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Situating Medieval Indian Historiography Through Literary Records: A Study of Tabqat-e-Nasiri as a Historical Text

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It is a commonly accepted fact that literature has been extensively used in delineating and establishing various historical problems and perspectives. Literature is the reflective medium of a particular religious, cultural, economic and political aspect of a society. As such, it becomes essential to study and evaluate the literary work of a particular period with a view to determine its history and culture. Literary sources played a key role in shaping and constructing the history of Persian world particularly with reference to Islamic civilization.

Arabic as the dominant language of the Islamic rulers invariably became the court language thereby setting the style, norm and standard as far as literary activity was concerned. Though history writing was precisely done only in Arabic, in the later period Persian also was employed. Minhaj-e-Siraj was one of the pioneering scholars who initiated the process of writing historical works in Persian, particularly with reference to India.

Minhaj-e-Siraj was born in a well respected family of Ghor in 1193 A.D. Starting his career as a civil servant in the court of Ghor like his ancestors, he moved to this subcontinent and attached himself to Nasiruddin Qubacha of Sindh in 1226 A.D.¹ Later he was absorbed into palace service of Delhi Sultanate by Shamsuddin Iltutmish. He served in various capacities as *Imam*, *Qazi*, *Khatib* of various places. In 1255

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