

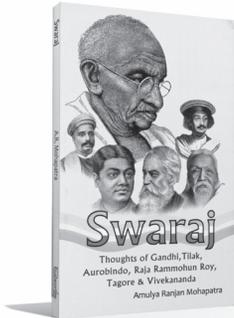
with regard to the relationship between jiva, jagat, and Brahman.

Reading this volume is like seeing the Indian philosophical systems through the lens of the Vishishtadvaita school, and Dr Chari, with his Vishishtadvaita leaning, does a good job in establishing the soundness and supremacy of this system.

However, in some places in the book it is not clear whether a particular view is Vedanta Deshika's or Dr Chari's own. The book's presentation is marred by as many as sixty-two printing mistakes, as far as we were able to identify.

In spite of these small limitations, this volume undoubtedly facilitates a deeper understanding of Indian philosophy in general and Vishishtadvaita Vedanta in particular.

*Brahmachari Isharupachaitanya*  
Belur Math



**Swaraj: Thoughts of  
Gandhi, Tilak, Aurobindo,  
Raja Rammohun Roy, Tagore  
& Vivekananda**

Amulya Ranjan Mohapatra

Readworthy Publications, A-18,  
Mohan Garden, New Delhi 110 059.  
Website: readworthypub.com. 2009.  
102 pp. ₹ 120.

**S**waraj, self-rule, is a multidimensional concept that has always been associated with political freedom. This book takes a contrarian and holistic view of Swaraj by exploring its many facets. It has been equated with Mahatma Gandhi's 'self-rule', Bal Gangadhar Tilak's 'birthright for freedom', Aurobindo's 'Sanatana Dharma', Raja Rammohun Roy's 'individual liberty', Rabindranath Tagore's 'humanity', and Swami Vivekananda's 'love of the motherland'. Corroborating his views with quotations from these thinkers, the author holds that Swaraj is the political, economic, social, cultural, moral, and spiritual freedom of oneself. This slim volume, equipped with an index, could be a good primer on the concept of self-rule.

*Swami Narasimhananda*  
Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata



**The Essential  
Śrī Ānandamayī Mā**

Alexander Lipski;

ed. Joseph A Fitzgerald

Motilal Banarsidass, 41 U A Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, New Delhi 110 007. Website: [www.mlbd.com](http://www.mlbd.com). 2010. x + 141 pp. ₹ 695.

**T**he spiritual journey and transformation of Nirmala Sundari, a poor village girl of Kheora in the erstwhile East Bengal, into a saint is the subject of this book. Her life from early childhood reveals that she was not an ordinary girl, as she frequently underwent absorption in trance. In spite of minimal school attendance she exhibited a sharp mind that impressed her teachers. As she was repeatedly experiencing high states of consciousness that made her an instrument of cosmic powers, her married life was unconventional. At night she used to perform complicated asanas and repeat mantras in the corner of her room—she later initiated her husband into spiritual life. In spite of not having read scriptures, her life and words conformed to them. The book elaborately and faithfully records the process of her spiritual evolution, to the establishment of her ashramas, to her final days at Kankhal.

In a spiritual environment that is predominantly male-oriented, Anandamayi Ma's spirituality is like a mother's love endearing one and all without distinction. Her teachings are tinged with her motherly love, and so her insights into the various aspects of spirituality such as reincarnation, samadhi, sadhana, role of a guru are simply lucid.

The use of Bengali and Sanskrit words appropriately inserted in religious contexts enhances this biography. Of course, an elaborate glossary is provided at the end. The book is well researched and carries 125 vivid sepia photos of Anandamayi Ma, each of which speaks volumes about her—the publishers must be praised for this excellent production in good glossy paper. This book is helping spread Anandamayi Ma's charisma worldwide.

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