SUBSTANCE OF THE POEM "FROM THE GANGA TO THE TAY"

The poem "From the Ganga to the Tay" presents a reflective and comparative journey between two rivers—the Ganga in India and the River Tay in Scotland. Through this symbolic movement from East to West, the poet explores themes of cultural connection, displacement, memory, and ecological consciousness.

At a deeper level, the rivers represent civilizations, histories, and living cultures. The Ganga stands for ancient Indian tradition, spirituality, and collective faith, while the Tay symbolizes Scottish landscape, history, and a quieter, natural continuity. By placing these two rivers in dialogue, the poet highlights how geographically distant spaces can be emotionally and culturally interconnected.

The poem also expresses the poet's diasporic experience. Bashabi Fraser, who lives between cultures, uses the rivers as metaphors for her own identity—rooted in India yet shaped by life in Scotland. The movement from the Ganga to the Tay thus becomes a journey of the self, reflecting nostalgia for the homeland and an attempt to find belonging in a new land.

An important aspect of the poem is its ecological concern. The Ganga, burdened by pollution and human neglect, contrasts sharply with the relatively clean and protected Tay. This contrast implicitly critiques modern society's treatment of nature and calls for greater environmental responsibility.

Overall, the substance of the poem lies in its fusion of geography, memory, culture, and ecology. "From the Ganga to the Tay" is not merely about two rivers but about continuity across cultures, the pain and richness of migration, and the urgent need to respect the natural world that sustains human civilization.

PROF. GOUR HARI MONDAL