Chapter: 2

Exploring Politics of Power:
Analyzing Anand’s Translation of *Divya*

*Divya* is the third novel of Yashpal but his first historical one. The novel is set in the first century B.C. and revolves around the physical setting of Sagal (present day Sialkot, Pakistan). The novel blends in it the social, cultural and political ordinances of Brahmanism, Buddhism and the Greeks. Regarding the authenticity of this blend, people have been quite critical, but Yashpal seems to have already clarified his intentions by writing in the preface to the novel, translated by Anand as *Divya*: “The basis for *Divya* is history, but history coloured by imagination. . . . I have attempted, as a literary experiment, to add realism to a fictional tale played out against a historical background” (xxviii). The novel is named after the protagonist, a Brahmin girl from an aristocratic family, who strives hard in quest of her freedom and identity. The novel also brings forward the social inequalities, religious hypocrisies and the prejudice of the caste system.

When the novel was first published, it received criticism also with respect to the protagonist’s revolutionary thoughts and antagonist approach towards the noble classes. Later, the approbation from young scholars helped the critics in realizing the existence of the despondent social-parasite. The torments that Divya faces in order to find a respectable place in society direct the readers to realize the unequal status given to women in society. Anuradha Shankar, a reviewer, feels that since *Divya* was written before the independence of India, Divya’s agonizing struggle to attain her freedom seems to be a “. . . metaphor for India seeking her independence from the shackles of the outsiders, and also from the chains of tradition.” On the other hand, Madhu Kaushik considers *Divya* as a “. . . purposeful study of history from the materialist point of view, in which the author tries to reveal objectively some of the basic contradictions of the Indian social traditions” (65). The words of Bernard Queenan, a literary artist, seem to be highly apt with respect to the theme of the novel and the approach of Yashpal:
Here too is the biting satire of the society of his time as seen through the savage eye of the uncompromising non-conformist. And here are the consuming passion for social justice, the conviction of the ultimate worth of the individual, and the creeping shadow of disillusionment with the dictates of any doctrinaire orthodoxy . . . , in which the tribulations of a central figure underline the pernicious forces—religious, social and political—that attempt, but fail, to stifle the aspirations of the human spirit. (qtd. in Naqvi)

While referring to Divya, Bernard Queenan has compared Yashpal’s literary persona to that of George Orwell, an English fictionist of the same time period as Yashpal. According to him, the portrayal of “gritty realism” in their fiction, including Divya, binds the two (qtd. in Naqvi). The novel’s impeccability can be deduced from the fact that despite it being based on remote history, the problems dealt with in it hold true even in the contemporary scenario.

Like most of his works, Yashpal has included the power politics to frame the plot of this novel. He had been legendary in his progressive thoughts and social-realist approach, and hence most of his characters, including Divya, are analogous to people from real life. This is acknowledged by Harini who rightly states,

His main protagonists are simple human beings, not famous historical figures, whose lives get caught up often involuntarily and are changed due to the overarching politics of the time. But this tumult and experience of having their lives change because of the prevailing politics help his characters introspect and evolve into more thinking and active human beings.

The atrocities which Divya experiences stem from the politics which is machinated by the people with power in society. Several characters in the novel play the politics by manipulating the beliefs and policies so as to fuel their own power. This is done at the cost of a woman—Divya.
Although, by and large, the novel outlines the subjugation of the power of woman, a precise analysis of the discourse identifies several other power structures too which are found at various levels. The novel is inundated with twists; as a result, the power keeps on shifting from one character to another with the development of the plot. The elements which reap the benefits of power at one level or time turn out to be powerless at some other level or time. The characters in the novel belong to various social, political, religious, cultural and professional strata. The co-existence of these characters gives birth to power differences. One prominent level from which power structures can be deconstructed is the level of status. From beginning till the end, the power differences caused by the social hierarchy are visible and go unresolved. Right at the start of the novel, translated by Anand as Divya, Yashpal introduces the power enjoyed by the people belonging to higher status. A big crowd gathers to celebrate the Festival of Spring, and in between this hubbub, the nobles and aristocrats get their own privilege:

... seats had been reserved for the members of the Republican Council, feudatory chiefs, nobles, prominent merchants, leading citizens and ladies of the noble families. ... before being ushered to their seats, their arrival was heralded first by the trumpets and then their names along with the names of their clans and their status were announced. (1-2)

The author has used some Brahmin characters abundantly to portray the self-aggrandizing belief of the Brahmins with respect to their caste. These include the two overprotective Brahmin nobles—Acharya Rudradhir and Vishnu Sharma. On one hand, these two Brahmins, particularly Rudradhir, go all out to regain the power over the lower classes. On the other hand, Prestha, the freed slave, and his son Prithusen aspire to overcome the taboo of slavery by attaining a powerful position in society. When Prithusen comes forward to lift the palanquin of the “Daughter of Saraswati” i.e. Divya on the occasion of the Festival of Spring, Rudradhir intervenes and says, “The son of a slave has no right to put his shoulder to the palanquin along with the young men of noble birth” (13). This approach of Rudradhir reflects the power possessed by the higher class. Regarding the same incident, Vishnu’s explanation to his son Prabuddha Sharma divulges their high opinion of their own caste. He
considers that “The proof of Brahmin’s authority lies in his power” (22). Vishnu says to his son,

To think that a slave can have the effrontery to draw his sword against a Brahmin! It is such wickedness that reduces the caste system and our dynastic rule to dust. . . . If the deity is more powerful than man, and Brahmins who bear the sacred fire are a part of the deity, then they cannot be on the same footing as Sudras. (20-21)

Even the most humble character of the novel, the Chief Justice, is aware of the fact that under the rule of the caste dynasty “. . . the power of noble families forms the basis of legislation” (26). There are various instances in the novel that clearly expound Brahmin’s desire to be the sole power in the dynasty. Belonging to an orthodox Brahmin philosophy, Rudradhir considers his caste to have divine favors. When he meets Anshumala (Divya) in Mathurapuri, he metaphorically acclaims the power of his caste by stating, “Devi, from a gold mine, iron cannot be extracted. Race and caste are the creations of god, above the power of man. Man is powerless either to give or to take away high caste” (208). A similar reasoning can be observed in his conversation with Devi Mallika after his return to Sagal: “The fire tongued Brahmin is the representative of the divine on earth. . . . He represents the invincible mights of the gods. . . . It is the bounden duty of the people to install the Brahmin in the seat of power” (227).

Another considerable depiction at the level of status is that of slaves as the novel is set in the times when the slave culture was widespread. Yashpal has thrown enough light on the irresolvable plight of the slaves in this novel. As mentioned earlier, Prithusen, son of a freed slave, strives hard to build his own identity as a person of repute in the society of Sagal. Each step of his towards this aspiration instigates the contempt of the Brahmins for him. His father Prestha is cunning and has immense hunger for power. Initially he remains deprived of gaining authority because “. . . he did not belong to a high caste” (42). Later, however, his political moves help him attain power, but the shadow of their caste still surrounds them, and thus defines them as inferior. This bitter truth of “Prithusen, the slave-born” (120) can be deduced
from the views of Ajeya Verma, son of the feudatory chief, when Divya and Dhata are obnoxiously agitated by Vrik and others: "What else can be expected, when low-caste people are encouraged to occupy posts meant only for the nobility?" (120). Apart from these two, two other slave characters who have found some importance in the novel are Dhata, former nurse of Divya and Dhata's daughter Chhaya, an attendant of Divya. These two characters have a slightly better position as compared to other slaves, but when Divya is found missing, Vishnu orders his doorkeepers to take Chhaya in another room and "... subject her to the severest torture" (134). This reveals the coercive power that is executed by the higher class on the slaves. The delineation of the marketing of the slaves in a habitual manner also exposes the power that was exercised over the slaves by the people of noble birth and consequently of high position.

While the power received by the virtue of status is innate, some characters are found to have power because of their authority. Throughout the novel, several characters desperately yearn to have an authoritative power by positioning themselves as members of the Council of Republic. Hence, the power of authority shifts with the shift in sovereignty which means that a person with power in one part is seen as powerless in the other. Like at the level of status, the conflict of Prithusen and Rudradhir nourishes power relations at the level of authority too. The explanation of the Chief Justice to Divya on account of Prithusen highlights the authoritative power that is enjoyed by the noble class: "For Prithusen to secure a commission means his stepping onto the first rung on the ladder of nobility. If every caste can acquire the status and rights of noblemen, then there will be no authority left with the nobility" (27). The power of authority possessed by the nobles can also be deduced from the fact that when the state of Madra has a threat of foreign invasion, the revenue collected from the peasants is exploited by the corrupt authority and is "... squandered in the pursuit of pleasures" (46). Prithusen's words to Divya also highlight the authoritative power enjoyed by the members of the Council over the common people:

The Chairman of the Council will gladly see Madra in ruins, if thereby, like his predecessors, he can obtain some position of power under Kendras. The life of the entire population of the Republic is dependent on the selfish
intrigues of these people, whose petty interests are dearer to them than the
lives of millions of people. (56)

The philosophy of Marish in itself brings out the power differences at various levels
including the level of authority. His voice is believed to be an expression of the
author himself. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss a few aspects of his character.
Marish is an atheist belonging to the Charvak school of philosophy. He overtly
rejects institutionalized religious, political and social beliefs. He is a materialist, and
hence he remains more concerned with material things and thoughts than with
spiritual or cultural values. He is free from the web of orthodoxy and hypocrisy, and
believes in equality. He has his own perception of things, and he is vociferous about
it. His opinion about the mastery of nobles over the slaves satirizes the unconcerned
power of authority:

One dog bites another and protects the wealth of his master. You and I will
kill one another at the whim of some civil servant. Friend, if you had an
officer’s belt round your waist, you too would growl at every passer-by, just
as a dog tied to his master’s porch barks at every dog passing in the street.

Feeding the Brahmans is a greater virtue than having your own dinner. Do you
know? Because the Brahmin is the dog of the gods. (58)

At the time of war, a big difference is observed between the contribution made by the
nobles and the contribution pulled out from the masses. This difference is caused due
to the authoritative power of the nobles. Even the slaves who belong to the nobles
have greater power of authority than the common people. A drunkard’s dialogue to
Prithusen reflects the power which the slaves of the nobles possess: “Are you afraid
of war? Go and become the slave of some noble! The officers of the state won’t even
be able to touch you” (63).

Prithusen remains devoid of powers until his father schemingly acquires the
dominant position in the Council. After acquiring this position, both father and son
enjoy the power of authority despite their low social-status. Hence, during their rule,
the power of authority overpowers the power of status. In the narrator’s words, the
realization of Prithusen brings forth his vision: “. . . there was only one reality in life, and that was power. And the thing that would bring him satisfaction was the exercise of power. Power was the force that moved the world” (217). On one occasion, Prithusen exercises his authoritative power by dancing with the “Brahmin” sister of Rudradhir in front of the Brahmins. Prithusen himself is proud and boastful of this authoritative power:

‘And today, right before his [Rudradhir’s] eyes, his sister has come to me of her own accord, and with her head on my chest and my arms round her, is dancing happily, and Rudradhir cannot so much as open his mouth. Such is the authority that power brings.’ Drugged with the sense of power, he smiled. He even made it a point to show Rudradhir that his sister was dancing in his arms. The sense of satisfaction that he experienced came not so much from his contact with Amrita’s body, as from the pride of power. (232-33)

The power of authority can also be seen lying with Devi Mallika, the court dancer. Being Laureate of Art, she was highly reputed by the people. At the level of authority, she has no less power. The narrator’s description of her arrival at the celebrations of the Festival of Spring shows her authoritative power: “Flowers and garlands were showered on her chariot, . . . she entered the marquee and walked towards her place of honour near the President, she acknowledged the salutations of the dignitaries” (4). Another court dancer that is found to have similar power is Devi Ratnaprabha, Laureate of Art in the province of Shursen. As Devi Mallika was the teacher of Devi Ratnaprabha, she had authoritative power even over Devi Ratnaprabha. The conduct of the latter when she meets Devi Mallika sketches this power:

Then with bowed head and joined hands, she replied, ‘Mother, you have only to command. Whatever I am, and whatever I possess, have been bestowed upon me by Goddess Saraswati through your grace.’ Kneeling on the ground, she placed her forehead at Mallika’s feet. (257)
At the level of authority, another kind of power which is seen to be adamant is the power of justice. The Chief Justice is one of the characters who possess the power of justice. The unquestionable characteristic of this power can be deduced from the verdicts that were given to Marish, a rationalist, and Rudradhir, a dominant Brahmin. Both of these characters are debarred from Sagal for their unlawful actions. The Viceroy of Mathurapuri also gives one such verdict against the Brahmin master and in favor of the slave Dara (Divya): “Brahmin, for the crime of causing the death of this slave’s child, you will have to pay a fine of two hundred gold coins to the state treasury” (163).

Apart from the power of status and the power of authority, another kind of power that seems to be highly influential is the monetary power. The characters possessing money exert power over others. Firstly, the buying and selling of the slaves is heavily based on the power of money. Also, the ascending of Prestha from a slave to the Chairman of the Council is caused due to the power of money. The wealth received as gift from King Milinda is used by Prestha as a catalyst for his crafty maneuverings and realpolitik manipulations. The advice that Prestha gives to his son is in itself a proof of his acquisitive reliance on the power of money: “Son, it is the power alone that matters; the power of wealth and the power over men. . . . Son, you understand some politics” (103). Moreover, it is his wealth that empowers him to buy and marry a Brahmin girl—a girl from a higher rank in the social hierarchy. The power of money also helps him in gaining the trust of nobles and in bringing up his son Prithusen in the manner of rich nobles:

He bought a poor but pretty Brahmin girl and married her. He built himself palaces and gardens, purchased men and women slaves, and began to live like one of the nobility. . . . with the power of his wealth, his ingenuity and humility, he succeeded in becoming a trusted confidant of Mithrodus, and thereby exercised great influence. (41-42)

The power of money is also observed to dominate the power of status and authority. When Sagal is about to be invaded by the armies of Kendras, due to the sly plots of
Prestha, the membership of the Republican Council is governed by the power of money rather than the power of status or authority:

During the emergency, ... wealth rather than caste, status or lineage had become the basis for the membership of the Council. ... Now the low-born but wealthy people could also aspire and compete for the privileges that were exclusively enjoyed in the past by the nobles and the high-born. (214)

Even after being a low-born, Prithusen eventually acquires the status of nobility by inheriting the massive property of the grandfather of his wife Seero. With the power of money, he becomes “the richest and the most honoured noble of Madra” (215). This verifies Vrik’s opinion that “Money alone is high born!” (118). The power of Prithusen by virtue of his wealth grants him the audacity to challenge even Devi Mallika, the reputed Laureate of Art. This again substantiates that the power of authority is overlooked by the power of money. When Devi Mallika rebukes Madulika, who is an infatuation of Prithusen, for her unprofessionalism, she is conceitedly insulted by Prithusen on the grounds of his wealth:

If the question before Madulika is of becoming your successor so that she may inherit your wealth, I shall give her double your wealth; if she is interested in becoming the Court Dancer, then I have the power to appoint her as such. Who is there in Madra that can flout Prithusen’s wishes? (225).

On the contrary, there have been some instances in the novel where even the power of money seems trivial. At the beginning of the novel when Prithusen was barred from lifting Divya’s palanquin, the narrator’s words portray the power of money to be invaluable in comparison to the power of status: “No power on earth, neither the force of arms nor the power of wealth or knowledge, can alter the status of one’s birth” (13). Although power of money later helps Prithusen in becoming the Commander-in-Chief of Sagal, it still cannot detach the tag of “low-born” from him. Monetary power is invaluable to Devi Mallika too. The narrator describes her perception of it as, “Wealth had no attraction for Devi Mallika. She believed that all the wealth she possessed was merely an offering made to the supremacy of art” (254).
One crucial level at which Yashpal has largely sketched power relations is the level of gender. On the whole, the patriarchal power has been shown to dominate over the feminine. Most of the male characters consider women to be subservient, and hence they exercise power over women. Prestha’s words to Prithusen regarding women accentuate the very ideology: “A man in authority has a need for many women and many marriages... Son, a woman is for man’s enjoyment” (105). Moreover, women characters like Dhata seem to have internalized the supremacy of the patriarchal power. When Divya leaves her grandfather’s house with Dhata, Dhata’s advice to Divya reflects women’s interdependency: “Child, without a man to accompany you, it is risky to go to an inn” (123). Similarly, the words of Seero to her husband Prithusen expose the power relations at the level of gender: “Among the Aryans, a woman is only a slave and an object of enjoyment” (107). There have been several instances in the fiction which reflect the patriarchal beliefs of the characters. The women have been depicted as utterly passive and powerless entities of the society. When Divya approaches the Chief Justice in order to discuss her concerns regarding law, his reply reflects male chauvinism: “Child, why must you bother about these complicated things when you have your garland-weaving, painting and music to occupy you?” (25). Another incident which confirms the dominance of patriarchal power is when Indradeep pulls a slave-girl in an unpleasant way. When Devi Mallika objects to this, Kedar Sharma furiously says, “See? A noble’s son is helpless even before a slave-girl! He cannot do as he pleases even with a slave-girl! Should we have to seek the consent of such an inferior creature?” (51-52). The powerless plight of women can also be deduced from Prestha’s views expressed to Prithusen: “My son, a woman is not the only fulfillment of life; she is only an instrument for the realization of something greater than herself” (103). Another male character whose perception of women exemplifies patriarchy is Vrik. Although, Vrik’s presence in the novel is for a very short duration, through his blunt remarks, Yashpal has enlightened his readers with society’s dogmatic psychology regarding various matters. When Vrik’s bawdy behavior is objected to by Dhata, he replies, “What does a woman’s family matter? A woman takes the family name of the man who enjoys her” (118). The way in which slaves, particularly women, are treated is also reflective of their pathetically feeble condition. Pratool, a slave trader, insensitively handles the women slaves to run his business lucratively. The fact that he kept four female slaves to produce children who would be sold as slaves represents the powerless state of women.
In spite of the abundant portrayal of women as powerless, there are some occasions in the novel where women are portrayed as powerful. Against the taboo, the birth of a girl-child (Divya) was considered by the Brahmans as blissful. Another exception to the doctrinaire of the patriarchal power lies in the views of the nonconformist Marish. He compliments Divya by putting the power of women over the power of art: “Your art is only the blossoming forth of your power of attraction, which is the primeval force of creation in woman” (28). Marish’s unprejudiced philosophy regarding the power of women is also outlined when he meets Divya who was disguised as Anshumala. He says,

Lady, women are the vessels of procreation. Being the primeval force of creation, a woman is the obvious centre of the family and of the human community. Man revolves around her as the ox revolves around the oil press. . . . In nature as well as in society, men and women are mutually dependent. . . for the fulfillment of a woman’s life a man’s protection is necessary and so is the support provided by a woman to a man. (192-93)

While all other women are observed to have been considerably dominated by the males, there is one woman who is rarely seen compromising with her power i.e. Seero. The rebellious power of women is highlighted through her character. Her ideology is indicative of her feminist approach. She is seen to be a dominant partner in her marital relationship with the most honored noble of Sagal i.e. Prithusen. Even the narrator exemplifies her power. “It was Seero who, in reality, held all power and status” (217). Her stiff words to Prithusen are evident of the power of woman:

I am no slave that you have bought. It is you who are dependent on me. I am not a pet that you can keep on a leash in your house. . . . You are not the only man in the world. There are many others like you, and better than you. I’m not the slave-wife of a Brahmin family. (216)

Moreover, her forthright conduct with respect to her intimacies outside the marriage also reflects the power that was enjoyed by her.
At the level of kith and kin too, the power structures are noted in the novel. Several characters have been observed to exercise or enjoy the power within the family. This is even found in the conduct of high-class nobles: “Vasudhir, out of respect for his elder brother and his friends, sat some distance away” (76). Likewise, Prithusen sacrifices his beloved Divya for the sake of his father, and submits all his moves to the will of his father. This highlights the power enjoyed by the father over the son: “Out of regard for his father, Prithusen made no reply, but began to feel all the more restless at heart” (101). Even his rapport with his father reflects his submissiveness to his father: “Father, I wish to go . . . Do I have your permission to do so?” (100). At the same level, the relationship of Mahadevi and the Chief Justice unveils the power of husband over wife. On the contrary, the relationship of Prithusen and Scero is an example of the power of the wife over the husband. It is the power of the wife that keeps Devi Ratnaprabha discontented with her independent profession. The narrator describes her feelings, “The life of a high-born housewife held the ultimate attraction for her, but she felt that she had lost the chance of becoming one herself” (171). Her desires are put into words by the narrator: “The courtesan gives up her private existence for the sake of success, affluence and self-dependence. But a wife, in giving up her independence in marriage, gets a man in return” (168). Even Marish locates dependent wife over the independent courtesan as he says, “If a respectable housewife is an object of some man’s enjoyment, then a prostitute, a courtesan—dancer, is an instrument for the satisfaction of the entire community” (194).

Like most of his works, in Divya too, Yashpal has spilled much ink in setting up the immaterial scene of religion, customs, fate etc. Some major conflicts in the novel are based on the significant existence of Buddhism in Sagal. The effect of the power of religion on various characters is clearly visible. In the first place, it has affected King Milinda, the former ruler of Madra, as due to the influence of Buddhism, he “. . . became a convert to the Buddhist faith. . . . he renounced the royal palace and the throne and took his vows as a monk” (40). Likewise, there are several instances where the characters talk about religion as the key to escape from all the problems of the world. The supreme power of religion is also conveyed through the concept of Nirvana—a transcendent state in which the subject is free from all materialistic desires and emotions. The words of Cheebuk, a Buddhist monk, reflect
his belief in the power of religion: “... just as water serves special purpose when a 
person is thirsty, the observance of religious practices too, assumes a special 
significance in times of crisis” (248). Prithusen’s conversion to a Buddhist monk to 
get rid of his problems is based on the same belief. The Brahmin’s faith in the gods 
and their power is also regularly highlighted. For instance, the words of Indradeep 
delivered to Rudradhir clearly suggest that according to them the power of religion is 
beyond the worldly powers: “The gods act according to their own purposes, which 
the mind of man cannot comprehend” (78). The conduct of the Brahmin ruler, 
Rudradhir, when the monks come to visit him, also put forward the power of religion 
as he “... bows before ... the wise monk Cheebuk” (251). Furthermore, the 
influence of the supernatural power on the characters can also be perceived by the 
superstitious beliefs that are internalized in them. The outlook of many characters is 
steered by the belief that the deeds in the present birth will nourish the life of the next 
birth. Ratnaprabha, for one, thinks the same, and in order to better her next birth, “... 
significant portion of her earnings went for religious offerings” (169). In fact, it is the 
power of religion, in a certain way, that compels the slaves to be tamed by their 
masters. The mindset of a young commoner while talking to Marish exemplifies this: 
“The priest says that the person who doesn’t obey his master will be born a dog in his 
next birth and will again be forced to serve his master” (61). Another belief which 
heightens the supernatural power over the worldly powers is seen when Prithusen and 
his army are set to leave for the war against the army of Kendras. Under such 
circumstances, Divya and her attendant Chhaya show more faith in the power of 
religion than the power of violence: “Chhaya had procured an amulet for her lover’s 
safety from Baikunth, the tantric pandit. Divya, too, parted with a gold ring to obtain 
from the pandit an especially powerful talisman for Prithusen’s protection” (87).

The intangible power of fate is noted to be a predominant power at various 
instances. Firstly, it is discerned to dominate the power of art. Laureate of Art Devi 
Mallika, who was once a sensation, seems helpless in front of the power of fate. The 
narrator describes the pitiable condition of her court, “... there was neither the old 
gathering of art lovers, nor was much quality to be seen in the performances. ... 
Many of Devi Mallika’s pupils had left her after completing their training” (222). Her 
powerlessness is confessed by Devi Mallika herself as she says, “It is the wheel of 
time, ... Or the will of fate! What can I say? My misfortune or that of Sagal! I am no
longer young. The human body has limited capacities, I have not been able to find a pupil who would carry on my artistic traditions" (224). Secondly, the valiant Commander-in-Chief Prithusen also surrenders to the power of fate. Cheebuk helps him in realizing the power of fate as he says, "There was a day when the people of Sagal hailed you whenever they saw you going round on horseback. Today the same people, seeing you in your present condition, will not utter a word of cheer” (244).

The above discussion includes some noticeable power politics related with the characters other than the titular protagonist Divya. As Divya is the main character of the novel, all the aforementioned power levels exert enormous influence on the character of Divya. In fact, the circumstances which surround Divya are themselves founts of power politics. Divya’s journey from an aristocratic girl to a vulnerable slave Dara and then to a frigid artist Anshumala is framed by the politics of power that exist at various levels around her. On many occasions, the discourse outlines Divya as sympathetically powerless; while on some occasions, she seems to have a certain degree of power.

At the beginning of the novel, Divya is shown as a young Brahmin girl from the noble family of Sagal. With the course of the novel, she gets subjected to the power of various kinds. Firstly, at the level of gender, the “woman” inside Divya seems highly submissive to the power of man. When Prithusen was about to leave for the war, she decides to “self-surrender . . . by offering herself to him” (91). Later when Divya conceives, Prithusen’s indifference towards her compels Divya to have a meek and powerless vision: “Can’t Seero accept other women as wives of the Arya? . . . There are dozens of maidservants in his palace. Can’t there be a place for me?” (111). The narrator also tells the readers about her condition: “. . . she was ready to wash Seero’s feet for the rest of her life, like a common slave” (115). When Divya is deserted by society, she says helplessly, “. . . I shall work as a drudge somewhere, sell my own body and somehow save the one who is lodged within me” (122). Likewise, the power of status has been recognized to subjugate Divya throughout the novel. It is the power of status that bars Divya from displaying emotions publicly. The narrator says, “But she was not free even to cry. She could not give vent to her feelings as freely as Chhaya could” (88). Even her slaves are aware of the conventions of the high class. When dejected Divya leaves Prithusen’s house, the power of status acts upon her: “Dhata lowered the curtains of the palanquin; she did not want passers-by
to witness a high born girl crying on the highway" (116). Her decision to leave her acquaintances is also instigated by the power of status as she feels that the premarital birth of her child “... would become a source of shame” for a high class family (92). On the contrary, inside the palace, Divya sometimes seems to have certain degree of power. Her resolute announcement regarding her marriage exemplifies this: “Let my great-grandfather know, let the whole palace know, that I shall not marry anyone except Prithusen” (85).

After leaving Sagal, Divya gets disguised as a slave—Dara of Mathurapuri. The character of Dara is overtly powerless as she lives the pathetic and oppressed life of a slave. In fact, the power of fate forces her to live a life that is even subordinate to the life of slaves:

Divya knew that she had only to cry out in protest and she would be free, free from the clutches of the slave trader, free from bondage. But then, where would she go? Was there anywhere that she would be truly free? Where would she find shelter and security? Where would she get protection for her child? Freedom had little meaning for a person who did not have the means to survive! (141)

In Mathurapuri, the “noose of slavery and oppression” (141) gets tightened around her neck when Pratool and his wife exploit her with their power of authority. Dara cannot complain about their cruel dominance as she is absolutely powerless. Dara feels, “So they don’t consider it necessary to use real chains to bind me. Far stronger than any physical bonds are the subtle invisible shackles that kept me a captive” (142). Even the narrator throws light onto the plight of Dara which “... appeared to be quite like the cow’s. The only difference was that there was no halter round Dara’s neck. In other respects she was just as helpless” (148). Apart from this, the power of authority deprives Dara of her basic right to grief: “Dara was not permitted even the comfort of forgetting herself for a while, or of remaining oblivious to her surroundings” (155). Despairingly when she runs away from his house to take refuge in the Buddhist monastery, she is battered by the power of religion. The monk abandons her desire to enter into the faith on the grounds that she does not have the
approval of a "male." He reasons, "... according to the laws of the Faith, the Monastic Order cannot grant shelter to a woman without the approval of her guardian" (154). Furthermore, he calls a prostitute a "free woman," and thus considers her to be the guardian of herself. This shows that the prostitutes enjoy more power than Dara does. This incidence turns out to be a mark of patriarchal hypocrisy because towards the end of the novel when bewildered Prithusen was wandering away from avenging Rudradhir, a monk of the same faith invites him unconditionally, "Son, if you are looking for shelter, there is the Buddhist monastery nearby. ... Every applicant is granted shelter there" (239). Thus, the power of man permits Prithusen to attain Nirvana; whereas, the same is unattainable by the power of woman (Dara). Dejected by life, when Dara tries to commit suicide, the Viceroy's words hail the power of authority. She is thrashed by the power of justice as the Viceroy summons, "By attempting to commit suicide, she has tried to deprive the Brahmin, her master, of his property. ... The slave and the slave's child are both the property of the Brahmin. It does not rest with slaves to decide the manner of their disposal" (161).

The power of fate then drives Dara under the kind mastery of Devi Ratnaprabha who carves her into a radiant dancer Anshumala. Even when Divya gets disguised as Anshumala, she gets suppressed by the politics of power. Although she does not allow monetary power to govern her, when she comes to Sagar as a reputed courtesan, the power of status throws her from the high platform of glory. Just when Anshumala was about to be crowned as the successor of Devi Mallika in the sphere of art, the high-class Brahmins raise their voices in chorus, "A Brahmin girl cannot be allowed, in Madras, to become a courtesan, a mere object of pleasure and entertainment for the people. She cannot be allowed to disgrace the caste religion!" (262). This again makes evident the dominant power of status.

It is interesting, however, to note that gradually the circumstances make Divya into a powerful unit. Her power can be deduced from several instances. As Anshumala, she gains the power to fight the power of man. Her revengeful reply to Marish in Mathurapuri is a testimony to this. About the same, the narrator comments, "By asking him to retire, Anshu robbed him of his sleep and rest as much as she lost her own. She had ridiculed his expression of love for her. That gave her the satisfaction of having taken revenge against barbarous men, ... " (188). Even under
bitter circumstances, her straight-forward rejection of the marriage proposal of
commanding Rudradhir speaks of her power over men. Her contemplation in the
court of Devi Ratnaprabha also throws light on her power over all other worldly
powers:

Why should I have an aversion for worldly things? Like Devi Ratnaprabha
and Mallika, I too should dedicate myself to the service of art and make that
the aim of my life. Instead of thinking of protection and pleasing a man, I
should become self-reliant. There is nothing to regret. Whatever happened to
me was what had to happen. (189)

The climactic scene of the novel emphatically showcases the power of Divya which
she has earned by her experiences of life. After being the subject of the protest of the
Brahmins, she does not show signs of perturbation; rather, her conduct is
unshakeable: “She stepped down from the dais and began to walk out. . . . With her
head erect, without looking to either side, she passed through the audience. . . . She
walked on, like the swan queen leading a bevy of swans” (263-64). Finally, her
refusal of Rudradhir’s offer of becoming the First-Lady in the house of the Acharyas
as well as of the Nirvana offer of Prithusen—the one whom she desperately desired
once—is a gigantic testament of her power. At the same time, this power seems to be
harmonizing with the heterodox power of Marish when she accepts the offer of
Marish:

When his chance came to speak, the traveler from the east drew near, and
addressing Divya, said, ‘I am Marish. . . . I live in the midst of the joys and
sorrows of this world. Experience and reflection are my only assets. I can only
offer to share those feelings and experiences with you. . . . On that journey,
impelled by the desire of your womanhood I offer my manhood to you. I want
an exchange of support. In this fleeting life I can only offer a feeling of
fulfillment. . . . By reproducing my kind, I can try to add another link to the
chain of human continuity.’
Divya . . . stretched out both her hands towards Marish . . . said, ‘Grant me the abiding shelter of your arms, Arya.’ (269)

Thus, the power which is free from the web of institutionalized schools of thought, social customs, stereotyped beliefs and religious hypocrisies finds compatibility with the power of one who has withstood all the odds of life. And so, the power of respect and love overwhelms all the other powers.

The translator has accomplished the task of retaining the sense of the original text commendably. The theme and the power politics have been rendered without causing any damage to the impact of the text. Although, there are some noticeable findings in the comparison of Yashpal’s Hindi novel Divya, published by Lokbharti Paperbacks in 2012 (onwards referred to as SLT in this chapter) and its English translation by Anand as Divya, published by Penguin Books in 2009 (onwards referred to as TLT in this chapter). The Hindi text seems to differ with the English translation at various linguistic levels.

At the phonological level, there are some occasions where the onomatopoetic words of the SLT have lost their feel in the TLT. For instance, “hoon-hoon” (90) sound of air in SLT has been rendered in TLT as “howling” (152). Similarly, the singing notes from SLT “mm-aa-aa-aa” (132) and “aa-aa-aa” (132) have been rendered in TLT in phrases like “began to sing” (224) and “stretched his last note” (223). Moreover, some SLT reduplicative expressions which carry along with them the alliterative effect do not have the same charm in the TLT. For example, “mai-mai-mai” (34) is translated as “I” (52), “mandhi-mandhikya” (58) as “precious stones” (95), “dhol-dhooosrit” (158) as “rough and dusty” (269) and “hua, hua na hua, na hua” (113) as “may or may not occur as a real event” (190). Although the translator has done a commending task by equating the meaning to the nearest in the TLT, the supplementary characteristics of these SLT expressions could not be retained. Similarly, some reduplicative phrases like “aate-jaate” (83), “tadakk-bhadak” (28), “khand-khand” (54), “chin-bhinn” (106), “phoot-phoot kar ro padhna”(52), “haye-haye” (72), “thar-thar kaanpna” (72), “peeche-peeche” (75), “ang-pratyang” (139), “chhip-chhip kar” (140), “daas-daasti” (83) and “sunte-sunte” (142) have been translated in a non-duplicative form as “travelled” (138),
"expensive" (40), "crushed" (88), "shattered" (179), "burst into tears" (84), "Oh" (118), "tremble with fear" (119), "followed" (128), "head to foot" (235), "by hiding" (238), "slaves" (139) and "listening" (241) respectively. Another noteworthy translation is of the SLT reduplicative phrase "shaneh-shaneh" (58 and 79) which has been translated differently on different occasions as "slowly" (94) and "trailed" (132) respectively. The translation of "dheele-dheele" (6) as "shabby" (3) also catches attention as there is a slight incongruity in their meanings. While "dheele" is closer in meaning to loose, "shabby" is closer in meaning to dirty. At the same time, it must be appreciated that the translator has been able to carry the alliterative effect of some reduplicative expressions. For example, "jahan-tahan" (36) and "kahin-kahin" (37) are translated as "here and there" (56 and 57) respectively and "baarbaar" (121) as "again and again" (204). The sounds of all the SLT proper nouns have been exactly reproduced in the translation except for a couple of occasions. One occasion is when Devi Mallika tries to wheedle Madulika by calling her as "madulike" (133) which displays some signs of affection in her call. On the other hand, in its translation as "Madulika" (225), no such signs are visible. The other occasion where a difference is noticed regarding the sound of proper noun is in the translation of SLT "babhru" (25) as TLT "Vabhru" (36). Here, the difference is in the initial consonant sound of the name.

At the level of morphology, many differences are comprehended. Many expressions have been rendered in the TLT in a different part of speech. Although the type of word changes, the meaning of the discourse as a whole does not get hampered. For example, in the translation of SLT "prithusen ko veh aayojan keval kolahal jaan padte" (61) as the TLT "But these distractions only jarred on Prithusen’s senses" (100), the noun "kolahal" which means buzz or turmoil is conveyed using the verb "jarred." Likewise, in the translation of SLT "veh mitbhashi ko gaye" (130) as TLT "He spoke less now," the adjective "mitbhashi" is conveyed using verb followed by an adverb "spoke less." Similarly, an adjective "udaaseen" (130) is put across using verb "took no interest" in the translation of SLT "... sena ke prati udaaseen the" (130) as "... took no interest in the army" (221). In TLT, the translator has been successful in communicating the literariness of the SLT to a great extent.
Apart from some occasions where the literary expressions are expressed using ordinary words like “peedhiyo ki paudh” (32) as “generations” (48), the literariness of the SLT is well maintained in the TLT. For example, the SLT expression “divya k shareer me bhaye ki sihron daud gat” (71) has been rendered in TLT using an equivalent idiomatic expression as “A shiver ran through Divya’s body” (117). In fact, in some cases the translator has enriched the literariness of the text. For instance, the SLT phrase “atyant vatsal” (13) has been expressed in TLT using an idiom “apple of his eyes” (15). Similarly, “keval teevrata se hi use santosh hua ki anshu paus kathan ka prabhav hua” (115) has been expressed in TLT as “... in the bitterness of her words Marish sensed anguish and knew that his words had hit home” (193). Here, the idiom “hit home” adds to the literary flavor of the text.

At the grammatical level, several variations have been noticed with respect to the tense, voice type, speech form and person type of the texts. Some sentences have been rendered in the TLT in a different tense. For example, the SLT sentence “vradhavastha ke kaaran mere netro ki jyoti mand ho chuki hai” (9) is in present perfect tense; whereas, in TLT, it is stated in simple present tense as “In my old age my eyesight is not what it used to be” (8). Similarly, the present continuous tense of SLT sentence “taat dharmasth kumarika smaran kar rahe hain” (15) has been expressed in TLT in the present perfect tense as “Grandsire has asked for you, my lady” (18). In the same way, the simple present tense of SLT sentence “mann ugrata ichchaein aur vyakulta hi manushya ke veh sanskaar hain jo mrityu ke peedamay bana dete hain” (54) has been rendered in simple past tense as “... it was the keen desires and restlessness of mankind that made death so painful” (88). Using this sentence, the SLT suggests a fact which is still true; whereas, the TLT refers to a fact that prevailed once and does not exist anymore. Some cases have been noticed in the TLT where its grammatical voice does not correspond to the grammatical voice of the SLT. One of such cases is when the active voice of SLT sentence “Shvetketa apramainko ko lekar is samay preshta prasad ko hastgat kar chuka hoga” (139) expressed in passive voice in the TLT as “Prestha’s palace must have been surrounded by Shvetketa and his soldiers by this time” (235).

Some differences are also observed between SLT and TLT with respect to the type of the grammatical person. On some occasions, in the TLT, the object or the subject in the speech of the characters is represented using different grammatical
type. For example, Divya refers to herself in third person as “kumari” in her dialogue with Chhaya in the SLT: “mahadevi se nivedan kar, kumari devi mallika ke samaaj mei ja rahi hain” (24); whereas, in the TLT, she refers to herself in the first person as “I”: “Tell Mahadevi that I am going to Devi Mallika’s” (34). In the same way, the maidservant’s reference to Divya is represented in TLT in the second person as opposed to the third person in SLT: “daasi ne sandesh nivedan kiya—’taat dharmasth kumari ka smaran kar rohe hain’” (15) is translated as “A maidservant approached her and said, ‘Grand sire has asked for you, my lady’” (18). When Divya converses with Prithusen, a similar kind of change in the person type is observed in the TLT: the third person SLT expression “aarya” in “aarya ke nyaye aavedan ke prati taat vishesh roop se chintit hain” (26) is expressed in second person as “your” in TLT “My great-grandfather is taking a keen interest in your petition” (38). Also in Prithusen’s speech, the third person reference as “kumari” in SLT is represented in the second person as “your” in the TLT: “kumari ki shivika mei kandha dene ki meri mehatvakansha kya kumari ki drishii mei bhi apradh hai?” (27) is translated as “Is my eagerness to shoulder your palanquin a crime in your eyes too?” (39). Another instance where the reference marker has a different person-type in TLT is when the slave-girl brings a message for Prithusen: “swami ne aayushman ke mangal ke prati jigyasa ki hai. ayushman ka swasth theek hai . . . chitt prasann hai?” (41) of SLT has a third person marker; whereas, the TLT has a second person marker, “The master has enquired after your health. He hopes that you are well and in good cheer” (64). In Vinay Sharma’s speech too, the third person marker is replaced by a first person marker: “sab mitr nagardwar se ek yojan tak rudradhir ko vida dene chalein” (50) is represented in TLT as “We shall all accompany Rudradhir to a distance of one yojan beyond the city gate” (80). Although, this change in person type does not bring about a change in the meaning, the portrayal of the characters and inter-personal relations get thwarted. The third-person reference markers in SLT reflect the aristocratic culture; on the other hand, the TLT does not provide any such information.

In some cases, differences in the speech form are also noticeable between the SLT and the TLT. Some direct speech expressions of SLT have been represented in the reported speech in the TLT. For example, “mallika ne ungli hontho par rakh kar indradeep ko sanket kiya, 'na aarya, daasi ko trast na karein!'” (34) is put across in TLT as “Mallika put her finger to her lips indicating that he should not frighten the
girl” (51). Similarly, the direct speech of SLT “vedi ke samapan par khadhe chaaran ne puneh tooryanad karke ghoshna ki 'kala ki adhishtatri, nagrakshrit, rajnritki devi mallika sabhashthal me padhar rahii hain’” (6) is rendered in TLT in the indirect form as “A herald poised on the steps of the stage, announced the arrival of Devi Mallika, the Court Dancer, Light of the Town and Laureate of Art” (4). Also, a dialogue of Ratnaprabha has been represented as a narration in TLT where the SLT “marish ke anumati prakat karne par ratnaprabha ne daasi dugdha ko aadesh diya — ‘sakhi anshumala aur mukhatvali ko bhi aayushman ki kalakriri ka darshan-sukh pane ke liye nimanrit karo’” (117) is translated in TLT as “Marish nodded his consent and Ratnaprabha asked Dugdha, the maidservant to bring Anshumala and Muktavali to see the sculpture” (197). This change in speech form restricts the readers from delving deep into the psyche of the characters. At the same time, the translator’s act of rendering indirect speech into direct speech deserves appreciation. By translating the reported speech into direct speech, the narrator has granted the readers with a deeper vision. To give some examples, the SLT narration “apni jeewan nauka ko usne ghatnaaao ki teevr dhaar me swayam thel diya hai . . . vhe jaane kahan jaakar rukegi?” (85) is unwrapped in TLT as “She was thinking to herself, ‘I have, with my own hands, pushed the boat of my life in fast current. . . Who knows where it will carry me?’” (142). Similarly, the SLT “seero ne . . . jambu dweep ke aryo ki kustit bahu-patni pratha ke prati ghrana prakat ki — aaryo mei stri keval bhogya sampatti aur dasi hai. vhe to apne priyatem ko kisi ke saath baant nahi sakti” (65) is rendered in TLT as “. . . Seero expressed her contempt for the customs that permitted the Aryans of Jambu Dweep to have more than one wife, ‘Among the Aryans, a woman is only a slave and an object of enjoyment. I cannot share my beloved with anyone else’” (107). Also by the representation of SLT “veh nirantar aatmahatiya aur prithusen ki hatya ki baat sochta raha” (48) in TLT as “I should kill Prithusen and thereafter kill myself,” he kept repeating to himself” (77), an added advantage is enjoyed by the readers.

Next, the differences that are recognized at the level of syntax demand discussion. A difference in the type of some sentences is noted in TLT; although, their function has remained the same. For instance, the declarative sentence of SLT “. . . wali ji, tum badhe chhaliya ho” (37) is translated as a rhetoric question in TLT with the use of question mark as “You are a clever one, aren’t you?” (57-58).
Similarly, an imperative utterance of Prithusen in SLT “anumati dijiye” (61) is rendered as an interrogative one in TLT “Do I have your Permission to do so?” (100). Here, the TLT utterance of Prithusen makes him appear even more obedient towards his father as compared to the SLT. Similarly, by the translation of an interrogative SLT “swamini ki nidra kis prakar bhang kare?” (68) as a declarative TLT “She had no heart to awaken her” (113), the translator has made the message clearer by highlighting the slave’s feelings for her mistress. By the translation of an imperative SLT “putri, abhyagat ki abharyaithna kar kushal-kshem aur aane ka kaaran poocho” (15) as an interrogative TLT “Can you go and receive the visitor and enquire from him the purpose of his visit?” (18), the order given by the Grandsire to his granddaughter Divya changes to a request. This diminishes the portrayal of the authoritative power of the Grandsire. One of the SLT rhetorical questions “parantu ek daasi ke hi kaaran veh kitne samay tak shoorsen me tika reh sakta tha?” (86) is translated as a TLT declarative “But Pratool could not afford to stay on indefinitely in Shursen for the sake of one female slave” (144). Here, the SLT expression involves the readers by, in a way, eliciting responses from them; whereas, the TLT states a fact and involves the readers only as recipients. Another kind of difference can be observed in the rendering of negative SLT questions as affirmative TLT ones and vice versa. For example, SLT question “kya aryka kala ka veh ratn swayam chal kar dikhaenge?” (117) is in affirmative form; whereas, the TLT question “Won’t you show the masterpiece that you have created?” (198) is in negative form. On the other hand, the SLT question “bhadre nahi jaanti swamini amita ne kis aparadh me mujhe kaksh se bahishkrit kiya hai?” (23) is in negative form; whereas, the TLT question “Do you know the fault for which mistress Amita dismissed me?” (32) is in positive form. This change in type of question, displays a slight change in the mood and intention of the speaker of SLT and of TLT.

Another interesting finding is the difference caused due to the textual rearrangement. For example, the following SLT sentence and its translation have a different textual sequencing:

uniki udaarta mei brahmalok aur nirvana dono ki hi avgya karne wale, sagal ke dharmagya, vipr-samaj dwara lanchit aur tathagat ke abhidharm dwara abhishapt, lokayakt ke samrthak, keval sthoon pratyaksh ihlok ke satya aur
jamantar mei karmphal ko asatya batane wale chaarvaak marish ke liye bhi sthaan tha. (14)

The doors of the house were open even to the atheist Marish, who held in contempt the Vedantic concept of salvation and of Nirvana. Marish had been censured and denounced both by the Brahmans and the votaries of the Buddhist faith for his views. He believed that there was no world beyond the visible one, regarded the palpable world as the true one and dismissed the belief that reward for one's deed awaited one in the next life. (16)

Here, in SLT, the noun (Marish) follows its description, and hence it has a cataphoric feature. This develops some suspense in the minds of the readers. On the other hand, in TLT, the description follows the noun (Marish); hence, it has an anaphoric feature which does not have any scope for suspense. Apart from this, another very surprising difference is observed between SLT and TLT. Three paragraphs from SLT have been rearranged and placed few pages later in the TLT. The rearranged SLT discourse delineates the thoughts of Divya concerning Rudradhir and Marish:

divya praay prati sandhya hi prasad ke udyaan mei prapitamaa, pitravya aur mahilaao ki gishtiyo mei upashit rehti thi. [. . . ] veh sochne lagti-sarvshreshth khadagdhaari aarya prithusen ne meri kala ke vishay mei mat prakat naahi kiyaa . . . shivika ke prasang mei unka khadag kheench lena . . . wahi unka mat tha (19)

Almost every evening, Divya was present at the gatherings in the garden of the palace, which were attended by her great-grandfather, her uncles and the ladies of the house. [. . . ] She would say to herself: 'The best swordsman, Prithusen, had not expressed any opinion about my art . . . That he should have drawn his sword to lend a shoulder to my palanquin . . . that itself was an expression of opinion.' (29)
In SLT, these paragraphs are placed in between the incident of Vishnu Sharma’s agitation at Divya for attending Prithusen and Divya’s conversation with the Chief Justice about Prithusen. The translator, however, has chosen to place these paragraphs after the entire conversation of Divya with her great-grandfather Chief Justice of Republic. Had the translator not opted to rearrange this text, the aforementioned TLT paragraphs would have been five pages earlier. The choice of textual arrangement of the translator seems to be more appropriate as it brings the two linked events together and makes it more meaningful without distracting the reader.

In order to keep intact the cultural aspect of the original text, the translator has wisely transliterated many SLT words in the TLT. Furthermore, so as to facilitate the readers, he has supplemented the transliterations with their meanings in the footnotes. The apparent transliterations in TLT include “shataji raga” (9), “alakta” (3), “chandrika” (3), “dharma-chakra” (21), “gopis” (38), “Rajasuya yajna” (43), “tilak” (43), “meraya” (72), “mridang” (72), “kausheya” (96), “Matal” (117) and “nishk” (139). At the same time, some transliterated words in TLT which have not been explained in the footnote are also noted. These include “uttariya” (57), a piece of dress popular in Indian context; “gandhari” (37), a type of raga; and “chhalika” (37), a type of dance. In other cases, the translator has placed the explanation of the transliterated words within the TLT just after the transliterated word. These include “raas” (37) which is followed by “the circular dance performed by Lord Krishna with gopis” (37-38), “Lakshmi” (210) followed by “my goddess of good fortune” (210), and “Dhata” (29) followed by “meaning the nurse of the newborn baby” (29). With the word “Chhaya” (29), the translator has used single inverted commas around the meaning in the TLT to highlight: “... looking upon the wet nurse’s child as the ‘shadow’ of her own daughter, gave her the name of ‘Chhaya’, and this name struck” (29). Also, to maintain the warm essence of “Amma” (121), the translator has transliterated it instead of translating it.

At the semantic level, there are several variations observed between SLT and the TLT. In most of the cases, the variation is minor and does not weaken the sense of the discourse. The meaning of some words does not seem to have exact equivalence with the SLT counterparts and are worth consideration. Besides, some words of SLT have been corresponded in TLT using single equivalent. For example, the SLT words “budhiya” (37) and “krapne” (39) have been translated using a less casual TLT word
“Grandma” (58 and 61) respectively. Similarly, “ang” (23) and “hriday” (57) have been represented with a specific TLT word “bosom” (32 and 92) respectively. Likewise, “chhaliya” (84) and “kutil” (88) are translated using same equivalent “crafty woman” (141 and 148) respectively; and “daas” (83), “utpeerdhit” (85) and “daasi” (86) using only “slave” (139, 142 and 144) respectively. On the other hand, a single recurring SLT word “taat” (36, 38, 41 and 46) has been rendered in TLT differently as “Great Grandfather” (56), “Uncle” (59), “Father” (64) and “Young Uncle” (73) respectively. Also, “aattarya” (72 and 72) is translated differently as “Beast” (119) and “Ruffian” (119) respectively.

Another interesting finding that deserves discussion is related with the measuring units of time that has been used by the author in SLT. As the novel is based in an ancient setting, in SLT, Yashpal has often used the traditional units of time—pahar and ghardhi—to refer to the time of the day. The translator, however, has chosen to represent these using familiar and present-time units. For example, “suryastra ki do ghardhi paschaat” (56) is translated as “an hour after sunset” (91), “dherdh ghardhi” (67) as “a long time” (110) and “aadhi ghardhi ke paschaat” (69) as “some time before” (114). Similarly, “chautha peher” (69) is translated as “afternoon” (114), “sooryast me abhi ek pehar shesh tha” (5) as “long before sunset” (1), “din ke chauthe peher” (93) as “late in the afternoon” (156), “raatri ke do peher” (112) as “late in the night” (188) and “raatri teen peher” (45, 46 and 146) which has been translated differently at different places as “past mid night” (71), “the third watch of the night” (72) and “till late in the night” (249) respectively. This choice of the translator has undoubtedly enhanced the readability of the text; however, the ancient feel of the original text has been compromised with. Apart from this, the translation of some other quantifiers has been found to be slightly incongruent with the SLT counterparts. For example, SLT “do-dhai maas” (65) as “two or three months” (107), “ek sau bees varsh” (106) as “more than a hundred year” (178), “aneik” (158) as “few” (269), “beesiyo” (67) as “dozens of” (111) and “aayu saath varsh ke sameep pohuch jane ke chhinh” (131) as “Signs of age” (222). This incongruence has formed a slightly different image in the minds of the TLT readers.

Some TLT words and phrases seem to have been translated differently with respect to their meaning. The translation of SLT “ardhaangini” (56) which is closer
in meaning to wife as TLT “beloved” (91), “chinta” (57) which is closer in meaning to tension as “shame” (92), “bharose ka” (7) which is closer in meaning to trustworthy as “of their choice” (5) and “niraale path” (73) which is closer in meaning to strange path as “Secluded path” (120) show some divergence. Also, “karwat le kar” (67) as “sat up startled” (110), “mundi dharm” (31) as “Buddhism” (47), “dheele joote” (6) as “slippers” (3), “yavni ki moorti” (22) as “Greek woman” (30) and “kandhe se kandhe bhidhte” (153) as “elbowing” (260) grab attention as in the translation slight change in the connotation occurs. At the same time, in the translation of some SLT words, some meaning is also gained. For example, in the translation of “aawastha” (68) as “so called indisposition” (112), “so called” is an addition; in “ratnjaat aabhooshan” (6) as “ornament studded with diamonds” (2), “diamonds” is an addition which makes it specific; in “chhatpata utha” (88) as “start crying, waving his fist in the air” (147), fist movement is an addition; in “divya ne pehchana” (15) as “Divya did not take too long to recognise him” (18), quickness in action is an addition; and in “aashray do aarya” (158) as “Grant me the abiding shelter of your arms, Arya” (269), “abiding” and “of your arms” are additions. Another such kind of addition occurs in the translation of SLT “maansik vishvasghaat” (86) as TLT “all kinds of duplicity and of disloyalty” (147). Here, the SLT refers to a specific kind of disloyalty; whereas, the TLT makes it general by referring to all the kinds of disloyalty. On the other hand, in the translation of SLT “uthe hue neitr” (138) as “eyes” (234), the state of eyes is dropped; in “nirbhay Sagal Nagri” (58) as “The city of Sagal” (95), the idea of fearlessness is dropped; and in “vijayi baldhikrat daas” (73) as “the slave born” (120), the reference to the triumph is missing.

Some differences can also be seen in the translation of longer utterances like clauses and sentences. Here again, the sense of the TLT discourse as a large entity is in equivalence with the SLT discourse, but considerable meaning variations are observed in isolation. A quick review of these SLTs and their TLTs will sufficiently suggest the noticeable variations. The SLT sentence “mitti ke paatr mei sammukh rakha ann waise hi reh gaya” (90) carries minute details along with it; whereas, it has been summarized in TLT as “Dara could not eat anymore” (150). The dialogue of Marish in SLT “kya tumne ye sweekar kiya?” (110) has been translated as “Is this what you wanted from life?” (184). Here, Marish refers to Divya’s acceptance of the
hardship in the SLT; whereas, Marish’s question in TLT refers to Divya’s desire. By the translation of SLT “dhata aur divya shithil pado se is vidhi se us vidhi aur us pathi se is path ghoom rahin thin” (75) as “Though extremely tired, they went on” (124), the translator has reduced the reflection of the helplessness and the efforts made by Divya and Dhata. In the translation of “kisi bhi shaan aur samay par kehne wale ek munh aur sunne wale do kaan ka sanyog ho jane se yudh ka prasang aarambh ho jata” (33) as “Everywhere people began to talk of war” (50), the eagerness and involvement of people in the discussions regarding war have been diminished. There is some difference in SLT “jeevan ke aanand se jeevan ki raksha ki chinta adhik prabal ho jati” (33) and its TLT “The joys of life were there, no doubt, but concern for its security was stronger” (51). The SLT, here, denotes a direct proportionality between “joy” and “concern”; whereas, TLT denotes an unassociated comparison between the two.

Before discussing the modifications that have taken place in the TLT, some visible errors can be talked about. These errors are noted in both SLT and TLT. Among the errors encountered in TLT, one is with the translation of SLT “gadhna ke do sau rajullon se ek raja ka shasan kahin bhala” (39) as TLT “The rule of one king is better in every way than that of the hundred kinglings of a republic” (61). Here, the error or variation is caused due to the translation of “do sau” “two hundred” as “the hundred.” Another perceptible error is in the translation of SLT “unke shamshru mundhe hue thei” (5) as TLT “Their heads were clean shaven” (2). While SLT “shamshru” refers to facial hair, the TLT refers to the hair on the head. Differences between SLT and TLT have also arisen due to certain breaches in the SLT which seem to be the typing errors. The SLT phrase “apna mann” in “apna mann darron aur veebhats smритyo ke durbehgh aawran me vishishthit tha” (99) seems to be problematic and should have been “uska mann.” In TLT, the phrase is correctly put as “her mind” (166). Likewise, SLT phrase “do sainik” (139) is inappropriate; whereas, the TLT phrase “two hundred soldiers” (236) seems to be appropriate in the context. Also, the SLT sentence “divya ki virikt aur shaithilye mei chhaya apne dukh ka aabhas paati?” (53) ends with an inapt question mark; whereas, in TLT, correct punctuation seems to have been used. Lastly, in SLT, “Prithusen” seems to have been missing after conjunction “parantu”; whereas, in TLT, he has been rightly mentioned:
With fatigue and drink, Amrita was dancing slowly. But Prithusen was quite content. It was not so much the enjoyment of the dance as the mute acceptance of the situation by Acharya Rudradhir and the other high-caste nobles that gave him the utmost satisfaction. (232)

Above, in the SLT, it does not make sense for Amrita to find pleasure in seeing the vexed state of her own family. However, Prithusen, due to his earlier clashes, has reasons to be happy in seeing Rudradhir unhappy. Keeping this in mind, the TLT seems to be more appropriate.

The translator’s dexterous skills can be identified from the verity that the feel of the TLT seems no less as compared to the feel of the SLT. As a matter of fact, the end product (TLT) seems more varnished than the SLT, at the cost of the original flavor though. At the first consideration, the TLT is supplemented with a detailed “Foreword” by Namita Singh which helps the readers to get acquainted with the context; at the same time, it, however, allows them to anticipate the plot of the novel. The translator has rightly helped his readers in knowing more about the author and the TLT by providing “Translator’s Note.” Furthermore in the preface to the SLT, Yashpal does not talk about any footnote, and he also does not provide any in the novel; whereas, in the TLT, there is a seemingly additional idea which talks about footnotes:

To preserve the atmosphere of classical times, it has been necessary to use some unusual words and the verbal forms. The meanings of these words are explained in footnotes and may add to the reader’s comprehension. (xxx)

Regarding the text, several textual components have been either added to TLT or dropped from the SLT. Mostly, this modification is praiseworthy as it has left out the unnecessary or superfluous content of the SLT, but it has adversely affected the
matter on some occasions. The TLT has not carried over full SLT sentences or group of sentences at times. For example, "sanyam ki mudra mei ... ho gaye" (52), "uske pushk rakt ... ugr ho gaya" (60), "haye-haye, dekho toh" (76), "haye-haye, theek toh kehti hai beti" (76), "yadi aisa hai to ... aisa dur bhi kya hai" (76), "use jan aur samaj mei ... nirash aur aashankit tha" (32), "kumara divya shubhr vayeveey, ... shastr-skahti ki moorti ki bhaanti" (11), "shishuo ke kanth aur vaadako ... anusadan kar rahe the" (9), "tu mar ja!" (23), "haye!" (25), "divya ki drishti kabhi idhar-udhar ... chhaya par padhti" (25), "taat ka shwas teewr ho gya. ... mei lekar peethika par iika diya" (82), "he devta, apna apraadh jaane ya dushkarm jaane bina abodh balak dushkarm se bachne ka nishchay kaise kare?" (89), "anshu marish ke sammukh ... is sampark se kshubd ho gai" (106), "kya hona tha? kya ho gaya ... anshu ne drishti pher li" (110), "parantu kaundhi ki ... hokar reh gaya?" (100), "acharya ke maun se jan samaj adheer hone laga" (155), "dev ne bhak ki upaksya ... . dradh rahi" (150), "rudradhir keval ek shabd samajh paye-madir! kya madir?" (132), "seero ke prati uska man ghrana se bhar gaya" (128), "utsav ke samaroh me bhi acharya rudradhir gambheer chinta se mukti na pa sake" (126), "apni sataan ke kshudhit rehte apna stanye dwiputro dena darsa ke liye asehan yantrana ban jata" (88), "divya se sehyog dene ka ... nritya aarambh kiya" (26), "parantu jahna tak ... raha tha" (5) and "anumaan anubhav ke aadhar ... pramanit nahi to sangidh hai" (17). Furthermore, an important discourse which suggests the similarities between Prithusen and Divya leading to their attraction towards each other is found missing in TLT:

prithusen kuch bhatka sa, aashray ki khoj me khinn sa jaan padhta. divya swayam bhi usi prakar anubhav karti thi. tab bhaare-poore prasad mei bhi soonapan lagta. us samay mahapritavyo, pitravyo aur pitravyaoo, bhaiyo aur behno ka sneh bojh sa jaan padhta. (22)

The presence of this discourse in SLT helps the author in setting the background for the attraction between Prithusen and Divya that follows. On the other hand, its absence in the TLT makes it appear an abrupt affair.

At the starting of some SLT utterances too, expressions have not been rendered in the TLT. For example, "prithusen ke mon prashn ke uttar mei daasi ne
uttar diya” (41), “choti se eidi tak” (54), “haan chhaya” (67), “raatri ke teesre peher tak isi duvidha mei kabhi utthi, kabhi baihhti” (68), “aankhein mood kar sir dukool mei lapeit lene par bhi” (23), “onthon ko daunt se dabaye divya ke vichaar ne kaha” (85), “sthavir ne kuch vichaar kar, drishti jhukaye prashn kiya” (92), “ratnprabha sochti rahi” (99), “apne apne isht mitro aur sakhao ki goshti mei” (135), “bahut samay pashchat swamini ke mukh se sambodhan sunkar” (67), “uska aadar bhi kiya” (14) and “shishu ki bhanti” (151). A couple of dialogues of the characters have also not been translated in TLT: “arya, sweekar karein” (104) and “dono hi yatharth hain” (106).

At the same time, there are some instances where the translator has added minor details so as to elaborate the content. For example, “veh adhik bol napaaye” (46) is extended as “He could not speak more and fell silent” (74); “divya leti thi. sehsa usne prashn kiya — ‘kya? kab?’” (55) is extended as “‘What? When did she come?’ exclaimed Divya jumping up from bed” (90); “utsah se chhaya ne samachar diya” (66) is represented with an addition as “Then one day Chhaya said excitedly” (109); “dharma sth ne sneh se divya ke keshon par haath rakh ke aadesh diya . . .” (15) as “When Divya went to meet her great-grandfather the old sage fondly put his hand on Divya’s head and said . . .” (18); “haan” (18) as “Of Course, you are not to blame” (23); “haaton, panyon, aur marg par khadhe log namaskaar ki mudra me pukaar rahe the — ‘mahadevi seero ki jai!’” (125) as “in the shops, on the balconies of the houses and along the pavement, cries of salutation went up: ‘Long live Mahadevi Seero! Long live Commander-in-Chief Prithusen!’” (212). New sentences can also be seen in the TLT. For example, “He held the liberal views” (17) is an addition. Surprisingly, a new concept is noticed in TLT as opposed to SLT, when Dara goes to the monastery to seek refuge:

The young monk appeared with a small mat of Kausheya grass, which he spread on a stone platform in the shade of a papal tree opposite the door of the monastery. The elderly monk sat on the mat, and making a sign to Dara to sit in front of him, enquired, “Tell me what is in your mind, my daughter.” (152-153)
Lastly, a drastic upliftment in the portrayal of the protagonist Divya is observed in TLT as opposed to the SLT when she decides to go to the inn towards the end of the novel:

us sheedhn aalok mei divya ne poory disha mei diganth tak phaile marg ki or dekha or shanti ka ek nishwaas lekar nagar dwaar ke bahar bani panthshaala ki or drishti ki. ratri mei deergh path par akele yatra karne ki duvidha me divya kshan bhar par khadhi rahi phir raatri paanthshaala mei vyateet karne ke vichaar se uss or mud gai. (155)

Divya looked at the road leading towards the eastern horizon. Heaving a tired sigh, she turned her eyes towards the inn, which stood outside the city gate.

For a few moments, she stood undecided; then with firm steps, walked towards the inn. (264)

The SLT phrase “ratri mei deergh path par akele yatra karne ki duvidha me” seems to impart weakness, insecurity and dependency to the character of Divya by conveying that she hesitates to travel alone at night. On the other hand, the translator has done exceptionally well in opting to modify it in such a way that the power of Divya, which she earns during her agonizing journey of life, does not get shattered. In place of it, the translator has made use of “For a few moments, she stood undecided; then with firm steps.” This modification in TLT portrays her as an independent and self-reliant woman who makes decisions about her own life. Also, the replacement of SLT “shanti ka ek nishwaas” with TLT “a tired sigh” justifies her decision of going to the inn: out of tiredness—a normal human tendency—she decides to go to the inn.

In the novel Divya, it is clear that Yashpal has outlined the power politics that exists at various levels. Also, he has focused upon the subjugation as well as the revival of the powers of the woman protagonist. It is praiseworthy that to make the translation even more successful, Anand, as admits in “Translator’s Note,” sought help from Bernard Queenan, a former British Army officer in India and a scholar, who helped him “. . . in the work of editing . . . and in retaining the classical flavor of Yashpal’s highly literary Hindi” (xxvii). The theme and the play of the power
structures have been retained remarkably in the translation. Although some
differences are observed in the translation, it does not significantly alter the meaning
of the SLT.
Works Cited


