

Ahmed Saeed Otaiwi Joudar

**Mobility Writers in-between Multiculturalism and Transculturality:
Case Studies in Canadian Literature**

Ph.D. Thesis

Supervisors

Prof. dr. Katalin Kürtösi

Assoc. Prof. dr. Zoltán Kelemen

Doctoral School of Literary and Cultural Studies
Department of Comparative Literature and Culture
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Szeged
Szeged, Hungary
2021

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
Introduction	2
1. Overview.....	2
2. The Aim of the Study and the Methodology.....	2
3. ‘Multiculturalism,’ ‘Interculturality,’ and ‘Transculturality’.....	8
4. The Relation Between the ‘Self’ and ‘Doubleness’ of Belonging.....	12
5. Differences, Overlapping, and Interaction between Ethnic Minorities and the Ethnic Majority in Canada.....	20
6. The Transition of Ethnic Minority Writers from Ethnic Identity Reconstruction to Transcultural Dialogue.....	28
Chapter One: The Dilemmas of Hungarian Minority in John Marlyn’s <i>Under the Ribs of Death</i>....	35
1. 1. Introduction.....	35
1. 2. The Isolation of the Hungarian Community in Canada.....	35
1. 3. The Conflict between Ethnic Minority and the Anglo–Canadian Majority in Canada.....	44
1. 4. The Influence of Changing Identity on the Assimilating in the Majority Community.....	49
1. 5. Conclusion.....	56
Chapter Two: The Duality of Identity in Naim Kattan’s <i>Farewell Babylon</i>.....	59
2. 1. Introduction.....	59
2. 2. The Exile of Jews to/from Iraq.....	61
2. 3. The Double Diasporic Situation and the Sense of Belonging to the Original Home.....	68
2. 4. The Move between Imaginary Boundaries in Baghdad.....	77
2. 5. Conclusion.....	85
Chapter Three: The Exploration of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ in Michael Ondaatje’s <i>Running in the Family</i>	88
3. 1. Introduction.....	88
3. 2. The Temporary Return to the Homeland: The Challenge of Identity and Alienation.....	89
3. 3. The Exploration of Cultural Roots.....	96
3. 4. The Exploration of the ‘Self’.....	104
3. 5. Conclusion.....	112
Conclusion	114
Work Cited	122

Summary of Thesis

The Aim of the Study and the Methodology

Canada is one of the first countries in the world which has cultural diversity and officially recognizes the rights of minorities through the Multiculturalism Policy. This policy became official when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced it in his statement to the House of Commons on 8 October 1971. This policy aims to assist ethnic minorities to integrate (not assimilate) into Canadian society. It also assists ethnic minorities to overcome cultural barriers to full participation in Canadian society in order to promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups. Thus, increasing programs that support studies and research related to the right of ethnic minorities through federal funding of the Canadian government contributed to raising the number of people who are interested in this area. But there is still a gap in studying the case of ethnic minorities who live in Canada and descend from immigrant roots before the declaration of the Multiculturalism Policy in a comparison with changes that happened to the ethnic minorities after the declaration of this Policy. As Canada is a multicultural state with two official languages and a mixture of the population of immigrants, transcultural writing related to Canada has its value and features.

This study explores how does the literary discourse of ethnic minorities writers contribute to developing Canadian literature and culture with the help of Multiculturalism Policy? and how does this discourse make influence the relationship of ethnic minorities writers with their local community as well as the relationship with the majority in Canada? In the last decades, Canadian narratives contributed to the radical change of stereotypes of Canadian society on the level of the relationship between ethnic minorities themselves and on the level of the relationship between ethnic minorities and the ethnic majority in Canadian society. Therefore, in this study, I investigate three different images of Canadian writers: one from Eastern Europe, one from the Middle East, and one from South Asia to explore how those writers represent their self-identity and belonging to the original home before/after the Multiculturalism Policy Declaration. The focus is on mobility writers who immigrated to Canada in three different periods of the twentieth century in order to study the transcultural aspects of their texts. Canadian mobility writers usually use narrative to present the Canadian identity and re-present the original identity. So the selected texts in the study link to the notion of 'transcultural discourse' which is used in their narration as a result of the clash and dialogue between the ethnic minorities of Eastern European, Arab Jewish and South Asians descent one hand and the ethnic majority in Canada on the other hand.

I also explore new realities and new spaces of the transcultural writers through challenges which they faced in different stages of their life. The findings then refer to the change which gets into the

discourse of ethnic minority writers in recent years. Consequently, transcultural discourse permits ethnic minorities to develop their discourse dynamically not only concerning the past or the present but also to the future. Therefore, the best understanding of defining ethnicity is through studying the transcultural discourse which appears in the texts of ethnic minority writers and does not only rely on presenting differences with the ethnic majority but is also based on creating a space of dialogue to eliminate these differences. This kind of discourse is necessary but not always possible inside ethnic minority communities themselves or with the majority in Canada.

Each one of the selected writers John Marlyn, Naim Kattan and Michael Ondaatje deals explicitly with the ethnic theme and puts it in his discourse with the other part of society though all of them belong to the ethnic minorities in Canada and have various cultural roots. They are also distinct in the use and manifestation self-consciousness in their texts because the best understanding of the 'Self' is through the mirror of others and thus the importance of the choice lies in the common points between them. Marlyn belongs to the second generation who arrived in Canada as an infant; therefore, he had a limited connection with the mother language, habits, and cultural roots. Kattan and Ondaatje who arrived in Canada adults (Kattan was 26 and Ondaatje 19) keep contact with everything which connects them to their original roots. So there is a degree of difference between them as a result of the spatial dimension, political changes, the influence of colonialism, and empires for long periods.

The categorization of each one of these writers always shows the 'doubleness' of belonging such as John Marlyn (Hungarian-Canadian), Naim Kattan (Iraqi-Jewish-Canadian), and Michael Ondaatje (Sri Lankan-Canadian). The determination of identity is stable for this kind of writers but the general form changes based on belonging, ethnicity, and allegiance. These writers express their 'double' identity and belonging through their cultural and ethnic experiences in the diaspora or displacement. Thus, their complicated life in displacement becomes an important means to examine the dilemmas of ethnic minorities in Canadian literature and history; therefore, this kind of narrations affirms its position in Canadian literature due to shedding light on immigrants' experiences and ethnic minorities.

The focus in this study is on sample texts of those three writers: John Marlyn's *Under the Ribs of Death*, Naim Kattan's *Farewell Babylon*, and Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*. The purpose of selecting these texts is to show how these three writers concentrate on their self-consciousness to present their ethnic identity and also point out the characteristics of this kind of writing, referring to the aesthetics of their discourse. Their concentration on cross-cultural features and experiences of crossing borderlines helped them foster their self-consciousness contributed to developing their literary production. The focus on the cultural and ethnic discourse in the three texts

attempts to show the importance of the approach of this study, thus paying attention to tensions aroused by complicated significances are important to the methodology of it.

The case requires concentrating on the chronology of the transition of ethnic minority writers in Canada from the stage of identity–building to creating a space of dialogue with the ethnic majority which becomes a central subject in ethnic minority writings after the second decade of the twentieth century. The dialogue space which is created in earlier texts of ethnic minority narratives sometimes is linear in form and content. When the Multiculturalism Policy was declared, the narrative mode of a transcultural dialogue changed from linear to dynamic. The study compares the period before the Multiculturalism Policy declaration in which John Marlyn was more interested in the construction of self–identity with the period after the Multiculturalism Policy declaration in which Naim Kattan and Michael Ondaatje are concerned more with the definition of their ethnicity. Both two writers aim to establish a transcultural dialogue between the minority and the majority parallel with the definition of the ‘Self’ and ‘Other.’ The focus on the realistic writers who criticize political and social conditions and put ethnicity in a certain mould in order to open a space of transcultural dialogue which helps to construct reality in a particular form. In the three chapters, I discuss the following questions: What is the stable sense of ‘Self’ of the writer when he faced racism and discrimination due to his ethnicity in the first decade of the twentieth century? What are the role and the impact of displacement, community, ethnicity, and identity on the personality of these three writers? How do writers of ethnic minorities establish the relationship between a sense of ‘Self’ and a sense of belonging?

The Structure of the Dissertation

The first chapter of this study discusses the dilemmas of the Hungarian minority in Canada at the beginning of the twentieth century by analyzing John Marlyn’s *Under the Ribs of Death* (1957). Marlyn’s text deals with Eastern European ethnicity, especially Hungarian ethnicity, which located in a conflict with the ethnic majority between 1910 and 1930. In this chapter, the focus is on questions related to a sense of belonging: Who decides a question of belonging of an individual? How does the immigrant of ethnic minority decide to which community to belong? Does the individual have the choice to determine his/her belonging? What is the individual’s response if one gets a rejection from the new society? All these questions explore through analyzing Marlyn’s text which represents an Eastern European narrative in Canada: his text offers a realistic representation of the question of belonging. The dilemmas of identity and isolation are obvious in *Under the Ribs of Death*, particularly, the Hungarian community which lived in a ghetto in Winnipeg at the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore, Marlyn’s text presents important problems that the ethnic minorities faced in Canada before the recognition of the Multiculturalism Policy. In his text, Marlyn portrays how Hungarians in Canada succeed in preserving ties with their cultural heritage, language, and their

ethnicity although Hungarians struggled to preserve their identity in their original home country, Hungary, and in Canada as well over the past decades.

The second and third chapters of this study focus on texts of ethnic minority writers which appeared after the declaration of the Multiculturalism Policy in Canada. The exploration in these two chapters will be through the two texts in which Naim Kattan and Michael Ondaatje move to their original home country either in imagination or personally. These two writers use their past to draw a dynamic line of the future of their ethnicity in both parts of Canada: The Francophone part and the English part. Consequently, their texts engage with the Canadian Multiculturalism Policy which assists them in integration on one hand and protection of their belonging on the other hand because their experience is a part of Canadian success which enables immigrants to preserve connectedness with their cultural heritage.

In the second chapter, I deal with Naim Kattan's *Farewell Babylon* which was published first in the French version under the title *Adieu Babylone* in 1975 and then was translated into the English language *Farewell Babylon* by Sheila Fischman in 1976. Naim Kattan is a Jewish Iraqi writer whose life is changed from a victim to a victor when he achieved prominent prizes such as the Order of Canada (1983) and the French Legion of Honor (2002). In *Farewell Babylon*, Kattan returns in his imagination to Iraq, especially the city of birth, to narrate a young Jewish story of who was born in Baghdad. Kattan's text refers to the complex experiences of the Jewish community in the cosmopolitan Arab city, Baghdad. The questions which are discussed in this chapter: How can Iraqi Jews prove their belonging to Iraq and Babylon particularly? As they were a minority in Iraq, how was their relationship with the majority there? What were the struggles which they faced between 1930 and 1951? And how do the Jews represent the Iraqi identity after they migrated to Canada? This chapter explores the imaginary journey of Kattan to return in memory to his birthplace Baghdad in order to explore the case of the Jewish community and dilemmas which they faced in the middle of the twentieth century. Kattan's case is studied in four dimensions: the exile of Jews to/from Iraq, the case of diasporic and the sense of belonging to the original home, the move between imaginary boundaries in Baghdad, and the search of the 'Self' and ethnic identity. This chapter focuses on examining the case of Jewish ethnicity in Baghdad between 1930 and 1951. The study of Kattan's case elaborates how he uses a transcultural discourse in order to affirm the ethnic identity of his community.

The third chapter is like Kattan's case, but Michael Ondaatje visited his homeland personally during two journeys. After these journeys to Sri Lanka, where he left it when he was a child, Michael Ondaatje wrote *Running in the Family* which first appeared in 1982. In his text, Ondaatje concentrates on specific issues such as memory, self-representation, and a sense of belonging. Therefore, this

chapter explores the following questions: What is the writer's sense after these two journeys? Does the writer find his 'Self' during these journeys? What is the relationship between the 'Self' and the 'Other'? How does memory help him to restore the past? Does the writer find the contact zone between the homeland and the host country? And what is the challenge of alienation for the writer? Through the exploration of the notions of 'Self' and 'Other' in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*, the case of Ondaatje is studied in four main principles: the temporary return to the homeland, the challenge of identity and alienation, the exploration of cultural roots, and the exploration of the 'Self.' The analyzing of Ondaatje's text shows that the writer uses his journeys in order to look for the roots of his ethnicity; therefore, he challenges the alienation by using the transcultural discourse to convey the real image of his ethnic and cultural identity into the host country. Through the answer to questions in the following chapters, the conclusion helps us to understand how writers of ethnic minorities in Canada can create a hybrid identity in a dynamic form. The shape enables the writers to create a space in the cultural diversity zone in which the dynamic of belonging and ethnicity allows them to be in the third space in-between multiple cultures to create a transcultural dialogue.

Conclusion

In the first part of the twentieth century, fictions that dealt with the theme of ethnic minorities were not popular for reasons which I mentioned in this study. After the 1970s, elements of ethnic hatred begun to decrease radically through attempts to find a state of mosaic on the level of national identity which, later, is known as Canadian Multiculturalism Policy. On the level of the literary Canon, the subject of ethnic minorities found a space in Canadian literature after it has been absent for several decades. Ethnicity performance depends on the repetition of the past to transform it into the present in order to create an open transcultural dialogue to reach the desired goal that enables communities to understand each other. The notion of ethnicity can be used to construct strong links between different ethnicities and nations, besides, help in creating a dialogue between these ethnicities to avoid probable conflicts. The narratives discussed in this study show that dialogue is a starting point to construct a bridge between ethnicities, communities, and nations to help them in developing and communicating with each other regardless of their language, religions, or colour.

After the declaration of the Multiculturalism Policy, Canadian writers of ethnic minorities used their narrative to create a space of transcultural discourse to define and redefine the meaning of their ethnicity as dynamic and not stable. This space of dialogue helps them to continue the evolution of their ethnic identity in the future. The three writers in this study used different approaches in the construction of their texts to produce what is called the narrative exchange. In each one of the three texts, the protagonist is an immigrant who reflects the cultural and ethnic identity of his original home through overlapping and interaction with the majority, thus keeps the dynamicity of his ethnicity. The

stages of the life of these three writers show sometimes that they are against the habits and traditions of their families and communities despite offering reconciliation at the end of their texts. In certain stages of their life, they were forced to move from their ethnic community into other communities for various reasons which I discussed in the previous chapters. Consequently, events that are mentioned in these three texts express their self-experiences at that time. Those three writers do not only show their experiences with their cultural and ethnic identity but also show us that there is new rhetoric related to cultural recovery.

These texts concentrate on cultural and ethnic roots to present a new concept of dynamic ethnicity which produces a transcultural dialogue between the majority and ethnic minorities in Canada. However, this new concept is not only useful between ethnic minorities and the majority in Canada but also can be useful for other nations and communities as well as within the community itself because it helps to redefine themselves to individuals of their nation and also to other nations and communities. After the discussion and description of visible and invisible differences between ethnicities, I argue that it becomes necessary to eliminate or at least decrease these differences and difficulties facing ethnic minorities and that they perhaps threaten their location to be undermined. As we are in the age of rapid changes, our vision of social structure is also changeable. Therefore, the dependence on the dialogue across boundaries will help to remove hatred and rancour between communities, thus enhances the understanding of each other. This may be beneficial in Canadian literature and Canadian society on the one hand and other societies and literature on another hand because it will allow them to understand that other ethnicities can develop.

The three texts deal with the behaviours, attitudes, and feelings of three different ethnicities: Hungarian, Iraqi Jewish, and Sri Lankan. Through the experiences of these three writers in exile and displacement, a dramatic sensation was generated in their personality which appeared in their three texts, *Under the Ribs of Death*, *Farewell Babylon*, and *Running in the Family*, as this sensation encouraged them to explore their cultural and ethnic identity. Most of the ethnic minority writers rejected to be located on the margin; instead, they create a space of dialogue to focus on minute details of their life stories to explore their cultural roots. Consequently, the examination of these three texts depends on how their writers portray ethnicity through the exchanging dialogue which enables them to present the habits and values of their community to the majority in Canadian society. The motifs which these writers mention in their texts reveal that they used different pictures to show factors of their ethnicity and the extent of the connection of these factors with the 'Self.'

After the discussion of the three texts in this study, I can assert that they offer an extension for the ethnic minorities within the environment of the majority, thus, it will help them in preserving the dynamic of ethnicity. These texts have features that support the ethnic writer to keep the extension

with his ethnicity in which the writer can evolve the process of cultural and ethnic recovery in each one of his texts. Marlyn, Kattan, and Ondaatje worked in their three texts to assemble fragments of their ethnicity and cultural identity for the sake of recovery although there is a difference in the way of dealing with these topics in their texts. As a result of the Policy of Multiculturalism and based on the hypothesis of the 'dynamic of ethnicity,' both Naim Kattan and Michael Ondaatje show the move from the phase of exile and displacement to marginality and isolation, then the move to the phase of integration, and finally the move to the phase of creating transcultural dialogue to preserve the dynamic of their ethnicity. Before Multiculturalism Policy, the case of John Marlyn shows the move from isolation and marginality to the phase of assimilation, but he failed; therefore, he used the reverse transition to move back to the phase of isolation again. I argue that the reason for differences is due to the Policy of Canadian Multiculturalism which allows and assists ethnic minority writers who deal with these topics in opening a wide variety of transcultural dialogue. Furthermore, exile, migration, displacement, and diaspora make an impact on the way of their self-representation, the construction of their identity, and also their cultural and literary production. The case of Kattan illustrates this process: he arrived in Canada as an immigrant in 1951 but his first literary appearance was in the 1970s meaning that his first work coincided with the introduction of the Policy of Canadian Multiculturalism which allows him to transmit the real picture of his ethnic identity to the majority in Canada.

Each writer of these three texts, *Under the Ribs of Death*, *Farewell Babylon*, and *Running in the Family* creates a space inside the text itself to express the different sides of identity. All of them use this space of expression to concentrate on the meaning of the 'Self' and belonging through the notion of 'absent home' that they evoke in their imagination. However, each one of them is different in the way of evoking and dealing with this idea. They used various strategies to draw attention to the experience of immigration in Canada and the isolation in which ethnic minorities were exposed to it. The specificity of each text leads to a comparative reading which forces the reader to focus on each angle in the text which considers a feature of ethnic writings. Each chapter of this study works on analyzing these angles and dismantling unstable presumptions. The common denominator which I found in these three texts was that all three writers were exposed to the experience of displacement but each one of them used his particular tools to resist classification and distinction. For instance, Marlyn's text shows that the protagonist tries to escape from isolation and classification due to his ethnicity; therefore, he decides to change his identity and moves to the majority part of Canada. On the contrary, Kattan exploits the space which he gets from the Policy of Multiculturalism in Canada to explore the belonging of Jews to Iraq to redefine his ethnic identity in the diaspora. It is the same with Ondaatje's case who exploits the opportunity of 'doubleness' to travel back to the country of

origin to explore cultural identity and belonging to the Sri Lankan community, thus redefine the ethnic identity of his community.

All three writers depend on the process of displacement in their texts to explore the 'Self' and 'ethnicity' which associate them either with the place of origin or their present life. In each one of these three texts, writers admit that there are powers that influenced the definition of the 'Self' – either in Canada or in the place of origin. Therefore, they depend on the strategy of delay and elongation in order to balance the 'doubleness' of belonging and also eliminate the tension resulting from the exploration of the 'Self.' Consequently, it is manifest that they exist in each angle of their text through the process of exploration, ordering, construction, and show. The strategy which they use in *Under the Ribs of Death*, *Farewell Babylon*, and *Running in the Family* works to show the rupture that occurs between the identity and place due to isolation, displacement, and alienation. Thus, the relationship that resulted between the identity and the place, either Canada or the place of origin, might be rather unstable.

These three writers never ignored their past unprocessed; therefore, the material reality considers the basis for the construction of their texts. The writers in these three texts depended on their memory and self-consciousness to discuss the subject of ethnic identity. Therefore, they needed to remember their past to connect it with the present, also needed to explore self-identity to treat it based on the condition of ethnicity either in Canada or in their home country. Marlyn in *Under the Ribs of Death* focuses on the ethnic case in Canada with a little reference to Hungary, thus, he attempts to make a connection between two parts of Winnipeg; North End and South End which represent the majority and minority. The case of Kattan and Ondaatje in *Farewell Babylon* and *Running in the Family* is different, they worked on the process of 'cultural recovery' which does not only mean to connect 'there' with 'here,' or 'past' with 'present' but also to negotiate how to bring 'there' to operate 'here' through rewriting the past to redefine their ethnicity and present their cultural identity to simulate Canadian society and ethnic majority. The results of their process are ethnic recovery, negotiation of the 'past' in the 'present,' and representation of the self-identity. Thus, the process is not only to discover the past but also to use it for the future to redefine their ethnicity for the next generations. However, each text of these three depends on personal memory and sometimes stories that are told by relatives and friends like in the text of Ondaatje more than depending on historical events. Marlyn's text shows also how the protagonist suffered from the pressure of stereotype of racism and discrimination which was directed by the dominant majority. So there is a turning point from complete isolation at the beginning of the twentieth century to the expression of ideas and the display of belonging to ethnic identity. However, all three writers concentrate carefully on the minute

details in drawing the map of their ethnicity to send a sign to their readers that this process does not finish yet and their stories are continuing for the next generations.

In this study, I focused on ethnic minority writers who represent a little part of this area of Canadian literature so my hope will be able to continue studies that deal with their issues in the recent future. My hope is also that Iraqi and Hungarian ethnic writers in Canada continue writing about their ethnicity in order to connect the past with the present, and also compare their cultural heritage with the new culture in Canada to keep ethnicity vibrant in the future. As all of the ethnic minority writers played and still play an important role in keeping on sustaining the dynamicity of their texts in Canadian literature, I hope also that the policy of Canadian Multiculturalism is in a wider form to help a fast integration in addition to hybridity between ethnic minorities and the majority to create stronger ties and also decrease conflicts in the future because Canada represents the real model of cultural diversity where several ethnic minorities get the rights that they do not get in their original country. Thus, my hope also through this study is that other countries in the world look for the Canadian experience to analyze how Canada treats the rights of minorities through the Policy of Multiculturalism which they set. In the present time, the task is how to contain others instead of fighting them, thus the main goal is to create a cross-cultural dialogue in order to leave differences behind.

Publications Pertaining to the Topic of the Dissertation

2020. "Exiles and Plurality of Cultures in Edward Said's Perspective." *European Academic Research* 8 (9): 5586–99. <http://www.euacademic.org/UploadArticle/4698.pdf>
2020. "The Influence of Transculturalism on Writers in Exile: The Cross-Cultural Writings of Naim Kattan." In *Literature in a Globalized Context*, edited by Hofferer Carmen, González Menéndez; Daniel, Santana Jügler; Daniel, 8:45–53. Wittenberg: Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt. <http://dx.doi.org/10.25673/33750>
2020. "The Temporary Return to the Homeland in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*." *Journal of Language and Cultural Education* 8 (3): 162–74. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jolace-2020-0027>.
2019. "The Cultures of Orient and Occident Must Be Together in the Character, Imagination, and Ideas of the Writer: A Conversation with Naim Kattan." Edited by Laura Moss. Translated by Ahmed Joudar. *Canadian Literature: A Quarterly of Criticism and Review* 60th Anniv (239): 178–83. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/29a31cf15313706b7923d6fe1a4bf746/1?cbl=47638&pq-origsite=gscholar>

Other Academic Publications

2018. "The Influence of New Reproductive Technologies on the Work of Art." *European Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, no. 4: 44–50.
2017. "Review: Nicole Markotić (Ed.), 2017. Robert Kroetsch: Essays on His Works." *Polish Journal of English Studies* 3 (1): 87–91.
2016. "Leavis' Critical Engagement with Samuel Johnson." *European Academic Research* 4 (2): 2066–78.

List of Conference Presentations and Interview

- "*Naim Kattan from Victim to Victor.*" 44th Annual Conference of the British Association for Canadian Studies (BACS), Senate House, University of London, London, UK. 11–13 April 2019.
- "*The Experience of Immigrants in Canada between Home and Homeland.*" International Conference on Canadian Generation in Culture and the Arts: Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches, Károli Gáspár Reformed University and Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary. 29–30 November 2018.
- "*The Influence of Transculturalism on Writers in Exile: The Cross-Cultural Writings of Naim Kattan.*" 11th International PhD Students' Conference on Literature in a "Globalized Context," Martin-Luther University, Halle-Wittenberg, Germany. 16–18 March 2018.
- "*The Temporary Return to the Homeland in Michael Ondaatje's Running in the Family.*" International Conference on Migrating World: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Migration and Integration, Birkbeck, University of London, London, UK. 10–11 February 2018.
- "*The Cultural Differences between Immigrants and the Majority.*" 19th World Conference for Youth and Students, Moscow, Russia. 7–14 October 2017.
- "*Exiles and Plurality of Cultures in Edward Said's Perspective.*" International Conference on Migrating World: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Migration and Integration, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland. 7–8 July 2017.
- Interview with *Naim Kattan*. Paris, France. 3rd May 2018.

Research Visits

- Canadian Library at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. 29 Oct–26 Nov 2018.
- Canadian Studies Centre, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. 18–25 October 2019.