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Fin de Siècle

# Shooting an Elephant- George Orwell

Goerge Orwell wrote Shhoting an Elephant back in those days when he was serving as a police officer in Brtish Empire in Indian Subcontinent. He was a rational and pragmatic person, but he was often caught between state obligations and his own sense of morality( Levinas). George Orwell had to follow some contesting injuctions of law. Shooting an Elephant is his narrative essay where he discussed his own experiences and his own opinions.

This story throws light on the conflicting nature of the law which was deliberately discussed in the aforementioned movement. George Orwell reminisced about his time as a police official in erstwhile Burma which was under the colonial empire. He recalled his experience of killing an elephant which proved a conscious-raising experience for him. An elephant was disturbing life in a market and someone has to control it. All people collectively wanted to get rid of that terrorizing elephant (Orwell), and Gorge had to kill it as per the collective will. Nevertheless, he felt guilty when he saw the excruciating pain on the face of the elephant after he shot it. It was all imperialism and might be considered right by all means. Later on, the author was influenced by the advent of modern ideas as he realized his mistake. He was mournful on his gruesome act. He, then, gave voice to his views in his essays and this became an eyeopener for the rest of the artists. Hence, he does follow the empire law and supposed act, but deep down he is not happy for his role as a colonial officer as his personal freedom was limited. Since Fin de Siècle was all about personal freedom and morality, so this essay really created a lasting impact on his readers. This story shows the moral dilemma where an individual is stuck between two opposite things. Even today, this moral dilemma is quite relevent as people long for times where individuals were caged to this extent (Feinberg).

Moreover, this essay represents the characteristics of the nineties. This shooting of elephant shows the Affection towards how things were before the war and revolution. Even Orwell highlights in his essay that “ there is a mask and your face grows to fit it" is the exact picture of his confusion and bewilderment. The author was subjected to the unknown circumstances that he made to perform an action that was immoral in his personal opinion.

# *Eveline* by James Joyce

Eveline is the story of an Irish thinker who had come from a troubling origin. It was published in 1904- a time of great and momentous changes in world history. This short story is also about the ambivalence of individuals when they are facing opposing patterns of life. this is the story of a girl who is distressed, but not hopeless (Joyce). She tries to escape from her current way of living patterns but failed in her attempt to do so. In this purview, this is just another literary piece that highlights the struggle of an individual in this conflicting world.

The advent of Fin de Siècle was all about ushering a new way of life, and a new set of beliefs. This era represents the change in current normative patterns. This Fin de Siècle paved the way for more artistic expression, aesthetics, rationality, escapism, and the feeling of world-weariness. In this way, this story models the same kind of situation where a girl is subjected to myriad societal pressures and then she is forced to choose whether her own will or the will of others. It is no wonder that society exerts enormous pressure on people and they have to be conformists in all way. This is still relevant in today's world where society exerts this tyranny of the majority (Gray). Hence, Eveline reflected on the gender bias and the societal pressures which were debated in literary Fin de Siècle movement.

Furthermore, this struggle of Eveline symbolizes the idea of anxiety, insecurity, indulgence in senses. This is the theme which shaped the cultural values and beliefs later on, and tried to resolve gender-related issues.

***A Haunted House* by Virginia Woolf**

This is the classic literary piece by Virginia Woolf which is not that scary as its name suggests. This two-page short story reveals the sense of horror in life where it dominates and dictates life. This story is quite meaningful in its nature and purpose as it subtly strikes the contesting ideas in people. This story illuminates how phantoms of an individual disturb his peace (Woolf). The author focuses aptly on visions and imaginations as she tries to connect it with contemporary trends of life.

The Fin de Siècle is the literary movement which shuns the old traditional beliefs and tries to highlight their ineffectiveness in real life (West). This story of A Haunted House illustrates the point that people do have something in their subconscious all the time(Woolf). in this way, some imagined situations are confused with mere imaginations. When it is connected with The Fin de Siècle, it shows the influence of dreams and imaginations in one's life. This story reveals the ideas of the movement as the present participles suggest it: reading, sleeping. A new style of modernism was found and then this became much relevant in contemporary artistic movements.

Thus, the writer is reinventing ways to express herself. She is switching between old and new styles to create an impact on her readers. The theme more elaborated in this short story is Despair and disillusion brought on by war and revolution as the ghost couple parted and now they were attempting to relive their lives in spirited form.

## **Section two:**

Romanticism was much common in Fin de Siècle era as authors tried to reveal the intrinsic good nature of arts and romance. In this scene as well (Ibsen), wife desire for everlasting passion and expression. Sometimes it is better to express emotions and desires because any restraint on them inhibit the process of personality development. Nevertheless, legitimate and open expression is always better than withholding emotions.

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