The dissertation takes its title from Oscar Wilde's article, "The Critic as Artist" and uses its key idea. Long before Eliot, Wilde had not only drawn attention to the role of creative criticism (which Eliot hated) but also the role of criticism in creativity. Arnold was not aware of what Wilde had written but its relevance to Arnold is striking and immediate. Wilde argues, "And just as artistic creation implies the working of the critical faculty, and, indeed, without it cannot be said to exist at all, so Criticism is really creative in the highest sense of the word." This is to underline that a work of art has behind it much of invisible critical exercise, and in the same way, any criticism has to proceed from an artistic appreciation. This key idea or basic position has been taken as a guideline in this exploration. It provides a consistent but unexplored perspective from which to look at a self-conscious, self-divided artist's dual performance, as artist and critic. Of course criticism in creativity and criticism on creativity— even one's own—are different matter. In Arnold both are present—a point not fully explored.

This study aims at finding out the artistic self of Matthew Arnold at work in his criticism as well as the critical self in his poetry. A poet-critic, he had both intuitive perception and

critical principles. When, in his criticism, Arnold moves beyond the so-called principles, he acquires an artistic accent. In the same way, when, in his poems, he introduces deliberate, cliché commentary, he is no better than just another critic. It may sound like too much of a generalisation. But, in fact, this is to suggest the complexity of Arnold the poet-critic, his amazing ambivalence which has not yet been sufficiently looked into. The poems and the critical pieces, and the invaluable letters have been placed here without any modish or ideological bias. These reveal a baffled and baffling Arnold, who still speaks — the gentleman alienated, long before the phrase was found. Much of his difficulty and attraction lie in the foiled attempt to unite opposites. This was a task unlikely ever to succeed and yet an attempt had to be made. In a sense, this is the heroic poem which unheroic Arnold was always trying to write, with many variations.

True that Arnold has been receiving in recent years a thorough and searching attention. Yet the last word about the nature of his quandry can never be told. The present study tries to open up an yet unattempted but seminal side of Arnold's mind and work: the conflict and coalescence of the critic and artist in him. This emphasis is wanting in almost all previous studies. Some of the major criticisms on him have taken up separately either his poetry or his prose-writings, or at best suggested either a unity or a dichotomy. But the invisible poet in the prose-writings as well as the critic hidden in the poems has not been searched, nor even suspected. The Poetry of Matthew
Arnold: A commentary by C.B. Tinker and H.F. Lowry is a kind of analysis of the individual poems with biographical references, and is not much critical. A.D. Culler's Imaginative Reason is a study of Arnold's poetry only. Louis Bonnerot in his Matthew Arnold, Poète stresses Arnold's function as a poet. So does H.C. Duffin in his Arnold the Poet. Arnold and the Romantics by William Jamison, Matthew Arnold and the Decline of English Romanticism by D.G. James and Matthew Arnold and the Romantics by Leon Gottfried discuss both poetry and prose, but the discussions are confined to Arnold's inheritance of the Romantic poets and to his criticism of their poetry. J.D. Jump's Matthew Arnold and W.A. Madden's book of the same title contain an overall estimate of Arnold as poet and critic in the context of aesthetic temperament in Victorian England. But none of these books really takes into account the constant inter-action of poet and critic in Arnold. Lionel Trilling's Matthew Arnold purports to be "a biography of Arnold's mind". But Trilling's book dwells more on the historical and situational factors which had formative influences on his mind. It has not touched the phenomenological that might have explained the complex unity in him. F.R. Leavis discusses Arnold as critic in A Selection from Scrutiny while Everett Lee's essay is 'Matthew Arnold: The Critic as Rhetorician'. Numerous articles and Reviews on Arnold have taken up one aspect or another of his poetry or criticism. E.K. Brown's Matthew Arnold: A Study in Conflict has brought out the see-saw game in Arnold's temperament; but that has not been exactly about the critic-artist conflict. This dissertation
may claim its pioneership in a thorough combing of Arnold's important poems and prose-writings in a search for the artistic and critical qualities in them. It holds up the drama of his mind in which the critic speaks through the mask of an artist or the artist is shown hidden in the mask of a critic. And in the process, the previous works have been made use of wherever necessary. The civilized Arnold Agonistes can never fail to fascinate.

In the opening chapter Arnold is seen as a critic in his early poems — a critic of life and society and of poet and poetry as well. Many of his poems of 1848-52 are packed with ideas about life and society, which are hardly poetic. The growth of his artistic sensibility is traced through them to its climax in 'Dover Beach'. The fact is that Arnold is a critic first and then a poet, and in the end both at once. The critic does not, as received opinion sees him, deaden the poet in him, rather the critic often surprisingly quickens the creative power. In a subsequent section of this chapter is given the supporting evidence of Arnold's notion about poet and poetry from some of his early and later poems, such as 'Resignation', 'The Strayed Reveller', 'Lessing's Laocoon', 'Memorial Verses' and a few shorter pieces, where he seems to have consciously introduced the basics of his aesthetics. When he says that with all his social liabilities, a poet must have a fine frenzy, Arnold seems to be echoing, perhaps unknowingly, the romantic tradition. He projects himself in his 'poet' — the critic and the artist in one; Arnold could never wholly champion Art for Art's Sake.
The second chapter attempts an assessment of Arnold as critic and artist from his letters written to different persons over a long period of time. Those letters alone have been selected which provide comments on his own poems, on the works of his contemporaries and on the romantics and the Elizabethans. Some of the letters chosen, however, are about poetry, its subject and style in general. Even the casual comments are refracted from Arnold's critical build-up. The sincerity and intimacy with which even the casual comments are made reveal the 'artist' in him.

The main proposition of tracing the artist-in-the-critic starts in the third chapter. *Essays in Criticism*, First Series (1865), his major critical venture, has been examined in some detail. The topics of the Essays vary greatly, yet an artistic charm binds them. Within an enviable range Arnold moves with confidence among the best that have been thought and said in the world. 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time' and 'The Literary Influence of Academies' contain important critical pro-nouncements, and are not without an aesthetic undercurrent. Criticism in Arnold glides easily into art, and one cannot think of a better example than 'Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment'. An in-depth study of the famous phrase, "imaginative reason," coined in the essay, has been made in this chapter. Other essays—more about personalities than about critical principles—such as 'Marcus Aurelius', 'Joubert' and 'Heinrich Heine' are taken up in a separate section to show once again Arnold's critical self working in happy unison with the artistic. The artist in him is neither wholly stifled nor killed by the critic. The
popular myth needs to be exploded. The essays on the Guérin brother and sister, and 'Spinoza' are left out along with 'A Persian Play' added to the third edition (1875) of the Series. Important in themselves, these essays are not relevant to this study.

The fourth chapter deals with Essays in Criticism, Second Series. As 'The Study of Poetry' may serve as a sequel to the 1853 'Preface', the two are compared in the first section of this chapter. In spite of weighty critical expositions much art lies in the two essays, specially in the choice of passages.² The essays on Milton and Gray are not as deeply critical or sustained as those on Wordsworth and Byron. Yet Arnold's admiration for the elder poets is founded on sound, deeply felt, judgment. He is straight-forward in such a remark as "Milton is of all our gifted men the best lesson, the most salutary influence". In the essay on Gray he makes a difference between poetry conceived and composed in wits and that in the soul. The estimates of the four great Romantic poets are clearly not on the same wave length, the Keats essay leaving an impression of unfulfilled execution. Arnold's moral-aesthetic bias comes out in the condemnatory sketch of Shelley. As critical estimates, 'Wordsworth' and

². Admiring Arnold's use of quotations in 'The Study of Poetry' Eliot says, "... to be able to quote as Arnold could is the best evidence of taste".

The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (Faber and Faber, London), p.118
'Byron' remain unsurpassed, though for entirely different reasons. From this analysis has become clear how Arnold's critical admiration for two such contrasting persons was enlivened by an unmistakable creative delight. 'Tolstoy' and 'Amiel' are testimony enough to his Continental consciousness. He reveals how the idea of life works in Tolstoy for establishing religion. His preference for Amiel proves to be more artistic than critical.

The fifth chapter, the longest of all, is a blanket survey of Arnold's Oxford Lectures, Culture and Anarchy, Mixed Essays, Discourses in America and Literature and Dogma. Clearly, moved by the Zeitgeist, Arnold took a varied interest in education, theology and even politics. A Humanist concerned with the intellectual deliverance of his age, he could not afford to ignore these problems. But this variety could not slacken his singleness of purpose: his concern for "the humanization of man in society". Such socio-political writings as 'Democracy' and 'Equality' have been duly considered to prove the point. Culture and Anarchy may also be seen as a variation on the same theme. Discourses in America suggests the ways to preserve "the love of good" in man. As in the literary lectures on Homer and the Celts, so in all these miscellaneous writings the same underlying ideas were worked out. The artist of course, crosses and re-crosses the critic. Most of the lectures and essays, analysed here, bring

3. An apt remark of an Indian author applies well to Arnold: "... in the humanness is the content of a work of art, and from this very humanness emerge the standards of criticism". 'Is Universal Criticism Possible?', Mulk Raj Anand, Literary Criticism (ed. C.D. Narasimhaiah, University of Mysore), p.15
out the coincidence of the released activity of a creative and critical spirit. In this connection, Arnold is seen, at some point, to move beyond criticism towards the archetypal, even though unaware of modern psychology and the way modern poetry has dealt with it. Arnold's educational thinking has been virtually left out. For his professional life did not affect the poetry to any great extent. His historical and social situation too has not been underlined because it is outside the present perspective. Biographical references have also been avoided because of an exclusive reliance on the internal evidence of his poetry and criticism, and their inter-relation.

But the artist cannot achieve what the critic aspires. This gives rise to in Arnold a sense of isolation and of imperfection of man. The sixth and last chapter takes this up in its stride, along with the elegiac poems—'The Scholar Gipsy', 'Thyrsis', 'Rugby Chapel', 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse', and the two Obermann poems—composed in perhaps Arnold's dearest mode. Very often the elegiac mood possesses a poet in his reflection on a lost way of life which cannot but generate a critical attitude. In these poems Arnold's critical temper is the nucleus round which poetic attitudes are explored. The elegies are perhaps the best expression of the critic-artist complex in him. The pathos and the paradox remain: the "fragments" which he is as an artist cannot be integrated into a "continuous whole" which he attempts to become as a critic.

The recognition of the creative spirit in Arnold's critical
work and of the critical element in his artistic creation is
the central point of these several chapters. He is an artistic
critic, "an antinomian", in Oscar Wilde's words. Yet Arnold
shows no antinomy. If as a critic he appears to partake of the
power of the original impulse of an artist with sympathy, as an
artist he is gifted with the talent to look beneath and beyond
the superficies with a critical mind. This cannot but improve
one's comprehension of Arnold. Arnold was more complex than
simplistic studies suggest. Also he may not have been a dramatic
poet, not even perhaps a dramatist of ideas, there was a drama
of his mind. The dissertation spotlights those two points, which
inevitably give a new look to Arnold, some fresh insights and
another reassessment of his work as poet and critic, or poet-
critic.*

* A word on the difficulty of an Indian researcher on
such a subject: the latest materials on Arnold have
not been available. It is hoped that has not greatly
affected the approach and the argument.