The Revival of Classics?
16th March 2015
British Academy, London

A SEMINAR ARRANGED BY
AXEL AND MARGARET AX:SON JOHNSON FOUNDATION
THE REVIVAL OF CLASSICS?

In 1900, Classics was the most influential and widely studied subject in British Universities, and across the world. At that time, many would have found it unthinkable that Classics could ever lose its dominant place in education, and some would have regarded such a prospect as the end of civilization. By 1970, the numbers studying Classics had diminished such that it was thought to be destined for marginal status, if not extinction.

But by the year 2000, the numbers taking up Classics had increased again. This revival is something which Language departments today, pondering their own demise, are looking at closely.

But was the price too high? Was the subject dumbed down in an effort to save it? Was it necessary? Has the teaching of Latin and Greek been demoted in favour of the history and culture of the Ancient world in order to bring in greater numbers who would otherwise have been put off by the intellectual rigour of the subject? What is lost? And what does this say about university life today?
The Ax:son Johnson London Seminar Series

Monday 16th March 2015

5.15 pm  REGISTRATION & DRINKS

5.25 p.m.  The Revival of Classics?
Opening by Bella Thomas

Chaired by Natalie Haynes

Harry Mount  A Greek & Latin Tragedy: The Dumbing down of Classics
Barbara Graziosi  The First (failed) Revival of Classics
William Fitzgerald  Rigour (Mortis) or Flexibility? The Advantages of Survival.
Johan Tralau  The Classics in Sweden
Charlotte Higgins  The Stubborn Persistence of Classics
Angus Kennedy  The Classical Revival?

6.30  Discussion

7.30  DRINKS & DINNER
PARTICIPANTS

William Fitzgerald  
Professor of Classics, King’s College, London
Barbara Graziosi  
The University of Durham
Angus Kennedy  
The Institute of Ideas
Charlotte Higgins  
Writer, and Arts editor, The Guardian
Harry Mount  
Writer & journalist
Johan Tralau  
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