

Dear Seminar Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning. I hope our European guests have so far experienced nice moments in Tehran.

Since its emergence in its modern sense, especially after the Industrial Revolution of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, university was identified with technology and technological products, while prior to that, universities were mainly involved in solving humans' public intellectual issues. However, today, human beings are facing fundamental issues which need to be scrutinized within the framework of humanities. In other words, a backward movement toward humanities can be observed in world universities which results from a number of socially decisive and history-making phenomena. Migration is one of these phenomena which alters not only the social and cultural identities, but also the whole nature of human societies, and paves the way for the development of human's life-world. Appreciation of the phenomenon of migration, the roots of its formation, and the principles for policy-making about it are all questions which may not even be answered using the classic research methods in social sciences. Answering these questions requires new theoretical foundations and research methods capable of scrutinizing this multifaceted phenomenon and changing the classic foundations of policy-making to bring about a new variety of policy formulation and implementation about it.

A brief overview of the studies conducted on the phenomenon of migration demonstrates a serious gap between western and non-western studies around it. The western attitudes, to quote Edward Said, have still an orientalist view in which there is a type of Eurocentric Dualist Ideology: the dominant, developed and supreme West in front of the underdeveloped, traditional, tense East. According to this view, migration is portrayed as a threat to the supreme Western life imposed by the underdeveloped East, and all analyses and policy-makings are performed according to the same view: according to how the western identity should be preserved intact despite the flow of migration and how the migrants should be transformed within the Western lifestyle. However, if we get away from this orientalist stance, perhaps we might analyze migration from another angle; perhaps we might look at it as a type of convergence among cultures and a possibility of interaction and symbiosis between different cultures, etc.

From this viewpoint, cooperation of Eastern universities, including Iranian universities, can be highly rewarding and unveil different aspects of the phenomenon of migration perhaps overlooked by a western researcher.

To this aim, AllamehTabataba'i University (ATU), as the largest Iranian public university specialized in humanities and social sciences, is expressing its willingness to organize a joint conference in partnership with Iranian and European universities. The purpose of this conference is to conduct joint research and use the experiences of immigrant and emigrant states in the field of organizing the state of migrants and preparing security and stability for increasing the peace and tranquility in different regions of the world, especially West of Asia and the Europe.

Thank you so much for your attention.