

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI

NPTEL

NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE

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Gender and Literature

By

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Shooting an Elephant

George Orwell

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So hello and welcome to the fifth lecture of the course which is entitled gender and literature, so today we will take up an essay by George Orwell it is called shooting an elephant and we are going to look at how gender identity power of these things play out in a political space, so this essay by always shooting elephant is it not it is largely an autobiographical essay which is written by him when he was stationed in Burma as a police officer so for a period of time in his life he was a colonial police officer working in Burma for the empire and then this particular essay is a reflection of his experiences.

The many things he wrote when he was in Burma the type to civil of essays he have written that the novel called Burma States which is very fine work of itself which if interested in journalism and the history of journalism and literature of colonialism is a very good read I suggest, but this particular essay called shooting an elephant it is a really rich essay especially when it comes to looking at the relationship and identity power race and of course gender.

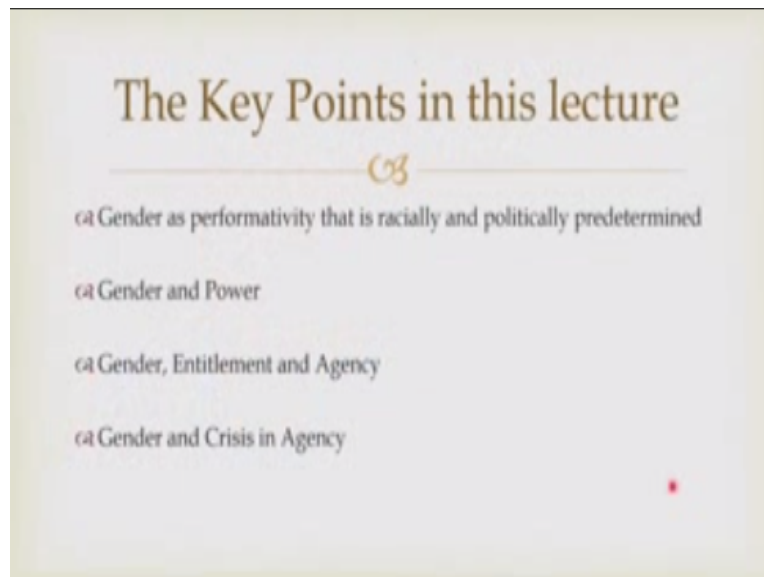
And most importantly what we have to bear in mind when we read this essay in a setting which the context which produces that historical context which is obviously one of imperialism British imperialism in Burma, so we starts with essay shooting an elephant by George Orwell, so a large part of what I will do today in this lecture is I will take you through this particular essay amongst

the England linked it I am going to connect it with the great different theoretical apparatus which we had been studying for the last two or three lectures and if remember the last text which we covered was shuttle circular in the moon sea French shark dog, Adam Sieve also looked at certain references from the Soviet dry film which was made out of the story.

I do not see we looked at the story as the text for gender studies and we looked at how things like gender, space, identity, political situations or agency using to play out against each other in certain discursive settings, so this as they do is very important text especially if you are looking at a relationship between gender identity and how these things so inform each other also deconstruct in certain so personal existential situation in a political space.

Now so largely what we will do today in this lecture is we look at you know certain key issues which we have been touching upon or in almost everything we have done so far.

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So when we are looking at 12th night a little Shakespeare, whether we are looking at you know certain circularity the chess players by blue chip frame job whether we are looking at gender and it is served in terms of a theoretical connection these are some of the key issues we have been talking about in a great recursive kind of a way, so the key points in this particular lecture will be the following.

Gender as performativity that is racially and politically predetermined, gender and power, gender entitlement and agency, gender and crisis in agency so these things important I mean these are different issues which we were looking at especially in our you know study a follows essays shooting an elephant, so first things first.

The first point which is on the screen at the moment it is gender as performativity routine that is racially and politically predetermined, so we were talking about performativity we have been talking about what is performativity it is kind of performance which is designed to generate an effect as we have mentioned and we will come back to the point we will have this definition played out on the screen and in a moment.

But obviously we have discussed it already, now in this particular essay what is important understand is how this notion of performativity the pathology of performativity is racially and politically created of mind, so not only is this something which you are doing at the first thing but also you are extending a particular racial identity you are sending a particular political identity.

So in a performativity is a very complex connected in this particular essay as we will see, when we read it with the notion the idea of racial identity and political identity and connected to all that the question of agency which will come in do in a moment. The second point gender and power the obviously we have been talking about the relationship between gender and power especially when we looked at French arm short stories of the secondary we saw how the males in the story they have some powers, political powers, financial powers, social powers, cultural powers precisely because a merely because they happen to be biologically men males.

And we saw the tragic situation of the woman in the short story where despite be more intelligent more intuitive in a better skilled in administrative duties they are relegated to a domestic space they are relegated to intimate space just because it happened to be a woman so they do not really have any power, they are really possess any power. So gender and power they are very complex able related to each other historically that is true even if you can look at any history of humanity you know gender and power have always been very, very complex related.

So the gender did minds of power your politic minds a large part of what your gender identity is. The third point as I mentioned a little while ago is a relationship with a gender entitlement and

agency, so entitlement as you know is the automatic expectation of something just because you happen to be someone, so you know if you are a white person in a colonial space you have certain entitlements, certain privileges in the certain expectations.

And the question of expectation is very important in this particular essay, because what we have in this essay, is a series, is an economy of expectations which has to be looked up to by the white man by a particular gender identity. So if you have a certain gender identity that have a certain gendered location there is automatically an economy expectation that builds around you, that is generated around you, and you know you are supposed to live up to expectation, you are supposed to live up to the narrative of expectations and you find to live up in the relative expectations then we have a crisis, then we have some kind of a problem you know the entire relationship in gender and power and entitlement agency this entire relationship gets publicized when it find to live up to the expectations around your gender identity.

So gender entitlement is an agency you know three very few points which are heavily present in this particular essay as we will study when we look at it. The final point that we look at on the series by no means an exhaustive list there are many more things we look at as we studied a essay but I am just giving you a summary an indicated list of things which we observe hop on as we read the essay and do you course that the fourth point has gender and crisis and agency.

So if you connect this with the second point with gender and power, so power and agency that related to each other, so they have power you automatically assume some agency you allowed to do certain things, you have the freedom in other words to enact will to carry out what we want to do and in order to make a change etcetera, so you can exert your agent so you can exert your authority to a certain extent if you happen to have power. But you know the relationship and gender and agency obviously is quite complex as we saw in the previous lectures on shuttles re-coloring, but if we have a certain kind gender a certain gender I mean you happened to be a male in that kind of a social situation is very feudal pre-capitalist you know a lot where the story is set in the moon ship chanced shuttle re-coloring.

So if you have that kind of situation then you know by just being a man and being a social person a man, a social man you happen to have certain kind of agency and just by not being that as a woman you have the lack of agency so you suffer crisis some agency just because you happen to be not a man in that kind of a social setting. Now interestingly what this particular essay does

and the reason why I find it extremely complex and interesting as a very rich study of gender is it looks and how being powerful being politically powerful, being a racially powerful can also generate in crisis some agency this is important.

Because it is very easy to understand how being politically power less being racially you know margins light can cause the crisis of agents so that happens all the time that if you are a black person in a white dominated colonial space then obviously you have less agency than your white male counterparts and that easily understand historically true that is happened all the time that is something which happens even now in certain social situations.

However, the point I am making it is more complex the point here in George Orwell's essay is precisely the opposite you know the ontological opposite that you know if we have a certain kind of gendered identity we have a certain kind of political and racial identity in the colonial Burma then he automatically assume a certain degree of agency and authority, but the funny thing about this essay and he was not funny in a great no discomfort away it is really dark humorous in certain ways.

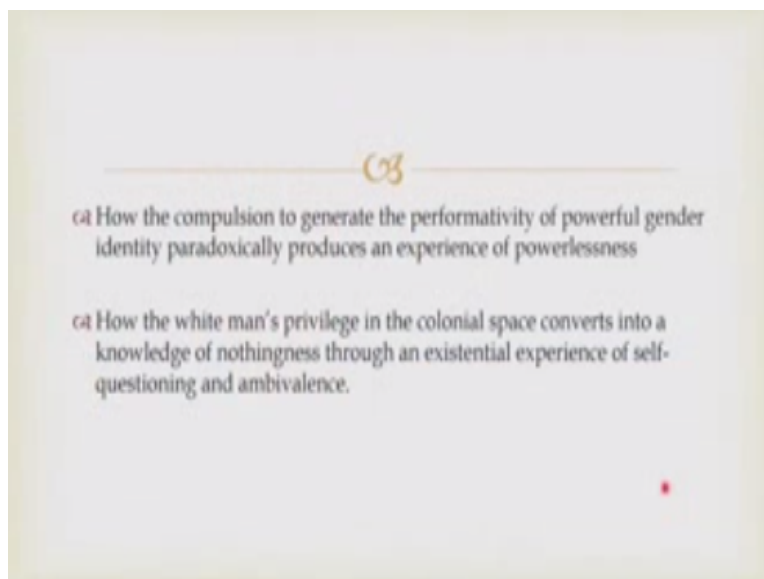
The funny thing is this particular person in this essay which is obviously George Orwell himself he stuck with the crisis some agency precisely because he is powerful and activist a paradox right, because they do not normally expect it you expect a politically, racially, culturally powerful person to have an assert certain agency you do not expect that person to suffer from a crisis and agency because of being you know because he is powerful right, you do not know me reader but this particular essay does and showcases that dramatizes exactly that right, the relationship in gender and crisis some agency you have this hegemony gender identity you are a white man in a non white colonial space, so you are basically the hegemony gender identity so you are very powerful ontologically, theoretically and you are very, very powerful.

But then you know something happens a certain narrative twist takes place which basically reveals before you your powerlessness and this particular powerlessness emerges out of your being powerful, so it is a very paradoxical situation, is a situation which is very complex and essentially you know it is got a dark humorous component to it but at the same time it is revelation and you get to know that he is not really a powerful despite assuming the authority the signifier of power you have a signifier of power, you have the image of power you are a white

man with a gun in a colonial space surrounded by the colonial natives, colonies natives and despite all this.

You do not really have any agency, you do not really have any particular you know you cannot really carry out your free will in certain situations and that is very important that is something we will look at when we read this essay. So this is exactly what happens in Orwell essay.

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As you will find out when you read it in and details we play out certain sections of the text and we look at it and unpack what he is going to say in that essay but the point is how the compulsion to generate the performativity are powerful gender identity, paradoxically produces the experience of powerlessness, since the paradoxical production as I mentioned a little while

ago and there is a compulsion to generate the performativity a powerful gender identity so you are opposed to carry out to enact a performed the role of the powerful gender identity.

So this particular case is the identity of a white man in a non white space and that is the performance regretted that is the image we have to play out all the time right, and you are compelled to do it you know you are forced to do it to a certain exchange and that is compulsion you know the forced you know decide that you are forced to do it all the time that paradoxical produces an experience of powerlessness.

In other words to put it more bluntly the fact that you have to be powerful all the time that is what makes the powerless, the knowledge that you have to be appear powerful all the time the knowledge that we have to you know enact power all the time because we belong to a certain gender and obviously of that particular gender its mediated also by race you know so if you are just a Burmese man and commander Burma you will not be so powerful. But if you are a British white person in Colonial Burma then obviously we are very powerful in a politically, socially, culturally, linguistically a powerful sense of the word right, but the fact is you know there is a difference between the human EU and the powerful EU and this is exactly what I am it meant when I discussed embodiment fatigue, so when I am defined if you remember when a defined embodiment of the combination of neural mechanisms as well as extended social mechanism.

It is what you are insight right, so what you are as a persons, what you are as a brain as a consciousness as its reasons emotions as you know a neural cells occurs how is have that is one component of environment, but equally the other important component of embodiment is see how you enact that surf in a social space, how you extend that surf in asocial space right, so it is idea of enacting extending your neural self into certain social situations that constitutes embodiment right.

So that particular tension between what you want to do as a human being and what you have to do as a social person that is really implicitly dramatized in all essay in the shooting an elephant I will look at it in great details as we move on especially to the lenses of Gender Studies as we have mentioned so far. The second point is how the white man privilege in the colonial space converts into knowledge of nothingness through an existential experience of self questioning and ambivalence.

So the ambivalence is very important over here, so he is ambivalent about something right, and what is he ambivalent about, his ambivalent about the fact that you know he is, he is in two minds so he sees a certain thing, he sees certain image, he wants to do something but he knows he is forced to do something else right, and this entire break between what he wants to do as a person and what he is forced to do as a social self is what generated ambivalence right, and this ambivalence comes to the knowledge of nothingness that you know he suddenly realizes.

But despite being a powerful male in a racially powerful politically powerful male in this colonial space he actually as powerless, he actually becomes an image of nothingness right, so from privileged to poverty and this is a very quick transition which happens in Orwell's essay so he starts out being this white man in a colonial space obviously very privileged, racially privileged, politically privileged but you know certain things happens, certain events take place in the course of the essay as described and that convinces them you know it really awakens them to the knowledge of its own nothingness and that is something we will look at as we look at the essay in some details.

So before we start with the essay the points just to reiterate what I have said so far this is a very political essay and that something we need to be careful about this is written by a Colonial Officer working in Colonial Burma, so he is a colonial white British officer working in a non white colonial Burma and obviously he is talking about his experiences as a colonial officer. Now obviously as I mentioned at a superficial level if you look at it superficially from the outside he obviously assumes a position of authority, a position of a great agency and know he is the image of power, the image of authority so to say so he enjoys a certain series of privileges and that sort of comes to him automatically by default because he happens to be a white man with authority, with military authority, with police authority etcetera.

So superficially speaking he is in a pretty good condition right, politically, racially and every sense of the word, but what makes the essay complex what makes the entire situation complex is it sudden awakening office knowledge of nothingness that you realizes that you know all this entire materiality of power around him, that includes race, that includes language, that includes political power etcetera, that attire materiality around them him is basically a mutable construct and I have used the word construct before especially going to talk about performativity.

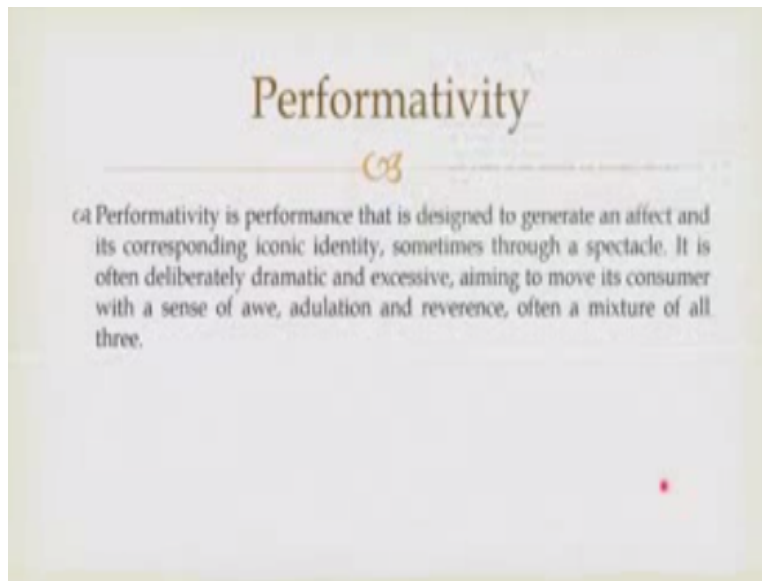
So gender is a construct identity is constructed something you construct through performances, through strategic performances, hence you use what performativity right, so it is a performative construct, it is something which is performativity produced and hence it is deconstruct and anything which is a construct can be deconstructed and reconstructed. In other words, what we moving into very quickly now is the text reality of power, the text reality of gender, identity especially in relation to powers.

So I have mentioned this before by the use, when I am using what text reality, when I am use the word text in general I am looking at a mutable construct, something which can be constructed and analyzed and equally something which can be deconstructed and reconstructed right, so we are looking at the text reality of power, we are looking at a text reality of gender, we are looking at a text reality of gendered hegemony identity in certain political situations and that is the really interesting thing which we look at when we read Orwell in this particular essay because shooting an elephant.

And obviously the big question which happens which comes up in the course of the essay is the pull between two different orders of will, so one win is obviously the great called existential, mural win that he does not want to do a certain act in this particular case he does not want to shoot an elephant right, but the other bigger hegemony overarching will is the fact that he has to carry all the particular act because that is what becomes its gendered political identity.

In other words because it happens to be a white male in a non-white colonial space the certainly there is an economy of expectations around them right, and he has to satisfy the expectations right, because those are the same expectations which inform his privilege, which inform his power, which inform his identity as a colonial officer in Burma okay. So with this preamble we sort of dive into the essay and we look at how you know it plays out especially in relation to the performativity power and gender identity but it is very quickly taken into again a true the definition of performativity which I played out couple times before.

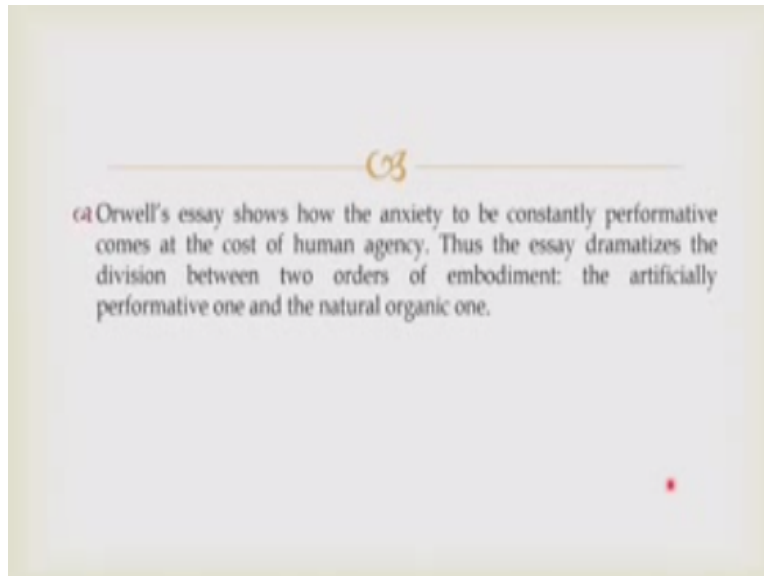
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But just a reiterate is the performance that is designed to generate an effect and it is corresponding iconic identity, so the word iconic is importantly is it is got a larger than life a representative image, a representative quality to it which makes us really unique so that particular performance can happen sometimes to a spectacle and often to a spectacle, so it spectacular it is excessive spectacular dramatic.

It is aiming to produce in a movies consumer with a sense of awe, adulation and reference also fear sometimes and often a mixture of all three. So in other words it is a kind of a very strategic kind of an act, the very strategic act which is designed to generate a in a certain kinds of political identity sync it can be used methodically, it can be used to the body, it can be used to dress, it can be used for threes of other material you know meta tourism markets and when in this particular case we are looking you know race, language, power and all these things so you know courtesan together in order to produce what we have as an iconic identity and that obviously done through performativity okay.

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So this is something we talked about before and so in a nutshell always essay shows how the anxiety to be constantly performative that is the important phrase constantly performative, so it is distributed from endless performance you have to perform all the time as a person right, so as a Colonial Officer in Burma you have to be performative all the time, you have to have certain kinds of expectation around you have a certain kind of privileges around the in order to fulfill this privileges you have to perform all the time some kind of acts. Now the two point is you may not like to perform this acts all the time, you may not like to carry all this acts all the time.

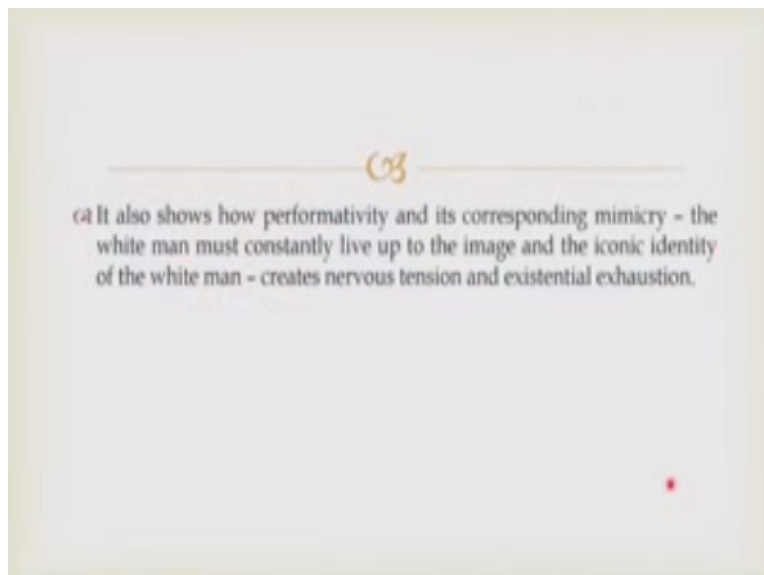
Let us decide the point that that is something which gets increasingly redundant your unwillingness do performative becomes redundant, that becomes the new option you know it is it not an option anymore right, and that is where a crisis of agency comes in, so this idea, this desire, this anxiety to be completely performative it often comes at the cost of human agency and so the relationship in agency and power over here becomes very complex it becomes really almost inverted they are almost inversely proportion to each other, the more powerful you know then this agency you have a certain level okay.

So thus this particular issue dramatizes the division that in two different orders of embodiment the artificially performative one and the natural organic one, so when we talk about embodiment as a bit of an interface between these two different kinds of orders, one is of the natural organic corporeal neural order of embodiment what we do to the brain, through our body, through our nerves etcetera and the other is more complex how we extend it into a social space, how we

enacted extended embodied in social situation and that is a bit of a prosthetic embodiment if we you know if you will so it is artificial it is performative and the point is how do these two orders of embodiment become dialogue with each other.

The artificial prosthetic enacted order to embodiment and the interiorized, inward-looking, natural organic order of embodiments, so how do these two you know enter the simpler dialogue with each other what happens if one becomes stronger than the other, in this particular case obviously the stronger order of embodiment is the occupational performative one, the natural organic one becomes less important is relegated into redundancy okay, so and the other important thing which we should pay some attention to.

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When we are looking at that same is the idea of mimicry, now obviously the word mimicry is very loaded political term and colonial and postcolonial studies those of you interested in criminal studies you know mostly it might be acquainted with this word it is a familiar word something which is used heavily in you know Academy polynomials especially in relation to colonial studies. Now in this particular case the mimicry is of a different order you know the biological person the human being George Orwell he has to mimic the identity of the white man there is a narrative out there which is pre-established before he had come to Burma and a white man must behave in a particular way.

So there is a series of expectations around him you know which are racially mediated, politically mediated, culturally mediated obviously linguistically mediated now those expectations had formed the narrative meaning before had come in, now his entire job as a police officer in Burma is entire tension at the police officer in Burma it should constantly mimic that identity right, to live up to it in other words to be in such a way that corresponds to that kind of identity so if the point is this entire essence shows how performativity and of course called mimicry the white man constantly living up to the high image of the iconic identity of the white man creates nervous tension and existential exhaustion.

So there is a very practicable a neurotic quality to this essay and you know obviously this essay written much later and it describes an experience which have had happened many years ago so your voice telling you the story is a karma, wiser, older voice telling the story but something which is happened many years ago spent like what happens in great expectations and all that they tell the story of a younger bit so a less neurotic voice telling you history of a more neurotic cells many years ago.

But that neurotic quality is actually there is habitably present in this particular essay that tension the neurotic tension it still very, very much you know is something which is quite visible in the terms how the descriptions happen, how it is describes three claustrophobic condition of colonialism etcetera, and what this entire nervous tension does in this essay is it creates an idea of this experience with existential exhaustion.

So he fills completely exhausted and essentially and why so, because his entire existential real desire, his entire existential fantasy agency so all these things are relegated into the background and the only thing which is important which he has to perform on the time is the iconic identity of the white man, so that is the most important thing right, the iconic identity of the white man and of deals can be secondary, tertiary and then modulized and you know something which can be relegated right.

But the entire discourse the entire endeavor the endless endeavor to constantly live up and produce and reproduce an infinitum the image of the white man in a non white curious space that is would exhaustion and essentially that is what causes the essential exhaustion right, and obviously that makes neurotic, that makes them guilty, that makes them dissolution about the entire idea power and also that makes them cynical.

So this is a very cynical kind of an essay about a white bitter old person who had looked true colonialism and seeing what colonialism really is and now it is giving you in much wiser calm of version of very neurotic experience which happened to him when he was a younger police officer working in Burma, okay. So hopefully what we have right now is the entire entanglement between identity embodiment racial identity and how all these things come together to produce the idea of gender right.

And I use what idea are quite deliberately over here, the constructive gender, how gender is constructed, how certain gender identities are constructed in this particular essay. Obviously, constructed as mediated to race as mediated to true in a political conditions, global conditions etcetera okay, so this is a backdrop of the essay we are shooting an elephant and we now dive into the main essay the main text and hopefully you have an idea about the essays all about and by the agents this is written in 1920's the setting of 1920s colonial Burma so it is very politically incorrect essay and that is what makes them to politically significant to our times.

Because it does not even try to be politically correct so it tells you very clearly as we find out in a movement when I play the next slide it tells you very clearly that he has an ideological a version to simple may hates comparison ideologically he knows about things and he is so very guilty because he is the part of it but equally he hates a local Burmese people because they hate him, so he is not trying to be politically correct he is would not saying oh, I am in love with the Burmese people, he says I am in love with the Burmese calls that is a different thing.

And at a micro level he really hates the Burmese people because they hate them, they make his at visible because you know he is a white man, they all have to you know abide by him they all have to be a spread of him, they all have to carry out of his orders but obviously internally they all hate him as a shield right, so he becomes less a human being and more an image and that is what makes as a quite complex right.

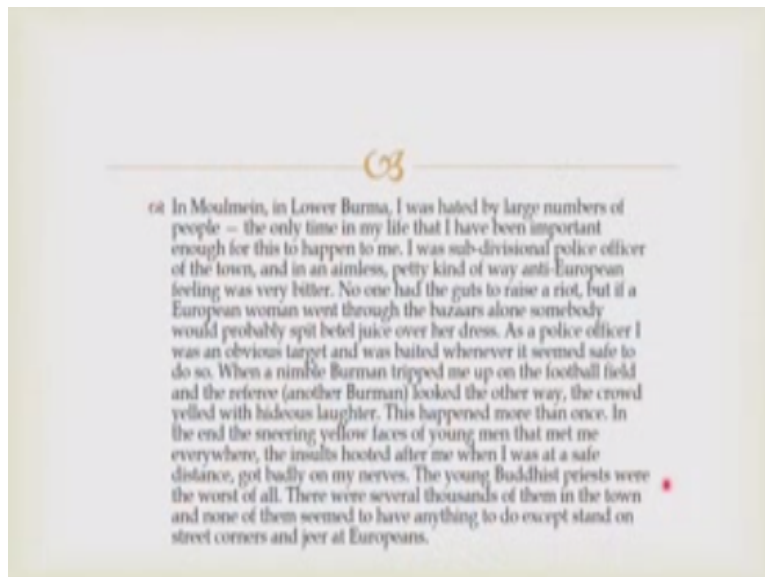
So his entire gendered location in this particular essay is very complex political location and that becomes a complete package it is so artificial that it becomes something outside of himself right, so his gender identity as a white colonial man it is so external to his internal to his organic identity as a human being I mean the two are so separable that it almost becomes comic in

certain level it almost becomes you know as if we have some kind of a split personality, he wants to do something as human being.

But as a white colonial man as a red colonialism he have to do something else and who is going to win there is a bit of a tussle attention going on between these two orders of embodiment and the point is who wins in the end, and we see quite clearly is the organic human order which loses that becomes less important than the political extended order of embodiment okay, so this is he basically long and short of the essay in the theoretical premise now we move on to what happens in shooting an elephant .

So why is that an important essay in gender studies and especially in relation to expectation, entanglement, agency, identity, performativity, mimicry is only three loaded terms which we have used so far, how do these terms come together to describe a very human experience in a colonial space and that is what constitutes shooting an elephant by George Orwell right, so we now move on into the essay actually we still dive in.

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And this is very, this is the opening of the essay what which he describes with position how it will start between two different orders of hatred, so he hates empire because he knows of an evil thing but that is more of an ideological hatred discourage hatred which happens the level of ideas and the other hatred is more micro, more visceral, more immediate where it says I hate the

Burmese people because they all hate me right, and you know it is believed of very, it is all hatred around him and he finds it difficult to live there is a normal human being and that is what makes them neurotic increasingly.

So I just say very clearly in moment in lower Burma I was hated by large numbers of people the only time in the life would have been important enough for this to happen to me, now you can see immediately the cynicism beside see do comic quality, the tragic comic quality coming in at the very opening of the essay, so he was important enough to be hated by a lot of people and that something which have only one to decide you know when he was in Burma station of the colonial officer.

I was sub-divisional police officer of the town and an aimless that he kind of laid and the European feeling was very bitter, so you know it do not need to be a rocket scientist understand that there were lots of anti-European sentiment because Europeans were there as colonizers they were the people exploiting the Burmese people, exploiting them financially, culturally, militarily and so you know there is no great reason why the Burmese would like them live alone accept them as their own, so there is a lot anti-European sentiment which he found himself in the middle of as a sub-divisional police officer in town. No one had the guts to raise the riot but if in Europe in the woman went to the bazaar alone somebody would probably split Betelgeuse over address that is important so the European woman becomes a way out but if an easy target.

Because she is someone who is not as popular as European man because she does not have the political power except what is conferred to her by the main protector every over Burmese days you find that kind of a relationships is very because, is very visible we have a little good ended up as that becomes in from England and she becomes someone who is sought after the, all the colonial officers the male officers, all they go after her but the point is she herself does not seem to have a lot of agency, except what is given to her by the other wise men around her.

So the location of the European women in a colonial space is quite complex because at some level she obviously at a superficial level in Europeans the racially superior German around her etcetera but she also happens to be a woman and we talked about times where women did not have anything in terms of political agency, in terms of financial agency, so the phase still is very, very heavily dependent on their nails around them.

So the European woman walk into the bazaar becomes the easy target for the Bernese people who would do what spit beetle juice all over dressed as a police officer I was an obvious target and was baited whenever it seems safe to do so. So as a police officer he was more of an image of authority so he was feared as well hated equally in equal measures and that is something which is important that you know because he is an image of authority there would be a lot of a version towards him, people were hate him because he is someone who represents who you know that icon of exploitation, you know authority power, domination etcetera.

But equally he someone who be haters for precisely the same reasons right, people do not never liked him because he happens to be a police officer. So when a nimble Burmen tripped me up in the football field and the referee another Burmen looked the other way the crowd yield with hideous laughter, so suppose he is talking about a sports game a sports even when he is playing football will other Burmese's people now a nimble Burman someone in the field might trip him you know foul him you know in a game a football and the referee who is another Burman would look the other way will not give a penalty, will not show a card, etcetera and what that would do, is up to generate a great laughter up on the Burmese spectacles in order to see the white man down the ground trip by the Burmese people etcetera, and that is something which is bit of a micro revenge that is how they arrange themselves of the exploitation that a white man had done to them.

So from the very beginning of the essay we seem to have a some kind of narrative coming in so what it is been told to you a was as readers is the fact that the human location in this matter is not so important, but the racial macro location you are just a white man and because you are a white man you are expected with certain things, because you are a white man you are expected to behave in a particular way, because you are a white man you expected to respond, receive certain kinds of emotional you know responses so people will hate you people be afraid of you despite the fact that it might be a different kind of a white man okay.

So the white man basically the image of the white men the icon of the white man it basically convinced the human being who happens to be the white person in that certain so Georges Orwell the man becomes increasingly less important compared to George Orwell the police officer. So this is a very good example how gender performativity basically convenes biological organic. identity and their associated agency okay.

So the crowd would love whenever he would trip to the football fields but another Burmese person and the referee another Burman would look the other way and the player will continue while you just get up in or full of mud and that side of the white man down the ground covered with mud is something which the Burmese to find very, very amusing and about laugh collectively this happens more than once.

In the end the sneering yellow faces of young men that met me everywhere the insult hooted after me when I was a safe distance got badly on my nerves, so he find and I mentioned this a little while ago this is an essay which does not want to be which is not set out to be politically correct, so you know if someone writing it now that sneering yellow faces of young men and I never using that definite to talk about you know certainly human beings that would be considered in visiting races.

When the point over here is you know he is not trying to be politically correct he is just giving a very honest description of his experiences of the white man in a colonial setting as a police officer in that kind of a situation right, so he is fine the people around him in a sneering attempt you find it you know very, very uncomfortable and he described them as yellow faces right.

But equally hate on job as you find out a little later, so you know it just got badly on his nerves the young Buddhist priests were the world's default there were several thousands of them in the town and none of them seemed to have anything to do except stand on three corners and junior Oscar options okay, I said you know he instead of looked at those collective gaze at him as a white man, so wherever he goes he realizes people are looking at him with hatred a version with fear knowing the positive emotions, no one looks at him with love right, the entire collective gain that experience was very suffered as the colonial person as a Colonial officer in Burma is a gaze of hatred.

And that begins to consume them that begins to make me more neurotic that begins to make him more cynical, that begins to make it more better right, and this is what happens in the course of this essay right. So it is not a happy situation to be in it is really neurotic situation to be and he finds himself hated when he finds himself and with the power but you know not really powerful because he just had to carry out the duties given to him it just had to fulfill the expectations of being a white man in the colonial space, so he is not really free and adopted that being painted

but everyone around him, so it is not really a happy situation to be in this particular practice describes.

All this was perplexing and upsetting throughout that time I had already read of a mind that in heroism was an evil thing and the sooner I check off my job.

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And got out of it the better theoretically and secretly of course I was also the Burmese and all again oppresses the British after the job I was doing I hated more bitterly than I can perhaps make clear. In a job like this you could have dirty work of empire at close quarters, the wretched prisoners huddling in the stinking cages of the knock outs the great college spaces or the long term conflict the scarred buttocks of the men who had been flogged with bamboos. All this oppressed me was an intolerable sense of guilt.

But I could get nothing into perspective, so it is very depressing got a description as you can see from the very beginning. so he could see in Pendleton was great bad thing and the texting do after this is heart of darkness and you find the similar situation coming in a cynical an ambivalence coming in because remember one of the ways in which impellers succeeded so magnificently is to classify itself as we grant noble enterprise you know a civilizing mission the Krishna's mission and a rescue mission the different not only in lofty names which are given to this entire project of imperialism.

And once you are then in the colonies, once you really see how everything works is once you really see the machinery of imperialism you know this is nothing but crude naked exploitation, so you know and the fact that you are a public foundation you are the part of this entire machinery of exploitation which is exploiting another race, another set of human beings does not really make you feel good if you a contentious person obviously over the way the contentious person is confused the same time is contentious.

So he knows he realizes that he is a white male, a normalized space he also happens to be a police officer and all that together makes him really, really up you know hatred makes him really cynical about what he is doing etcetera. So secretly he is saying theoretically it logically secretly it was all for the Burmese so he really was for the Burmese cause of liberation because he saw that what is happened to Burmese to the wrong thing is a morally wrong thing okay.

And you know he is against the president the English the British, but the paradox is he walked to the British right, so he is someone who is a servant to the British army the British Empire by the same time it logically he hates incomparably so it is a bit of a castile situation as you can see it is a no win situation is a paradoxical situation either a limbo, he cannot really choose in one and the other. So at a macro level at a macro ideological level he is for the Burmese and he is against a British and he hit logically he hates the British.

But at a micro level in a he someone you know who hates the Burmese it was because we all hate him back, now this particular image the very depressing image of prisoners and came to a tortured and how he experiences the torture of a very close quarters because he happens to be police officer in a sub-divisional police officer over that so he sees how people are tortured systematically, corporally, mentally and how they are tortured in order to keep the Empire running and that is not a happy sight and obviously he also realizes that he is part of the torture, he is part of the machinery of torture whether he is doing it directly or not.

He can take his hands off becomes he cannot washes himself so he is guilty in cynical he is better okay, and as you can see the words that come over here I mean dispersing words he has he suffers from intolerable sense of guilt. But I could get nothing into perspective so he is completely confused right, so he is essentially confused, he is politically confused, he is ideologically confused because I hate everyone over there I was young and in educated and I

have had to think out of my problems in the utter silence that is imposed on every Englishman in the East.

The silence imposed on Englishmen on the East and that silence becomes a metaphor for the lack of agency you cannot speak right, so as you can see there as you know some of you who have read post colonial studies to some extent is very famous essay by Dr. Chakrabarty with his fever it is called 'The Calcutta Subaltern' speak right, and that is the bodies of all some people and some other people who are tortured and there is about people like this Burmese people the wretched prisoners were tortured in prison counters.

And the woman who are doubly marginalize so the point is can they speak to the our voice right, it is very difficult for someone in that position to speak. But the paradox aware that over the same the despite being I know theoretically the powerful person you know technically the powerful person he too cannot speak, but he cannot speak out against the evil of the empire I cannot speak out against the evil of imperialism, he cannot say stopped this, do not torture this people and let us go back, he cannot say he has to carry on the word silently, in spite knowing fully well it is completely aware of the fact that what is happening is the morally and politically and at a human level it is an evil thing.

But it cannot do anything to change, it cannot do anything into independence or human intervention possible in its current situation okay, so the utter silence will impose on every English man in the east okay, that is something just imposed on him is something which is given to him we cannot break it, he cannot confront it, he cannot challenge it, I did not even know that the British Empire is dying still let us did not know that it was great deal better than a younger empires that are going to supplant it.

So he did not know because it is right in the middle of it he did not know that empires actually dying gradually, so as I mentioned it is American twenties and early 30s and so empire will die in another 10 to 15 years with the Second World War and they would become liberated and Britain will just seems to become an imperial power. But in a because he is in the middle of it he is right in the heart of it does not realize, he does not have the big picture okay, so does not know that Empire is dying gradually and naturally death.

All the name was that I was stuck between my hatred of the Empire I served and the rage against the evil Clinton little beasts could try to make my job impossible, so again I mean observe the political incorrectness of this kind of description he is talking about the Burmese people over here describing them as little be evil spirited little beasts and that completes races by modern standards but other things was writing in multi channels we have to understand the context in which is white man.

So he is someone who is giving a very honest picture of his existential experience it is exactly how I am suffering I hate the Empire, I think is evil thing that it logically in moral thing by the same time our hate this evil beings around me who hate me, because I happen to be a white man okay, with one part of my mind I thought of the British Raj as an unbreakable tyranny are something clamped down in secular seclorum in you know at infinitum forever upon the wind up frustrate people, with another part I thought that a greatest joy in the world would be to drive a building in the Buddhist places God's.

Freedom for these are the normal byproducts of imperialism ask any Anglo Indian official if you catch him off duty, so this is a classic example of ambivalence on one hand he wants you know get rid of the Empire he thinks of Empire the tyranny something which is happening forever, something just changing you know innocent people, weaker people as a moral evil things but another part of him really want to be compared innate and kill all the Buddhist people around it because I hate him right.

So the complete dichotomy of you know emotion the complete break in emotion you know so he is cognitively confused is some of rupture you can also say is a split personality and he says and he had feelings like these so ambivalence like these over the hand are the normal by products in terrorism okay, something which happens normally out of the parallelism is what invented Industrial right, it makes you only one hand hated it logically they hate in permissivity logically it is a horrible thing it is a terrible thing ideologically you know it is because you are middle of it.

But equally it makes you cynical and bitter and generate your forces love this visceral hatred against the people around you the colonized people around you because they collectively hate you, so like I said it is a castle situation completely a classic castle situation he cannot escape it, he is completely in escapable mode right, and that is what he means to the face that you know feelings are these are enormous by products so this neurosis is normal right, and that is

something which is a entirely gelatin me and this is of natural normal kind of experience being neurotic to this extent of this degree okay.

So ask any Anglo Indian official if you catch an off duty, so if you just catch him off duty if you are drinking with a person and you know alcohol becomes a very important metaphor especially in Burmese States the norm that I mentioned which has a very similar diversity but obviously it is fictional though it does draw on all those personal experiences, it is not as personal or as autobiographical at this particular essay, Burmese days you know you have Burmese's race the way interesting novel where people perform certain kinds of identity in the morning when they go to the offices who are talking to the colonials people when they interact among those they are something, they are civilized white people, skilled civilized efficient people.

So when they get drunk in the evening when they when they indulge in alcoholism and become alcoholism in the end all them because alcohols in the end that is where they get caught and put off duty and that is why we get to know the truth about the experience of being powerful and that is why they tell me that being powerful actually is an experience and powerlessness, because if you have to pass on all the time if you do not have an option not to powerful that is what makes you powerless.

So here gender becomes limited gender becomes ironically also a metaphor for imprisonment so we thought in the piece couple lectures I read certain circularity and the chess players how the woman were imprisoned because of a gender identity, because they do not have in the financial agency and the cultural agency in the political agency just by the talent they never been they would have made much better rulers administrators courtiers, military people in the habit choice that is the chance opportunity.

But it did not have an option historically there was deny to them that given point of time so and that was project that is what was deeply tragic and depressing for the division right, but over here we see different more complex things we have a person a white man who supposedly enjoys all the power they has when the power you know is politically powerful, racially powerful privileged in every sense in the world, but ironically this privileged makes them powerless okay, so he says and if you catch any Anglo Indian officials off-duty when he is not being performative in other words when non performances been asking what experience were imperative and looking exactly.

What the person will tell you, that you know this is a split, there is a split in your emotion there is a division in our emotional on hand you hate in Burmese on the other hand we hated Burmese people only because you know it is one of ecological hatred the other is visceral hatred okay. And use of caught between two different kinds of majors those are a very happy stage to be in other words right.

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So now we move on to the main event in this particular essay the events which changes things changes they are very homologous of power, changes a very understanding of identity, the way understanding of gender politics raise etcetera, so you know you grew up in that kind of a culture you continue to consume that kind of a narrative which tells to you are powerful because you are a white person in the terminal space etcetera, etcetera and if you serve internalize it after point you internalize that narrative which is around me all the time, but there is certain events which happen and you know what event is quite philosophically so these are events which change the course of undirected these are events which are ontologically designed in such a way that it changed the course or underactive, the change the way you look at things.

So in a post or even your perspective will change, your knowledge of life will change your look of life will change, so pre event opposed so something happens in doing that here and there is some glove an ontological change there is some kind of a change which happens at a level of

knowledge so it is also an epistemological change right, so your understanding changes right we understand your knowledge changes at to a certain series of events, so this particular event which happens in essays says theorizing and philosophizing the notion of event why it is important to me do it especially because still profound in this particular essay.

And this particular event changes of entire idea of gender, gender of identity and power especially as a white colonial officer in a colonized space in Burma so what is that is that event that he was talking on. So one day something happens which in a roundabout way was enlightening and user enlightening and just reread the word enlightening I do not see the one in life things it reveals a certain kind of knowledge.

But ironically it is a knowledge of nothingness is not the knowledge which elevates them its knowledge with things them down as would see in the course of this essay, it was a tiny incident in itself but it gave me a better glimpse that I had had before of the real nature of imperialism the real motives for which despotic government act so the event in itself technically was on a major event there is a way minor event, but ontologically epistemologically in the level of knowledge that is why you do an epistemological it is a major profound massive event, because it changes everything right.

It gives them a renewed understanding of life and relieved understanding a power of imperialism how things work, how power works of identity that created, recreated generated, degenerated and regenerated and that is what happened in this particular essay. Early one morning the sub-inspector at the police station at the other end of the town rang me up on the phone and said that the elephant was ravaging the bazaar so in other words bazaars he came from the colony so it is only like loot secondly the words which came in so there was a bazaar and there is an elephant just ravaging the bazaars so pavilions in Madison and so would have please come and do something about it.

I did not know what I could do but I wanted to see what was happening and I got on the pony and started out. Now notice the way up the automatic expectation from the white man because he happens to be the hegemonic gender identity and even a Dominican kind of advocacy to germinate the cosmic gender and also because of its race because when you we just saw while ago how European woman who are also white the racially the privilege because you know they

have a different gender identity they are not still privileged, they are not so feared as a white man.

So no other about them as with we produced on a white man in the bazaar, but people will do it for fun when a white woman pass by because there will be a nest of fear for retaliation, unless of course there is a main round who can be offended on behalf of the woman I am and or avenge the woman and retaliate on behalf of the woman but the woman themselves seem to be quite you know powerless you know as human beings themselves.

But the point is over here, there is a mad elephant in the bazaar there is a news that elephant have gone mad in the bazaar and the obvious automatic evaded expectation is that a white man would come and control that with the gun, because he happens to be the hegemonic gendered identity so he is the military identity he the authoritative identity he is the exertive identity and all that taken together makes them the automatic choice of being the instrument of control right. So whenever there is a example of a knocking it is a white man you supposed to go and reestablish reads of that right, so if you look at again if you philosophizing entire thing if you looking at theoretical thing there is the elephants coming into the bazaar and ravaging it is an example of the break of the norm active in erectus that is not what happens every day right, you do walk into bazaar unexpected elephant ravaging it every day, you walk into bazaar.

And finally expected to be the normal people coming and buying and selling and consuming things that is what happens in the bazaar that seems normal directed the normative narrative that we associate with a bazaar. Now that normative narrative has been disrupted by the appearance of this elephant towards comment who has come in and had graduated bazaar. Now the moment there is a break or disruption of normativity the person summoned is a person who embodies normativity embodied as many, embodies established the white man right.

So the white man is some amount to reestablish reason to restart this rationality to reestablish normativity in the bazaar so I know his responses I do not know what I could do because they know he is a human being he cannot just say oh there is a man enter into the bazaar I would go and shoot away and he cannot see them as human being. But because of the white man he knows there is some expectations laughing so what does he do at is my riffle an old point for Winchester and much too small to kill an elephant.

But a thought the noise might be useful in Tehran to create terror just engaged wants to make a blank fire do scare the elephant the way it gets in the pony getting the riffle, take some riffle and has to safe bazaar in order to find the elephant with the hope of controlling it because it is gone mad. When this Burmese stopped me on the way and told me about the elephants doing it was not of course a wild elephant but a tame one which had gone must it had been changed out that same elephants always up when attackers must forgive.

But on the previous night it had broken its chain and escaped it is my hood the only person who could manage it when it was in that place had been had set off in pursuit but had taken a wrong direction and was on 12 hours journey away and in the morning the elephant had suddenly reappeared in the town. The Burmese population has no weapons and quite helpless against it, it had a very destroyed somebody humble hearts killed a cow and raises from food stalls and give up his job stock also had met inducible rubbish van and when the driver jumped out and took to his heels had done this on over and infected while insist upon it okay.

So this is the long and short summary of what anything had done see it is the tame elephant as the normal and it was a domestic elephant but it has its attack the seasonal attack when an elephant becomes amorous they become friendly and that state we have been talked about and that frenzied state in commander should break away from the chain and in a wild temporary the motherhood you know who the only person in control in the state has taken a wrong direction so he is haven the wrong way so it still goes behind the elephants so mean while the elephant is come to the count and had done certain things which are you know quite disturbing.

So it is getting to a bumble heart kill the cow and raided some food stalls and devolve this job is eat enough food in a rampage across the bazaar and you know an interestingly there is a minimal van rubbish fans which had managed to find and then it all turned that the Graviton away of course to save his own life and the elephant just basically been ravished the particular municipal van.

It is a story which is given to already as it set to shoot the elephant. Now what will see subsequently in this particular essay is how certain events play out how sudden events emerge out this particular report and how does those event they you know essentially problematize the entire location of power right, so at this stage what we have is very normal description of non

normativity right, the elephant that come a while the elephant attainment in front of become wild, so that is an example of non normativity so break of your normatively right.

And because one wise temporarily what is it done is coming to town did some damages, eat lots some fruit stalls over Tony from you know stalls in the bazaar and then a little the city, in the middle of the town it had found you know this rubbish van which it had overturned and then it sort of basically having a good time ravaging it. So this is one elephant that done and over the man over the white police officer is supposed to go and tame it to control it okay.

But we get to know subsequently as a reader say what is happened to the twist of evens which making more complex and which reveals the florist and to all well inside this particular essay the constructed-ness of gendered identities especially politically political gender identities so identities which is political as transgendered qualities together as in the case of always the white police officer in Colonial Burma. So I will stop you today thanks for listening and we will continue with the particular text in the next lecture, thank you.

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