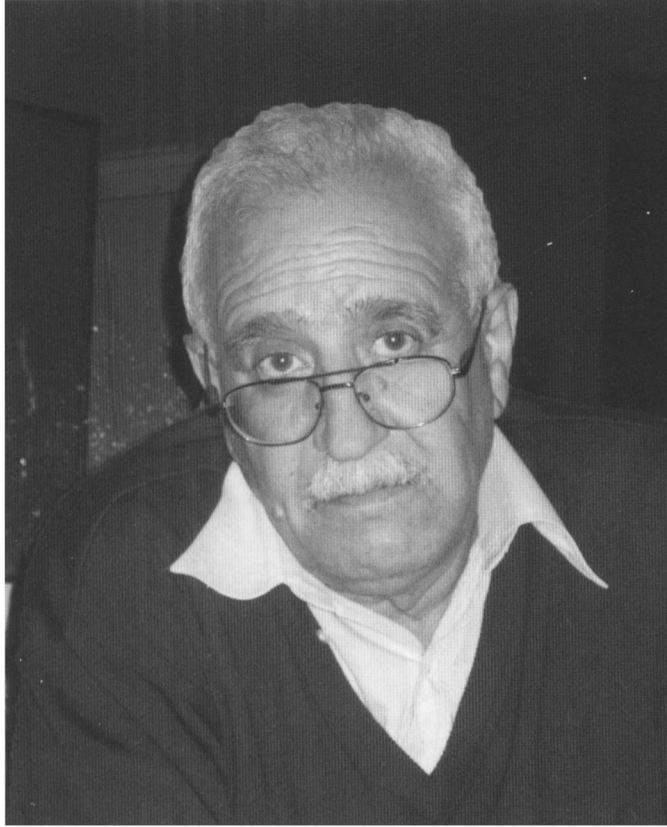


## OBITUARY

BURHAN SHAKIR SULAIMAN, BA  
(1944–2013)



Burhan Shakir Sulaiman was born in the village of Qara Tepe, Hamrin, in 1944. In the late 1950s his family left for Baghdad, where he graduated from high school in 1962. In the same year he enrolled at the University of Baghdad, where he studied in the Department of Archaeology, receiving his degree in 1966/67. He was hired by the Directorate General of Antiquities in 1968, and in the following years he functioned as a government representative for several British and German archaeological excavations across Iraq.

Soon he was also directing excavations and surveys throughout the country. Amongst his most important excavations were the projects in Tell Sleimah<sup>1</sup> and Tell al-Namil,<sup>2</sup> where he discovered Early Dynastic round buildings. Since he found three more structures of this kind in later projects, he often joked about being a collector of such architectural features. His largest projects were the salvage excavations that had become necessary due to the building of the Adheim Dam in the Hamrin in the 1990s and the Makhul Dam south of Ashur on the Tigris River, which was planned to be built in 2007. His work in the Adheim area, which also included excavations in Tell Hadad,<sup>3</sup> ancient Mê-Tur(r)an, is only published preliminarily,<sup>4</sup> but his family is currently preparing a

<sup>1</sup> Salman and Sulaiman, حفرة تاب تل سليمة (Tell Slaimah Excavations), *Sumer* 35, 1979: 420–27.

<sup>2</sup> التنقيبات في تل النمل (Excavations in Tall al-Namil), *Sumer* 51, 2001-2: 1-50.

<sup>3</sup> نتائج التنقيبات في تل حداد (Results of Excavations at Tall Hadad), *Sumer* 52: 89–143, 2003–4.

<sup>4</sup> A brief report on the al-Adhaim Dam Salvage Project. In: P. A. Miglus and S. Mühl (eds), *Between the cultures. The central Tigris region from the 3rd to the 1st millennium BC*. Heidelberg Studien zum Alten Orient 14, 2011: 385–94.

monograph on the results of this project based on his manuscript. From 2006 to 2009 Burhan, together with Zuhair Rajab Abdallah, his colleague and friend with whom he shared many years of collaboration in archaeological projects, worked on an edition of the archaeological material of the Makhul Dam excavations at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. Graciously, he was willing to share his expertise with his German colleagues and students, and he inspired them to undertake new research in Mesopotamian archaeology. In 2010, he published the results of this project in monograph form.<sup>5</sup>

In 2003, Burhan was appointed Director General of the Department of Archaeological Excavations and Investigations in Baghdad, a position which he held until his retirement for political reasons in 2005. In 2009 he continued his research in Iraqi Kurdistan, where he conducted his last excavation, at the site Bawageldi, Sulaymaniyah Province.

Courage was a major driving force in his life. Next to his love for the cultural heritage of Iraq, he also had a political life in which he was a member of the Communist Party. During times when belonging to a political organisation was dangerous and even life-threatening, this was indeed a problematic issue. Burhan was also an accomplished journalist, and published articles for several Iraqi newspapers. Until the end of his life, he was a very active member of the Union of Iraqi writers and of the Journalists' Syndicate. He also dedicated himself to the Association for the Support of Iraqi Culture, and acted as a member of its administrative board. He was in contact with many young artists, who he supported in a country which is still searching for its new political and cultural identity, a process to which he contributed to as a member of the administrative board of the Iraqi Archaeologists' Association. Many generations of Iraqi archaeologists were mentored by him on his excavations, and he guided them towards taking up their own research.

In January 2013, Burhan Shakir Sulaiman passed away in Baghdad. He is survived by his wife and two sons with their families. His warm and open friendliness is missed by his friends, colleagues and students all over the world. He is remembered as a brave, honest and direct man, who dedicated his life to many different aspects of the cultural heritage of Iraq and its communication to the world.

Simone Mühl

<sup>5</sup> تنقيبات عراقية في منطقة سد مكحول *Irakische Ausgrabungen im Makhul-Staudammgebiet*, Heidelberger Studien zum Alten Orient 12. For an English report see Mühl and Sulaiman, The

Makhul Dam Project, In: *Between the Cultures* 2011: 371–84. A German edition of Burhan's work is in preparation by Miglus and Mühl as HSAO 13.