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**Fred M. Donner's** segment of the translation of the *Annals of Apostles and Kings*, an extensive universal history compiled by the ninth-century Arab historian al-Tabarī, is now in press. While the joyous labors of reading proof and indexing the Tabarī volume still loom ahead, completion of the main task of translation during the winter months has enabled Donner to turn to other projects. He has resumed work on a partially-completed monograph on the beginnings of Islamic historical writing, collecting material for several case studies that he plans to include as an appendix to the work. During spring quarter he was fortunate to receive from the newly-created Chicago Humanities Institute a fellowship for release time that enabled him to explore the vast recent literature on theories of narrative. Much of the Islamic historiographical tradition consists of narrative accounts, and this review of recent theoretical approaches to narrative proposed by literary critics, philosophers of history, psychologists, and anthropologists has been helpful to Donner in formulating his own treatment of the Islamic historiographical tradition.

In November, 1990, Donner presented a paper on "The Hanifa Tribe of Eastern Arabia in the Early Islamic Period" at the Middle East Studies Association annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas. In it he tried to explain why a tribe that had been very wealthy and powerful on the eve of Islam fell on hard times and eventually vanished from the historical record during the early Islamic centuries—a fate that was not shared by many other Arabian tribes.

Donner's article on "The Sources of Islamic Conceptions of War" was published in a volume entitled *Just War and Jihād*, edited by John Kelsay and James Turner Johnson (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991). He completed the article "Dolafids," about a semi-independent dynasty in the Zagros region of western Iran during the ninth century C.E., for the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, as well as several book reviews for various journals. He was engaged in his usual teaching and administrative duties during the fall and winter quarters, and continued to serve as coordinator of the University of Chicago-University of Damascus Affiliation program, which arranges research visits to Chicago by scholars from

the University of Damascus, Syria, and sponsors Chicago scholars in Syria. During 1990-91 the Oriental Institute benefited from the presence here of two faculty from the University of Damascus—Dr. Aid Mari, a specialist in the history of northern Syria and Mesopotamia in the 2nd millennium B.C., and Dr. Sultan Muhesen, a noted prehistorian.

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