

What's our identity

The Suthar community extends worldwide as a direct result of the vision and foresight of Vishwakarma Dada. The following outline is taken from legendary and historical details collected and extracted from research into Hindu Scriptures (PURANS), Indian Government official gazettes and as told occasionally by the VAHIVANCHA – BAROS or BAROTS (Record keepers) of the Vainsh Suthar Community.

OVER 4,000 years ago, during the ancient Aryan times in India, there lived a great sage and originator of the Indian artisan communities named "Shree Vishwakarma". He possessed divine knowledge of the engineering crafts of wood, stone and metals to build towns with temples, palaces, houses, swimming pools, forts, public baths, water ponds, dams, bridges. Furthermore his knowledge extended to also making furniture, farming tools, warrior's arms, ronze wares, domestic utensils, golden jewellery, band artistic engraving on stone, metal and wood. He also knew how to make the landscape and the art of colour-making and earth mixing for painting and plastering as well as inventing the weights, measures and dimensions. He was a pioneer in researching and testing the qualities of various materials to be used for these crafts.

Naturally, a person with such talent and individual genius was considered to be "miraculous" or "charismatic" possessing deeds of a super human being who could only be some sort of "godly" or "divine" power. The knowledge he possessed was of great importance and useful for human welfare as a whole, that the masses of Indian population, out of respect and gratitude, eventually started to worship "Shree Vishwakarma" as the incarnation of the "Universal Creator" and the "God" himself. Similar in fact to the cases of Bhagwan "Shree Rama" and "Shree Krishna" as the incarnations of "God" being born in human form, Thus, "Shree Vishwakarma" was established as one of the Hindu deities (Gods) in our religious belief for more than 4,000 years.

Being a divine person, Bhagwan Shree Vishwakarma was never married, yet Hindu scriptures (Purans) refer him to be as the "Kriti-Pati", which in spoken language is spelt like the husband of Kriti but literally means "The Master or Lord of Creation". With a view to preserve his extra-ordinary or divine knowledge eternally and therefore continue to benefit mankind as a whole, Bhagwan Shree Vishwakarma set up a school of teaching

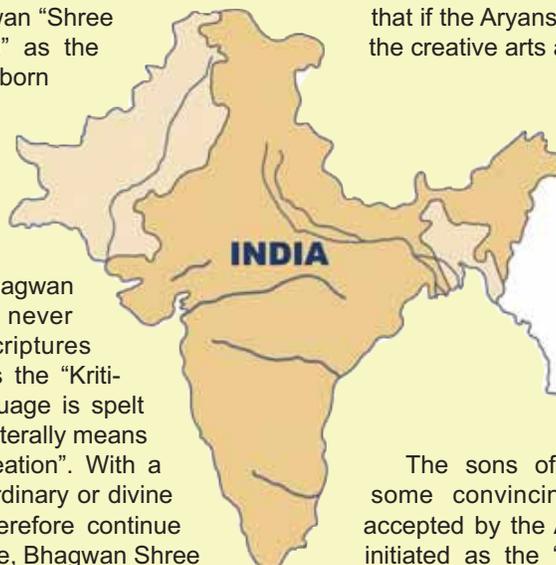
("Gurukul") for these various crafts and arts of which he was the original inventor. He selected very intelligent and capable youngsters named Vastu, Manu, Maya, Shilpi, Tvatha and Devagna from the various races, both "Aryans" and "Non-Aryans" that were the natives of India and adopted them as his sons (pupils – "Shisya") to carry on his desired mission to imbibe the populous with the skills he possessed.

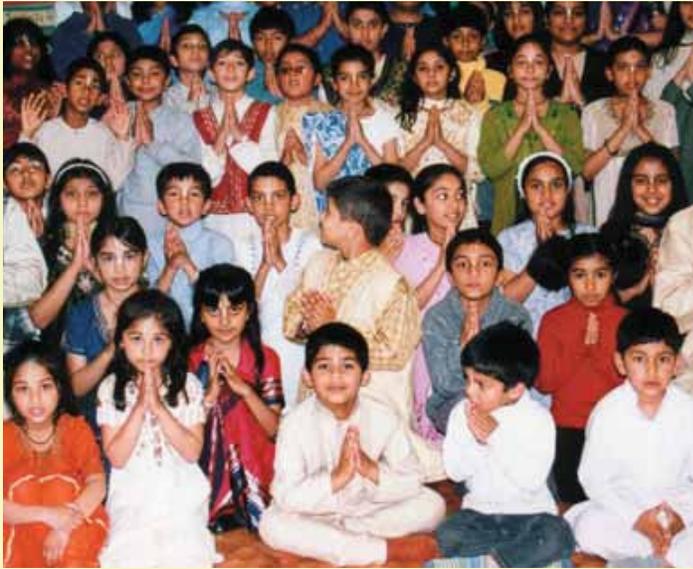
For this purpose Shree Vishwakarma entrusted chief son Vastu the literary work of compiling instruction books on various subjects; civil and irrigation engineering, artistic crafts in metals and materials used for construction work, such as the Geology, Metallurgy, Masonry, Carpentry, Trigonometry, Geometry and Astrology etc. Shree Vishwakarma personally taught other specialised main subjects and trades of Carpentry, Stone Masonry, Blacksmithing, Jewellery and Bronze work respectively to Maya, Shilpi, Manu, Devagna and Tvastha. These adopted sons of Shree Vishwakarma, were selected by him from the various "Non-Aryan" groups and were unfortunately looked upon as "inferior blood descents" by the Aryans.

Shree Vishwakarma took offence on this attitude towards his adopted sons and so cleverly fought with the Aryans, his own blood brothers, by not helping them with his intellectual and religious arguments that if the Aryans could accept and depend on the creative arts and skills of his adopted sons

in making the idols (images=Murtis) of their gods, building their temples and houses, and in making of the holy sacrificial fire-pits (Yagna-Kunds) and auditoriums (Mandaps) for religious ceremonies, arms for their defence, farmers tools and domestic utensils for their own livelihood, etc.

The sons of Shree Vishwakarma, after some convincing and compromise, were accepted by the Aryans into their society and initiated as the "Dveeja" (born twice as the "purified Aryans") by the Vasta-Vayan





“Yagnopaveet” (Janoi) ceremony as set out in the text of the “Vastu-Shastra”, compiled by Vastu. Having gained the respect and status by the Aryans, the sons of Shree Vishwakarma were then married to the daughters of leading Brahmins, those called of the highest caste (Varna) among the Aryan society and subsequently established as the “Vastavayan Viswa-Brahmins” among the Aryans. With the exception of Vastu who was appointed as the head of the “Gurukul” as a “Kul-pati” or “Acharya”, the other sons, having attained perfection in their various and particular professions were dispersed from the Gurukul. So that the masses could receive and benefit from the teachings in engineering, artistic skills and crafts that had been learnt as a divine knowledge from Shree Vishwakarma, the sons were asked to settle in different parts or states and provinces of India, whilst the other pupils that came from places named Kurujangal, Mewar, and Gujarat, returned to their homelands. The sons and pupils of Shree Vishwakarma not only taught the masses but inevitably handed the knowledge to their offspring and others who were keenly interested in learning the various crafts and arts. So generations later we are the descendents of this link that began with Dada and his wisdom and foresight. All these sons of Shree Vishwakarma were also called “Sutradhar”, which actually means “one who wears a Sutra” (now called Janoi) or “one who uses a cord measuring tape for his profession”. Over the years this tag has worn out and is now collectively spoken as “Suthar”.

Manu, the professional in Blacksmithing settled in

a country called “Panchal”; Shilpi the Stonecraft expert settled on the bank of the River “Saraswati”; Devagana and Tvastha with their experience and expertise in gold jewellery and bronze work settled in the Indian districts where they had a prospective scope for their specialised arts; and Maya, the Great forefather or the originator of our community called “Vainsh Suthar” settled in a country called “Vansh Desh” (or the State of Vasta) from which our community has derived the name of “Vansh” or “Vainsh”, as it bears at present.

The divine knowledge of engineering crafts and artistic trades eventually spread up in each and every corner of India, and the artisan communities such as Saltas (Shilpis) of Somnath Patan, Jangar, Mewara, and Gujjar Suthars (carpenters) from Kurujangal, Mewar (in Rajasthan) and Gujarat as well as the Lohars (Lohakars or Blacksmiths) from Panchal bear the community names of their forefathers homelands in the same way as we do at present. The Sutradhar decedents of Shilpi (Stonecraft experts), who were in the beginning called Shilpikars and later came to be known

as Shilvatkars and Salats, now bear the worn out name of “Thaar”.

The descendants of Maya being called as “Kastakars” (woodcraft experts) and “Vardhakis” (woodcutting sawmen) in the old times now bear the names of “Suthars” and “Kathiaras” respectively. The descendants of the Devagana (Suvarnakars or Sonis) and Tvastha eventually renounced the name of Sutradhars and now call themselves as Mahajans (Vaisyas or businessmen). The descendants of Manu, Panchal Lohars (Lohars or Blacksmiths) still call themselves “Suthars”.

So today out there, we as a community have many brothers and sisters to hold hands with as a part of a family that pays homage and respect to our dada.

Jai Vishwakarma

4,000 years ago, Shree Vishwakarma set up a Gurukul where he personally trained several Aryans and non-Aryans all the skills of the various trades he knew and sent them back into their respective communities to do the same. They gained respect and status and eventually married daughters of leading Brahmins.

