

***Culture and Anarchy. Reading Matthew Arnold Today II***  
**An on-line international conference**

**Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Porto, 12-13 April 2021**

**Call for papers**

Confirmed keynote speakers

Professor Laurel Brake (Professor Emerita, Birkbeck College, University of London)  
Professor Murray Pittock (University of Glasgow)

It has been 150 years since Matthew Arnold published his groundbreaking work, *Culture and Anarchy*. His essays in book form are not only a powerful critique of Victorian society and values but also of modern ones. Contemporary political, economic and cultural issues provide an opportunity to revisit Arnold's thought critically, to assess his enduring legacy, and to appraise the modern predicament in relation to distinguished cultural achievements from the past.

In the wake of the Brexit phenomenon, Victorian cultural superiority and idealism are worth exploring. Despite the invocation of ethnocentrism (e.g. Saxon-Celtic roots and Latin-French influences), Arnold strongly appealed to (English) national unity. The curtailment of the mechanic spirit would not only prevent unwarranted cultural uniformity but also provide the conditions for the continual improvement of the mind. Hence, it would be possible to find balance, light, and sweetness through cultural development in a society struggling with political turmoil, social change and the search for a sense of self. Like the Victorian sages, Brexiteers came up with new solutions to the country's social and identity problems. Under the aegis of gaining back control over their lost national identity, Brexiteers recovered a national discourse based on myths, historical recreations, and constructed insights into a glorious past. The past, the present, and the future are thus unavoidably entangled, and all the more so in any reassessment of English (cultural) identity in the present.

Moreover, as part of an ongoing dialogue between researchers from the Centre for English, Translation and Anglo-Portuguese Studies (CETAPS) and the University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies (ULICES), this international conference aims to reflect on the meaning of *Culture and Anarchy* and other works by Arnold, with a special focus on their relevance for the present. The conference follows upon "Culture and Anarchy: From Arnold to Brexit", an event that took place at the University of Lisbon in December 2019.

Relevant topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Arnold and modernity; Arnold's modernity

- Arnold and the idea of the sage
- Arnold and other intellectuals – of his time and of our own
- Arnold and the theory/ies of culture
- the role and nature of cultural institutions
- culture and societal transition(s)
- anarchy, freedom and security
- unity and divisiveness in culture and society
- the liberal legacy and the question of equality
- culture, politics and religion
- translating Arnold; Arnold's translators and translations
- the international reception of the work of Matthew Arnold
- Brexit and the search for identity
- the impact of Brexit on (British) society and culture

### **Submission process**

Abstracts for individual (20-minute) or panel presentations in English or Portuguese are welcome. Please include the following information with your proposal:

- the full title of your paper;
- a 250-300 word description of your paper;
- 5 keywords;
- your name, postal address and e-mail address;
- your institutional affiliation and position;
- a short bio note (circa 7 lines).

In order to prevent technological difficulties, participants will be required to send the Organizing Committee a video recording of their papers, no less than a week in advance. The videos will be broadcast in accordance with the programme. Participants are expected to be on-line for the discussion periods of the conference.

**Please send submissions and address all queries to: [matthewarnold@letras.up.pt](mailto:matthewarnold@letras.up.pt)**

Deadline for the receipt of proposals: 5 March 2021.

Notification of acceptance: 15 March 2021.

Deadline for registration: 31 March 2021.

### **Fees and registration**

**Registration fee:** 40.00 euros

**Student fee:** 20.00 euros

**Further information will be posted on the conference website:  
<https://cetaps.wixsite.com/MatthewArnold2>**

**Organizing Committee**

Alcinda Pinheiro de Sousa (CEAUL) | Iolanda Ramos (CETAPS/UNL) | Jorge Bastos da Silva (CETAPS/FLUP) | Teresa Malafaia (CEAUL) | Cristina Baptista (CEAUL) | Elisabete Silva (IP Bragança/CEAUL)