MAC: 08 Sem: 05 British Literature: 18th Century
UNIT: 01 Historical overview of 18th Century British Literature

Meaning of Neoclassicism or Neoclassical Period (1660-1790 CE)

The word "Neoclassicism" means "new classical" which refers to the revival of classical ideals such as order, reason, balance and restraint.

Origin of Neoclassicism

Neoclassicism is a major literary and artistic movement that developed in Europe during the late 17th and 18th centuries. It began itself with the return of Charles II to the throne in 1660 marked the beginning of Long 18th 18th century or the Neo-Classical Period, as Charles II's return to the throne marked the end of Political upheaval (उथल-पुथल), the re-establishment of the monarchy, and a revival of the Church of England.

Characteristics of Neoclassicism

- Imitation of classical Models : Writers of this period followed Greek and Roman authors like Homer, Virgil and Horace.
- Strict order and structure : Literature of this period follow fixed & strict rules of symmetry (similarity) in formal structure and style.
- Emphasis on Reason and intelect : Logic, common sense, rational thinking and scientific views were valued more than emotional point.
- Formal and polished language : clear, precise and controlled expression became the sign of Neoclassicism.
- Didactic Purpose : Literature aimed at moral teaching as well as entertainment.
- Urban and Social themes : Themes of literature dealt with life of cities, coffeehouses, politics and society.