

Clifford Edmund Bosworth, Emeritus Professor of Arabic studies, fellow of the British Academy, was born in Sheffield, England, 1928.

He got his [B. A. degree. in](#) St. John's College, Oxford, in modern history. Later he studied oriental languages (Arabic, Persian and Turkish) in Edinburgh, where he got his M.A in 1956, and PhD in 1961. Between 1956 and 1965 he was lecturer in Arabic at the university of St. Andrews, Scotland, and after a year spent in Toronto as visiting associate professor he became professor in Manchester, where he worked from 1967 until 1990. He spent shorter or longer periods as visiting professor at various universities from Kuwait to the United States (Princeton, Harvard, etc.). Since 1997 he has been honorary professor at the University of Wales, Lampeter.

Behind these numbers, marking the obligatory stages of a university career as well as the exceptional recognition of a successful scholar, there is a long life full of work and rich in results.

Edmund Bosworth, well versed in three major languages of the Islamic world, was active in various fields of the oriental studies. He paid attention to historical as well as literary works, he wrote books on history of culture and religion too. This comprehensive knowledge of Islam enables him to deeply understand all fields he investigated during fifty years of continuous work. The wide range of Arabic and Persian sources investigated by him made his achievements admired not only by European orientalists, but by oriental scholars too. This explains why one of his earliest books written in Edinburgh (*The Ghaznavids, their empire in Afghanistan and eastern Iran 994-1040*, Edinburgh, 1963) was ten years later reedited in Beirut (1973), and again nearly twenty years later (1992) in Bombay. The subsequent volume continuing the investigation of the same epoch (*The later Ghaznavids, splendour and decay: the dynasty in Afghanistan and northern India 1040-1186*, Edinburgh, 1977) was reprinted in New Delhi, 1992, and translated into Persian. Another book dedicated to the early history of Afghanistan (*Sistan under the Arabs, from the Islamic conquest to the rise of the Saffarids, 650-864*, Rome, 1968) was translated into Persian.

E. Bosworth's handbook of Islamic dynasties (Edinburgh, 1967) is being translated into many languages, e.g. into Russian and French in Europe, into Arabic, Persian and Turkish in the East.

The works dedicated to the questions of literature can be characterized by the same variety of sources that can be observed in the case of history. In the book *The mediaeval Islamic underworld, the Banu Sasan in Arabic society and literature I-II*, Leiden, 1976, literature and sociology, Arabic and Iranian philology are being combined.

Purely literary interest is reflected by his translation of Tha`álibi's *The Book of curious and entertaining information (Latiz'if al-ma`árij)*, Edinburgh, 1968. In a special volume of the Journal of Semitic Studies (*Bahá' al-Din al-`flmili and his literary anthologies*, Manchester, 1989) E. Bosworth gave a thorough treatment to the problem of the literary anthologies enjoying great popularity in the Middle Ages.

Having selected some items from the long list of books published by E. Bosworth I have to mention his articles dedicated to the same subjects. Now we are in the lucky position of having the possibility to read the most important ones of his nearly 100 articles in several volumes of the famous *Variorum* reprint series. By way of example here I want to mention just two of them: *Medieval culture and administration*, London, 1982, *The Arabs, Byzantium and Iran. Studies in early Islamic history and culture*, Aldershot, 1996.

In spite of the great number of his own publications, he had time to do unselfish work on the precious bequest of his deceased colleagues too. Suffice to mention here Richard Bell's most important commentary on the Qur'án in two volumes. The book is one of the most remarkable monuments of the European critique of the Qur'án, but the late author (he died in Edinburgh, 1952) did not have time to finish his manuscript. This work was done by M.E.J.