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## **UNIT 57 CHANGING CASTE IDENTITY**

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### **Structure**

- 57.0 Learning Objectives
- 57.1 Introduction
- 57.2 Relationship of Diaspora and Caste
  - 57.2.1 Indian Diaspora and Social Exclusion
  - 57.2.2 Caste and Assertion
- 57.3 Bhakti Movement
  - 57.3.1 Ravidasi Religious Institutions
  - 57.3.2 Ravidasi / Ambedkar Associations
  - 57.3.3 Media and Changing Caste Identity
- 57.4 Lets Sum Up
- 57.5 Key Words
- 57.6 Reference / Selected Readings
- 57.7 Check Your Progress – Possible Answers

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### **57.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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After Studying this unit you should be able to:

- Explain the relationship between Indian diaspora and caste.
- Describe how the traditional caste system is changing the Indian diaspora.

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### **57.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Dear Learner,

In the block 46 of this course, we discussed that caste plays a vital role in Diaspora studies. Indians migrate with their castebased identities. Caste system hierarchically divided the Indian society in India and overseas. The Indian Constitution places emphasis on equality and poses a challenge to exploitative practices associated with the caste system; caste remains persistent in several spheres of contemporary Indian society. In contemporary times, traditional caste identities are changing. So called untouchable castes are asserting their caste identities. This unit aims to arrive at an understanding of ways in which new caste based identities emerge parallel to the upper castes in Diaspora. With the example of the Chamars / Ravidasis are asserting their caste identity with pride in the overseas. To understand caste identity within the Diaspora, we should learn the relationship of Indian diaspora and caste.

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### **57.2 RELATIONSHIP OF DIASPORA AND CASTE**

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The Indian Diaspora is not a monolithic whole and caste facts lines replicate within the Indian diaspora. Indian Diaspora based on caste identity (Kumar 2004:114). be believes, “that caste was increasingly an aspect of culture than of social stratification per se.”(Jain2003). But caste identities were (are) strong within the Indians Diaspora.

During colonial period migration patterns were also associated with caste system. The three patterns of migration such as organized, assisted and unassisted and involuntary migration were associated with the 19th century migration of the Indians. “Under the Kangani system of labour they went to Sri Lanka and Malaysia. [The migrants were recruited a score or more of men belonging mainly to his own caste and kin group, and from about the turn of the century migration by families was the prominent form. Sometimes several emigrant bands, each under its own leader, combined under the overall direction of a high caste head Kangani” (Jain 2012: 28 -29)].

The Kangani system in the Ceylon and Malaya (1839-1950) indicates that how the caste systems started overseas. Kangani was the leader of migrant labours.

In the context of Indian diaspora, Lal (2007:14) argues that there is “a common ancestral homeland from which people went voluntarily and involuntarily. Indian Diaspora retains a sense of cultural, religious and historical ties with India and thus harbingers a sense of longing nostalgia”. Lal further argues that, “Due to the varied origins, divergent patterns of migration and settlement, due to the various degrees of absorptions or integration into the culture of their new homeland, the Indian Diaspora defy an easy categorisation. It is a complex confluence of many discreet cultures languages and histories” (Lal2007:10). According to Shukla (2003) “Indian Diaspora is concept and a set of social formations. This allows one to unravel the negotiations made by migrant in the social, cultural and political sphere. Indian Diaspora locations at different places across different times entail disconnectedness between place, culture and identity” (Shukla 2003:4).

In the opinion Jayaram (2004) in human migration two unique factors needs to be recognised: migration does not mean the mere physical movement of people. “Migration carry with it a socio-cultural baggage which among other things consists of (a) a predefined social identity (b) set of religious beliefs and practices, (c) a framework of norms and value governing family and kinship organization, and food habits and (d) language” (Jayaram and Sharma 2004:1 6). According to Kumar (2013) that “when people migrate, they do not migrate merely as biological souls. Rather, when human beings migrate they carry with them their socio- cultural baggage as well. Migrants travel with the set of pre- defined social identity, they have set of religious beliefs and practices along with framework of norms and values. Migrants take their languages along with them as well” (Kumar 2013: 232).

The above discussion highlights that Indian migrated with strong belief in caste system. In some cases dalits faced caste exclusion.

### **57.2.1 Indian Diaspora and Social Exclusion**

The term social exclusion refers to the act of practicing discriminatory ways of dealing with a particular population and excluding them from the mainstream. The social exclusion of the so called untouchables is very strong and excessive that no point what they achieve and wherever they are, even if they improve in political and economic areas acceptance of them as equal by the upper castes is not easy. The stigmatized social identity continues to be attached in India and overseas. Dalits always claime that upper castes sees them with discriminatory lens. Various diaspora studies emphasized that achievements of the untouchables are seen in relation to their caste identity. In the global countries they are not equally treated by dominant castes. According to sociologist Oommen (2014: 71), In the Indian context that ex – untouchables are still not socially included. ‘Non – Dalits’ have not ceased to practice untouchability and still continue to face discrimination. This has been the case with Dalit Diaspora as well.

They are still not seen equal with the upper castes. Oommen (2014) and Kumar (2003) draw the attention to existence of caste and exclusion in the Indian Diaspora

- The major source of deprivation of Dalits has been the degrading ritual status.
- Dalits have been excluded by higher castes on the ritual dimension.
- All Dalits have been excluded by higher castes on the ritual dimension. ‘cumulative exclusion’ excludes Dalits from secular as well as ritual dimensions; ‘Contextual exclusion’ excludes Dalits either from rituals or secular dimension which is practiced in a hierarchical society like India
- That caste identification helps one to relate to members of the same caste and help members of the same caste.
- Even for marriages, Diaspora community visit to their native country to find groom or bride from the same caste, this strengthens and renews caste relations as well. This is the strongest way to maintain caste identity.

The exclusion exists because caste exists. The Scheduled Caste population has been discriminated in the Indian context as they have to grapple with old traditions. The Dalits continue to face discrimination. Hindu theological doctrines have justified the practices of untouchability and this has excluded Dalits, the bases of exclusion being the low ritual status that Dalits were assigned (cited in Oommen 2014: 46). The basis of social exclusion of Dalits by the so called upper castes can be further proved by the emphatic argument given by Dr. Ambedkar, “There is an utter lack among the Hindus of what the sociologist would call consciousness of kind. There is no Hindu consciousness kind. In every Hindu the consciousness that exists is the consciousness of his caste” (Ambedkar 1979: 17). That is why the so called upper castes tend to exclude Dalits not only in India but also in Diaspora.

This caste based exclusion and discrimination enforced Chamars to assert their caste identity

### 57.2.2 Caste and Assertion

The above discussion makes in clear the presence of caste and caste hierarchy, discrimination among the practising Indian Diaspora. Caste discrimination forced the Dalits to assert their caste identity. In the contemporary periods so called lower castes are not aloof. Dalits are forming new independent caste based organizations. They started organizing themselves through religious, civil and voluntary organizations. They started following their own caste religious saints and leaders. Bhakti movement occupied a prominent place in the social religious history of India. Bhakti movement challenged the untouchability and brings revolution in the Indian society. The lower castes under the Bhakti movement improved their social and religious conditions. They established their religious standing. In the 1850s Dalits came up with congregations in order to have interactions among themselves about the kind of the issues affecting them and they also tried to look into strategies to counter this. These events resulted in what is known as Bhakti movement. Today, there is formation of caste associations and assertion of Ravidasi identity.

Kumar (2004) further mentioned that in forming a social solidarity, and uniting Dalit communities overseas, new Dalit Diaspora have played a significant role. For examples Dalits in the UK have built their Gurdwaras and Buddha Vihars by 1960s, along with

Buddhist council which came into existence in 1985. Buddhist council consists of the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist organizations and voice of Dalit International which works for improving the conditions of Dalits back home. They paved their association with Black Panther movement in US, in an effort to bring into light their conditions. Thus, it came to mark ‘Dalit and Black Unity’. With efforts of the new Dalit diaspora, Dalit identities have been formulated in the new ways. Even though, Dalits have faced discrimination and exclusion both the national and international level. Today their assertion is visible in different ways. They are constructing their own *Ravidasi* and Ambedkar associations, clubs and organizations.

The ideology of Guru Ravidass and Dr. Ambedkar has guided the associations, clubs and organizations in India and all over the world. The ideology has worked as uniting castebased communities in India and all over the world. Today the *Chamars* of Doaba region of Punjab have come together and have identified themselves along the name of Guru Ravidass and Ambedkar. “Babasaheb Ambedkar brought Dalit diaspora together and his struggle has provided them an ideology to Dalit diaspora, as has been the case with the Dalits in India (Kumar 2013: 286).

According to Kumar (2013: 287), “In UK, Ambedkar-Buddhist organization came into existence in 1950s, in U.S Dalits have started “volunteering in services of Indian oppressed and neglected (vision) in 1970s. In Canada, Ambedkar International Vision propagates the views of Babasaheb Ambedkar”. Dalits Diaspora has many organizations named after Ambedkar testifies that Dalits in diaspora have successfully used name of Babasaheb Ambedkar for mobilization and assertion. In this context Hardtmann (2009: 159) argues about Ambedkarites among the immigrants SCs in Britain. According to her, “Ambedkarites in Britain are part of the worldwide Dalit Diaspora”. The term ‘Ambedkarite’ in Britain has been used by the Dalits as the mark of identity Ambedkarite Diaspora to expand their networks and establish and maintain links with Ambedkarites as well as Dalits in India with their movement in India.

Apart from Religious and Ambedkar ideology, associations, media also played a significant role to change the caste identity. They have their own T.V channels those discussed about philosophy Guru Ravidass, Ambedkar and social, political economics issues of the Dalits. Kanshi TV and you tube videos are changing the thinking of the society. Missionary and Ravidasi pop –singers are entraining, uniting, protesting and boosting the society. We are discussing in details the below section.

**Check Your Progress 1**

**1. Write the relationship of Diaspora and caste.**

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**2. What do you understand Indian Diaspora and social exclusion?**

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### 3. What is the process of caste assertion?

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In the above section, we defined the (1) relationship of Indian Diaspora and caste (2) social exclusion among the Indian Diaspora which is not accepted by chamar (3) Caste identity. Dalits stopped hiding their caste identity and proudly asserting their caste identity. Thus the six main elements to understand changing caste identity in the Indian Diaspora. These are the main elements that influence the spread of a new idea of changing caste identity in the diaspora.

- i. Bhakti movement
- ii. Ravidasi religious institutions
- iii. Ravidasi and Ambedkar Associations
- vi. Ravidasi Media and Caste Identity

Key Elements of the changing Caste Identity	
Elements	Meaning
Bhakti Movement	Challenged brahminical theory of untouchability.
Ravidasi Religious Institutions	Ravidasis are asserting their caste identity. Ravidasis are constructing their Gurdwaras / temples / bhawans in India and abroad.
Ravidasi and Ambedkar Associations	These associations are representing the community. These associations raised voice against the atrocities of the community. The associations also developing the caste solidarity.
Ravidasi Media and Caste Identity	Ravidasi's established their TV channels, social networking sites. Ravidasi media focused on the Ravidasi identity.

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## 57.3 BHAKTI MOVEMENT

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Bhakti movement saints writings openly challenged the traditional Brahminical caste system. The lower caste sees Bhakti as a path of devotion. Bhkati saints brought revolution in the Indian society. Historically, perhaps the best known challenge to caste oppression came from the Bhakti movement that spread across many regions of India between the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. Its revolutionary poet-preachers opposed caste distinctions as well as the hypocrisy of Brahminical rituals that had taken over Hinduism. Bhakti saints underlined the presence of the divinity in each person, wherein every individual, regardless of their birth, could have equal access to spiritual enlightenment through ethical conduct of everyday life. Bhakti saints such as Kabir,

Ravidass, and Tukaram, popularized their teachings through popular folklore songs, etc., which often addressed social injustice (Shah 2006:31).

Bhakti movement deeply impacted on the lower castes and transformed their traditional, hierarchy. With the influence of this movement lower castes changed their lives and began asserting their caste identity. The Bhakti movement rejected the scriptural authority of Vedas, broke with the past traditions, fought against social discrimination, and strove for Hindu – Muslim reconciliation (Iraqi 2009: 108). The main mission of the Bhakti movement was to hit the caste system, opposition to the Brahminical ritualism and idol worship. Some of the essential attributes are of Bhakti movement which influence of the lower castes.

- i. Challenged caste system
- ii. Saints brought revolution in the Indian society
- iii. Bhakti movement saints Ravidass, Kabir and Tukaram philosophy influenced the lower castes.
- iv. Questioned the concept of untouchability
- v. Oppose the Brahminical ritualism and idol worship, Vedas and idol worship

The poets and saints of this movement were religious persons. Their poetry was against contemporary culture. Bhakti poetry was of rebellion against the feudal social order and its ideologies, also expresses realities of everyday life and desire for an egalitarian social order.

Ravidass, a spiritual figure whom Omvedt called “the Bhakti radical”, commands a massive following among his caste fellows, especially the Chamars in Punjab, who consider him their Guru (Omvedt 2008:7). Guru Ravidass, born in an untouchable Chamar family in Benares (Varanasi), the holy city of Hindus, challenged Brahmins to demonstrate their purity vis – a -vis the impurity of the lower castes. There are several legends, popular among his devotees, which bear out his divine birth and miracles he performed in the name of Har (one God) to falsify the Brahmins’ claim to purity and exclusive right to salvation. Brahmins disingenuously accepted the story of his low birth, but attributed it to his bad Karma, and argued that he was redeemed for his good deeds in life.

Bhakti movement saint Ravidass is the religious spiritual icon of the Chamars. In the Punjab, Chamars are constructed Deras (religious centers) and Gurdwaras/ temples on the name of Ravidass. Ravidass hymns are compiled in the Sikh religious sacred book Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhs read Guru Ravidass hymns and other Bhakti movement saints writings. But they are considering Chamars to equal to them. However, Sikhism completely rejected the caste discrimination. Chamars migrated to overseas, they start sending money to the construction of Ravidasi Gurdwaras. They have their own religious book “Amritbani shri Guru Ravidass ji Maharaj”. Chamars are asserting their caste identity parallel to Jats. They are not following them.

### **57.3.1 Ravidasi Religious Institutions**

Guru Ravidass is revered mostly by Chamars (traditionally, leather workers), and there are a large number of gurdwaras/temples named after him in the Canada, US, UK and

Europe. With the Bhakti movement, Indian society, its literature and culture, entered a new phase of growth and evolution. In the present era, the followers of the Bhakti movement have established their religious places. Through the pilgrimages, temples lower castes asserted their separate identity in the Indian society and unified the lower castes.

Chamars faced discrimination in the Sikh Gurdwaras. Although, Sikh ideology is against any kind of discrimination but still castebased hierarchy is followed by the upper caste Sikhs. They are not considering dalits equal to them. Gurdwaras became a centre where upper castes occupied advantageous positions; Dalits in the Gurdwaras were discriminated and were also sidelined in the management of the Gurdwaras. When it came to the distribution of parsad in the Gurdwaras, they were not allowed to do so. These acts show the practice of untouchability in the Gurdwaras (Ghuman 2011:97-99). After facing such discriminations, the Chamars began to build their own Gurdwaras. The counter of upper caste discriminations towards them, educated Dalits proudly identified with their caste identity and did not feel shame by disclosing caste identities. The prejudiced and arrogant attitudes of the high caste against Dalits did not go down well with the second generation of the Dalits. This was a time when Indian immigrants began to 'socialize separately'. As a result, in the UK, their places of worship are called bhavans. This is done precisely to escape the controls of Shri Gurdwara Parbandhak committee in Amritsar and Punjab. It is clear that Dalits want their controls over their bhavans (Ghuman 2011: 97-99).

Chamars constructed Ravidasi temples, bhawans (appendix 1) on the name Guru Ravidass. In these religious places Ravidasi religious activities are organized by Ravidasi community. They followed their own religious rituals with pride. Ravidasi society depicts separate identity.



Shri Guru Ravidass Temple Wolverhampton (outside view of the temple)



Inside view of the Ravidasi Temple

In the Sikh Gurdwaras the religious symbol is Khanda (appendix ii) (two-edged sword over a quoits with two crossed sabers below the quoits) even the Hindu temples have separate identity. Ravidasi religious places inscribed their Har (appendix iii) religious symbols. Ravidasi religious flag also identify their separate religious identity. Ravidasi religious intuitions prayer format is different from the other religions. The explanation of the ardas (prayer) closes with the utterance bole so nirbhay, Sri Guru Ravidass maharaj ki jai (Fearless is the one who utters victory to Shri Guru Ravidass)”. The greeting ways are also different like Jai gurudev or jai Guru Ravidass’ (victory to the divine Guru or Guru Ravidass) to which the reply was ‘Dhan Guru Dev’ (blessed the divine Guru). Jai saintan di means (Victory to the Saints).



Khanda is a Sikh religious symbol.



Har is Ravidasi religious symbol



### 57.3.2 Ravidasi / Ambedkar Associations

Emergences of the Ravidasi associations are the strong symbol of changing traditional caste identity. There is a procedure to become a member of the Ravidasi association. Members should have complete faith on Guru Ravidass and Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy. These associations mobilised the community. The associations organized all functions. Associations are thereby channels of spreading the messages of Guru Ravidass and Ambedkar among the society. They feel that their identification is different from the others. Associations are promoting their specific interests. These associations are legally registered. The associations display the banners and invite the Ravidasi and Ambedkarite scholars for spreading awareness among the community. They are also providing media advertisement of their functions. So, everybody can attend the functions. Ravidasi associations invite the Ravidasi dera guru's for preaching and blessings.

Ravidasi women also have their Meera Bahi associations, under these associations, women organized their religious functions. Women are treated equally. They can read and sing religious scriptures.

The associations are acting in the interest of civil society. They reproduce caste solidarity. These associations raise the voice against dalit atrocities, reservation, and discrimination in public places. The contribution of associations cannot be ignored in terms of changing caste identity.

There are some significant features of Associations.

- i. Highlighting their caste identity
- ii. Mobilizing their caste people
- iii. Organising the functions
- iv. Develop the solidarity among the community.
- v. To reachout media

### 57.3.3 Media and changing caste identity

Media is the mirror of every society. This section deals that how Ravidasi internet social websites, pop- singers, T.V. programs, Ravidasi symbols and literature have enabled Ravidasis to build to their Ravidasi identity. In this forms traditional ways of hiding caste identity are changing. The cultural forms like music, films and fiction are mobilizing caste identity. They are making their cultural capital. Earlier, their caste identity has been a source of social exclusion, humiliation, subjugation, ridicule and degradation so it was this much stigmatized identity that has to be deconstructed and evaded in order to construct a positive identity. In the contemporary Chamar, singers are developing their separate image. They are openly challenging Jat pride songs. According to Singh "While Punjab has always been known for its peppy music and boisterous socio-cultural life, the rise and prominence of Dalit singers harks to the state's caste conundrum in its wake. Celebratory occasions in Punjab have hitherto seen the predominance of a particular kind of music, locally known as "Jat pop" music, highlighting and valorising the Jat culture and its heroes" (Singh 2017: 33). For instance Put Chamaran de', a video uploaded around 2009 on you tube, presents an interesting case study of assertion of Ravidassia community in Punjab and within Punjabi Diaspora. The video displaces the Bhangra formulaic lyric 'put Jatan de' (the sons of Jats) with

‘put Chamaran de’ (the sons of Chamars). The pop song danger chamar is very popular among the Chamars. There are other popular and professional names like Miss Pooja, Kaler Kanth, Ginni Mahi, Faroz Kahn, Rajni Thakkarwal, Amrita Virk , and Harbhajan Tajpuri, Pumma Sunnar etc. in their songs carried Ravidassia religious symbols, the models of the videos have Ravidasi tattoos on their bodies. In the video chorography, on the overseas locations, the roads of overseas and Punjab one can easily spot the luxury transport vehicles displaying the stickers of Har symbol, Guru Ravidass, Sant Rama Nand and Chamar etc. Now-a-days young Ravidassis are interested to wear the T- shirts which are displaying the Har symbol.

**Check Your Progress 2**

**1. Explain the role of Bhakti movement to challenge caste system ?**

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**2. What is the meaning of Ravidasi religious institutions ?**

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**3. What do you mean by Ravidasi Associations?**

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**4. Which ways Ravidasi media is breaking the traditional caste system?**

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**57.4 LET US SUM UP**

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We cannot study Indian diaspora without a caste system. Both are closely connected. So in this unit, we discussed aspects caste identity in the diaspora. We discussed on how migration promotes caste identity. People are not merely biologically migrated they are also migrated culturally and religiously. These elements leads towards caste based social exclusion, we discussed the exclusion faced by the lower castes. We

further discussed now Dalits rejected caste system and started assertion of their caste identity.

Bhakti movement saints ideology was followed by the chamars. They followed the prominent saint Ravidass as their religious guru. For spreading the ideology of Guru Ravidass they constructed their own temples/ Gurdwaras those are parallel to the Sikh Gurdwaras. In the Ravidasi religious institutions they feel discrimination free environment. Associations' part discussed about role of these associations. In the last we discussed Chamar singers singing songs in the bravery of their caste. They were protesting against the mainstream upper caste media.

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## 57.5 KEY WORDS

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- Caste** : “Caste is of Spanish and Portuguese origin emerged from the word “*Casta*” which means ‘lineage’ or ‘race’. In the Indian society caste is a matter of everyday life. Caste system divided the society in the hierarchical order like Brahmins, Kashtriya , Vashiya and Shudra .
- Diaspora** : The word ‘Diaspora’ is derived from the Greek word diasperio ‘to distribute’; it is a compound of speiro, ‘to sow to scatter’ like seed and dia ‘from one end to the other” (Baumann 2000: 313-337).
- Identity** : In the psychological point of view identity means self image. Identity could be of various types like religious, cultural, political, social, caste and gender based.
- Chamar** : According to traditional caste system chamars are leather workers. Punjabi chamars migrated to various parts of the globe. They do not hide their caste identity.
- Dalit** : Literal meaning of the dailt is broken/ scattered. They are the lowest people of the traditional Indian caste system. However, in this era Dalit identity is emerging at the global level.
- Social Exclusion** : Social Exclusion is a form of social discrimination. In the Indian society, Dalits often face caste based social exclusion.
- Assertion** : Assertion means is confident. Proudly and powerfully. In this unit Chamars are confidently asserting their caste identity.
- Bhakti Movement** : Bhakti movement occupies a prominent place in the social and religious history of India. Bhakti movement emerged in India against the caste and untouchability. The Bhakti movement challenged the hierarchical traditional caste system.
- Gurdwara** : Gurdwara is a place of worship Sikhs. Caste based Gurdwaras are established by different castes in Punjab and overseas.

- Dera** : The state of Punjab has witness the emergence of large number of *Deras* (religious centers), as *Chamars* continued to feel socially excluded within Sikhism. Other crucial factor was that the majority of *Chamars* and other lower castes are landless and this has led to the exclusion of the *Ravidasis* by the dominant land owning *Jat* Sikhs which further led to an ever increasing number of *Deras* all over Punjab. “In Punjab, the number of *Deras* is not in hundreds but in thousands.
- Guru** : Spiritual leader. Majority of Indian society blindly follow on their gurus.
- Institution** : Institutions are the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They consist of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights).
- Association** : Associations is an organization within a community. The association is organized for a particular interest. Memberships of the associations are limited.
- Media** : Media is a source of communication. Form media people get information easily. There are two types of media electronic and print.

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## 57.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – POSSIBLE ANSWERS

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### Check your Progress 1

1. The caste system supported colonial period migration patterns like Kangani. Indian diaspora closely connected, Indian history, religious and culture. Diaspora practiced a set of religious beliefs. People do not migrate only as biological souls. They migrate with their caste identities also.
2. The exclusion exists because caste exists. Hindu theological doctrines have justified the practices of the caste system, and this has excluded lower castes from participating in rituals. Dalits always claim that dominant castes never accepts them as equal.
3. Dalits are forming new independent caste based organizations. They started following, Bhakti movement religious saints philosophy. Dalit Diaspora has played a significant role. They have constructed their own Ravidasi Gurdwaras, Buddha Vihars. The Buddhist council consists of the Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist organizations and voice of Dalit International which works for improving the dalits. They paved their association with Black Panther movement in the US, to bring into light their conditions. Thus, it came to mark 'Dalit and Black Unity.' With efforts of the new Dalit diaspora, Dalit identities have been formulated in new ways.

### Check Your Progress 2

1. Some essential elements of Bhakti movement (1) Bhakti movement saints openly challenged the traditional brahminical caste system. The lower caste sees Bhakti as a path of devotion. Bhkati saints brought revolution in Indian society. (2) Bhakti movement sants Ravidass, Kabir and Tukaram philosophy influenced the lower castes. (3) It Changed the life and ideology of the untouchables (4) opposed the Brahmanical ritualism, Vedas and idol worship.

## Core Concepts

2. The chamars built a large number of gurdwaras/temples named after Guru Ravidass in Canada, US, UK, and Europe. With the Bhakti movement, Indian society, its literature, and culture, entered a new phase of growth and evolution. Through the pilgrimages, temples lower castes asserted their separate identity in the Indian society and unified the lower castes.
3. Ravidasi associations challenged the upper castes domination. Emergences of the Ravidasi associations are potent symbol of changing traditional caste identity. Associations are promoting their specific interests. They feel their self-identification is different from the others.
4. Ravidasi media have been protesting against the caste system. They are glorying their religious and cultural history with their songs, films, and videos. The Ravidasi community established their channels parallel to the upper castes. They are highlighting their heroes and challenging the Jat pride culture.