

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Tom Clancy is one of the greatest American novelists; most of his works are about crime, military and espionage fiction, and techno-thriller storylines. Tom Clancy is “one of only two authors to have sold two million copies on a first printing in the 1990s. His 1989 novel *Clear and Present Danger*, sold 1,625,544 hardcover copies, making it the #1 bestselling novel of the 1980s” (“Tom Clancy Biography and Notes”). His debut novel, *The Hunt for Red October*, was also sold millions of copies on the first printing in 1984.

Tom Clancy’s novels are included into “the techno-thriller genre, suspenseful novels that rely on extensive knowledge of military technology and espionage” (“Tom Clancy”). Moreover, Tom Clancy is best-known for his ability in writing crime fiction, which definition is:

The genre of fiction that deals with crimes, their detection, criminals, and their motives. Most though not all, crime novels share a common structure. First, there is the crime, usually a murder, then there is

investigation; and finally, the outcome or judgment, often in the shape of the criminal's arrest or death ("Definition of the Crime Fiction Genre").

One of Tom Clancy's novels, *Op Center: Mission of Honor*, is a story about a group of African militiamen who kidnap a priest who spreads Catholicism in Botswana. Even though the story in the book is fiction and was published in early 2000s, it portrays a similar situation that really happened in a small African country during the late seventies until eighties.

When I read the book, I find many events that leading me as a reader to read further to know what will happen in the story. In the middle of reading, I also find some events that I do not expect to happen. Those things create a tense when I read the book, wonder to know how the story ends.

As plot is the most important element in Tom Clancy's *Op Center: Mission of Honor*, it will be suitable for me to analyse the suspense, surprise and artistic unity. According to Harry Shaw in *Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*, suspense is "a state of mental uncertainty, excitement, or indecision." Suspensus, which involves awaiting an outcome or decision, derives from Latin word that means "hanging up" and therefore left undecided. In literature, suspense refers to the anticipation of readers (or of an audience) concerning the outcome of events in a novel, story, or play. Suspense is a quality of tension in a plot which sustains interest and makes readers ask "what happens next?" (Shaw 365).

Shaw's definition of surprise is "a sudden and unexpected turn in the action occurring at the end of a work. Such a conclusion is a trick ending if it has not been previously hinted at or prepared for." (365).

As for artistic unity, he defines it as “a term applied to characters, ideas, and events that are believable, that seem worthy of approval and acceptance.” (289).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problems that are going to be analysed in this thesis are:

1. Which parts of the story act as suspense in the novel?
2. Which parts of the story act as a surprise in the novel?
3. How is the artistic unity presented in the novel?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Based on the above statement of the problem, this study is conducted with the following purposes:

1. To reveal suspense in the novel.
2. To reveal surprise in the novel.
3. To show how the artistic unity is presented in the novel.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

Internet research and library research are used during the writing of my thesis. First, Tom Clancy's *Op-Center: Mission of Honor* is read as the primary text. Then, in order to support my analysis of suspense, surprise and artistic unity of the novel, I also read as well as compile some data from the Internet, after which I make some conclusion of my analysis.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis consists of three chapters, preceded by the Table of Contents and the Abstract. The first chapter is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. The second chapter is the Analysis of Elements of Plot of Tom Clancy's *OP-Center: Mission of Honor*. The third chapter is the Conclusion. Finally, the thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices which contain the Synopsis of the Novel and the Biography of the Author.