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Ironizing Christianity in Tony Kushner's *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*

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Abstract

This research attempts to unmask the century's long discrimination and domination among the people of different religious faiths and the psychological detachment of people in America at the time of millennium transfusions in Tony Kushner's *Angels in America, Millennium Approaches*. It aims to explore the way we perceive the religious norms and the detached concept of characters like Joy, Roy, Hannah, Harper from the norms and values of the religions in American society. With the help of Linda Hutcheon, Wayne C Booth and other ironists' conception of irony is used. This research analyzes the position and the psychological change and behavioral change of major characters as the victims of religious bias and upcoming time, and tries to overturn the perspective of reading the play to find out the real position of the characters that follow Judaism and Mormonism mainly in Christian dominated society in America, which is its main objective. Besides, the study focuses on the Jewish and Mormon characters' attempts to get rid of the domination of the Christianization by challenging the rooted oppressive intention in the moral norms and ethics of society and religions. The play can be read in diverse perspective i.e. writing from the psychological point of view, from the ironical point of view which attempts to go against the mainstream.

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1. Ironizing Religious References in Kushner's *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*

The research analyzes the use and politics of irony in Tony Kushner's *Angels in America: Millennium Approach* (1993) which is a landmark of American post-war drama. *Angels in America* has become one of the most celebrated and acclaimed plays in the United States and Britain. The drama's charm lies in its accurate depiction and imaginative interpretation of a variety of 'national themes'. The play is dominant over numerous issues like homosexuality, deception, class conflict, religiosity, HIV, AIDS etc. The research analyzes the orthodox beliefs rooted in American society and pit out the reality on religions throughout the ironic looks: Mormonism, Christianize and Judaism. The project attempts to bring forth the sufferings and problems of the characters having different religious faith. The drama exposes the inherent contradiction of religious norms and values and the distracted concept of people along with the change of time. As *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines:

The drama expresses the meaning by language of opposite or different tendency, esp. simulated adoption of author's point of view or the tone of ridicule: ill-timed or perverse arrival of event's or circumstance in itself desirable, as if in mockery of the fitness of things; use of language that has an inner meaning for a privileged audience and an outer meaning for a privileged audience and an outer meaning for the person addressed or concerned.

The study tries to unmask the century's long discrimination and domination among religions: Christianity, Mormons, Judaism and try to explore the contradiction, paradox, ambiguities through ironic look on them. The reading takes the pose of Jewish characters as the pivot which is influenced by the overall activities and going-

on of the play in one way or the other. The norms, values and inner aim or intention of religions: Christian, Judaism and Mormonism are traced out gradually with the issue of social reality, culture and traditional beliefs in the drama in coming millennium. The change of time 'Millennium' should have carried the themes of morality, ethnicity and so on but values and customs of religions embrace contradiction and contention, faith and doubt, progressive social vision and deepened spiritual commitment. Such rooted beliefs, norms and values are drawn to their understanding of the spiritual power and cultural grandeur and Jewish heritage but questions the politics of accommodation and the limitations of tradition and law in religion, religious effects on characters, domination and hatred on Jews and Mormons.

The multiplicity in themes and issues of the play overshadow the imperative issues pertaining to the male and female characters from different religious faith. The research dramatizes the long rooted beliefs on characters, contradiction the actual situation of characters and their reality. Jews characters- Sarah, Louise, Joe, Harper, and Prior suffer in Christian dominated society. In this case Jonathan Freedman argues: "Within a religious culture, the balance of social benefits may be a reason to find one more persuasive than another but on their own and for people outside that culture, no amount of yearning for a return of community, an end to lawlessness, or the peace of personal contentment will make a religious faith plausible" (125). The struggle of Jewish in the American society throughout the study on characters, plot, dialectics, religion, and politics and so on can explore the reality in the drama. The religious misbalance, cultural crisis, religious downfall and institutionalization of characters in Christian dominated society and the reality can be seen. The cases of religion assisting people to come to grips with rapid social change remind us that religion is about a lot more than man and God.

While portraying the lives of American people at the end of the century, it probes the topic and issues that reveals the problem of the United States of the 1980s. Kushner connotes the representation of the inner violence of the characters on religion. The presentation of the characters and their real concept is quite different. The struggle in their lives as journeys in search of hope in America through the process of progress redemption and reformation. The journeys can be seen in reality are painful but they lead them to hope in the future coming millennium. 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 settings like Washington, Salt Lake City, New York City etc. and also fantasy places like ozone and some dream sequences.

While analyzing the ironic representation of the Christianity, Judaism and Mormonism, the study argues that Kushner exploits subversive politics of irony for critiquing and revealing the hierarchies and suppressive ideologies founded on the religious norms and values. As John M. Clum in his *Acting Gay, Male Homosexuality in Modern Drama* mentions that, 'Millennium Approaches' depicts the "dissolution of relationship and the various unmooring seem to be the prelude to a revolution, the creation of a new order" (318). Basically the play attacks on the orthodox-beliefs and norms of the religions. The spiritual and metaphysical elements are presented as an important factor. By the use of biblical references, Kushner not only casts an ironic look at Christianity but also the foundation of American dream, which claims to be based on Christian ideals. The foundation of religious influence on characters' interpersonal/ intra-personal relationship and the detachment in their physical and mental obstacle comes under the spotlight of the research. The unusual activities in understanding and the defining the religion on their own words are

satirically dramatized in the drama. The values and customs of religions embrace contradiction and contention, faith and doubt, progressive social vision and deepened spiritual commitment. Such rooted beliefs, norms and values are drawn to the people's understanding of the spiritual power and cultural divinity and Jewish heritage but questions the politics of accommodation and the limitations of traditional and law.

Angels in America exploits the elements of religion in Judaism, Christianity and Mormonism. By castigating the norms and values, the concept of religion has been shown as a construction of human nature, social and historical forces rather than as a supernatural power. The orthodox religious norms, cultural systems, beliefs and conception of the people of the world that establish symbols relating humanity to spirituality, lack clear "pre-given" guidelines to form a shared religion. In the words of De Witte and Billiet, "The growing number of people who lack clear, 'pre-given' guidelines form a shared religion that might be driving force of the increasing popularity of new left-wing politics and new right-wing politics in the west since 1960" (462). In *Angels in America*, characters like Joe, Harper, Louis, Hannah as well as other characters are suffering from domination, torture in Christian dominated American base. They play the important role in the drama by detaching from religious norms or let's say from 'pre-given' guidelines of Christianity rather they are involved more in humanitarian activities either such activities result in positivity or negativity. Most of the character chooses the path of institutionalization at the end of play, rather choosing the way of struggle and progress.

Even though Christianity has tried to be all inclusive by trying to look on all the religions equally but it seems as if the position of the Jewish and Mormon seem to be relegated. Most of the characters are drawn to their understanding of the spiritual

power and cultural divinity of Jewish heritage but questions the condition of accommodation and limitation of tradition and law in Christian dominated American society. Most of the immigrant characters: Joe, Harper, Louis, Hannah, Belize etc are in dominated position. They are getting chance to move in cage like situation under the Christianity as lower citizens and marginalize group.

Kushner's portrayal of God as the Almighty reinforces a hierarchical order whereby gender is uniquely salient and males have legitimate authority for all the matter of any consequences in each religion. The concept of God sociologically is losing its own faith in people. Biblical God has come in a problematic stage in modern west at the time of late 20th century. According to Jorgensen L. Danny in his *Gender-Inclusive Image of God: A Sociological Interpretation of Early Shakerism and Mormonism* elaborates: "As the structure and organization of modern western societies have become less hierarchical and authoritarian and more egalitarian and democratic, the traditional patriarchal image of biblical God increasingly has been perceived to be problematic" (66). The concept of religions, God and Angels are in terrible and unexpected situation to spread their real intention for human life. The beliefs and their changing psychology in religions are transmitting the hidden values slowly and gradually in the coming millennium which can be pit out in an ironic look.

The religious issues based on *Angels in America: Millennium Approach* have mainly presented the conflict over the interpersonal and intra personal wills and desire that is seen in several events and characters are in hierarchy in the deep analysis of all the aspects in deep analysis. Kushner dramatizes the concept of irony mainly on the issue of religion that can be clearly notice the gap in all the traditional norms, faith and its value in the ironic light and the separation in belief in coming millennium. Most the characters institutionalize in the drama and ready to accept what they want:

life as alienation, frustration, homosexual and so on. Although all those characteristics are not negative in totality that depends upon the concept of individual but those all issues can be taken negatively in the steps of drama's analysis. Want of freedom in the characters' life and the avoidance of traditional hierarchy especially in religious belief are clearly noticed in the research. Kushner's dramatization of the struggle and conflict between religious beliefs and social reality, moral and social dilemmas carries the supernatural element 'Angels' for a higher pain. As Graft mentions, "the liberal pluralist solution against the conservative solution more specifically the conflict over the moral and social dilemmas in homosexuality has caused the greatest conservation" (10). Jewish characters are in a socially undecided situation about their life, career and so on in American society.

Angels in America is a play about the feelings of Americans throughout the period of Millennium at the end of the 20th century. According to Bible, "the millennium is the time when the Christ will return and judge all human beings on earth". The concern of the end of world and the judgment of human beings are prominent in the play. Facing the coming millennium, the human race suffers from anxiety and despair induced by numerous man-made catastrophes around the world. In describing the anxieties and struggles of people in the face of millennium, Jewish who were migrated through different countries to America turned out dispossessed and dislocated refugees from community and Christian society in America. The interpersonal relationship and symbolize the destruction of the traditional moral order in *Angels*. Alfonso Ceballos Munoz 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 to crack wide open. He, in his *Tony Kushner's Angels in America or How American History Spins Forward*, expresses that “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).

The drama is presented having full of the religious images. Particularly images in Mormonism and Judaism are based through the characters. Savran has pointed out, “Given the number of prominence of Mormon characters in the play, it should come as little surprise that Mormonism, maintains a very close relationship to the epistemology of *Angels in America*” (217). The Jewish life and Mormons life is as a hindrance forces for Christian people. The biblical prediction of Christ’s return, the unpredictable events that are to happen at the turn of century and the seemingly pessimistic future prospect of the human race are all sources of millenarian anxiety. As Alisa Solomon comments, “*Angels in America* is staturated with familiar Jewish imagery and ideas” (118). Almost every character in the verbal and visual manifestation has expressed his or her idea of apocalyptic scenes or events in the play.

By carving out the characters, the apocalyptic meaning of the millennium is reversing in a scene that millennium is a crisis and chance of renewal to the world. Kushner has written the play as the emergency of time especially to select the title. He wanted to show the changes on the behavioral aspect of physical, mental and social aspect of people of Judaism and Mormonism in Christian dominated society. Stanov B. Garner points out, “In their recourse to millenarian imagery the closing scenes represent Kushner’s final attempt to rewrite apocalypse, to borrow its urgency and its transformative imagination while challenging its exclusions” (182). The Angel of

history wants to go back and restore what has been destroyed. The role of God, Angels lacks their position in spiritually and morally degraded American society. Wayne C. Booth in his *Rhetoric of Irony* clarifies the concept of God in the modern West gives the concept of modern God. He explains how the religious inner intention has been changed. He further argues:

The concept of God has reached the limits of its usefulness: it cannot evolve further. Supernatural powers were created by man to carry the burden of religion. From diffuse magic man to personal spirits, from spirits to gods: from gods to God-so, cruelly speaking that evolution has gone. The particular phase of that evolution which concerns us in that of gods. In one period of our western civilization the gods were necessary fictions, useful hypotheses by which to live. (4)

The Angels which are believed as a savior of human beings, the task of God lacks their duty on human race in the changing millennium. Angels themselves become the victim of cruel time and human in American society. Questions arises what is the faith on God, Angels and other supernatural elements.

Kushner's *Angels in America*, in the word of famous drama critics John M Culm, "marks a turning point in the history of gay drama, the history of American drama and of American literary culture" (325). Use of irony and the exploration of irony in the drama's construction: Characters, setting, title, plot; themes twist the drama's intention in its deep research. Mainly the religious references and the use of such references in character can be noted down. The reality seen in characters and the actuality they face are totally different. 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* expresses his view, "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).

Irony, in its simplest semantics, can be defined as, in the words of Samuel Johnson, "a mode of speech of which the meaning is contrary to the word" (qtd. in Enright 5). Different sorts of irony is appropriate to pit out the drama's reality. Religious, stable, situational ironies, progressive ironies are mainly use to analysis the context. The ironic effect of such an irony is intensified by the listener or onlooker's knowledge that the speaker is wiser than the speaker is wiser than the permits himself to appear and who may perceive slightly in advance the direction the naïve questioning will take. Alan Wilder, in *Horizons of Assent* (1971), offers a heady account of how irony works: "Irony, as the typical form, at all levels, of this century's response to the problematic of an increasingly recessive and dissolving self and an increasingly randomized world, strives to achieve the simultaneous acceptance and creation of a world that is both indeterminate and consciousness" (4).

The play starts during the last days of October, 1985. Prior Walter, a poor but stylish past-time worker, is attending the Jewish funeral of Sarah Ironson, grandmother to his boy friend Louis. After the funeral service, Prior shows Louis the Kaposi's sarcoma on his arm, which is a symptom of AIDS. Louis frown at the scene. He worries about Prior very much. Jewish in America lost their existence. They do not have their identity, existence, desire in Christian society. As Jy Lynn Felman in his *Lost Jewish (male) Souls: a midrash on 'Angels in America'* notices that "Rabbi Chemlwitz publicly admits that he does not know the deceased Sarah Ironson on her family. But he knows Sarah's journey and the meaning of that journey, which in the end is more important than knowing the person herself" (1).

The journeys of Jews is completely suffering, a journey where there is no ladder to climb but forced to climb, there is life but lacks the feeling of ownership over it. To survive in Jewish home for them, ‘in this strange place, in the melting pot where nothing melted’. They have to suffer terribly as Rabbi explains “every day of your lives the miles that voyage between that place and this one you cross” (10). The history of homoerotic and Jewish otherness goes on to see the plays as losing much of Jewish element in the collapse to be essentially Christian.

Irony shows the clear gap on actuality and seen reality in different aspect. As Muecke, D. C in his *Irony and Ironic* says, the word was defined as “saying the contrary of what one means”, as “saying one thing but meaning another”, as praising in order to blame and blaming in order to “praise”, and as “mocking and scoffing” (170). Such drama forwards the biblical references in the contrary meanings. Irony becomes “rhetorically effective and aesthetically pleasing” that generates the “curious feeling of paradox, of the ambivalent, of the ambiguity, of the impossibility made actual, of a double contradictory reality” that conjoins with the “feeling of liberation” as in verbal irony “reality definitely unmask the appearance” while sarcasm lacks this feel of liberation, which is not “for a moment plausible in its literal sense, (and) the tone conveys reproach so strongly that no feeling of contradiction is possible”(45-46).

The drama is about life, living and the will to live of Jews and Mormon characters. It is about love and idea of love, it is about pain and suffering, belief and doubt, hidden behavior and expressed reality, about death and beyond, about strength and weakness and the infuriating frustrations that characters’ experience cannot control what happen to them. When Joe tries to console Louis, they become acquainted. Joe as a homosexual but denies the fact and has got married to Harper.

Harper is valium addict. Her life is full of illusion and hope plays vital role in her life but she lacks all in the millennium. The condition of character like, Joe, Harper, Louis, Prior is seen with fear of future, moral uncertainty and a sense of inexplicable loss drives Kushner's tormented and confused characters in all of his plays. Kushner characters are generally caught between two worlds: "one dying and one being born" (Fisher 9). Irony locates itself not only in a dramatic situation but it also comes into being in the implied faith in the relationship between the supernatural power and human beings. When explored in such a way, irony turns to be what has labeled as cosmic irony. Cosmic irony occurs when individuals are usually struck with tragedy, frustration and mocking because of their belief that the universe or human life is deliberately manipulated by supernatural power like a deity or fate, thereby leading them to false hopes. In such an irony, the expressed meaning is that human beings are like toys in the hands of supernatural powers, while the ironic meaning is often critical causing people to question God and see the universe as hostile. The ironic intensity in cosmic irony is reinforced by character's blind faith in divinity and destiny, though such a faith may generate frustration and tragedy.

Dialectical relationship is shown between different political positions races religions, political believes and sexual orientations. Such relationship comprises various external and internal journeys of the characters. The conflicts between Louis and Belize, the conflict of wills between the Angels and Prior, and the contrast between the split scenes. Hegel claims that "irony is the dialectic progress of history". Solgar has liberated, "irony from its negative association so that it could be applied to situations and events that seem unpromising but surprisingly turn out fortunate". (qtd. in Mueckem 28). As the basic features of every irony are a contrast between a reality and an appearance, the dialectic relation in characters is differ in reality. Five Jewish

characters play a significant role in Kushner's play giving it a Jewish tone. Louis Ironson, an intellectual is a secular third generation New York immigrant. Sarah Ironson, Louis's grandmother from Eastern Europe, speaks mostly Yiddish, the orthodox Rabbi Isidor Chemelwitz with a heavy Eastern European accent. Roy M, Cohn, an anti-Semitic is a self-loathing Jew and with communism and espionage. Even though, these figures seem rather stereotypical at first sight, Kushner manages to display them as round and diverse characters in the course of the play. American Jews in general, are being from between the modern, secular society and historical ties to ethnic and religious identity. Willem de Koster and Jeron van der Waali in *Cultural Value Orientation and Christian Religiosity: on Moral Traditionalism, Authoritarianism and Their Implication for Voting Behavior* explains:

In the west, Christian dominates the traditional part of society when it comes to moral issues as gender relations, sexuality, life and death.

There traditional stance is of course, deeply inspired by Christian Bible and by socialization in Christian institutions. Therefore, for Christian it is generally beyond doubt that this order should be respected and that life should be protected against man induced changes. In case of authoritarianism, such a 'natural' relationship with Christian doctrine appears to be lacking. (453)

Prior, a homosexual friend of Louis, gets worse situation and becomes seriously ill and unable to walk. Louis faces dilemma, he loves Prior, but he worries that he may not be able to take care of him for long Prior becomes furious because Louis wants to leave him when he needs him most. Louis tells Prior he still loves him but he cannot endure the mental pressure of worrying about Prior condition.

Longsner's research even goes to the justification of the very word, 'angel' 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 Longsner, colloquial use of the term extends the word, 'Angel' to almost any good person. Addressing to the orientation of the end of millennium in the play, Longsner even argues that there must be enough just people, enough angels.

Prior sees the impending doom and rebirth of the world, a vision. Harper also has prophetic qualities: she 'feels' something to happen with the coming of third millennium. Her breakdown of reality is very different from Prior's however instead of having The Angel to guide her, she has Mr Lies, Roy Cohn the false prophet has an angel appear to him as well, the other historical character in the play Ethel Rosenberg appears to him as a sign that justice is coming. She is well suited for the function because she died as a result of Roy's abuse of American justice system. Her trial was a mockery of Justice; Hannah steps away from her Mormon traditions and goes from Salt Lake City to New York. There is a breakdown in the fabric of reality as well thought it can be detached by prophet characters. Freedman in *Troubling the Water* argues that "*Angels in America* depicts varying degrees of anger, humor and empathy, a poignant and epic tapestry of the substantial societal and spiritual issues facing humankind and Americans in particular at the dawn of the new millennium" (54).

Louis, being frustrated strolls in the park. Joe follows him; Joe has come out to his mother and wife. Deeply depressed by Harper's leaving, Joe rejects the job opportunity offered by his boss Roy which makes Joe feel very sorry and Roy betrayed. Joe is distressed more than ever. Louis feels it is the right time. So he makes an attempt to console and seduce Joe. He touches Joe and then kisses him. He asks Joe to come to his place and Joe agrees. The heterosexual concept based on religion is

under challenged. Questions arise in the practice and acceptance of homosexuality in Christian dominated society at the end of the millennium. As mentioned in *Religion Ethnicity and Social Change*, “Religion that is to prove a series of ideas and images which people can draw on to explain their fortunes; it can explain why they are suffering these tribulations and it can promise some future end to their suffering” (107).

The aforementioned point makes us clear that the ground of religion has been made wider in ironic looks. The religious norms are in question in the coming millennium. The ironists like Huchteon, Burke, and Alan Wilder are just the examples which help to fill the gap among the religious beliefs on Judaism, Mormonism and Christianity. Likewise many other critics on *Angels in America* as well as the critics on religions are also appropriately taken. The research has attempted to explore the detachment among the characters towards the religious beliefs with the passing generations. It has also tried to excavate the drama's construction, settings, title and the useless role of ‘Angels’ through the ironical analysis in the place of religious references.

II. Irony as a Trope of Critiquing and Subverting the Traditional Hierarchies in Kushner's *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*

Kushner's *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* is one of the brilliant settings of 20th century with multiple issues. *Angels in America* to its overarching story about Angels, God and Heaven, based with specific references to the Bible. Kushner reflects the anxieties and evangelical concerns of many Americans facing the coming of Millennium. *Angels in America* provides a picture of America at the end of the 20th century, a time of crisis and change to American, "you're pitched into a world where God has gone and the angels are incompetent bureaucrats with dark plans to kill off humanity" (qtd. in Steyn 7). An individual strongly attached to individual freedom may logically consider traditional moral values to be as oppressive as authoritarianism: both imply the oppression of individual self-realization. The concept of irony enlarged in the Romantic period beyond instrumental irony to be observable ironic comprise of irony of even, irony of character, irony of situation, irony of idea..

The observable ironies can be seen as local or universal. Credit goes undoubtedly to Schlegel for making irony, open, dialectical, paradoxical or Romantic. The observable irony of man's situation should not be regarded as a helpless predicament, because it can be countered by an instrumental irony. Just a personified nature might be said to play with or ionized it's created from, so mend too, has both a creative and decretive energy. Wayne Booth in *A Rhetoric of Irony* presents her view concerning irony as follows:

All utterance is halted by irony. All speech is tainted by irony. Not only can we question whether what is said is really meant. Any act of speech can be repeated and quoted in other contexts generally unintended forces. Further and more importantly, in so far as speaking creates some

event of decision forces. Further and more importantly, insofar as speaking creates some events of decision, force and difference, or makes a claim about what is other than itself, it must refer to what is not itself. One can only make a statement about the world, or really say something, if one recognizes the force of contradiction. To assert that something is the case is only a forceful speech act in a context where one could or would assert that it is not the case. (162)

According to Booth irony is the soul of any utterance. Whether irony is traditional or postmodern it hardly destroys its expressive and penetrating purpose. Traditional irony is intuited or suspected because one assumes a principle on no contradiction. If the text is contradictory, absurd, clichéd or self-refuting, then it must be assumed that what is said is not meant. However one can't remain in a position of pure not saying: for the not-saying is itself an Elsa of speech.

The use of progressive irony of Linda Hutcheon is also appropriate to show the progress of drama in coming millennium. As Hutcheon argues, "Needless to say, irony can be provocative when its politics are conservative or authoritarian as easily as when its politics are oppositional and subversive: it depends on who is using/attributing it and at whose expense it is seen to be. Such is the transideological nature of irony" (15). Irony can neither be achieved nor overcome. One can't remain in a naively postmodern position above and beyond any discourse. The liberal ironist who has freed himself from metaphysical commitment remains blind to the ways in which this discourse of detachment has its own attachments.

Kushner's choice of the selection of topic given to the drama itself can be seen through ironic lenses. 'Angel' as a spirit who is believed to be a servant of God, and is sent by God to deliver a message or perform a task, which are supposed to be a savior

of human beings, in form of human. But the drama totally lacks to achieve the task which is supposed to perform by Angels. Angels themselves can't perform their role for the people who have been detached from the religious norms and values. The role of 'angels' has gone in narrow space with the change of the millennium. How can the role of Angels be change in the coming millennium? So the concept of 'Angel', Kushner has applied in an ironic way. According to the Bible, the Millennium is the time when the Messiah will return and judge all the human beings on earth. The concerns of the end of the world and the judgment of human beings are vital importance in the play.

All the issues like biblical terms (angels), the question of the national identity(America), the homosexual (gay and lesbian) identity, and the important topic in the United States (national themes) and so on rooted in *Angels in America* do not provide any clear concept. They all present the gap between the themes needed in reality but the appearances is not usual. Veit Bader in his *Religious Diversity and Democratic Institutional Pluralism* elaborates the traditional values and its effects on different aspect of human life:

She or he will therefore reject them and adhere to their anti-poles; nontraditional moral values and non-authoritarianism, both imply the restriction of individual freedom; whereas moral traditionalism is found on legitimacy, because it is religiously inspired, authoritarian ideas concerning gender relation, homosexuality, the family, and life and death stemming from one's Christian notion of good life seems to differ from a strong attachment to a rigid social order. (455)

The drama declines to accept traditional ethics of religious faith. The authoritarian ideas have been changed because of the different environment, liberation, tortured and

so on. Most of the characters like Roy, Joe, and Harper are presented as rigid characters in the course of time to follow social order.

‘Angels’, the supernatural elements, have long been symbols of spiritual significance, residing in a realm somewhere between the Deity and his creations, angels watch over humanity as unspeakably beautiful harbingers of hope and death. But the same ‘Angel’ in the end of millennium is performing the task of communicator who is unable to take responsibility of human beings. ‘Angel’ must be in God forms as a savior of human beings but the same Angel is afraid with human being. Jorgensen L. Danny in his *Gender-Inclusive Images of God: A Sociological Interpretation of Early Shakerism and Mormonism* argues, “As the structure and organization of modern western societies have become less hierarchical and authoritarian and more egalitarian and democratic, the traditional patriarchal image of biblical God increasingly has been perceived to be problematic” (66). Angels, God and other supernatural elements are unable to perform their role in the earth. Their own creations challenge the existence of own creator. The creator and the savior is seen in a critical condition.

Angels in America depicts the impending doom is the abundance of angels and prophets. The satire in related subject and the rebirth of the world have created challenge for Jewish in American society. People seem to have much more security, education, shelter but in reality they get nothing. The happiness, progress among the people is not fulfilled. The material world, power, greed for capital is underestimating the religious norms, love, faith among the people. There is struggle for the salvation in Christian dominated society. One has to struggle terribly. Especially Jews are not allowed to think in America as their home. Rabbi in the Sarah’s funeral ceremony says that “for the Jewish home, so that you would not grow up here, in this strange

place, in the melting pot where nothing melted” (10). Michael A. Mayer clarifies the existence of Jews in American society. He in his *The Emergence of Jewish Historiography: Motives and Motifs* clarifies, “Modern Diasporas Jewish existence required as existence required as ex-employs individuals who had combined adherence to Judaism with full participation in the non-Jewish world around them” (162). Jewish life in America is nothing, they obtain nothing but Jewish lives in illusion in that melting pot but nothing melted there. They couldn't get any rights, peace and pursuit of happiness in Christian American society.

Kushner presents his Jews characters rather negatively while plotting the drama with Jews and Mormon characters. Jewish characters are marginalized and negatively presented that they just involve in homosexuality. Just involving in such activities is not totally bad but while observing with the tool of irony, such activities is unaccepted in later centuries by any of the religions. Kushner in a review *Angels in America; A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* mentions, “I’m very critical of Jews because I am one and Jewish homophobia makes me angrier than Goyische homophobia to God, after what we have gone through for the last six hundred years and before surely suffering should teach you compassion” (4). They struggle to get a better position in America for a long time in Christian dominated society. Jewish life in America is nothing; they obtain nothing but Jewish lives in illusion in every step in American life.

Mormon anticipated a theological interpretation of American society. The people with profound interest in democratic political procedures, the separation of church and state and manifested their destiny. Roy expresses his conception of Mormons in America with Joe, “Mormon. Delectable. Absolutely. Only in America” (15). Jewish entered as a secularity but faced the difficulties. In the word of Jonathan

Freedman in his book *Angels, Monsters, and Jews; Intersection of Queer and Jewish Identity* argues, “The Jewish other and contiguity in the literacy traditions of the west well before sexologists or psychologist or race theorists codified that relation” (105). We can see the otherness of Mormon through the light of situational irony. Mormon character Roy, Doctor is in psychological problem. Because of so called proud they hide their own reality. Their expectation and performance in the society is fully unjudgeable as situational irony.

Situational irony involves an incongruity between what is expected or intended and what actually occurs. In *Angels in America* most of the characters situation is contradictory or another word irony. Langman A. Baker defines situational irony in the following way:

Situational irony is a relationship of contrast between what an audience is led to expect during a particular situation that ends up actually resulting later on. It is thus the result a special sort of discrepancy in perspective that is not moment bound, in that it involves the contrast between what we know in one moment with what we have come to know in another. (10)

The situational irony ranges from the tragic to the comic. It results from recognizing the oddness or unfairness of a given situation, be it positive or negative, situational irony occurs in literature and in drama when personal and events come together in improbable situational, creating a tension between expected and real results.

Sarah Ironson, an old Jewish woman, is presented as a secondary citizen in the American Christian society. Such migrated Jewish women as well as men were not getting proper rights in American society. The Christian American society always dominates o people of other religions which can be seen as a challenge for the

existence of Jewish and Mormon. Christian society presents its double natured with the people who follow Judaism or Mormonism. Irony is 'double-natured', sometimes instrumental irony can be thought of as a finite act or at most an adopted manner. On different occasion it could now be thought of as a permanent and self-conscious commitment. The ironist would be always an ironist. Irony could be seen as obligatory, dynamic and dialectical but the drama lack clear dynamic, obligatory and dialectical nature. Characters are presented dynamic but detaching from their own life, religious faith. DeMneeke says that "the specific meaning of the word irony emerged out of the ferment of philosophical and aesthetic speculation the intellectual leader of Europe" (19). The situation is presented as very critical and the Jews struggled for existence for the family, to get the home which is too much ironic. American society mostly Christian religion is dominated on Jewish and the history become continue which one passes to his/her children, their ancient, ancient culture and home. Same things happen in the life of migrated Jews and Mormons.

The motto of Christian religion is to get the equal opportunity for all people in society, caste and religion but the very concept is under challenged. As Michael A Meyer in his book, *The Emergence of Jewish Historiography: Motives and Motifs* strengthens his view:

The Jew too had possessed their historians in ancient times who had undertaken that task, but much of their work was lost, and more recently Jews had sorely neglected a history filled with countless tribulations. The Jewish historian in the present had no choice but to rely on what gentiles had written. (162)

Accordingly, Kushner wants to reverse the apocalyptic meaning of the millennium by proposing that the millennium is a crisis and also a chance of renewal to the world.

In the past decade, ‘angels’ have been attracting the critics who have seen topical concern in it. The main concerns related to American national themes, illustrate in their combination a scene of America facing in new Millennium and the other forces of the country.

The multiplicity of the national themes and critics’ interpretations as a result, gives the controversial ideas in the drama that help to increase the charm of the drama. Rabbi stresses about the life of Jews who lives in America that “no such place exists” as America that “the clay of some Litvak Shetel” has been worked into “the bones of Sarah’s descendents, that the culture must be passed on” (10). The complicated, contradictory Jewish types reactionary Roy Cohn, liberal Louise, dead Ethel Rosenberg are used by Kushner to examine the trajectory of the Jewish life through American politics and popular imagery. In the words of Alisa Solomon:

The image of the Jew tends to become the image of everyone, the metaphorical Jew, tied to her shetel and past and in the American melting pot bringing to America the values of nineteenth century Eastern European culture and, in some respect influencing American Jews of subsequent generation. (65)

In *Angels in America* Kushner forges a vital alliance between Judaism and gay struggle. Judaism can be seen in totally different which is shown by putting on the equal position along with gayness. The drama constants allusion to an underlying affiliation between gays and Jews may strike some merely irrelevant whims, but it seems to one more to sincere outrage toward the bigotry of his co-religionists.

The orthodox relationship between characters can be seen having the gaps on their reality and the appearances. As a threat to religious intention and norms, the “metaphorical homosexual” is centrally important in *Angels in America*. Most of the

male characters (except Rabbi, Perhaps Cohn's doctor) are gay, whether "out" or closeted. Emily, Prior's nurse is apparently a lesbian. Hannah, a strong follower of Judaism also slightly changes her concept of natural sex that religion accepts and slightly biases in lesbianism, the same sex. Such characters directly or indirectly involve in homosexual or lesbian activity which is beyond of the religious norms.

The reality in America has begged fantasy which has almost lost in spiritual and moral faith that implores Kushner to turn inwards, rather than dramatically confront a continuous outrageousness that no stage representation can hope to rival. Ranem Omer- Sherman in his *Jewish/ Queer: Thresholds of Vulnerable Identifies in Tony Kushner's Angels in America* views:

Angels in America encompasses narrative complexities including a richly multicultural spectrum of ethnic identities and religious that have sometimes obscured its profoundly Jewish sensibility while 'Angel' is rightly appreciated or criticized for its unabashed liberal paean to multicultural tolerance and understanding, a closer examination of the text reveals a surprisingly conservative approach to the moral gains and losses incurred by Jews in their American success story. (1)

The conversation itself is colloquial and double natured. Ambiguous meaning and ironic meaning can be castigated while observing in dialogue construction. So the drama itself lacks the integral vision of Kushner. The language, setting, characters, cross gender characters casting the minor characters like Hannah, Harper as well heterosexual characters. Female characters are presented in negative way that they always live in illusion, alienation and so on. They are constructed as temporary characters.

Angels in America along with much other projection, the play undertakes an extensive mapping of the place where figuration of the Jews meet figurations of the sexual other, the deviant and the queer. Jewish lived as a dominated position in Christian vice, which have their origin in countries of the East, and which have in recent years sprung into existence in this country that practice them. As Rabbi Isidor Chemelwitz sees, “The Holy Scriptures has nothing to say about such a person” (25) he further explains, “Catholics believe in forgiveness. Jews believe in Guilt”. (25) But the rebirth and myth collapse with the original theme of religion. Jonathan Freedman further elaborates, “The play collapses into a traditional assimilations answer to the questions of Jewish identity it has bravely raised: the price of achieving political efficacy in a Christian centered culture turns out to be the abandonment of Jewish difference to affirm other forms of differences” (105). As Jonathan mentions, the characters mainly the Jews lives in marginalized, dominated position in the present of Christian base American society. Because of the situation Jews characters challenges the so rooted authorities in religions and become rigid to accept their own freedom.

Kushner in the drama exploits a understanding of transcendence that allow a space for queer citizenship in a culture obsessed with the myth of rebirth and the inevitability of miracle. The holy scriptures do not tell or give any security to the people of changing millennium. Hutcheon argues that “ things like class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual preference are involved, but so too are nationality, neighborhood, profession, religion and all the other micro-political complexities of our lives to which we may not even be able to give labels” (18). Jews are compelled to believe in guilt in American society. With the concept Freedman presents and through the intention of drama the gap between the Jewish lives in Christian rooted culture is clear. The speech of Jews is said to be as disgusting as their behavior: The

average Jew is disgustingly bawdy in his talk, and interlards his conversation with filthy expressions and obscene words.

The obscene tone in the language itself is beyond the established conception of religion that shows the shift through the religious themes in coming millennium. The religious freedom was questioned. The vacuum seen in the Christian religion can be clearly dug out. The norms and values of the religions are not totally accepted. The drama is presented in the comprehensive exploration of the social topics and illustrates the hopeful prospect for the new millennium. As Christ is presented as a savior of the people from sin in Bible but in the drama there is no one to save rather people are compiled to accept sins in their life. As Alisa Solomon in *Wrestling with Angels: A Jewish Fantasia* comments, “*Angels in America* is saturated with familiar Jewish imagery and ideas” (118). *Angels in America* has still the issues that are very crucial at present time. Some of them include the AIDS epidemic; religions and the anxieties in ‘Millennium’ Religious imageries are appropriate for coming millennium that expresses the intentions of the change of time in modern European life.

The biblical prediction of Christ’s return the catastrophic events that are to happen at the turn of the century, and seeming pessimistic future prospect of the human race are all sources of the millenarian anxiety in *Angels in America*. The scenes of the revelation of the American ‘Angel’ are apparently inspired by the legend of the revelation of Angels. David Shner in his *Queer is the New Pink: how Queer Jews moved to the forefront of Jewish Culture* has pointed out: “Given the number and prominence of Mormon characters in the play, it should come a little surprise that Mormonism maintain a very close relationship to the epistemology of *Angels in America*” (227). History and religious spirit of Mormonism influences the scene of revelation in *Angels in America*. The verbal and visual manifestations beyond the

prediction can be dug out throughout the exploration of characters' behavior. For instance, behind Harper's illusion of the destruction of the ecological system, she really waits the coming millennium with the hope of something change in her real own life.

But the hope is just illusion. Critic Deborah Geis in *Approaching the Millennium: Essays on Angels in America* credits, "Harper's interest in the collapsing of the Ozone layer as a warning that "the future apocalypse is now" (200). Kushner creates the dramatic plot having both contextual signals and specific textual markers that work lead to interpret to recognize or to attribute irony. We have to see particular situation to explore ironical meaning what is involved in the process of drama and with the context of plot which determine meaning beyond our persecution. Jonathan Freedman argues "Along with many other projects, the play undertakes an extensive mapping of the place where figuration of the Jew meets figuration of sexual other, the deviant the queer" (91). Kushner assigns Prior by metaphorical role, as he does so by making him, in terms of Jewish. These considerations clearly show how homosexuality and Judaism occur side by side in Kushner's works. Among many factors, both his Jewishness and gayness equally contribute to the style of his works.

The relationship among Roy and Joe is presented as ironic. Roy doesn't express his own faith on particular religion within the whole drama. The clear gap is seen on Roy's faith on God, on the other Joe is clear on the religious faith although he is detaching from religious norms. Somehow fate also plays key role in Joe.

Roy: No no no no, principles count. I respect principles, I'm not religious but I like God and God likes me. Baptist, Catholic?

Joe: Mormon.

Roy: Mormon. Delectable, Absolutely. Only in America. So Joe,

Whatty Think? (15)

The relation with Joe is also presented in ironic way. Garner also points out that Kushner intends to construct hope on the ground of millenarian anxiety: “In their recourse to millenarian imagery these closing scenes represent Kushner’s attempt to rewrite apocalypse, to borrow its urgency and its transformative imagination while challenging its exclusive formative imagination while challenging its exclusion” (182). Roy accepts religion in his inner heart but which religion does he follow and what norms and values he believes isn’t mentioned clearly. As well he doesn’t mention clearly what he thinks on religion.

When he knows that Joe is a Mormon follower, he further clarifies about religion. Roy is a character of dominating others. He neither accepts his one religion nor expresses his own clear view on others religions. Roy is still undecided on Mormon religion. He knows about some Mormons of Vegas of Nevada of U.S.A.

Roy: Well but God bless chaos. Right?

Joe: Umma.

Roy: Huh, Mormons. I know Mormonism, um, Nevada.

Joe: Utah, mostly.

Roy: No these Mormons were in Vegas. (15)

The communicative context of the plot is clearly ironic. As Linda Hutcheon in his book *Irony’s Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* argues that the “ironic meaning is a dependent upon the circumstances of any viewing as upon what I was actually seeing” (143). The situation creates the misunderstanding between them and creates the difficulties to know the reality on religion. Who is attributing to whom, when and for what purpose, is not understood. What characters feel, they do define religion. Even Roy, despite his self-confident assertions presented as the obstacle in Judaism to

maintain political centrality: “The disbarment committee genteel, gentle man Brahmin lawyers’ country. I offended to these men, I’m what, Martin some sort of filthy little Jewish troll!” (67). Power as a hindrance force, characters takes and follow the faith in religions in negative way.

The play lacks the feeling of Jewish people. The tracing the parallel history of homoerotic and Jewish otherness and goes on to see the play as losing much of the Jewish otherness and goes on to see the plays as losing much of the Jewish elements in the ‘collapse’. Meron Langsner in Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America: a word in need of Salvation* analyses, “The absence of justice must eventually be corrected and so the play builds on towards the coming of the angel. With the characters’ description, the ‘angel’ is a representation of the continental principality of America, meaning it is a divine manifestation or guardian of America” (50). As the words of Rabbi about the American life after the death of Sahara in funeral that Jewish life is terribly critical. Neither there is justice nor freedom.

Of the two, prior is the more logical choice for the Angel’s avatar because of his ancient lineage, ties to the past when people were righteous. The woman being buried in the opening scene also represented his past. The past life of Jews and the present attitude among the characters that follow the religion is different in their situation, verbal as well many other ways. The past is in danger however Prior is near of death because of AIDS for the port. Harper struggles with the habit of taking addiction to valium with anxiety and increasingly surreal hallucinations. The situation of confusion and irony determines in Harper and Prior’s hallucination. The situation of Harper and Prior’s hallucination is very ironic:

Prior: Who are you?

Harper: What are you doing in my hallucination?

Prior: I'm not in your hallucination; you're in my dream.

Harper: I have emotional problems. I took too many pills. Why are you wearing makeup?

Prior: I was in the process of applying the face, trying to make myself feel better. (31)

They are in circumstantial position. The situation is very confusion. Mutual dream occurs in each other's mind that creates the scene more ironic. The situation creates "something in their surroundings and it is usually something merely implicit in their place that gives them away" (qtd. in Hucheon 145).

In the progression of the conversation both Harper and Prior find that they are living in an ironic life. The reality is beyond their perception. They are far from the reality of each other's religious norms. The contrast of the illusion comes out in their conversation:

Harper: It's terrible. Mormon is not supposed to be addicted to anything. I'm a Mormon.

Prior: I'm a homosexual.

Harper: Oh. In my church we don't believe in homosexual.

Prior: In my church we don't believe in Mormon. (32)

The conversation clearly shows the contradiction on religious faith. How the characters are creating misunderstanding and unfaithfulness to each other. As Hucheon mentions, "irony is in the difference; irony makes the difference. It plays between meanings, in a space that is always affectively charged, that always has a critical edge" (105). Mormon does not allow homosexuality. Prior who is homosexual does not believe on the Mormon. The process and the circumstance of communication that entails two or more meaningful played off, one against the other.

On the other hand Harper, a Mormon woman, addicted woman herself lives in illusion. She is unknown about her own husband's real behavior and desire. She goes herself beyond the norms of Mormonism and involves taking pills. The religious faith is under challenged in the context. When she hears the reality of Joe from Prior, she can't tolerate the situation. She surprises herself. Harper says, "Well I don't like your revelation. I don't think you intuit. Well at all. Joe's very normal man, he, . . . Oh God, Oh God he . . . Do homos take, like lots of long walk?" (32). What Harper's prediction on Joe eventually comes the near of reality. Prior elaborates that Harper is living such an ironic life. Prior says, "I'm sorry, I usually say, 'fuck the truth', but mostly, 'the truth fucks you'" (34). While Louis performs masculine role at family surroundings, he, obviously, at times acts feminine role when he is with friends. Similarly, Prior does not always stick to the masculine aspects of his characters The concept of irony as Belsey mentions, "Irony is no less authoritative because its meanings are implicit rather than explicit" (72). Here we can analyze the deep means of irony. The feeling of Harper and Prior's mutual dream is taken as the indication of death or the dark kiss of the Angela of death.

Harper is in risk as well, because of her drug addiction and mental instability. It is during their appearance to each other in a drama that their status as prophets is affirmed. A one steadfast of Mormon, Joe finds himself struggling in his marriage to Harper as long suppressed homosexual begin to overcome his will. Joe seems to be a good person with Harper. He himself keeps the nonsense desire within him although he advises Harper not to listen stuff things.

Joe: You really shouldn't listen to stuff like that.

Harper: Mormons can give blowjobs

Joe: Harper

Harper: (imitating his tone). Joe

It was little Jewish lady with a German accent. This is a good time. For me to make a baby. (27)

Much like the biblical prophets they are cast away by those who they love. As Hutcheon mentions, “All these images solution, double exposures do imply, however that ironic meaning is simultaneously double and that therefore you don’t actually have to reject a “literal” meaning in order to get at what is usually called the “ironic” or “real” meaning of the utterance” (60). Prior’s personal and religious cosmology call for an ending to the world, specifically his own world while Louis’s beliefs correspond to continuation. As Hutcheon mentioned the solution of Harper is is unachievable. Harper believes on God, she has illusion on religion, she still get the impossible hope of living better life, but she feels herself that life is different from her imagination, “it’s a kind of gift from God, the crowning touch to the creation of the world: guardian angels, hand linked, make a spherical net, a blue-green nesting orb, a shell of safety for life itself. But everywhere, things are collapsing lies surfacing, system of defense giving way” (16). But neither ‘Angels’ nor any prophets arrive in her life to fulfill her desire.

Louis’s and Joe are negatively influencing each other’s relationship because of the strong attachment between them. Louis breaks down his urges to continue to repress his homosexuality and Louis cannot resist the urge to leave his sick lover for Joe. They only adds to the tortures faced by Prior and Harper. Meron Langsner in *Tony Kushner’s Angels in America: a word in need of salvation* elaborates the situation:

Prior sees the impending doom and rebirth of the world, a vision denied to non-prophets. Harper also has prophetic qualities: she ‘feels’

something about to happen with the coming of the third millennium. Her breakdown of reality is very different from Prior's. However, instead of having The Angel to guide her, she has Mr. Lies, whose very name is in crinating. Harper lives in illusionary world. Her living is ironic. People, who are lonely, people left alone, sit talking nonsense to the air, imagining, and beautiful system of dying, old fix order spiraling apart. (16)

Her motivations are in all confusion. Harper and Prior see the prophetic qualities. The 'Angel' doesn't do anything in her life. As Linda mentions "that different motivations result in different reasons for attributing irony that lacks of distinctions among the multiple possible functions of irony is one of the reasons for so much of the confusion and disagreement about its appropriateness and value" (45).

Kushner's trope of the octopus functions brilliance in this context: in conjoins on image of Joe as hyper phallic monster with that stressed the perverse dimension of that figure. An octopus, like a spider, has "eight loving arms" but it also has 'all those suckers' (45). The multiplication of phalli as suggested by the arms is reoriented by the trope of the suckers, which unites implications of cheating, vampirism and fellatio in a vivid image of monstrosity that is both recognizably Jewish and demonstrably queer. Jonathan Freedman analyses:

The figure of Cohn represent an audacious attempt to think through to the center of anti-Semitic imagery to the cultural queering of the Jew, and finally to the representation of the Jew as at once monstrous, empowered and perverse an image Kushner then installs at the center of the play's most malignant icon of queer-Jewish identity. (110)

Kushner invokes this anti-Semitic iconography throughout the play with amazing

accuracy. Cohn represents a kind of trickle down morality in *Angels in America*.

Corruption, greed and bad faith exist in the powerful members of a society that will ultimately sleep down to each individual. As Robert Burstein writes, there are “no Angels in America, only angels” (30), and ‘angels’ present a battle of political angel-conservative and liberal ideologies.

Irony allows for detached point of view. The ironic self can be questioned whether life might not be otherwise, whether we might create ourselves differently. Indeed irony detaches itself from any recognized ‘we’ in order to question and disrupt the hierarchical-setting itself above everyday life and opinion. Roy does not believe on God. Once he says in a drama that he does not belief on God. But he often takes the name of God in his conversation. It shows, he inwardly beliefs in God but outwardly he shows he does not have any religious faith. Cohn is full-mouthed:

Roy: Christ!

Joe: Roy

Roy: (into receiver). Hold (Button; to Joe) What?

Joe: Could you please not take the Lord’s name in vain? (Pause) I’m sorry, but please. At least while I’m . . .

Roy: (laughs, then). Right. Sorry. Fuck. (14)

Cohn seduces an innocent gentile, Joe Pit, when he tempts first into big-city life and then into homosexual identity. The plot construction itself is very ironic. Colloquial and broken language itself creates ambiguity which doesn’t give the clear meaning. Harper is presented as an ambiguous or in other word undecided figure. She does not distinguish what she wants and the reality. She runs her life with the hope of changing something in coming millennium. To David Savran in *Ambivalence, Utopia, and a Queer Sort of Materialism: How Angels in America Reconstructs The Nation*, who

gradually admits, the plays breathe of appeal and generosity to the construction of a distinctive American identity, “What is most remarkable about the play is that it has managed, against all odds. It does so by its skill both in reactivating a sense (derived from the early nineteenth century) of America, the dispense to produce a vision of a once and future pluralist culture” (225). But the idea of the sexually used that never escape far from the Jews, and when anti-semiotic surfaces in the play. The queers and Jews as the bearers of modernity and frequently the role that they played were put in a negative light. It is difficult to survive plural religions, plural cultures, and beliefs and so on in single religious dominated society as Jews and Mormon’s cultural, ethnical, religious activities dominant under Christianity.

Kushner evokes the rhetoric of an American utopia not to elide Jewish difference but to intervene on behalf of a queer politics a cultural debate over the national destiny to queer the Puritan, as it were. It is troubling that a play beginning with Rabbi’s voice extolling “the melting pot that doesn’t melt” ends with the subordination of the Jew to Christian implement (10). Ironically this utopian understanding of America has served for many Jewish intellectuals as a vector of assimilation into a national drama that had excluded them. Berocovitch argues: “Jewish difference becomes not only one part of ethnic dissents but also the shadowy type whose truth is named America” (73). Prior’s articulation of a Jewish blessing continues and indeed confirms the absorption of Jewish type into Christian fulfillment instead of breaking or reversing that pattern. Jewish are under the shadow of ethnic belief.

Through the intimate concerns of Prior and Louis’s relationship, Kushner opens up historical vistas into generation of American oppression. Louis Knows the condition his grandmother had faced in the Christian dominated American society. In

the situation one could speak himself or herself. As not only they suffered in Christian society but we can see the ironic situation within Jewish community: As Louis mentions the situation of Jews in Christian society after his grandmother's funeral:

Louis: It's an old Jewish custom to express love. Here, Grandma, have a shovelful. Latecomers run risk of finding the grave completely filled. She was pretty crazy. She was up there in that home for ten years, talking to herself, I never visited. She looked too much like my mother (19).

An individual strongly attached to individual freedom may logically consider traditional moral values to be as oppressive as authoritarianism; both imply the oppression of individual self-realization. She or he will therefore reject them and adhere to their anti-poles: nontraditional moral values and no authoritarianism.

Prior's articulation of a Jewish blessing thus continues and indeed confirms the absorption of Jewish type into Christian fulfillment instead of breaking or reversing that pattern. Prior explains, "I don't blame you, hiding. Bloodiness. Jewish curses are the worst. I personally would dissolve if anyone ever looked me in the eye and said 'feh'. Fortunately WAP's don't say 'feh" (20). Prior feels himself as a token of the ending millennium. He feels 'angel' has given him a wine-dark kiss, "K.S baby. Lesion number one. Look it. The wine-dark kiss of the angel of death" (21).

Prior is an immortal person in his feeling or understanding but he realizes that meaning of living is to death later: "Bad timing funeral and all, but I figured as long as we're on the subject of death" (22). Person feels that he never dies but some events help them to understand the goal of life is to death. As well Harper is very obedient in religion; she feels that "nothing good happens in Washington. We'll forget church teaching and buy furniture at Conran's and become Yuppies" (23). The context

having full of irony where the ignorance when we see one character after another coming to share our knowledge whether or not language spoken by or heard is a double reference to the real situation and the situation as he sees. . Samuel MacComb in *The Irony of Christ* brings the concept of Christianity:

It is true that the indignation of Christ has received some attention in the pulpit, but its importance in helping us to discover his own psychology has been altogether overlooked. Although there remains enough of his vehemence to let us see how intense it must have been, he still remains in popular imagination the supreme type of self-effacement, a figure almost vanishing before the storm. (346)

Jewish life in America is nothing, they obtain nothing but Jewish lives in illusion in that melting pot but nothing melted there. But the struggle of Jewish is to seek their position with the Christian life in America.

Prior never knows the meaning of living. Confusion and doubt always in dilemma his mind. He feels as an immortal person, at the same time he also understands the meaning of living is to death: “Bad timing funeral and all, but I figured as long as we’re on the subject of death” (22). The existence of the Jews and Mormon people is questionable. Their existence is not more than death. Person feels that he never dies but some events help them to understand the goal of life is to death. As well Harper is very obedient in religion. She feels that “nothing good happens in Washington. We’ll forget Church teaching and buy furniture at Conran’s and become Yuppies” (23). She slowly changes her mind to detach from religion. Louis Ironson abandons his virus-infected lover just as he abandoned his grandmother of Jewish tradition and afraid of what he’s about to do, Louis checks with the rabbi after Sarah’s funeral:

Louis: Rabbi, what does the Holy Writ say about someone who abandons? Someone he loves at a time of great need?

Rabbi: Why would a person do such a thing?

Holy Scripture have nothing to say about such a person.

Louis: But I'm not a Catholic, I'm a Jew.

Rabbi: Worse luck for you, bubblah, Catholics believe in forgiveness.

Jews believe in Guilt. (25)

Interestingly, both the rabbi's speech and Louis' subsequent moral vacillations seem strongly inflected by Kushner's awareness of Walter Benjamin's evocative sense of memory as a redemptive storehouse for future action and responsibility: "There is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one. Our coming was expected on earth. Like every generation that preceded us: we have been endowed with a weak Messianic power, a power to which the past has claim" (22). But as Benjamin prediction of future is not useful here. The agreement between past and present generation can not be seen. Present generation has detached more from the spiritual, moral faith and so on.

Out of his internalized self-loathing Louis abandons his grandmother, his roots. Because of his shame, he is unable to comprehend that he is about to abandon his lover Prior, in the exact same way. With the creation of Louis Ironson as a secular Jewish faggot, suffers a lot because of his dilemma to choose the correct way for career. The journeys can be seen in reality are painful but they lead them to hope in the future coming millennium. As David Savran stresses, "the construction of the 'Angel' represses her/his historicity, the heaven s/he calls home is explicitly the product temporality" (22). Kushner locates the question of abandonment outside a religious context. Throughout *Angels in America*, Louis seeks to locate moral

justification for the immoral abandonment of these lovers. The same moral justification is what he is seeking he himself lacks.

Behavior of the characters is not objective but perceived reality, and far from feeling privileged. In the case of Joe and Harper, their understanding as a paradox which is readily explained if one understand the nearness of reality that develops around ethnic conflict. Louis with Prior expresses “Jews don’t have any clear textual guide to the afterlife, even that it exists. I don’t think much about it. I see it as a perpetual rainy Thursday afternoon in March. Dead leaves” (38). In this view of Jews in modern American society, Michael A. Meyer synthesizes many of these developments in the chapters of his *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism*, an award-winning survey of the history of ‘Reform Judaism’ throughout the world mentions: “No parallel study of American Orthodox Judaism exists, but historians, perhaps influenced by Orthodoxy's con-temporary resurgence, have become newly sensitive to the subject’s significance” (348). The matter is not only any individual’s religiosity but also the individual’s incorporation in an ethnic group defined by a particular religion. The matter of particular religiosity plays the vital role in individual’s life.

The survival of Jews is as rainy days in Christian dominated society. The intimacy among them is not good as well as clear. The meaning of friendship is always in question. Actually Louis wants to leave Prior after knowing the reality about Prior that he is suffering from AIDS. The appearances the friends show each other and their real intension is differ in the drama. Louis gets confusion whether or not he can face staying with Prior, who feels sickness and more in need of help every day. Despite his love for Prior, he finds liberation from justice to abandon his lover. Abandonment and faithlessness are key concern in the play and are manifested on

different levels. As Lukacs in a review explains:

While irony depicts reality as victorious, it reveals not only that reality is as nothing in the face of its defeated opponent, not only that the victory of reality can never be a final one, that it will always, again, be challenged by new rebellions of the idea, but also that reality owes its advantage not so much to its own strength, which is too crude and directionless to maintain the advantage, as to the inner problematic of the soul weighted down by its ideals. (86)

Louis is an opportunist who seeks opportunity for the betterment of his own life. He seeks good opportunity. Selfishness is one of the main mottos for him. Being an opportunities seeker he abandons his long year love with Prior in his very critical situation. He seeks liberation rather than friendship.

The love, humanity etc has been changed into hatred, doubt and so on. Loved ones have abandoned to their lovers. Has God, whose religious faith suggests loves all of humanity, abandoned his creations. The playwright's response to these questions may be most tellingly articulated by Belize: "I still don't understand what love is. Justice is simple, But love is very hard. And it goes bad for you if you violate the hard law of love" (100). The emotional, humanitarian respects on God have been changed in the people of late 20th century of America. As Kierkegaard in his book *The concept of Irony*, translated by Lee M. Capel says, "We are not exalted by the destruction of the great, we are reconciled to its destruction by the fact that truth is victorious, and we are exalted by its victory" (334). Such love, justice, faith etc are very difficult to understand. Belize, Harper, Joe, Roy are unable to understand and feel. The morality, spirituality, humanity are degrading in the drama.

The play explores Harper's troubled marriage to Joe, the ways in which this

confines both her and him, and the ways in which Harper's fantasy life recapitulates but also enables a certain escape from unsatisfactory heterosexual relation. Harper always lives in illusionary world. Joe eventually decides to leave Harper because he is caught up in a personal struggle with his long repressed homosexuality. He has lived according to the rules by which he was raised: to be straight, to be a family man, to be devoutly religious, and to be a staunchly conservative Replica. However he is also miserably unhappy. In an agonized plea to Harper who demands that Joe tells her whether or not he is in fact a homosexual. Joe replies:

Does it make any difference? That I might be one thing deep within, no matter how wrong or ugly that thing is, so long as 'I fought, with everything I have to kill it. What do you want from me Harper? More than that? For God's sake, there's nothing left, I'm a shell. There's nothing left to kill. As long as my behavior is what I know it has to be Decent. Correct. That alone in the eyes of God. (40)

Slowly Joe wants to come in his reality actually what does his inner instinct desire in his life. He expresses with Harper that being a homosexual and heterosexual that does not make any different. As a heterosexual his life is not fruitful with his pills taking wife Harper. His life is like nothingness in the trap of the meaning of living in life.

In *Angels in America*, Joe and Harper have to live a miserable life mainly owing to the tenets of Mormonism. Joe lives in a dual condition. He doesn't clearly manifest his reality and want to show his appearances as a good husband. He does not confess with Harper that he is a homosexual, "I'm not. I don't see what difference it makes" (38). But he doesn't stay long with his hidden desire. Louis with Prior tell that "Jews don't have any clear textual guide to the afterlife: even that it exists. I don't think much about it. I see it as a perpetual rainy Thursday afternoon in March. Dead

leaves”(38). Louis and Prior do not have good relationship. Joe tries his best to be a good son and a responsible husband by repressing his reality: homosexual reality. The opposing forces cannot help but tear Joe apart; Roy cannot ‘come out’ throughout his life due to the fear that he will lose his power. The fear is so great that he does not even accept the doctor’s diagnosis of AIDS on the account of the severe stigma attached to it as a homosexual disease. Homosexuals with AIDS can be stigmatized even by other homosexuals as can be seen in the case of Prior forgetting their four-year-long relationship and not realizing the value of true love, until it is too late. As Sharpe mentions the ‘ironic mood’ in drama, creates a paradoxically harmonious contradiction between the true and untrue. As quoted in Hutcheon, Sharpe's idea in *Irony's Edge*, “one is conscious of contradictions but is above being frustrated by them; rather, one includes them in a single perception of living beauty” (viii). Prior’s life remains agonizing till he becomes a prophet and accepts his life as it is.

Having abandoned Prior, and at the same time, his own sense of right and wrong. Louis is in profound emotional agony over his faithlessness. Filled with remorse he chooses a consciously self- destructive path, when Belize becomes aware that Louis is seeking forgiveness for abandoning Prior. He says, “I can’t help you Louis, you’re not my business” (100). Joe, having strong attachment with Louis, goes to the ailing Cohn to say he cannot take the offered job as Roy’s man in Washington. He neither leaves with his wife nor reign from the post. The life of Joy is full of ironic or in dilemma. He neither shows his inner intention as homosexuality nor can leave Roy. Angered by Joe’s indecisiveness, Roy uses the execution of Ethel Rosenberg, who he describes as “that sweet superposing woman, two kids, bro-hoo-hoo reminded us all of our little Jewish mamas” to make the point that he achieved his goal (198).

Roy challenges the reality, he is not eager to express his own reality. He really

suffers from AIDS but denies the fact. Because of society and the fear to decrease his prestige, he doesn't want to accept the reality. Cohn's persona is most vividly demonstrating in his scathing denial of his own homosexuality when near the end of the play's first act, he learns from his doctor that he is suffering from AIDS. Here the irony lies in the characters' explicit refusal to take the cure seriously:

Henry: Roy Cohn, you are. You have had sex with men, many many times, Roy and one of them, or any number of them has made you very sick. You have AIDS.

Roy: AIDS. Your problem, Henry, is that you are hung up on words, on labels, that you believe they mean what they seem to mean. AIDS, homosexual, Gay, Lesbian. You think these are names that tell you who someone sleeps with, but they don't tell you that. (45)

The complicated, contradictory Jewish types- reactionary Roy Cohn, liberal Louis Ironson, and dead radical Ethel Rosenberg are used to examine the trajectory of the Jew through American politics and popular imagery. Louis is hypocritical not about this sexuality, but in his tortured inability to act on his progressive and compassionate beliefs and in his emotional insufficiencies. Louis himself ruefully realizes that there is no safety net for life, and little helpful guidance in the past American experience, for "there are no 'angels' in America, no spiritual past, no radical past, there's only the political" (92). Kierkegaard argues that "it is true that irony often presents overt victims, one can always imagine a victim by conjuring up" (qtd. in Booth 26). He realizes the changes in the American society. The given duty and responsibility of angels have lost its way. Such angels are disrespected, ineffective during the period of changing millennium.

The overlapping dialogue underscores the fact that the problem in each case is

the same- each couple has one partner in serious need and another partner who cannot, or will not respond. Louis clearly cannot cope with Prior's deteriorating physical condition, which now involves disturbing hallucinations, more heavenly voices, and a midnight collapse that sends him to the hospital and Louis out into the night. Prior also receives disturbing visit from two Priors: "One from the thirteenth century, the other from the seventeenth century. These dead ancestors warn of the horrors of death and of a mysterious messenger to come. Kushner explains that the importance of Prior" (71). Prior is disgraced because of Louis's leaving him. Prior with Belize expresses that his inner condition or pain of being alone. He fears that his homosexual boyfriend is going to leave him as well he is afraid with the prophets who have given him threats. Having a boyfriend or homosexual relation is a like drug addiction in the world of Prior.

Two angels from the different time period show the gap between the changes in the beliefs on Christian life. They explore the gap seen in the society throughout the period. Prior is now totally lost in the memory of his boyfriend. He doesn't care what is right and wrong:

Prior: (Getting suddenly upset). I don't remember. I don't give a fuck.

I want Louis. I want my fucking boyfriend, where the fuck is he? I'm dying, Where's Louis?

Belize: Shhhh, shhh . . .

Prior: This is very strange drug. This drug. Emotional lability for starters. (60)

Louis breaks the law of his religion, Judaism, which supports neither homosexuality, nor the act of leaving a loved one in time of need. Louis seems terribly frightened when he observes Prior with infected blood. Louis quietly means: "Oh help. Oh help.

Oh God Oh God help me I can't I can't I can't" (54). So he flees to Joe to get solace and happiness. Joe keeps walking often till late nights in the Central Park gay cruising area, Louis calls such walking "internalized oppression" (100). The condition and thinking of Louis is as Linda mentions, "Irony is the intentional transmission of both information and evaluative attitude other than what is explicitly presented" (11). It happens in the space between the said and the unsaid it need both to happen, "ironic" meaning is inclusive and relational: the said and the unsaid co-exist.

Both Joe and Louis are ensured by their religions. Scared by torment and still in dilemma, Louis advises Joe to infringe the rules that "sometimes, even if it scares you to death, you have to be willing to break the law" (79). This encourages Joe to make a phone call at 4 a.m. to Hannah, his mother. When his mother asks, why Joe has come to such a place as "Central park", Joe answers, "Just to watch" (81). In fact, he gets out himself after visualizing what he had been searching for a long time. He wants to come out from his repressed desire what he has kept in because of the fear. At the time on the pretend of being drunk tells his mother on phone:

Joe: Mom. Momma. I'm a homosexual. Momma.

Hannah: Boy, did that come out awkward.

Joe: Hello? Hello?

I'm homosexual.

Please, Momma, say something. (75)

Kushner here tries to present the unusual situation of woman and her concept on his son. Hannah here is fully in illusion. She thinks that her son is a heterosexual person and the family is good. For her, their son and daughter-in-law have the mutual relationship and following the religious norms and values. When Joe confessed his homosexuality Hannah also confesses her husbands' attitude on him. Her husband

didn't love his son and was ridiculous on him. Wayne C. Booth, in his book, *A Rhetoric of Irony*, says, "Every literary context is ironic because it provides a weighting or qualification on every word in it, thus requiring the reader to infer meaning which are in a sense not in the words themselves: all literary meanings in this view becomes from covert irony" (7). The context shows an ambiguity which creates the illusion and created the double meaning between the relationship of son and his father. No doubt there are many controversies that can never be resolved; we must be willing to live with whatever confusion cannot be avoided.

Joe now wants to come out from his suppressed desire and wants to express his real feeling. He does not want to make the gap between what he really wants and appears out. He at a payphone, phoning Hannah at home in Salt Lake City at around mid night.

Hannah: You're old enough to understand that your father did not love you without being ridiculous about it.

Joe: What?

Hannah: You're ridiculous. You're being ridiculous.

You really ought to go home now to your wife. (76)

He wants to explore his reality and expresses too with his mom. He then expresses with Louis about his reality: "I'm losing ground here, I go walking, you want to know where I walk, I go to the park, or up and down 53rd street, or places where And I keep swearing I won't go walking again, but I just can't" (77). The idea that life is irremediably flawed or even contradictory was not something. Joe didn't have any sexual feeling toward Harper in his real life. As Schlegel says that "Irony is almost the inevitable influence of selfish motives in human nature" (22). Joe's whole life is also motivated by selfishness and repressed desire.

American Jews were befriended by Christians, and even if they intermarried, they were never permitted to forget their religious roots. All of the connected plotlines correspond to religious beliefs about the end of the world. He feels alienated from his wife, mother and family. Joe wants some company with the Roy. Joe does eventually abandon himself into the 'sinful' freedom of embracing his angel and allowing himself a homosexual experience. Roy Cohn is a hero- villain and a strong individuality. Cohn is a fascinating blend of singularity and individuality, neither of them a source of his murderous malice. The play depicts the closeted figure of Roy and Joe struggling to misidentify from gayness. And it displays complex, indeed contradictory definitions of gayness as, for instance both strength and weakness:

Joe. I love you Roy. There so much that I want, to be what you see in me, I want to be a Participant in the world, in your world, Roy, I want to be capable of that, I've tried, really I have but.. I can't do this. Not because I don't believe in you, but because I believe in you so much, in what you stand for, at heart, the order, the decency. I would give anything to protect you, but there are laws. I can't break. It's too ingrained. It's not me. There's enough damage I've already done (107).

Each faith of society is collapsing, and each character is in a state of crisis. The family is breaking down, the characters are slowly separating from the friendship, family, relation and religion. Joe at last confesses his reality with Roy.

Roy and Joe are in a brightly lit restaurant. They gaze each other, each alternating interest and indifference, "Joe . . . Monsters. Mormons. Everyone thinks Mormons don't come from homes like that, we are not supposed to behave that way, but we do. It's not lying, or being two-faced. Everyone tries very hard to like up to

God's strictures, which are vey...um..." (52).

Roy Cohn in his last time too does not want to confess about the real cause of his illness. Because of the greed of power and position he denies to confess his own reality. He actually suffers from AIDS because of the frequent homosexual activity.

Harold Bloom sees in his critical book that *Angels in America*:

Most is centered on Louis, the unmistakably ambivalent, ironic Jew, who invariably sets the level of discussion and determines the tenor of the argument. It with Belize he takes a comparatively rightist (and racist) stance, with Joe he take an explicitly lefties (and anti-homophobic) one. And while the play unquestionably problemtizes his several positions, he ends up, with all its contradiction. Belize intriguingly, functions unlike the white gay men as ideological functions unlike the white gay men as an ideological point of reference, a kind of "moral bellwether" in the words of one critic. (32)

Harold bloom criticizes Kushner's characterization guided by the race, religion and beliefs. Bloom points out Louis who is seen quite problematic in several contexts in the play. While talking to Belize, he is shown to have rightist and racist but on the other hand, while talking to Joe, he seems to be leftist and anti-homophobic.

Moreover, with the scene with the Rabbi, he is shown to have forgotten the way forward. Mostly, other critics have pointed out Kushner's idea of characterization to be the positive one but Bloom has brought almost all the examples regarding Louis which proves that Kushner has become biased with him.

Disgraced with Harper and the American society, Joe continues his troubleshoot condition with Roy. Christian thinks that, 'Mormon is not from home, the reality is seen clearly but they deny the fact that they are not the people'. In the

same condition Joe explains, “What scared me is that maybe what I really love in her is the part of her that’s farthest from the light, from God’s love: maybe I was drawn to that in the first place. And I’m keeping it alive because I need it” (53). He further explains, “As someone cheerful and strong. Those who love God with an open heart by secrets and struggles and cheerful; God’s easy simple love for them shows in how strong and happy they are. The saints” (54).

There is the irony in the relationship between Louis and Prior. Prior loves too much to Louis but Louis wants to leave Prior. Love is an editorial ‘you’, which shows that love is the special relationship in the one’s inner psyche:

Louis: You can love someone and fail them; you can love and not be able to.

Prior: You can, theoretically, yes. A person can maybe an editorial “you” can Love, Louis, but not you, specifically you, I don’t know, I think you are excluded from that general category. A person could theoretically love and maybe many do. (78)

Prior is in confusion that whether Louis really loves him or not. So Prior in horror remind Louis about their 4 years long friendship as well his condition of life now. He wants some company with Louis till his lifetime especially in his critical condition Prior expresses that, “(shattered; almost pleading; trying to reach him) I’m dying! You stupid fuck! Do you know what that is! Love! Do you know what love means? We lived together four –and- a – half years, you animal, you idiot” (79). In his dream, Prior meets a 13th century clothing man Prior I. He came as a prophet in the drama to aware Prior. Prior explains that he is a gay but the prophet does not like to leave the religious norms. Prior I threatened him to be a gay homosexual forever in a negative scène.

Alternating between universalizing and subversive concepts of the subject, Louis manages at once to dismiss a politics of race (and insult Belize) and to assert its irreducibility. Yet the gist of Louis's argument is his conception about the nation. Race, ethnicity and religion are similarly prominent and similarly conflicted, categories of analysis in the play. Belize's and Louis's political positions are shown to differ particularly around the question of race, in ways clearly connected to their differing experiences of racial identity. As Belize mentions, "I still don't understand what love is. Justice is simple. Democracy is simple. Those things are in ambivalent. But love is very hard. And it goes bad for you if you violate the hart law of love" (100). Really the meaning of love is very difficult to understand. What is love among people is very difficult to define. The concept of love and the fake imagination of pregnancy of Harper both have ironic meaning. Harper with Mr. Lies in Antarctica imagines her pregnancy which is just illusion. She has lost her fertility and just imagines the fertility within herself and dreams of having baby.

It is troubling that a play beginning with a rabbi's voice extolling 'the melting pot that does not melt' ends with the subordination of the Jew to Christian. The prophet comes to take Prior and finds the sudden changes. Title of the drama construction, role of 'Angels', characters and the different norms and faith of the religions can be seen in overturning position in the drama. With the use of irony as a trope to analyze the drama in different aspect of drama has explored the actual analysis and the unexplored reality in the drama. The role of the writer, his characters, setting, plot, dialectics and the use of religious images through the characters speech is in contradiction in its deep analysis.

IV. Exploration of Christian Hierarchy in *Angels in America: Millennium*

Approaches

Angels in America: Millennium Approaches in ironical excavation has explored with the massive and terrible changes in religious faith, obstacles in internal progress of people and questions on the living style, choices, behaviors, faith so on of the people of late 20th century. Irony as a narrative tool presented to foreground the suffering and problems of the Jewish and Mormon people as well as the created problem and changes in concepts because of the domination, marginalization and the change in perception in Christian society.

The study tries to unmask the century's long religious discrimination and domination in society. The research analyzes the orthodox beliefs rooted in American society and pit out the reality or different religions. The research subverts the long term hierarchy in Christian dominated society. Mainly I have tried to excavate the religions: Christianity Judaism and Mormonism and the values that have drawn to their understanding of the cultural grandeur. This reading takes the pose of Jews character as the pivot which is influenced by the overall activities and goings-on of the play in one way or the other. Kushner demonstrates in the play the importance of progress of human race and the significance of redemption of modern people. The struggle of Jews and Mormon is presented as a journey to search hope in America through the process of progress redemption and reformation. The concern of the end of world and the judgments of human beings are prominent in the play. The life of Jews in America has found as a symbol of the destruction of the traditional moral order in *Angels in America*.

The progressive irony, situational irony, religious irony are vital in the drama's title, characters, setting, plot as well as religious references is with full of ironies in

differ analysis. The seekers of comfortable life in Christian society, 'Angels' which are known as the safe pathfinder of human beings for a better life by following ethics, moral etc, itself is unable to perform its role, and paralyzed itself in American society. As Wayne C. Booth in his *Rhetoric of Irony* clarifies the concept of god in modern west gives the concept of modern god. The hopes of Americans are totally become detached and face problems in the new millennium that questions the optimism and raised pessimism to the unknown future of the country. *Angels in America* depicts with varying degrees of anger, humor and empathy, a poignant of the substantial societal and spiritual issues facing humankind.

While analyzing the concept of irony, the gap between traditional norms, faith and its value and diversification in brief in coming millennium in Christian religion is deeply analyzed. The institutionalization of most of the characters is also met in drama due to the lack of freedom, pursuit of happiness. The power, greed for capital is underestimating the religious norms, love and faith among the people. The controversial ideas are seen with controversial meanings in characters conversation like Rabbi, Joe, Prior, Hannah and others. Female Jewish characters are presented in negative way as they are constructed as temporary characters. The speech of Jews is said to be as disgusting as their behavior. The average Jew is disgusting bawdy in his talk, with filthy expressions and obscene words.

An individual's sense of his or her place of marginality, power as a hindrance force, characters take and follow the faith in religion in negative way. Irony detaches itself from any recognized 'we' in other to question and disrupt the hierarchical setting itself above everyday life and opinion. Colloquial and broken language itself creates ambiguity which doesn't give the clear meaning. Behavior of the characters is not objective but perceived reality and far from feeling privileged.

The research has tried to answer the fundamental questions on Jewish identity in political, cultural and spiritual dimensions. Ignoring or disguising Jewish concept of reconfigures in narratives of obligation and ethical community. It is studded with specific references to the Bible. The play becomes a wounding figure of misunderstanding and recrimination committed in the name of love and religion. The play adheres to Judeo- Christian apocalyptic tradition. The action of 'angels' and prophets shape both the nature of apocalypse and the rebirth of the word in the illusionary world.

The play explores the ironization in the play mainly based on Harold Bloom's *Modern Critical Views on Tony Kushner*, Wayne. C. Booths *A Rhetoric of Irony*, Situational Irony of Langman. A. Baker as well as Linda Hutcheon's concept of politics and progressive irony in *Irony's Edge*. Likewise varies critics on religious issues on Christianize, Mormonism and Judaism as well as criticism on Tony Kushner's drama *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* are used while analyzing the drama in ironic looks.

Thus the aforementioned use of tool has somehow helped to excavate the life of American people of different religious faith in the transfusion of millennium. Millennium has been seen as a detachment of old tradition and acceptance and practice of free life going beyond the religious faith, social order. The drama's charm lies in the exploration of its deeper meaning of all the sector and activities like: character, title, American people of different religious faith, role of angels and God, the circumstances and the progressive attitude of people in America at the end of millennium.

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