

Review of: "Understanding on Social Utopia: West to East"

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The essay entitled "Understanding on Social Utopia: West to East" by Sadiat Mannan is an interesting read. Based on a comparative study of Tagore's philosophy of evolution and Rousseau's and Marx's views on evolution and estranged labour, the essay argues that achieving near utopia is a possibility through the inculcation of socialist and creative values. In other words, Mannan, drawing on a range of works, which is a bit limited in some ways, notes that a society that values individual freedom and liberty is achievable provided it allows and encourages the harnessing of the creative potential and spirit of its members. While the theme, as indicated earlier, is interesting, Mannan's treatment of it is a bit too straightforward, which means he does not fully succeed in locating and analysing the nuances, especially while dealing with Marx and the concept of estranged labour, etc. In fact, there is just one sketchy paragraph devoted to Marx's idea which is, quite correctly though, drawn from EPM, 1944; but Mannan does not quite do enough justice to the otherwise rich text and also its tangible linkage to Tagore's ideas. The section on Rousseau is fine but reads a little like a review of literature, albeit a good, descriptive one. So, what we may suggest is as follows: the essay will be good to go if Mannan substantially reworks the analysis of Marx, adds more references in the text or notes for the many claims it makes, reworks the title to make it more specific, polishes up the essay generally by improving the structure, prose style, typos, etc., and finally and most importantly, brings more clarity to the central argument and distinguishes that from the other peripheral arguments. But all said, Mannan has made a significant attempt to compare eastern and western philosophical thought and must take this work forward.