Conclusion

The *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* has been translated into Bangla by several authors from varied backgrounds, starting from religious preachers, nationalist leaders, literary persons, philosophers, Sanskrit scholars to left liberal thinkers, throughout the history of Bangla literature. This phenomenon has been in practice since the time period of Shri Chaitanya. However, since the late nineteenth century it has become a trend to work on the *Gita* in the form of commentaries, explanations and translations etc. Virtually all the eminent figures of the then Bengal from all walks of life have worked on the *Gita*. Hence, I have focused on this period i.e. early twentieth century. The early twentieth century is one of the most interesting areas to study the Bengal province as the then Bengal was reverberating with a lot of movements starting from social reformation movements to freedom movement.

The main objective of my research was to look at the socio-cultural perspective of the translations of the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* in Bangla. As the most popular Hindu religious text, the *Gita* is widely translated. All the socio-political-cultural changes/reforms, witnessed by Bengal and Bengalis, have influenced the discourse of the *Gita* translation in Bangla. Though, the day-to-day life of Bengalis does not have much direct connection with the discourse of the *Gita* translation, the intellectual sphere of the Bengali Community has always paid great attention to the various works done on this religio-philosophical text.
As extra-literary components, the translator’s education, religious belief, individual worldview, understanding of philosophy, ideology, cultural background, contemporary social and political scenario have great impact on the translation. Along with this, the patronage also plays a major role. In totality, all the above mentioned factors create the differences between the several translations of a particular text. In this context, the primary area that I explored is how these extra-literary components shaped a translation through the translator.

The *Gita* has served as a religious and philosophical base for the various religious groups and philosophical schools quite contradictory to one another. Various literary persons and individual *Gita* scholars also have worked on the text and came up with translations not affiliated to any particular school of thought per se. Every one of the translators shaped the translation of the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* keeping in mind the demand of the contemporary societal scenario and their own socio-cultural affiliations and subscriptions. It is really interesting to unearth that a single text is translated with multiple connotations by varied translators of dynamic backgrounds, sometimes surprisingly contradictory in ideology to one another.

As Hirendranath Dutta was assigned to write on Indian philosophy he chose to work on the *Gita*. It was because working on *Gita* has become trend by then and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, whom he used to ardently follow from teenage, could not complete the work the latter started on the *Gita*. In a sense it is understood through my research that Hirendranath, partly, also took up working on the *Gita* to fulfill Bankim’s incomplete translation by invoking the Hindu nationalist ideology of the former. It was analytically understood through this
research that the dialectic of nationalists was clearly visible and reflected throughout the *Gitay Ishwarvaad*. It was clearly delineated in the previous chapters that though, the project was taken up by him to promote the Bangla literature, as part of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, he ultimately, to some extent paradoxically, relied on a western scholar, who had never been to India.

Shri Aurobindo aimed to write on the *Gita* from a spiritual viewpoint immediately after coming out of the Alipore jail. Nevertheless, he could not maintain the spiritual approach throughout the text. Particularly, while discussing Shri Krishna and his politics from the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*, Aurobindo’s revolutionary spirit came out in several parts of the text. It was found out that in a few cases his occidental education and revolutionary motivation made him politicize the *Gitar Bhumika* in subtle ways, whereas politicizing the *Gita* is a very rare occurrence among the contemporary Bengali scholars who worked on the *Gita*.

Dwijendranath Tagore approached the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* with a philosophical viewpoint. Though he maintained the philosophical view throughout dealing with the *Gita*, ultimately he could not succeed to maintain the impartiality. In the initial chapters his emphasis on Sankhya Karikya and the Yoga of Pathanjali reflects his neutrality, nonetheless, gradually his leanings towards Brahmo ideology manifested subtly. He tried to explain some concepts of the *Gita* using geometrical figures in his *Gitapath*. This unique technique did not at all exist in the works of his contemporaries from Bengal. It shows the versatile expertise on the diverse fields of knowledge apart from philosophy and scriptures.
Swami Saradananda claimed that he would come up with an impartial explanation of the *Gita*. Consequently, his *Gitatattva* is loaded with ideologies and references of the Ramakrishna Mission and Math. It was also found out that Swami Saradananda was trying to legitimize the life of Ramakrishan Paramahansa by equating him as an incarnation and extensively drawing parallels to the events in the life of Ramakrishna. From the *Gitatattva* it is clearly visible that he has used the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* as a religious base to propagate the ideology of the Ramkrishna Mission Movement. The primary reason behind coming up with multiple versions of translations of a particular text can be substantiated by saying that the different schools of thoughts want to have their own easy explanation of the *Gita* sometimes in a very lucid language, which can be accessed by the common mass.

Rajshekar Basu’s the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* is comparatively one of the least biased texts among the *Gita* translations used for the scrutiny under this research project. Being a chemist by profession his approach towards the text is more or less scientific in nature. Interestingly, Rajshekar Basu has not included any commentary in his translation. He approached the *Gita* as a repository of practical knowledges. This is visible from his preference of the discourse of action and knowledge as compared to the widely revered discourse of meditation and devotion.

Among the translators I have selected for my research, Jagadish Chandra Ghosh is the only one known as the *Gita* scholar. He being widely learned in Indian philosophy and scriptures attempted to juxtapose the various philosophical schools and the other canonical ‘shastras’ of Sanskrit language. It is evident from
this gesture that he was trying to interpret the Gita in multiple philosophical view points of India. This particular approach proves that Jagadish Chandra Ghosh was trying to ascertain, through his Shri Gita, the mutual coexistence of various philosophical schools in India. He also to a greater extent tried to suggest that there is no clash between these different philosophical schools.

My inference from the above case studies suggests that translation has not only to do with the text alone. It is, in a sense, the presentation of the translators’ ideologies and socio-cultural background itself through the text.