

Cultural Ethics In Jaisree Misra's Novel Afterwards

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ABSTRACT

Culture is defined as the shared patterns of behaviours and interactions, cognitive, constructs, and effective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. According to Varen no, culture is the totality of the mental and physical relations and activities that characterize the behaviour of individuals. Culture is the way of a particular society of a group of people including patterns of thought, beliefs, behaviour, customs, traditional, dress, and language as well as art, music and literature. In years Indian writes have made a dent in the world literacy scenario by their genius and awakened an interest in the riches of Indian culture and cavitations as well as in the changes that are taking places in Indian ethos. Hariharen portrays the customs and traditions in which the Indian women are caught in identity is an essential infrastructure of development because without culture, there can be socio, economic, scientific and spiritual development in a nation. A powerful total wave is surging across the world creating a new tradition from tradition to modernity.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Ethics, Cultural Identity, Human relationship, Isolation, Self- realization.

The novel Afterwards is the story of Maya-her oppressive married life, her brief dalliance with freedom and finally her demise. Abused by her suspicious husband in Kerala Maya strike upon a friendship with Rahul Tiwari an NRI door. Rahul is her ticket to freedom. Rahul is the most important factor who encourages Maya to throw her Indian identity and rebel against tradition. Maya totally discards her identity of Govind's wife and leaves her husband.

Although individual women from pre-historic times have accomplished much, as a class they have been set aside to minister to men's comfort. But when nice the higher has been tried, civilization repudiates the lower. Men have come to see that no advance can be made with one half-humanity set apart merely for the functions of sex; that children are quite limitable to in her it from the mother , and should have opportunities to inherit the accumulated ability and culture and character that is produced only by intellectual and ac civil activity.

The world has tried to move with men for dynamos, and ‘Clinging’ women impending every step of progress, in arts, science, industry, profession; they have been a thousand years behind men because forced into seclusion. They have been over-sexed. They have naturally not been impressed with their duties to Society, in its myriad needs, or with their own value as individuals. When Maya frankly shares about her married life, she confesses that Govind not beat her or torture her, but the one only problem she faces with him is his suspicious nature.

Jaishree Misra is known for her realistic revolution of the problems in relationships confronted by men and women in India. Through her authentic portrayal of characters, she exhibits the cultural identity of India marching towards westernization in the name of modernization. But she has chosen women characters to symbolize cultural identity of the society and of the nation. Jaishree Mishra’s *Afterwards* have been chosen for study.

Jaishree Misra’s *Afterwards* speaks about the various instances that lead ruptures in relationship. Relationship is complex algebraic equations, a little bit difficult to understand when the elements of love loyalty are missing. In *Afterwards*, when Rahul Tiwari arrives in Kerala for a short break from London, he finds himself playing friend, partner, co-conspirator and finally the unexpected role of a saviour to Maya. Maya, suffocating under the weight of a loveless marriage and a suspicious husband, turns to him for help.

In *Afterwards*, She badly waits to escape from her husband, because he was suspicious. The novelist fully aware of the patriarchal set-up of Indian society does not place for any kind of confrontation or militancy between Man and Wife. As it is often said and practical that silence, tolerance, suffering is golden and though the novel is the feminist frame work, the novelist does not cross the limits of Indian, social-cultural reality.

Indian marriage system is highly influenced by society. Because societal pressure. Indian parents don’t want to feel bad while listening to the neighbours, relatives and other human being. Indian society believes in one nice word “settled” which means getting married. If a girl is not getting married or not ready for that, society creates hell lot of pressure on parents.

A few Indian couples started thinking about marriage as an institution but for most of them it is just a matter of having a homely wife or a decent earning husband. There is almost no professional counselling or device or advice for people who want to get married. Either Indians are very smart or they understand marriage in and out. To understand marriage, one should be in a relationship and try to spend good time with her/his partner. Being in a relationship helps to understand your partner and some other critical things he/she wants in life.

In case of arrange marriage in India the Indian parents try to arrange the marriage of their daughters as it is taken as an obligatory responsibility on them. In this marriage a girl is given off to a groom

completely unknown to her. She marries a man to whom she has never met and her approval is taken for granted and she moves to a land with her groom which she never seen and goes all individual rights. As it is considered indecency on the part of girl to tell her parents of her parents of her choice in marriage. That's why these decent girls obey their parents and silently bow down before them without questioning about their marriage or their groom.

The concept of marriage in the novels of Misra is related to a delicate union of two different mind has not been properly realized in traditional bound Indian male dominated families. Women's individual identity has been positively and open-mindedly realized in her marriage. Women have never been accepted as a full human being or an equal partner to man in marriage. She is taken for granted on number of fronts. This casual attitude causes her consistent suffering and miserable life. Maya is also facing the same marital crisis.

Maya does not care for her identity nor is she worried about protecting the Indian culture and tradition. Her only motive is to move away from the levelness life she is experiencing. When Maya frankly shares about her married life, she confesses that Govind does not beat her torture her, but the one and only problem she faces with him his suspicious nature. Indian women, after marriage, face many untold miseries and sorrows. Indian wives give much importance to culture. They undergo all types of suffering to preserve their culture identity. Maya is an exception. Maya has many things.

Maya, I don't need to tell you, it's a cruel world out there when you don't have all those things! 'I know! But, having had all those things, I know how little it all can mean if you don't have the really import things in life, Rahul. Can't you understand? To someone like me, that kind of loss of freedom would be sheer torture. (57)

Maya in this manner is trying to analyse the double standards in our society, men are allowed to take any kind of liberties seeking sexual pleasure, even after they are married. The gods are pleased by pleasing the husband and wife must ever remain devoted her husband and please him. After his death, she should never, never think of other man. These women who accept these marriage as their fate or destiny or consider it a religious act are the blind worshippers of their husbands and to them husband is almost like god and disobedience to husband is considered a great sin.

And they teach this thing their daughter the lesson of feminine inferiority and submission. Maya is bold enough to throw off her current identity, leave her husband for the simple reason that he is suspicious and elope with Rahul, completely shedding her identity. Maya's strong decision of betraying her quite shocking. Her unbelievable courage also compels Rahul to take a wrong decision, urges him to risk. Hence, he follows the heart rather than the mind and does unthinkable:

And so it came to pass that Maya left Kerala with Anjali and with me. It wasn't quite an elopement. But that was certainly how it was seen by everyone else. Trivandrum would have reeled from the shock of it for days after that. But we were not to know what was being said. It wasn't hard to guess, though, and I certainly didn't want to make worse for Maya by speculating about it. (67)

Maya had decided to cut off all family ties to break out of the confining cage of subordinate womanhood. She very well knows, the fact that her female relations have uncountable succumbed to the dictates of male authority and she feels, that their version was blind folded so that they should not see the choices, and that man since generation has hampered their movement, so that the women will be under their thumb. Due to her non-real marriage and non-real love, having trapped her in a negative situation, shatters her positive struggle to be independent for selfhood and intellectual liberation.

This her refuse to be a child religious tenants, cultural ethics, family an institution have all condemned a women's pursuit of sexual pleasure. It is only for the child bearing purpose, she has to be passive and submissive. A women as a quested for sexual satisfaction is not ethically accepted. Thus Maya, having found her inner personality being suppressed strives for expression and acceptance through an extra marital affair with her neighbour, Rahul.

Maya and Rahul reach England and star living a new life there. For the mistake Maya committed, she meets with an accident three years and losses her life. The second important character is Rahul Tiwari. He is Maya's neighbour who exchanges s food and daily chats with her in the beginning. Slowly the relationship takes a different turn. Maya creates situations and voluntarily talks to Rahul. Rahul senses that Maya is unusually happy and feels shy when they have a conversation.

He also finds out that that Maya's husband, Govind is uncaring and suspicious. Rahul Tiwari, though looks kind and patient, is basically a selfish person. He rents a house and manages to live in it without bothering about loneliness. The author does not say a word about his other relations but everyone he knew. On a conversation with Maya, Rahul confesses.

My sort of existence can feel like a very selfish one sometimes. I just do what I want to do, go...big, important things, like family ties and statehood and even nationhood seem to have passed me by completely. How lovely to be so free! She said softly. People like me just get so bogged down, thinking all the time about what other people want, what other people think. (40)

Still, at times Rahul feels guilty of what he is doing. He can never deny that he is getting attracted towards Maya. As a just man, he troubled and confused of his strange relationship with Maya. He muses:

That was the other thing, god demits, and you couldn't just go falling in love with some poor kid's mother, could you? Some things ought to little children, most of all. They were sacrosanct, going by all the rules be sacrosanct. Other people's lives, other men's wives, the trust of I knew that. In fact, I was painfully conscious of that and had never had any trouble with it before. (50)

Rahul is the most important factor that encourages may to throw away her Indian identity and rebel against tradition. Maya totally discards her identity of Govind's wife and leaves her husband. Govind, as a character, makes his physical presence in the novel only after death of wife. He reaches England to get back his daughter, Anjali. The social services people who are taking care of Anjali call Govind and ask him to reach England keeping in mind the physical, emotional and financial needs of the body. When he meets Rahul, he is reminded of what Rahul and his ex-wife did to him. Govind is basically very traditional and follows old beliefs. To such a husband Maya is unbearable. Even when Maya and women from the social service offer their hand to greet him, he avoids. Below is an observation of Govind by Rahul:

Sandy shook Govind's hand and then mine. I could tell he was uncomfortable with this and remembered that in India women did not usually shake hands. Unless they moved in very westernized circles and met a lot of foreigners. I knew from all the things Maya told me that Govind was old-fashioned, full of conservative beliefs. (201)

When the social service people ask Govind as to how Anjali's future should be organized, he replies, Govind fears that Anjali would choose a like life he mother. So, he is clear and stubborn that Anjali must be brought up only with him. This would enable the baby to realize the values and traditions of India. Govind as Anjali's biological father.....would also check if she follows the traditional proper let without going mother. Here, Govind gives much importance to the cultural identity of his daughter.

Jaishree Misra learns a valuable lesson and reserves the Indian culture and tradition. Misra gives freedom to his women character to feel and think in her own way. Meanwhile, she realizes the existing realities of the world. On the other hand, Maya gets an urgent need to discard the cultural identity created by tradition bound society. The wave of passion in from of concern strikes her vehemently and she admitted. There by, she betrays her husbands, Maya and elopes with Rahul. Culture Ethics discusses about the relationship between culture and modernity with women being seen as the representative of that which is uniquely Indian in the country's culture. There is an incredible charge of nativity in India, which does not allow women to get out this role to firmly ensure continue of age –old forms of repression and subjugation. Jaishree Misra's *Afterwards* speaks about the various instances that lead to ruptures in relationship. Relationship is complex algebraic equations, a little bit difficult to understand when the elements of love and loyalty are missing.

Feminism looks at all the representational strategies in popular and other culture forms, drawing attention to the masculinity. Feminism argues that gender inequalities in society are 'naturalized' through systems of representation in media and culture. Where the women always a secondary figure, an object. In the writings of Misra, the actual day-to-day problems of life are encountered, examined, exposed, challenged and settled. The finest achievements of the new women has been personal liberty, Modern, young, women like Maya is bricked between tradition and modernity.

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