

Rabbit's Identity Crisis and Identity Reconstruction in Rabbit Redux

Chen Tianyu
Shanghai International Studies University
East Tiyuhui Road, Shanghai, China
18292485148@163.com

ABSTRACT

Abstract: A panorama of post-war America is pictured from a microcosmic perspective in *Rabbit Redux* by John Updike. He, presenting Rabbit's personal life, describes the conflicts as well as confusion which lead to Rabbit, the protagonist's identity crisis. This essay focuses on Rabbit's identity crisis as the patriarch, the white majority and the man of property, in which he struggles and pays his price. Eventually he could treat the binary forces such as male and female, black and white, upper and low more rationally and objectively, which helps him relocate himself in the society. The connection between Rabbit's personal life and the social events is unusually close. It is safe to say that the turmoil of the sixties exerts an inevitable influence on Rabbit. Meanwhile, the connection is not one-way. Rabbit's individual identity crisis is representative and reflects the crisis of America.

Introduction

As the second book shadowed by the glory of two Pulitzer winners in the same series, *Rabbit Redux* does not earn enough attention especially in China, which is a pity. It is in this important novel that Rabbit undergoes the greatest change by stopping running and heads for a better direction of life. Few scholars have illustrated why, how and into what he has changed. This essay intends to discuss the questions from the perspective of identity.

Stuart Hall employs a quite inclusive term "cultural identity" to refer to "those aspects of our identities which arises from our belonging to distinctive ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious and above all, national cultures". (Hall, *Modernity* 274) "Culture" is a word full of ambiguity because it can be used to refer to not only art and thought but also social faiths and moral norms. Comprehensive as it is, the term "cultural identity" is feasible in Rabbit's case. Identities from the aspects of patriarchy, race, nation and property are on the list. As for identity crisis, it usually happens when one raises the question "who I am". One is brought to question his identity when one does not have the sense of belonging; he or she does not know where is the position and how to act properly when faced with various styles and patterns. (Hall, *Questions* 19) Harry had been stagnant in the last ten years while everyone else moved forward and held the ideas that Rabbit was not ready to accept. Conflicts and confusion cornered him and forced him to reconsider everything that was going on. His position as a patriarch, a white American and a man of property underwent the most salient challenge. Reluctantly or willingly, Rabbit finally relocated himself in family and in society.

"Patriarchy" in anthropological and sociological studies refers to the rule of father in a family. Feminists employ the term to designate man's supremacy over woman. Traditionally, husband and father, as the male in the family, enjoy a higher position than the female because men take occupations in various fields and make significant

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contribution to the family and the society. Patriarchy confines women within the house and makes their sole meaning lie in getting married, producing children and serving their husband. Although the patriarchal system was gone in 1950s in America and woman liberation movement was on its way in the sixties, the patriarchal consciousness still existed in people's, especially in men's mind. Household as the smallest unit of society was a perfect lieu to practice the norm, thus became a place where confrontations between men and women easily happened as the arrival of the second wave of feminist movement.

Interpersonal relationship greatly influenced one's self-identification. Janice was the most important person with whom Rabbit had the closest connection. Once the connection was broken, he was going to have difficulties in defining himself. In Rabbit's eyes, Janice was a silly woman who knew nothing, a property. Unexpectedly, it was exactly Janice "the dumb mutt" who blew Rabbit, the head of the family for the first and heaviest attack. No longer sick and drunken, she realized that life was full of possibilities except being a housewife. Delicate physical appearance, newly occupied job, improved taste had brought out the hidden and oppressed self of Janice. Her changes should be linked to the second wave of feminist movement in the 1960s. Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* published in 1963 examined "the problem that has no name" and believed that women should break the only role of mother and wife. To solve the problem, women were supposed to receive education, work and use their talent. During the decade, woman struggled for their equal position and legal rights on employment, promotion and education etc.. The old Janice was a typical example of the depressed women in Friedan's case. She was treated as an object belonging to man; she was blamed for not fulfilling her role as wife; she was the money-taker in the family; her job was not respected and recognized by Rabbit. The new Janice, however, put Friedan's idea into practice and outweighed the lethargic Rabbit.

Economically, Rabbit had been devalued by his working wife. One significant reason why women are considered inferior to men is that the former are dependent on the latter for surviving. Traditionally, men should support their family as the provider and if they failed such a basic task, they would be extremely humiliated and be thought to be incapable. (Tyson 87) A man unable to afford the family is considered as less a man while a woman who shares the responsibility of supporting the family is going to threaten the authority of her husband. In *Redux*, economically independent Janice deprived Rabbit of his privilege as the only provider. Janice, as the daughter of Springer Motor's boss, had already advanced Rabbit in terms of income by the stock given by her father. She was kind to some degree to take Harry's feeling into consideration so as not to degrade him, which demonstrated that she was still maintaining the long-existed patriarchy. The self-sacrifice was considerate but not recommending because it only indulged men's dominance over women. After being blamed, she was quite aggressive to point out that the money Harry made was slender and useless. From this moment, Janice no longer repressed her true feelings and she had her voice heard. When she announced her contribution to the family, she began to realize her self-value. Her expression implied her assertion about herself and the awakening of her self-consciousness. The more their conversation concerned money, the less Harry talked. Due to his failure of supporting the family, Rabbit who was the loud speaker before was silenced. The absence of voice, which had been a metaphor for women's powerlessness, indicated the crash of Rabbit's power. Economic independence had enabled Janice's voice to be heard by Rabbit, which stopped Harry from being the only speaker and decision-maker in the family.

Not lively any more, Rabbit appeared in *Redux* in a quite fragile image. The fatigue and fragility of Rabbit slacked his masculinity. On the contrary, Janice was more active and alive. An edge that Janice had over Harry was her desire for but his resistance to sex

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and the reason was the death of their baby daughter, with which he associated their intercourse. He could not walk out from the feeling of guilt and murder. When finally they had sex, he was shocked by her newly acquired skills and appetite, and realized he could never be her match, which again waned his masculinity in their marriage. Sally Robinson contends that Janice's physical ambition and desire cut Rabbit's power and privilege as a man. (344) To skip the inappropriateness of Janice's betray, her bold desire for body pleasure implied a cultural and social change---sexual liberation in the 1960s. As a strong force to crush the conservative values about sex, this movement encouraged women to get equality in terms of sexual relationship so as to break the unbalanced position between men and women. More importantly, the movement tended to overthrow the social hierarchy imposed by patriarchal culture on women so that they could discover their self which had been locked or suppressed by men. Compared with the women who had sex only to please their husbands and oppressed their own need several decades ago, Janice was very honest about her sexual demand without any embarrassment. She had her own consciousness about and absolute ownership of her body. Instead of being the obedient and pleasing wife, Janice not only claimed Rabbit's duty to satisfy her, but also looked for pleasure without him. Her consciousness about sexual equality and bodily carnival were surely a weapon against patriarchy. She noticed her existence from her own body. From this perspective, Janice overwhelmed Rabbit by her spring body and more importantly by her awakened sexual consciousness.

If Janice's increasing economic independence and spring body were privately cutting Harry's power, her cohabitation with Charlie was a public humiliation for him. Janice's extramarital affair was not rare in America in the 1960s when the number of women who had regarded sexual intercourse prior to marriage showed a marked growth. Harry was shocked when he knew Janice's affair and all he could feel was coldness. Christopher Steven maintains that Janice is so sick of Rabbit's stagnancy and motionlessness that she must leave him behind, but she was not getting away from the duty of a housewife. (92) The author of the essay disagrees. Janice's escape is a consequence of Rabbit's deprecation and neglect of her value and her realization of it. Her adultery left Harry to domesticity and in the gloomy garden alone, which worsened his situation. Her leaving him officially announced that she did not need him anymore and made him a public laugh stock. Everyone knew, even his black coworker added this news when introducing him to the people in Jimbo's. Being cuckolded by Janice, Harry was deprived the title of husband, physically and spiritually.

What's worse, Janice's growth after she lived with Charlie was so surprising that she delivered the long and earnest speech over the phone:

“Harry, I'm sorry for whatever pain this is causing you, truly sorry, but it's very important that at this point in our lives we don't let guilt feelings motivate us. I'm trying to look honestly into myself, to see who I am, and where I should be going. I want us both, Harry, to come to a decision we can live with. It's the year nineteen sixty-nine and there's no reason for two mature people to smother each other to death simply out of inertia. I'm searching for a valid identity and I suggest you do the same.”(111)

She was right to bring out the identity thing. She found her position in her job and in the romantic relationship with Charlie. From the point of feminism, however, what she had done was meaningful. Apart from being the servant of men in the house, there were many other possibilities through which she was aware of her existence and value. This was what the feminist movement and sexual revolution had meant for women---helping them acquire self-identification. Harry was not ready for the broken relationship, for the

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loneliness Janice had left him, for the disempowerment at home and for the unexpected identity crisis. The relationship between Janice and Rabbit was husband-and-wife as well as male-and-female. The female with Janice as the representative were pursuing more equal rights and were challenging the authority which had been occupied long enough by the male with Rabbit as the spokesman.

Harry would never admit his care and love to Janice because he was reluctant to take the risk of losing his authority. That explained why Harry kept passive and indifferent when Janice decided to end the extramarital relationship. It was not right, however, to regard his passivity as lifelessness. (Brian 75) In fact, he was rather manipulative and revengeful to achieve his purpose of forcing Janice to go home. After Janice's leaving, their communication was mainly through telephone. Together there were four calls, among which only the first one was by Harry. He did everything ridiculous enough to attract Janice's attention and to stealthily force her home. He kept a hippy girl at home and took a black in. He was trying to be manipulative, yet he was not good at that way, especially after his manipulation resulted in the burning of the house to some degree. Luckily he had a sister who was better at calculating. She successfully broke the tie between Janice and Charlie. The final call by Janice eventually turned the whole thing to a better direction. This time, Janice was modest and compromising. Instead of shedding tears and reproaching, she responded to Harry's cruelty and silence with laughter and tolerance, which made Rabbit feel much less threatening and more controlling. The present that Janice gave to Harry, the car key, was symbolic and significant for the car was the only property that was free from the fire. Compared with the aggressive and assertive Janice, the current Janice who was obedient and modest met the demand of the dominant Rabbit. By returning the only property to her husband, Janice established his control of the car, more importantly, of her. At least, as husband in the family, his position was secured again due to Janice's return and submission. Women's strength and potential were increasingly felt by men though the latter had difficulties in embracing the fact. Anyway, it is a step forward toward the equality between male and female.

Updike characterizes Harry as a typical American. The white majority generally agreed on two beliefs--white supremacy and the greatness of America. However, in America the 1960s was a period full of social turbulence such as the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement, a time when problems and divisions were springing, a time when "the activities of racial minorities and youthful rebels are given center stage, while their adversaries, the white, middle-class, middle-age establishment, sink into the shadows" (Robinson 331). The conflict between races, mainly between the white and the black, was no doubt one reason accountable for the violence. Race was very important for the white when it came to identity. Being a white American brought a sense of belonging and pride. Rabbit was apparently a racist and his opinions on race were cliché: The binary division between the white and the black made them the symbols of good and evil respectively; The white were much better than other races or minorities especially the black. Yet people who he met and opinions which he encountered crashed his superiority as a white American, and Skeeter was one competitive challenger.

Their encounter in Harry's house was their first round in which Harry tried to win so as to stabilize his dominant position as a white. Skeeter was smart to know that the only way to knock Harry open was to submit to him first. He, on the one hand, pretended to leave. On the other hand, he insulted Harry and forced Harry to fight back. Harry's fear was finally outweighed by his anger and he resorted to violence. Skeeter's yielding was meaningful for Rabbit because it secured Rabbit's superiority. His permission for Skeeter's stay did not mean that his attitude toward the black had changed. He still saw

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Skeeter as a dangerous opponent. Rabbit's fear of and anger at the black was not individual. Robert Allen writes that "the mass mind of white America was gripped with fear and horror at the thought that blackness and power could be joined" (46) The fear was meaningful because the black would be no more invisible for the white. The increasing communication between Rabbit and Skeeter gradually made Rabbit discharged his defense. In the debate on whether America had been humane to the black, Rabbit was weak and admitted his fear to Skeeter. The confession rewarded Harry not only with a sound sleep, but also with an open mind to see through the truth. This was a turning point where Rabbit shifted from a fighter to a learner. He started to ask questions according to the speeches Skeeter delivered instead of arguing with Skeeter. Being a learner, Rabbit had abandoned his unreasonable supremacy over the black and became more tolerant and less radical.

Rabbit's new experience of noticing Skeeter's body updated his cliché about the black being physically primitive. He finally found an advantage in the black and did not deny it. He made comparison between the white and the black, which meant he began to take the black as human being like the white. The body of the black had been controlled by the white since the former had been enslaved by the latter, but it was admired by a white at the moment. Rabbit's fascination about Skeeter's body implied his lack of confidence about his own body, which crushed his white supremacy again to some degree whether he was conscious of it or not. Updike clarified that "throughout the entire history of America, the blacks have not been just slaves and underclass, but they've also had something to offer which whites have coveted" (Plath 225). Physical strength probably was the thing that impotent and stagnant Rabbit had coveted from Skeeter. Updike here is quite sarcastic about the contradictory psychology of the white. The white belonged to a superior class, but they were not competent rivals of the black in terms of physical strength. The white despised the strong servant for they felt threatened and envied stealthily the black who they detested. Racism was problematic itself and was doomed to fall, so was Rabbit's identity as a superior white.

The falling white supremacy also resulted from Rabbit's repressed hatred toward his white peers. Skeeter's education was not restricted to the black. He aroused Rabbit's authentic feelings about his white compatriots. Harry distasted them because he could not lead a cozy life even if he worked hard day by day, but they enjoyed what richness had brought to them. Thanks to Skeeter and his lectures, Rabbit realized that he was still the one who was exploited. His new realization about the black promoted their position, and his expressed repugnance to the elite white degraded his own race, both contributing to the fall of white superiority.

Rabbit was a passionate royal nationalist. With a strong sense of belonging, he was the only one in the novel that never said one bad word about America. His faith was challenged by the disunity between him and Charlie as well as Skeeter on Vietnam War. Harry, a staunch supporter, totally believed that America was helping Vietnam fight for liberty to make a happy rich country, while Charlie maintained that America desired for power and control. Rabbit's patriotism had caused his guilt for not being there, so he asked Skeeter, the veteran about Vietnam. Skeeter described the terrible environment, the explosion, the rules, the death and the fire etc., all of which were cruel and awful. What was ironic was that black and white were "equally treated" because the black were able to stop a bullet like the white. The personal experiences about the war were much more convincing. Rabbit was suspicious of his view on Vietnam and the faith that he once strongly believed in now needed to be ensured by others, which meant that his belief was crashing. His suspicion was going to aim at the boss behind the war---his country. Rabbit's original support of Vietnam War was the consequence of national propaganda

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and ideology which can be called official history. Skeeter's personal description about the war was a challenge to grand narrative. The image about America carried by Skeeter was totally different from Rabbit's. Susan Klein summarizes that the image of Rabbit was composed by the ideology of Cold War, while that of Skeeter by Black Power. There was confrontation between them (171). If Rabbit's image about America was a dream where freedom and liberty were everywhere, Skeeter's image was a nightmare full of war, violence and unfairness. But Rabbit's dream was being replaced by the nightmare. Patriotism was an indispensable part in Rabbit's identity. Christopher suggests that Rabbit's love for his country was so energetic because it derived from his disappointment in his life. He imaginatively took America as his own. (73) In other words, he needed the glory of America to make up for his loss in personal life. Unfortunately, America failed Rabbit with a fake image.

As his racism and patriotism, two important elements for his identity begun to fall, he was faced with identity crisis and was forced to reconsider his position in the society. If he was the manipulator when he tried to reclaim his authority as a patriarch at home, he was the manipulatee when he struggled to rebalance his relationship with the black.

Rabbit used to feel superior to the black, but he then became a slave of Skeeter. Rabbit's servility established his inferiority. His absolute obedience, utmost tolerance and unconditional submission to Skeeter were a sharp contrast with his foregoing violence. One possible explanation was that the information about the authentic situation of America was too much for him to take so he lost his mind. Skeeter was such an excellent teacher and controller, making full use of diverse methods such as introduction, argumentation, persuasion, questions and reading to convince Rabbit. Not all Skeeter's opinions were right and reasonable, but his influence upon Rabbit was quite positive. Though Rabbit's skin was white, something under it turned "black". He turned from a protester to a protector of the black. He ignored a driver's warning against the danger of Skeeter, refused the neighbors' request to send Skeeter away, and concealed everything that was against Skeeter including his drug addiction and his violent actions from the police. This Rabbit was totally different from the one who despised Negroes on the bus and regarded them as the latest thing to evolve. He begun to sympathize and understand the terrible situation that the black underwent or he would not have done all of these for Skeeter. When he judged people by their personality instead of by skin, he was much less prejudiced. No longer the black hater and the white chanter, he got his racism greatly eliminated and reset his position from the perspective of race.

Rabbit's unconditional patriotism had changed with the increase of his knowledge about America. His conclusion about America was short but precise: "this country isn't perfect." (381) He witnessed so many flaws: the dark history of black, the civil disturbance, the rotting politics, the violent citizens etc.. America was never as perfect as Rabbit had thought and his dream about the great country was just an illusion. The stains of America disappointed Rabbit, but he himself should be responsible for his disillusionment about America. He had already known that it was a dog-eat-dog society and he taught it to his son even before he declared the imperfection of America. He refused to admit it because bragging about the perfect America helped fulfill his self-esteem. The nationality had been a part of Rabbit's identity. Being an American made him look better of himself with self-assertion. When he admitted this country was no longer perfect, his high expectation about America was gone, so was the aggressive Rabbit. The word "rabbit" was used to modify Rabbit's patriotism because "rabbit" endowed the meaning of vitality and personal emotion. His love for the country, less rabbit and no longer unconditional, rewarded him with a clearer recognition about his country as well as his national identity. Therefore, Rabbit had relocated himself in the American society.

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A freestanding private family house is a symbol of a high social status, from which Rabbit as a typical white middle-class citizen, could never be immune. Owning a house separated him from the lower class including the black. His dream was to live in Penn Park which was the wealthy suburb community he longed to join. Rabbit's identity as a man of property enhanced his superiority as a patriarch and a white American. Rabbit's house in this novel was especially vital and deserved careful attention. In *Rabbit, Run*, the running Rabbit made the setting diverse--his house, hospital, Eccles' home, the golf course, Ruth's apartment etc.. In *Redux*, the protagonist confined himself to his house and seldom went out when he was off work. House provided characters with a main setting where all kinds of confrontations and conflicts happened and reconciliation and reconstruction were reached. The house, as a company of Rabbit, experienced all those ups and downs and as a symbol of Rabbit's identity, underwent changes as well.

Rabbit's house was the only place where he could boss around when Janice was home. In other places, he had to take orders no matter how reluctant he was. But the absence of the hostess made the house less home and Rabbit lost in emptiness. Janice was quite important for both the house and Rabbit. Since they moved into the house, everything within the house had the shadow of Janice for Rabbit. According to Malcolm Quantrill, house is the carrier of emotion (93) and remembering the specific house strengthens our sense of subjectivity (184). Janice was a part of the house since the furniture was selected by her. When Janice fled away, Rabbit felt the emptiness of both the house and his heart and he was even frightened to go home. The house became a spacecraft, "a long empty box in the blackness of Penn Villas, slowly spinning in the void" (106). There was a similarity between the house without Janice and the spacecraft. The parts in the spacecraft were lifeless, so was the furniture in the house. The morning when Janice was going to fly away was the beginning of Rabbit's lonely journey in "summer of the moon". He had already noticed that the familiar furniture looked different and Martian in the morning light. The difference was more obvious later: "it is not the same old furniture, the fake cobbler's bench, the sofa and the silver thread chair facing each other like two bulky drunks too tired to go upstairs. The blank TV screen in its box of metal painted with wood grain, the see-through shelves with nothing on them." (150) The furniture did not alter at all. What had altered was Rabbit's feeling toward the furniture. Janice's absence made Rabbit entirely sad and unable to enjoy the joyful sight of the objects. Rene Wellek explains the relationship between setting and character, especially that between house and houseowner: "Setting is environment, and environments, especially domestic interiors, may be viewed as metonymic, or metaphoric, expression of character. A man's home is an extension of himself. Describe it and you have described him." (221) It seemed that the house was abandoned and left uncared-for due to Janice's flight, so was Rabbit. Rabbit's environment is himself; his household is himself and Janice. The household was incomplete, so was Rabbit. Janice's flight was an interior challenge to Rabbit's identity as a houseowner.

There were exterior threats to the man of property. Jill and Skeeter who Rabbit took in were dangerous and marginal, and Rabbit, belonging to the establishment, at least was the guard of the norm. (George 262) But his being the norm was based on his identity as the owner of a suburban house. Without the house, the "adoption" would have been impossible. It was exactly the house that provided Rabbit with the chance of homing strangers which enabled him to undergo different relationship. The new dwellers moved into Rabbit's house to form a new "family": Jill replaced the position of Janice as his wife; Skeeter was like the radical and rebellious son. They had totally different background and held discrepant views. His house sheltered those who he used to consider as his enemies whose existence would make him suspicious of his identity. Their relationship was not

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stable, altering from rival to friend, from guest to host. Each new relationship called Rabbit's identity into question. When he classified Jill into the up-class people whom he hated, he criticized her way of life and she was just a rich bitch for him while he considered himself as the hardworking middle class who deserved respect. When he listened to Jill as a friend, he knew that this rich hippie was not precarious and she ran away for a reason. Death, religion and beauty became their topic which refreshed Rabbit's minds. When Skeeter was his enemy, he violently beat the black and saw Skeeter as "humans made of a new material" (228). When they made peace, he learned the history of black, the bloody truth in Vietnam and understood Skeeter's distrust on the law and the country. He realized that the law only severed the white and the elite and the black was still excluded in the society. Every shift updated Rabbit's knowledge, thus forced him to question himself. His house became a micro society with the coexistence of riots and peace, pain and joy, death and life. Not only did his house lose its defense function, but also Rabbit was defenseless to "new" viewpoints.

Both Janice's leaving and the moving-in of Skeeter and Jill did not deprive Rabbit the ownership of the house. His white neighbors, however, not only invaded his privacy, but also intervened his ownership to the house. Rabbit's awareness of their invasion was attributed to two neighbors' block. Ignoring that Rabbit was the house owner, they demand that he eject the black because of the unpleasant scene at his home. He refused their request not only to protect Skeeter, but also to defend his identity as the house owner. The hostility of his white neighbors was beyond Rabbit's expectation---they set a fire on his house. The white should be the most horrible in the novel. Their narrow mind, indifference and craziness might be what Updike intended to point out. In the process of the Civil Rights Movements, blood and death triggered by the white racists were numerous. Even the laws enacted to protect the rights of the black were ignored by the white racists.

The fire dehousing Rabbit, turning him from a man of possession to the property-less. The white neighbors were crazy and violent to punish Rabbit by destroying his house. If we change the perspective, the house was of great significance both for them and Rabbit, which made the destruction meaningful. It was not only a physical building, sheltering Rabbit from rain and wind, but also the carrier of dreams and values which he hold both for himself and his nation. He had constructed his identity based on the house. Under the roof, he used to be the most dominant patriarch, regarding his wife as an object; he had been deserted and de-husbanded by his wife; he was the radical racist and the passionate patriot; he also received reeducation as a student and turned more partial to the issue of race and patriotism. The house shifted with the changes that took place there from a personal territory where he gave orders, to a lifeless spaceship where he felt emptiness and nothingness, to a boisterous sanctuary full of contradictions and concessions. All of these mixed in the house and were burned by the fire along with the house. The only property from which Rabbit's identity originated vanished, not only making him homeless but also changed his sense of self. (George 265) Rabbit's identity was shattered along with the ruined home, but what remained helped him to reconstruct it. The fire freed him from the lonely spacecraft without Janice and the refugee camp which brought him danger and burden.

The burning of the house was a kind of ritual for Rabbit's reconstruction of his identity and it was both destructive and constructive. It was destructive because the burned house which had been the only property left Rabbit property-less and homeless. It was constructive as the burning freed him from further burden and trouble and gave him a chance to start over. Rabbit this time would have a new vision about his family, his race and his nation.

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It is true that *Redux* is about Rabbit's personal life. But Harry's personal life gives readers a closer and smaller perspective to see what was happening in the 1960s in America. The credibility of reality does not decrease due to the description of personal life. On the contrary, it makes the history alive. Actually the connection between Rabbit's personal life and the social events is unusually close. It is safe to say that the turmoil of the sixties exerts an inevitable influence on Rabbit. Meanwhile, the connection is not one-way. Rabbit's individual identity crisis is representative and reflects the crisis of America. The imparity between man and woman, the inequality between black and white, the disparity between classes, the distance between reality and ideal, the conflicts between morality and desire will all continue to be factors that have caused a problematic America. His identity crisis and its reconstruction reveals Rabbit's acceptance and deny to the binary forces such as white and black, male and female as well as upper and low in American society, which indicates the author's contemplation on his nation's and people's situation.

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