

UNIT 1

- NARRATIVE ART
- STORY
- RE-CREATION
- MEMORY
- IMAGINATION
- VERBAL NARRATION

NARRATIVE

A story or description of actual or fictional events; a narrated account – spoken or written accounts of connected events in order of happening.

- The nature of narrative art is to organize arrangements of real or fictional events in an interesting manner to the spectator.
- The purpose of narrative art is entertainment which means that the audience should experience the various aspects of emotion.

For the ancient man the most important purpose in life was to gather food for himself for his wife or his children. This is the primary need and those who succeed in this daily hunting assume importance among a group of primitive man. So body strength and cunningness became important elements in hunting strong animals. Wherever single individual could not succeed, primitive men in groups attacked their targets.

For those at home, especially women and children found it very interesting when man repeated his narration on the success of his kill. This desire to repeat pleasant events evoked aspirations in minds of the children as well as training for future. While organizing the events of a successful hunting, the primitive man used his imagination to a great extent, to evoke the emotion of Rasa from Rasikas or the listener. Thus a rudimentary (basic) method of structure took place.

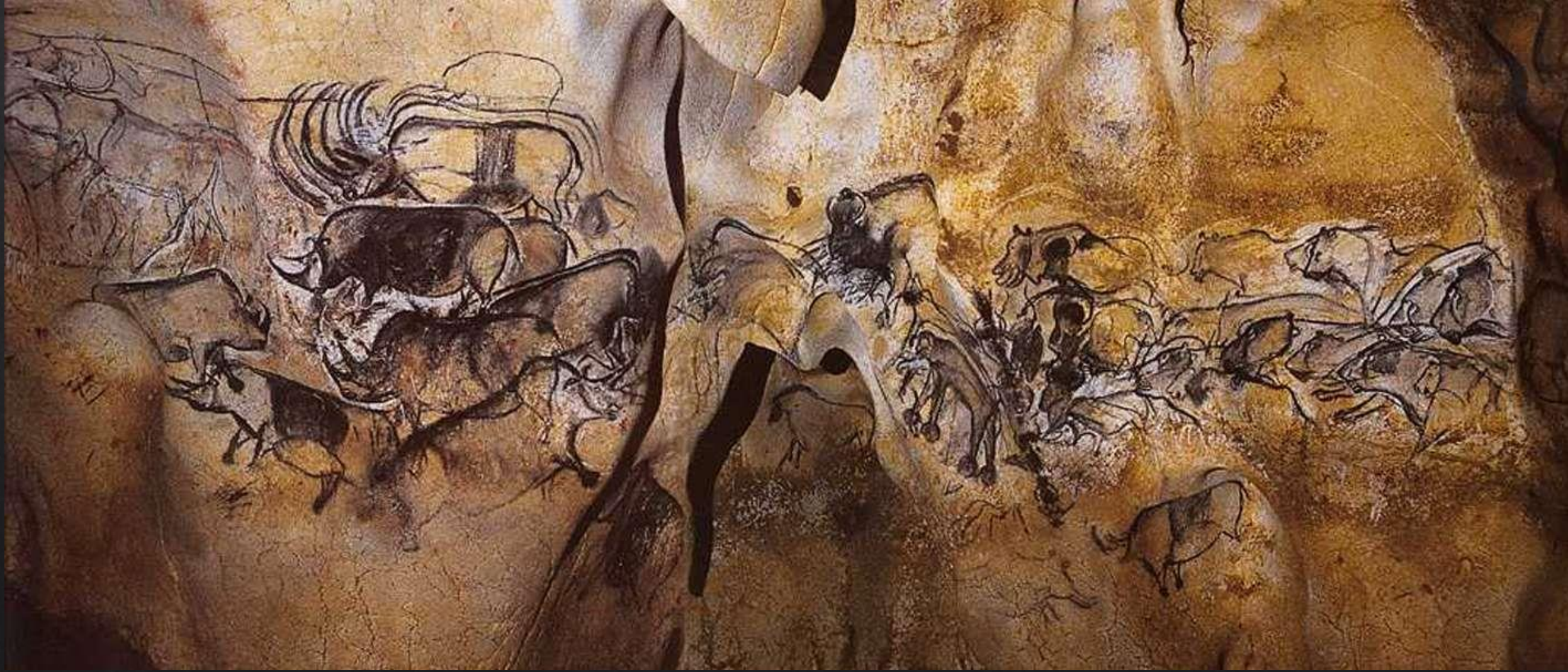
Narrative drawings

Man's desire to repeat pleasant events did not stop with narrating the event. In his spare and solitary time he took the charcoal and started giving shape to his imagination through rudimentary attempts at drawing. Thus we have today the cave painting of the early primitive man. He recreated events from his own experience. But many things remained mysterious to him. For example thunder and lightning. Sun and moon or any natural events that destroyed him and the nature around him became frightful to him. For all those things which remained unexplained, man's desire was to pay homage through sacrifice and prayer. There he exercised a lot of imagination and drew heavily upon such events. Thus even before the story telling method originated he drew pictures drawing upon his experiences.









ELEMENTS OF NARRATIVE ART

NARRATIVE POINT OF VIEW

All stories are narrated from a point of view. There are basically two points of view from which to tell a story: Either from outside the story or from inside the story-- an External Narrator or an Internal Narrator.

Eg: *As Ajai awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect.*

- The External Narrator

1. Narration from **outside** the story is easily recognizable because the story is written grammatically in the third person: **he, she, it, they**. So the External Narrator is frequently called the **Third Person Narrator**.
2. The External Narrative point of view is extremely flexible and pliable. The Narrator can **report** the action; **describe** the people, places and things; **present** the speech of the characters; **present** the internal life--the thoughts, feelings, reactions, consciousness--of any of the characters; and **comment** on the characters and events in the story.

The Internal Narrator

1. The Internal Narrator is a character **within** the story itself. Frequently called the First-Person Narrator because the story is told by a character who uses "I". The Internal Narrative point of view is by definition a **restricted** view of the characters and events of the story. The Internal Narrator is usually the central character, but sometimes a secondary character who is a "witness" to the events he or she is telling.
2. Internal Narration has the advantage of **directly expressing** the feelings, reactions and judgments of a particular individual. The character's way of telling the story, his or her voice--the language, the emotions, the perceptions and reactions--are frequently what the story is about.
3. Eg: *Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger.*

- **Plot**

Plot is the shape of the action. The relationship between the incidents. E.M. Forster in *The Art of the Novel*, said: "the king died, and then the queen died" is not a plot but merely a report of two incidents. But "the king died, and then the queen died of grief," is a plot. Here's a plot: *When he woke up, the dinosaur was still there.*--"The Dinosaur," Augusto Monterroso

- **Setting**

The setting is the context of the action. Where and when the events of the story take place. Setting frequently takes on symbolic meaning.

- **Character**

Who are the central characters? Who changes during the course of the events?

- **Symbol**

A symbol is a detail in the story that suggests meaning beyond itself. Context determines symbolic meaning. Some symbols are conventional: The Country vs. The City. Black hats v/s White hats. A story detail--a gesture, an object, a piece of dialogue--becomes symbolic through repetition.

- **Theme**

The theme is what the story is about, the issues it investigates, its meaning. The story's point or message.

Enjoyment of Recreation

Recreation of an event in the narrative form depends on the mental state of the narrator. For the primitive man any action that ended in success was very pleasant for narration. By recreating such an event he was recording in the minds of listeners that he has enough mental and physical strength; coupled with cunningness to defeat an adversary which was eventually a powerful animal. And hunting was the main activity. If there was failure in killing an animal, the incident was not pleasant for recreation. Thus by establishing one's superiority in physical strength and mental capability one could become the leader of the tribe.

Role of memory and imagination

Killing a physically superior wild animal can be stated in one line. If man wanted to celebrate this as an event, a proper structural narration is of primary importance. Here we discover the role of memory and imagination as applied by primitive man. He must develop a keen sense of memory for analyzing the details. This he should do mentally and store them for future use. The role played by imagination is the key point in narration. The narrator should structure the story with a Beginning, Middle and an End.

- **Memory** is the faculty of the mind by which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved.
- **Imagination** is making images in our minds.

Origin of Story – Verbal Narration

The most important parts of the story narration are the beginning, the middle and the end. As a story has to be effectively conveyed to the listener, the words have to be structured to involve the listener. This required clarity of thought, style in diction with voice flexibility and imaginative ideas to create dramatic interest. Thus words primarily became the vehicle for the entertainment of primitive man. Verbal narration had to be dramatically effective. It was not the physical strength alone that created a leader among the primitive men. The part played by imagination and efficiency in articulation were the other means.

Therefore verbal narration had great significance in the primitive society. Before man discovered alphabets and writing systems. Narration was the main vehicle for story telling. This tendency still exists in various forms in modern society.

The Oral Tradition of Stories

The youngest forms of storytelling were oral, combined with gesture and expression: words were spoken from one person to another in an effort to communicate a message or a feeling. Stories are also seen in the artwork scratched onto the walls of caves. With the invention of writing, stories were recorded, transcribed and shared over wide regions of the world, such that today, the medium most commonly-associated with storytelling is the novel. As human activities have become more refined and complex, visual stories have been presented in images carved into wood, ivory or stone, painted on canvas, recorded on film and stored electronically as digital images.

Traditionally, oral stories were passed from generation to generation, and survived solely by memory. With written media, this has become less important. Conversely, in modern times, the vast entertainment industry is built upon a foundation of sophisticated multimedia storytelling.

People in all times and places have told stories. In the oral tradition, storytelling includes the teller and the audience. The storyteller creates the experience, while the audience perceives the message and creates personal mental images from the words heard and the gestures seen. In this experience, the audience becomes co-creator of the art.

Generally, a storyteller does not memorize a set text, but learns a series of script-like incidents that form a satisfying narrative arch (a plot) with a distinct beginning, middle and end. The teller visualizes the characters and settings, and then improvises the actual wording. Thus no two tellings of an oral story are exactly alike.

A good storyteller gives the listener or reader a sense of making order out of chaos. So the good storyteller must give the reader a good dose of feeling the chaos, and there has to follow enough order made out of the chaos to give the reader the satisfaction of a good story. As we look at the Indian traditional aspect of emotions we come across the codification (rules) in Nava Rasas which evoke the desired emotion in the spectator if the performer is disciplined in nava rasas. However, the stories that appeal to generation after generation are the stories that are never resolvable - just as life is never resolvable; the complexity of life remains.

ASSIGNMENT : 2

FIND OUT THE TYPES OF NARRATIVES WITH EXAMPLES (STORIES, MOVIES, SCULPTURES, PAINTINGS, NOVELS..ETC) :

- Synchronic
- Diachronic
- Simultaneous narrative
- Monoscenic narrative
- Continuous narrative
- Synoptic narrative
- Progressive narrative
- Sequential narrative

END