

Write a critical note on Neo-classical poetry -

Introduction — It is true that the period between (1680-1750) is known as the Augustan age or Neo-classical age. This period is also called the age of John Dryden, Alexander Pope and Dr. Samuel Johnson or the age of prose and reason. It was the firm belief of the neo-classical poets that the world is God's graceful creation with man midway in the great chain of being. The neo-classicism Dryden, Pope and Johnson were ideal representatives of this age. The spirit of the age was analytic and equisitive and not synthetic and naively credulous. The Neo-classical poetry stresses on reason and intellect than on passion and imagination.

Characteristics of the Neo-classical period.

Respects for the Ancients — Canzonian observes that, "The literary transition from the Renaissance to the Restoration is nothing more or less than the progressive movement of the spirit of the liberty. At once fanciful, brilliant and adventurous, towards a rule and discipline both inspiration and inform". The neo-classical poets were champions of common sense and reasons. They were in favour of normal generalities against the whims of individual genius. Dryden, Pope and Johnson stressed on the imitation of the ancient rules. The original works Neo-classicism have got such echoes of classical writers.

Influence of the French Neo-classicists —

The Neo-classical school of Dryden and Pope was much influenced by the famous French writers of this period. Aristotle the father of all criticism thinks of epic and tragedies. It is true that many English Authors turned to French literature for motivation and guidance. The most influenced mock heroic poems were *Le-Lutin*, written by

Boileau, Mack Flekorce by John Dryden and the Rape of the Lock and the Dunciad composed by Alexander Pope.

Realism and Didacticism in Neo-classical poetry.

We observe that the Neo-classical poetry is very realistic and didactic. All the poets of this age were men of action whenever we go through the literary compositions of these books are realistic didactic and satiric. Some of Neo-classical poems are too much topical in nature and mood.

Artificial and conventional style and satirical verse—

The neo-classical poets are extremely artificial and conventional style at their various poems they used strange poetic diction in their poems. Satire was the delectate form of literature of the Neo-classical age. In Dryden's verses we find the use of satire to a great extent. Even the verses of Pope and Johnson are satirical in spirit and temperament.

Treatment of town life:— The literature of the Neo-classical period (1660-1798) was much concerned with the life in London. The Neo-classical poets did their best to use many social evidences and the contemporary controversies in their poetry. The true social picture of the contemporary London society has been beautifully portrayed in the satirical books of poems composed by Dryden Pope and Johnson.

Expression of the heroic couplets:— Every heroic couplet consists of two iambic pentameter lines rhyming together. The Neo-classical poets draw our special attention towards beautiful and expressive objects. All the three Neo-classical poets have used heroic couplets in their different poems.

The Neo-classical poets— John Dryden, Alexander Pope and Dr Samuel Johnson are known as great Neo-classical poets.

John-Dryden— Dryden is the greatest pioneer of the

Neo-classical school of poetry. He was not only a great poet but also father of English literary criticism. His Absalom and Achitophel and the Medal are political satires in verse. His Mac Fleknoe is a personal brilliant satire in verse written to tarnish the image of his rival poet Thomas Shadwell. His The Hind and the Panther is also a very significant satire. His style of using Heroic couplets has immortalised him. His Mac Heroic poems enchant the hearts and mind of the readers.

Alexander Pope - Alexander Pope also holds a significant position after Dryden in the Neo-classical poetry. His famous literary compositions are 'The Rape of Lock' and the Dunciad. The Rape of the Lock deals with the cutting of the hair lock of Belinda by his lover Lord Peter a Baron. It can be said that the Epistle to Arbuthnot are all verse satire. His other ~~poems~~ poems, A little learning is a dangerous thing and Essay on Man, Essay on Criticism and Moral Essays are very didactic in aim. He was a great lover of puzzles and puns and anagram. He was also a great master in using the heroic couplets in his poems.

Dr. Samuel Johnson - Dr. Samuel Johnson's literary master piece is Vanity of human wishes. His poems London is also very satirical. After Dryden and Pope the most important and the weightiest welder of the Heroic couplet is Dr. Johnson. It is fact that the vogue of the couplet declined after him as romanticism spread in the air.

Conclusion - The Neo-classical poetry has an artificial poetic diction. It is quite classical and passed on the realities of the contemporary society of London.