

ADULTERY AND DISPERSED FAMILY RELATIONSHIP IN JOHN UPDIKE'S RABBIT REDUX

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ABSTRACT

This research paper observes Rabbit Redux as a novel of manner which shows the reality of middle class contemporary American people about marriage, love, sex, morality, American values, etc. in the changing American society of 1970s. Updike's purpose is ultimately to subvert the authority of all sociological and psychological interpretations of family and marriage by showing the self contradictory nature of outer forces and inner motives of the characters. The family is not only the source of security and mutual affection but if it goes out of the track and family relationships are dispersed, it becomes as a prison. So, this novel exists in the human realms of family rather than the intellectual realms of cold doctrinaire. People in this postmodern world are essentially living in alienation and fragmentation. It shows that there is a lack of binding force. So, they are torn apart. However, they never lament for their solitary and disintegrated lives. Updike's characters are guided by internal motives. They do not follow the established and rational way of life. They defy the natural law and conventions.

Keyword: *adultery, family relation, postmodernism, fragmentation, morality*

1. INTRODUCTION: ADULTERY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

John Updike's novel Rabbit Redux shows the herding mass of images gathered around the poles of family and adultery. The process accomplishes more than a display of virtuosity, however; it is central to his subversion of conventional moral association.

Good does not cling to one pole and evil to another. He demonstrates that family undermines the sense of self and helps to define it. The family is not merely a source of security and mutual affection, but also a prison. Likewise, adultery is a multifarious set of experiences ranging from boredom and disgust to beauty and evidence of Updike's strategies. First, it presents and rejects the great American archetype of the heroes fleeing women and society to find freedom in nurturing American nature. It teases us with an exploration of Rabbit's different activities as mystic-romantics and mix-instinct with a kin of religious superstition. John Updike shows the manner of American Society of second half of twentieth century through their effect on one person, the Rabbit Angst of his novel, now thirty-six still, adrift, but yet alive to change.

The Novel Rabbit Redux shows the subversion of conventional moral association with marriage and family. According to conventional moral view, family and marriage are the central points of culture and society. There as the convention of high moral perspective in family and marriage. But in the novel John Updike shows the manner of the second half of twentieth century. He took all the turmoil of his times and put it on a purely domestic level. The novel Rabbit Redux is an intriguing mix of literary excess stylistic passages that strike at the jugular of the immobile common man existing in the rapids political and social changes of the late 1960s and early 1970s and an overlong yet occasionally perceptive view of marriage and infidelity. Updike's emphasis is on how sex, free love, the breakdown of institutions and emerging political movements are during the given time of the novel, affecting the small town American values and morality of the past. The institution of marriage and infidelity are used as symbols for that, and the action of the characters, having to cope with this lie having to remain true not to themselves, but to what they believe their responsibilities, also reflects this. But to have a main character Rabbit who remains immobile, who does not grow, who does not act who in short does not react to the changes around them creates unpleasant moments.

Despite this frustration, Rabbit Redux continues to enthrall because there is something of this dilemma within us all. Rabbit and Janice are playing out this game on a living form day to day basis. They do not plan. They exist, yet they are capable of open minds despite this inactivity, they are capable of adapting and experimenting, but ultimately they resort back to the Americans they have been instilled with. Crazy could be the description of this novel.

John Updike's novel, Rabbit Redux ridicules the institution of marriage and mocks ideas of human morality. The book is an attempt to explain how one married couple Janice and the familiar Rabbit go through and finally overcome the experience of adultery, one would think then; that this is a tale of happy endings, but unfortunately the attempt is a sad failure. Rabbit and his wife Janice are the basic middle class parents of one son. (At least "middle class" in the 1970s in the eyes of Updike). Rabbit is a factory worker and Janice is a part time clerk at a car dealership. It is at this car dealership that she begins an affair with the son of the owner, an affair that is ultimately discovered by her husband. Janice's reasons for her affairs are the typical one's heard; she is lonely, life is hard, marriage is not exciting enough. The news however devastates Rabbit and after Janice leaves to live with her love, Rabbit's life deteriorates into immorality. We watch him take in a run-away girl, who is half his age as well as a criminal, who, since he happens to be black, is subject to racist threats from the small town.

They experiment with drugs, with no regard for the child that is still there. They all seem to live for the moment. But one can forgive the indiscretions in Rabbit Redux; one is, after all waiting for the two main characters to realize their mistake and re kindle their love, their marriage, their family; but multiple tragedies strike the house burns down and the run-away girl dies in the fire; Janice's lover decides he likes living the life of the "bachelor" (indeed it is the life of the bachelor that looks best in this book). It is when all of these occur that Rabbit and Janice are forced to talk together and make a decision to stay or not to of togetherness. There are no discussions of memories shared together in a once happier past. Indeed one wonders why the couple married in the first place since they both seem to think that the other is so displeasing in every sense. If

Updike had put even one sentence about staying together for their child or just because they were friends, the ending would be saved. Instead we are left with the sense that Rabbit and Janice might repeat their history again in the near future. It shows that this is an acceptable part of being human. In this novel, it shows that, though the life is not only happy and successful, but also have tragic outlook on marriage and family, one that must be accepted and enjoy with what we have.

Crazy could be the description of this novel. Rabbit's Crazy for harboring a black fugitive, a young female runaway, drug use and of course sex. The ending is crazy, complicated and defining setting the stage for Updike's Rabbit novel. Crazy in defining Vietnam through Skeeter's eyes, drug use by all and the changes with life and death.

Updike's view point of Middle America in 1969 is a yearning for change. Updike's style and imagery are beautiful and transporting. His written narrative is the best challenging our mind and thoughts allowing our mind to wander, travel and enjoy his descriptive prose. All of this, makes Rabbit Redux worthwhile.

Thus, the rival claims of freedom and responsibility are explored in Rabbit Redux from several different points of view. After deserting his wife in the novel of the series, the title character is now trying to maintain a home in the face of increasing odds. This time his wife experiments with freedom by having an affair with a used car salesman. Harry learns about this at a bar where the television repeatedly shows Apollo 11 blasting off to the moon. Updike thus reveals the emptiness in the life of his chief character at the very moment that America is ready to explore a new world in space. Tanner Tony has presented his ideas about family and adultery in his book Adultery in the Novel that:

In the Rabbit novels if comes to us not in the free-agent fantasy tradition but instead in the complicated context of the family with adultery attached. There are risks of course, Tonny Tanner has pointed out, with reference to Couples, that frequent adulteries "lose contact with the sense of intense passion," and that "adultery . . . no longer signifies" such passion because society no longer maintains strong "institutional obstructions" against adulterers. [. . .]. (47)

These above lines show the quest for knowledge must be endlessly self-revising. George W. Hunt shows the multiplicity and plurality of truth by describing these things in his book *John Updike and Three Great Secret Things: Sex, Religion and Art*. Any attempt to judge, Rabbit Redux into the Kierkegaardian notion that every truth is nevertheless truth only to a certain degree; when it goes beyond, the counterpoint appears and it becomes untruth. Reality is not a solid but fluid. It has no fixed shape but the shape is being built, destroyed and rebuilt by human actions and beliefs all the time. It is an “open universe” where a man can enter and walk out whenever he likes.

The main character Harry Angstrom (Rabbit) is a real example of this situation. The main characters of the novel *Rabbit*, Janice, Jill, Charlie Stavorus have subverted the traditional convention and curious to adopt the changing social activities and values. Updike is good at balancing the perspective of characters, so that we figure out what is happening through their heads sometime and at other times, we hear it in the third person, when inside a head, Updike also does not let a linear transgression occur through objectified and common facts, but instead shows the stream of consciousness, though patterned, way of thinking, and of being wrong about a physical and social world that is constantly changing.

2. POSTMODERNISM

The Postmodernism generally developed after the Second World War along with its extremely changing from the traditional world views. It challenges the traditional values of truth knowledge, reason meaning etc. It focuses on the way having no certainty or single meaning. Many interpretations are possible for a single event.

There are some important incidents which mark change in the certain period of history. To exemplify these trends gives the sacrificial incidents of the great personalities like Socrates, Jesus Christ and Galileo. It was after the execution of Socrates that the classical Greek mind was born. Similarly the crucifixion of Jesus invited the birth of Christianity and the trial and condemnation of Galileo resulted in the birth of modern science with this. We can relate that it was after the rise of Frederic Nietzsche that the post modernism was born. Because, Nietzsche embraced radical thought, changing critical sensibility and the sense of appearing nihilism in western culture, the

traces of postmodern mind also date back to Nietzsche's critical thoughts.

It is generally considered that the word 'postmodern' is related to a movement developed in France in 1960s and it is very close to 'post structuralism'. It means that it emerged after post structural and deconstruction theory. Jacques Derrida, J. H. Miller, Paul de Man, G. Hartman, Harold Bloom, etc. are known as poststructuralists and deconstructionists. When the Second World War ended, that created to new situation in Europe. The French communist party played a significant role in the antifascist movement during the Second World War. The popularity of French communist party was increasing. In post war general election, French communist party emerged as one of the largest party in French parliament. But French communist party did not work what people had expected. And there emerged student's movement in 1968. The arrogance of students and youths altered into the frustration and pessimism. In this situation, pessimism and frustration became the dominant ideology and inspiration for energetic and dynamic youths and students. Lyotard, Foucault, and Derrida attracted their mind by stressing the fragmentary, heterogeneous and plural character reality.

At this background, Postmodernism had its most widespread influence in arts and architecture in the 1960s and 1970s. According to the postmodern perspectives, reality is not the solid and given but inconstant and changing. Whatever we understand as real is only an interpretation and no interpretation is final. All human knowledge depends upon signs and symbols which themselves comes from uncertain origin. Hence the nature of truth and reality is highly ambiguous. The world itself is not a thing-in-itself or independent of interpretation. It comes into being only through interpretation. In this way, the conflicts between subject and object the concept of uncertainty, pluralism of interpretations, the incoherence of events, the break of logics etc are the main characteristic of Postmodernism.

The inherent characteristic spirit of postmodern mind is one of damaging established structure, uncovering the pretentious exploding belief etc. In the spirit of Marx, Nietzsche and Freud Postmodernism in this sense, is a rebellious movement that subverts the established values of western mind by deconstructing, decentring,

demystifying and discontinuing them. They attack on the western mind's forceful effort of establish order by means of theological, scientific and economic bases is not only self deceptive but destructive. Thus all the previously established values are questioned by the postmodern mind.

Modernism rejects objective truth as a source of meaning. Modernism believes that the individual creates meaning by perception, action and imagination symbolism and personal mythmaking becomes the means of self expression. Yet, the glorification of the inner being leads the modern to alienation and a sense of loss and despair. But postmodernism is the period of uncertainty. It has many interpretations and no single interpretation is final. No single definition is adequate. In literature writers adopt a self conscious intersexuality, sometimes verging on pastiche which denies the formal propriety of authorship and genre. The modern mind was somehow sure and certain whereas the postmodern mind is very skeptical and uncertain. It is believed that everything found today can be changed tomorrow. Implicitly, the one postmodern an absolute is critical consciousness and by deconstructing all by this consciousness, it has deconstructed itself. This is the unstable paradox, contradiction, confusion that spreads the postmodern mind.

2.1. Postmodernism: Celebration of Fragmentation

Postmodernism focuses on the breaking the unity and celebration of self. Post modernism follows the ideas of rejecting boundaries between high and low forms of art, defying rigid genre destination, emphasizing pastiche, parody, bricolage, irony, and playfulness, postmodern art favours self reflexivity and self consciousness, fragmentation and discontinuity, ambiguity and an emphasis on the decentred and dehumanized subject. Modernism presents the fragmentation as something tragic something to be lamented and mourned as loss. Many modernist works try to uphold the idea that work of art can provide the unity, coherence, and meaning which has been lost in modern life. But Postmodernism in contrast, does not lament on fragmentation or incoherence rather celebrates it. The world is meaningless, so the postmodernist thinkers do not believe that art can make meaning. They enjoy playing with chaos and confusion. Post modernism rejects grand narratives and favours mininarratives, stories that explain small practices, local events, rather than

large scale universal or global concepts. The ambiguity of Postmodernism is a consequence of different meanings and ways the form has been used to characterize the different fields such as social, aesthetic, economic and political phenomena. So the Postmodernism shows the fragmentation and trivialization of values

Fredric Jameson suggests that Postmodernism is different from cultural forms by its emphasis on fragmentation. He specially emphasizes on the term fragmentation. For Jameson, the fragmentation of the subject replaces the alienation of the subject which characterized modernism. Postmodernism always deals with surface, not substance. There is not center, rather everything tends to be decentralized in Postmodernism. Postmodernist works are often characterized by a lack of depth. According to Jameson, individuals are no longer anomic and anxious because there is nothing from which an individual could cut his or her ties. The librations from the anxiety that characterized anomic may also mean liberation from other kinds of feeling as well. For him, this is not to say that the cultural products of the post modernism are devoid of feelings, but rather such feelings, are new free floating and impersonal.

Hence, modernism tends of present a fragmented view of human subjectivity and history but presents that fragmentation as something tragic, something to be lamented and mourned as loss. Many modernist works try of uphold the idea that comes of art can provide the unity, coherence and meaning which has been lost in most of modern life; art will do what other human institution fail to do. But Postmodernism in contrast, does not lament the idea of fragmentation, provisionality, or incoherence but rather celebrates that, the world is meaningless, let's not pretend that art can make meaning. Let's enjoy with the disjunction.

2.2. Subversion of Tradition and Convention

Language or the mode of expression used in producing and disseminating knowledge must be rational also. To be rational language must be transparent; it must function only to represent the real/ perceivable world which the rational mind observed. There must be a firm and objective connection between the objects of perception and the words used to name them. These are some of the fundamental premises of humanism or of

modernism. They serve as to justify and explain virtually all of our social structures and institutions, including democracy, law, science, ethics and aesthetics.

Modernity is fundamentally about order: rationality, and rationalization creating order out of chaos. The assumption is that creating more rationality is conducive to creating more order, and that the more ordered a society is the better it will function. Because modernity is about the pursuit of ever-increasing levels of order, modern societies constantly are on guard against anything and everything labeled as disordered, which might disrupt order. Thus modern societies rely on continually, establishing a binary opposition between order and disorder, so that they can are the superiority of order but to do this, they have to have thinks that represent disorder, modern society thus continually have to create/construct disorder. In Western culture, this disorder becomes the other define in relation to other binary oppositions. Thus anything non-white, non-male, non-hetero sexual, non-hygiene, non-rational etc becomes part of "disorder" and has to be eliminated from the ordered, rational modern society.

The way that modern societies go about categories labeled as order or disordered have to do with the effort to achieve stability. François Lyotard equates that stability with the idea of "totality" or a totalized system. Totality, stability and order Lyotard argues are maintained in modern societies through means of grand narratives or master narrative which are stories a culture tells itself about its practices and beliefs. A grand narrative in American culture might be the story that democracy is the most enlightened form of government, and that democracy can and will lead to universal human happiness. Every belief system or ideology has its grand narratives, according to Lyotard; for Marxism, for instance, the grand narrative is the idea that capitalism will collapse in on itself and a utopian socialist world will evolve. We can think of grand narrative as meta-theory or meta ideology, that is, an ideology that explains an ideology; a story that is told to explain the belief systems that exist.

Another way of saying this, according to Jean Baudrillard, is that in postmodern society, there are no originals, only copies or what he calls simulacra, we can say that, for example, about painting or sculpture, which there an original

work is and there also might be thousands of copies but the original is the one with the highest value. Contrasts that with CDs or music recordings where there is no original, as in painting, no recordings, that are all the same, and all sold for the same amount of money. Another version of Baudrillard's simulacrum would be the concepts of virtual reality, a reality created by simulation, for which there is no original.

In his most pivotal book, *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (1976), Baudrillard argues that the culture of electronic media repeals sense of reality with a new "hyper reality" (437). That "hyper reality" is "on order of representation that is not the unreal, but has replaces reality, and more real, more real than real" (58).

Though Frederick Jameson interprets Postmodernism with neo-Marxist perspectives and defines it as Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism (556). His description of postmodern societies features are depthless, pastiche, and consumerism because of the advanced development of the science and technology in late capitalism. He says that it distrusts the hierarchy between high culture and low or mass culture. He outlines three phases of capitalism and claims that each state of capitalism has particular cultural practices.

The first phase is the period of market capitalism. During this era, industrial capital is mostly limited or expanded in national market which existed in the eighteenth to late nineteenth century in Western Europe, British and the United States. The second phase existed from the late nineteenth century to mid twentieth century in which national markets expanded into world markets. This phase is known as monopoly capitalism, the age of imperialism. Realism, modernism and Postmodernism are in series of cultural levels of market capitalism, monopoly capitalism and multinational capitalism. The new features of culture (Postmodernism) includes "an erasure of the boundary between 'high' and 'mass' or commercial culture, expansion of the culture industries and an associated proliferation of popular cultural forms" (6).

Jameson believes that Postmodernism is not merely one period style which takes its particular significance from the context of late capitalist society. He sees a profound connection between the 'electronic and nuclear powered' technology of

the multinational global economy and the depthless, fragmented and randomly heterogeneous images of postmodernist culture. This culture has affected the frontier between high culture and mass culture.

2.3. Unprecedented Outcome of the Postmodern Era

It is evident now that the most significant characteristics of the larger postmodern, intellectual situation, its pluralism, complexity, and ambiguity are precisely the characteristics necessary for the potential emergence of a fundamentally new form of intellectual vision. In this era, no perspectives – religions, scientific or philosophical, has the upper hand, yet that situation has encouraged an almost unprecedented intellectual flexibility and cross-fertilization. The extreme fluidity and multiplicity of the contemporary intellectual scene can hardly be exaggerated. Not only is the post modern mind itself a maelstrom of unresolved diversity, but virtually every important element of the western intellectual past is now present and active in one form or another, contributing to the vitality and confusion of the contemporary general trend of the era. The cultural and intellectual role of religion has, of course, been drastically affected by the secularizing and pluralistic developments of the modern era. While in most respects the influence of institutionalized religion has continued to decline, the religious sensibility itself seems to have been revitalized by the newly ambiguous intellectual circumstances of the postmodern era. Several developments in the postmodern era ultimately encouraged new forms of religious orientation and greater spiritual autonomy.

Contemporary science has given rise to a number of radically divergent interpretations of the world. Many of the interpretations differ sharply from what was previously the conventional scientific vision. Science has become increasingly self-aware and self critical, less effective to a naive scientism, more conscious of its knowledge and existential limitations. It is true that individuals who contributed for unified and self evident “scientific world view” (58) of the modern type are seen failure to engage the larger intellectual challenge of the age.

3.ADULTERY AND DISPERSED FAMILY RELATIONSHIP: A WAY OF CHARACTERS' LIVES IN RABBIT REDUX

In this well expressed and readable novel *Rabbit Redux*, Updike explores the freedom, family relationship and alienation in late 60s in American society. Updike continuous both the life of characters as well as his depiction of a specific place and time in American history. In this case the time in question is the end of the sixties, a period immersed in radical change and the novel seems to be about both characters specially Harry's reaction to the sixties and the sixties reaction to him. Updike writes the novel more episodic than anything else, mimicking the flow of life weaving in the problematic times of the sixties depending characters like Rabbit, his parents and sister, his wife and son. Further more, it explores how the effect of time and situation helps to live the fragmented life of people as the characters of novel.

Rabbit himself remains the central enigma, inhabiting the center of the novel without really revealing himself. In him, Updike found the perfect everyman, able to comments on the changing times not by sitting there and ranting to us about them, but simply by having things happen to him, by having life just parade by which he stands there starting, confused by what's going on. As always, the prose and dialogue remain razor-sharp, Updike's description of suburban surroundings attaining an odd beauty in their mundanity and his dialogue filled with offhand gems that come naturally from the characters, not like scripts placed in their hands.

Rabbit Redux clearly shows Updike's awareness of the energy in patterns of disintegrating and substitute families. There or three children in this novel, the boy remains, the girl dies and the third never really his, fades view among hints of death. Its success or derives much of its imagery and narrative impulse from violations and perversions of family relationships as individuals struggle against their circumstances, specifically their family role. Mothers and fathers, they turn up everywhere. More important than the novels similarities are the variations, Updike creates on that basic theme. First, adultery frames the narrative for both Rabbit and Janice, she begins by consenting to an affair with Charlie Stavros and ends by rejecting it, while Rabbit at first refuses the advances of Peggy Fosnacht (the victim of her

husband's adultery), but flees to her in the end to break himself free, for Janice second, Rabbit Redux takes great risks by creating a new Angstrom family where all the characters knowingly contribute to the emotional conflict which draws upon a broader social and cultural base than Updike had previously attempted to use.

Rabbit has spent the sixties becoming a modern day's new rank; with no apparent tension between inner and outer forces, he sits at his linotype machine, spiritually care free. His condition helps explain Janice's decision to break the family, and is somehow related his guilt. But her adultery – like Rabbits with Ruth, even to its setting in an upstairs apartment across town – is ancillary, serving to take her away so that Updike can focus once again on Rabbit and his response to a vacuum in which like the space exploration in these same months, connection is inevitable.

This novel exists in the human realm of family rather than the intellectual realm of cold doctrine. It shows the real situation of family and contemporary American society of late 1960s. Family members were separated each other. There is gap between the way of life of old generation and young generation.

It's clear that, Rabbits is living far from his parents. When he meets his father, he asks his father how his mother is. Most of the characters marital life is not successful. Mainly, Rabbits, Janice, Stavros, Jill have committed adultery and spent their life in disorder and fragmentation. It shows the difficulties of living and ordinary, middle class life. The characters show the unusual sense of morality and responsibilities:

There is a depth of suffering, of tooth sore reality, beneath this fingle, that makes it silly, worse than silly, evil. His bladder gets a touch of that guilty soveetness it had when as a child he was running the school late, beside the slime-rimmed gutter water that ran down from the ice plant. He tries to explain "Listen, Stavros, you are the one in the wrong, you're the one screwing another man's wife. If you want to pull out, pull out, don't try to commit me to one of your . . .". (161)

Above lines show the main characters enmity and the difficult situation created by illegal relationship among each others. Updike carefully nurtures ambiguity by emphasizing the aesthetics of adultery as much as characters discussion of its immorality. The technical commences in the

dialectical description of that first sexual encounters, which neatly balance images of ecstasy and depression, tenderness and anger, etc. Likewise, we can see the characters are having fun even in the situation of messiness:

"Great" Rabbit tells her and, Mellow on wine, goes on, in apology for his life, "no kidding, I once took that inner light trip and all I did was bruise my surroundings. Revolution or whatever, is just a way of saying a mess in fun. Well it is fun, for a while, as long as somebody else has laid in the supplies. A mess is a luxury, is all I mean." Jill has been strumming for him, between sentences, past helping him along, part poking fun. He turns on her "Now you tell us something you tell us the story of your life." "I have had no "life" she says, and no man's daughter and no man's wife. (154)

After that event, the relation between husband and wife became slowly cold. Both of them try to raise the smaller weak points and start quarrel. At last, their relationship has broken and they got divorce. After that, Rabbit involved with other women to pass his days. But those who are involved with Rabbit are also from the same category. It shows the loss of tradition and instability of American life. John Updike, the novelist himself takes the protagonist as an every man who is like all men, is unique and mortal.

Thus, the novel presents the unhealthy and dispersed relationship between the couples. Their fragmented activity brings disintegration and division in the family. So the novel captures a sense of individual and societal contradiction in the life of an aging American man and woman.

3.1. Conflict between Outer Forces and Inner Motives

Updike's purpose is ultimately to subvert the authority of all sociological and psychological interpretations of family and society by showing the self-contradictory nature of outer forces and inner motives. Consequently, he forces us to contemplate the contexts and the processes of knowing. This novel exists in the human realm of family rather than the intellectual realm of cold doctrine. Nothing points to the advantages of the marriage adultery pairing better than the genesis story of the Rabbit Angstrom situations. The tension comes from a polarity of less – through still considerable force: a male's often self – contradictory freedom fantasies, expressed in images of family. The tense balance of this

arrangement becomes clearer if one considers Updike's pre-occupation with and explicit representation of sexual behaviour. In his most resonant fiction, he employs sexuality as the most revealing form of social manners and spiritual quest – in fiction as in life, he seems to be saying individuals can feign all manners but those can be seen in their behave. And though Updike has grown increasingly bold in the sex he describes, his purpose has never been sex-for-its-own-sake, though he could be fairly charged with analogous abuses else where. And if sexual manners can not ultimately be feigned, then sexuality can be presented as a kind of ultimate reality.

In *Rabbit Redux*, it comes to us not in the free-agent fantasy tradition but instead in the complicated context of the family with adultery attached. Updike has tried to integrate sexual behaviours into the organized mass of images from other sources, to polarize it in its inner world against the family, that visible evidence of a character's past efforts to create a reality both embodying and transcending passion. Family provides the significant theme by the complications it presents to the Rabbit who seeks certain selfhood. To be a male member of a family is to be simultaneously – as Updike emphasized “father, son, brother and husband,” and to know” the fierce strains of the household. Rabbit finds that to fail as a father also means to fail as a son (his father calls him as “enemy” (132), husband and brother Rabbit wants to be a responsible father, responsible son and responsible husband but because of his inner motives, he can not maintain the responsibility of family and society.

Rabbit Redux takes great risks by creating a new “Angstrom” family where in all the characters knowingly contributed to the emotional conflict which draws upon a broader social and cultural base than Updike had previously attempted to use. The substitute family Rabbit soon finds gathered at his home consists entirely of persons floating free because of familial and social breakups. Janice's departure breaks a static circle and allows Rabbit to act out one of the great “freedom” myths of the sixties (and of American idealism): communal living. In an extended family metaphor, this mode of sharing makes Rabbit the paradoxical “father” in a situation in which parental authority seems irrelevant. He wants “brotherhood more than authority” (144), but a temporary brotherhood of freedom without responsibility.

From this, comes a tension between the communal ideal and the conventional family that keeps the novel alive, for it constantly subverts tradition, especially racial and sexual conventions within clearly defined family metaphors.

Racial and sexual convention was order in family and society. By breaking the convention, the characters of the novel involves in illegal sexual relationship with outer partners than the family. There is no parental responsibility in family. Every member in the family have their own way. Thus people struggle between their own personal motives, interest passions and outer rules, laws and system of social forces. We can clearly see these ideas in the major characters of the novel. Janice, wife of Rabbit says him by forgetting her responsibility to her family, husband and son: I love him. Damm you, Harry.

Rabbit and Janice both have the feign manners. They both are hesitating to show the reality but it is revealed through their behaviour. They are trying to hide the real and inner intention because of the obstruction of social values. We can see the reality from Janice's further analysis:

“All right, you still love her,” Janice says. “No, I did not, I don't. You haven't heard the worse thing she did then”, said Harry. “I can't believe you never tried to get in touch with her after you came back to me. At least to see what she did about her . . . pregnancy”, said Janice. “I felt I shouldn't. But he sees now in his wife's dark and judging eyes that the rules were more complicated that there were some rules by which he should have. There were rules beneath the surface rules that also mattered (66).

On the other hand Rabbit have to meet to his parents in home town. He was called by his father to meet his ill mother. But he is busy in these vague activities. It shows the Rabbit motive as natural as the human desire for complication or the heart's choosing to move against the grain of circumstances:

He says, “Jesus” “I forgot, we were suppose to go over to mom's tonight!”, Tell me, Harry, “How is your mother's health? Rebecca and I are naturally very concerned”, said Janice. My father says it's about the same. It's a slow process, you know. They have drugs now that make it even slower. I've been meaning this weak to get up to Mt. Judge to see her but we haven't managed.” (72)

It shows that Harry's mind is occupied by the ideas of meetings women and trying to hide it in front of Janice. But he wants to go to meet his ill mother also. It means, he can't fulfill his responsibility because of his freeness. The trend of society was such in 1960s American society. They want to enjoy the freedom by breaking the traditional and conventional assumptions but on the other hand they also want to fulfill their responsibility in the family and society. As a result, they face the freedom without responsibility. They enjoy in loneliness. Nelson, Harry's son says: "Billy Fosnacht says when we grow up, we're going to overthrow the system" (78). It means the new generation are trying to break the traditional and conventional system.

In the vacuum created by Janice's absence, the lovers make slow orbits. Updike's creative temperament seems to require this stasis, which allows him to expose every contour of the experience in the same way that a young man in one of his New Yorker stories sits on a bed examining his naked girlfriend as she slowly revolves before him. Rabbit too becomes more and more the spectator, and equivocates so long that by the time Jill feels or thinks his genuine emotion, she whispers, "It's too late for you to love me" (263). Rabbit can think to love her as a woman after Skeeter has used heroin to become her master; he can think to love her as a daughter when she, like Rebecca, is dead to him. The imagery of betrayal here is specifically of the sixties; he imagines a metaphor making his semen on her body an "acid-burn . . . [she looks] like a napalmed child"

(142). The theme surfaces again when the fire (ignited perhaps by an emotionally shaky Vietnam veteran) destroys his house and kills Jill in his bedroom. His active complicity is also implied when he cleans the windows of his home (a voyager had peered through the night before) and returns to Peggy Fosnacht's for an adulterous tumble whose "inflammation" (273) coincides with the arson's work.

By destroying role boundaries, Updike frees his main characters from simple interpretation. Most important is that their three-ring sexual denies passion. It is the absence of obstacles between Rabbit and the attainment of his desire that explains his lack of emotion compared with the responses of Nelson and Janice, who claims that she is in bliss but whose actions constantly belie

the assertion. The closet he can come to her it to take the place of her dead father, for as he explains to Nelson, "she is too old to adopt. And you're too young to marry" (256). Examining the needle marks on her arm, he thinks, "They might be bee stings. There are not too many. He can talk to Janice. Then he remembers that Janice is not here, and that only Nelson is their child" (264). From these events, we can see the one basic structural feature is the oedipal struggle of Rabbit's attempt to send Nelson away so that rest unchallenged beneath the Nelson's counter fantasy. So, outer forces of family and society and inner motives of the character always struggles each other.

3.2. Dispersed Family Relationship is the Effect of Adultery

Updike's purpose has never been sex for-its-own-sake but it is to show the reality of human nature and sexual behaviour of human beings. By portraying Rabbit's equivocations, Updike clearly invites just the moral categorizing, he seeks to prove inappropriate. Rabbit is a family man who breaks one family to begin another, breaks that to reunite the first, and breaks that to run; he gravitates toward increasingly complex social and moral situation. The development of the characters sexual relationship is an important tool that leads to better understanding of the individual's life and experience while at the same time giving the readers a familiar background common to all human beings. The narrator of the novel explains how Harry spends his entire time by keeping sexual relationship with many women and alienated from the family. Janice is his wife but he has sexual relationship with other women such as Jill, Ruth, Mrs. Fosnacht etc. and Janice also have the illegal relationship with Charlie Stavours. Rabbit's crazy for harboring a black fugitive, a young female run away, drug use and of course sex makes his wife challenging. On the other hand his wife experiments with freedom by having an affair with a used car salesman.

Rabbit Redux, ridicules the institution of marriage and mocks ideas of human morality. It shows that how one married couple Janice and the familiar Rabbit go through and finally overcomes the experience of adultery. Janice's reason for her affair and adultery is her life is lonely, marriage is not exciting enough, "she is usually out sick with some sort of female problem she had developed in her life" (26). Because of such family background

not only in Rabbit's family, such environment was there even in their society. Nelson says:

"The kids at school say Mr. Fosnacht was having an affair, that's why they got divorced", "or maybe he just got tired of not knowing which of his wife's eyes was looking at him". "Dad, what is an affair exactly?", "Oh, it's two people going out together when they're married to somebody else". "Dad that ever happens to you and mom?" (30)

But it is ironical that Rabbit himself is involving in adultery with Mrs. Fosnacht and his son is raising such questions. When the early baby was died, Rabbit and Janice's family became disturbed. Then both of them Rabbit and Janice try to come out from that boredom. Their resulting in frustration prepares for the emergence of most subtle and devilish characters in the family. Adultery plays:

The baby that died. But through Janice's grief was worse at first, though she bent under it like a reed he was afraid might break, in the long year since, he has become sole heir to the grief since he refused to get her pregnant again the murder and guilt have become all his. At first, he tried to explain how it was, that sex with her had become too dark, too serious, too kindered to death, to trust anything that might come out of it. Then he stopped explaining and she seemed to forget; like a cat who sniffs around in corners mewing for the drowned kittens a day or two and then back to lapping milk and napping in the wash basket. (41)

So, Janice has affair with Charlie Stavorus to remove her boredom in family. But it affects directly and bitterly in their married life. Their friendship and relationship was dispersed among each other in family. Throughout the novel, Harry does not take any rest except at the end of this novel. His mind frequently moves here and there. His reality does not stay in a fixed place but rather moves around past memories and sometimes his thinking reaches in the politics also. Among with Harry, Janice's mind also moves with the changing time and not able to concentrate in her fixed goal. She is not getting proper love from her husband. She has passed the dark days during her youth while Harry ran away from the family and kept sexual relation with many women.

Truth is constructed subjectivity and it differs from person to person in Angstrom family. All the family members are guided by their own individualism by creating their own favorable truth. Family disintegration mainly leads to

plurality of truth. The belief system of Angstrom family is not to depend upon other but to create one's own favorable condition.

4. CONCLUSION

The present study of the novel *Rabbit Redux* finds fragmentation, alienation, subversion of tradition, disorder, depthlessness, insensitiveness, loss of historicity, mimicry, discontinuity, ambiguity, incoherence etc. These elements ultimately contribute to the betrayal in the family relationship among the characters but they have their self ideology and selfness. They celebrate fragmentation and chaos. There is no lamentation in alienation. Characters are involved in breaking the unity and celebration of the self. Every character passes their life in their own way. This novel itself is like a moving snapshot, and Updike parses out enough details and specificity to tell us a story, but without losing some of the complication and ambiguities of how life is experienced on multiple levels from multiple angles, and from simultaneous, but traditionally opposing view point. In *Rabbit Redux*, Updike really provides us with a small time capsule of the end of the 1960s and once again illustrates the difficulties of living an ordinary, middle class life.

The novel presents the unhealthy relationship between the couples which brings disintegration and division in the family. So, the novel captures a sense of individual and societal frustration in the life of an aging American man and woman. They are in fragmentation and alienation but they don't have lamentation. They are enjoying the disjunction. Like this way, Updike's novel details the marital tension, sexual escapes, personal betrayals, professional disappointments, and spiritual crisis that reflects changing attitudes about sexual behaviours, relationship between man and women, and most importantly religious beliefs in contemporary society.

To sum up, the *Rabbit Redux* by John Updike depicts the postmodernistic ideas in the characters, especially Rabbit, the protagonist in the novel who dispersed his family relationship with his wife amusing in fragmented situation.

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