

Elements of Visual Representation
Prof. Shatarupa Thakurta Roy
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

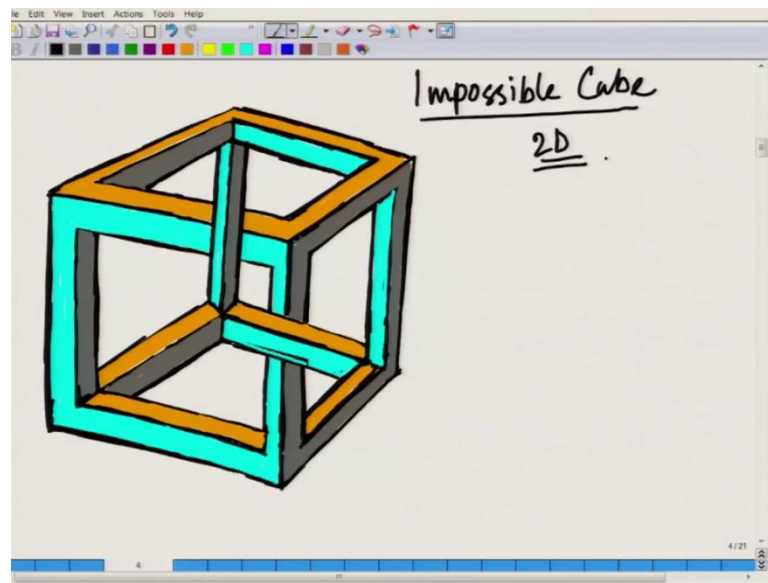
Lecture – 24

Naturalism tells us about a proportion that follows the natural norms. So, when we see a door of a house we may just make out the door is more than 5 and half feet tall or maybe it is around 6 or more feet and height. Because we know that is made for a purpose. So, our sense of logic also operates us to take the decision. When we look at something which does not better human body structure, we often wonder that what it is meant for. Is it meant for human use or it is just meant for no purpose or even, if we see a structure which does not fit the human body, we may straight away call it a piece of art.

So, those are the possibilities that we usually come across, so we have a very, very tuned and active rational mind and it is through that rationality, we try to give things a new structure. But, then we have another part of your mind that thinks of an ideal condition. So, we move from naturalism to idealism and we can also bring the aspects of utopia into our thought.

So, we think of a ideal condition where everything is ideal, it follows a ideal norm, but we usually it is possible, we can create it, but our rationality our mind says that it is not perhaps possible in reality. So, we constantly come across a dilemma of happening, which is reality and which is our imagination and through that, some visual expression is possible. So, we can produce things in visual reality, which is perhaps not possible in physical reality.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:12)

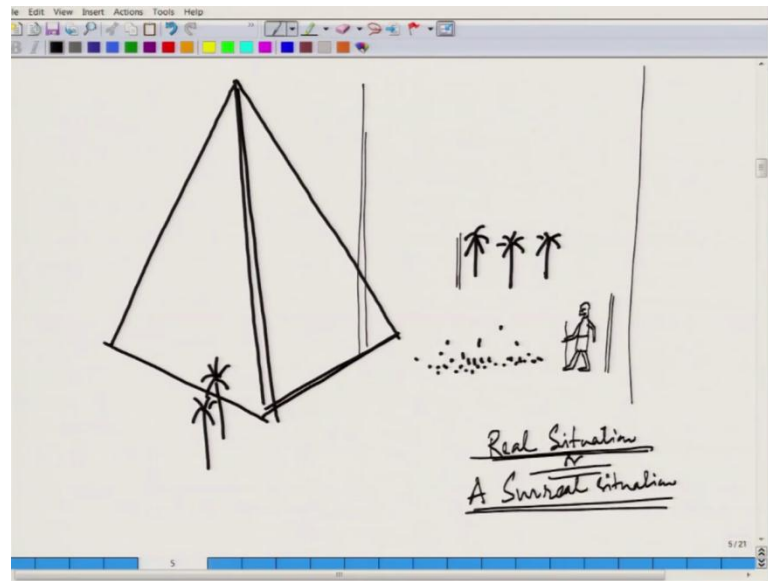


So, this is a structure that I have drawn here and we call it an impossible cube. So, why is it impossible? Because, it is possible in a drawing with, it is two dimensional drawing, we get a sense of a three dimensional object which is a cube, but because of its formation we cannot ever make it physically. So, it can only happen in a virtual reality, we create a reality which is far off from our known reality.

So, if you see the structure, we feel that this is quite interesting, but we cannot ever make it physically with other available materials that we have handling. Let us realize it with more examples that, how a scale change can affect our visual meet. So, if we create a land where the proportional norms or a bit changed or altered. Like, as we see that you know when we see the figures or let us say the figures on the surrounding they are much bigger than the main character in one of the stories or in their illustrations, we can make out that the very tinny.

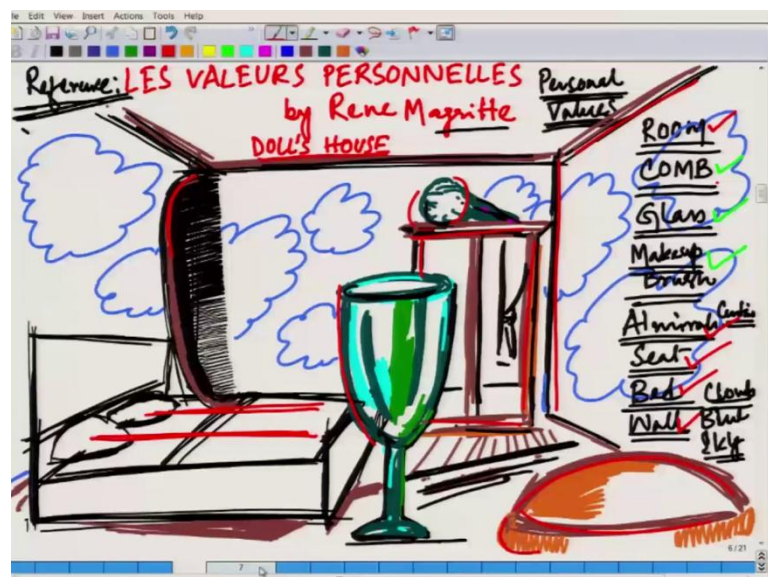
For example, if you see allograph test that the figure is very large and he is in entering land of the Lilliput's, who are very small there the small characters. Now, the scale change will give us a different reality, we enter a new land that can be totally unreal land of Utopia. But, these are found in most of the survey literature, most of the survey paintings that we create a land with the altered proportion that places us in a dilemma that is create visual paradox.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:21)



So, when we make a structure like this in a place, we expect the human figure to be not more than this big. But, if we see a human figure there, who is this big in size in relation to the pyramid here or the trees over here, we will wonder whether this is a real situation or a surreal situation. So, this is impossible in a visual representation, but it may not be possible in reality.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:31)



We are going to realize this principle of visual paradox in reference to a very famous art work, which is made by Magritte and the title of the picture is commonly known as the

personal values. So, what Magritte want to show in the picture personal values takes us to a different condition, where we see in the pictorial space, this is just the reference where I try to analyze this same art work in terms of it is space, if not in it is physical detail. So, what we see is a just position of different objects which are common in a space like this.

So, if we try to take the reference of the object that we get to see here, it is a room, we have a comb, a glass, a makeup brush and almirah, a seat, a bed, a mirror in the cupboard the almirah. And the mirror has some reflection of a carton and a wall full of blue sky and clouds. The bed also has a few pillows, the floor has some wooden plants and a few cups in it. So, that is how we can find out like these are the recognizable objects, that is there throughout the picture and not a single object is ambiguous for our knowledge.

So, everything we understood that is there in the picture, but still we are experiencing a reality which is a bit confusing in the picture. The reason is that, when we look at this comb which are otherwise meant for a human use, we comb our here, so the comb if it is this big. When we please your head on the pillow, then you compare the size of the head and the comb is disproportionately large as compared to do that.

So, that gives us a question that, how can a comb be this big. Then, we see a wine glass that is often a normal scale, if we compare it with the other things. If you put it into the four ground, he feel that this is in a closer view, then it is normal. If you place it in the same order on the floor, then this is like a very big wine glass that we get to see and they are not of a human use. Also, when we see the makeup brush, this is very huge, it is not for the normal human use and the almirah will be too small for that.

So, the almirah and the bed, if they follow a particular scale which is like a human scale and also the room has the same scale, then this three objects are disproportion it. So, that is a paradigm that is relative and we have in our mind that true that, they are meant for the human use. So, we see that the size of the room is fine, the size of the cupboard or the almirah is also fine, the size of the bed is good, the wall size is of a good, the cloud and the blue sky maybe something which is a little kind of doubtful thing, that can also be some kind of visual texture that is there on the wall.

So, that somehow satisfies our thought, our understanding, but than what about the other objects, like what about the size of the comb, the size of the glass, the size of the makeup

brush and the size of the site may also fit the conditions. So, that is right and these are the point of confusion, so then we change our outlook we try to justify things in a different order. If you say that this is a dolls house and there are some objects of human use that are a placed there, that will give us the answer.

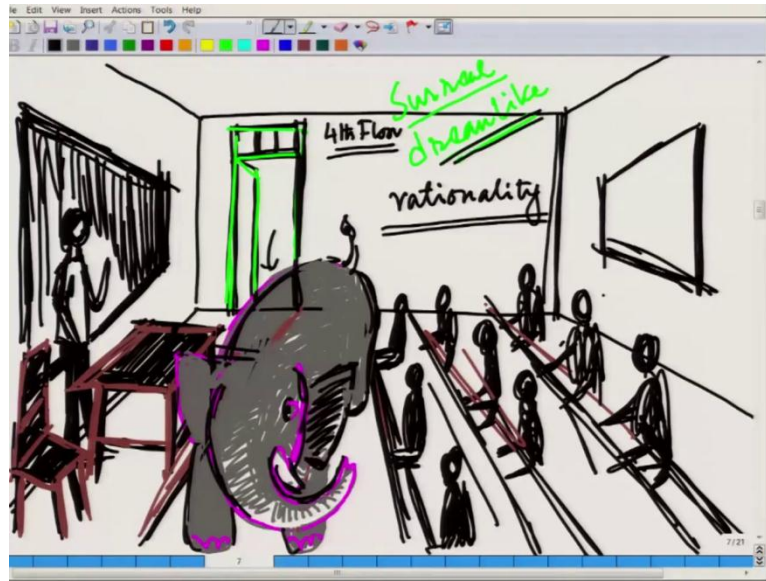
So, in a picture when we feel that, this is a doll's house, so the bed is meant for a doll which is very small maybe 6 or 8 inches tall. So, if the doll is the small then maybe the glasses for human use, the comb is also for human use, the makeup brushes is also for the human use, the almirah is for the use of the doll. The seat is also for the doll and rests of the things are for the human use and you have a visual texture done on the walls.

So, this is not the real cloud or sky, but it is painted in the very realistic manor. So, in a single picture we need to shift our orientation, we orient ourselves two times in two different orders to justify the proportions, the norms of the scale that was used in the picture. So, let when we come across this kind of conditions, where we altar our vision we try to understand whether it is reality or it is imagination, we call it as realism, it has a real treatment.

Because, we are creating a world that is a parallel realities perhaps, so there you need to have, like you need to also adopt a style, which is a realistic way of applying things. Otherwise, it would not lead you to confusion. If you see the things are fictional the kind of line that we using the kind of texture we are using, they are flexible, they are very imaginary. So, we would not actually get baffled by the condition, we will just feel that you know somebody has done it with some rationality.

So, to justify that, we need to also to produce a surface with the use of some of the treatment. So, the brush treatment and everything who has to be you know close to naturalism. So, that it looks very, very real and the moment it starts looking real, we start questioning that if it is reality, then why it does not fit to your understanding and why we are not understanding it through a normal rational. So, it can also happen let us see that with another visual that there are lots of things, that is possible in reality like the impossible cube that we have seen earlier.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:15)



A let us take example of a classroom, so this is one of the wall of a class room, this entrance. Now, we have one place where the teacher will stand; it may have a table, a chair as per human proportion and you also have students sitting here and of course, a black board to fit with context. So, everything in this picture is following the general norms of scale that if the classroom is this pic, the door has to be around this pic, the board is also following the same scale, the ratio of proportion between the teacher and the student as per their sizes are just fine.

So, we cannot call it, so real until we see certain things, which is so real there. So, let us add something that will convert it into a visual paradox. So, we certainly put a figure which is an elephant in the picture. So, the elephant comes and the teacher demonstrates the concept of an animal perhaps to the students. Now, the elephant can also stay here and this position, there is no problem with that, because the class room is big enough to make place for an elephant.

But, then what is so strange about it an elephant can be there in between the teacher and the student by then you are going to ask this question that how can an elephant enter from a door which is this big. So, an elephant can, but this is obvious that the elephant ((Refer Time: 17:31)) grow in this room. So, it must have enter through some other location, so that also puts us under some question and the whole picture will become, so real or dreamlike.

And we do not call it reality only because, it does not fit our normal rationality. So, there are lots of similar things. Like, if you replace the elephant with may be a locomotive or may be just a simple car or anything else, you may have ask the same questions that how will it enter, how will it fit in, even if the classroom is situated somewhere, you have a caption written that this is the fourth floor or even the second floor you could have ask the same question that how will it fit into the door and how enter the place.

So, these are the questions, that is very much there in our mind and not in reality, but still it makes expression very different. So, even when we are creating a natural or ideal structure, we need to keep in mind whether it is suiting our general perception of reality or not. So, we can create our ideal situation, like as we see said it is like a social utopia that to make create that everything is perfect there, you have a just a position of two, three contradictory things within a fear to idealize certain things, you may be just question.

Because, you are rationality it goes on a different order, the human mind will always question, whether it is possible in reality or not. So, that is another reality and the representation aspects of that reality will be different from the naturalness or the idleness of whatever creation that we have discussed, so far. So, we need to create a structure that is believable, at the same time that will put us in front of question we need to face a question of whether it is possible or not.

So, that is all about the possibility, impossibility and we need to choose the scale accordingly. So, that you know if needed it will create visual paradox, if it is not needed that it will just represent the reality. So, it is all are supported by the kind of color, the kind of texture, the kind of light and other things that we using to fit your contacts. So, when we are choosing a proportion, it should also fit to the context very well, and then we have free to do whatever we feel like in our visual representation or the visual representation.