

Memory and Pain: A Critical Examination of Tom Stoppard's *Leopoldstadt* through the Holocaust

Bellek ve Acı: Tom Stoppard'ın *Leopoldstadt* Oyununun Holokost Bağlamında İncelenmesi

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Abstract

Tom Stoppard, a playwright of Jewish origin born in 1937 and still alive, reflects his own past in terms of the Holocaust in his 2020 play *Leopoldstadt*. While *Leopoldstadt* conveys Stoppard's life from past to present as an autobiographical family story, it also confronts the author with his painful past in the modern age. Besides the modern individual and Europe, both having undergone development and transformation with Modernity and Modernism, the traumatic traces left behind by the historical process reveal the reality of the Holocaust. In this respect, *Leopoldstadt* is important in terms of understanding the impact of the characters' confrontation with their past memories and unforgettable traces caused by the Holocaust on the memory of modern and postmodern Jewish societies. The theoretical framework of this study is based on Zygmunt Bauman's views on modernity. Bauman is a thinker who has made significant contributions to the issues of modernity and the Holocaust, and his work contains important explanations for understanding the complexities of the modern world. His critique of modernity also leads *Leopoldstadt* to address the effects of the Holocaust and the dark sides of the modern world. This study focuses on how Stoppard, who experienced the devastating effects of the Holocaust, addresses the interplay between his Jewish identity and the challenges he faced in the modern age. The aim of this study is to evaluate the traumatic painful realities of the historical process in the play *Leopoldstadt* from the perspective of the relationship between memory and history.

Keywords: Stoppard, Bauman, Modernity, Holocaust, Autobiography.

Öz

Bugün hayatta olan 1937 doğumlu Yahudi kökenli oyun yazarı Tom Stoppard, 2020 tarihli *Leopoldstadt* oyununda kendi geçmişini, holokost yani Yahudi soykırımı açısından yansıtır. *Leopoldstadt* Stoppard'ın geçmişten günümüze kadar olan süreçte yaşantısını otobiyografik bir aile hikâyesi olarak aktarırken, aynı zamanda yazarı modern çağda acıyla örülmüş geçmişleriyle de yüzleştirir. Modernite ve Modernizm süreçleri ile gelişim ve dönüşüme uğrayan modern bireyin ve Avrupa'nın yanı sıra tarihsel sürecin arka planda bıraktığı travmatik izler holokost gerçeğini gözler önüne serer. Bu bakımdan *Leopoldstadt* modern dünyanın yol açtığı değişimlerle başa çıkmaya çalışan karakterlerin geçmiş anıları ile yüzleşmelerinin ve holokostun sebep olduğu unutulmaz izleri modern ve postmodern Yahudi toplumlarının belleği üzerindeki etkisini anlamak açısından önemlidir. Bu çalışmanın teorik çerçevesini ise Zygmunt Bauman'ın modernite ile ilgili görüşleri oluşturmaktadır. Bauman, modernite ve holokost konularına önemli katkılarda bulunmuş bir düşünürdür ve çalışmaları, modern dünyanın karmaşıklıklarını anlamak için önemli açıklamalar barındırır. Bauman'ın modernite eleştirisi, *Leopoldstadt*'ın holokostun etkilerini ve modern dünyanın karanlık yüzlerini ele almasına da öncülük eder. Bu çalışma modernitenin karanlık yanlarından biri olarak holokostun yıkıcı etkilerini tecrübe eden Stoppard'ın, Yahudi kimliği ve modern çağda karşılaştığı zorluklar arasındaki etkileşimi nasıl ele aldığına odaklanır. Bu çalışmanın amacı *Leopoldstadt* oyununda tarihsel sürecin travmatik acı gerçeklerini bellek ve tarih arasındaki ilişki perspektifinde değerlendirmektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Stoppard, Bauman, Modernite, Holokost, Otobiyografi.

Introduction

“Modern civilization was not the Holocaust’s sufficient condition; it was, however, most certainly its necessary condition. Without it, the Holocaust would be unthinkable. It was the rational world of modern civilization that made the Holocaust thinkable.”

(Bauman, 1989, p. 13)

As the Enlightenment period was characterized by an emphasis on rationality, power of science, and individual freedom, Modernism could be said to have emerged with a more sophisticated and contradictory perception of the world that first questioned and then shattered these values. While people, spurred by the tenets of the Enlightenment, believed that everything was logical and explicable in the light of science and reasoning, modernists exhibited the limits, handicaps and possible tragedies of this belief system. One of those modernists is Zygmunt Bauman, a Polish philosopher and sociologist of Jewish origin who is renowned for his adaptation of postmodernist philosophy to the field of sociology and evaluation of it on a theoretical level. To Bauman, “modernity was born with the intention of throwing aside the legacy, burden and rubble of the past and making a fresh start” (1989, p. 41). Defining the traditions, established institutions, practices and authoritarian figures of the pre-modern periods as ‘solids’, Bauman also considers the “melting of solids” as the permanent feature of modernity, thus “*having acquired a new meaning and above all having been redirected to a new target*” (2000, p. 6). Not only did Modernism, with its declared and well-known purpose of making it new, affect the fields of art and literature, but it also transformed the general dynamics of society and human relations between the past and future. By depicting internal conflicts and social collapses, Modernism caused humanity to question the self-confident path of the Enlightenment. According to Susan Stanford Friedman, the term ‘modern’ refers to “*the initial break with medieval institutions and outlooks that evolved over time*” (2009, pp. 11-32). Even the Renaissance itself could as well be taken as a modernist revival in that it sought to replace the scholastic medieval institutions and practices with the secular ones. Behind this transformation lies a process in which Modernism deeply affected human consciousness and perception. Modernism, however, brought about some negative consequences throughout, which cannot be ignored. Modernist movements challenged social norms and patterns of the past by highlighting individual experiences and abstract ideas. In this context, Modernism questioned classical and traditional values and viewed human experience in a new and often complex light. This contrariness sometimes caused the social fabric and traditional ties to weaken or even disappear. Marshall Berman’s statement on this issue is noticeable: “*To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world – and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are*” (1982, p. 15). Correspondingly, with the gradual realization of Modernism through the historical process, the world also experienced one of the darkest events in its often-catastrophic history, the Holocaust almost in the middle of the 20th century.

One of the most concrete examples of the disaster is the Nazi Germany’s genocide of the Jewish, which is reflected in Tom Stoppard’s stage play *Leopoldstadt* (2020). Within the context of modernity, *Leopoldstadt* (2020) is a historical record that examines themes such as individualism, fragmentation, and historical crisis of Modernism from an autobiographical perspective. Bauman’s views of modernity will contribute to understanding the conflict of the modern world in theoretical terms. This notion creates a juxtaposition as contrasted but connected with two terms, ‘Holocaust’ and ‘modernity’. Bauman holds Modernism’s abstraction and insensitivity to the ‘other’ for such inhumane events as the Holocaust: “*The Holocaust was born and executed in our modern rational society, at the high stage of our civilization and at the peak of human cultural achievement, and for this reason it is a problem of that society, civilization and culture*” (1989, p. x). Therefore, understanding the positive and negative effects of Modernism is a critical step in understanding the vulnerability of modern Jewish societies, especially in *Leopoldstadt*. Revolutionary changes and dangers led by Modernism have a profound impact on art, literature and society. Bauman’s approach to modernity will form the theoretical framework of this study in terms of reflecting the complications of the modern world. The emphasis of this study is to examine the family characters in Stoppard’s play *Leopoldstadt* in the dilemma of Modernism and the Holocaust as well as focus on the negative consequences of Modernism.

Correlation Between Modernism and the Holocaust

By promoting values like individualism, rationality, and glorification of science, Modernism and some of the ideologies accompanying it are often kept accountable for one of the darkest and most tragic events in human history, especially the Holocaust. The term “Holocaust” has a biblical meaning and derives from the Greek word ‘holokaustos’, meaning fully burnt, and was used in the first major translation of the Bible into Greek, the third-century BCE Septuagint (Hellig, 2003, p. 6). On the other hand, Eva Hoffman (2000) describes the Holocaust as “shorthand for atrocity.” Because Modernism is credited with having led people to abstract categorization and division of societies into ethnic groups, understanding the mechanisms whereby Modernism led to the Holocaust proves a handwriting action. This chaotic process involves the interaction of many

different factors.

The term 'the Holocaust' refers to the cruel and organized killing of large numbers of Jewish people in Europe during World War II. The major factor behind the discrimination and persecution of Jews during this dark period is accepted to be anti-Semitism, which is largely attributed to the modernist division and disintegration of societies. Anti-Semitic sentiments formed the basis of the ideology that led to the inhumane treatment and persecution of Jewish individuals. In this sense, September 1919 could be accepted as a touchstone when Adolf Hitler stated the origins of hatred by saying "*there is living amongst us, a non-German, foreign race, unwilling and unable to sacrifice its characteristics*" (Trezise, 2017, p. 14). This marks the beginning of everything. These words may be taken as a foreshadowing of the animosity that would instigate the Holocaust some decades later.

Another factor could be the ideologies and philosophical movements consequent upon Modernism, encouraging ethnic superiority and racism. Nazi ideology, based on biological racism, developed under the influence of modernist thought and was used to legitimize the Holocaust. Since then, the world has experienced an axis shift, settling into a negative orbit in the infinite modern world. Also, rationalization pursuant to modernization caused the world to lose its unique mysticism. Although humanity was positioned as a dominating nature, it faced the loss of traditional values. People thus became isolated and even the ecosystem was irreversibly damaged by self-motivated human practices (Habermas, McCarthy & Lawrence, 1990). With its emphasis on individualism and originality, modernist art and literature could be accepted to have contributed to the weakening of cultural, traditional and social ties with the past. This, in turn, led people gradually to ignore their relationships with each other, empathy, and shared values. Such inhumane acts as the Holocaust could be said to have been made possible with the rejection of such values as social solidarity and protection of human dignity. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane explain this rejection, or ignorance, stating that Modernism "*is the art of a world from which many traditional certainties had departed, and a certain sort of Victorian confidence not only in the onward progress of mankind but in the very solidity and visibility of reality itself has evaporated*" (1978, p. 57).

One of the factors influential in this process is the industrial and technological advances along with Modernism because militarization of the industrial production techniques made the development of mass destruction methods possible. Fabrication and mass production techniques facilitated the mass murder of people, especially in concentration camps. Horrifying methods such as gas chambers and death trains were carried out through the effective use of industrial processes. Additionally, modern communication and transportation technologies allowed the Nazi regime to more effectively control the people in the areas they occupied. Thus, the cutting-edge technological advances concomitant with Modernism have their share the scope and horror of the Holocaust. Bauman puts this claim in more obvious terms:

[Auschwitz] was also a mundane extension of the modern factory system. Rather than producing goods, the raw material was human beings and the end-product was death, so many units per day marked carefully on the manager's production charts. The chimneys, the very symbol of the modern factory system, poured forth acrid smoke produced by burning human flesh. The brilliantly organized railroad grid of modern Europe carried a new kind of raw material to the factories (1989, p. 8).

National identity and nationalism growing with Modernism deserve a place among the factors for extreme nationalist and even fascist ideologies, which triggered hostility and violence against groups viewed as 'other'. In Nazi Germany, Jews and other minority groups were targeted as enemies of national identity. Finally, Modernism caused political and social upheavals, playing a pushing role in the Holocaust. Economic depression, political instability, and social unrest led to the rise of totalitarian regimes and legitimized human rights violations by these regimes. With all these factors combined, Modernism could as well be said to have given rise to the Holocaust. The eminent sociologist Theodor W. Adorno uses the phrase "*to write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric*" (Marcuse, n.d.) to show the gravity of this situation. This quote of Adorno draws attention to the impossibility of understanding or even expressing the extent of genocide and inhuman brutality, and achieving "the reality effect" (Barthes, 1986) with traditional art forms, especially arts such as theater or poetry. In short, he points out that words, images, and stages are insufficient to understand and express the horror experienced in Nazi concentration camps. "As a result of all this, we find ourselves today in the midst of a modern age that has lost touch with the roots of its own modernity" (Berman, 1982, p. 17). Therefore, in the face of an atrocity like Auschwitz, even modern art proves to be inadequate and we are faced with a pain and void of meaning that seems not to be erased from memories exceeding human existential limits.

Memory and Pain: Confronting Tom Stoppard's Family History

With the above accounts of the Holocaust in mind, it could be said that desperation and pain of people tortured in concentration camps such as Auschwitz, and the horror and despair in a world witnessing unbearable cruelty and genocide are almost indelible from the history of mankind and memories of man. Memory and pain are emotional and mental

processes that leave deep traces in human experience. Dante Alighieri puts it in *Divine Comedy*, delineating inferno “*here sighs and cries and shrieks of lamentation echoed throughout the starless air of Hell.*” (1996). Likewise, the concentration camp in Stoppard’s hometown is Theresienstadt, which “*is considered as ‘a funneling place’ for Auschwitz*” (Roth, 2008, p. 119). In this context, these verses acquire a meaning that reflects the horror and despair in regions where inhuman cruelty and genocide took place. The dark and hopeless atmosphere of the concentration camps may also be seen as the metaphor of “*starless air*” in the memories of humanity. Richard Terdiman, who labels memory as the “*present past*” (1993), asserts that memory is a tool that preserves and allows us to recall the past experiences. The concept of memory brings back joyful memories to our minds at times and reminds us of strong pain at others. On the other hand, pain can be physical or emotional. The concept of memory is of vital importance in recognizing and preventing the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes, i.e. Nazis, against human rights and freedom. From this perspective, Arendt states “*memory is so dangerous for totalitarian rulers*” (1976, p. 414).

In the complexity of the modern world, however, people carry the burden of their past while trying to take steps toward the future. In this context, the art of theatre and playwrights also have important duties. Tom Stoppard, a playwright who bears the responsibilities of history, brings to his stage the traces of the past combined with the difficulties brought by the modern life and constantly affecting all like him, who grew up with a traumatic family history that was directly affected by the Holocaust. Memory functions as a store of both pain and happiness, but it seeks to cope with the former by burying, forgetting or pushing it to the back of the mind as it torments one to remember and face the pain(s) of their own past. It, however, enlivens itself with the remembrance of happiness, glory or joy of the same past, if any, by talking about them on every possible occasion. Why Stoppard produced his anti-Holocaust play in 2020, almost 80 years after it was really experienced by his family members when he was just a child, might be because he chose not to busy himself with the nightmarish pains of his childhood throughout. Though this might be his strategy to preserve his psychological and mental health, long-year suppression of such pains is often sure to find a way for themselves to erupt into one’s conscious state of mind either as a trauma or as a mental crisis. Stoppard’s play *Leopoldstadt* can be accepted as a means of his coping with the traumatic effect of the Holocaust as writing about such traumas is believed to alleviate its effect. Another reason why he wrote this play might be that he found himself responsible to his grandparents killed in Auschwitz for exposing the atrocity and brutality of what they were made to suffer there.

Whatever the reason might be for his play *Leopoldstadt*, it would be best to seek for it in his familial identity. Stoppard was born under the name of Tomas Straussler into a Jewish family in Zlin, Czechoslovakia in 1937. His father escaped in 1939 from Czechoslovakia, which was then occupied by Nazi Germany. Then he lost his father Eugen Strauss during the Japanese attack in Singapore. Forced into exile due to the war, Straussler lived for a while in Singapore and India before moving to England. With his mother, marrying another man, he moved to England in 1946. Straussler took the surname of his stepfather Kenneth Stoppard. Surnamed after his stepfather, Tom Stoppard probably wrote his more recent play at the age of 82, seemingly in an attempt to show the audience a biographical panorama from the past to the future. In this context, *Leopoldstadt* is a play that represents Stoppard’s “*secret Holocaust history*” (Glancy, 2021). Almost all his family members seem to have vanished under the influence of Modernism and time. However, it is more than a painful fact that even in the last walks of his life, Stoppard wants to bring the dark page of history to the theater stage. This painful truth of his memory, along with his harrowing ordeal, continues to exist in negative ways. His painful family picture is a reflection that goes beyond just his personal experience into the depths of Modernism. The modern world is full of rapidly changing norms, technological advances, and cultural transformations; however, rather than offering salvation for individuals with a traumatic past, these changes may deepen the traces of the past. While Stoppard expresses this painful truth in his work, he also expresses the pain seemingly buried alive in the depths of his own memory. The memories that he cannot throw out intensely affect his existence in the modern world. Although Modernism tends to ignore the past, the effect of the past will always exist for individuals like Stoppard. His experience requires “*confronting the unpleasant ordeal of the past rather than erasing them*” and accepting those memories is part of modern life. In this manner, the act of remembering is vital because according to Theodor Adorno, “*remembering is a means of resistance against the destruction of social realities*” (Craig, 2002, pp. 276, 289). This is exactly what Stoppard tries to achieve in his play, an achievement that is called social resistance. Memory and pain tell how the modern individual confronts his traumatic family past and how this experience is shaped by the influence of Modernism. Stoppard’s play shows that the troubling recollection of the past leaves deep traces in human memory and that even the changes brought by modern life cannot erase these traces.

Leopoldstadt through the Lenses of the Holocaust

Stoppard’s *Leopoldstadt* takes place in the Merz Apartment, a socialite, ostentatious and cultural center of Vienna’s Ringstrasse in the early twentieth century. The focus of the play is on the family itself. As Stoppard delves deeper into the

life of a Jewish family living in Vienna, he draws attention to their bourgeois status and deep penetration into society. It is an extended family, and its various members are intended to represent familiar people who represent examples from Stoppard's own life. The play takes place in four different time periods, which are 1899/1900, 1924, 1938 and 1955. The first scene shows a Judeo-Christian family joyfully celebrating Christmas in a crowded apartment in December 1899/1900. This family portrait is actually a micro-representation of the traditions and culture of nineteenth-century Jewish families in the Czech Republic and Austria. Therefore, it forms the basis of the family depicted in *Leopoldstadt*. The visual representation of the characters on stage is only the beginning of an unexpected conclusion between the audience's awareness and the looming shadow of the Holocaust on Vienna's Jewish community. In particular, the wealthy Merz family constitutes a micro image of the assimilated Jewish families in Central Europe. Historically they have been intertwined with Stoppard's own family, but their texture and location have changed. The Christmas week is packed with activity and the family prominently displays the Star of David at the top of their Christmas tree. Throughout the play, we encounter many members of this large, blended family, including wives, partners, grandmothers, maids, and grandchildren. This depiction also reveals the complex identity of the assimilated Jewish family. They live together on the Ringstrasse, displaying an appearance of approaching Christianity from their Jewish origins. As a matter of fact: "The family in Lepoldstadt is typical, and he created them out of an amalgam of all the family stories he had been reading. They have left the ghetto behind them. They don't live in Leopoldstadt anymore but on the Ringstrasse. They have converted and intermarried. They are Jewish and Protestant and Catholic" (Lee, 2021, p. 932).

This family states that their grandchildren's Jewish appearance is more critical than their surname to maintaining their relationship with their elders. This highlights not only a genetic link but also appearance-based biases. Family members question their own identities, thinking that Jewish identity is abstract and specific. Act One frequently explores the tensions between the modern, integrated, and secular Jews of Vienna and the more traditional Austro-Hungarian Jews from other regions. Conversations continue in a crowded environment while children run around the play and move in the given chronological development. Hermann, who is in the mood to talk in the crowded family environment of the first act, suddenly starts to give examples from fifty years ago and says that the Jews at that time "*stepped off the pavement to make way for an Austrian*" (Stoppard, 2020, p. 17). This quote may evoke the bullying and discrimination that Jewish people faced during the Holocaust. The phrase "*stepped off the pavement*" is associated with the oppression and humiliation that Jews experienced under the Nazi regime. Therefore, this may offer a new insight into understanding the painful memories of the Holocaust and the historical persecution suffered by the Jewish community. In parallel, many characters in the play indicate a counterpart in Stoppard's own family history. Another example of this is in the first scene, when two major characters, Emilia Merz's merchant son Hermann, who converts to Christianity, and Hermann's father-in-law Ludwig, discuss how historical facts shape ideas, beliefs, cultures, and places. By converting to Catholicism, Hermann leaves the Jewish ghetto, which is Leopoldstadt, and his Jewish identity. It is clearly stated that Hermann, who appears to be the family leader in Leopoldstadt neighborhood, is no longer a Jew: Hermann's disconnection with Judaism is expressed in the play as follows: "*We are Austrians now. Austrians of Jewish descent*" (Stoppard, 2020, p. 22). From the perspective of modernity, Hermann's statement emphasizes the intricate dynamics of social integration and identities. Herman's statement that they no longer understand or express anything in Hebrew from a modern perspective is expressed here: "*You couldn't even buy a tram ticket in Hebrew*" (Stoppard, 2020, p. 22). He clearly shows that he no longer sees himself as a Jew. This having been said, it is an undeniable fact that the Holocaust is responsible not only for the systematic destruction of the human race but also for the degeneration of human and social values such as language and culture. Hermann, for example, has a big argument with Ernst, who's a Protestant doctor, just like his debate with Ludwig before. In their talk, Hermann confesses being a Christian at present and not considering himself Jewish anymore. This is a clear indication of his full integration into the Christian culture.

Hermann: I can tell you the moment I decided not to be a Jew. My Grandpa Ignatz- Mother's father-told me when I was nine or ten how he was tossed a coin into the hat of a man playing a fiddle on a street corner. The man stopped playing and said, 'Where's your manners, Jew?', and snatched Grandpa's cap off his head and threw it into the road. (...). His hero was Bismarck. If he had been able to choose his life, he said, he would have been a Prussian aristocrat. Ernst ... we're both Christians (Stoppard, 2020, p. 34).

Standing out as someone who tries to advocate Jewish values, Ludwig's response to Hermann during the conversation mirrors what it is like to live as a Jew in the twenty-first century. This situation is defined in the play as follows: "*Assimilation does not mean to stop being a Jew. [...] Assimilation means to carry on being a Jew without insult*" (Stoppard, 2020, p. 24).

Amidst all the family conversations, the subsequent part of the play begins with a sudden change of music and scenery, and the year has now jumped into 1924. This episode mostly focuses on the effects of World War I, the decline of the Merz family's fortunes and declining status, and the increasing anti-Semitism as a worldwide catastrophe loomed. In the later sections, the characters deal with problems that Jews have suffered for centuries, such as the consequences of war, exile,

deprivation, and land dispossession. The environment still continues as a chat environment. In the following act, the reader witnesses Ludwig teaching his grandson and great-nephew the game 'Cat's Cradle'. This game is played by threading the fingers. It is the game that gave its name to the play. The cat's cradle should be considered a metaphor for historical events. It clearly shows the cyclical nature of history and its repetition. The scene takes place in November 1938, forming an important example of Nazi Germany's attacks and taking place in a critical period after the invasion of Austria. During this period, the luxurious apartment, once a symbol of the prosperity of the Merz family, has lost its former glory. Meanwhile, we learn from the family members that Rosa has begun to mumble as "Auschwitz" in December 1938 due to a brain tumor. With the departure of personnel and expensive items, civilian settlers or colonizers take over the apartments. The Merz family experiences significant transformations over the course of forty years. During this period, when they face increasing persecution and the threat of the Leopoldstadt ghetto, each family member is exiled to different places and some of them lose their lives. Because the apartment "*no longer belongs to the Merzes*" (Silman, 2021), an official of the Nazi government comes to the family's house to check on them and forces them to leave. While going through papers and identifying family members, he keeps making fun of them for being Jewish. This part of the story shows how merciless and intolerant people in power can be to others who are incapable of protecting or defending themselves. When that official arrives, he first catches a glimpse of Percy, looking different because he looks as if he were British. He mentions Percy's girlfriend Nelly, saying: "*race defilement runs in the family*" (Stoppard, 2020, p. 66). The removal of the Jewish involves civilians taking control over a sizable region within an area governed by the Nazis. When they encounter the Nazis, it does not take them long to realize that their home is no longer there: "*You're not at home now*" (Stoppard, 2020, p. 76). As the play progresses through 1924, 1938 and finally 1955, it takes on a dramatically frightening quality, and in 1955, the number of people having remained alive from this family is now only three (Leo, Nathan and Rosa) due to the Holocaust. The multi-generational nature of the play allows for the presentation of a variety of characters at different ages, which forms the play's primary thematic purpose. In particular, the emotional climax of the play comes when Leo, the Englishman at his heart, realizes that he vaguely remembers a key moment from the year 1938, when he was a child. Nathan sees Leo as an "accident of history" (Stoppard, 2020, p. 98) because she believes that Leo cannot have a Jewish future or carry Jewish values. In the closing scene, they look at their family tree. Family members have been killed in concentration camps such as Dachau and Auschwitz. Only Emilia is lucky because she has died in her bed.

Conclusion

The play Leopoldstadt could be considered valuable in that it recalls the past memories of characters trying to cope with the changes brought by the modern world and explains the unforgettable traces of the Holocaust and its impact on the memory of modern and postmodern Jewish societies. Bauman's views of modernity clearly show the effects of Leopoldstadt's Holocaust and the dark sides of the modern world. Human history has caused the persecution of Jews to recur once again in the most vivid version of art, the art of theater. It is implied with examples through the play that Modernism brought with it many ideologies that should be held accountable for the occurrence of the Holocaust, which is seen "by Christian theologians as a reason for God's demise" (Hellig, 2003, p. 4). By encouraging individualism, rationalism, and glorification of science, some modernist ideas could as well be accepted to have culminated in the Holocaust. This might be because these three developments have created distances and gaps between the individual members of the society and individual states or peoples of the world, thus making each a singularized or isolated one to a large extent. As such, each society has started, in a fast tempo, to be composed of individuals away from each other not only in physical but also mental and emotional terms. In his sense, it would not be strong to say that Modernism has also tended to divide societies and ethnic groups while pushing people into abstract categorization. The ideologies and movements brought by Modernism could be accepted to have largely paved the grounds for Jewish individuals' subjection to discrimination and persecution. Modernism, along with industrialization and technological advances, have also contributed to the Holocaust through the industrial and technological advances.

As a playwright who experienced the horrifying violence and inhumanity of the Holocaust when the child of an exiled and even tortured family, Tom Stoppard refers in his play Leopoldstadt to his memories as the reflection of his pain which seems to have not been alleviated despite the eight decades since then. It must be the fact that his memory is still filled with the indelible pain of the Holocaust that has urged Stoppard to write this play. The play, however, highlights the complexities and dark aspects of the modern world while dealing with the Jewish family's intersection between modernity and the Holocaust. While forming its basis, it also reflects the effects of the changes brought by the modern world. In this context, Leopoldstadt is an important tool for understanding the complexities and harsh realities of the modern world along with Bauman's views of modernity and the Holocaust.

In conclusion, the play Leopoldstadt helps understand the realities of the modern world by deeply examining the

relationship between modernity and the Holocaust. In this context, it is an important source for understanding how the Jewish past was shaped in terms of modernity and the Holocaust. It is not just the consequence of all that inhuman violence that matters, but also the process leading up to the emergence of the grounds and conditions making it possible. As such, the play invites the reader to remember and question the whole process of the Holocaust, both the pain itself and the premises and preliminary conditions for it.

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