



INTER-CASTE MARRIAGE IN THE NOVELS OF CHETAN BHAGAT

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At present, there is an ear-bursting loudspeaker noise for promoting their candidates from almost all the political parties on the roads and streets of the town for the General Elections. To win the hearts of the common people all these parties are using religion as their tool. Some parties are busy winning hearts of Muslim community and some others are putting all their efforts to get votes of Hindus and other religions in their favor. Though India is known as a secular state where people of different religions and followers of diverse cultural backgrounds live together in a society, but political parties are know well how to provoke them against each other. They make false promises and come up with providing special benefits to a particular community just to come in the power. So, one can understand that how religion politics play a significant role in electing a political candidate. It's not only politics it's also our social setup and conservative norms which try to keep distance when it comes to making a social and personal relation especially in terms of marriage. Although we are living in a modern and digital age and talk about the advancement of our living standards like western and advanced countries but as far as marriage is concerned our families find only a suitable boy or girl who belong to the same religion and even status. Inter-caste marriages are still a big no in our societies though one can find a few exceptions.

Chetan Bhagat is a young and famous writer whose novels and columns present the problems of today's youth. In his novel Two States: The Story of My Marriage explores the struggle of two people from completely two different religions and states who fell in love with each other and want to tie knot. Chetan says that this novel presents his personal life as he himself belongs to a Punjabi family and his wife is a Tamil Brahmin. Though the issue seems serious but the writer here takes the comic and rib-tickling path to show this journey of love and finally converting into marriage. The love between the two protagonists flourishes during the college days. Apart from studies both discuss their future career plans and getting married. They plan to set up a meeting for their

respective parents and family members on the day of convocation ceremony in the college. For the people of advanced and modern countries, getting married to a particular person is quite simple. Two people start liking each other, fall in love with each other, spend some time with each other and if they are like minded they get married and their families and friends attend the function. But for us it is simple as it seems, first it is still questionable in India if a girl and a boy start seeing each other. If they decide to get married a list of questions come in their minds like they would check if they belong to same society, same economic conditions, same living standards and above all religions must be same.

Dr. Sapna Tiwari states in her research in IJELLH paper that *“Bhagat has tried to minimize their problems through his novel. Not only urban area but villages are also touched with inter caste marriages with the changing social scenario, the mindset of villages also can be seen. People of city in India have learnt the caste system and positively of inter caste marriages. But in villages still inter caste marriages are not welcomed wholeheartedly. They prefer that their son or daughter should marry in the same caste and community as they disown them. People in villages need to be taught about the menaces of inter caste marriages and caste system and the initiative should be taken to fight against this caste and creed system. After all marriage is meant of two souls which never require the caste and creed and other customs of the society, it only requires that happiness and peace should always remain there in the family.”*

It gets difficult for a person to get married to another if they do not belong to the same religion. Same is the case with the novel’s writer and her beloved as he is Punjabi and the girl belongs to a Tamil family. For our conservative society it’s not a personal affair of just two person, it’s a big matter for the whole family because each religion has its own customs, beliefs, and rituals. Even their gods are different whom they worship in the morning after getting fresh. For different religions, festivals and celebrations are different too. Marriage rituals and its procedures are also two worlds apart. When the question of marriage arises in a family, these questions take the prime seat. Love, affection and understand of the two people gets its place on the bottom of the parent’s list. Nevertheless, the families of the two meet at the convocation ceremony and they decide to meet again for formal talks and to know each other in a better way.

Here Chetan presents his witty and humorous style of writing and presents the religious and customary difference of the two states. The boy lives in the northern part of India, Delhi and the girl’s family lives in the South of India, Chennai. Punjabi families believe in exchanging heavy-priced gifts and branded clothes to express their love and affection. Southern families follow their rituals and customs sternly and strictly and their focus is on the

gold jewelry presented to the girl. Punjabi believes more in comforts and luxurious items. Food and eating habits are also varies for two different religions.

CONCLUSION:

The inter-caste or inter-religious marriages are a big concern in India. Families do not allow or permit their children to marry a different caste person. If try everything from rigid to emotional behavior and try to convince their child to select a person who is of the same religion. Our younger generation is trying to come out of this conservative thought and prefer to choose their life partner with whom they have affection and have understanding regardless of their partner's religion. It's getting comparatively a normal affair for the youth as they work out of their home city. Getting exposure of the modern and big cities open their thoughts and behavior especially after setting up of multinational IT industries. Younger generation shifted from city to city in search of jobs and these multinational organization provide them the opportunity to meet people of different states and different religions. Other states' customs and celebrations are not strange to them anymore. They celebrate each and every festivals. This practice bring them closer to the people of other religion. It's also a fact that marriages in two different religions runs successfully. They teach their children the customs and importance of both the religious festivals. Celebrities and people in limelight play a big role making this practice common. Apart from that, modern writers and intellectuals also support this inter-caste relationships. It's also helps establishing peace in the society and community.

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