

ABSTRACT

Literature has become a credible source for writing History by which we can explore the past, and in the light of that we can analyze our present, which helps us to have proper perspective for the future. Literature provides us with a prism through which the changes accruing to the value can be identified. Literature is indeed a tool of hastening the process of history. Such monumental events like reformation and renaissance in Europe could be made possible through the endeavors of laureates. Besides, history and literature are complimentary to each other in particular respect to the social history. To trace the social history of the populations, prose writings provide the basic information related to contemporary issues, culture of ruling elite and the extent of their relationship with the masses. Thus, nineteenth century Urdu literature verily was an instrument for the renaissance among the *Ashrafia* (Muslim aristocratic) class. Urdu prose writers pushed their pens, depicting the state of Muslim elite which was the central theme of the literary activities in Delhi and Lucknow. In Urdu prose Deputy Nazir Ahmed was the harbinger of that particular trend. He brought into his literary focus the culture, language and lifestyle of the Delhi *Ashraf* in his writings and set out to explore the merits and demerits in their *weltanschauung*. Lucknow was the other centre where Urdu literature flourished in the nineteenth century and Rattan Nath Sarshar was the key laureate. Both, Nazir Ahmed and Sarshar gave a good account of the *Ashraf* which was being influenced by the western lifestyle and also clinging onto the tradition. Both the authors have demonstrated quite adroitly the complex state that *Ashrafia* had been caught up with. Hence their works and the central themes that they had engaged with, forms the central focus of this study.