

I. Tony Kushner and Women in His Writings

This project attempts to analyze Tony Kushner's *Angels In America, Millennium Approaches*, a play which deals with numerous issues like homosexuality, deception, class conflict, religiosity, HIV AIDS etc. however this research explores the tribulations that Harper, Hannah and Ethel have to face in the family and society as women. This reading takes the pose of female characters as the pivot which is influenced by the overall activities and goings-on of the play in one way or the other. This study tries to give a perspective of evaluation different from the attempts made previously.

The multiplicity in themes and issues of the play has overshadowed the imperative issues pertaining to the female characters; though the female characters like Harper, Ethel and Hannah have to undergo a lot of sufferings either it be physical or psychological. Throughout the play, we can witness those women figures suffering a lot and having mental tortures from the male, either it is a husband or a son who also turns to be gay. Joe, husband to Harper and son to Hannah, is a Chief clerk for Justice Theodore Wilson of the Federal Court of Appeals, Second Circuit. He falls short to impart happiness in his family and as an outcome, his wife Harper turns to be an agoraphobic with a mild valium addiction. Moreover, his mother also has to suffer and trek a lot to bring together her family. The play has revealed Harper as a mentally weak woman as she keeps the imaginary friend, Mr. Lies, but does not seem to have focused on to establish her weakness to be the result of Joe's personal setback. Joe on the other hand loves his wife and is even trying to get some outlet of their discords but more or less his mind is sexist in nature. He tries to hide his problems and does not become open as a husband should be.

This project attempts to bring forth the sufferings and problems of the women that are imposed on them by the males. This study also tries to alter the position of the women shown in the play, who are shown to be the second to the males. The story marks around

the homosexuality, religiosity, AIDS but tells hardly any impact of them in women's lives.

The study tries to unmask the centuries long gender discrimination and domination in the society in *Angels In America, Millennium Approaches*. But this research not only efforts to analyze the position given to the women characters like, Harper, Hannah, Ethel and Sarah but it shows the female character's endurance, audacity, attempt, revolt and also focuses on their own attempts to get rid of the domination, tensions, subversions they've got from the male characters, either direct or indirect. The play talks not many about the rights of the women and their abilities.

It also discloses the satisfaction, happiness and confidence that Harper gets by entering into an imaginary world. After she has a final discord with her husband, she calls her imaginary friend, Mr. Lies, a travel agent, and asks him to take her away with him in some flight of the imagination to some places where she can get rid of the current tribulations. It is her attempt and also revolt through which she proves that she no longer needs the conjugal life. On the other hand, Hannah comprehends her responsibility to unite her family and resolve the discord. She even does not care about her belongings and sells it to set out to New York City. We can see her motherly love and responsibility in her attempt. The play ends without the indication whether she is able in her attempt or not but her effort and sacrifice towards her family is enough to prove that she has full obligation and commitment to solve her familial discords.

Tony Kushner founded a theater group and began writing and producing plays in the early 1980s. He completed a Broadway blockbuster *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* which earned for Kushner a Pulitzer Prize (1993), and many others. After the performance of *Angels In America* Jack Kroll, in a review published by *Newsweek* writes:

Daring and Dazzling! The most ambitious American play of our time: an

epic that ranges from earth to heaven; focuses on politics, sex and religion; transports us to Washington, the Kremlin, the South Bronx, Salt Lake City and Antarctica; deals with Jews, Mormons, WASPs, blacks; switches between realism and fantasy, from the tragedy of AIDS to the camp comedy of drag queens to the death or at least the absconding of God.

Kroll has pointed out the overall themes and setting of the play. *Millennium Approaches* deals with the themes like, politics, sex, religion, disappearance of the God and includes both real spatial setting like Washington, Salt Lake City, New York City etc. and also fantasy places like Ozone and some dream sequences.

But quite differently, Kushner's *The Illusion* is all an intricately woven tale of illusions that seeks to put us in touch with ourselves, what we create in our minds vs. what is actually real. In a review "Review on *Angels In America*", published on *Arts & Entertainment*, Mialka Bonadonna Morano notes, "Kushner's introspective and witty script weaves a fairy-tale like narrative out of irony and physical comedy" (2). Morano has pointed out the reflective quality with the use of metaplay elements and further, a father's effort to find his son in *The Illusion* can be related to the attempt of Hannah who exercises a lot to unite her family in *Angels In America*.

Kushner's *A Bright Room Called Day* is taken as another remarkable work. The plot is shaggy, more a slice of life than a clearly developing story. In a review, "Gripping Theatre at Custom-made," Charles Kruger says:

The readers and audience experiences the activities in a Berlin apartment in the 1930s, and, as counterpoint, in the 1980s. The folk in the apartment are responding to the political winds blowing about them: the rise of Hitler in the 30 s, the rise of Reagan in the 80s. Kushner has painted an emotional portrait of a "complicated, confusing and desperate moment in

time", says director Brian Katz in his program note. We are not looking at the events, but experiencing what it feels like to be there, emotionally. As one character observes, "I am NOT a camera", referencing Christopher Isherwood's famous line, "I am a camera" which begins his take on the same historical period. (1)

In this review, Kruger has pointed out the visual features he noticed while watching the play. Rise of Hitler and Regan have the significant space in the world history and even the characters of Kushner have the impact of the political ups and downs, which clarifies the impact of politics in Kushner's characters. Kushner's temporal and spatial settings as well as character representation makes the audiences feel their own presence in the drama as the same character. Kushner's use of Brechtian style of performance empathizes the audience with the characters but he is aware of not making the drama an exact camera.

Supporting Kurger's statement, in his book, *Troubling the Waters*, James Fisher says that the characters that appear as the major ones in Kushner's plays "represent a mixed bag of classes, races, cultural backgrounds and ideological principles" (3). Kushner chooses characters mainly from so-called marginal strata of the society. Similarly, according to Fisher, "fear of future, moral uncertainty and sense of inexplicable loss drives Kushner's tormented and confused characters in all of his plays" (148). While talking about Kushner's adaptations, the same critic comments about the dramatist's "major women characters-, who find themselves living through social and personal stresses beyond their capacity" (139). It makes us clear that Kushner picks up the characters from the society and some of the characters of his dramas have similar type of serious social and familial problem which imposes them psychological stresses.

Like what Kurger and James Fisher have said, most of Kushner's characters go through intense life-changing events. Most of his works are also political without

sounding preachy. This is probably because all of the political discussions in the plays are deeply rooted in the characters – they have a real need to voice their political views. In many of Kushner's Plays, faith seems to be a source of hope - a theme that might be surprising given his adverse reaction to the Christian right involvement in politics. There is a great deal of ambiguity and ambivalence about faith and spirituality in those plays, which Kushner himself accepts. Alfonso C. M., in a review "Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* or How American History Spins Forward" quotes Kushner's lines where he speaks about the peculiar construction of his plays, "When I am fascinated by questions of faith when they appear in essays, plays, poetry, novels and films, and public discourse of that kind, then it's appropriate" (9). He clarifies that, first, the characters enter into his mind and then only into his works.

In his plays, Kushner deliberately reprocesses the long-established American myths and essentials of American culture and attaches them all on a renovation of identity-whether it be gender, racial, or political etc. About the historicity in *Millennium Approaches*, in a review, in a review "Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* or How American History Spins Forward" Alfonso C.M. writes:

He introduces a different optimized concept of history. In *Millennium Approaches*, some of his characters give their own opinion about a disastrous and apocalyptic vision of history and its future by recalling the AIDS epidemic, racism, homophobia and the dismantlement of the world: "Roy: I see the universe, Joe, as a kind of sandstorm in outer space with winds of mega-hurricane velocity but instead of grains of sand it's shards and splinters of glass", "Ethel Rosenberg: History... is about to crack wide open, Millennium approaches." (4)

Unlike Kruger and James Fisher, Alfonso focuses on the apocalyptic vision of history

Kushner mostly uses in his plays and also has used in *Millennium Approaches*. Kruger and Fisher have focused on the representation of the characters from different class, caste, gender, locality etc. But Alfonso has focused on the angelic presence of some of the characters who themselves express their opinion on the dismantlement of the world. As pointed out by Alfonso, in the play, Roy sees the universe as a kind of sandstorm in outer space with the winds of a huge hurricane and another character, Ethel declares that the history is about crack wide open. Alfonso finds most of *Millennium Approaches* devoted to the introduction of the plot and the characters' foremost features and personal situations.

The play *Angels in America, Millennium Approaches*, opens in 1985 with the funeral service of Louis's grandmother- Sarah. Kushner's temporal setting draws both the readers and audiences to the 80s. The Play deals mainly with the story of two couples: the homosexual couple of Prior and Louis, and the heterosexual couple of Joe and Harper. The present characters represent different gender, political, religious and social Background like Kurger and Fisher have said. Louis works as a Word Processor in Brooklyn. Prior is an openly gay character so is Louis but he performs homosexual role only with friends. They have represented middle class family and the homosexuals also. On the other hand, Joe, a Lawyer is a bisexual but his religious beliefs hinder himself to perform such role overtly. He belongs to a well known moral family in Salt Lake City. His boss, Roy Cohn, a successful Lawyer and Unofficial power broker is also homosexual. He wants to befriend Joe as his homosexual partner by means of his power and position but it brings dispute in Joe and Harper's conjugal life. And, Harper's journey from valium addiction, conflict with Joe and finally her revolutionary attempt of leaving husband for her spiritual satisfaction drives the readers and audiences in every ups and downs in her life; it is exactly what Kruger has pointed out as one of the rhetoric of Kushner.

In the play, not only the lives of gay characters are deeply influenced by the social norms, but the lives of other characters like Harper, Hannah, and Ethel are also at times endangered by the same norms. Joe, on the one hand, cannot disclose his homosexuality either to Harper or to his mother, as he finds it very difficult to do so. Louis on the other hand, deserts his partner, prior who is suffering from AIDS. Joe's wife, Harper wants love and normal sexual life but as she finds her husband cold and ignoring her on bed, she turns to be valium addicted. The little time Joe gives her fails to match up her expectations of love from him. She always passes time on thinking and imagining different things in a dark room behind the closed door which makes her agoraphobic. She always goes to dream sequence and imagination and one day she meets Prior, who informs her about the homosexuality of her husband. Now, she has built a weight on her mind and suspects Joe of being homosexual which Joe can not disclose. Harper is caught into dilemma between what to do and not to do; what is true and what is not.

Like Harper's mental stipulation in *Angels In America*, Kushner's other characters also face the same confused mentality in his other works. In his book, *Troubling The Waters*, a Theatre scholar, James Fisher says, "Kushner's characters are generally caught between two worlds: one dying and one being born" (9). History for Kushner is intricately bound to the personal, and can perhaps be best understood through the experiences of ordinary individuals living through storm of events, chaos and change. In the same book, about Kushner's way of representing typical moments of history, moments when social change may erupt from unstable dynamism of fabric of everyday, Fisher notes:

Kushner found such a moment for *Angels* in the rise of the "neo conservatism" of the Later Twentieth Century. Kushner seeks out similar historical moments in the Late Seventeenth Century in *Hydriotaphia* or *The Death of Dr. Browne*, in the collision of the old world settles of Eastern

Europe and the new technologies of the modern world in his adaptation of the Yiddish theater classic *A Dybbuk*, in the Nazi Party's seizure of power in 1930s Germany in *A Bright Room Called Day*, in the American Deep South of the 1960s in *Carline, or Change*, in the collapse of the Soviet Union in *Slavs!* and the *Struggles for Survival* in the decaying American infrastructures of the Late Twentieth century in *Grim(m)*. (4)

We can take Fisher's detailed criticism to say that Kushner's plays deal with both historical and political concerns. Neo Conservatism of Late Twentieth Century gave a ground for Kushner's *Angels*. His other works like, *Hydriotaphi* and *The Death of Dr. Browne* deal with the collision of the old world and the beginning of the new one. His *A Bright Room Called Day*, *Struggles for Survival*, *A Dybbuk* etc. also have historical-political issues and their impacts on the characters.

Unlike Fisher's criticism, Alfonso Ceballos Muñoz focuses on the multiplicity of themes and issue selection in Kushner's plays, especially in *Angels In America*. In a review, "Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* or How American History Spins Forward" Alfonso also writes about the tagging of Kushner's *Angels in America*:

For some of them, it is just epic drama or political drama; others classify it as a gay play or an AIDS play; and some go beyond and call it a religious or a Jewish play. But there certainly is one thing with which they all coincide: *Angels in America* is serious drama and the most criticized, commented on, and awarded play on the American Stage since the middle 1950s. (1)

Alfonso tries to include the various opinions of the other critics. Because of the multiplicity on themes, some of the critics have classified *Angels In America* as an AIDS play, religious play, a gay play etc. In Alfonso's opinion, the use of apocalyptic literary

style, political discussions on Regan's policy on AIDS, and reminiscent historical images, the play becomes a "revision of the new National Period America is living as the promised land which every single individual re-creates with his/her daily efforts and capabilities"

(1). Alfonso adds:

Apart from its dramatic qualities, literary influences and sources, *Angels in America* is not only one more AIDS or gay play, but also a piece of dramatic work that critically gives an answer to thousands of Americans who lived a crude reality and questioned what it meant to be a part of a community in a particularly difficult time. (1)

Alfonso tries to explain a different feature of *Angels in America*. Unlike other critics, he relates the characters with thousands of Americans who lived a crude reality in the different historical and political scenario which are taken as the most difficult and disastrous time in the history of America.

Meron Langsner, a PhD student in Drama at Tufts University opines in his book, *Tony Kushner's Angels In America: A World In Need Of Salvation*, "The play opens with the burial of one of these angels. If there are not more angels, they must be replaced, though the world will be destroyed in the vacuum before the new angels may fill it" (1). For him, "Evidence of that vacuum is spread through the play" (2). While talking about the themes that the play starts with, it first and foremost, establishes the major characters and later on goes on its own way with corruption, AIDS, drug addiction, hole in the ozone layer, racial disharmony etc. and after all it goes to meet Kushner's own apocalyptic vision. The statement, 'History is about to crack wide open. Millennium approaches' seems to hint at a climax of something, probably the end of the millennium.

Langsner's research even goes to the justification of the very word, angels in title, *Angels in America*. In his opinion, the use of angels extends to the Mormon tradition,

which claims to have been started at the command of an Angel's message. He adds, "Popular culture would define the soul of a dead person admitted to heaven as an angel" (1). For Langsner, colloquial use of the term extends the word, 'Angel' to almost any good person. Like Alfonso, Langsner also focuses on the use of the apocalyptic view in *Angels in America*, which makes use of all these perspectives of 'Angels' in its presentation of the apocalypse. At the beginning of the drama, relating the death of Sarah Ironson, the Rabbi, says, "There are no more angels in America" (10), which Langsner says, is the definition of the Popular Culture, which would define the dead soul as the angel, good person. Addressing to the orientation of the end of the millennium in the play, Langsner even argues that there must be enough just people, enough angels, "for the world will be remade for an additional year" (2), perhaps another Millennium.

Craig Young, in writing in "Interview with Tony Kushner" quotes, "I didn't write *Angels in America* to have a political effect, I don't think you should do that as a writer. You should write to make an entertaining evening of theatre". Young adds, "His passion for politics is clearly reflected in his work, *Angels in America* to *Homebody/ Kabul*, which focuses on the chaos of life" (2). Young has found that Kushner's own background reflects clashing cultures within America, and his work in turn is a reflection of his background. He has found faith to be a source of hope in many of Kushner's plays which deal with the theme that might be surprising given his adverse reaction to the Christian right involvement in politics. But Young does not forget to quote Kushner's own words as an answer to his statement, "There is a great deal of ambiguity and ambivalence about faith and spirituality in those plays" (2).

The examples and views discussed and quoted above make us conclude that, different critics have eyed Kushner's play, *Angels in America*, *Millennium Approaches* with rhetorical and contextual viewpoint. Most of them talk about power and justice,

having a political effect. Not only that, some of them also claim that this play contains the issue of cultural clash which is the reflection of his own backdrop. Summing up the themes from aforementioned critics, his play *Angels In America* deals with the multiple issues like, Homosexuality, AIDS, racial disharmony, deception, religiosity, Climate change etc. But none of the aforementioned critics has talked about the impacts on the woman characters and also about the psychology, endurance, problems, desires, devotion, revolt as well as the position of the woman figure like, Harper, Hannah, Sarah Eronson, Ethel Rosenberg etc. So, this project is headed towards the site where other critics have never gone. It will be different from them in a clear and exact sense that this thesis will be trying to show the position of women throughout the play dealing with their psychology, endurance, revolt, love, devotion etc.

Feminism is both an intellectual commitment and a political movement that seeks justice for women and the end of sexism in all forms. However, there are different kinds of feminisms. Motivated by the quest for social justice, feminist inquiry provides a wide range of perspectives on social, cultural, economic, and political phenomena.

In the mid 1800s, the term 'feminism' was used to refer to the qualities of females, and it was not until after the First International Women's Conference in Paris in 1892 that the term, following the French term, *Féministe* was used regularly in English for a belief in and advocacy of equal rights for women based on the idea of the equality of the sexes. In the book, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, the critic, Nancy and O' Connor writes:

On the wave model, from the Mid-Nineteenth Century until the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 counts as "First Wave" feminism. Feminism diminished between the two world wars, but later was revived in the late 1960's and early 1970's, which is called "Second Wave" feminism when

feminists focused on the early quest for political rights to fight for greater equality across the board, e.g., in education, the workplace, and at home.

Third Wave feminists often critique Second Wave feminism for its lack of attention to the differences among women due to race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, and emphasize "identity" as a site of gender struggle.

(1)

Nancy and O' Connor has given this wave model as classification of the time feminism started from and the time it has come on. The Wave Model gives us an insight that it started with the awareness of domination and some rights and with its next wave it has travelled through political rights, equality, education, workplace, identity etc. and has come to the age.

Many other feminists have defined feminism on their own ways. Elaine Showalter focuses on Women as the Writer rather than Women as the Reader and like the wave model; she divides the history into three phases from her feminist point of view. In Feminine Phase (1840-1880), she defines as the period when females used to take equality as the parameter and write to be equal to males. In the same way, Feminist Phase (1880-1920) she defines, as the period when the females became severe critic of patriarchal tendencies, norms and values. But in Female Phase (1920 onwards), without taking males as the parameter, they write about their own subjects like, menstruation, gestation, child birth, sex experiences etc. which men can never experience.

French writer and feminist, and Existentialist thinker, Beauvoir claims that motherhood is the woman specific area. It is something that the males do not experience. Women are superior to the males in terms of maternity; but patriarchy takes it as a pretext to farther its abuses upon the women. In this point, she resembles with Showalter. In *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir writes, "An existentialist perspective has enabled us, then, to

understand how the biological and economic condition of the primitive horde must have led to male supremacy... in maternity woman remained closely bound to her body, like an animal. It is because humanity calls itself in question in the matter of living" (36).

After the publication of *The Second Sex*, 'About maternity', in her autobiography: *Force of Circumstances* Beauvoir says, she was "attacked" (6). She writes, "Many men declared I had no right to discuss women because I hadn't given birth; and they?" (6) Beauvoir says that, patriarchy functions with the myth, which divides humanity into two parts: male and female. According to the myths, a man is expected to be protective and women to be submissive. But the problem is, if the woman does not confirm to the stereotypes of the myth, the myth is not wrong, woman is wrong. In her book, *The Second Sex*, she writes:

They cannot be blamed for not cheerfully relinquishing all the benefits they derive from the myth, for they realize what they would lose in relinquishing woman as they fancy her to be, while they fail to realize what they have to gain from the woman of tomorrow. [. . .] According to the Platonic myth, there were at the beginning men, women, and hermaphrodites. Each individual had two faces, four arms, four legs, and two conjoined bodies. At a certain time they were split in two, and ever since each half seeks to rejoin its corresponding half. Later the gods decreed that new human beings should be created through the coupling of dissimilar halves. But it is only love that this story is intended to explain; division into sexes is assumed at the outset. (9)

Beauvoir blames myth for vesting the women within its stereotypical images which has no good sense nowadays. She has to shape herself as to the images described in the different myths, while all of them describe male as superior. Moreover, the myths have

presented women as the part of the male bodies which seeks to rejoin its corresponding half.

Beauvoir focuses on the identity of the women which is othered and states that women identity is created preceding the essence. First her identity is created and only then, she comes into existence. And without addressing her biological differences, her previously established identity names her as a fragile, weak and other. In *The Second Sex*, she writes, "Woman – the most individualized of females – seems to be the most fragile, most subject to this pain and danger: she who most dramatically fulfils the call of destiny and most profoundly differs from her male" (16). She focuses on the biological differences of the Women which makes her different from the males, not weaker and inferior. But the males have tagged her with different mythical images, names and tasks and a woman is always taken to be second to a man, not even similar.

After the publication of *The Second Sex*, in her book, *Force of Circumstances* Beauvoir says, "If my book has helped women, it is because it expressed them, and they in their turn give it its truth" (8). About the progress in Feminism, she is happy writes, "During these last ten years, the myths that men created have crumbled, and many women writers have gone beyond me and have been far more daring than I" (8). But in an interview with John Gerassi in "The Second Sex 25 Years Later", she has found a problem in the women themselves. She points out, "A worker's wife, for example, is least free to join the movement. She knows that her husband is more exploited than most feminist leaders and that he depends on her role as the housewife-mother to survive himself" (3). In one way, her point shows the problems in conducting the feminist movement and in other way, the same point shows how loving, caring and convincing role women play in their family; even if they are not given value.

Beauvoir finds the deep rooted patriarchy as the main obstacle for the feminist

movement. In *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, she says, " ... to uproot what has been anchored in one's behavior pattern and value system from the earliest days of childhood takes years, decades" (8). Patriarchy has made almost all of the females the victim and the males the oppressor or victimizer. It has grown the seed of oppression right from the childhood. Even if a man supports Feminist Movement, his unconscious mind sometimes plays the role of a male oppressor. So, she finds it a long process, taking decades or even more, to uproot the deeply rooted patriarchal values.

Beauvoir also relates Feminism to the Class struggle, precisely speaking Leftist Movements. She says, in an interview, "The sex struggle embodies the class struggle, but the class struggle does not embody the sex struggle. Feminists are, therefore, genuine leftists. In fact, they are to the left of what we now traditionally call the political left" (5). She has found similarities between the Leftist Movement and Feminist Movement because both of them are struggling for equality and rights. She adds, "A Feminist, whether she calls herself leftist or not, is a leftist by definition. She is struggling for total equality, for the right to be as important, as relevant, as any man. Therefore, embodied in her revolt for sexual equality is the demand for class equality" (5). Therefore she rightly says, We must first fight the class struggle. It is true that equality of the sexes is impossible under capitalism.

In her book, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, Beauvoir elaborates male's dominating nature at the women and their thinking parameter as the "atomic bomb" which will one day destroy them. She writes:

Men of today seem to feel more acutely than ever the paradox of their condition. They (Male) know themselves to be the supreme end to which all action should be subordinated. [. . .] The more widespread their mastery of the world, the more they find themselves crushed by

uncontrollable forces. Though they are masters of the atomic bomb, yet it is created only to destroy them. (6)

Beauvoir, in this way, has given strength to the womankind as well as she has also suggested and even warned the patriarchy of being destroyed because of themselves and within themselves. Beauvoir elaborates Satre's idea as described in the book *Being and Nothingness*. Being convinced by Satre's ideas, she writes, "Man's passion is useless; he has no means for becoming the being that he is not" (8). In the book, under the topic 'Freedom and Liberation', Beauvoir writes, "To will freedom and to will to disclose being are one and the same choice; hence, freedom takes a positive and constructive step which causes being to pass to existence in a movement which is constantly surpassed" (58). She has pointed out the logical right to will freedom. For her, to will freedom and to will to a free one is the same and it takes a 'constructive step'.

An Eighteenth-century British writer, philosopher, and advocate of women's rights, Mary Wollstonecraft in her essay, *A Vindication in the Rights of Women* blames Habitual Ideas as the reason of female suppression rather than Instantaneous Ideas, which is known as the instant thought that comes on our mind. Habitual Ideas are like the myths- previously established which gives the othered position to the females and even the Instantaneous Ideas are shaped by the Habitual Ideas. So, Wollstonecraft also can be linked with Beauvoir and her concept of myth. Similarly, Virginia Woolf, a British prolific writer, novelist, essayist, biographer, and feminist, also shows patriarchal social structure as the barrier for women's creativity. She blames patriarchy for vesting women within maintaining order in the family. In her essay, *A Room of One's Own*, she writes, "Patriarchy has not acknowledged the capacity of the women writers" (10). She opines that women can expose as much capacity as the men, if they are given equal socio-economic independence. It is at this point, she can be compared with Beauvoir, who

demands the socio-economic independence to the general woman.

The aforementioned points make us clear that the ground of Feminism has been made wider than the previous decades and the process is going on with its own speed. The feminists like, Showalter, Virginia Woolf, Nancy and O' Connor, Wollstonecraft and the rest are just the examples of the diverse feminists. But their essence is the almost the same if not the opposite. But Simon de Beauvoir and her views about feminism relate their crux and quintessence. And moreover, Beauvoir's feminist theory, especially related to *The Second Sex*, talks about feminism in a different way-going with the idea of psychology and myth which makes her theory adaptable in showing the position of the women figures in Tony Kushner's *Angels In America, Millennium Approaches*.

The study will have its structure with the three chapters. The first one will be the introductory part entitled 'To Kushner and Women in His Writings' which will also analyze Kushner's rhetoric as well as the women characters in his writings. The second part, 'Women Position in Kushner's *Angels In America: A Textual Analysis*' will bring out the textual evidences from the drama and will be studied with the feminist theoretical perspectives. Moreover, the third part entitled, 'Revolt against the Granted Inferior Position' will conclude the findings of the research. With the completion of all the chapters, the research will have its full structure.

II. Women Position in Kushner's *Angels In America: A Textual Analysis*

Harper, a housewife, alone in a closed dark room, is killing time in frustration speaking to herself. Her husband, Joe, a Chief Clerk in Federal Court of Appeals, spends most of his time in office and elsewhere but is not able to understand his wife's feelings and desires. The whole day and even the evening, she has nowhere to go but just to be at home waiting for her husband, who arrives late in the evening. Harper, alone, keeps on uttering:

But everywhere, things are collapsing, lies surfacing, systems of defense giving way. . . This is why, Joe, this is why I shouldn't be left alone. I'd like to go traveling. Leave you behind to worry. I'll send postcards with strange stamps and tantalizing messages on the back. "Later maybe."

"Nevermore. . ." (16)

To analyze Harper's situation, Simon de Beauvoir's assumption from her book, *The Second Sex* seems to be relevant here. As to Beauvoir, "women live 'dispersed' among the males, attached through residence, housework, economic condition, and social standing to certain 'men-fathers' or 'husbands-more' " (xix). She is living with her husband but still is alone. On the other hand, her husband, like Beauvoir says, 'husbands more' never suggests utilizing her intellect going out and doing some job or business; he does not even comprehend it. Women, like Harper has to live 'dispersed' because of 'men-fathers' or 'husbands-more' among themselves indeed. So, because of that, Harper keeps on thinking about the destruction and devastation which she realizes, is only because of her loneliness and thus she says that this is why she should not be left alone.

Harper keeps on uttering, "Ozone layer, thirty miles above, a thin layer of three atom oxygen molecules, product of photosynthesis, which explains the fussy vegetable preferences for visible light, its rejection of darker rays and emanations" (16), which

proves that she is a well educated lady but vested into a room just like a bird in the cage. Her scientific and logical utterances prove her intellect but still she is within the four walls. Beauvoir's argument in *The Second Sex* seems to be relevant here. She argues: "Woman may fail to lay claim to the status of subject because she lacks definite resources, because she feels the necessary bond that ties her to man regardless of reciprocity, and because she is often very well pleased with her role as the Other." (xxi)

If we relate Beauvoir's argument to Harper, she 'lacks definite resources' and feels the 'necessary bond' to Joe, whom she loves and expects the same from him. Even if Harper is a well educated lady but has to be sitting a room all the time. Her scientific and logical utterances are enough to prove her intellect but her intellect has not found any outlets; still she is within the four walls. Likewise, Harper is willing to go out of all the mental discords and tensions, which she thinks is possible only if she leaves Joe and goes travelling. She has confusions all over her mind which she speaks out, "maybe Joe loves me and I'm only crazy thinking otherwise, maybe not, maybe it's even worse than I know, maybe . . ." (17). It is just because of the 'necessary bond' she feels that ties her to Joe in spite of 'reciprocity' from him though she is not 'well pleased'. But her vision of destruction and collision of the systems and all can be taken as the revolutionary instinct in her mind which can be generalized to the entire womankind.

Harper's revolutionary instinct leads her to narrate Joe all the destructive images from her imagination and she tries to make him feel his shortcomings because of which she has come to this psychological stage. Joe tries to point out her loneliness as the problem:

JOE: You never go out in the world, Harper, and you have emotional problems.

HARPER: I do so get out in the world.

JOE: You don't. You stay in all day, fretting about imaginary. . .

HARPER: I get out. I do. You don't know what I do.

JOE: Where do you go?

HARPER: Where do *you* go? When you walk.

(Pause, then angrily) And I DO NOT have emotional problems.[. . .] And

if I do have emotional problems it's from living with you. (27)

Joe tries to convince her that she not going out that's why she has emotional problems which Harper objects. She says that she goes out when he is not home. Joe really does not know whether she goes out or not because he is quite busy in his job and making sufficient money. He makes a guess and blames her of having emotional problems. But Harper quite boldly opposes it and says that she gets out sometimes but the problem is, he does not know what she does. It seems that she is actually opposing and reacting over Joe's indifference towards her.

Relating to Joe's trial of imposing the blame on Harper herself, Beauvoir writes in an interview *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, "If they felt genuine affection for the women they were with, if they are honest with themselves and with their partners, they would automatically think of satisfying both" (9). Here too, Harper is trying to relate her emotional sufferings with Joe's shortcomings but Joe as a competent tries to point out her loneliness as the major problem. He is not 'honest' with himself and with Harper and he does not have 'genuine affection' for her otherwise he would have thought about her satisfaction also. Harper's revolutionary claim, 'And I DO NOT have emotional problems.[. . .] And if I do have emotional problems it's from living with you' proves that she is living in this darkness and psychological discords just because of him being failure to be a caring husband.

In *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, Beauvoir notes "To uproot what has been

anchored in one's behavior pattern and value system from the earliest days of childhood takes years, decades" (8). Whatever Beauvoir has noted is rightly applicable here too. Joe is a well educated man and also Chief clerk for Justice Theodore Wilson of the Federal Court of Appeals, Second Circuit. But he can not come out of the 'value system' that has been 'anchored' in his mind. He really does not know whether she goes out or not because he is quite busy in his job and making sufficient money. So, it is not easy to 'uproot' his old 'value system' right now, it takes decades.

Harper's hallucination and Prior's dream drag both of them in the same place. Prior is doing make up and ready to face camera. Harper and Prior meet there and claim their ownership over that imaginary place. Harper's hallucination and Prior's dream is nothing but the same place there. It seems to be meaningful to a great extent because, Prior is seen having make up and handiwork and quite tempted towards the mirror. It proves his femininity. He murmurs, "I Look like a corpse. A corpsette. Oh my queen; you know you've hit rock-bottom when even drag is a drag" (31). Here, his addressing himself as 'my queen' and 'a corpsette' proves his dominated self because of having female attributes. Harper does not find the hallucination soothing like before, so she talks to Prior about it:

HARPER: The world. Finite. Terribly, terribly. . . Well . . . This is the most depressing hallucination I've ever had.

PRIOR: Apologies. I do try to be amusing.

HARPER: Oh, well, don't apologize, you . . . I can't expect someone who's really sick to entertain me.

Harper expects the world of hallucination to be quite pleasing and soothing. But this time it is not pleasing what she expects the dream to be. She is having a serious conversation with Prior. So, she says that this is the most depressing hallucination she has ever had

and she even does not expect Prior to entertain her for, she thinks, he is in the same traumatic condition which she has because she has found him in the place where she thinks is the only way to escape from the mental pressures and discords. But Prior, addressing to the threshold of revelation, tells some surprising revelations he has got.

About the subordinate position of women, Beauvoir formulates in her book, *The Second Sex*, "Legislators, priests, philosophers, writers, and scientists have striven to show that the subordinate position of woman is willed in heaven and advantageous on earth. The religions invented by men reflect this wish for domination" (xxii). Prior is here the victim of 'wish for domination'. Biologically, he is a male but living a life of a gay. His partner Louis loves Prior less than he himself does to Louis. Indirectly, he has given 'Subordinate position' to Prior. So, Prior can be compared to Harper because of having 'advantageous' position of woman which they themselves have never willed. That is why Harper replies that she can not expect someone who is really sick to entertain her. It proves Prior's dominated identity. But it is not a choice of him. Like Beauvoir said, it is willed by 'Legislators, priests, philosophers, writers and scientists' who represent the dominating agents of Patriarchy. In the hallucination, Prior reveals the bitter truth about Harper's husband's sexuality:

PRIOR: You are amazingly unhappy.

HARPER: Oh big deal. You meet a Valium addict and you figure out she's unhappy. That doesn't count. Of course I . . . something else. Something surprising.

PRIOR: Something surprising.

HARPER: Yes.

PRIOR: Your husband's a homo.

HARPER: Well I don't like your revelations. I don't think you intuit well

at all. Joe's a very normal man, he . . . (33)

Prior's revelation of Joe's homosexuality gives her the intuition about the homosexuality of her husband, Joe. She had not expected him to be a homosexual, but now, she starts thinking about it and suspecting on him, "I have to go now, get back, something just . . . fell apart. Oh God, I feel so sad . . ." (33). Harper's despaired mind does not let her believe on that revelation like Beauvoir states in an interview, *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, "It is very slow for rebellion to develop. First, such peoples have to become aware of that domination. Then they have to believe in their own strength to change it" (3). Like what she has stated, after Harper leaves the hallucination, Prior's revelation compels her to think about her husband's sexuality which may be the cause of her mental discords and tensions, from where she has escaped to the world of imagination. As Beauvoir says that it is very slow for the rebellion to develop, Harper also can not be convinced easily by Prior's threshold of revelation. But as she suspects and becomes aware; the germ of rebellion grows in her mind. She has her own strength on which she has full belief that she can face it.

As Harper leaves the world of hallucination, Prior is left alone. He does not think there is any uninfected part of him. He feels so dirty and his heart pumping polluted blood, because of his sickness and dominated self. Suddenly, he hears an incredibly beautiful voice which asks him to prepare the way for something infinite descent. Prior is surprised and also feels insecure. "Poor me. Poor poor me. Why me? Why poor poor me? Oh I don't feel good right now. I really don't" (33). He does not recognize the voice but he feels it to be the signal of something unusual happening in future. Prior seems helpless there, alone. He is still in this world of imagination which he has chosen to take relief from the coldness in his partnership which he has in his mind.

Likewise, Beauvoir argues in *The Second Sex*, "It is not a mysterious essence that

compels men and women to act in good or in bad faith, it is their situation that inclines them more or less toward the search for truth" (xxvii). Likewise, Harper's mind is full of suspicion. She has got a clue from Prior in the hallucination and her mind is set on confirming that one. She suspects her husband of being a homo and wants that revelation to be proved or accepted from Joe himself so that she could help him find some way out. She tries to make Joe think that she is not happy:

HARPER: I burned dinner.

JOE: Sorry.

HARPER: Not my dinner. My dinner was fine. Your dinner. I put it back in the oven and turned everything up as high as it could go and I watched till it burned black. It's still hot. Very hot. Want it?

JOE: You didn't have to do that.

HARPER: I know. It just seemed like the kind of thing a mentally deranged sex-starved pill-popping housewife would do. (36)

Harper acts and reacts boldly. She turns to be protesting and revolting against her husband's silence and ignorance. It is nothing like mysterious essence because of which Harper is inclined towards probing him. She burned his dinner but not hers. She even discloses that she should not have done so but it's something a mentally deranged sex starved housewife would do. But Joe thinks that it is just because of her pills and tries to change the subject. Now, Like Beauvoir has said above, the situation comes that 'inclines' her towards the 'search for truth'. But he does not realize his drawbacks to make her happy and satisfied both physically and psychologically. Hearing him changing the subject, Harper reacts more boldly, "Don't Change the Subject [. . .] I'm fine, pills are not the problem, not our problem, I WANT TO KNOW WHERE YOU'VE BEEN! I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!" But again, Joe tries to ignore her saying, "Going on

what? The Job?" (36). He does not want to stick to the subject and wants to go to bed. Joe's going to bed can be related to what Beauvoir has said above, 'mysterious essence'.

Relating to the ignorance like Joe has shown to Harper, Beauvoir writes in her book, *The Second Sex*, "women have been so far removed from male consciousness that she is not even "considered rivals" (28). She is removed from Joe's 'consciousness' that she does not deserve the truth. But Harper time and again tries to stop him talking about the job but even then, he keeps talking about his office, his boss and his job, which makes a very clear note that he really does not want to talk to Harper about their problems; specifically, his personal problems which has created another problem for Harper and their conjugal life. In Beauvoir's words, 'male consciousness' that Joe is carrying on has no place for Harper; not even as rivals. Like Beauvoir says, Joe does not reveal the truth to Harper because he does not even talk with logics in the same subject as he would have done to his 'rivals'. Simon de Beauvoir has also talked about the shaping of the behaviour under the shelter of males. In, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, she notes:

Women who have not had in their work an apprenticeship of freedom, there are still many who take shelter in the shadow of men; they adopt without discussion the opinions and values recognized by their husband or their lover, and that allows them to develop childish qualities which are forbidden to adults because they are based on a feeling of irresponsibility.

(28)

Beauvoir's note can be applicable to Harper for, she is also taking 'shelter' in 'the shadow of men'. She has adopted 'the opinions' and 'values' recognized by Joe who has allowed her to develop childish qualities like, burning a dinner but not hers. Joe says, 'You did not have to do that', which Harper also knows but her pill-popping life has led her to burn his dinner as a symbol of opposition or revolt. But Joe thinks it to be the 'childish' quality

thinking it to be the reason of too many pills she has taken this day, which in one way seems to be the 'feeling of irresponsibility' in Joe towards her psychological stipulation.

Harper expects Joe's love and affection and always wants to see probably the loving face with a charming smile on it. But, Joe's presence makes her confused and distressed when she has to see him with a different complexion. So, she shares her opinion to let him know how and what she feels these days.

HARPER: When you come through the door at night your face is never exactly the way I remembered it. I get surprised by something . . . mean and hard about the way you look. Even the weight of you in the bed at night, the way you breathe in your sleep seems unfamiliar.

You terrify me.

JOE: (*Cold*): I know who you are. (37)

Harper expresses her feelings about the absence of a husband in Joe. She loves him but does not get the same in return. She gets surprised about the way he looks every night at the door. She even finds Joe quite unfamiliar at night. Beauvoir has written in *The Second Sex*, "Male and female stand opposed within a primordial *Mitsein*, and woman has not broken it" (xix). It can be applied here too. Because of her love for Joe, she has not broken the 'Primordial *Mitsein*' where she has found Joe and herself 'standing opposed'. She is still trying to solve the conflict finding a proper way out. She gets surprised by the looks of her husband which she feels is 'Hard'. Joe also accepts it but answers with coldness that he knows who she is, which sounds irrelevant. She openly says that she can not see her husband's indifference towards physical relation and even to see him sleeping like an unfamiliar. She wants her husband back with the face she loves, likes and remembers; but it rather terrifies her. In a way, they 'stand opposed' within the same four

walls. So, Harper utters, "It was wrong of me to marry you. I knew you . . . It's a sin, and it's killing us both" (37). Joe knows that he is not doing well like what a husband should do but does not accept it; but Harper does.

Roy Cohn represents a character, which underestimates the ladies and misuses power. He is a homosexual and has no respect for the womankind.

HENRY: We have zero clout. Does this sound like me, Henry?

ROY: No. I have clout. A lot. I can pick up this phone, punch fifteen numbers and you know who will be on the other end in under five minutes, Henry?

HENRY: The President.

ROY: Even better, Henry. His wife. (45)

Henry and Roy Cohn are talking about their power and when Henry says that he has a zero clout but Roy says no. To convince Joe, Roy boasts that he can use his power to impress not only the President but his wife. Beauvoir formulates in *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, "The male rationale that women are the weaker sex and hence must play a secondary role can no longer be logically maintained" (3). Likewise, Roy is among the male chauvinist who claims that women are the 'weaker sex'. That's why he proudly says, 'Even better, Henry. His wife' when he has to make Henry understand about his power of only a phone call. In the book, *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir writes, "But in speaking of certain women, connoisseurs declare that they are not women, although they are equipped with a uterus like rest" (1). Like Beauvoir says, Roy Cohn is one of the 'Connoisseurs' who underestimate women just because they have uterus and owe him favors picking up the phone when he calls. He proudly calls his activities 'a clout' and misuses it.

About the orthodox male chauvinists like Roy Cohn, Beauvoir states in *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, "To uproot what has been anchored in one's behavior pattern

and value system from the earliest days of childhood takes years, decades" (8).

Beauvoir's statement is rightly applicable here too Roy is a well educated man, a professional lawyer but still he has got the 'value system' from the patriarchal schooling that has 'anchored' in his 'Behavior pattern'. So, it is not easy to 'uproot' right now, it takes decades.

As Harper's tolerance has been increasing, she has a serious discussion with Joe about having a baby. Joe really does not know about it because he himself knows that they did not have physical relation these days. So he asks her:

JOE: Are you . . . are you really going to have a baby?

HARPER: It's my time, and there's no blood. I don't really know. I suppose it wouldn't be a great thing. Maybe I'm just not bleeding because I take too many pills. Maybe I'll give birth to a pill. That would give a new meaning to pill-popping, huh?
I think you should go to Washington. Alone. Change, like you said.

JOE: I'm not going to leave you, Harper.

HARPER: Well maybe not. But I'm going to leave you. (50)

For Harper, Joe is the only person she loves or has ever loved; and she loves him terribly. As Joe wants to know whether she is going to have a baby, she says that it is her time for pregnancy and there is no blood, but she also has the fear of having pill-popping child like herself. Now, because of her diverted and distressed mentality she changes the subject and suggests her to go to Washington alone for change, like she said before. As Joe does not agree to leave her, she quite boldly says, that she is going to leave him. This is the revolt against the previous state that she had to pass through. Relating to the revolutionary decision like Harper has made of leaving Joe, Beauvoir writes down in *The*

Ethics of Ambiguity, "The oppressed has only one solution: to deny the harmony of that mankind from which an attempt is made to exclude him, to prove that he is a man and that he is free by revolting against the tyrants" (62). Beauvoir's line can be taken as the main revolt reason for Harper. She sees only one solution and that is, 'to deny the harmony of mankind' and she is ready to 'exclude him'. She does so to make herself free from all the barriers and troubles she was getting from the conjugal life with Joe. "The couple is a fundamental unity with its two halves riveted together, and the cleavage of society along the line of sex is impossible" (xix). Beauvoir's words are quite applicable here too. Joe did not realize the couple as the 'fundamental unity' and the value of conjugal life; but now he realizes. That is why, he does not agree to go to Washington alone where he was pre-planned to go. But Harper has become so bold that she directly declares of leaving him. Harper was like an 'oppressed' rebellion who has only one solution to be free and that is, 'excluding him'.

Beauvoir has found problem in men in defining women not as an autonomous being; but as relative to them. In her book, *The Second Sex*, she argues, "Humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being" (xvi). Like her argument, in *Angels in America*, there is a dream sequence among many where, the ghosts of Prior's ancestors have a meeting with Prior. He does not recognize them. They have a serious talk about their ancestors and lineage:

PRIOR: Not *the* Prior Walter? The Bayeux tapestry Prior Walter?

PRIOR I: His great-great grandson. The fifth of the name.

PRIOR: I'm the thirty-fourth, I think.

PRIOR I: Actually the thirty-second.

PRIOR: Not according to Mother.

PRIOR I: She's including the two bastards, then; I say leave them out. I

say no room for bastards. (86)

Like what Beauvoir has argued above, male define women not as an 'autonomous being' but as 'relative' to them. During the talk, first of all, Prior I declares his lineage position as the fifth one and Prior says that in his guess, he is the thirty-fourth. But Prior I and Prior have different lineage counting there. According to Prior, he's claiming his thirty-fourth position according to mother but Prior I does not valorize the counting of mother because, for him, she is including two bastards. Here too, Prior I has defined his lineage himself, there is no value of his mother's counting. The daughters are also not counted here as the member of the lineage. Prior I is trying to prove humanity to be 'male' and he has not left his mother free to be defined 'in herself' like Beauvoir has mentioned above. He orders his mother to leave them out because, for him, there is no room for bastards. It makes us clear that he is defining his mother and her existence 'relative' to the male or his forefathers like Beauvoir has said above. Beauvoir adds:

They propose to stabilize her as object and to doom her to immanence since her transcendence is to be overshadowed and forever transcended by another ego (*conscience*) which is essential and sovereign. The drama of woman lies in this conflict between the fundamental aspirations of every subject (ego) - who always regards the self as the essential-and the compulsions of a situation in which she is inessential. (xxix)

Like Beauvoir's argument, Prior I's mother and her transcendence is 'overshadowed' and 'transcended' by the male conscience. She has given birth to thirty-four children but two of them are not counted as hers. Her existence is caught in the 'situation in which she is inessential'. Male 'ego' or 'conscience' has 'overshadowed' the existence and right of women like her. Prior I says, 'I say leave them out. I say no room for bastards', which means that he is directly dominating his mother whom he thinks to be 'inessential'

because, for him, she is not 'the self' but rather an 'object' and her transcendence is overshadowed and transcended by his essential and sovereign 'ego' or 'conscience'. As Joe finds Harper being cold, he tries to persuade her:

JOE: Harper, Please listen. I still love you very much. You're still my best buddy; I'm not going to leave you.

HARPER: No, I don't like the sound of this. I'm leaving. [. . .]

[. . .] I think you should go.

JOE: Where?

HARPER: Washington. Doesn't matter.

JOE: What are you talking about?

HARPER: Without me.

Without me, Joe. Isn't that you want to hear ?

(Little Pause.)

JOE: Yes. (78)

Joe and Harper's conflict has been increasing. Harper seems to have decided to leave Joe and he tries to persuade her but she is determined in herself for an escape. So, she is not convinced by Joe's persuasive polite words. At any cost, she has to overcome her weaknesses right now for, she is determined to have a decision this day. In such condition, Beauvoir states, "a woman can not do anything because of the social norms but she opposes him with neither the hostile silence of nature nor the hard requirement of reciprocal relation" (55). Likewise, she suggests Joe to go to Washington alone because Joe was planning and in a way dreaming to go to Washington for his better career. She is now giving the decision to let Joe go to Washington alone, without her. She asks whether he wants her to let him go without her which Joe accepts after a little contemplation. Joe's acceptance proves that he was planning of moving to Washington. Beauvoir writes

in the interview, *The Second Sex, 25 years later*, "If they felt genuine affection for the women they were with, if they are honest with themselves and with their partners. . ."

This point is quite applicable here too. Joe was planning in himself to go to Washington, alone but as a wife, he should have talked to Harper previously but he did not. In fact, he did not feel 'genuine affection' for her because he was not honest to her.

Like Beauvoir writes in *The Second Sex*, "If the 'women question' seems trivial, it is because masculine arrogance has made of it a 'quarrel'; and when quarrelling one no longer reasons well (xxvii). Here too, neither Joe is reasoning well nor Harper is. When Joe tries to persuade her, she says that she does not like the sound of and she is leaving. It makes us clear that she is determined in herself so that one time loving and persuasive words would be less effective on her. Harper has found out that Joe is the man with knives, who used to haunt her even in her visions. She says:

HARPER: I recognize you now.

JOE: Oh. Wait, I Oh!

I'm bleeding.

HARPER: Mr. Lies.

MR. LIES: (*Appearing, dressed in Antarctic explorer's apparel*) : Right here.

HARPER: I want to go away. I can't see him anymore.

MR. LIES: Where ?

HARPER : Anywhere. Far away.

MR. LIES: Absolutamento.

(*Harper and Mr. Lies vanish. Joe looks up, sees that she's gone.*)

Under the topic 'Freedom and Liberation', in her book, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, Beauvoir talks about the logical right to will freedom, "To will freedom and to will to disclose

being are one and the same choice; hence, freedom takes a positive and constructive step which causes being to pass to existence in a movement which is constantly surpassed" (58). Beauvoir's writing supports Harper's escape with Mr. Lies. Like Beauvoir's saying, Harper's will for freedom is a 'positive and constructive step'. First of all, Mr. Lies himself is the positive side of her own mind and she has chosen it to avoid the negative pressures. Moreover, her escape with Mr. Lies is the completion of her will for total freedom. Beauvoir's reason for revolution in the case of the oppressors is also applicable in here. She writes, "The oppressed has only one solution: to deny the harmony of that mankind from which an attempt is made to exclude him, to prove that he is a man and that he is free by revolting against the tyrants (62). Here too, Harper has not reached any harm on Joe while leaving him but when he says, that he is bleeding, she calls Mr. Lies because she says that she can not see him anymore and thus, wants to go anywhere but far away from his sight with Mr. Lies. She does not stay back to hold bleeding Joe, it is another evidence of revolt instinct in her mind. After all, at any cost, she leaves Joe and escapes with Mr. Lies. Like Beauvoir has said above, Harper has also only one solution, 'to deny the harmony' of patriarchy and her 'attempt' to be free by 'revolting against' patriarchal norms and values.

About the possibility of liberation, whatever Beauvoir has written in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, can be generalized here too. She writes, "But once there appears a possibility of liberation, it is resignation of freedom not to exploit the possibility, a resignation which implies dishonesty and which is a positive fault (28). Likewise, as Harper ca not stand bleeding down there, she calls Mr. Lies and asks him to take her away, anywhere, no matter whichever place; just far away. Joe remains bleeding and hurt there to see revolting Harper and her escape with Mr. Lies. Mr Lies brings in the 'possibility of liberation' which she chooses. She has chosen her liberation not to let patriarchy 'exploit

the possibility' in her upcoming life. In one way, Harper's escape may seem like 'dishonesty' or 'positive fault' but from her revolt attempt point of view, she has proved herself as a daring rebellion; and Prior also the same sending Louis out of his room, i.e. out of life too. Both of the discussions happen in a split scene and both of them have separation at the end of the discussion. Prior shows his anger to Joe though he loves him:

PRIOR: If I could get up now I'd kill you. I would. Go away. Go away or

I'll scream.

HARPER: Oh God . . .

JOE: I'm sorry . . .

LOUIS: Please don't scream.

PRIOR: Go. [. . .] (*Closing his eyes*) When I open my eyes you'll be gone.

(*Louis leaves.*)

JOE: Harper?

PRIOR: (*Opening his eyes*): Huh. It worked.

JOE (*Calling*): Harper?

PRIOR: I hurt all over. I wish I was dead. (80)

In this split scene, on the one hand, Harper and Joe have conversation at home and on the other, Prior and Louis at hospital; in a juxtaposed split scene. Louis tells Prior he is moving out responding that he needs privacy that he refuses to be judged, that he is doing the best that he can. Shattered, pleading, Prior tries to reason with him, then screams at him to leave, which Louis does. Meanwhile, on the other side, Joe tells Harper that he still loves her and that he will not desert her, but that even when they were first wedded he knew inside that he was unusual from other men. Harper gets furious at Joe and tells him to set out for Washington, anywhere, but just to leave her alone. As they argue, they both realize that Joe is the same man who terrifies Harper in her hallucinations. Joe finds

his mouth bleeding. She can not see it anymore so, closing her ears, she calls Mr. Lies. She now without fear jumps into her imagination and imaginary friend, Mr. Lies to take her away. Mr. Lies appears and takes her back to her imagination. At the end of this split scene, both Prior (At hospital) and Joe (At home) find themselves left by their partners.

Like Beauvoir says in *The Second Sex*, "Ignorance and error are facts as inescapable as prison walls" (28), Joe's ignorance towards her desires and demands and his 'error' of judgment about Harper was like the 'prison walls' for her. Her attempt to solve the problem would be always refuted by Joe. She has none but just the imaginary friend, Mr. Lies to talk with. He promises her to travel with her to the imaginary places she desires for. On the same way, Prior also has the same 'prison walls' who hardly can endure Louis's 'ignorance' towards him. But now, the time has come and both Harper and Prior had a lot of endurance that has kept him with him up to now, which Joe, Louis and no other man could do if they had to. But now, by escaping with Mr. Lies, Harper has broken down the 'prison walls' besides which she has wanted to leave the pill-popping past alone. And so does Prior being strong enough to send Louis out of the hospital, "If I could get up now I'd kill you. I would. Go away. Go away or I'll scream" (28). Louis would behave Prior as an inferior and ignores him like Joe does to Harper. Harper and Prior's condition seems alike. Their partners, Joe and Louis try to suppress them according to their interest and mood. After getting appropriate chance, like Harper's leave, it is Prior's revolt against Louis's 'ignorance' and revolt against his 'error' of befriending him; and now he has been able to break them all 'prison walls' leaving Louis forever like Beauvoir says, in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, "But once there appears a possibility of liberation, it is resignation of freedom not to exploit the possibility, a resignation which implies dishonesty and which is a positive fault (28). Like Harper, Prior also sees 'a possibility of liberation' and for that they revolt to get 'a resignation'

which attempt is a 'positive fault' for the rebellions like them.

Beauvoir gives the following argument regarding rebellion in *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, "It is very slow for rebellion to develop. First, such peoples have to become aware of that domination. Then they have to believe in their own strength to change it" (3). This argument of Beauvoir can be applied in the case of both couples, Joe and Harper or Prior and Louis. In previous discussions both Harpers would be suppressed by Joe either it be with logics or illogical verbal or emotional pressures. And Prior also looked like pitiful while being ignored by Louis and even during their previous discussions, Louis would try to bond him emotionally not to let him know that he has found another homosexual partner except Prior, even younger and healthier. But in this split scene, both Harper and Prior have become bold and rebellious radically. Prior boldly orders Louis to go out of his sight closing his eyes. He makes a prediction basing on Louis's unfaithfulness, "When I open my eyes you'll be gone" (30). At the same time, Louis leaves the room and prior says, opening his eyes, "Huh. It worked" (30). It makes clear sense that Prior was confident in himself that Louis wants separation, not the union or reunion. So, he orders him to go out or he'll scream. And even Harper calls Mr. Lies and leaves Joe alone vomiting blood there because she has a determination to be free at such time. It is Harper and Prior's attempt to revolt because they have become 'aware of that domination' and they also believe in their own 'strength to change'.

Hannah, Joe's mother is really a sacrificing mother. An underlying conflict occurs when Hannah finds out her son is a homosexual; a problem which forces her to question her love and acceptance towards her son and her strong Mormon anti gay sentiments and beliefs. It is even more shocking due to the fact that Joe is presumably happily married to Harper, also a Mormon. This conflict between mother and son helps Kushner illustrate the complexity of sexuality and the changing views of homosexuality. Hannah cannot

seem to deal with the situation and inquires into into extreme denial. She hangs up the phone thinking the conversation came from Joe just being drunk. Their family background does not allow her to accept Joe's sexuality. When she knows about the arousing conflicts in Joe and Harper's conjugal life, she thinks of selling out all the properties and prepares to go to New York City from Salt Lake city to unite her family. As Sister Ella Chapter expresses, "Look at that view! A view of heaven. Like the living city of heaven, is not it, it just fairly glimmers in the sun" (81), it makes us clear that such a beautiful place has no meaning for Hannah now, because it is the very place which she wants to sell out for her family reunion. She is ready to sacrifice all her property out of her motherly love. About sacrifice, Beauvoir formulates under the topic, *The Data of Biology in The Second Sex*:

We have seen that even in the insects, where the female is highly privileged in return for her total sacrifice to the species, it is usually the male who takes the initiative in fecundation; among the fishes he often stimulates the female to lay her eggs through his presence and contact; and in the frogs and toads he acts as a stimulator in amplexus. But it is in birds and mammals especially that he forces himself upon her, while very often she submits indifferently or even resists him. (35)

In the aforementioned formulation, Beauvoir has attempted to link, 'sacrifice' as the instinct found not only in women but also in insects and pieces. In every example, female has to 'sacrifice to the species'. For example: laying eggs in the context of birds and fishes and breast feeding in the case of birds and mammals. Most of the time, she has to sacrifice because of the male 'forces'. In a way, she has to sacrifice for the male but again it is herself who has to be forced by males. The same example is applied here too in the case of Joe and Hannah. Hannah feels it to be her duty to attempt for the reunion of Joe's

conjugal life. So, she has a motherly moral pressure or 'force' in her mind from her son and his doings. It is another fact that in the case of motherly love, she is unable to 'resist' it rather she realizes her duty and tries to sell out the property 'indifferently'. With Sister Ella Chapter, Hannah has dealing about her property:

HANNAH: Just get me a good price.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: Well, the market's off.

HANNAH: At least fifty.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: Forty'd be more like it.

HANNAH: Fifty.

SISTER ELLA CHAPTER: Wish you'd wait a bit.

HANNAH: Well I can't.

The above conversation between Hannah and Sister Ella Chapter, a real estate agent, makes us clear about Hannah's sacrificial mentality for her loving family. Her property which looks like 'a view of heaven' is not getting the latest price because the market is off. But even now, at any cost, she has to sell it no matter whether she has to go down regarding the selling price. She has felt it to be her duty to reunite her family at any cost and it is in this upheaval that Hannah moves from Salt Lake City to New York in hopes to save her son and his dying marriage.

Mr. Lies has taken Harper to the bottommost part of the world, Antarctica. Mr. Lies opines it to be the cold shelter for the shattered and there will be no sorrow. Here, Harper is feeling better and the snow and mountains of ice are making her feel 'wonderful and sharp' in her lungs. She finds the place to be so much soothing and expresses her desire to stay here forever:

HARPER: That's great. I want to stay here forever. Set up camp. Build things. Build a city, an enormous city made up of frontier forts,

dark wood and green roofs and high gates made of pointed logs and bonfires burning on every street corner. I should build by a river.

Where are the forests?

MR. LIES: No timber here. Too cold. Ice, no trees.

HARPER: Oh details! I'm sick of details! I'll plant them and grow them.

I'll live off caribou fat, I'll melt it over the bonfires and drink it from long, curved goat-horn cups. It'll be great. I want to make a new world here. So that I never have to go home again. (101)

Harper is feeling like heaven in the icy areas of Antarctica. So, she wants to stay right here forever. Motherly love is clearly seen in her planning of building a city, planting trees and making a completely new world there so that she never has to go home again. Mr. Lies is there listening to her planning and her happiness never seen before. Beauvoir opines in *The Second Sex*, "There is no possibility of measuring the happiness of others, and it is always easy to describe as happy the situation in which one wishes to place them" (xxviii). Like Beauvoir's opinion, Harper herself is not able to measure the happiness and not even Mr. Lies; and there is not 'possibility of measuring the happiness' of Harper. But this kingdom of ice is the place where she has arrived after tolerating a frustrated life in New York and here, she feels soothing. She screams with joy, "Well all of this is made up. So if the snow feels cold I'm pregnant. Right? Here, I can be pregnant. And I can have any kind of baby I want" (102). After all, she has got the pleasure of being a mother for which she was longing for a long time. Like Beauvoir says, Harper wanted to 'place' herself in such a situation where she can 'describe' her happiness.

Beauvoir formulates in *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, "What we need is an angel-neither man nor woman-but where shall we find one? Still, the angel would be

poorly qualified to speak, for an angel is ignorant of all the basic facts involved in the problem" (xxvii). Beauvoir's formulation supports the character of Mr. Lies and his help for Harper in every situation. Though Mr. Lies is born male, but as an angelic character, he is not bias to any gender. In fact, Harper needed an angelic presence neither man nor woman. Though, the angel, Mr. Lies is 'poorly qualified to speak' about the 'basic facts' of Harper's sorrows and happiness too, but he is quite helpful for Harper. Mr. Lies is not bias to anyone because he is neither a man nor woman and Harper has found him in her hallucinations and dream visions.

Beauvoir, in the subject of honesty and freedom relating to the revolt against the patriarchy writes in her book, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*. Beauvoir has given the examples of Nora in Ibsen's *The Doll's House*. She argues:

This is the case of women who inherit a long tradition of submission and of those who are called "the humble". There is often laziness and timidity in their resignation; their honesty is not quite complete; but to the extent that it exists, their freedom remains available, it is not denied. They can, in their situation of ignorant and powerless individuals, know the truth of existence and raise themselves to a properly moral life. It even happens that they turn the freedom which they have thus won against the very object of their respect; thus, in *A Doll's House*, the childlike naivete of the heroine leads her to rebel against the lie of the serious. (36)

In the aforementioned argument, Beauvoir has tried to justify the rebellious character; Nora in Ibsen's *The Doll's House*. Nora had a childlike lifestyle in outer look but was very powerful inwardly. She also did 'inherit a long tradition of submission' and was 'humble' all the time. But at last, she revolts against the patriarchal power. The same interpretation can be done in the case of Harper. She also wins freedom 'against the very

object' of her respect i.e. Joe. She knows the 'truth of existence' and revolts for 'properly moral life'. Though in previous days, there was 'laziness and timidity' in her thoughts but as she got the chance, 'it is not denied' by her like Nora does in Ibsen's *The Doll's House*.

Harper realizes the truth of existence and raises herself to get a properly moral life revolting against her husband. Joe has become so sad and upset after the leave of Harper. Now, in her absence, he has understood the value of Harper. His arousing tensions and his sinking mentality proves it enough. To find a solution, Joe has gone to talk Roy:

. . . Roy is wearing an elegant bathrobe. He has made a considerable effort to look well. He isn't well, and he hasn't succeeded much in looking it.

JOE: I can't. The answer's no. I'm sorry.

ROY: Oh, well, apologies . . .

I can't see that there's anyone asking for apologies

(Pause.)

JOE: I'm sorry, Roy.

ROY: Oh, well, apologies.

JOE: My wife is missing, Roy. My mother's coming from Salt Lake to . . . to help look, I guess. I'm supposed to be at the airport now, picking her up but . . . I just spent two days in a hospital, Roy, with a bleeding ulcer, I was spitting up blood. (106)

The descriptions seem to have a lot of importance here to highlight the value of Harper in his life. Joe has done a considerable effort to look well though he is not well, and he has not succeeded much in looking well. The description about Joe proves the impact after Harper left him. His condition is exposed as he discloses that he just spent two days in a hospital, and he was spitting up blood with a bleeding ulcer. Now, there is no Harper to

take care of sick Joe. He has not even been able to pick his mother up from airport who has come to help him. But his mentality has sunk to the extent that he can only lament on his wife's leave and his inability to meet his mother. He is now so upset and asks for forgiveness to Roy because he ca not go to Washington with Harper as Roy wanted. In *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, Beauvoir has pointed out some clues as what happens when a man like Joe is left alone by his rebellious wife like Harper. She notes, "He makes himself serious. He dissimulates his subjectivity under the shield of rights which emanate from the ethical universe recognized by him; he is no longer a man, but a father, a boss, a member of the Christian Church or the Communist Party" (36). Here too, Joe has made himself 'serious'. He is trying to look good but is not able to really look like good. He is trying his best to 'dissimulate' his real 'subjectivity' and condition. His 'ethical universe' which formulates his false subjectivity and condition is not easily concealed. Now, Joe is not longer 'a man' because he was a real hero or man for his wife, Harper, who has already left him; and his homosexual links with Roy and Louis has also killed him manhood. The options Beauvoir has given, 'a father', 'A boss', 'a member of Christian Church' or the 'Communist Party' are also not the genuine parts of his subjectivity. Now, the possibility is of being 'a father', which he really is not; 'a boss', which he fails to be. He is a Mormon and his religious background does not allow him to be a homosexual and he is no more a supporter of freedom like the member of 'Communist Party' does. Throughout his conjugal life, he gave Harper a readymade position out of his traditional understanding of women. He behaved her in quite illogical and traditional way of dominating the females which had made Harper 'a woman' though she was not born like that. Later, Harper kicked down his given identity and left him, now he is left with nothing; not even identity. As he lost his identity of 'a man', he lost all the prestigious status.

Joe even now, does not think himself the cause of what has happened up to now. But he is wandering with his broken mentality. He has a serious conversation with Roy about this:

JOE: I wanted to be one of the elect, one of the Blessed.

[. . .] Harper's sorrow, that really deep sorrow, she didn't choose that. But it's there.

ROY: You didn't put it there.

JOE: No.

ROY: You sound like you think you did. (107)

Joe was trying to persuade Harper to go to Washington according to Roy's planning and his own desire to get an upper position Roy had offered him. He agrees, 'I wanted to be one of the elect, one of the Blessed.' but now he has left his happiness somewhere out of his reach. He even knows that Harper did not choose that sorrow, but it is there. He first of all does not want to take the blame on himself. He says that he did not put sorrow in Harper's life but when Roy suspects on his lie, he hardly agrees. Even now, he is not ready to accept his mistakes as his own which have ruined his conjugal life and even the whole coherent family.

Another rebellious character, Ethel Rosenberg visits Roy Cohn in his apartment falling on ground. It is not Ethel herself but, it is her ghost coming to cast out some words of revenge to Roy Cohn. It was Roy, who was the main cause of her death penalty. He even proudly claims and tries to justify his use of power on the females. With pride, he narrates Joe his use of power on a famous column writer for one of the national magazines. He proudly says, "If it wasn't for me, Joe, Ethel Rosenberg would be alive today, writing some personal-advice column for *Ms. Magazine*. She isn't because during the trial, Joe, I was on the phone every day, talking with the judge" (108). Beauvoir notes

in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, "The oppressed has only one solution: [. . .] revolting against the tyrants" (62). Like Beauvoir says, being a rebellious one, Ethel satirically declares Roy's death, "Be seeing you soon, Roy. Julius sends his regards" (110). She has come there to take the revenge on him in the name of Julius for Julius Caesar is deified and considered a god as an honor after his death, by the Roman and Westerners. Even after her death, Ethel Rosenberg comes to revolt 'against the tyrant' i.e. Roy Cohn.

Hannah has sold all of her properties and come to New York City. But she does not have proper address and she does not know this city. She was supposed to be met at the airport by Joe but he did not come for more than 3 hours. So, she sets off alone to find him and asks a woman about the location that irritates her. She can not control her nerves and she furiously threatens her and compels her to tell the exact location. She starts with fury:

HANNAH: Shut up. Please. Now I want you to stop jabbering for a minute and pull your wits together and tell me how to get to Brooklyn. Because you know! And you are going to tell me! Because there is no one else around to tell me and I am wet and cold and I am very angry! So I am sorry you're psychotic but just make the effort--take a deep breath--DO IT! (105)

It is a kind of rebellious attempt she has made to the woman for the exact location of Joe's apartment. Beauvoir notes in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, "The oppressed has only one solution: [. . .] revolting against the tyrants" (62). Like Beauvoir stated, Hannah had no other way than revolting against that woman because there was none except that woman and at any cost she had to find out the way she has missed. It is like 'revolting against' the patriarchy itself because, for her, the unknown woman was being ignorant and cold as the agent who tried to interrupt her from reuniting her family. In the context of a loving and

sacrificing mother searching for a son, she is 'oppressed' in one way that had 'only one solution' i.e. 'revolting against' the psychotic woman.

Women as a group experience many different forms of injustice, and the sexism they encounter interacts in complex ways with other systems of oppression. Women are oppressed and this oppression is wrong or unjust. Women as a group can be usefully compared against men as a group with respect to their standing or position in society; and this seems to suggest that women as a group are treated in the same way, or that they all suffer the same injustices, and men as a group all reap the same advantages. Of course, the oppressed female characters they typically support one another. Because human actions are often best explained by the framework employed for justifying them, one's sex may play a large role in determining how one is treated because the background understandings for what's appropriate treatment draw invidious distinctions between the sexes. In other words, the causal mechanism for sexism often passes through problematic representations of women and gender roles. Beauvoir Beauvoir writes in *The Second Sex*, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine" (267). Like Beauvoir said, no one is women by birth but after birth, they become women. She does not vest the term 'women' within gender discrimination; she has tried to define it in broader sense where 'biological' and 'psychological' fate plays vital role rather than gender. It is 'civilization' itself who gives male or female identity to the human beings. 'This creature', female are not female by birth, or if they are male by birth, even then they may have the identity of a 'eunuch' which has female-like identity. In the drama, we can see Prior Walter as the example of such 'creature'. Here, Prior seems to have faced oppression like any other female

characters Harper, Hannah etc. though he is male by birth.

The same case is found in the society too. Beauvoir points out in *The Second Sex*, "She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute-she is the Other" (xvi). Like Beauvoir's argument, the same is the condition of women in general even now a days. They are 'differentiated' from males as the 'incidental' and 'inessential' but, on the other hand, the males think themselves to be 'essential' and 'Subject' where as females are taken as 'Other'. Beauvoir adds, "It is not the Other who, in defining himself as the Other, establishes the One. The Other is posed as such by the One in defining himself as the One" (xviii). Moreover, in her book, *The Second Sex 25 Years Later*, Beauvoir has noted, "If women still exist, if they will always exist, whether or it is desirable that they should, what place they occupy in this world, what their place should be" (2). Equal existence of both male and female is the demand of nature. Male and female are the inseparable parts of nature without one of them; the whole creative foundation of the universe will be demolished. One needs another whether it be in the form of husband and wife, son and mother, father and daughter, brother and sister etc. So, like Beauvoir says, "The me-others relationship is as indissoluble as the subject-object relationship" (53). Then, why to other one from another? Why to go against nature?

A woman has to face domination and she has to live with an inferior position right from her childhood throughout the whole life. The society has granted women with the household activities and dispersed identity among the males. In her family, she has to take care of her brothers and father whom she has to be second to, in every aspects. Later on, after marriage, she has to go to her husband and this compulsion makes her feel like being a commodity. The series of domination follows her there too. Not only this, she is

not allowed to go to work; and even if she does, she is not paid equally. In every step, she has to face a dominating male character whether it is father, brother, husband, boss or anyone else. The patriarchal society does not let her raise her hands against the domination because patriarchy is deep rooted in every mind. So, directly or indirectly, the deep rooted patriarchal chauvinist mentality attempts to dominate the women like Harper, Hannah and Ethel. Even if the male characters like Joe, Roy etc. are well educated, the deep rooted dominating nature keeps on dominating the women in every steps of life. So, whatever is set in the mind is not easily wiped out, it takes a long span of time, a decade or even more. Male and female are the inseparable parts of nature. Without one of them; the whole creative foundation of the universe will be demolished. One needs another whether it be in the form of husband and wife, son and mother, father and daughter, brother and sister etc. So, equality should be ensured in such a way that no one would be compelled to revolt against inequality and domination.

III. Revolt against the Granted Inferior Position

After a thorough analysis and research about women position on Tony Kushner's *Angels In America, Millennium Approaches*, researcher has come to a conclusion that the present play has revolutionized female characters by making them bold and courageous. The play shows the tribulations that Harper, Hannah and Ethel etc. have to face in the family and society as women with a granted identity of being always second to male. The oppressed ones always seek for the right time to revolt against the oppression and when they get the suitable opportunity, they revolt in such a way that leaves the oppressor with an incomplete identity.

Joe, husband to Harper and son to Hannah, fails to impart happiness in his family and as a result, his wife, Harper turns to be an agoraphobic with a mild valium addiction. To bring out some solution, Harper tries to relate her emotional sufferings with Joe's shortcomings but Joe as a competent tries to point out her loneliness as the major problem. He is not honest with himself and with Harper and he does not have genuine affection for her; otherwise, he would have thought about her satisfaction also. It proves that she is living in this darkness and psychological discords just because of his failure to be a promising husband.

Harper loves her husband a lot and is seeking for the solution in her conjugal life. For Harper, Joe is the only person she loves or has ever loved; and she loves him terribly. She believes Joe to such an extent that she cannot be convinced easily by Prior's threshold of revelation that Joe is a homosexual. But as she suspects and becomes aware; the germ of rebellion grows in her mind. She has her own strength on which she has full belief that she can face it. But Joe behaves her as if she does not deserve the truth. He really does not want to talk to Harper about their problems; specifically, his personal problems which has created another problem for Harper and their conjugal life.

Prior can be compared to Harper because of having advantageous position of woman which neither Harper nor Prior had ever willed. Both of them have chosen the world of imagination as the soothing place where Prior take relief from the coldness in his partnership, and Harper in her conjugal life.

Harper expresses her feelings about the absence of a husband in Joe. She loves him but does not get the same in return. She openly says that she cannot see her husband's indifference towards physical relation and even to see him sleeping like an unfamiliar. She even finds Joe quite unknown at night. She wants her husband back with the face she loves, likes and remembers; but Joe's unfamiliar face terrifies her in turn.

Harper's pill-popping life has led her to burn Joe's dinner which is also a symbol of resistance or revolt. But Joe thinks it to be the childish quality and points out the revolt action to be the reason of too many pills she takes. In one way, it seems to be the Joe's irresponsibility towards her psychological condition.

Roy is among the male chauvinist who claims that women are the weaker sex and underestimates women for owing him favors picking up the phone when he calls. Though Roy is a well educated man, a professional lawyer but still he has got the male chauvinist value system that has been set in his thinking parameter.

Previously, Joe did not realize the value of conjugal life especially presence of Harper; but now he does. That is why, he does not agree to go to Washington alone where he was pre-planned to go. But up to now Harper has become so bold that she directly declares of leaving him. Harper was like a rebellion who has only one solution to be free and that is, excluding him; the only solution. The main revolt reason for Harper is to make herself free from all the blockades and predicaments she was getting from the living with Joe.

In hallucination, Prior claims his thirty-fourth lineage position according to mother but Prior I does not valorize the counting of mother because, for him, she is including two bastards. Prior I defines his lineage by himself, there is no value of his mother's counting.

He is defining his mother and her existence relative to the male or his forefathers. The mother has given birth to thirty-four children but two of them are not counted as hers.

Mr. Lies is the positive side of Harper's mind and she has chosen it to avoid the negative pressures. Her escape with Mr. Lies is the fulfillment of her will for total freedom. Mr. Lies brings in the possibility of liberation for Harper which she chooses rather than Joe. Joe is kneeling down bleeding but she does not stay back to hold bleeding Joe, it is the evidence of revolt instinct in her mind. Joe tries to persuade Harper but she is determined in herself so that his loving and persuasive words have no impact on her. After all, at any cost, she leaves Joe and escapes with Mr. Lies.

By escaping with Mr. Lies, Harper has revolt against the patriarchal domination at once, and so does Prior enduring enough to send Louis out of the hospital. Both Harper and Prior have become courageous and rebellious radically. Harper and Prior both had tolerated the domination a lot which Joe, Louis and no other man could do if he had to.

After Harper's leave, Joe is left with nothing; not even identity. As he lost his identity of a man in front of himself, he realizes of losing all the belongings. Joe has become so sad and upset after Harper's leave. Now, in her absence, he has understood the value of Harper. His arousing tensions and his sinking mentality proves it enough.

Another female character who is counted to be rebellious even after her death is, Ethel Rosenberg. She has come to Roy Cohn's apartment to take the revenge on him even after her death. Ethel comes to revolt against the tyrant, Roy Cohn, who was the cause of her death. She was given death penalty because during the trial, Roy Cohn was on the phone every day, talking with the judge and misusing his power for ego fulfillment.

Joe's mother Hannah is really a sacrificing mother. Joe calls her at midnight and opens the secret of his homosexuality to her, which hurts her. When she knows about the arousing conflicts in Joe and Harper's conjugal life, she thinks of selling out all the properties and prepares to set out for family reunion. Even the heaven-like place has no meaning for

her. She has a moral pressure and motherly love in her mind, because of which she realizes her duty and to sell out all her property.

None is women by birth but after birth, they become women. It is civilization itself which gives male or female identity to the human beings. Female are not female by birth, or if they are male by birth, even then they may have the identity of a person who has female-like identity. In the drama, we can see Prior Walter as the example. Prior seems to have faced oppression like any other female characters Harper, Hannah etc. though he is male by birth.

To sum up, the multiplicity in themes and issues of Tony Kushner's play, *Angels In America* has really overshadowed the imperative female issues. Throughout the play, the female characters like Harper, Ethel and Hannah have to undergo a lot of sufferings either it is physical or psychological. The female-like character, Prior is also another example. The identity of female is given to them by the society after their birth, which they do not want and do not deserve too. The major and sub plots of the play talk a lot about homosexuality, religiosity, AIDS but tells barely about any impact of them in women's lives. The dominated characters like, Harper, Prior and Ethel turn to be rebellious when the limit of endurance is extreme and when they see the possibility of freedom. On the other hand, Hannah's sacrificial attempt to reunite her family proves the power of motherly love. The major male characters like Joe, Louis and Roy etc. are seem to be immoral and irresponsible and with the oppressive mentality. Though they are well educated and holding the powerful position, they have the oppressive mentality since their childhood, shaped by the patriarchal schooling. So, it is not easy to uproot what type of male chauvinism and oppressive mentality has been planted in their mind; it seems to take probably a decade. For the present researcher, reading of the play from feminist viewpoint reverts the secondary position of female to the major and pivotal one.

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