**ENG-CC Purdah 1**

1} What is the major theme of the poem ‘Purdah 1’?’

Ans: The major theme of the poem is the oppression women face as they are silenced by overpowering customs and traditions that make them live in a suffocating existence.

2} Comment on the title of the poem.

Ans: the title of the poem indicates a veil which actually stands for a metaphor in the way social norms and values force women to live as per the set rules of the society; killing their individual spirit. The poem is based on an image of a young girl who is trained to adopt the veil (Purdah) as per custom which slowly begins to stifle her existence and individual identity along with her aspirations, dreams and finally her voice.

3} Does Purdah protect identity of a women or disrupts identity?

Ans: The young girl in the poem is made to wear the Purdah by accepting it as some kind of protection. While the cloth obstructs the body from view however the veil also makes a woman an object of scrutiny. It makes a woman feel self-conscious of her feminity in a negative manner by connotating it with sin. This burden becomes heavier and slowly suffocates the individuality of the person. While the Purdah in itself is not a perpetrator; rather the associated practices of the society and the inbuilt norms of the system destroy the spirit of the woman; thus, leaving behind a skeletal shadow of a vivacious personality filled with unfulfilled dreams and hopes for life.

4} Why is the girl asked to ‘learn some shame’?

Ans: By this line, the girl is made to toe the track of life that has already been drawn for her. By making her feel as if she is in the wrong, the society wants her to feel ashamed of being free and happy. Rather the society makes her feel as if it is shameful and something definitely wrong if she does not wear a veil.

5} Describe the metaphors used in the poem to indicate the oppressive situation that women face.

Ans: The major metaphors that are used are:

Purdah as a coffin that strangulates the woman – Using this the poet tries to show how the supposed protection ends up becoming a coffin for the woman as the purdah stifles the identity and finally kills the spirit of life in her.

Norms of society as roots that keep pulling her down – Using this the poet describes how loathsome and powerful the rules of the society are for they drag the woman downs squashing her cries for help and any possible freedom from the set regulations of the society that forever oppresses her.

6} When was the poem published?

Ans: ‘Purdah 1’ was published in 1989 in Imtiaz Dharkar’s poetry collection *Purdah* (1989)