

CULTURAL CONFLICT IN CHETAN BHAGAT'S 2 STATES THE STORY OF MY MARRIAGE

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Abstract

This paper deals with the cultural conflict presented by Chetan Bhagat in 2 states the story of my Marriage. In this novel Chetan Bhagat gives a clear picture about cultural conflict in India. Chetan Bhagat has tried to show the limitations of current Indian society.

Chetan Bhagat is an Indian author and columnist. He is a youth oriented writer. People consider him as youth icon rather than an author. He is the mirror of contemporary young India. He has touched some of the sensitive cultural issues. His view is love has no boundaries whether it be of caste, creed, religion, state or country.

Two States is a love story of a Punjabi guy Krish Malhotra and Tamil Brahmin girl Ananya. The novel deals with cultural contradictions. Several families go through this situations in India. It depicts how the culture create problem in matrimonial alliances.

In Two States it reveals about the cultural conflict between two contrary states North and South. The Story starts in the IIM Ahmadabad mess hall, where Krish a Punjabi boy from Delhi sights a beautiful girl Ananya, a Tamilian from Chennai arguing with the mess staff about the food. They become friends within a few days. They both get jobs and have serious plan for their wedding. Marriage is mainly associated with these terms. On marriage in India as Boy loves girl. Girl loves boy. They get married. In India, there are few more steps : Girl's family has to love boy. Boy's family has to love girl. Girl's family has to love boy's family. Boy's family has to love girl's family. Girl and boy still love each other. They get married.

Both of them struggled and faced a lot of problems. Chetan Bhagat is known for the representation of reality in the contemporary society. In this novel he reflects inter racial and inter state marriages. The portrayals of various characters were exit in the contemporary India. They fight against the customs of an traditional and conservative society.

Family is the most meaningful social and cultural unit. Both admires their own culture and blame another's for unknown reasons. They never accept each others without prejudices and find reason to blame always. They have diversities in their languages, customs, rituals, cuisines, occupations, comforts, movies etc and they turn boon and boom in every situation.

When the protagonist observes the south Indian man in the picture that is Ananya's father he portrays like “I looked carefully. a middle aged man with neatly combed hair rationed his grin. He wore a half sleeve shirt with a dhoti in most of the pictures. He looked like the neighbor who steps you from playing loud music. No, nothing cute about him. I scanned the remaining pictures taken on festival, weddings and birthdays”(Bhagat 13)

Cultural clash between North and South is again explained by Chetan Bhagat with a tinge of humor. When Krish offers her to go for the lunch, the cultural clash even more obvious from the conversation of Krish and Ananya.

She laughed. I didn't say i am practicing Tam Brahmin. But you should know that iam born into the purest of pure upper caste communities ever created. What about you commoner? To this Krish replies about Punjabi cuisine i am Punjabi i grew up in Delhi and i have no idea of my caste but we do eat chicken. And i can digest bad sambar better than Tamil Brahmins. (Bhagat 7)

Through this remark, Chetan Bhagat tries to uncover the conventional mentality of Indian People. The hero Krish tries to make his mother understand the sensitivity of the situation and suggest her to call them Tamilian, but she remarked as madrasis with dark complexion. She makes a comment that These south India don't know how to control

their daughters. From Hema Malini to Sridevi, all of them trying to catch Punjabi men (Bhagat 48)

In this sequential series, there is an episode a minor character mocks on North Indian as “Why do they sent North Indians here? Meanwhile a North Indian officer comments on south Indian as What do you mean waitlisted for business class? Iam not coming back like i did this morning sitting cramped with these madrasis?” Despite all these Chetan Bhagat stands at every place to criticise and mocks the narrow mindedness of typical Indian whether it is of south Indians or North Indians.

The speech of Ananya's father conveys the real message of the novel. He states

....Yes the Tamilian in me is a little disappointed. But the Indian in me quite happy and more than anything, the human being in me is happy. After all we've decided to use this opportunity to create more loved ones for ourselves. [Bhagat 266]

Tamilians have a great love for knowledge and education. While Punjabi’s are more interested in money and wealth. South Indians have a love for rules and feels safe when there are rules. But North Indians are not only for rules but also for law and experience even for breaking them. As Indian society is not liberal to mixed marriages between different castes, religion or geographies. They suffer because of generation gap, communication gap and cultural gap.

The real message of the novel is to give importance to human relationships based on human emotions and sentiments. The conversation between Krish and Ananya while dancing in their marriages determines the novelist's concept We kissed as Tamils and Punjabi’s danced around us... only for the sake of uniting the nation...[Bhagat 267]. The main objective of the novel is to show that in the era of globalization caste, religion or region are less important than human relationships.

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