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Michael Hamilton Burgoyne, 1944–2021

The fields of medieval studies and Jerusalem studies have lost a major scholar this year with the death of Michael Hamilton Burgoyne on 21 September 2021 at the Infirmary of Edinburgh. His monumental book *Mamluk Jerusalem: An Architectural Study* was published by the World of Islam Festival Trust in 1987 to great scholarly acclaim. It followed many years of surveys and architectural analysis he undertook in Jerusalem's Old City, in work supported by the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (BSAJ). His book has stood the test of time and even today is regarded as one of the most important books ever published on the architecture of medieval Islamic Jerusalem.



Michael Hamilton Burgoyne addressing a conference at Providence College in June 2017 (photo credit: Patricia Krupinski/Providence College).



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Born in 1944 (with a twin brother) at Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland, to parents who were in the fields of education and medicine, Burgoyne had, from a very early age, a fascination with draughtsmanship. This interest probably eventually led him to study architecture and conservation at the Edinburgh Heriot-Watt University, graduating in 1969. Following his marriage in 1974, Burgoyne moved to Jerusalem to undertake the comprehensive survey of Mamluk buildings there, and he immediately became entranced by the city and its people. He then went to the University of Oxford to complete a D.Phil. thesis (1979) based on his Jerusalem research, and decided to learn Arabic.

Following a brief stint as a Visiting Agha Khan Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1981–82), Burgoyne became a TAVO Research Fellow at the University of Tübingen for a short while (1984) before taking up a position as Lecturer in Islamic Architecture at the Mackintosh School of Architecture in Glasgow University (1986–89). In 1987 he was entrusted with preparing a proposal for the restoration and conservation of the old downtown core of the city of Nablus, work that was sponsored by the British Council. Burgoyne was appointed Senior Architect in Historic Scotland in Edinburgh in 1989, where he worked until his retirement. He was a proud member of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) from 1976, and an Associate of the Royal Incorporation of Architects of Scotland (ARIAS) from 1978.

Burgoyne's passion for the architecture of the Near East never ceased: in 1999 he served on the Medieval and Ottoman Survey committee for the Council of British Research in the Levant (CBRL) and in 2006 he became the project architect for the White Monastery Documentation Project of the Yale Egyptological Institute in Egypt. While not a prolific writer, Burgoyne was fastidious about providing the scholarly world with well-documented research, presented with precision and style. Most of his efforts went into *Mamluk Jerusalem*, which he began preparing for publication in 1985, with a contribution of additional historical research provided by D. S. Richards. In 1993 and 1999, Burgoyne published two important papers on the gateways leading to the Ḥaram al-Sharīf (in *Bayt al-Maqdis: 'Abd al Malik's Jerusalem*, Parts 1–2, ed. J. Raby). This was followed by a paper on the east wall of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf, which was published in 2000 (in *Ottoman Jerusalem*, ed. R. Hillenbrand and S. Auld), and a number of other papers dealing with various architectural features from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. His 2009 paper on the "Smaller Domes in the Haram al-Sharif" made the significant point that the upper platform of the Ḥaram was expanded in the Ayyubid period (in *Ayyubid Jerusalem: The Holy City in Context 1187–1250*, ed. R. Hillenbrand and S. Auld). I am told that Burgoyne's last visit to Jerusalem was in May 2016, when he met with scholars Isam Awwad and Beatrice St. Laurent for a visit to the Ḥaram.



The last time I saw Michael was at “Marking the Sacred: The Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif,” a 2017 conference organized by Joan Branham and Beatrice St. Laurent at Providence College in Rhode Island in the United States. He seemed frail, but at the same time had a smile on his face. After all, the conference was on the subject that he loved the most: Jerusalem and the Ḥaram al-Sharīf.

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