

Fred M. Donner

Fred M. Donner, after many years' labor, finally completed his study of early Islamic historiography, entitled *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing*. It has now been submitted to the series Late Antiquity and Early Islam, published by Darwin Press, and should appear in late 1997 or early 1998. He also completed a short entry on "Islamic State, Structure of" for the forthcoming *Guide to the Late Antique World* (Harvard University Press), and the lead chapter, entitled "Muhammad and the Islamic Caliphate, 570–1258 CE," for the forthcoming *Oxford History of Islam*. At the 1996 Middle East Studies Association Conference, held in November in Providence, Rhode Island, he participated in a panel devoted to the medieval Islamic historian Ali ibn 'Asakir (d. 1176), presenting a paper on "Ibn 'Asakir's depiction of the Rashidun caliphs." In January, he delivered a paper on "Tribalism and the State" at the Mellon-Sawyer Seminar at Northwestern University. He also lectured on early Islamic history at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, and at North Park College. Donner continued to serve as editor of *Al-'Usur al-Wusta* ("The Middle Ages" in Arabic), which is the semiannual Newsletter of Middle East Medievalists. In June, in his role as a member of the Board of Directors of the fledgling American Research Institute in Syria (ARIS), he participated in discussions in Damascus with the Minister of Culture and Director of Antiquities, aimed at getting official Syrian approval for the establishment of an American center there, and also met extensively with colleagues at the University of Damascus and the University of Jordan in Amman.
