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عدد خاص بنشر وقائع المؤتمر العلمي الثالث (العلوم الإنسانية أساس الارتقاء الفكري للمجتمع للمدة 2-1 - حزيران 2025)

Chronotope in The Bone Clock by David Mitchell

Prof.Sabah Atallah Khalifa Ali, Ph. D.College of Education-Ibn

Rushd,University of Baghdad

Sabah eataallah khalifat ali

Email: sabah909ali@gmail.com

Asst.Inst .Maha Hamed Issa

Email: maha.hamid.issa@gmail.com

Ministry of Education, Baghdad General Directorate of Education, Al-
Karkh the Second



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Abstract

Time and place are two essential components in analyzing any literary work. Mikhail Bakhtin (1895- 1975) was a Russian philosopher and literary critic who believed that Chronotope investigated the perplexing relationship that combines time and space to assimilate historical incidents. In his essay, the Bildungsroman, he asserts Bildungsroman as an indication of the complicated pursuit of the hero to discover his identity in the context of spatial-temporal dimensions. This research investigates the Chronotopes that create additional world images within the novel's structure through the lenses of Bildungsroman. The term will enrich the plot with genres that discuss contemporary cultural inequalities and the abusive ecological practices of current policies. The postmodern novelist David Mitchell (1969) intends in *The Bone Clocks* (2014) to sustain the hallmark of Bildungsroman. It is a historical panorama of the social aspects of human culture. The book traces Holly Skyes's life from 1984 to 2043, where she meets many protagonists and engages in battles with supernatural creatures.

Keywords: Bildungsroman, Chronotope, ecological, panorama, supernatural.



الكرونوتوب في رواية ساعات العظام

أ.د. صباح عطا الله خليفة علي

sabah909ali@gmail.com

م.م. مها حامد عيسى

maha.hamid.issa@gmail.com

الملخص

الزمان والمكان عنصران أساسيان في تحليل أي عمل أدبي. ميخائيل باختين (1895-1975) كان فيلسوفًا وناقداً أدبيًا روسيًا، يعتقد أن مصطلح "الكرونوتوب" (الزمان) يدرس العلاقة المعقدة التي تجمع بين الزمان والمكان لفهم الأحداث التاريخية. في مقاله عن رواية التكوين (Bildungsroman)، يؤكد باختين أن هذا النوع الأدبي يرمز إلى السعي المعقد للبلبل لاكتشاف هويته ضمن أبعاد زمنية-مكانية. تبحث هذه الدراسة في الكرونوتوبات التي تنتج صورًا عالمية إضافية داخل بنية الرواية من خلال عدسة رواية التكوين. هذا المفهوم يُثري الحبكة بأنواع أدبية تناقش عدم المساواة الثقافية المعاصرة والممارسات البيئية التعسفية للسياسات الحالية. يسعى الروائي ما بعد الحداثي ديفيد ميتشل (1969) في روايته ساعات العظام (2014) إلى الحفاظ على سمة رواية التكوين. إنها بانوراما تاريخية للجوانب الاجتماعية للثقافة الإنسانية، حيث تتبع الرواية حياة "هولي سايكس" من عام 1984 حتى 2043، حيث تلتقي بالعديد من الشخصيات وتخوض معارك مع كائنات خارقة للطبيعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: رواية التكوين، الكرونوتوب، البيئة، بانوراما، خارق للطبيعة



1.1 Bildungsroman

Karl Morgenstern (1770-1852), the German philologist, introduced the Bildungsroman in his lecture On the Nature of the Bildungsroman in 1819 (Golban 10). He interpreted the term as a: "thematic material, because it portrays the Bildung of the hero in its beginnings and growth to a certain stage of completeness, and also secondly because it is by this portrayal that it furthers the reader's Bildung to a much greater extent than any other kind of novel" (Swales 12). Christopher Martin Wieland applied the elements of Bildungsroman in his novel The History of Agathon, (1766-67) (Golban 16).

'Bildungs' in German indicate formation, a way of "modeling oneself in the image of God"

(2). 'Roman' means novel. The term became widespread during the 19th Century. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) adopted Bildungsroman in his novel Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship (1794). The novelist focused on the protagonist's psychological struggle, which formed his personality and showed the individual's moral development and emotional maturity (Golban 2).

The term in England flourished among the realist novelist during the Victorian Age. The English writers complicated the hero/heroine's pursuit of discovering his/her identity. Numerous external obstacles started forming in their quest from childhood to find meaning for their existence. The protagonist was used as a tool



to criticize society's social and moral impact on the individual (Golban 13). For example , Charles Dickens (1812-1870) adopted Bildungsroman in two famous works, David Copperfield (1850) and Great Expectations (1861). The hero left his rural environment in each novel and became a gentleman. He finally fell in love with the lady of his dreams and realized his value despite his social status.

In Sons and Lovers (1913), D.H Lawrence (1885-1930) portrayed an excellent example of modern Bildungsroman. Paul, a miner's son, suffered from an ambitious mother. He faced many difficulties in finding his identity.

Mikhail Bakhtin interpreted Bildungsroman in The Bildungsroman and Its Significance in the History of Realism. He defined it as a perplexing relationship that combined time and space to assimilate actual historical incidents, forming "the image of man in the processes of becoming in the novel." (Bakhtin, The Bildungsroman and Its Significance in the History of Realism 19). Bakhtin completed his obsession with Bildungsroman in Speech genres and other late Essays (1979), in which he discussed molding the protagonist's personality in a sociopolitical environment:

the concentration of the whole plot on the process of the hero's education), significantly limit this list (Rabelais, for example, is excluded). Others, conversely, requiring only the hero's development and emergence in the novel, considerably expand this list, including 96 such works, for example, as Fielding's Tom Jones or Thackeray's Vanity Fair. ...Some of the novels are



essentially biographical or autobiographical, while others are not; in some of them the organizing basis is the purely pedagogical notion of man's education, while this is not even mentioned in others; some of them are constructed on the strictly chronological plane of the main hero's educational development and have almost no plot at all, while others, conversely, have complex adventurous plots.

Novelists like Thomas Hardy (1840- 1928), James Joyce (1882- 1941), and Virginia Woolf (1882- 1941), employed the genre to personify dominant themes, like; identity crisis, coming of age, bohemian life, and rejection of classes (Golbin 5). Readers start tracing the protagonist's psychological development through a physical journey in the city.

The Novel of Formation started to have humanistic elements in postmodern fiction. The novelist employed different perspectives blending them with diverse techniques. Postmodernist novelists had a: "view of the individual as being, self, subject, that is subjected, ordered, dominated, determined, constructed" (7). The character tends to have a unique personality depending on his experience, to be accessible without being restricted by any rules.

The postmodern novelist David Mitchell (1969) intends in *The Bone Clocks* (2014) to sustain the hallmark of Bildungsroman. The book traces Holly Skyes's life from 1984 to 2043, where she meets many protagonists and is involved in battles with supernatural creatures. The novel is a historical panorama of the



social aspects of human culture. Holly's life portrays all the colors of life, such as pain, truth, beauty, and mental stability that she gained in her journey.

Throughout the novel, she crosses diverse stages as a: "mother, sister, daughter, widow, writer, friend" (Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks* 467).

1.2 The Bone Clocks 2014

The Bone Clocks is a novel with six narratives. They are in different locations: Gravesend, Alps, Baghdad, Iceland, New York, and Ireland. It moves chronologically according to Holly's age.

In Mitchell's novels, war, violence, and class distinction are repeated themes. In *The Bone Clocks*, he mentions a class war resulting from social materialism and shows its drastic economic consequences. It brings various adverse outcomes for individuals. In fact, it is a direct criticism of Capitalism and its impact on English society during the eighties due to the economic depression. Therefore, Holly Skys is a personification of Mitchell's childhood for sharing a similar growing environment. Mitchell spent his adolescence through the Thatcherite region and the Falkland War. Being a child of a middle-class English family, such incidents formed his personality as anti-capitalist and anti-war. Mitchell wants societies to get rid of economic chains. In an interview with Alden Mudge in 2006, Mitchell speaks about such intimate periods in his childhood: The war was one of the formative memories of my youth," Mitchell says:



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The patriotism, the flags, the jubilation, as if it were a sporting event. It was the last time that any young English boy could feel that he lived in a country that kicked ass. The consequences of it and the truth of it—the stunning expense, the miserable expense in terms of human life—didn't come for months or years. I also remember being surprised by how quickly it disappeared. ... I learned that from the Falklands. (Mudge).

Hot Spell, the opening chapter in *The Bone Clocks*, takes place in 1984. Holly Skys belongs to a middle-class English family and works part-time in the “socialist worker”(....) newspaper. Holly mentions: “invisible war’s going on, ... all through history—the class war. Owners versus slaves, nobles versus serfs, the bloated bosses versus workers, the haves versus the have-nots. The working classes are kept in a state of repression by a mixture of force and lies”. (Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks* 52) ; Holly explicitly refers to class war. Margret Thatcher (1925-2013) was Britain's first female prime minister who ruled from 1979 to 1990. Her policy empowered class distinction in Britain. She restricted the unions’ authority. Therefore, it increased unemployment, leaving laborers with no protection. The British economy was re-established as a Capitalist market. Still, such economic transformation was marked by social unrest. Greed and selfishness became expected norms in a competitive country (Self).

The social structure under such conditions shows a culture with different layers. Some are born with privileged lifestyle, while others held under challenging



situations: I smear a bit of Woods of Windsor moisturizer on my suntanned skin, thinking how easily Heidi might have been born in a grotty Gravesend pub, and me the one who's clever and confident and studying politics in London,... Being born's a hell of a lottery. (Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks* 54)

There is a reference in the novel to war that bears resources' features in a parallel world. Two supernatural clans, the Hotoroglots, the immortal psychics. The other is the Anchorites, vampire predators who feed on children's souls. The Anchorites reflect Capitalism in consuming labourers' youth. The Capitalist system recruits members to expand their markets, like the Anchorites who seduce their victims by false promises of immortality: "Anchorites must befriend their prey, like Constantin befriended you. If the prey isn't conscious and calm during decanting, the Black Wine's tainted. It's a delicate vintage" (410).

Hugo Lamb, a student at Cambridge University, is the product of a Capitalist environment that encourages competition by any means. He turns into a ruthless beast to ascend the social hierarchy of Capitalism: "the insight that "outside the system" means poverty"(126). His actions are motivated by a system that treats workers as enslaved people:

Commuters sway like sides of beef and slump like corpses: red-eyed office slaves plugged into Discmans; their podgier selves in their forties buried in the Evening Standard; and nearly retired versions gazing over West London wondering where their lives went. I am the system you have to beat, clacks the



carriage. I am the system you have to beat. But what does “beating the system” mean? Becoming rich enough to buy one’s manumission from the daily humiliation of employment .(125)

Hugo engages in improper actions to be wealthy regardless of ethics. He personifies Niteche’s survival motto of the fittest. He substitutes lust for love; “This isn’t lust. Lust wants, does the obvious, and pads back into the forest. Love is greedier. Love wants round the-clock care; protection; rings, vows, joint accounts; scented candles on birthdays; life insurance. Babies. Love’s a dictator” (168). His ambition sides him with the Anchorites in order to gain immortality. Hugo’s indulging in politics and economy strengthens his Machiavellian traits. He believes that:

Power is the ability to make someone do what they otherwise wouldn’t, or deter them from doing what they otherwise ... By coercion and reward. Carrots and sticks, though in bad light one looks much like the other. Coercion is predicated upon the fear of violence or suffering. ‘Obey, or you’ll regret it. (92-93)

Deceptions are his power to control others : “if they could have read my mind, they would have called me a sociopath” (144). Mitchell's choosing Switzerland as the center of the Anchorites is not arbitrary since it is the world’s ultimate competitive Capitalist country . (Sharma).

In Crispin Hershey’s Lonely Planet, Michell clearly expresses the notion of class disparity. Crispin, the wealthy British author, speaks out loud about world’s



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materialism:

Global Capitalism does not appear to have been kind to the owners of these impassive faces. I wonder what these working-class Colombians make of us? Where do they sleep, what do they eat, of what do they dream? Each of the American-built armored limousines surely costs more than a lifetime's earnings for these street vendors. (Mitchell, *The Bone clocks* 279)

The low wages, lack of fulfillment, and resource shortage make people violent and cruel. Material pursuit is the core activity of the world system. This prophecy is outlined in the *An Horologist's Labyrinth* chapter. The stimulates 'invisible war' theme in an alternative reality in 2024. It highlights Mitchell's philosophy about the basic instinct of human nature. The Anchorites seeking for immortality mirror human consumption of natural resources. Modern societies do not consider global conditions or the future of the new generations.

The system birthed an exhausted materialistic generation hunted by materialism as the children of *The Bone Clocks*, tracked by 'soul suckers'. In the future, There will be terrible socio-ecological conditions. The selfish exploitation of the earth's resources will lead to global warming issues and the collapse of social order.

From a different perspective, Anchorites fight to protect their species from the resources' shortness. They want to ensure their continuity by any means. War is a desperate means that drives people to act violently in such corrupt policy: "We



are the Anchorites of the Dusk Chapel... why does your group exist?" "To ensure the indefinite survival of the group by inducting its members into the Psychosoterica of the Shaded Way." (181)

Ed Brubeck, a war journalist, narrates Wedding Bash 2004. He tells Holly about his dream to travel worldwide: "the tip of Portugal to the top of Norway. Eastern-bloc countries too, Yugoslavia and places. The Berlin Wall. Istanbul. In Istanbul, there's this bridge, right. One side's in Europe and the other's in Asia. I'm going to walk across it"(38). The Bosnian and cold wars during the eighties changed the geographical landscape and reshaped the world's map. War is a dominant feature in the world's history, whether in this world or other dimensional ones : "The secret war. The secret war waging around us, inside us, even" (358).

Ed is obsessed with; "Paul Bremer" (207) military orders that cause the death of thousands of Iraqi civilians. The Iraqi Army released creates thousands of soldiers who lost their jobs, "Bremer created 375,000 potential insurgents—unemployed, armed, and trained to kill. Hindsight is easy, sure, but if you're the viceroy of an occupied country, it's your job to possess foresight—or at least to listen to advisers who do" (226).

The battles in Fallujah and the brutality in Abu Ghraib: "If you try write truth, you die in Abu Ghraib" (236). They are reasons that prevent Ed from answering Holly's question about choosing his job or family .He is committed in preserving the world's history:



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if an atrocity isn't written about, it stops existing when the last witnesses die. That's what I can't stand. If a mass shooting, a bomb, a whatever, is written about, then at least it's made a tiny dent in the world's memory. Someone, somewhere, sometime, has a chance of learning what happened. (189)

Ed discovers that any past document or historical incident gives the future generation a chance to change their present . To Ed, war has a different meaning, unlike the resources one . It is presented as Marvin Harris says: "War as politics. ... is the logical outcome of an attempt of one group to protect or increase its political, social and economic welfare at the expense of another group. War occurs because it leads to the expropriation of territory and resources" (Harris, Cannibals and Kings 47). Mitchell exposes the insufficiency of the Iraq invasion. It is a war for political and economic reasons without considering the inhabitants. Ed's traumatic flashbacks enhanced this notion since it t haunt him. He murmurs about his friend's death in an attack, leaving his family without protection: "Nasser's daughters don't have a daddy now because Nasser dropped me off late, at car-bombing time, at a Westerners' hotel" (258). Though e survived these fatal incidents, the memories of the dead bodies still hunting him

Despite his survival, Ed remembers the dead bodies and the agony of people : U.S. doesn't, and probably couldn't, keep a record of Iraqis killed in crossfire, so even to ask the question is an act of criticism. "The Coalition Provisional Authority," Klimt lowered his head bullishly at Dole, "is not an office of



statistics. We have a counter insurgency to prosecute. But I say this: Whatever innocent blood has been spilled in Fallujah is on the insurgents' hands. Not ours. When a mistake is made, compensation is paid. (208)

Ed sacrifices this domesticity with his family to show how Iraq becomes a living hell due to the American invasion: "Everything there has "gone so horribly off script?" (225). This script, to Ed, is : "the script was written referring not to Iraq as it was, but to a fantasy Iraq as Rumsfeld, Rice, and Bush et al. wanted it to be, or dreamt it to be, or were promised by their pet Iraqis-in-exile it would be" (225) Mitchell modifies the impact of the war in destroying human soul and body. War can damage the psychological, political, and economic since life is like a chain of cause and effect; one thing leads to another.

The Sheep's Head describing humanity's fate in 2043. There will be a series of global ecological crises : "Endarkenment like our ancestors talked about the Black Death, as if it's an act of God. But we summoned it, with every tank of oil we burned our way through."(498). The catastrophe started in the : "early 2030s the seasons went badly haywire, with summer frosts and droughts in winter, but for the last five years we've had long, thirsty summers, long, squally winters, with springs and autumns hurrying by in between" (500).

China pulled out of oil supplies and stopped trading with Europe. Thus, the power system collapses, and the socio-political order falls. The depletion of fossil resources makes people rely on solar power. The electricity and



transitional mobility stopped due to a lack of fuel supplies :“ We try to catch a whiff of the stuff, and suffer a fresh round of pangs for the Petrol Age” (512). The global population shrinks because of Ebola and “Ratflu”(490), with the radiation of the :“full meltdown of the reactor at Hinkley E”(489). Technology collapses; thus, no internet communication is available. With the overconsumption of environmental resources, people starts to suffer :“For most of my life, the world shrank and technology progressed; this was the natural order of things”(529).

In 2045 humanity lived in chaos, especially with civilization collapsing; society reverts to medievalism: “Civilization’s like the economy or Tinkerbelle: If people stop believing it’s real, it dies” (534). A massive climatological disaster occurred because of reckless human behavior. The nuclear meltdown and global warming are the reasons that made humanity live in brutal circumstances. Thus, the rich get richer while the others are merely survivalists. People migrate to find a place to provide them with shelter and food supplies: “thousands of hungry, rootless men, women, and children will get through the winter. (489)

Mitchell’s dystopian future is the natural outcome of current socio-political problems. He creates a global novel to alert humanity of the environmental destruction, which will be caused by human beings, not by the Anchorites:

grief for the regions we dead landed, the ice caps we melted, the Gulf Stream we redirected, the rivers we drained, the coasts we flooded, the lakes we choked



with crap, the seas we killed, the species we drove to extinction, the pollinators we wiped out, the oil we squandered, the drugs we rendered impotent, the comforting liars we voted into office. (498)

The episodic structure of *The Bone Clocks* is built with different narrative moods, conventions, and genres, reflecting the fragmented nature of postmodernity. The fragmented style in narration is Mitchell's distinctive feature. *The Bone Clocks* comprises six disconnected narratives, sharing spatiotemporal dimensions that blend fantasy with reality. They all work together in presenting a novel with Macrocosmic and Microcosmic levels. Various sites, voices, and historical periods explore human's quest for mortality through the transmigrating soul (Birtill 131).

Holly narrates the first and sixth chapters, but four male characters tell the others. This technique is known as a "metadiegetic" (Harris 133), a narrative when the character (Holly) exists within each character's world and has her own at the same time. This versatility of settings with multi genres in one novel enriches the text with different perspectives.

1.3 Chronotope

Chronotope is a mathematical application mentioned by Albert Einstein in his relativity theory. Chronos means time, while topos indicates space. Generally, it is a subjective term that depends on the observer's position.



Mikhail Bakhtin applied the term in the literature, especially in novels. He noticed a connection that bound people and events with space and time (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* 84) . Literary Chronotope investigates how space and time are vital forces in a narrative.

In 1973 *Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics* , Bakhtin established the practical approaches to Chronotopes on four distinctive levels. They should have : (1) narrative and plot-generating significance, (2) symbolic relevance, (3) a basis for distinguishing generic types, and (4) semantic meaning (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* 250-1). Bakhtin's methods helped the scholars to apply minor and major Chronotopes of different genres with Chronotopic motifs (Morson and Emerson 374). In contrast, some speak of micro, incidental, local, and significant (Ladin 215), while others speak of adjacent and basic Chronotopes (Vlasov 44-5).

In the *Fleshing out the chronotope*, Jay Ladin mentions the substantial Levels of Chronotopes: The Micro-Chronotopes, which constitute smaller language units than sentences. According to Ladin, language is:

charged with chronotopic energy,... and the vitality of language grows, in part, out of the tension between the 'centrifugal' chronotopic implications of individual words and phrases, and the 'centripetal' forces, such as syntax, that subordinate these centrifugal energies to articulate predominant meanings. (Ladin, 216)



In Bakhtin's concluding remarks in *Forms of Time and the Chronotope* he stated that:

We have been speaking so far only of the major chronotopes, those that are most fundamental and wide-ranging. But each such chronotope can include within it an unlimited number of minor chronotopes; in fact,... any motif may have a specific chronotope of its own. Within the limits of a single work and the total literary output of a single author, we may notice a number of different chronotopes and complex interactions among them, specific to the given work or author; it is common moreover for one of these chronotopes to envelope or dominate the others. (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* 252)

To Bakhtin, the motif and Chronotope share the same meaning. He conversely employed the Chronotope of meeting with 'the motif of meeting (97). Bakhtin elaborates on several examples of minor Chronotopes in *The Dialogic Imagination*, such as the Chronotope of the salon, road, public square, threshold, Castle, and provincial town. Bart Keunen defined those 26 Chronotopes as: "four-dimensional mental images, combining the three spatial dimensions with the time structure of temporal action" (Keunen 421). Moreover, Morson and Emerson described them as "congealed event,... condensed reminder of the kind of time and space that typically functions there" (Morson and Emerson 374).

Major or Dominant Chronotopes are literary levels of chronotype that permit



the reader to a predominant expression. They bind the efforts of local chronotopes in the one narrative (Ladin 215). Scholars like ; Nele Bemong, Pieter Borghart, Michel De Dobbeleer, and Bart Keunen did not speculate a transitional level between minor and generic Chronotopes. In fact , they equate the dominant Chronotope's status with the minor. Major Chronotope is subjective;the emotional image left is the constructed dominant impression "the reader's ideologically restrained imagination,... be clearly distinguished from the text surface" (Bemong et al. 10). Generic Chronotopes are created within the process of reading a literary text. The reader fantasized an analogous impression as major and minor Chronotopes. These Chronotopes: "can be abstracted from the individual works in which they appear and serve as the basis for categorisation and comparison for those works" (Ladin, 232). Bakhtin recognized Chronotope as "a formally constitutive category of literature" (Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination 84).

Bart Keunen identifies teleological or Monological Chronotopes as a methodical structure that can divide the latter into more conceptual categories. This conceptual level portrays the traditional tales by moving the entire plot toward its finale (Keunen). The conflict is like an exterior obstacle during a hero's journey toward his equilibrium state



1.4 Chronotope in The Bone clocks:

In the form of time and chronotope in the novel 1973, Bakhtin analyse the symbolic meaning of Chronotope by tracing the evaluation of European's novels. He started from Greek's writings to Francois Rabelais (1483-1553), the French Renaissance writer, considered the modern novel's creator (Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination 85). The essay clarifies the symbolic meaning of the concept:

chronotope, functioning as the primary means for materializing time in space, emerges as a center for concretizing representation, as a force giving body to the entire novel. All the novel's abstract elements – philosophical and social generalizations, ideas, analyses of cause and effect – gravitate toward the chronotope ... permitting the imaging power of art to do its work. Such is the representational significance of the chronotope.(250)

According to Bakhtin, time and space images are not temporal or spatial indicators. They infuse a significant meaning of images within the novel. They also can present an alternative dimension of reality . (Bemong et al. 36). Space and time are woven: In the literary artistic chronotope, “spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time as it were thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history.” (Bakhtin, The Dialogical Imagination 84)



Bakhtin believes that time and space are inseparable. Chronotope will allow the reader an opportunity to understand the novel's significance. The information in literary works portrays the character's picture. Thus , Chronotope enables the possibility to describe the character's encounters in a certain period and at a particular place. To Bakhtin, a narrative consists of events and discourses created in a fictional world through Chronotope. In literature, there are two ways to present space; the protagonist's depictions of his immediate horizon. And the outside area, which is the stable environment in the narrative. (143-144). Therefore , space is a vital force in the story. It is an independent entity observed from different perspectives (144).

Chronotope analyses the spatial and temporal references on a larger scale. There are five standard definitions of Chronotope explained in Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotope: Reflections, Applications, Perspectives: Micro-Chronotope, Minor-Chronotope, Major or Dominant Chronotope, Generic Chronotope, and Technological Chronotope. Thus it is crucial to understand the setting in The Bone Clocks since it demonstrates the plot's progression and establishes its background.

1.4.1 Minor Chronotope :

Minor Chronotope investigates the intertextual connections with the current cultural relevance and historical significance. Mitchell employs the Chronotope of the Castle, Encounter, Road, and provincial town to add multiple layers of



space in the novel, to provoke various emotional responses from the reader. The Castle, for example, invokes a specific emotional response. To Bakhtin, : "The castle is saturated through and through with a time that is historical in the narrow sense of the word, that is, the time of the historical past... and is a constant reminder of past events" (Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination 245-246). It has a specific image to Holly: "ROCHESTER CASTLE" (Mitchell, the Bone Clocks 49). It is a reminder of the disturbance past that Holly encounters in Kent. It reminds her of the painful, fractured memories while escaping. The Anchorites' attack and her friends' dreadful assassinations are all events she wished to forget.

The Rochester Castle is reminiscent of Holly's adventure in her childhood. Rochester Castle has a cultural relevance to English heritage. It has a rich history of conflicts, from Hasting battle in 1080 to the fictitious fight between the Anchorites and Horologists. Historically the Castle was inhabited by knights who defended its siege over different historical periods. Rochester Castle signifies the resistance to oppression since Holly confronts the Anchorites and refuses to surrender till the end. Yet, The historical context of Rochester Castle had a negative connotation due to the recurrent theme of war and devastation.

There is cultural dialogic between the text and the reader in The Bone Clocks. Holly believes the Castle is : "like a giant model, and a big black lion guards the iron bridge. ... The girders groan as trucks go over, and my feet are aching" (49). This intertextuality in narrative innovates the gothic genre. The Bone Clocks



hold many gothic features, including bloody violent creatures, the secret chambers, and a lady in trouble. Mitchell employs this spatial reference to generate specific cultural, historical, and social experiences. Rochester Castle in *The Bone Clocks*, like Manderley in *Rebecca*, represents historical oppression. These gothic settings bind the female protagonist to the apparitions of a violent past. According to *Schehrazade Revisited*, such spaces highlight patriarchal domination and offer a narrative opportunity for women to face it through emotional intelligence.

(Moosa and Ismael 3-4):

Other characters use the Castle to symbolize a view of their epoch. In Ed and Holly's dialogue, the reader can identify the time of incidents since the character uses words that reflect their reign : "castle builders or canal diggers or druids. Scargill's arguing for the economics of Fantasy Island and the politics of Bullshit Mountain" (36). His statement indicates the spirit of the economic depression in England during the eighties. He mentioned Arthur Scargill, who led the miner strike against Thatcher's oppressive policy toward the laborers in 1984.

The Encounter To Bakhtin, the Chronotope of meeting or encountering is : "marked by a higher degree of intensity in emotions and values" (Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination* 243). At age seven, Holly meets Miss Constantin, the Anchorite, who tends to be her imaginary friend. The reader can sense the intensity of this encounter through Holly's feelings at the meeting:



I didn't scream or freak out. Sure, I was shaking, but even in my fear, I felt it was like a puzzle or a test. There was nobody in my room, but someone was speaking to me. So, as calm as I could, I asked the lady if she was a ghost. "Not a ghost," said the lady who wasn't there, "but a visitor to your mind. That's why you can't see me" I asked what my visitor's name was. Miss Constantin. (Mitchell, *The Bone Clocks* 19)

The purpose of this meeting is to elaborate Holly's transcendence since it occurs in her private room. Miss Constantin violates Holly's privacy which indicates that Holly is unprotected from the Anchorite At age 15, Holly encounters Esther Little, "the crazy old woman" (27). She is confused: "like rewind on an old-style DVD, showing one frame every eight, sixteen, thirty-two, sixty-four ... Too fast. Slow down. Too slow" (442). Esther introduces Holly to a new dimensional world. She cannot distinguish between reality and hallucination. Thus, the reader can identify the intense feeling of Holly: Why's my mind doing this to me now? We head towards a picture hanging in a sharp corner, of a man like a saint from Bible times, but his face has no eyes. I'm inches away now. There's a black spot on the 118 saint's forehead, a bit above where the eyebrows meet. It's growing. The spot's a dot. The dot's an eye. Then I feel one on my own forehead, in the same place, but I'm not quite sure I'm still Holly Sykes, not exactly, though if I'm not me, who else could I be? (45)



Another short encounter in the novel is between Holly and Hugo in Switzerland.

They do not know how to act with each other :

love wants round the-clock care; protection; rings, vows, joint accounts; scented candles on birthdays; life insurance. Babies. Love's a dictator. I know this, yet the blast furnace in my ribcage roars You You You You You You just the same... "It feels perfect," I tell her . (168)

Nevertheless, after this encounter, Hugo makes a fatal choice in meeting Miss Constantine in the chapel at Cambridge University. She plants the seeds of doubt in him and convinces him that if he seeks immortality, he will learn how to cheat death and escape from time: "What is born must one day die. So says the contract of life, yes? I am here to tell you, however, that in rare instances this iron clause may be ... rewritten" (94). She shows him how to be immortal by feeding on children's souls. It is like "Black wine", Hugo describes this encounter as "real, live Faustian pact" (180); his purpose in life becomes clear. His encounter with Constantine transforms him into an Anchorite; "whatever I do with my life, however much power, wealth, experience, knowledge, or beauty I'll accrue, I, too, will end up like 119 this vulnerable old man. When I look at Brigadier Reginald Phil by, I'm looking down time's telescope at myself" (116). Like the controversial unveiling of Irish peasant violence in Synge's plays, the chronotope of the encounter in *The Bone Clocks* shocks readers into confronting painful truths beneath superficial realities. Synge's rejection of an "ideal



Irishman” parallels Mitchell’s refusal of utopian views of power; both authors embrace disturbing realism to undermine dominant expectations (Moosa and Ismael2–3).

The RoadThe road and the encounter chronotope share many similar features. Throughout the novel, Holly wanders in different places, meeting total strangers. Hot Spell, the first chapter, is presented with picaresque traits in meeting many different characters and going through advantage in her trip to Kent Marshland. The spatial references in this chapter indicate an exact historical period: "I walk and walk and walk away from Gravesend towards the Kent marshes ... To my right, the A2 roars away over the marshes. Old Mr. Sharkey says it's built over a road made by the Romans in Roman time" (22). These multitemporal places expose the destructive impact of war. Thus, these walks determine Holly's lifes since she meets her future husband Ed. Crispin experiences the same incidents. In his trip to Iceland with Holly, he links the spatial references with its cultural connection. David Mitchell hints at these actual places without directly describing them. He mentions them and lets the reader imagine them. The Northern Island is defined with : not telephone pole, not a power line, not a tree, not a shrub, not a sheep, not a crow, not a fly, just a few tufts of coarse grass and a lone novelist. The valley in The Fall of the House of Usher... The few glaciers I've seen previously were grubby toes unworthy of the name—Langjökull is vast ... The visible skull of an ice planet smooshed onto earth. (321 - 322)



Thus, it's an opportunity for the reader to vision these places and visit them mentally

The Provincial town The provincial town indicates the character's idyllic time at a particular place. Bakhtin maintains it as :

such towns are the locus for cyclical everyday time. Here there are no events, only 'doings' that constantly repeat themselves. Time here has no advancing historical movement; it moves rather in narrow circles of the day, of the week, of the month, of a person's entire life .(Bakhtin, DialogicImagination 248).

This illustration fits the spatial reference to Gravesend, where Holly spends summer days at age 15. There is no effect of time on this town; every day is like the day before and after . Here Holly is happy as she picks strawberries every day: "Strawberry picking's boring work, sure, but it's calming, too, compared to bar work. It's nice being out in the open air. There's birds, and sheep, and the sound of a tractor somewhere, and the students' chattering, though that dies away after a bit'" (Mitchell, The BoneClocks 80).

Holly enjoys wandering in nature repeatedly, and this never-ending loop may last forever unless something happens and breaks the loop. Bakhtin asserts the importance of such distractions; otherwise, time will keep repeating itself : "here there are no 'meetings' and no 'partings'. It is a viscous and sticky time that drags itself slowly through space and therefore it cannot serve as the primary time in the



novel" (Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination 121 248). Therefore , with the Anchorites attack, she moves out of the city. For that reason, Gravestone, the provincial town, becomes Holly's happy memory.

There is another spatial reference but with a personal connection. Kent is a distinctive city in Mitchell's life , since he got his M.A degree from Kent University in a postmodern novel. Thus, this city has a authentic donation for Holly and Mitchell.

The rural nature of Kent is mentioned with loving terms: "THE SUN'S WARM on my neck and a salty breeze has picked up. Down in the narrow channel between Kent and the Isle of Sheppey a trawler's blasting its honker" (Mitchell, The Bone Clocks 65). It differs from Ed's description of the Green Zone, the American Base in Iraq,: "the Green Zone, ... see a bullet-riddled corpse plummeting to earth and getting barbecued by Young Republicans" (198). This space illustrates the difference between a peaceful, calm, stable English environment and Iraq's explosive state. Ed goes to the Green Zone to cover military operations, it: "ten-square-kilometer fortress maintained by the U.S. Army and its contractors to keep out the reality of post invasion Iraq and preserve the illusion of a kind of Tampa, Florida, in the Middle East." (Mitchell, The BoneClocks 204). The city is : "the elevators haven't worked since 2001— the second, and the third. Through the window I looked across the oil-black Tigris at the Green Zone, lit up like Disneyland in Dystopia" (242). Such description provokes the reader to witness



the chaos of the American invasion

and Ed's dissatisfaction with Western policy toward the Middle East.

Rottnest Island in Australia is another rural spatial reference mentioned in the novel , where time is static: "It keeps reappearing at odd angles and in wrong sizes, but 122 refuses to let me arrive. There's a hill in Through the Looking-Glass that does the same until Alice stops trying to arrive there—maybe I'll try the same. What'll I think about, to distract myself?" (296-297). The Island resists modernity stepping in a pointless circle of time. This circle broke when Holly noticed the Noongar spirits who freed Holly and Crispin from the dull time on the Island:

White fella made Wadjemup a prison for Noongar. F'burning bush, like we always done, White fella ship us to Wadjemup. F'fighting at White fella, White fella ship us to Wadjemup. Chains. Cells. Coldbox. Hotbox. Years. Whips. Work. Worst thing is this: Our souls can't cross the sea. So when the prison boat takes us from Fremantle, our soul's torn from out body. Sick joke. So when come to Wadjemup, we Noongar we die like flies. (302)

The Threshold /The Crisis It is a metaphorical chronotope indicating the drastic transformation in the the protagonist's life. Bakhtin considers it as a:

highly charged with emotion and value... and is connected with a decision that changes a life or an indecisiveness that fails to change a life... It is the main



places where crisis events occur, the falls, the 123 resurrections, renewals, epiphanies, decision that determine the whole life of a man .(Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination 248)

In *The Bone Clock*, the characters often find themselves at a threshold. Ed Brubeck's flashback from Iraq haunts his soul . He tried to make a brave decision maker to reconcile his domestic. He believes the wedding guests are fortunate to be in such stable environment: "The world's default mode is basic indifference. It'd like to care, but it's just got too much on at the moment." (Mitchell, *The Bone clocks* 189). His job as a war journalist obliges him to expose the "a mass shooting, a bomb, a whatever, is written about, then at least it's made a tiny dent in the world's memory. Someone, somewhere, sometime, has a chance of learning what happened. And, just maybe, acting on it. Or not. But at least it's there"(189).

Holly warns him to break up with him , if he neglects his family. Ed knows the consequences of his choice to leave his family, but he knows the importance of the written word in exposing reality: "I'm an addict, Holly. Life is flat and stale when I'm not working. What Brendan denied implying yesterday, it's true. The whole truth, nothing but the truth. I ... I'm a war-zone junkie. And I don't know what to do about it' " (258).

4.4.2 Major/Dominan Chronotope:

It is an outline of the dominant impression that the reader can entrust. The



Bone Clocks contains many different major chronotope. According to Bakhtin, the construction of Holly, Hugo, and Ed's personalities is a "course of someone seeking true knowledge" (Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination 130). The three characters gain authentic knowledge about the world around them through their journey. Their self-knowledge is identified as a "seeker path" or "platonic scheme" (130). It is an essential element of the self-conscious in Hellenistic and Roman Mythology, and implied in autobiographical novels. Mitchell lets the protagonist experiences tests to determine his ethical choice. There are specific references to time dimensions in the story:

Hot Spell is a concrete reference to the Thatcherian era, indicating the exact historical period without referring to a precise year. There is a real connection with reality in the story: "Outside the library, a bunch of union men are collecting money in buckets for the striking miners with Socialist Workers holding signs saying COAL NOT DOLE and THATCHER DECLARES WAR ON THE WORKERS"(Mitchell, The BoneClocks 14). It is an explicit reference to 1984 when mine workers rioted against the British coal industry and the governmental restriction of the union's power.

In chapter two, Myrrh is Mine, Its Bitter Perfume, the reader can know it is the Christmas holiday since the title is taken from a Christmas carol song, 'we three kings'. This day witnessed Hugo's transformation after signing the contract with the Anchorites.



The Weeding Bash chapter references “Paul Bremer III announced Saddam Hussein’s capture to loud cheers last December” (207). The places : “the Green Zone when I go back to Baghdad”(189), and “Midway between Baghdad and Fallujah we reached the town of Abu Ghraib”(214) are actual places and events that took place in Iraq in 2004.

In Sheep Head, the last chapter, Holly is an older woman. Her narrative reflects the passing of time : “Youth is a horse, and maturity a charioteer” (338). She never mentioned her age, yet her maturity reflects her age. In addition, the reader can identify it is an apocalyptic time due to the shortage of natural resources: “the inevitable result... population growth and lies about oil reserves”(449).

In The Bone Clocks the timeline is derived from events and memories its characters. It holds the chronotope feature as “the seeker’s passage goes through a series of philosophical schools with their various tests, and the marking of this path by temporal divisions determined by their own biographical projects” (Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination 130). It highlights the moments that indicate the rebirth and crisis within the major Chronoptope of The Bone Clocks.

Consequently, the narrative structure functions as: “adventure novel of ordeal” (Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination 86). Adventure time constantly changes the text’s time structure whenever something new happens to the protagonist. When protagonists meet a person, they develop unusual feelings, creating a new



subplot within the novel: “often very detailed descriptions of specific features of countries, cities, structures of various kinds, works of art, the habits and customs of the population and/or various exotic and marvelous animals” (88). The Boneclocks portrays characters with a world, times, events, and people they encounter during their experiences.

4.4.3 Generic Chronotope:

It determines which minor chronotope is motivic and establishes a major chronotope . They both form the generic chronotope. In The Bone Clocks, Generic chronotope is the provincial town. The familiar space type of minor chronotope with adventure novel and everyday life's details would be an example of major chronotope.

Different minor and major chronotopes create additional world images with their structure. Therefore, they enrich the plot with genres such as Bildungsroman, climate fiction, thriller, and fantasy.

David Mitchell discusses contemporary cultural inequalities and the abusive ecological practices of current policies. Horologist's war is a metaphorical one to discuss cosmopolitanism, but in an innovative way.

The novel discusses the overexploitation of natural resources and the destructive impact of technology. In addition to that, The Boneclocks raises issues such as ageism, racism, and classicism to demonstrate humanity's interconnectedness



Conclusion:

In *The Bone Clocks*, Mitchell uses chronotope to focus on British society during the eighties. He criticises the administration of Margret Thatcher since she transforms English society into a competitive one. This political policy causes the middle class's frustration and tension. Holly Skys belongs to a middle-class family, who witnesses an invisible war in society. The novel overlaps Chronotopes from 1981 to 2043, moving across temporal and spatial dimensions. They cover accurate contemporary references and imaginary ones providing the reader with a coherent world made up of several temporal and spatial indicators. Chronotope is used in *The Bone Clocks* to expose socio-cultural and historical contexts of the conventional era that governed the structure of English society during the eighties. In addition to class war, Mitchell warns the world of resource war that will cause human extinction. The Anchorite and Horolglot war is a symbolic one that portrays the bleak future of humanity due to the consumption of world resources.

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