

The Warning Messages of Jeanne DuPrau's *The City of Ember* to the World with Reference to Gil Kenan's Film Adaptation: The Theory of Conspiracy

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Abstract

The City of Ember is a very interesting novel that is although intended for young readers, have so many layers and messages that are misunderstood. In this research, both the novel and the film adaptation are studied with the intent to decode the warning messages that the novelist and the director tried to introduce to the audience. The research studies four vital messages; the first message is that history repeats itself for the novel has many allusions to the history of Jews and their painful holocaust and even goes back in history the days of Moses and the Exodus, the second message tackles the conspiracy theory that states nothing happens by accident and that everything is planned and connected hence comes the third message incarnated in the film adaptation of the novel, secret societies do exist namely the freemasons. Finally, the four messages come like a rather dark omen, Man's internal fear of the end whether the religious end represented by the apocalypse or the scientific end and the expiry of earth. Since the novel is for young readers, the author has provided a silver lining at the final message stating people always find a solution for all their problems in spite of the chronic fear.

Keywords: *The City of Ember*, film, novel, warning messages

الرسائل التحذيرية لجين دبرا في رواية مدينة امبو مع الاشارة الى الفلم المقتبس عنها
لجل كنعان : نظرية المؤامرة

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الخلاصة

ان رواية مدينة امبر تح مل في طياتها الكثير من الرسائل التحذيرية الامر الذي جعله احد اهم الرويات التي تدرس ضمن منهج المرحلة المتوسطة في الولايات المتحدة. توم هانكس الممثل الامريكي تبنى الرواية وانتجها فلما من اخراج جل كيناين الا ان الفلم لم يلاقى النجاح الذي شهدته الرواية ربما لكثرة الرسائل المبطنة التي يرسلها الفلم. الهدف من هذا البحث تسليط الضوء على الرسائل التي حاولت كل من مؤلفة الرواية ومخرج الفلم ايصالها الى الناس. تركز البحث في اربعة رسائل: الرسالة الاولى هي ان التاريخ يعيد نفسه وكيف ان هذه الرواية تجسد تاريخ اليهود ومحرقه ا ليهود رجوعا الى تاريخهم القديم منذ عهد موسى و الألواح، الرسالة الثانية نظرية المؤامرة وكيف انه لا توجد صدف بل ان كل شيء مدروس وتصل ببعضه البعض اما الرسالة الثالثة التي تجسدت في الفلم وليس في الرواية وهي فكرة وجود المجتمعات السرية وخصوصا الماسونية، الرسالة الرابعة والاخيرة ان الانسان على الرغم من خوفه الدائم من النهاية سواء يوم القيامة او الابدانة النووية الا انه يمتلك القدرة على التغلب على جميع الازمات سواء الدينية او السياسية او الاجتماعية.

Introductory

Gil Kenan is an Israeli-British-American film director and screenwriter,¹ best known for his work on the animated family horror comedy film *Monster House* 2006.² The “*City of Ember*” is Kenan’s second movie with Tom Hanks producing; released in October 2008. The film is based on the best-selling novel *City Of Ember* by Jeanne Duprau (2003)³ and its script was written by the winner of the *Distinguished Screenwriter Award* at the 2011 Austin Film Festival (AFF), Caroline Thompson.⁴ The cast of the film included two Oscar nominees (Saoirse Ronan and Bill Murray) and two Oscar winners (Tim Robbins and Martin Landau) and other starring names.⁵ But with a budget of \$55 million and \$17.9 million in the box office, a big question aroused; has Kenan’s film adaptation failed to serve the warning message of Jeanne Duprau’s book to the world or has the world misunderstood the message?

When World War II ended in 1945, Jeanne Du Prau (born 1944) was one-year-old which means that she is a war survivor. She has grown up in the 1950s burden with her age fear of what would happen next. Ironically, the future disaster that there might be a nuclear war was what people worried about at that time and still do nowadays but with higher expectations. On her website, she described how people were building bomb shelters in their back yards a matter that apparently has influenced her ideas when she wrote *Ember*; “a city built to protect the human race from a terrible threat.”⁶ “What was that terrible threat?... War? ... Disease? ... Environmental crisis? ... Aliens’ invasion? ... Zombies?... Monster? Who are the builders of the city of Ember? Why did they build it deeply underground? Why did they put 200 years instructions to escape? And why they were so sure that everything is going to be as they designed after all these years when the time comes? Who are the citizens of Ember? Do they have certain religion, nationality, race, or even a history? All these questions and more could have captivated the readers’ and audiences’ minds as it has captivated DuPrau’s and Kenan’s mind as well but in different directions. However, both of DuPrau’s novel and Kenan’s film adaptation of *the City of Ember* shared the same post-apocalypse plot “in which the Earth’s technological civilization is collapsing or has collapsed.”⁷

The story in short tracks the continuous attempts of (Lina and Doon, the two protagonist teenagers) to prevent an apocalypse event (the collapse of the electricity generator) in order to save their doomed city; a non-technological future world. The city of Ember was built as the last underground refuge for the human race. Two hundred years later, the great lamps that illuminate the city began to blink. When Lina found a piece of an old message, she started to decode the secret that will save the city. She and her friend Doon must hurry up to discover the tracks before the lights go off in Ember forever. In their journey to solve the problem, they desperately dealt with the consequences of (solving the puzzle of the instructions box left by the builders, facing the mayor and find the way out). With more than 3.5 million copies sold, DuPrau has succeeded to reflect the fear of the age of unknown threat, how to escape a coming apocalypse and how to strife in order to save others and survive in hard times. The *City of Ember* books became one of the modern-day classics especially written to young adult readers.

Hence the aim of this study in shedding the light on the success elements of this novel and expose the coded warning messages woven by Jeanne DuPrau in her book *The City of Ember* and unraveled by Gil Kenan’s film adaptation. While she was trying to set the readers’ mind free to translate their future fears and make it a global political clash of interests, he was leading them to the secret coded design hidden in an old box of instructions and make it specifically religious or in another word a Jewish related matter. Despite their different perspectives, they found in themes like the end of the world, Holocaust survivors, Masonic secret society, conspiracy theory a well-hidden setting for inspiring young adults with the sense of salvation throughout generations. To figure out that unnamed thread and deliver these warning messages to the world, the researchers will explore and discuss the secret messages embedded in *The City of Ember*; religiously, politically, socially and scientifically.

- **The First message: History repeats itself (The Holocaust survivors)**

Gil Kenan’s film adaptation of *the City of Ember* was an honest incarnation of DuPrau’s future scientific fear yet, on the other hand, it showed the religious interpretation of Jewish history. Looking for the lexical meaning of ‘ember’, the word means a small piece of burning or glowing coal or wood in a dying fire. The word came in the bible as a symbol of hidden desire and continuous spirit to strife for disposition or changing one’s state from slavery to freedom as happened with the Jews throughout history,⁸ “Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.”⁹ It also came as a symbol of guidance in the Holy Quran, surat Taha, verse 10 when Moses saw a fire and said to his family, “Stay here; indeed, I have perceived a fire; perhaps I can bring you a torch or find at the fire some

guidance.”¹⁰ And this is what Kenan as a conservative Jewish director tried to deliver for his people that they should keep the spirit up, to flame the ember of strife in order to find a solution, to find their way out of the bottleneck which has been metaphorically represented as a light bulb on the book cover.

He was able to take the story back to the historical and religious allegory for the Jews in exile and their exodus as came in Torah.¹¹ The lost children of Israel were led by Moses the messenger and his brother Aaron to leave the underworld of Egypt, escape the tyranny of the Pharaoh, cross the sea, bring the fire or the ember from the mountain of Senai in reference to the commandments or in other words the holy instructions or guidance, fall in sin and condemned to be lost again. This allegorical plot has continued in modern age represented with the holocaust in the two world wars; as history repeats itself. According to Tom Von Malder, Kenan tried to revive the memory of the holocaust survivors who were located in an underground city that was designed to last 200 years. The "escape" instructions were carefully coded and hidden in a closed box (protected) to go from mayor to mayor. The box was lost after the seventh mayor and the time has come to find it and save the people.¹² In Judaism, the box refers to the Tefillin (also called phylacteries meaning "to guard, protect"), are a set of small black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah. They are worn by male observant Jews during weekday morning prayers. The arm-tefillin, is placed on the upper arm, and the strap wrapped around the arm/hand, hand and fingers; while the head-tefillin, is placed above the forehead. The Torah commands that they should be worn to serve as a "sign" and "remembrance" that God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt.¹³

The two teenagers Lina Mayfield and her friend Doon Harrow took the responsibility to save the City from its apocalypse (failing generator) and to figure out the puzzle of the box. According to the Jewish law children of Israel should take the covenant at age of thirteen for boys (become bar mitzvah) and twelve for girls (become bat mitzvah). They become responsible for their actions and are able to participate in all areas of Jewish community life.¹⁴ In DuPrau's novel chapter one (The Assignment Day), she said that "grown people did their work, and younger people, until they reached the age of twelve, went to school. On the last day of their final year, which was called Assignment Day, they were given jobs to do."¹⁵ For Lina to be the new messenger of the city on that day, the journey will take its allegorical order to save the city, take people out of Ember, and cross the river to the other side of light.

- **The Second message: Nothing happens by accident (Conspiracy Theory)**

In his book *A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America*, Michael Barkun, the political scientist, stated that conspiracy theories rely on the view that the universe is governed by design, and embody three principles: nothing happens by accident, nothing is as it seems, and everything is connected.¹⁶

Nothing happens by accident. In her opening scene 'Instructions', DuPrau introduced the dialogue between the chief builder and the assistant builder and revealed their worry about the future of the City of Ember that was "just built and not yet inhabited."¹⁷ They designed the timeline of peoples' life by giving them two hundred and twenty years to live. They also put a set of instructions locked in a timed box determining their fate, how long they should stay, when they should leave, how will they know, what to do when the time comes, and whom to trust the secrets.

"They must not leave the city for at least two hundred years," said the chief builder. "Or perhaps two hundred and twenty." "Is that

long enough?" asked his assistant. "It should be. We can't know for sure." "And when the time comes," said the assistant, "how will they know what to do?" "We'll provide them with instructions, of course," the chief builder replied. "But who will keep the instructions? Who can we trust to keep them safe and secret all that time?"¹⁸

When the time has come, Lina the messenger and the chosen one for this task, found the box and piece of the instructions which have been hidden for two hundred and twenty years. With her friend Doon, they found the secret exit of the city and cross the river out to save their people.

Nothing seems as it is. According to Mariam Webster, conspiracy theory is "a theory that explains an event or situation as the result of a secret plan by usually powerful people or groups."¹⁹ The Oxford English Dictionary also defines conspiracy theory as "the belief that a secret but powerful organization is responsible for an event"²⁰ In chapter 20 "The Last Message", the secret plan of the City of Ember was unraveled to be a scientific project designed by a group of scientists who "have spent years and years making this plan."²¹ They thought that the world is doomed and people should have good training to protect the human race from close disaster. As came in the notebook found by Lina and Doon, people of different age men, women, and babies all strangers to one another were recruited in this experiment to make false families with no memories or history.

"They want us to forget everything about the lives we've learned the places we've lived. The babies must grow up with no knowledge of a world outside, so that they feel no sorrow for what they have lost."²²

Finally, everything is connected. In other words, the whole families and characters in the story are not really related; they have no blood or history relationships yet connected in one virtual world which they considered home and shared the same fate. In reference to the new world order, the whole world is going to be controlled and connected in one world.

- **The Third Message: Secret Societies Do Exist**

The novel starts with the Builders with capital **B** to refer to those scientists who created and built a secret society underground. The most famous secret society whose members are nicknamed the Builders are the freemasonry.²³ Although the novel carries many Masonic symbols like the Builders, Believers, secrete, the blue color, stones, the light, underground, pioneers, etc. were craftily interwoven and hidden that can be overlooked by readers not familiar with Freemasonry. The movie, in the other hand, seems like dipped in the river of Freemasonry from beginning to end.

Freemasonry is a very ancient fraternity of stone builders and craftsmen that goes back in history to the builders of the Babel Tower and King Solomon's Temple.²⁴ Freemasons had the knowledge of geometry and physics thus they were able to transform small drawings into large buildings that can defy gravity and time.²⁵ This knowledge gave them distinctiveness and prestige so they kept their knowledge secrete from outsiders vowing never to tell their secrete knowledge nor writing anything about it.²⁶ The freemasonry grew to be a secret society of builders who relayed on secret handshakes, symbols and codes for communication.²⁷ The Masonic symbolic system is highly developed and many of their symbols are well known like the blue color, initiation rituals, pyramids, medallions, and the all Seeing Eye many of which one can see on the back of the one – dollar bill. Some symbols are old and borrowed from ancient belief systems namely the Egyptian, Babylonian, Jewish and Christian beliefs while others are purely Masonic and craft related like the square and the

compass.²⁸ Many describe the fraternity as "a science of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols."²⁹

All old masons were operative masons, masons who actually design and build landmarks³⁰ and it was not until the eighteenth century that scientists and elites from all fields of life joined the fraternity moving it to another level, a more philosophical, theoretical level and those masons came to be called the Speculative Masons.³¹ It was in 1717 London that the first Masonic Lodge was founded to honor the brotherhood of craftsmen of all professions whose aim is to "make good men better."³² Those elites gave the fraternity its symbolic depth, enriched it with a plan, made it sacred by setting fraternity initiation rituals, awarded degrees after completion each level of rituals, and finally assigned a role to be fulfilled.

Since Freemasonry symbolism relays heavily on The builders of King Solomon's Temple, their most cherished architectural achievement, the lodge is designed as the alter of the Temple that consists of two pillars called the pillars of the Porch³³ and a windy staircase that represents Jacob's ladder to heaven or the source of illumination, the sun.³⁴ The roof is covered with a blue canopy representing the sky imprinted on it the stars, sun, and moon.³⁵ The lodge is designed as a circle because it stands for the world, the globe.³⁶ The circle does not only stand for the world and universe, the circle with the point in the middle represents the union of man and women³⁷ where the point is the phallus that is the male organ that has been worshiped by many ancient religion especially the legend of Osiris while the circle represent the clitoris the female organ. Freemasons incorporated the point within the circle in many of their landmarks like fountains with an obelisk in the middle, in some cases the circle with the point in the middle is placed between two pillars each pillar represent one of the pastors of Masonry John the Baptist and John the Evangelist represented capital B and Capital E.³⁸

The Masonic lodge is the world of the freemasons, they cherish the sky and the sun since all religions and every country in the world of ancient world offered a sun – worship officers' positions within the lodge stand for the sun rise, mid and set positions and the movement is circular like the movement of the sun.³⁹

Becoming a mason involves going through three levels or degrees. The first degree is the Apprentice in which the candidate should attend a ceremony in an altar before him is set a sacred text or a book of instructions each candidate according to his belief system upon which he recites an oath of secrecy.⁴⁰ The candidate is treated as a raw stone roughened by ignorance and darkness thus he is given a ruler and a gavel as tools for improving himself from a rough stone to a polished stone; a stone perfected by knowledge, purification, and light. He should use the ruler to measure "time well employed"⁴¹ and the gravel "purification of the heart."⁴² During the second level which is called Fellow Crafts, the Apprentice is given tools; square, level and plumb, to perfect his character and cleans it from all vice and darkness using a square that stands for morality, level that stands for equality of station and plumb that stands for rectitude of conduct.⁴³ He is also given the Masonic apron. In the final level he becomes the third-degree master Mason. After proving his craft, and perfection of his character, the overseer makes a circuit by his right hand to represent the movement of the sun then he bestows the Masonic light of knowledge and truth.⁴⁴ In this stage the mason is given a trowel that stands for brotherly love⁴⁵ and vow to work because for the freemasons "labor is worship."⁴⁶ In the Scottish Rite they use double three 33 to represent the highest levels in freemasonry since the double three represented the holy trinity, Christ was thirty-three when he was crucified, and his miracles were recorded as being thirty-three in Christianity. In Judaism Jacob's children were thirty three, the seal of Solomon and Star of David are two triangles with each triangle representing a three, and finally the human body has thirty-three vertebrate in his spine.⁴⁷

All this intensive secretive rituals and teachings have been interpreted as means for controlling the world hence emerged the Masonic-related conspiracy theories; the New World

Order and The Protocols of priors of Zion, causing the apocalypse through worshipping Satan, and the invasion of popular culture.⁴⁸

The Protocols of Elders of Zion is a document found in Russia that aims at enabling the Jews to control the world using freemasonry.⁴⁹ This assumed collaboration between the Jews and freemasonry is called Judeo – Masonic Conspiracy.⁵⁰

New World Order conspiracy is also theory based on the ideas of the Illuminati, a secret society within the freemasonry, aimed at designing and creating a country ruled by new orders to create a Utopia in a world of chaos. The theory has it that both the freemasons and the Illuminati were able to achieve their goals by designing, and making America, their New World.⁵¹ The very core of the country, Washington D.C. is designed, executed and ruled by freemasons.⁵² The founding fathers of the United States were mostly freemasons; they signed the declaration of independence and helped form the states' constitution.⁵³ The United States carries the same code of ethics of the fraternity: "equality, mutual responsibility, religious tolerance, personal freedom and trust among men."⁵⁴

Since freemasonry believes in religious tolerance and derive much of its symbolism from all religions over the world they are accused of being Satanic in nature. Most holy books depict the tree of knowledge in Eden as being forbidden for man yet Adam and Eve sought this forbidden knowledge and consequently they were driven out of heaven for trying to obtain it. Freemasonry encourages seeking all knowledge thus are associated with occult and devil worshipping for defying god and asking for more knowledge. Lucifer, Satan, is called the light bearer so many associations were made between Lucifer and the Masonic light.⁵⁵

Popular culture includes the media, movies, literature, arts and songs and without doubt, Masonic symbols have invaded popular culture and this novel and its movie adaption is a living proof of this claim.⁵⁶

After this elementary background about Freemasonry, one can see the movie from the freemason's perspective.

The first scene in the film shows a group of elite builders whom the narrator calls architects, scientists and engineers are all wearing blue decide to keep their members safe from extension in a secret hideout underground and to come out only when it is safe for them. These builders are clear representations of speculative masons who are accused of building America as their New World. Ever since its formation, freemasonry was considered as a threat to all countries thus anti – Masonic movement aroused. Many countries banned and forbidden secret societies and some countries like Germany actually prosecuted 80.000 to 200.000 freemasons during the Holocaust.⁵⁷ Freemasonry became a secret society because of this war against them.

This hideout, Ember, is designed as a circle. The aerial footage of the city shows it to be like the Masonic circle with a point in the middle. Since the city is underground they have no sky but a canopy of lights just like the Masonic lodge canopy. Unlike the novel's school setting, the assignment day of graduate students takes place in a gathering hall with an entrance designed with two pillars and winding staircase. On top of each pillar, there is a sun-shaped light. In front of the entrance, there is a circular fountain with a statue in the middle. The statue is of adult male and female with a child reaching frantically to the sun-shaped light. The movie provides an unmistakable Masonic lodge setting with all its symbolic references enhanced when the Masonic rituals of initiation begin.

The Mayor places the book of the City of Ember, depicted in the movie as a sacred and secret book kept locked and can be read only by few including the mayor, then recites the oath as candidates of the Masonic lodge reciting their oath from their sacred text. In the novel, there is no such oath nor the Book of the City is that sacred. On the contrary, it is taught in school as part of the students' education.

Doon and Lina, the candidates are given their jobs as assignments they should train to learn and maintain, not based on their skill. Both are given the tools of their jobs and are assigned a master to teach them just like the first level of freemasonry, the Apprentice. At the beginning they are rough stones lack the knowledge and education of their profession. Their education goal is to find the Masonic light, a way out of the darkness of Ember. Thus they start their education by deciphering the instruction left by the elites printed on a circle – shaped eaten up a map at the same time their encounter with the darkness of ignorance represented by their failure to fix the generator and the darkness of corruption represented by the Mayor. They had no knowledge of how their city operates, how electricity is functioning, they don't know there is a world they are buried underneath, nor a river that runs underneath their city. They were not confronted with moral corruption till they face Lizzie, the Mayor, the chief guard, Looper and the huge mole were all stealing their food. In the movie they had to make drastic moral choices, Lina refuses Lizzie's can of food as a price for her silence, she walks straight to the chief guard to report the Mayor stealing and they confront the greedy mole in the storerooms. In the novel Lina takes cans of food and keeps silent, she goes with Doon to report the Mayor, and there is no mole in the novel.

In this stage, they become Fellow Crafts. To reach the thirds degree, they reach the generator room marked by two light bolts facing each other representing electricity as well as the Masonic double three or thirty-three. Most of the deciphering occurs in the emergency control room after passing the second stage. They find the boats marked with capital B, the circular path of boats, and the river which they had no idea that it exists. Doon had to use the control panel using circular motion using his right hand to control the river's water flow just like the hand movement of the master mason bestowing the degree. Then after a rough journey, Doon and Lina from earth, using water came out to fresh air and light ascending the winding ladder to heaven thus reaching the Masonic light. The Mayor is eaten up by his own greed, the mole.

The movie ends with Doon and Lina trying to pass their knowledge to the people of Ember, so they tie a message on a stone that falls right into the hands of his fellow Masonic father.

Secret societies are always threatened by exposure and prosecution just like the freemasons. The city of Ember is founded to save their members from extinction yet their secrete hideout is dying. The city operates by a large generator that beats like a heart in the background. Whenever there is a climax one can hear the heart enthusiastic beats, and when there is a threat it fails and stops like a stroke in the heart that can be revived with electric shock yet sometimes it is beyond revival. Secrete society, like the generator in the city of Ember, beats in the background sometimes its beating is faint like its novel representation and sometimes it beats very loudly like the movie representation of the same society.

- **The last Message: "People find a way through just about anything."⁵⁸**

The last message in *The City of Ember* concluded all messages in one sentence wither believers or not, secret society members, ordinary humans, refugees, all people are created being able to find a solution to almost all their problems. The novel starts and ends as a longitudinal case study⁵⁹ conducted by a group of scientists on a selected, controlled and trained sample. Their exact number and ages are carefully selected and paired to form a small family. Male and female adult participants are all over sixty to make sure they will not produce children of their own flesh and blood, they are old enough to forget most of their social and cultural memories, and with the knowledge that they will not live long to rebel or protest. The male and female babies are too young in facts a few days old. The sample is called pioneers, are placed in a controlled environment underground. The environment is built

on a river, a source of energy, mild temperature and air. The city is built on the river and a generator is constructed to change water power into electricity.

The scientist had a perfect plan; they wanted to see if they can preserve human life after the expiry of earth. From the down of civilization, Man was obsessed with the idea that this world is coming to an end. Religion called this expiry of earth as doomsday or the Apocalypse, yet scientist believes it to be a natural result of using the planet so badly. As mentioned earlier, *The City of Ember* is considered an apocalyptic novel. According to the dictionary, the word Apocalypse means "uncovering"⁶⁰ and it is a religious term found in all religions although it first appeared in the New Testament, the book of Revelation denoting the destruction of all evil and the triumph of God and his true believers.⁶¹ It is also called the end of time, judgment day, or the end of the World in many world religions for example in Islam and Christianity. In the world of science, earth and the whole world will come to an end not because of a Supreme Being but simply because everything has to come to an end and they called it expiry of earth, human extension, and global catastrophe.⁶² Since there are many scientists in the world there are many theories of how the end will be just the same as in different religions stating different types of doomsday yet they all share the same end.

Whether God – made disasters or Man-made disasters the scientific people wanted to be prepared for both. In the novel, the disasters are not named yet in the movie it is war. The underground shelter lab was so vast that people believe they had a sky above them yet it is a dark sky. All buildings were made of stone to survive environmental influences. The sample was brought into ember and the exit was concealed from all of them and hidden inside a box that has a timed lock. Once the builders leave the city, the clock starts clicking for 200 and twenty years; a proper time to form generations of the population with no knowledge of anything but this lab. As lab rats, the people of ember were provided with on need to know information. They live in a city they think it is the only inhabitants of the world, it is light with electricity powered by the river yet they do not know how electricity works thus don't know how to fix it, they don't know what is a river thus cannot in common sense know that they can leave using the river. Knowledge is hidden from them deliberately because they have no books whatsoever. The library only has piles of paper clips together written by people of ember recording their experiences about things. In school they study numbers, letters and the right from wrong is in the book of ember.

The sample was never meant to stay in this environment forever thus there are clocks everywhere, all clocks are wind – up clocks, they are ticking and their references become more climax. Characters are compared to clocks like lizzee wound – up too tight that is the way she moves so fast. The irony of the clock here is that in 1947 the members of the Bulletin Of Atomic Scientist, an academic journal, published the volume of their journal with a clock on its cover to represent Doomsday clock⁶³; this clock ever since represented the "hypothetical global catastrophe as "midnight"" and the members opinion of how close the world is to midnight each year. In January 2017 for example, the journal's clock is set only two minutes and half to midnight after Donald Trump's⁶⁴ views of nuclear weapons in North Korea and Russia.

The name of the city itself means ember, which contrary to the popular believe is not fading fire, the deterioration of the environment is heating up the sample's minds enforcing them to come up with ideas. Getting an idea is generally symbolized by the light bulbs similar to the one the novel's front cover. Ember is heated coal that will spark at the end of the novel. The sample managed to find the accidentally lost instructions and managed to find their way out.

Conclusions

Both the author DuPrau and Kenan were successful in presenting the warning messages in their works yet each message require certain knowledge that should be

understood. The novel is for young readers and the film starred young actors and most of the readers and the audience are young thus lack the proper frame of mind to comprehend such messages. Many teacher's resources and guides for this novel try to direct the young reader to the idea of refugees and provide projects and activities that aim at defining the concept of the refugee with a very brief account of the modern historical overview of the concept. Other resources, however, concentrated on the idea of the world coming to an end, thus brainstorming solutions and precautions for saving the planet from expiry. The conspiracy theory and the secret societies concepts were never approached before and are left for the reader and the audience to decipher.

Endnotes

¹“Gil Kenan”(URL:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gil_Kenan). Retrieved June29, 2017.

²Monster House is a 2006 American 3D computer- film directed by Gil Kenan, produced by ImageMovers and Amblin Entertainment ,and distributed by Columbia Pictures about a neighborhood that's being terrorized by a demonic house. See (URL:[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monster_House_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monster_House_(film))). Retrieved August 5, 2017.

³She is an American writer, best known for The City of Ember, a series of novels for young people. Her works include: The City of Ember serial books (The City of Ember (2003), The People of Sparks (2004), The Prophet of Yonwood (2006), The Diamond of Darkhold (2008). She also has one fiction “ Car Trouble” (2005) and nonfiction The Earth House (1992 memoir), Adoption: The Facts, Feelings, and Issues of a Double Heritage, Cells, Cloning, Daily Life in the American Colonies. Her short stories "Pearl's Fateful Wish" included in the young adult short story collection What You Wish For, published September 2011. For more information see (URL:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeanne_DuPrau). Retrieved August 6, 2017.

⁴The writer of Edward Scissorhands (1990), The Addams Family (1991), Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey (1993), The Secret Garden (1993), The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993), Black Beauty (1994), Buddy (1997), Snow White: The Fairest of Them All (TV, 2001), Corpse Bride (2005), City of Ember (2008), Untitled Robert Zemeckis Film (2018) Todd Hertz (October 10, 2008), “City of Ember”, Christianity Today. (URL:<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2008/octoberweb-only/cityofember.html>) Retrieved June29, 2017.

⁵Harry Treadaway, Mary Kay Place, Toby Jones, Mackenzie Crook, and Marianne Jean-Baptiste.

⁶ Jeanne DuPrau's website (URL:<http://www.jeanneduprau.com/answers.shtml>). Retrieved July 7, 2017.

⁷Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction is a subgenre of science fiction, science fantasy or horror fiction literature in which the Earth's technological civilization is collapsing or has collapsed. See "Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction" in Wikipedia (URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocalyptic_and_post-apocalyptic_fiction). Retrieved July 30,2017.The word also "Denoting or relating to the time following a nuclear war or other catastrophic event."according to Oxford Dictionary(URL: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/post-apocalyptic>) Retrieved December 26,2017. See also John Joseph Collins, *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p 1.

⁸"Ember in the bible" in (URL: <http://www.knowing-jesus.com/>) Retrieved December 25,2017.

⁹The Book of Proverbs (26 :21).

(10)إِذْ رَأَى نَارًا فَقَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا لَعَلِّي آتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِقَبَسٍ أَوْ أَجْدُ عَلَى النَّارِ هُدًى

¹¹The Book of Exodus or, simply, Exodus, is the second book of the Torah and the Hebrew Bible. It tells of the events that befell the Israelites following the death of Joseph , their departure from Egypt and their wanderings in the wilderness, including the revelations at Sinai , up to their arrival at the borders of Canaan .(URL:<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+12&version=NIV>) Retrieved 30 July 2017

¹²Tom Von Malder (Jan 20, 2009), "Imagination at work: 'City of Ember,' 'Mirrors,' 'Moonlight'", Village Soup • Knox. (URL:<https://knox.villagesoup.com/p/Imagination-at-work-City-of-Ember-Mirrors-Moonlight/643099>). Retrieved August 12, 2017.

¹³The scriptural texts for tefillin are obscure in literal meaning. For example, Deuteronomy 11:18 is one of the standard texts referenced as supporting the obligation. Also in Exodus 13:1-10 and Exoduxs 13:11-16.

¹⁴Raphael Patai and Haya Bat-Itzhak, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions, volumes 1-2*(London: Routledge , 2015)P. 65.

¹⁵Jean DuPrau, *The City of Ember* (New York: Random house, 2003) p.18.

¹⁶Michael Barkun, *A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America*(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003)P.3-4.

¹⁷DuPrau, p.11.

¹⁸Ibid.,

¹⁹"Conspiracy Theory", Mariam Webster , Learner's Dictionary online.

²⁰"Conspiracy Theory", Oxford Learner's Dictionary online.

²¹Jean DuPrau, *The City of Ember*(New York: Random house, 2003) p.547.

²²Ibid., p.548.

²³ Christopher Hodapp, *Solomon's Builders: Freemasons, Founding Fathers, and the Secretes Of Washington D.C*(USA: Ulysses Press, 2007.) See also Jessica L. Harland Jacobs, *Builders Of Empire: Freemasonry and British Imperialism 1717 – 1927* (USA: University of South Carolina Press, 2007.)

²⁴Albert Gallatin Mackey, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry* (New York: Clark and Maynard, 1869) p.3.

25Mark Stavish, *Freemasonry: Rituals, Symbolism and History of The Secret Society*(USA: Llewellyn Worldwide Ltd., 2007) p.3.

²⁶Ibid, p. 20.

²⁷Ibid, p.21.

²⁸Mackey, p.70.

²⁹Ibid, p.71.

³⁰Stavish, p.5.

³¹Ibid, p.6.

³²Ibid, p.19.

³³Ibid., p. 27.

³⁴Hodapp, p. 65, see also Stavish, p. 27 – 28, and Mackey, p. 118.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Mackey, P. 105.

³⁷Ibid, p.113.

³⁸Jean – LouisDe Biasi,*Secrets and Practices of Freemasons*(USA: Llewellyn Worldwide Ltd, 2010) p. xix.

³⁹ Mackey, P 109.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p88 see also "freemasonry" Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia. Retrieved August 4,2017.

⁴¹Mackey, p 92.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid, p.5.

⁴⁴stavish, p 24.

⁴⁵Mackey, p79.

⁴⁶Ibid., p.265.

⁴⁷Hodapp, p.81.

⁴⁸"Masonic conspiracy theories," Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia, August 8,2017. See also Peter Knight, Ed.,*Conspiracy Theories In American History; Encyclopedia*. Vol 1 A – L. Oxford: ABC – CLIO, Inc, 2003.

⁴⁹Victor E.Marsden, *The protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*(N.P. The Book Tree, 1999)

⁵⁰"Judeo – Masonic Conspiracy." Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia. Retrieved August 12,2017.

⁵¹MarkDice, *New World Order: Facts and Fiction*(New York: Resistance, 2010). See also MichaelCage,*Illuminati Secrets: Unmasking the New World Order*. E – Book, Illuminati Publishing, 2015.

⁵²BBC, (YoutubeNovember 1,2015), *Freemasons Revealed New BBC Documentary 2015 Full Length HD* available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtCCcUOhs_o . accessed at June1, 2016. See also Antiquities Research Films, (YouTube March 2,2011), *Freemasons in American History Part 1 - 3*. Available at (URL:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=COJb4oV47qI>)Retrieved June1, 2016.

⁵³James Wasserman, *The Secretes Of Masonic Washington* (Vermont: Destiny Books, 2008).

⁵⁴Mackey, p5.

⁵⁵ChrisRelitz,*Antichrist Osiris: the History of the Luciferian Conspiracy*(Canada: Daniel Books, 2012).

⁵⁶KevinTucker, *Web Of Illuminati*. Tucker Inc, 2013 see also Dice, Mark.*The Illuminati In Hollywood*. San Diego: Resistance Manifesto, 2016 and Dice, Mark. Inside *the Illuminati: Evidence, Objectives, and the Methods of Operation*. E – book, 2014.

⁵⁷"Anti – Masonry" Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia. Retrieved August 12,2017.

⁵⁸Duprau,P263

⁵⁹Peter Lynn, *Methodology of Longitudinal Surveys*, (UK: JhonWiely and Sons Ltd, 2009), p11.

⁶⁰ Angus Stevenson,*Oxford Dictionary of English*, 3rded, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), P 72. See also Gwendolyn Audrey Foster, *Hoarders, Doomsday Preppers, and the Culture of Apocalypse*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2014), p.48.

⁶¹Adele Berlin , *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, 2nd ed (oxford: oxford University Press, 2011), P58.

⁶²"Global Catastrophic Risks" Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia.Retrieved December 27, 2017.

⁶³"Doomsday Clock", (URL:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doomsday_Clock. Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia) Retrieved December 27, 2017.

⁶⁴Donald John Trump (born June 14, 1946) is the 45th and current President of the United States, in office since January 20, 2017. Before entering politics, he was a businessman and television personality.Wikipedia the free online encyclopedia.Retrieved December 27, 2017.

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