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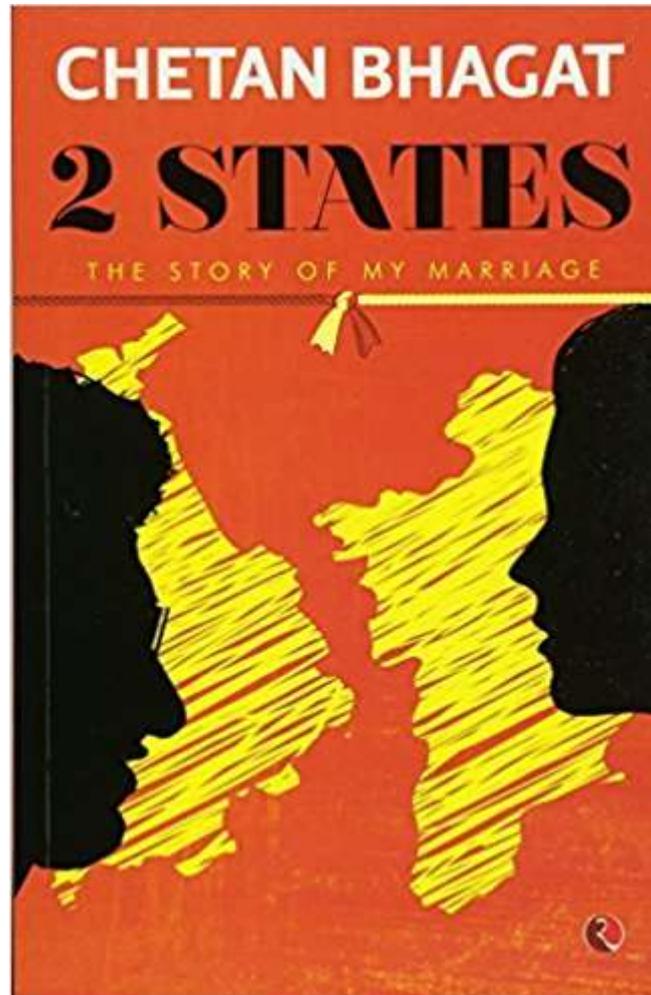
Portrayal of Social Issues in Literature and Media

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**Multiculturalism in Chetan Bhagat's
*Two States: The Story of My Marriage***

G. Annapoorani, Research Scholar



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Chetan Bhagat

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Multiculturalism in Chetan Bhagat's *Two States: The Story of My Marriage*

Chetan Bhagat is one of the most popular contemporary Indian novelists in English literature. He has portrayed young dynamic and modern Indian youth and their culture, trying hard to make themselves successful in their lives. He is gifted with an extraordinary ability to deal with various aspects of human life. His novels deal with different postcolonial perspectives from culture issues. India is well known for its varied cultural heritage, as it is known for the lively and traditionally performed variety of marriages in his novel, *'Two States: The Story of My Marriage'*. Though the idea is the most realistic modern trend, it draws attention to cultural differences in diverse India. Chetan Bhagat truly captures the spirit of modern culture.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a study of the multiple (two or more) cultures. The word 'culture' is derived from the Latin root 'colere' which means to inhibit, to cultivate or to honour. It refers to the capability of human beings to classify and inhibit the various experiences to encode and imbibe them meaningfully. Many scholars use the terms multiculturalism and cultural studies, socio-political, religious studies, media studies, and so on. Likewise, this paper analyses the different cultures. The people in this novel, both the older and the younger generation have a multi-cultural background. This provides ample scope to make a studied comment on multiculturalism.

Two States: The Story of My Marriage

Chetan Bhagat's novel, *'Two States: The Story of My Marriage'* concentrates on how a particular phenomenon, the concept of love related to matters of culture and society with its numerous customs. The novel *'Two States: The Story of My Marriage'* deals with the cross-cultural encounter complimenting the different experiences and imbibing them meaningfully. As rose symbolizes beauty, the soldier symbolizes a nation, the title of any work should symbolize its theme. Chetan Bhagat's *'Two States: The Story of My Marriage'* - the title by itself showcases axis people of the two states coming to its convergence. A simply realistic novel, it brilliantly explores the encounter of two states, Punjab and Tamilnadu.

Life Story

'Two States: The Story of My Marriage' is one of the successful works by Chetan Bhagat, a young Indian writer in English. His works like *One Night on the Call Centre*, *Five Point Someone* and *Three Mistakes of My Life* were bestsellers. He was also hailed by the media for the "3 Idiots" controversy, the film based on his novel *Five Point Someone*. *'Two States: The Story of My Marriage'* is the real-life story of Chetan Bhagat. Though the characters portrayed in this novel are fictitious, the plot is his real-life story. India is a country of different cultures. One represents the south Indian Tamil and the other north Indian Delhi. These two major characters move throughout the novel throwing light on the cultural differences between these two cultures of the same nation.

'Two States: The Story of My Marriage' is partly autobiographical. The story is about a couple, Krish and Ananya who from two different states of India, Punjab and Tamilnadu respectively, are deeply in love and want to get married. *'Two States: The Story of My Marriage'* is

an awesome journey from a rasgolla (sweet made of milk and sugar) to a buffet dinner. The novel follows the lives of two characters, it has four different time spans.

Krish and Ananya

'Two States: The Story of My Marriage' begins in the IIM Ahmadabad mess ball, where Krish, Punjabi boy from Delhi sights a beautiful girl, Ananya, a Tamilian from Chennai, quarrelling with the mess staff about the food. Ananya was tagged as the 'Best girl of the fresher batch'. They become friends within a few days and decide to study together every night. In the meantime, they become romantically involved. They both get jobs and have serious plans for their wedding. At first Krish tries to convince his girlfriend Ananya's parents and at last convinces them by helping Ananya's father to do his first PowerPoint presentation, her brother, Manju, by giving him IIT tuition and later convinces her mother by asking her to sing in a concert organised by Krish's off-city at Citibank. The mother is convinced as her biggest dream of singing at a big concert comes true. Then they try to convince Krish's mom. But the problem in Krish's mother's relatives who don't quite like this. They say that Krish should not marry a Tamilian but end up agreeing with him, when Ananya tries to help one of Krish's cousins to get married and successfully does it.

Krish has had hatred against his father. He never shares his feelings and/or doesn't share a harmonious bonding with him. Now as they have convinced both their parents, they now try to introduce each other's parents. They go to Goa. But this dream of theirs ends as Ananya's parents find something fishy between Krish's mom and him. Ananya's family end up deciding that Krish and Ananya will not marry each other. Krish starts to become work-aholic and starts living badly. But, at last, Krish's father, who was like an enemy for Krish, helps Krish and Ananya to get married as he convinces Ananya's family as well. Now Krish realizes his Dad's love for him. They really work very hard to convince each other's parents and finally make it. It is narrated in the first-person point of view in a humorous tone, often taking digs at both Tamil and Punjabi cultures.

Cross-cultural Marriage

The novel ends with Ananya giving birth to twin boys. She says that the babies belong to a state called India, with a thought to end regional prejudices. The intensity and the beautiful description about the contrast in marriages make his novel more attractive. The language is subtle, readable, interesting and is made very humorous, with some really good similes and metaphors.

Cross-cultural marriages are still unacceptable in our society, though we are living in the world's greatest culture. As rightly acknowledged in the novel, when we accept a family of a different culture, we are adding value to our existing ones. At the end we all belong to only one state and that's 'INDIA'.

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