Part II
A renowned twentieth century author of Hindi and Urdu literature, Premchand is also referred to as the “Tolstoy of India” (Lindsay 17). His literary repertoire comprises more than three hundred short stories and several novels where the focus is primarily upon the depiction of the life of the common man. In fact, Premchand is considered to be an important Indian literary figure for he shaped novel as a literary genre. He is also referred as the harbinger of progressive writing which marked a new age in Indian literature. Australian-born author Jack Lindsay says that it is Premchand’s “passionate sympathy, his closeness to the suffering of people and his sense of urgent historical issue” which initiated him into penning realistic portrayal of humanity battling multifarious forms of violence (21). For instance, his short story entitled “Idgaah” describes the marginalized existence of an underprivileged five years old orphan called Haamid. Another story “Vidhwa” narrates the suffering of an old and destitute widow named Bhungi who is forced to lead a miserable life and suffers a tragic death at the instigation of her village’s wealthy priest. Premchand’s novel Nirmala describes the plight of a young girl married whose parents marry her off to an old widower for they lacked the dowry required to procure a suitable match for their daughter.
Moreover, it provides an insight into the prehistory of feminism in India. An Indian critic named Harish Trivedi says that *Nirmala* presents an “exceptionally fine psychologisation of the ill-married and sexually anguished heroine” (“The Power of Premchand”). In his novel *Rangbhoomi* Premchand creates an idealist hero named Surdas, a dispossessed blind beggar, who is structured according to Gandhian values of non-violence, non-possession and detachment. In fact, Premchand’s literary works, barring *Nirmala* and *Godan*, are influenced heavily by the views of Mohandas K. Gandhi interspersed with idealism. *Godan* was published in 1936 and has been translated in English by Jai Ratan and P. Lal. Critics believe that by the time he penned *Godan* Premchand had lost all faith in the idealistic solutions provided by Gandhi’s concept of “Ramrajya” (Chaturvedi 92).

In the novel *Godan*, Premchand skillfully captures those nuances of violence that have been normalized by patriarchal ideology. The story is set in a small, poverty-ridden village called Belari in Avadh, Uttar Pradesh, during Pre-independence. Premchand lays bare the misery which is a permanent fixture in the lives of people who belong to the different ends of the social spectrum. A study of the novel reveals the vein of corruption, manipulation and hypocrisy that lies hidden under pseudo-idealism. It lays bare the victimization of individuals at the hands of the representatives of powerful, oppressive social institutions. It also shows the peripheral situation of women caught in the traps of poverty, feminine ideals and humiliating social practices. Moreover, the novel also shows those who are victims of self-inflicted violence, mainly due to their submission to social malpractices. In fact, the
narrative offers a vivid glimpse of the multi-faceted violence that is part of the lives of people residing in the villages and small towns of India.

Amaresh Dutta says that *Godan* represents a “vibrant and lively portrayal of contemporary Indian life which reflects the true faces of India’s rural and urban milieu” (1430). In Harish Trivedi’s view, the text highlights Premchand’s recognition of its characters deep, unresisting and often thoughtless allegiance to as well as their “uninterrogated internalization” of the violence situated in traditional and social values (*Literary Cultures in History* 1010). Prabhakar Jha states that *Godan* articulates a specific moment of modern Indian history rather than presenting a timeless portrait of Indian peasantry. In his view, its significance lies in its representation of all the “ideological voices of that moment entering into resonance or conflict” (“The Moment of Godan”).

A study of *Godan* sheds light on violence that erupts out of the convergence between the feudalistic operations that control the lower castes and the capitalistic relations that define the upper castes. It reveals the violence that underlines the social laws, rules and norms constructed according to the ideological standpoint of the ruling caste and class. The author focusses on the plight of the poor through his description of the everyday life of a peasant named Hori. He is caught between feeding his family with his meager earnings and trying to pay off the numerous debts leveled on him by corrupt officials. In fact, indebtedness is shown to be the primary socio-economic factor behind the victimization of the peasants and their families. Premchand discloses that the peasant is at the mercy of not one but several persons who never lose an opportunity to divest the poor man of all
he has. Several persons lead such parasitic existence on the peasants.
Pateshwari, the revenue clerk of the Semari village’s landlord named Amarpal Singh also known as Rai Saheb, dupes the villagers of money. Nokhey Ram, the bailiff, does not let the farmers take their earnings from the revenue clerk unless they partake with him. The police inspector appointed at the village does not entertain the peasants’ complains without the offer of a bribe. But the most manipulative of them all are the moneylenders who give loans to the poor at such high rates that the latter are forced to pay their debts even while nearing their death.

Datadin, a Brahmin priest, presides over religious functions that take place in the upper caste families of the village Belari. His religious fanaticism is fuelled by the belief that a thorough knowledge of the scriptures, vigorous chanting of prayers and performance of religious rites absolves an individual from all wrongdoings. For him, the essence of religion lies in “mumbling prayers, parroting the holy books, observing fasts and eating cooked food with their own hands” (Godan 232). Moreover, he believes that his birth into a higher caste gives him the power to “chastise the stick-in-the-mud peasants” (108). Datadin is, in fact, a con-artist who extorts money from illiterate, gullible, and poor lower caste people on the pretext of saving them from the wrath of God. His misguided notion about purity makes him treat the inferior castes with contempt but he turns a blind eye to his son maintaining illicit relations with a cobbler woman of lower caste. Datadin employs his knowledge of the religious scriptures to extort money from the peasants and, also, save his earnings from the landlord’s bailiff and other officials who demand monetary dues from him. For instance, Datadin’s idea of a peasant’s
atonement for her or his sins involves providing a feast for the Brahmin community and going on a pilgrimage. This readymade solution for penitence encourages him to carry on the crime of extorting money. On the other hand, Datadin successfully avoids paying his dues to the village landlord by threatening to commit suicide, for the death of a “poor” Brahmin would bring misfortune upon everyone (106). Apart from demanding money from the villagers while conducting religious ceremonies, Datadin employs several other methods in order to extract maximum amount of money from them. He works as a money-lender, matrimonial match-maker, and a doctor for the villagers. He keeps abreast of everyone’s personal business and deliberately creates misunderstandings between in order to make a profit out of the entire situation. Everyone distrusts and fears Datadin yet they are forced to follow his orders due to his upper caste.

Here Datadin is one of the representatives of a “pre-capitalist economy’s symbolic violence” (Outline of Theory and Practice 179).

Symbolic violence is, in Pierre Bourdieu’s view, the product of symbolic capital5. Symbolic violence is defined as a gentle, covert, socially (mis)recognized and legitimized form of violence which is not so much undergone as chosen by individuals (192). In fact, symbolic violence is the

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5 In The Forms of Capital, Pierre Bourdieu states that capital presents itself in three different guises: economic, social, and cultural. Economic capital, according to him, is directly changeable into money and institutionalized in the forms of property rights. Cultural capital is institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications and art. Social capital comprises social obligations which manifest in the form of a title of nobility. However, Symbolic capital is the manifestation of each of the above forms of capital in their naturalized form. It is situated within the economy of generosity and gift. Bourdieu’s views it as “the most valuable form of accumulation” in society (Outline of Theory and Practice 179).
most economical mode of domination that operates through various codes of
honour, such as credit, confidence, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality,
gifts, gratitude, piety, etc. The active principle or the essence of this “social
alchemy” includes wastage of labour, time, care, attention, and savoir-fare in
order to produce a personal gift irreducible to its equivalent in money (192).
The novel Godan, the English translation of the term being “gift of a cow,”
shows Hori to be the perpetual victim of symbolic violence.

In the beginning of the novel, Hori fulfills the foremost wish of his
life, that is, to buy a cow; an act symbolizing the level of an individual’s piety,
prosperity and prestige in the Brahmin community. However, this act of
Hori’s quickly spirals into his socio-economic ruination. The priest Datadin
along with other money-lenders get angry for they feel that possession of a
cow has somehow made Hori & his wife Dhania less tolerant of the
condescending attitude of ruling class of Belari. Also, the mere thought of rise
in Hori’s esteem among the villagers forces his brother Heera to commit the
vengeful act of poisoning the cow. Heera flees after committing the crime,
leaving behind his helpless brother to face the entire village’s accusations and
outrage over the sacrilegious act. The village officials along with the priest
Datadin impose a heavy fine on Hori for committing “cow murder.”
Moreover, Hori faces another economic as well as psychological blow when
his son Gobar flees home after impregnating Jhunia, daughter of the cowherd
Bhola (who sold the cow to Hori). After being thrown out of her familial
home, Jhunia is forced to seek shelter at the home of Gobar’s parents. An
honour-bound Hori’s kindness towards Jhunia leads to the imposition of
another massive fine upon him by the village officials. They are outraged at
him for allowing a promiscuous woman to stay at his home. His plight worsens as he is forced to incur more amount of debt in order to plan his elder daughter Sona’s marriage with pomp and fair. Sona’s prospective bridegroom agrees to marry her without making any demands for dowry. Yet Dhania declines his offer for she believes that “money comes and goes but prestige lasts” (*Godan* 247). Hori’s staunch belief in *dharma*, his code of honour, and Dhania’s sensitivity towards the maintenance of social prestige make both of them the perpetual victims as well as the perpetrators of symbolic violence.

Soon the time comes to find a suitable groom for their second daughter Rupa. However, the drastic deterioration of their economic condition forces Hori to wed his teenage daughter to a man close to his own age. This act shames Hori a great deal and he cuts himself off socially from others. Towards the end of the novel, a physically frail Hori is shown working ceaselessly in order pay off his debts and to fulfill his cherished dream of buying a cow once again. Ultimately, working long hours in scorching weather results in his falling gravely ill. Despite being on his deathbed, Hori continues to lament over things that never came to fruition, that is, his failed attempt to buy a cow.

Dhania tries to prepare medicinal concoctions to save her husband. But Heera along with other villagers puts a stop to her efforts and asks her to gift a cow to Datadin as charity. The novel ends with Dhania requesting Datadin to accept her meager earnings as the equivalent of a cow.

*Godan* elaborates on the misery inherent in the lives of the poor people living in India. Gobar feels fortunate for working in the city and serving only one employer; unlike peasants who are confined to the dreary life of working in the fields.

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6 A Sanskrit word, *dharma* means righteousness, that is, a quality necessary for the sustenance of the souls of individuals.
in village and are forced to satisfy several masters. The peasant, according to Gobar, works “like a machine”, leads his life “without any hope or great joy”, and accepts “oppression and suffering as part of his destiny” (Godan 330). However, he feels that years of his stay in the city have put him in touch with a new way of life and widened his vision. Gobar’s condition as a worker in the city is, however, the exact opposite of what he perceives it to be. After migrating to the city, Gobar does different menial jobs and, ultimately, sets up a stall at the bazaar. He travels to Belari in order to get Jhunia and their son to accompany him in the city. But upon his return to Lucknow, Gobar finds out that his stall in the bazaar has been usurped. He is forced to find employment in the local sugar mill. He gets involved in Workerist politics, strikes, and violent repression at the hands of the police. Gobar’s personal life suffers as the result of his experience of the constant competition, violent upheaval, and psychological turmoil that is an integral part of the life of every worker. He starts consuming alcohol, becomes physically and emotionally abusive towards Jhunia, and turns indifferent towards his family’s welfare. Hence the cut-throat environment of the city destroys Gobar and his nuclear family. In other words, Gobar’s experience as a poor labourer in the city turns out to be as miserable as his father’s life as a peasant. In fact, Gobar, Hori, Heera, and all the other peasants described in Premchand’s Godan stand as representatives of Jean Paul Sartre’s proletariat caught within the hell of the “practico-inert” (Critique of Dialectical Reason 58). It entails the worker’s existence as a slave to the tyranny of the Machine which is further defined by slavery, alienation, and powerlessness.
Apart from his description of the misery that underlies the existence of peasants, Premchand also focusses on women as being victims of multi-faceted violence. The female protagonists of the novel, namely Dhania, Jhunia, Selia, Govindi, and Malti hail from both ends of the social spectrum. Yet their victimization somehow exceeds the level of oppression measured according to the denominator of caste and class. For instance, Govindi is an educated, upper caste/class woman married to a wealthy banker named Mr. Khanna. She tries hard to maintain the persona of a poised, serene, and loving mother, living a content married life in front of her friends and acquaintances. The reality of her situation is far different. Mr. Khanna is a debauch who cheats continually and publicly on his wife. His duplicity is highlighted when he philosophizes about concepts like virtue and ethics in order to impress women other than his wife. He proclaims to be a staunch supporter of women’s fight for equality. He continually declares that he is a firm believer in non-violence. But Mr. Khanna’s “rude and inflammable” behaviour towards Govindi behind closed door shows that he is, in fact, a pathological liar who feels no sense of guilt over subjecting his wife to violence, both physical and psychological (Godan 174-75). However, Govindi is the biggest perpetrator of violence for she directs it at herself. Despite the harsh treatment meted out to her, Govindi refuses to protest against her abusive husband as she can’t fathom her existence without him. She admits that her love for Mr. Khanna’s has turned her into his slave. Govindi’s acceptance of her victimization can, in fact, be attributed to her warped perspective regarding love, happiness, and fulfillment. She is steadfast in her belief that “real happiness lies in making others happy.” Govindi is also a masochist for she declares in front of her
husband and their friends, with her “whole being lit up by devotion”, that it is “better to be the oppressed than to be the tyrant” (278). In other words, Govindi takes pride in her status as a victim. Moreover, her family and friends encourage her ideology by openly admiring her “lofty ideals,” “generous heart” and “pure life” (278). Govindi is a victim of patriarchal ideology’s “misrecognition.” Louis Althusser equates ideology to misrecognition. The misrecognizing function of ideology makes Govindi submit freely to her victimization for it deceives her into believing that she is making conscious, moral and free decisions. Govindi’s warped ideology leaves her no recourse besides accepting her abuse and consequent abandonment by a financially bankrupt Mr. Khanna. After battling a grave illness, Govindi finally succumbs to her death.

Another victim of her misrecognized perception of love is Selia: a cobbler woman belonging to the lower caste of the village Belari. Selia is a lowly, unpaid worker employed by the village priest Datadin. She does the work equal to that of three men but is provided with nothing more than two meals a day. Selia’s economic exploitation is worsened by her sexual exploitation at the hands of Datadin’s son, Matadin. He “cunningly exploits” Selia’s love by promising to treat her as his legally wedded wife to ensure that she will continue to do his bidding (234). Datadin allows his son to sexually manipulate Selia as long as he keeps his sexual liaison with her a secret and remains meticulous about his daily religious routine. He excuses his son’s behaviour by pointing out it is not sinful for a Brahmin man to have sexual relations with a lower caste woman, as long as she stays away from the kitchen of a Brahmin household. However, Selia’s family is angered at their
daughter’s blatant exploitation by Matadin and his father. They call Selia a “shameless girl for that suffers all this in silence” (235). Matadin promptly labels Selia as evil and rejects her publicly. The cobbler community avenges the public rejection of Selia by forcing a bone inside Matadin’s mouth, thereby tainting his dharma. Selia, on the other hand, continues to believe that Matadin might somehow accept her again in his life. Her continuous naiveté in expecting love and concern from Matadin enrages her parents who beat her up and throw her out of their house. But after giving birth to an illegitimate son she finds the strength to survive on her own. Matadin does ultimately unite with Selia but only after experiencing the rejection from the Brahmin community. Initially, he undergoes various rituals such as going on pilgrimages, and eating cow dung for purification purposes (319). Yet the upper caste community, driven by rigid ideologies, refuses to involve him in any of their religious activities. Hence Matadin becomes aware of the violence he inflicted on Selia only after being shunned and victimized by his own community. Moreover, Selia’s experience of violence makes her realize that her ‘being’ does not need a phallocentric subject for its existence.

Jhunia is the widowed daughter of the cowherd Bhola living in Belari’s neighbouring village, Semari. Hori’s son Gobar develops a relationship with Jhunia during his visits to Bhola’s house to negotiate the sale of the cow. He ultimately impregnates Jhunia. But instead of taking responsibility for Jhunia and their unborn child, Gobar abandons her near his father’s hut and flees to the city. Jhunia’s character represents the violence meted out to widows in a religious and caste-driven society. As a young widow, Jhunia is forced to endure the lascivious behaviour from the men in
her village. Although she is cynical about Gobar’s intentions, she allows herself to be persuaded by his promises of love and secure future. Her naïveté turns her into a victim of Gobar’s duplicitous nature. A pregnant and unmarried Jhunia is disowned by her relatives and is forced to seek shelter with Hori’s family. Her character is thoroughly maligned by the orthodox villagers who also impose a heavy fine on Hori for providing succour to a promiscuous woman. She is forced to behave submissively so as not to provoke Dhania. Ultimately Gobar returns to Belari to convince Jhunia to elope with him along with their two year old son named Lallu. However, Jhunia’s stay in the city turns out to be vastly different than she had imagined.

Jhunia realizes that the “romantic picture of city life” presented by Gobar is actually a “dismal dungeon.” She is annoyed at being “cooped up” with their son inside their small house every day (261). She has no one to converse with except her husband who shows no interest in her besides maintaining sexual relations. Irritated by Lallu’s cries, she beats him up regularly and turns him out of the house for hours. Lallu succumbs to the harsh living conditions of the city. He dies within a week of having diarrhoea. After Lallu’s death, Jhunia is over-whelmed by a wave of guilt, stress and depression. She gets no support from Gobar for he turns to alcohol to drown his bodily fatigue and mental trauma from his pathetic socio-economic condition. In fact, he labels Jhunia as an “ill-omened woman” responsible for all his monetary problems (264). She begins to suspect that Gobar does not regard any better than a “keep” and, consequently, feels worthless. Moreover, Gobar makes Jhunia the victim of his physical and sexual abuse. Jhunia’s experience of domestic violence makes her withdraw into herself and behave,
“outwardly, no more than an automaton” (262). Jhunia thus represents those victims of violence whose means for survival is to put on the “mask of automatism” (Spectres of Marx 153). She almost loses her life in childbirth owing to neglect, and the abuse which Gobar metes out to her throughout her second pregnancy. However, a marked change comes over Jhunia after Gobar gets injured during a workers’ strike. It provides her with an opportunity to disengage herself from the dominant subjectivity of her husband. Jhunia decides to step outside her home and earn a living so as to give her husband ample time to regain his health and find new employment. She begins to derive the same pleasure in her work that “a baby gets when he suddenly finds he can stand on his legs” (Godan 271). Jhunia’s subjectivity thus transfers from immanance to a conscious, transcendental being. Her decision to seek employment plays a key role in her realization that her entity constitutes more than being viewed as a sexual body by Gobar.

Malti is another character who becomes the victim of violence through her “misrecognition” of the notion of love. Malti is a doctor by profession but is devoid of any qualities that are associated with healing, such as compassion, patience, kindness, etc. She is a coquette who is more interested in catching the attention of men than paying attention to the sick. Initially Malti discriminates between her patients according to their caste and class. This prejudiced behaviour by Malti forms the basis of her interaction and verbal sparring with Mr. Mehta who is an acquaintance of Rai Sahib. Mr. Mehta is a professor. He is also a self-proclaimed idealist (149). He is an articulate intellectual and is frequently invited by educational institutes and

7In Spectres of Marx, Jacques Derrida defines an automaton an “artifactual body, a puppet, a stiff and mechanical doll…[who] mimes the living” (153).
social-rights motivated clubs to present key-note speeches. Mehta is also very vocal about his views on the role of women in society. During his speech at Malti’s club “The Woman’s League,” Mehta points out that womankind’s attempts to step outside the sexual binaries and interfere in “men’s sphere is the greatest shame of the century” (140). Mehta compares woman to a swan and sees man as the eagle. In his view, man’s role as a “philosopher, scientist, warrior, statesman, navigator, mahatma, founder of religions,” etc. has mainly been to initiate endless violence. On the other hand, he defines woman based on the ideals of sacrifice, selfless, service, non-violence, and forgiveness.

Mehta wants women to receive only that form of education that leads them toward nature or creation. He detests women who renounce their biological role and “run after illusory, pernicious, and artificial rights” such as universal franchise (145). He insists that woman’s hedonistic and ingrained tendencies rather than the social-economic circumstances are the cause for her sexual exploitation. Mehta also views motherhood to be the “greatest worship, the highest sacrifice, and the brightest victory” of every woman’s life (183). In fact, Mehta considers Govindi to be an ideal woman.

Mehta is, in fact, a typical patriarchal chauvinist. He never loses an opportunity to insult Malti for her ambition and her feminist perspective. During their numerous interactions and arguments, however, Malti is gradually shown as undergoing a transformation. Unlike other men who focus on her “sensual side,” Malti finds Mehta’s caustic remarks about her to be a refreshing change. She eventually falls in love with Mehta. Under his influence thus her dormant spirit of self-sacrifice and helpfulness surfaces. She begins to tend to poor patients without any charging fees. She begins to view
her ambition as being “mean and artificial” (290). Here the romantic relationship between Malti and Mehta reflects Jean Paul Sartre’s theorization of the concept of love. Sartre views love to be a clash between two gazes. Love is, in fact, a conflict (*Being and Nothingness* 366). In his view, the ideal of love involves successfully incorporating within oneself, another person’s perspective about one’s *self*. In every situation revolving around love, the lover wants to be the absolute source of all the values of the beloved. Moreover, the lover wants to be the object limit of the beloved’s transcendence (367-68). Similarly, Malti successfully incorporates Mr. Mehta’s perspective that Indian women must uphold the tradition of “sacrifice and penance” (147). In fact, it becomes essential for her to transform herself based on the values outlined by Mehta in order to be accepted by him. Hence the gradual transformation of Malti to attain Mehta’s acceptance can be viewed as a form of violence.

Hori’s wife Dhania is the most self-aware character of the novel. She is completely supportive of her husband. Although she is criticized by the villagers for being sharp-tongued, Dhania continues to stand up for her as well as other women’s rights. She is unfazed by the public slander of Jhunia and, along with Hori, readily accepts her into their home. Dhania declares that she is not willing to “sacrifice a young girl’s life for false prestige” (106). She is the only one who publicly holds Matadin culpable for his misdeeds against Selia. Dhania is distressed by the asymmetry that underlies the social positions of both sexes. In her view, “all men are alike. When Matadin humiliated Selia no one raised a little finger in protest. But when Matadin comes in for trouble, he gets all the sympathy in the world. Has Selia no dharma of her own?”
Dhania is, in fact, a feminist figure in *Godan*. She throws light on patriarchal prejudice that views woman’s resistance to violence as an act in negativity. Dhania also is a victim of Hori’s physical and verbal abuse. It emphasizes Hori’s hypocritical nature. He proclaims that his dharma prohibits him to retaliate in anger towards anyone. He even forgives his brother Heera for committing the grave sin of poisoning his cow. The spirit of brotherhood commands him to let go of his anger against Heera. Yet Hori is not averse to publicly beating his wife whenever she challenges his authority and goes against his wishes. Hence Dhania is the victim of Hori’s exhibition of phallocentric power. Moreover, Dhania is also the target of symbolic violence as discussed by Bordieu. She refuses to hand over her hard-earned money and grain as a form of charity to the village officials. But she also refuses to marry her eldest daughter without providing her with dowry. According to Dhania, “money comes and goes but prestige lasts” (247).

A critical analysis of *Godan* thus highlights the symbolic violence that culminates from the intersection of axes of power such as caste, class, and religion. Patriarchy wields violence on individual by appealing to their code of honour. The basis of symbolic violence lies in the individual’s need to obtain validation, and maintain her or his status within society. In *Godan*, the two greatest acts of symbolic violence are the act of giving dowry and the gift of a cow. Dowry comprises the gifts presented to the bride on her espousal. In a class-based society, the status of the bride’s family is measured according to the expense of the gift. Hori and Dhania accrue a large amount of debt during the marriage of their eldest daughter, Sona. In their desire to maintain false prestige, they reject the prospective bridegroom’s proposal of marriage
without dowry. Laden with fine-clothes and jewels, Sona becomes the embodiment of Hori and Dhania’s social capital. By the time Hori’s second-daughter named Rupa reaches marriageable age, he is debt-ridden. He is penniless and incapable of arranging an adequate dowry for his youngest daughter. Hence Hori is forced to marry Rupa off to an old widower. Thus Rupa is another victim of symbolic violence. In the caste-driven village Belari, gifting a cow to a Brahmin is viewed as the most virtuous act for it absolves the gift-giver of all his past sins. Moreover, Hindu ideology promotes the perspective that the gift of a cow is mandatory for man’s salvation after death. The entire novel focusses on Hori’s desire to own a cow – the Hindu symbol of prestige and prosperity. Godan ends with Dhania being forced to part with her meager earnings to appease Datadin over her inability to gift him a cow. The demand for a cow in charity is, in fact, put forth by her brother-in-law Heera. The villagers insist upon Heera’s suggestion of gifting a cow to Datadin so that he can pray for the recovery of a gravely-ill Hori. The scene emphasizes the callousness inherent in the ideology of a caste and class driven society. They show a blatant disregard for the fact that Dhania does not even have any money to pay the doctor’s bill. They are only concerned with upholding social conventions. Hence Premchand’s Godan is an elaborate critique of symbolic violence.