance of Khadi. This thought was completely nationalist at those time. He was influenced by the nature beauty, readiness, studiousness of Indu Ghule. She also feels lonely when he departed from her house. He writes in his first letter that 'a series of complements to me for my capacity for diligent work, my penchant for serving the needy and an appreciation of my beauty'. (*Samidha* -15)

He wrote many letters to Indu, but all letters have to go through domestic censorship. He directly demanded Indu's hand in marriage. All family opposed to the idea because of Murlidhar's life style and there is difference between their age. Indu inwardly wants to marry Murlidhar Amte. She told to the house members. This was really a love at first sight. On the one side Murali was romantic and Indu was realistic. Indu's family was conservative and traditions keeping. They have never expected that in future they will erect such type of work poor, needy, helpless and leprosy patients. 'The inner urge to tear down the artificial barriers of convention coupled with love at first sight worked a miracle.' (*Samidha* -18)

Murlidhar was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. He used khaki and dhoti. He practiced charkha as well. M. K. Gandhi is known for his non-violence to the world. 'My creed of non-violence is an extremely active force. It has no room for cowardice or even weakness. There is a hope for a violent man to be some day non-violent, but there is none for a coward. I have therefore said more than once ... that if we do not know how to defend ourselves, our women and our places of worship by the force of suffering i.e. non-violence, we must if we are men, be at least able to defend all these by fighting'. (Prabhu- 68,69) It seems from the following dialogue Murlidhar Amte has followed Mahatma Gandhi. One day Indu asked Murlidhar Amte 'What will you do if thieves come? You are a follower of Gandhiji and in non-violence. If thieves come Muralidhar will say that 'Here are the keys to treasure. You can gladly take away whatever you want and next day if you feel guilty, fast for a day for the purification of your soul'. (*Samidha* -24)

Murlidhar Amte before wedding lived in the groom's home, at that time he had a big fight with the thief. He was badly injured. This fight is known to Murlidhar's father. This they did not like. In Indian marriage system bridegroom does not live in the groom's house before wedding takes place. This act of Muralidhar is criticized not only by his family member but also all Warora people. But he was modernist and liberal in his principle.

Indu and Murlidhar's marriage took place on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 1946. Many people attended the marriage ceremony. Murlidhar has a big fight with a thief and he was hospitalized. That's why some bandages were seen to his leg and head. The marriage is performed in traditional Vedic style but Murlidhar did not like it, and has no other option. He was mentally absent, He disliked such kind of ceremony and did not take part in that ceremony willingly. 'I have already told you that Baba does not believe in ritual or idol-worship. He has more faith in reason.' (*Samidha* -31)

All typical Indian brides when they first come to their father's house, after wedding, they want to boast about in-laws or get sympathy of the parents, sister and brother. But Indu did not indulge in this matter. She neither boasted nor got sympathy of the parent. She does not use so much jewelry as newly bride wears. Many wives criticized but Indu does not pay any attention to their criticism. 'In a typical middle-

class family, gold ornaments play a crucial role in deciding the status and the happiness of the newly wedded girl. My parents were shocked to see me without a single piece of jewelry'. (*Samidha* -37)

Samidha is a story of a common man and woman i.e. Murlidhar Amte and Indu Ghule. Everyone's aim is different. Some people want to become politician, others doctor, engineer, architect, teacher, administrator and builder. But the motive behind becoming anything is important. If the motive is selfish, then his or her actions will not be ideal. Some men and women give preference to their development, some give preference to their relatives. Some give preference to religion. Some people give preference to province etc. but Murlidhar Amte and Indu Ghule has given preference to tribal, dalits, needy, poor, helpless, illiterate who are seen in any caste and religion. The people who help tribal, dalit, needy poor, helpless and illiterate without considering their caste and religion are great and ideal.

'Nothing stemmed from premeditated intellectual positions, about the equality of men and women's liberation or eternal male domination. ... our work together and my share in it too is purely out of love. Baba's philosophy of care and share began at home and extended to a large section of society where it was needed – to lepers, the destitute, the physically handicapped, orphans, the tribal and the displaced'. (*Samidha* -39)

Baba Amte and Sadhana Amte are the doctors by profession. But they have not used profession for their progress, they have used their profession for betterment of tribal, dalit, needy, helpless, leprosy and betterment of animals like tiger, snakes and wild animals. After doing their degree they have faced many problems – tribal's attacks, wild animal's attacks, but they have not left the work. Such work nobody does even for their betterment. To become social worker one must have vision of betterment of society. Then there must be an action plan to reach that vision. Baba Amte and Sadhana Amte's vision is not limited for their life but even it continued from their life afterwards. 'Thus Vikas, his wife and children are continuing the great work at Anandwan, while Prakash and his wife Mandakini are doing remarkable service both to tribal families as well as to wild life in the dense forest of Bhamaragad in the Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra.' (vii foreword by M. S. Swaminathan) When they arrived at Warora a grand welcome is arranged by Harijans. Muralidhar was a leader of downtrodden. They decorated a stage carefully. Some harijans kept distance from the newly wedded couple. It is the custom and strictly practiced by the Brahmin community that when they touch an untouchable by mistake. They have to get a bath. 'Shashi Deshpande presented very clearly the details of a large Maharashtrian Brahmin household, and the myriad women characters, their greed, jealousy, hopes, fears, disappointments, and their anguish.' (A. P. Mali-55) Akka is the famous character in the novel *Roots and Shadows*, falls ill and hospitalized once. Actually we have to take treatment from the doctor whose caste is unknown. Akka has doubt about the doctor, she thinks that they may belong to lower caste. 'God knows what caste the nurses are ... or the doctors. I couldn't drink a drop of water there.' (Deshpande Shashi-24) Indu told that, if she touches untouchables, she will not get bath. She mixed with ladies of backward class. They were offered the images of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru.

In this way early life of Baba Amte and Sadhana Amte was very remarkable one and that leads to social worker.

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