

# Ministère de la culture et de la communication

*Concours externe pour l'accès au grade de professeur des écoles nationales supérieures  
d'art*

SESSION 2016

**Les 18, 25 et 26 mai 2016**

**Épreuve orale d'admission de langue  
Langue anglaise**

**Cette épreuve orale consiste en une conversation à partir d'un texte en anglais.**  
*(préparation sans dictionnaire : 20 minutes ; durée : 20 minutes ; coefficient 1)*

**Avertissements :**

- l'usage de la calculatrice, d'un dictionnaire ou de tout autre document est interdit ;
- avant de commencer, vérifiez que le sujet qui vous a été remis comporte toutes les questions ; signalez aux surveillants tout de suite les anomalies éventuelles (page manquante, page illisible...).

**Ce document comporte 2 pages au total :**

- Page de garde (1 page)
- Sujet (1 page)

## Palmyra must not be fixed. History would never forgive us

*Sometimes ruins are better left as ruins. Just because we have the 3D printers to undo Isis's vandalism doesn't mean we should use them.*

Palmyra must not “rise again”, as Syria’s director of antiquities has promised. It must not be turned into a fake replica of its former glory. Instead, what remains of this ancient city after its destruction by Isis – and that is mercifully more than many people feared – should be tactfully, sensitively and honestly preserved.

The honesty has to begin with Palmyra’s newfound fame. Before Isis seized this extraordinary Syrian site last year, Palmyra was a name known best to archaeologists, historians and classicists. In a monstrous and horrific way, by blowing up some of its most beautiful monuments and carrying out inhuman atrocities amid its splendours, the terrorist army has made Palmyra known.

If Syria’s tragedy ever ends, if there is a peaceful Syria somewhere in the future, tourists will flock to a city now seen as a kind of Pompeii of the desert. And what will they find?

Ruins, of course. Palmyra was in ruins before Isis occupied it and it is still in ruins today. That is the nature of ancient cities. Mycenae, Machu Picchu, the Roman Forum – none are complete, none pristine. Their atmosphere and poetry lie in their scarring by time, nature and history. [...]

How can these terrible losses be put right? That seems to be the question archaeologists are asking. It seems to be what the world expects. Yet it may be the wrong approach. Restoration is a delicate art, and the responsible preservation of antiquities has to mean accepting the finality of loss where rebuilding might be deceitful.

The first job in Palmyra is to assess the damage very, very carefully. It will surely take many years to sift through the rubble of the demolished buildings with the appropriate caution and precision. If enough chunks of masonry and sculpture have survived in sufficiently recognisable shape, it may indeed be possible to re-erect parts of buildings or even entire structures. That would be wonderful. On the other hand, it may turn out to be more truthful to display the fragments in a specially constructed museum.

What is never legitimate is to rebuild ancient monuments using modern materials to replace lost parts – to essentially refabricate them – even though today’s technology makes that seem practical. [...]

By contrast, the British archaeologist Arthur Evans created a strange mess in his arrogant over-restoration of Knossos in Crete.

It is always more moving to see the real stuff of the past, however damaged, than to see a faked-up approximation. The temptation to “fix” Palmyra and make it look like it did at the start of 2015 is understandable. This fascinating place has been subjected to a barbaric onslaught, the thinking goes. Surely it should be as if Isis never did their worst.

History is not like that. The Isis attack on Palmyra was not a counterfactual fantasy. It really occurred. This 21st-century tragedy is part of Palmyra’s history now. This too, for the sake of truth and as a warning to the future, must be preserved.

Jonathan Jones, *The Guardian*, April 11, 2016