



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF VISHWAKARMA COMMUNITY IN BALLARI DISTRICT: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The Vishwakarma community has existed since long back and has been engaging in different occupations parts in the history of India. The Vishwakarma is known for their creative work and have contributed not only to art, structural design, Sculpture and also to the agriculture and others in manufacturing tools and implements required by them. Vishwakarma communities are the traditional artisans. They constitute five occupational groups namely Blacksmith, Carpenter, Braziers, sculptor, and Goldsmith in Society. They believed that they are descendants of Vishwakarma, a Hindu deity.

Method: adopted for this study paper is as usual to the social science. The authors adopted a secondary source of data. Data is generated from research books, articles and electronic media.

Aims: The present paper and its study area are about Vishwakarma's in Ballari District. To know the different Divisions, Structure, and Occupations of the Vishwakarma Community. This study paper attempts to understand their Historical Perspective of the Vishwakarma Community etc.

Conclusion: Community plays a very significant role in the life of an individual. A community is the total organized social life of a locality. The community life provides the individual the needed protection and security. It is also applicable to the Vishwakarma community. Historically, this community has been an expression that emphasized the unity of the common life among the artisan people.

KEYWORDS : Vishwakarma Community, Artisans, Historical Perspective and Society.

INTRODUCTION:

Vishwakarma is the name of the God. Vishwakarmas are Basically Artisans in Society. The Vishwakarma community, also known as the Vishwabrahmin, is a social group of India, sometimes described as a caste. The community comprises five sub-groups - Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Bronze smiths, Stonemasons and Goldsmiths—who believe that they are descendants of Vishwakarma, a Hindu deity.

Vishwakarma or the Vishwa Brahmin community is used in India for the class of engineers, architects, sculptors, temple builders, and artists. Generally the term Vishwakarma caste is used for five classes of people namely the gold-smiths, the black-smiths, the copper-smith, the carpenter and the sculptors. In India there are several sub-divisions of the Vishwakarma caste in the different regions.

Their communal identity has always been strongly tied to their profession. With industrialization and more recently, globalization, the traditional artisan trade has been greatly affected. The socio-economic and technological forces are buffeting their profession to extinction. This has contributed to a sort of identity crisis - being unable to identify with the upper castes or the lower castes. They also have a rather unpopular history (until the 1980s) of identifying with the communists. Their socio-economic status varies from a very high level to a low level in different parts of India as they earned high wages in towns because of their factory employment and income low in villages.

Human society is divided into different classes or strata. This is a universal feature found in all societies. Social inequalities are generally expressed in certain social differences like power, occupation, prestige, position and wealth or status. Generally we find different groups or classes ranked one above the other in different strata or layers. Such a kind of hierarchical order of different groups like a ladder is called stratification.

Vishwakarma People are indicated in Vedas as Special Creation. They are not Created by Sri Brahma who creates other People, Animals, Birds, Etc. Vishwakarma People are Created from five heads by Sri Vishwakarma who Creates All Gods and Whole Universe. They have Separate Identities, Religious rites, traditional culture, and Individual Heritage. If They Follow the Procedures as they can, they can Make New History like as their ancestors in Society.

Meaning of the Vishwakarma:

Vishwakarma is of Indian origin, it generally means Architect of the universe, Name Vishwakarma is a Masculine (or Boy) name. Person

with name Vishwakarma are mainly Hindu by religion. The community comprises five-sub groups – Carpenters, Blacksmiths, Branzesmith, Goldsmiths, and Stonemasons- who believe that they are descendants of Vishwakarma a Hindu deity.

Definitions of the Vishwakarma:

According to the Nirukta Scholar Yaskacharya (10-85): Vishwakarma means “Sarvasya Karta” (Performer of all). Which means to who are all the functions and routines of the world belong is Vishwakarmas.

Origin of the Vishwakarma:

To trace the origin of Vishwakarma and the descendants of an ancient community. Which for centuries had fallen into oblivion, justifies going back over 5000 years and even the earliest periods. The origin of Vishwakarma can be identified from Indus valley culture. Further, we find various ancient literary sources like Vedas, Brahman's, Upanishads, Puranas, historical events, and valuable records that explain Hindu life and thought. The other important sources of information The God Vishwakarma is considered by followers of the Hindu faith to be the divine architect or engineer of the universes. He had five children – Manu, Maya, Tvastar, Shilpi, and Vishwajna. Five subgroups being respectively the gotras of Blacksmith, Carpenters, Bronze smiths, Sculptures, and Goldsmiths. This is a feature of the Indian caste system.

Vishwakarma Puja Mahotsava:

"Vishwakarma Puja" always celebrated in India on the 17th of September every year. Since Vishwakarma is the divine engineer of the world, as a mark of reverence, Lord Vishwakarma is the creator of all the palaces of Hindu Gods and Goddesses along with their weapons and vehicles. The festival of Vishwakarma Jayanti is celebrated as the birth anniversary of Lord Vishwakarma every year. He is not only worshipped by the engineering and architectural community but also by all professionals. It is customary for craftsmen to worship their tools in his name. Vishwakarma Day is celebrated to worship Vishwakarma, an Indian god. Vishwakarma was the divine architect, and one of the fourteen precious things born of the Samudra Manthan. He constructed the holy city of Dwaraka where Lord Krishna ruled, the Maya Sabha of the Pandavas, and was the creator of many fabulous weapons for the gods. He is also called the divine carpenter, is mentioned in the Rig Veda, and is credited with Sthapati Veda, the science of mechanics and architecture.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

The method adopted for this study paper is as usual to the social science. The authors adopted a secondary source of data. Data is generated from research books, articles, and electronic media.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To know the different divisions, structures, and occupations of the Vishwakarma community.
2. Historical perspective of the Vishwakarma community.

1. The Different Divisions, Structure and Occupations of Vishwakarma Community:

According to Purusha Sukta of Rig-Veda, Vishwakarma is none other than 'the Purusha' from whose faces five sons have sprung. These sons are the author of five Vedas. These five Vedas are Rig-Veda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, Atharvaveda, and Pranavaveda. They are also the creators of 'Pancha Shilpas' – five Crafts:

Sons of Vishwakarma	Occupation	Nomenclature	Gotras	Division
<i>Manu</i>	Blacksmith (iron)	Kammara	Sanaga	Rig-Veda
<i>Maya</i>	Carpentry (wood)	Badigera (Rathakar)	Sanathana	Yajurveda
<i>Twastri</i>	Brazier (bronze, copper and other metals)	Kanchugara	Ahabhavana	Samaveda
<i>Shilpi</i>	Sculptor (stone)	Stapathy(shilpa kara)	Prathnasa	Atharva Veda
<i>Vishwajna</i>	Goldsmith (gold and silver)	Swarnakara	Suparnas	Pranava

The descendants of these sons of Vishwakarmas together are called Kammara or Panchala or Vishwabrahmins. They belong to a class of Brahmins who follow Vedic rituals and customs and profile the hereditary calling. The five gotras are further divided into a total of 25 sub-clans called *upagotras*.

2. Historical Perspective of Vishwakarma Community:

Vishwakarma is the Personification of ultimate reality and deity of the creative power. He is believed to be one of the ancient architects or engineers who created and taught building of ancient monuments, architectures in India. According to the Rig-Veda He is considered to be the architect, divine engineer of the universe from before the advent of time in Society.

Vishvakarma was originally used as an epithet for any supreme god and as an attribute of Indra and the Sun. The name Vishvakarma occurs five times in the tenth book of the Rig-Veda. The two hymns of the Rig-Veda identify Vishvakarma as all-seeing, and having eyes, faces, arms and feet on every side and also have wings. Brahma, the later god of creation, who is four-faced and four-armed, resembles him in these aspects. He is represented as being the source of all prosperity, as swift as thought and titled a seer, priest, lord of speech.

While many sources refer to the five sub-groups of the Vishwakarma as artisans, Ramaswamy believes that the Vishwakarma of the medieval period should be distinguished as craftsmen, arguing that "... while all craftsmen were an artisan, every artisan was not a craftsman". Ramaswamy notes that the socio-economic and geographic stability of a medieval village-based maker of plows differed considerably from that of the various people who banded together as Vishwakarma and lived a relatively itinerant lifestyle that was dependent on the "temple economy" that waxed and waned as dynasties such as the Vijayanagara Empire were formed and disintegrated. The latter group, who did work in proximity to each other while constructing and embellishing temples, had opportunities for socio-economic advancement but also bore the risks of withdrawal of patronage and changes in religious focus.

Archaeological discoveries show the highly advanced civilization emerged in India as far back as 5000 years. Hitherto some scholars assumed that civilization had been brought from Outside by Aryans. The people who lived in the Indus valley knew about agriculture, sculpture, engraving, carving, jewelry, astrology, agriculture, etc. They were skilled craftsmen in gold, silver, and bronze. Rich ornaments like bangles, ring, necklaces, earrings, bronze mirrors and cosmetics were enjoyed great popularity among noble citizens. They worshiped Shiva or Pashupati and mother goddess. Edifices of temples were also found in these settlements.

to various castes, tribes, religious and linguistic groups. Each group claims that its cultural life is unique and distinct from others. The patterns of behavior, self-image, and other aspects of life reflect their religion. An outsider finds it difficult to understand the Indian scene in its real perspective because of its complexities inherent in the social system. Despite such complexities, the social scientists have penetrated deep into the various issues of Indian society and can explain many of the problems. Though that ancient scholars as well as foreigners [orientalist and ideologists] have studied about the community orientation of Hindu social structure, broadly under ideological, cultural and empirical approaches, yet certain aspects of community studies have been relatively unnoticed or the studies seem to be inadequate.

Vishwakarma is the largest single group under the Hindu fold in India with a population of 18 crores. Vishwakarma community could never consolidate itself like other communities either politically or communally. It failed to organize politically since it never had a philosophical vision needed for political organization. On the other hand, it could never organize communally also since it lacked a spirituality that could impart symbolic coherence to the community's aspirations.

Vishwakarma or Vishwabrahmins is a term used in India to describe five castes of artisans in India, formerly more closely connected than they are now. Vishwakarma is a common term for five castes who are into artisan professions namely Goldsmith, Carpenter, Blacksmith, Copper-smith and Stone-mason. The Vishwakarma of south Karnataka is composed of several sub-castes namely the Kulachars (ironsmiths and carpenters) the Shivachars (ironsmiths-cum-carpenters, founders-cum-sculptors) the Uttaradi goldsmiths, the Matachar founders, the Muddekammaras Chikkamanes and the Doddamanes. Most of these sub-castes do not inter-marry, and do have a hierarchy amongst them. All the sub-castes worship goddess Kali and they are very similar to Brahmins in their ritual practices.

According to traditional belief, Vishwabrahmins are descended from five sons of Lord Vishwakarma. They are Manu (blacksmith), Maya (carpenter), Thwastha (metal craftsman), Shilpi (stone-carver) and Vishwajna (goldsmith). The community is spread widely throughout India and played a vital role in the village economy. Their socio-economic status varied from a very high level to a low level in different parts of India as they earned high wages in towns because of their factory employment and low in villages.

Artisans (known as Kammalan/Vishwakarma/Vishwabrahmin in Kerala, in all south India, paradoxically, fought for a higher position in the community system. According to John Fryer, who visited India in 1670, the members of the Kammalan caste held themselves equal to Brahmins and disputed the higher position of Brahmins. The weavers and goldsmiths in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh created their priest systems. They belong to the category of Brahmins and wear the sacred thread. Vishwakarma Brahmins trace their origin back to the Vedic period. Brahmanism is divided into two categories Saptarshya Brahmanya and Pancharsheya Brahmanism and Vishwakarma Brahmins belong to Pancharsheya Brahmanism.

Contribution by these artisans who belong to the Vishwakarma community to the rural economy is quite significant. The architectural beauty of the temples and idols of gods and goddesses is sculptors' creation. With all this gifted craftsmanship Vishwakarma remains backward economically, educationally and more important, politically in Karnataka. The absence of unity is the main cause of their backwardness in society.

Review of Literature:

Venkataramacharya Naaba. Chandrasekharacharya (2000): In his "Vishwakarma Theory" he said that the world was null and void, and he made Pancharukha myself. The same Jagat underwent conversion. His brilliance was caused by five Vishnu Brahmans - Manu, Maya, Twastha, Sculptor, and Vishnu. The Universalist said of them. Walk the world through the Pancharukha and society will know that the world runs by these five. I am the master of sculptures and the sacrificial ritual. He said that all the skills of this world sculpture are my luxury. In this essay, I would like to know about the creation, status, and core of the Vishwakarma Theory for my research.

Dr. K.V. Krishna Murthy (2012): This book entitled "Traditional

Indian society is diversified into an infinite variety of people belonging

Artisans of South India" (Sociological Study of Vishwakarma) This study of traditional artisans, noted for their artistic skills, who preserved the rich heritage of Indian culture has been relatively ignored and unnoticed for a long period by sociologists and anthropologists. The Vishwakarma comprising five craftsmen viz, Blacksmiths, Carpenter, Braziers, Sculptures, and Goldsmiths. A cluster of these five occupational are called Vishwakarma or Traditional artisans in society. In this regard I have concentrated on the origin and development of the study for my research.

G. N. M. Acharya. (2012): In his book "Mahavishwakarma", the sun that gives life to the world is the new face, the invisible face Vishnu, the northeastern face of Lord Shiva, the Lord Brahma, the last Vamanadevaka-faced Indra, the Panchamukha deity is the Panchamukha Deva. Those of the Vishwa Brahman clan were the first Deva of the creation of Jagatgur Vishwakarma is praised by the Vedarshis as the cause of the creation of all the universes as the lord of all the universes. In this regard I have concentrated on their It is helpful to know the historical background of the creation and origin of the Vishwakarma study for my research.

Significance of the Study:

Traditional Vishwakarma artisans are defined as those native engineers, known for artistic excellence namely Blacksmith, Carpenters, Braziers, Sculptors, and Goldsmiths, the cluster of these occupational together constitute an ethnic group or community called Vishwakarma. Though they comprise a small number, yet they contributed much to the development of art, architecture and culture. They are famous for artistic skills in metal, wood, stone, ivory, and in the field of fine arts. Their past and present role in the field of social, economic, and cultural spheres makes them one of the most significant and Interesting people in Society.

Findings and suggestions:

1. Socio-Economically backward of this community.
2. This Community Members does not have machinery equipments.
3. The literacy level is very back in this society.
4. Vishwakarma community has not been successful in their efforts to improve their status and position.
5. Vishwakarma artisans making a livelihood out of their capabilities suffer as they need capital to invest.
6. The government has neglected the Vishwakarma Community artisans.
7. This community needs training and technical skills.
8. No facility in these Community differently occupational artisans.

CONCLUSION:

Community plays a very significant role in the life of an individual. A community is the total organized social life of a locality. The community life provides the individual the needed protection and security. It is also applicable to the Vishwakarma community. Historically, this community has been an expression that emphasized the unity of the common life among the artisan people. But in the wake of modern industrialization, increasing mechanization and other changes, the task of retaining its traditional occupations, customs, and architecture is more difficult in a society. The cluster of these occupational together constitutes an ethnic group or community called Vishwakarma. They have scattered in villages and towns all over India since the dawn of civilization. Though they constitute a tiny minority, functionally plays a significant role in the Socio-economic and Occupational Changes and development of the state in particular and country in general.

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