

The Australian Institute of Archaeology and the beginning of ancient world archaeology at the University of Melbourne

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Abstract: The origin of the relationship between the University of Melbourne and the Australian Institute of Archaeology is described together with the roles played by Maurice Goldman and John Thompson. The circumstances of William Culican's arrival in Melbourne are discussed, and the expectations of the founder of the Institute, Walter Beasley, in relation to Thompson and Culican are briefly explored.

The Australian Institute of Archaeology (the Institute) was founded in Melbourne in 1946. It is often remembered in the context of the secondary school ancient history curriculum, which was its primary concern between 1970 and 1999, but the original constitution of the Institute did not mention 'schools' or 'education', it did however refer to 'universities and museums' five times, 'research' six times, and 'exploration' and 'publishing' each three times. The original focus of the Institute and its founder, Walter J. Beasley, was clearly tertiary level studies.

Beasley (1889-1976) was a successful businessman who in 1930 ceased to exercise day-to-day management of his import-export/transport company, Tho H Young Pty Ltd, in order to devote his considerable energy to Christian missions and archaeology. Although he only had an 8th grade education he worked tirelessly to educate himself in archaeology and he appreciated the strategic importance of tertiary study. As a means of furthering his own archaeological knowledge he travelled extensively in India and the Middle East visiting excavations where the international scholars he met were all based in European and American universities and museums. Australian scholars were nowhere to be seen. The Institute was established in part to tackle this situation.

Between 1945 and 1947 Beasley successfully negotiated with Professors Dale Trendall and A.H. McDonald of the University of Sydney to arrange James R.B. Stewart's return to Australia to begin archaeological education in Sydney (Davey 2013a). While Beasley was not cognisant of university politics, his commercial impatience meant that he would financially resolve any perceived problem and in so doing he eliminated the main impediments facing Sydney University with respect to the appointment. While Stewart's tenure at Sydney was never smooth, the archaeological education he began was the first of its kind in Australia and has gone on to produce a significant number of the world's leading archaeologists.

When writing to G.R.H. (Mick) Wright in June 1954 about funding for Wright's excavations at Tocra (Davey 2013b), Beasley explained his need for ancient pottery,

...it is possible to see something of an investment in pottery that would assist us in lecturing at

Melbourne University, and incidentally intrigue the professors of that university in our work.... as general archaeology as known overseas, is not really known in Australia (AIAdoc 763).

Beasley was concerned that in Australian universities, Sydney excepted, ancient history was generally limited to the classical period and archaeology was ignored. In a following letter, Beasley told Wright that he was in contact with five professors at the University of Melbourne and he asked him if he could locate some ancient slag samples for one of them, Howard Worner, the Professor of Metallurgy (AIAdoc 762).



Figure 1: Walter Beasley in the early 1950s with some pots from Cyprus. Photo: the Institute.

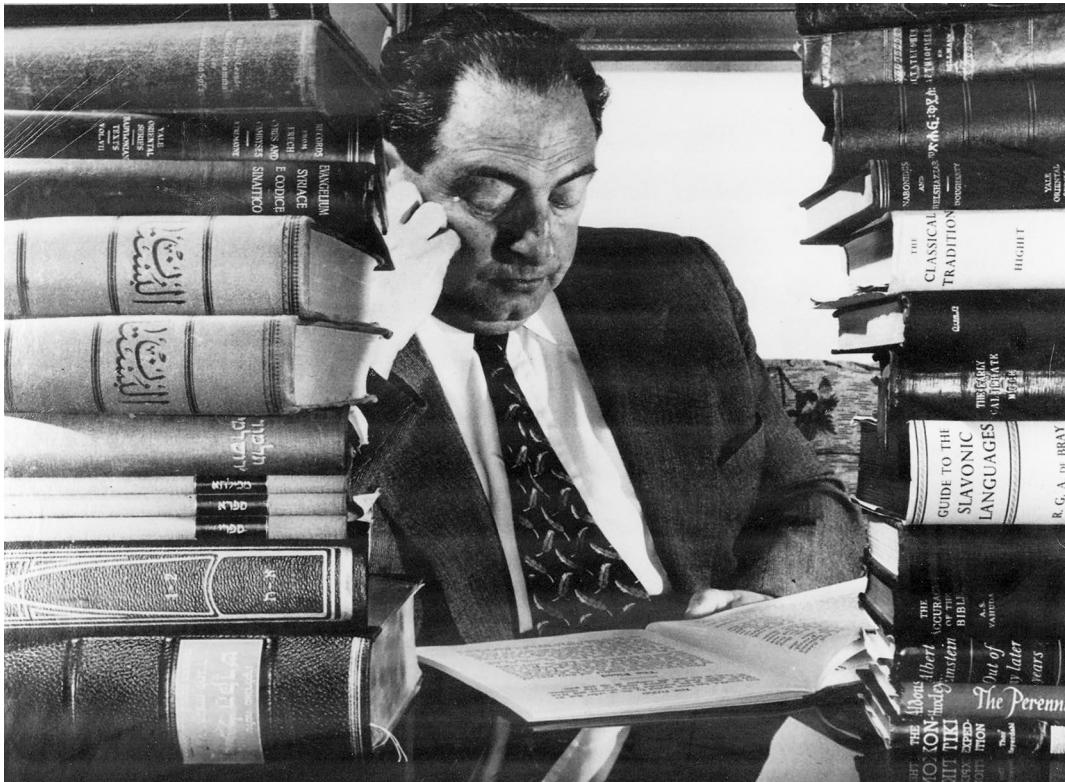


Figure 2: Professor Maurice Goldman. Photo held by Dr Ziva Shavitsky and scanned by Andrew Jamieson

Maurice Goldman

The University of Melbourne (the University) began in 1854 with chairs in Classics, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, History and Law (Blainey 1956). The University followed the University College London model of not allowing the teaching of theology. There was a sentiment in the Colony of Victoria not to confer on the Church of England, and religion in general, the status they had in England where so much education was sponsored by religious entities and university education was restricted to members of the Church of England. Education in Victoria was to be secular and open to all.

Thus the University began with a Eurocentric model teaching Classical Greek religion and mythology, and excluding semitic and oriental languages and cultures so important to the development of Western culture. This unbalanced situation was still evident after eighty years when Beasley came on the scene. Hebrew had been taught at Cambridge and Oxford universities from 1540s and Arabic from 1630s. By 1900 many universities in Europe and North America had chairs in the fields of Ancient History, Archaeology, Assyriology and Egyptology but in Australia, even today, such positions are rare.

In 1944 Professor Alan R Chisholm, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, was approached by a Melbourne businessman, Abraham Hyam Sicree of the A.B.Y Manufacturing Co., who offered to fund a chair in Semitic Languages and Culture for a period of five years (Chisholm 1958: 127). The opportunity was grasped by Chisholm, who rapidly obtained the necessary approvals and selected a Melbourne-based scholar, Maurice Goldman, who on 1

July 1945 became the foundation Lazarus and Abraham Sicree Professor of Semitic Studies (Christesen 1996).

Maurice David Goldman (1898-1957) was born of Jewish parents at Kolo in Poland and studied Arabic, Islamic culture and Oriental languages at the University of Berlin from 1920 to 1925, where he took the degree of doctor of philosophy *magna cum laude* (*The Argus* 11 May 1945: 3; Apple 1959). He left Germany in 1938, after being warned by his friends that he was in danger, and joined his sister in Horsham, Victoria (*The Sydney Morning Herald* 15 December 1938: 13). Goldman soon moved to Melbourne where he undertook many teaching engagements, especially within the Jewish community, and during World War II he was an interpreter and consultant in the censor's office, Department of the Army, Melbourne (Apple 2012).

Chisholm described how Goldman was appointed to the chair of Semitic Studies at the University (1958: 127). He was mindful of the fact that after the Sicree funding expired in 1950 it would be necessary for the University to accept responsibility for Goldman's position. Chisholm regarded Goldman as a unique opportunity that he correctly judged the University would not reject when the time came; he estimated that Goldman had a working knowledge of at least forty languages and that he spoke fifteen fluently. While Goldman's ability to decipher almost any language had secured his war-time employment, his engaging teaching style and brilliant scholarship assured his academic position, the effects of which are still felt today.



Figure 3: John Thompson's business card in 1955 as Director of the Australian Institute of Archaeology.

John Thompson

In 1951 the *Sydney Morning Herald* (6 October: 2) reported that the Institute had made prizes totalling £90 available for students studying archaeology at the University of Sydney. This came to Goldman's notice and he immediately contacted the Institute.

Beasley, whose own father was Jewish, would have appreciated Goldman's business-like candour. He reported on the subsequent discussions with Goldman in a letter to Stewart (AIAdoc 440). From the beginning of 1952 Thompson, the Director of the Institute, would teach a subject entitled Biblical Archaeology at the University to a significant number of students who were studying classical Hebrew.

John Arthur Thompson (1913-2002) had been a science master at 'Churchie', Brisbane Anglican Church Grammar School, and because of his relationship with some of the first Council members of the Institute, he was employed from 1 March 1947 as the Director of the Institute (Davey 2001/2). At the time of his appointment he had no experience of archaeology, but one of his first acts was to enrol at the University to study Hebrew with Goldman. To assist with archaeology he also enrolled in Geology, and he had access to the substantial archaeological library that Beasley had amassed.

Thompson was a good student and Goldman was an effective teacher, so by 1949 he was tutoring in Hebrew. His role as a sessional lecturer in Biblical Archaeology at the University was therefore not out of place, and his remuneration, for which the University was reimbursed by the Institute, meant that there were no financial implications for the University. In August 1951 Thompson had returned from twelve months in the Middle East where he was an Honorary Fellow of the American Schools of Oriental Research. He had excavated with people such as James Pritchard, Gerald Lankester Harding and Dimitri Baramki, and had travelled in Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Cyprus,

Israel and Italy. He also visited museums in London and Oxford and met numerous archaeologists.

The syllabus of the Biblical Archaeology subject is not a mystery. Soon after leaving the Institute in 1956 Thompson published three Pathway Books entitled *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (1957, 2nd ed. 1959), *Archaeology and the Pre-Christian Centuries* (1958, 2nd ed. 1959), and *Archaeology and the New Testament* (1960). These were consolidated into one volume entitled *The Bible and Archaeology* in 1962. It ran through three editions, the last in 1982, and is currently available in the USA in both electronic and hard copy forms. In the Preface, Thompson states that the content 'originally comprised lectures given in theological college, Bible college, and university classes in Australia'.

There is some evidence that the Institute and Goldman developed a good working relationship. On 6 June 1953, as Beasley's association with Stewart and Sydney University came to an end, the remaining funds in the Australian Cyprus Expedition account, £517.9.4, were returned to the Institute and then passed on to the University (AIAdocs 588, 589, 595). It is not clear how the money was spent, but it may have funded Goldman's travel to international conferences. Goldman, in return, wrote the forward in Beasley's next book entitled *Creation's Amazing Architect* (1955).

Thompson resigned from the directorship of the Institute on 2 September 1956 to take up a position as a tutor at the New South Wales Baptist Theological College commencing on 1 January 1957 (AIAdmin 21/9/1956; *New Life* 27/9/1956: 1). Thompson was then 45 years old and the new position was comparatively junior so his departure is somewhat curious. While written sources are silent about the reason for his departure, as was Thompson himself, two informants have stated that Beasley was opposed to



Figure 4: The Dhiban team at Thanksgiving dinner, November 1950. From the left, John Thompson, Father Murphy, Bennie (servant), Ken Ogden, Amil (driver), Omar (cook) and Bill Morton. Photo: taken by James Pritchard, Thompson Archive



Figure 5: John Thompson, the first director of the Institute, at Pompeii 1951. Photo: Thompson Archive.

the publication of *The Bible and Archaeology*. Thompson would appear to have been fulfilling Beasley's dream of having archaeology taught at an Australian university, so why put this in jeopardy?

Some years earlier *The Sydney Morning Herald* (18 February 1939: 20) published a review of Beasley's first book *Jericho's Judgment* together with a review of *Biblical Archaeology: Its uses and abuses* by George H Richardson, Rector of Oswaldkirk, York and onetime secretary of the Egypt Exploration Society (Richardson ND; Beasley 1938). The reviewer recounted how Richardson was annoyed by those who were making exaggerated claims for archaeology by proclaiming absolute biblical confirmations. For Richardson archaeology was more able to confirm the historical character of the Bible by way of illustration and analogy. Beasley on the other hand had been convinced after discussions with Professor Garstang at Jericho in 1935 that he had found the walls that fell down at the time of Joshua and that this was scientific proof that the Bible was correct and that biblical critics were wrong. The reviewer concluded,

He [Richardson] would be even more annoyed if he read Mr Beasley's book. The truth is that archaeology supplies only meagre evidence for actual Biblical statements but it does to a growing

extent bring back to us the environment, historical and geographical, in which the Bible grew and in which its stories are set (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 February 1939: 20).

A copy of Richardson's book was in Beasley's library, but it lacks his normal enthusiastic marginalia and underlining and instead has some neat pencil markings and a note on the last page '28/3/47 JAT'. It appears Thompson read this book during his first month as director of the Institute and that he adopted Richardson's approach. This would have set him apart from Beasley's conviction that archaeology could be expected to deliver unequivocal proof of the Bible.

When introducing *The Bible and Archaeology* Professor F.F. Bruce of Manchester University, arguably the most significant English evangelical biblical scholar since World War II, stated,

Archaeology certainly makes an important contribution to the study of the Bible. Large areas, especially of the Old Testament, have been so greatly illuminated by it that it is not easy to imagine what readers made of them before the days of biblical archaeology. Yet the scale of its contribution can be exaggerated, and it is one of the merits of Dr. Thompson's book that it does not make exaggerated claims for archaeology or try to make it fill a role for which it is unsuited. For all the light that archaeology throws upon the text, language, and narrative of the Bible, it is improper, and in any case unnecessary, to appeal to it to "prove" the Bible. Archaeology has indeed corroborated the substantial historicity of the biblical record from the patriarchal period to the apostolic age, but it is not by archaeology that the essential message of the Bible can be verified. (Thompson 1962: viif)

This is a fairly clear rejection of the Beasley approach by a person that would have been held in the highest regard by the Council members of the Institute. Dr Paul White, for example, was a Beasley confidante, a co-founder of the Institute and from 1943 he was also General-Secretary of Intersociety Fellowship Australia, a tertiary society of evangelical Christian students that has members on all campuses in Australia (now called the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students). Bruce was the president of Intersociety Fellowship International in 1954-55 and Thompson was the Australian president in the same year. White originally followed the Beasley line, but that no doubt changed as he was exposed to the views of scholars such as Bruce.

The Institute financially supported Kenyon's excavations at Jericho from 1952 and would have been receiving reports that her work had re-dated Garstang's walls to the Early Bronze Age, a thousand years before the biblical story of Joshua. While it seems Beasley ignored such information, those around him could not.

At the Council meeting following Thompson's departure Francis Andersen, who had been the Intersvarsity Fellowship representative on the Council since 1950 and who was a close friend of Thompson, resigned to take up a Fulbright Scholarship to study with Albright at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. Canon Arrowsmith, who had been the vice-president of the Institute from its beginning, also resigned (AIAmin 17/5/1957).

Francis Ian Andersen (1925-) is another link between the Institute and the University. After completing a science degree in 1947 at the University of Queensland, he moved to Melbourne to become a demonstrator in Chemistry at the University. He conducted research in nuclear chemistry, receiving a Master of Science degree in Physical Chemistry in 1951, but then turned to the humanities, completing a Bachelor of Arts in Russian in 1955. During this time he was also enrolled in biblical studies at Ridley College and he studied Hebrew with Goldman and Thompson. It was this aspect of his academic interests that he pursued at Johns Hopkins University, where his doctoral dissertation was entitled *Studies in Hebrew Syntax*. Andersen has had numerous roles at the Institute, including the editorship of this journal and is currently a Fellow of the Institute, and until recently was also a Professorial Fellow at the University.

Thompson was also to have future roles at the Institute after returning to Melbourne at the completion of his doctoral studies at Cambridge. Beasley was constitutionally President for life and when he died in 1976 Thompson became the President, holding the position until 1989. During this time and after his retirement he wrote regularly for *Buried History*, completed some biblical commentaries and updated earlier publications. He died in Melbourne on 22 November 2002 (Davey 2001/2).

In 1957 G.G. Garner, an Institute staff member, reported that University students studying Ancient History I with John O'Brien were using the Institute library for essay preparation. At Goldman's request, Garner lectured the subject of Biblical Archaeology initiated by Thompson; it was made available to the 60 students who were then studying Hebrew (AIAmin 17/5/1957). Gordon George Garner (1926-2001) was a graduate of Ridley College and had joined the Institute in September 1954 (AIAmin 8/10/1954). He was a Hebrew scholar and had no experience of field archaeology. He would go on to be the Director of the Institute 1970-1987, during which time he did a season of excavation at Caesarea Maritima (Davey 2000).

William (Bill) Culican

Goldman died in September 1957 (Christesen 1996) and was succeeded by Professor Bowman who arrived in 1959. John Bowman (1916-2006) was born in Scotland and educated at Glasgow and Oxford Universities (Sagona 2006; Bowman & Bowman 2006). He came to Melbourne from Leeds University and had experience of archaeological excavation in Israel (*The World's News (Sydney)* 22 November 1952: 34).



Figure 6: Bill Culican at El-Qitar, northern Syria, 1984. Photo: Courtesy Jenny Zimmer

Bowman wanted to retain the Biblical Archaeology subject and to appoint a full-time staff member to teach it. On 13 October 1959 Bowman wrote to the Chancellor of the University, Sir George Paton, informing him that Beasley had committed £2,000 for a lectureship in Biblical Archaeology for which Bowman suggested the title 'The Australian Institute of Archaeology Lectureship in Biblical Archaeology'. In a letter written a few days earlier to R.D. Barnett, a keeper at the British Museum, Bowman stated:

Thanks to Mr. Beasley of the Australian Institute of Archaeology, there seems to be hope that a lectureship in Biblical Archaeology will be established in my department (BMArchive1, 8/10/1959).

In reply Barnett suggested that Terence Mitchell, an Assistant Keeper at the Museum, might be a suitable



Figure 7: Bill Culican El-Qitar 1984, in the pottery workroom. Photo: Courtesy Jenny Zimmer

person for the position because he was an Akkadian scholar, something that he understood Bowman wanted (BMArchive2, 22/10/1959). Mitchell had undertaken assignments for Beasley in 1958 but found it hard to define the intended scope of work and then to produce results that were satisfactory to him (per. comm. 2010).

The Council of the Institute resolved initially to fund the Biblical Archaeology position to about two-thirds of the total cost (£1100) from 1960 (AIAMin 7/10/1959), enabling Bowman to report to Barnett that the position was agreed and the applications for it would close on 4 January 1960 (BMArchive3, 13/11/1959). He asked Barnett to notify anyone who had field experience in Palestine or Mesopotamia, especially if they also knew Akkadian or Ugaritic.

The position was awarded to William (Bill) Culican. Mitchell did not apply. There is some University anecdotal evidence that Beasley wanted Garner appointed to the position, but there is nothing in the Institute Minutes, archive or oral history to suggest it, nor is there anything in the University Archives. The Institute Minutes, which were written by Garner, record that Culican was the only applicant 'sufficiently qualified' and that he was expected to be 'a valuable asset' to the Institute (AIAMin 11/3/1960). It is possible that Garner was making it clear that, whatever Beasley may have expected, he knew that his own appointment was out of the question. Thompson did not apply as he would soon be on his way to Fitzwil-

liam College, Cambridge, to undertake PhD research; he returned in 1965 to take up a lectureship in the Semitic Studies Department at the University replacing Culican, who had moved to the History Department. Stewart's Sydney students, Basil Hennessy and Robert Merrillees, were also soon to travel to England for doctoral research.

Culican arrived in Australia on 21 April 1960 (AIAMin 11/3/1960). The speed and efficiency of the appointment was extraordinary, especially when compared with two years of tortured negotiations associated with Stewart's arrival at the University of Sydney. The position was mooted and approved, and a candidate had been selected and brought to Australia, all within six months.

Culican's life is described by Professor Antonio Sagona in a collection of Culican's papers entitled *Opera Selecta* (Culican 1986); he also has an entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (Ridley 2007) and obituaries in the *Proceedings, Australian Academy of the Humanities* (Clarke 1982), *The Artefact* (Sagona 1984) and *Archiv für Orientforschung* (Curtis 1984). He was educated at the Jesuit Catholic College, Preston, Lancashire, England, and after military service in Germany during 1947 he received degrees in classics and archaeology from Edinburgh. Between 1954 and 1960 he studied Egyptian with Jaroslav Černý at Oxford, Akkadian with Mullo Weir at Glasgow University, worked on Iron Age metalwork in Yugoslavia, studied and travelled in the Levant, Iran and Turkey and participated in the Oxford University Archaeological Expedition to Motya in 1955 and 1957. He was well equipped for the Melbourne position.

Garner had been teaching Thompson's Biblical Archaeology subject at the University since 1957 and he continued to do so after the appointment of Culican. The Institute increased its contribution for Culican to £1500 and added £500 to be paid to Garner. A loan to Culican was also made to assist him with the costs of relocating to Australia (AIAExecmin 1/7/1960).

Bowman appears to have initially got on well with Beasley. When he was invited to the 25th International Committee of Orientalists in Moscow in August 1960, the Institute contributed £722 to cover his costs (AIAMin 10/3/1961). While abroad, Bowman also spent time working at the Prague Museum. Beasley was to accompany him, but could not do so because of ill-health (AIAExecmin 1/7/1960, Sup 7 UniMelbArchive, Report 5/12/60).

The indications are that Culican also initially had good relations with Beasley. Beasley had a longstanding involvement with the Poona and Indian Village Mission and regularly travelled to India. This led to an interest in Indian archaeology and ethnography and contact with Hasmukhlal Dhirajlal Sankalia at the Deccan College, Poona, Maharashtra. Sankalia had completed a PhD at the University of London in 1938 and had worked with the Wheelers at Maiden Castle, Dorset, before returning to India in 1939 as Professor in Proto and Ancient Indian History at the Deccan College (Sankalia 1978: 26ff).



Figure 8: *El-Qitar from the east, with the Euphrates River in the foreground. Culican, with Tom McClelland, led two University of Melbourne expeditions to the site in 1983-4. Photo: the author*

Sankalia acknowledged that Beasley ‘spontaneously’ contributed to the Deccan College excavations at the prehistoric Indian site of Nevasa in 1957 and 1958 (Sankalia et al. 1960: ix). Institute records reveal the total contribution to be £344 (AIAmins 15/2/1957, 15/11/1957, 22/8/1958). In 1958 Beasley also arranged for a collection of Mediterranean pottery to be sent to the Deccan College and the University of Baroda, Gujarat.

In 1961 Culican led a group of people from Melbourne, including Dr Kazi and Ted Nixon, to excavate with Sankalia at Ahar, a site near Nevasa (Sankalia et al. 1969: ix; Culican 1961-2); the Institute contributed funds to this expedition. Culican’s archaeological work in India may not seem so incongruous when it is appreciated that evidence for trade with the Mediterranean during Roman times had been found at Nevasa (Gupta 1998). Culican was in touch with his teacher, Stuart Piggott, and also Sir Mortimer Wheeler, who had been a reference for his appointment at the University. Both men had significant Indian archaeological experience, so it is probable that it was their encouragement together with the interest and resources of Beasley and the Institute that got the expedition underway.

In 1960 Garner reported to the Institute Council that he was giving three lectures a week in Biblical Archaeology at the University, that Dr Francis Andersen was lecturing in Middle Eastern Culture I and Culican lectured in Biblical Literature and Antiquities I, and Biblical Archaeology I (AIAmin 10/3/1961). Andersen had returned from Johns Hopkins to be Vice-Principal of Ridley College. He did not find Beasley welcoming and had little to do with the Institute during this time in Melbourne; Beasley, he thought, had changed from the person he had known four years earlier (pers. comm. 2014). In 1963 Andersen accepted an appointment as Professor of Old Testament at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley,

California, a position he held until 1972; James Pritchard was the previous incumbent.

By mid-1961 Beasley was concerned about the Culican lectureship, writing to the University on 28 August 1961 and following it up by meeting Bowman and the Registrar. According to the Institute minutes Bowman replied on 14 September 1961. Although the grounds for concern were not mentioned in Institute documents or those in the University Archives, the issue is said to have two aspects, but that is all we know. When later acknowledging the Institute’s intention not to extend its sponsorship of Culican’s position beyond three years, it was reported that the Registrar agreed that ‘the circumstances were unusual’ (AIAExecmin 8/2/1963).

A few comments may be relevant to this situation. Beasley was an ageing Australian business man, while Culican was a young English academic. Beasley never appreciated the university intellectual environment and was more comfortable in a business setting where management exercised control. He would have found Culican’s English eccentricities unengaging; Beasley was not a conversationalist and would not have warmed to Culican’s wit and wisdom. But the issues here were certainly not personal.

Many people who knew Beasley at the time acknowledge that he had changed. His daughter, Pauline, believes that it was as a result of a medical trauma that he experienced in 1958 when he was on the docks in Bombay personally arranging the passage of the consignment of ancient Mediterranean pottery and suffered sunstroke resulting in hospitalisation. In 1960 he was 70 years old and by 1969 he had dementia and was unreachable. The 1960s were a period of deterioration and although the documents from that time often refer to his ill-health, he never relinquished any control of the Institute or its activities. His constitutional status as President of the Institute for life limited the role others could play.



Figure 9: *The 1983 El-Qitar team in the snow. Left to right, Christopher Davey, Burhan Nissani, Bill Culican, Thomas McClelland (co-director), Abu Yakub (cook), Cliff Ogleby, Janet Eryan, Tony Sagona, Anne Porter, Marilyn Truscott, Michelle Stillman, Joanna McClelland, Claudia Sagona, Gwen Acklom, the Mukhtar, Veronica Talbot-Windeyer, Mandy Mottram, Abu Akif (driver). Photo: Courtesy Jenny Zimmer.*

One example of the changed situation is illustrated by Garner's departure from the Institute. Beasley's 1955 book *Creation's Amazing Architect* was a comparatively well-researched piece of work that recognised 'day' in the context of Genesis chapter 1 to mean a period of time. In 1965, Beasley sacked Garner, who had become the Director of the Institute, because he would not advocate a six (24 hour) day Creation. The Institute minutes during the 1960s are uneven and often convey the impression that the Council was managing a difficult situation as Beasley's controlling character became increasingly evident. During this time of deterioration those around him worked hard to mitigate many of his unfortunate decisions. The Culican situation was an early example of such a situation.

Both Beasley and Culican were deeply religious men, but their theological traditions were at opposite ends of the spectrum. Culican was 'high church' and sacramental, whereas Beasley came from an evangelical non-conformist tradition, and may be deemed 'low church'. Beasley considered the Bible to be history, while Culican would rarely have thought of it in the context of the ancient world. Culican's early education was Roman Catholic, he was trained in classics and researched the culture of the Phoenicians and the Mediterranean where the biblical 'proofs' so important to Beasley were not to be sought.

Beasley was a Baptist, had attended a non-conformist Bible college and believed that a sustainable Australian society was reliant on a respect for the Bible.

The specific issue that concerned Beasley was probably associated with Culican's acceptance of the academic 'higher critical' approach to the biblical text. In particular it may have focussed on Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, an issue that is known to have been important to Beasley at that time. The structure of the Institute that afforded Beasley the freedom to commit rapidly to the University Biblical Archaeology position also allowed him to pursue less productive courses of action. That freedom, however, was not open-ended as he needed the approval of the Institute Council, which comprised academics, professionals and business men. The Council was then also the governing body of Young's Transport.

When the matter of support for Culican's position came to a head at a Council meeting, Dr John Upton, a lecturer in mathematics at the University, was responsible for a successful motion proposing that Garner cease his involvement at the University at the end of 1961 and that the Institute continue its sponsorship of Culican's Biblical Archaeology lectureship into a third year (1962), as originally agreed (AIAMin 21/9/1961). Beasley and the Institute never withdrew from their funding obligations,

although as in this case, an extension of the funding beyond the original commitment was not considered. Beasley did not get support to take his concerns any further and the Institute continued to fund Culican's international archaeological activities and to provide him with archaeological material for his teaching.

With respect to Garner, it is probable that Upton understood that he had already worn out his welcome. In a letter to Vice-Chancellor Paton on 7 September 1960, Bowman referred to Garner as one of the 'loose ends' that 'he had inherited' when he took over the department, and 'I suppose he must stay as long as Beasley pays' (Sup 6 UniMelbArchive Bowman to Chancellor). Dudley Hallam was soon to be engaged by the University. Like Bowman and Culican he was a scholar with archaeological field experience, something Garner did not have.

Culican was not unaware of the Beasley situation as it potentially impacted on his tenure at the University; he need not have worried. In 1964 he was promoted to senior lecturer and in 1965 he transferred to the Department of History to replace John Mulvaney who had left for Canberra and had been teaching Greek and Roman history since 1954 while excavating Australian pre-historic sites from 1956 (Mulvaney 2011: 91ff). In History he joined Ron Ridley who had been appointed on the retirement of John O'Brien. Culican became a reader in 1972, was a foundation member of the Humanities Research Council (1966) and the Australian Academy of the Humanities (1969) and in 1965 he founded the Archaeological Society of Victoria (Ridley 2007).

Concluding comments

As private funding in the Australian tertiary sector increases in importance, this story reminds us that arrangements can be complex when satisfying the aspirations of all the parties. In this case, Bowman would have appreciated his department's more comprehensive subject offering, the University's academic autonomy was preserved, and although Beasley seemed to lose the argument, his overall goal of promoting the tertiary study of ancient world archaeology was achieved.

This paper may appear somewhat presumptuous, given the roles at the University of such Historians as Jessie Webb and John O'Brien and archaeologist, John Mulvaney. Archaeology at the University is now led by Professor Antonio Sagona, a student of and successor to Culican. This tradition of ancient world studies arguably began under the stewardship of Goldman who in 1952 engaged Thompson with the support of Beasley and the Institute.

History has not been kind to Beasley as his memory is often over-shadowed by the 1960s when he was in decline and when his decisions became increasingly erratic and often seemed callous. Although Beasley had effectively terminated his employment, Thompson never bore any rancour, and at his funeral in 1976 he paid tribute to Beasley for his vision and personal commitment to that

vision (*New Life* 17/6/1976: 3). Thompson was able to look past the later years of deterioration and remember the significant contribution that Beasley had made, not just by establishing the Institute, but by being the catalyst for the teaching of ancient world archaeology in Australia at the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne.

Culican died on 24 March 1984 when at the peak of his academic productivity. One night about six weeks before his death I drove him back from a weekend in Aleppo to our excavation at El-Qitar, in northern Syria. As the Land Rover rattled along the rough track from Membidj to Yusuf Pasha and our conversation ranged far and wide, I vividly remember Bill radiating a great sense of happiness and satisfaction. He was the author of over one hundred published works including a number of books, had made a significant contribution to the study of Phoenician culture, had introduced a generation of students to the ancient world, and he was now leading his own international archaeological excavation. Many people in Melbourne valued their association with Bill Culican, but we should also acknowledge that it was Professor John Bowman and Walter Beasley who were responsible for the circumstances that brought Bill to Melbourne, and it was the Institute that funded his position until the University was in a position to assume the remit.

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