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Foreword

In *The Heart of Man: Its Genesis for Good and Evil, in Religious Perspectives* (1964. p 93), Erich Fromm argues that "our conscious mind represents mainly our own society and culture, while our unconscious represents the universal man in each of us." If we could conclude the project of Allama Jafari in one sentence that would be what Erich Fromm stated about the role of unconscious and its relation to the universal in each of us. In other words, Allama Jafari was working on the poetry of awakening the 'universal being' in the heart of human self in a dialectical fashion that the unconscious would turn conscious and the universal would get fused with the conscious heart in a dynamic mode.

In 2010, I wrote a book on Allama Jafari entitled *Reflections on the Social Thought of Allama M. T. Jafari: Rediscovering the Sociological Relevance of the Primordial School of Social Theory*, which was published by University Press of America.

There I attempted to reconstruct the theoretical significance of Allama Jafari within the broad parameters of social theory by arguing that he belongs to a school of thought which has been undertheorized in the Iranian context as well as not known in the global context of social theory.

While thinking over the repercussions of such bold assertions in regard to a thinker who, is not even recognized within Iran as a relevant social philosopher (let alone a social thinker or social theorist and sociologist), I came across an unpublished manuscript by Allama Jafari entitled *Sociology and Human Being* dated 1976.1

In these unpublished lectures, he precisely takes issue with sociology as a field of knowledge and mentions the works of Western sociologists and even quotes Durkheim and other classical sociologists at length. Reading this work I realized that we are faced with a thinker who is a many-sided theoretician that is indispensable for all who are interested

in alternative sociological imaginations. In other words, the sociological works of Allama Jafari represents a novel fashion in doing sociology based on primordial school of social theory. To put it differently, we who studied disciplinary sociology and grew within the parameters of discursive rationalized imagination have come to believe that reflections over the destiny of humanity is tantamount to the principles of

disciplinary rationality.

However, as Syed Farid Alatas has demonstrated cogently the alternative sociology is desirably possible when the students of social sciences get in touch with their respective traditions which enable them to build new concepts for explaining 'other' *historical experiences* and *social realities*. (2006) One creative mode of relating to alternative traditions is to build upon the works of thinkers who belong to an intellectual tradition in an intellectual fashion and not long for a tradition in a fetishistic manner.

In other words, Allama Jafari is rooted in the soil of perennial tradition of religio perennis but that has not stopped him to establish constructive dialog with other traditions such as European, Russian, Chinese, Indian, and many other schools of thought.

In this work, I have attempted to demonstrate the contours of an alternative approach to sociological problematiques within the work of Allama Jafari which is aimed at reviving the "universal" within the parameters of human sciences. In other words, the revival of alternative discourses is only possible when one's classics are different than the disciplinary canonical paradigm but this does not mean to exclude other streams of thought such as disciplinary discourses embodied in the pantheon of sociological temple.

Last but not least, I would like to emphasize that any attempt to identify the thread that runs through Allama Jafari's writings will soon uncover an unequivocally *humaneistic* 2 worldview. From the 194os on to the end of his life in 1998, this was Allama Jafari's guiding principle.

1. This work is composed of 180 pages in Persian. At the Center for Allama Jafari Studies in Iran the lectures have been edited by one of my students at Sharif University of Technology namely Vahide Sadeghi who has gone through all the papers and edited them in a presentable fashion.

The book has not been published yet but the director of the Center for Allama Jafari Studies, i.e. Ali Jafari is intending to carry out the task by this year. In other words, the reason I have not given page numbers whenever I have quoted from this work is that it has not been paginated yet. Therefore I have referred to chapters rather than pages in these lectures.

Additionally, the lectures were conducted in Persian and the translations are mine and I have not rendered literally. On the contrary, I have translated freely and used aspects of these lectures. However, I should mention that I have looked at other works of Allama Jafari in regard to sociological questions too.

2. I used by purpose this term as humanism has come to refer to secularized inclinations. Although I have argued elsewhere that humanism in the pristine sense of the term cannot be but a revival of humane tendencies in the heart of human being and in the body of human community. Nevertheless I have decided to employ another term to remove any trace of confusion in regard to the universe of Allama Jafari's thought.

In other words, by humaneistic I intended to emphasize the humane dimensions of the work of Allama Jafari which could be interpreted as an antidote against alienating forces of modernism by paving the road towards realization of wonderful possibilities of human spirit.

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