

2 States by Chetan Bhagat and its film adaptation: A study in terms of elements of social reconstruction

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Abstract:

Chetan Bhagat is a famous writer and most of his works deal with the social themes in some way or the other. The representation of Social reconstruction is the basic concern in this paper. Bhagat, by different ways tries to bring social change in the Indian society. As we know education is always an important aspect as far as social reconstruction is concerned, Bhagat uses this tool in the novel 2 states perfectly. Education is the tool that has been challenging all the traditional norms. Bhagat incorporated this with the other things to bring the change. This novel has been made into a film and the script was written by Chetan Bhagat. So, we will discuss the elements of social reconstruction displayed in both the versions.

Key Words: Social reconstruction, film, representation, diaspora, society, education

“There is nothing more dangerous in this world than a Punjabi mother-in-law”
- 2 states [the movie]

Chetan Bhagat is a youth icon of the new generation. He inspired everyone by his works. His novels are not typical; instead they teach us new things that can be changed. He offers us some thoughts that need to be implemented. He inspired everybody by his works. He was positioned on the list of 100 most influential person of the globe by Time. He is much admired in India as well as in abroad. New York Times also was astonished by the popularity of such a non-literary person as they say: “*Chetan Bhagat, an investment Banker discovers his recognition off the book*”. Donald Greenlees, Bhagat’s colleague in U.S.A examines that:

Bhagat, who wrote his manuscripts while existing here, has obscurity clearing up why a thirty five year-old banker of investment scripting in his extra point

in time has had such extraordinary accomplishment getting spectators of mostly young middle-class Indians.

The novel, '2 States – the story of my marriage' of Chetan Bhagat is a successful novel that tells us about the existing Indian society and the difficulty that the youngsters of different cultures face if they want to marry with the boy/girl of other community or other state. Bhagat, having a personal experience suggest this thing in this novel. In the words of M Aarthi:

The multiculturalism has been depicted by Chetan Bhagat in 2 States – the story of my marriage. The picture of cultural diversity and the traditionalism is shown by the different characters presented in the novel. India is a country of many cultures and it has been discussed here.

As we know our society is pretty much an orthodox one and mostly governed by the people of such mentality. However, the literature, along with other genres, has the power to bring some sort of change in the traditional mindsets, thoughts, point of views etc. Film too, have this power as they can represent the world more concretely than any kind of literacy work. Recently a film called 'Toilet, Ek Premkatha', has shaken the minds of the Indians as it displays the importance of Toilets around us. This in a way is a social reconstruction. Similarly the upcoming movie 'Padman' too deals with the serious issue i.e. 'Pad' used while a girl or a women is having her monthly periods. This is the serious yet neglected issue by our so-called orthodox society. It is a fact that still 60% of females do not use "pads" during the periods (they use any waste cloth or fabric) and it is really a pity. It causes infection and consequently many deaths have been recorded. So, this is also a way to socialize people because cinema is an easy medium to express as compared to the books because majority of people do not read books nowadays.

Let us discuss this in detail.

'2 states' is a famous novel written by Chetan Bhagat and recently we have its film adaptation with the same title. As we know social reconstruction is a broad issue and thus, here, in this article we would like to deal with only a few issues find in both the textual version and the cinematic version. We find the social change in the following things:

- 1) Dowry
- 2) Different cultures are getting mingled

3) Women/girls empowerment

Dowry is the age old evil that has been evident even today in our society. The novel and the film too, clearly are seen to reject this traditional belief. As we live in the 21st century this kind of thing is not acceptable on the contrary we should acknowledge the thought of the writer and of the director to show this conventional evil and to educate us against such thing. Arjun Kapoor (Krish) is fed up by the proposals of the marriages and this mother is forcing him to get married. Here, his mother says that:

“Ek accha rishta Aaya hai”

(There is a good proposal of marriage)

and Krish replies mother ironically:

“Agar acche paise de rahe hai to ha kar do”

(If they are giving good amount then say yes)

The mother was disturbed by such answer and says that she is not his enemy. However, it should be noted that this kind of thing is very natural to them a good amount at the time of marriage, car and all the expensive gifts are the symbol of how the boy is rated in the community. Again in another conversation the mother says:

“Mere Krish ki to kam se kam 40 lakh ki shaadi aur 10 lakh ke gehne”

(The marriage of Krish would be of at least 40 lakh and the jewelery of 10lakh.)

However, the ironical son replies:

“Chalo is bahane meri market price to pata chal gai”

(Oh! At least now I know what my market price is!)

So, these two dialogues are evident to get the idea about the dowry in our society and in the text and the movie, both the major characters (Krish and Ananya) is the spokespersons against this age-old system.

It is Ananya who on the other hand, rebukes the Bridegroom in one marriage function. She tells him that doesn't have any self respect as he is demanding the bigger car from the father in law (though they are not able to give it to them) she, eventually manages to make the family of the bridegroom understand the fact that this dowry and all is a traditional yet troublesome norm. This is a social reconstruction.

The other thing find in '2 states' is the treatment of the female characters. We have 3 major female characters. The traditional Punjabi mother of Krish and the traditional, yet

modern south Indian mother of Ananya, Of course, we too have Ananya who is in every sense a modern girl. Thus here, we have a clash between two cultures. Krish belongs to Punjabi family whereas Ananya belongs to Tamilian family and therefore there is a vast difference in their cultures. However, the younger guys have so much in common as opposed to the older guys. Consequently, there arises a conflict between two opposite cultures. Here, the females are shown being very powerful. Ananya, though belongs to south Indian family, wants to adjust into the family of a Punjabi boy, similar is the case of Krish on the contrary both the families are somewhat disagree with this.

The women shown in the novel and film are very powerful especially Ananya, who has the daring to enter the boys' hostel. This is very new thing as far as India is concerned. The other thing is her love for Punjabi boy and the clash with her would be Mother-in- law. Yet she tolerates all these and gives back whenever required. She is the brave girl who challenges everything and everyone whenever she finds it necessary. However, to face a Punjabi mother-in- law is not an easy task as Krish says:

“There is nothing more dangerous in the world than a Punjabi Mother-in- law”

However, Ananya is a modern girl who likes challenges. She endures everything for love. She goes to Delhi alone and stays at Krish' house before marriage, a brave stance. It shows the change in attitudes and mindsets of the people of India. Krish and Ananya almost have a live-in relationship, not a thing to be proud as far as traditional India is concerned. However, Ananya challenges every norm again and again, in every step of her life. She even fights for her right in the very first scene when she meets Krish at the college mess hall. There she openly says that the food is not up to the mark and other questionable things. So, in every sense she is a modern girl. Thus, through her Bhagat tries to change the traditional notions of women. He tries to show the problems and lives it on us to change it. As we know a modern woman has to face a lot of problems when she encounters a strong rival with traditional mindset. Ananya too has the rival in her Mother-in- law, a staunch Punjabi woman. She is the perfect traditionalist for whom a boy from Punjab should never marry a girl outside his culture. She even says for Ananya:

“The South Indian girl grabs the good looking Punjabi boys”

[As most of the South Indian boys are black]

Ananya, being a strong modern girl tries her level best to make the mother of Krish agreed and finally she wins it (of course with the help of Krish) and it really shows the Social reconstruction.

We all are gripped up with traditional beliefs but it is not necessary that we should follow them in any situation. The world has changed and we need to walk according to the world. We should contribute to change our society. Bhagat tries his best to make this change and rightly he achieves what he wants i.e to bring some sort of social change in our society. He shows the two main character, being very much educated and by that the approach, the thinking, the life-styles are all modern and opposite to the conventional things.

Thus, this is how Chetan Bhagat and the director too, of '2 States' bring before us the social reconstruction. It is very important as far as Indian society is concerned.

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