This dissertation on 'The Motif of the Bird in the Nineteenth Century Poetry' reveals how different poets responded and then used the bird as a subjective means of self expression. It strives to give an account of the concerns of Romantic movement and the Romantic poets' use of metaphors. The 'bird' as a natural object inspiring them to great heights of achievement revealing mainly its spontaneity and making man aware of his alienation from nature and his self-consciousness is explained and differing perceptions that the bird created in different poets is discussed.

According to Greek Myth the bird was a symbol of melancholy. But the great Romantics, Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley used the bird as a symbol of joy and happiness. The American poet Edgar Allan Poe depicts the raven as a bird of ill-omen whereas Walt Whitman considers the bird as a teacher. The bird is a symbol of alluring attraction for Frost. Thomas Hardy shows how the bird brings in spirit and enthusiasm amidst bleak surroundings. Hopkins imparts a religious
significance to the bird and turns it into the figure of Christ who masters the world. Sorrow, despair and frustration are revealed through the bird by Robert Bridges. In the twentieth century, Ted Hughes has used the bird to reveal man's struggle to live in a meaningless world. Whatever the kind of bird chosen by the poet it has been used as a vehicle to express his thought successively.

This book is divided into four chapters. The first part is on 'Romanticism' which explains the meaning of the term and its difference from Classicism. An account is given of the various metaphors used by the Romantics to express their thought. The bird was one such metaphor. The second chapter, 'The Romantic Period Bird' shows how each poet used the bird to give vent to his subjective ideas. The third chapter brings out the difference in the 'bird' used by various poets. The conclusion is given in the fourth chapter.

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