**George Orwell’s “Shooting an Elephant”**

**What does the elephant symbolize in shooting an elephant?**

The elephant is the central symbol of the story. Orwell uses it to represent the effect of colonialism on both the colonizer and the colonized. The elephant, like a colonized populace, has its liberty restricted, and it becomes violently rebellious only as a response to being shackled.

**What is the main idea of shooting an elephant?**

In "Shooting an Elephant," Orwell advances an argument that imperialism exerts a coercive effect not just on its victims within the colonized world, but also on the colonizers themselves. This argument is advanced based on his own experience as a police officer working in the British Empire.

**What is the value of the elephant in shooting an elephant?**

The Burmese chaining the elephant (British Empire) symbolizes how the British must live up to the expectation of its colonies. The Elephant symbolizes the imperialistic British Empire. His death at Orwell's hands shows the fall of the British Empire at the hands of its own officials.

**How does Orwell feel about imperialism?**

Orwell expresses hostile feelings towards the imperialism, British justification for taking over the powers of the Burma people and the entire British Empire. Orwell gives his experience in Burma and the story shows the mood and feeling of a person experiencing British imperial break down.

**Who is the intended audience for shooting an elephant?**

The audience in “Shooting an Elephant” is Imperial Britain and the Europeans in general. Orwell is speaking to the British population about their Imperial government and how it is ineffective, hurtful, and oppressive to all. The essay has a very tragic tone to it.

**What would the elephant symbolize?**

Elephants have a positive symbolic meaning all over the world and are considered a symbol of good luck, power, success wisdom and experience. Because elephants are highly social animals, they are also considered to be a symbol of loyalty, companionship and unity.

**What is Orwell's argument?**

Throughout Orwell's short story "Shooting an Elephant," he critiques imperialism by illustrating the conflicting nature of colonialism as well as the tense relationship between the ruling Europeans and the marginalized Burmese citizens. ... Herein lies Orwell's argument regarding the nature of imperialism.

**Is shooting an elephant an allegory?**

The actual shooting of the elephant works as an allegory for the British colonial project in Burma. Orwell feels that it's wrong to kill such a large and wild animal. This feeling represents the guilt of attempting to commandeer an entire culture and society.

**Why does the narrator shoot the elephant?**

The narrator in Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" does not believe that the elephant is dangerous. ... So, with thousands of Burmese behind him, as he held the gun on the elephant, the narrator felt that he could not back down, even though shooting the elephant was against his better judgment.

**What does the elephant's slow death symbolize in shooting an elephant?**

The fact that the elephant does not immediately die but remains paralyzed after being shot could symbolically represent the oppressed nature of the native Burmese citizens. Either way, the elephant's slow, agonizing death symbolically represents the destructive, debilitating nature of colonialism.

**What does elephant symbolize in Christianity?**

The elephant has a different symbolism in Christianity. In the Christian religion, the elephant is seen as a symbol of patience, chastity, and temperance. The animal is depicted in different ancient works and is believed to represent Adam and Eve.

**What is the climax of shooting an elephant?**

Climax: Influenced by the pressure from the crowd, the officer shoots the elephant multiple times before leaving it there. Falling Action: He walks away, feeling bad about his actions, as the elephant dies slowly.

**What country is shooting an elephant set in?**

The essay "Shooting an Elephant" is set in a town in southern Burma during the colonial period. The country that is today Burma (Myanmar) was, during the time of Orwell's experiences in the colony, a province of India, itself a British colony.

**Who is the main character in shooting an elephant?**

The main character of George Orwell's short story "Shooting an elephant" is the narrator. He is not named, which might be because he is meant to represent any British officer working in the British colonies.

**What is the author's point of view in shooting an elephant?**

In "Shooting an Elephant," Orwell uses the first-person point of view. The story is told completely from his memory and perspective. ... This makes Orwell's narrative style very effective: the reader finishes the story believing that imperialism truly is an evil and destructive force.

**What is George Orwell's job and responsibilities?**

The narrator of "Shooting an Elephant," often taken to be Orwell himself, is also a subdivisional police officer in Burma. His job is to help keep order, the usual role of a police officer. He implies that his job involves working with Burmese prisoners, which gives him a view of the darker side of empire.

**What is George Orwell's real name?**

Eric Arthur Blair

**How would you describe George Orwell's feelings about killing the elephant?**

Shooting the elephant for Orwell is symbolic of his role as a colonial police officer. ... Even if the Burmese are overawed by his authority as a police officer, they will always resent him. If he doesn't shoot the elephant, then he'll be considered weak as well as remaining a figure of hate.

**What is the conflict in shooting an elephant?**

The most obvious conflict in "Shooting an Elephant" is the narrator's unwillingness to shoot the elephant that went on a rampage. This conflicts with the perceived need for him to do so as a display of colonial strength and resolution.

**George Orwell’s “Shooting an Elephant” – Theme of Imperialism**

Eric Arthur Blair, whose pen name was George Orwell, was a British author. Among his many accomplished works is the non-fictional story, “Shooting an Elephant,” which boldly established his position on Imperialism. This story is about the time when Orwell went to Burma and served in the Indian Imperial Police as an assistant superintendent in 1922 because of lacking the means to attend a university. During the time of Imperialistic rule, the great empires dominated many subordinate countries to exploit their resources. These European empires believed it was, “the white man’s burden” to civilize the people they called heathens and savages of these countries. In “Shooting an Elephant”, George Orwell first reveals his opposition to the imperialism, then he uses parallel between the British Empire and a Burmese elephant to convey a message about Imperialism: although Imperialism is justified by the European empire, in actuality, its nature is horrendous, and it is the British Empire that has destroyed its own freedoms.

Although the author was working as a police officer for the British Emperor, he strongly opposed to the idea of Imperialism. His opposition is revealed since the beginning of the story.

‘I had already made up my mind that imperialism was an evil thing’. (Orwell)

Being an officer, Orwell knows better than others the truth of Imperialism that the British Emperor made up to make it a meaningful action. It is not like a charity such as educating for those uncivilized natives. The natives has such a big consent with British that Orwell depicts he is “hated by a large number of natives.” Orwell specifically chooses the elephant to represent the British Empire. The author draws a connection between the British Empire and the elephant using two main aspects; physical traits and its effects on the country of Burma. The elephant, a colossal being in the animal kingdom, represents the British Empire in its scale. The size signifies power as it is assumed that the two are unstoppable. Aside from the similarities in physical and structural qualities, the elephant and the empire both share hideousness in the effect it causes on Burma. When describing the true nature of Imperialism, Orwell distinctly associates the words: evil, dirty, wretch, huddling, stinky, grey, cowed, convicts, scared and intolerable. To create a parallel between the elephant and the empire, the author describes the result of the elephant is wild and terrorizing. By describing the effects of the two separates with one manner, he successfully established a clear parallel between the elephant and the British Empire.

The decision to shoot the elephant proved the futility of the Europeans in the East. In the story, Orwell clearly mentions that he does not want to shoot the elephant because it is not necessary in terms of safety of the people; he realizes that he is not in controls. “I could feel their two thousand wills pressing me forward, irresistibly.” The elephant, which represents the British Empire, stands before Orwell with his life on the hands of him. On the opposing end are the two thousand Burmese people. This detail is about to reach the climax of the story. Although Orwell raises an internal conflict in his mind since the beginning, the climax is not the point that he solves his conflict but raise another one. The image of the elephant is compared to the power of the British Empire. Shooting the elephant means that Orwell for the first time in his job chooses to stand on the side of the natives by his action.

Orwell perceives that killing an unharmed animal is not a right thing to do. He even considers that action as murder which insists his giving up on shooting the animal. However, a group of natives are waiting for him to shoot that elephant down, so they can share its meat. Orwell perceives that whether he shoots that elephant or not, he cannot change the thought of the natives about him, a European officer. As the lack of control is revealed, there is a hint of the breakdown of Imperialism. The shooting of the elephant represents the breakdown of Imperialism rule. “It was obvious that the elephant would never rise again, but he was not dead.” (792 Orwell) As overestimated their power over them, the British Empire invaded Burma, but even with thousands of their men in Burma, they never actually had any control. In retrospect, the Burmese actually controlled the officers. Like a puppet, Orwell was manipulated in the story to destroy the British Empire.

It is true that the European was conquering Burma, and the natives had to suffer from those officers who were sent there. The imperialism was depicted clearly at the beginning. Until the end, the young European men when knew that the author had shot the elephant, he was mad about it. “It was a damn shame to shoot an elephant for killing a coolie because an elephant was worth more than any damn Coringhee coolie”. Through this detail, it points out that the Europeans did not even consider the natives as human because they worth less than an animal. However, those fellow officers were not standing there to see how the author was not only looking like a fool, but also a puppet of the Burmese people. The two sides actually looked down on each other. Since the beginning, Orwell described that the natives much hated the Europeans because they were treated badly by the Europeans. However, it is not as simple as hating a person. The natives did not even show any respect with the officers.

In the end the sneering yellow faces of young men that met me everywhere, the insults hooted after me when I was at a safe distance, got badly on my nerves. The young Buddhist priests were the worst of all. There were several thousands of them in the town and none of them seemed to have anything to do except stand on the street corners and jeer at Europeans.

Orwell cleverly gave some of these details when the story just opens to show the failure of the British Emperor on his action of conquering, or imperialism. The main point which completely destroyed imperialism obviously was when the author shot the elephant and indirectly became the puppet of the natives. The author lost his control at that moment similarly to the European lost the control on its colonies. Therefore, the European only apparently controlled Burma. In fact, they could not build a real control on it. In addition, the imperialism that the British Emperor thought that he wisely applied it to his colonies totally fails.

The destruction of Imperialism rule was inevitable. The British Empire never truly had complete control of Burma. By drawing a parallel between the elephant and the British Empire, Orwell successfully establishes the true nature of Imperialism.