

Cultural Globalization in Anne Tyler's *Digging to America*

Iman Raslan*
Helwan University

Abstract: *At the turn of the twenty-first century, globalization becomes one of the most contested topics in literature. It not only brings about independence and integration of economic process but also makes a tremendous impact on the literary and cultural fields around the world. It helps in spreading the Western culture and beliefs. Moreover, it is specially linked to the rise of the American influence and Western hegemony. Emanating from Europe and the West, it is a theory of 'Westernization' replicating all the problems associated with 'Eurocentrism'. The aim of this research paper is to explore the concept of cultural globalization in Anne Tyler's *Digging to America* (2006). This paper stresses that if there is ever to be a global society, its basis is likely to be on Western socio-political culture which can lead to a backlash of non-Western cultures. This paper provides an overview of globalization and then gives a cogent anti-imperialist analysis of the phenomenon. Within the frame of globalization, it pursues a close reading of the novel which deals with two families meeting at the airport for the first time. Each of them anticipates the arrival of an adopted infant daughter from Korea. Over the years, the American family, The Donaldsons, and the Iranian-American, The Yazdans, become more entwined. As a result, cultures clash, values are challenged and the American way is seen from different perspectives. The novel also examines family ties, cultural identity, hybridity and the universal struggle towards the American Dream.*

At the turn of the twenty-first century, globalization becomes one of the most contested topics in literature. It is viewed as having the potential to create greater opportunities for growth globally and therefore benefiting the developing world. On the other hand, globalization is viewed as contributing to the "rising gaps of inequality between nations and within all nations of the global economy, increased environmental degradation, especially in the developing world, the loss of sovereignty, cultural imperialism, and the rise in extreme nationalism" (Ramsaran and Price 2003:1). It not only brought about independence and integration of economic process but also makes a tremendous impact on the literary and cultural fields around the world. It has raised severe challenges against the intellectual life. Moreover, it influences people's mode of thinking and penetrates the cultural life in varying degrees.

By its very nature, the idea of globalization seems to defy easy definitions. It is an umbrella term that provides explanation for phenomena as diverse as global tourism, climate change, Jihadi, terrorism, the power of transnational brands, mass migrations, the spread of the English language and the growth of global media. It offers both a theory of everything and an explanation of nothing (Annesley 2006:4). Manfred B. Steger thinks that the term globalization applies to a set of social processes that appear to transform our present social condition of weakening nationality into one of globality. At its core, then globalization is about shifting forms of human contact (2009, 9). Furthermore, Giddens refers to globalization as

The intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. This is a dialectical process because most local happenings may move in an observe direction from the very distanciated relations that shape them (1990: 64).

Globalization, or global integration, is considered a speeding up of interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life. It helps in the breaking down of artificial barriers between countries and people of the world. It refers to the interpenetration and interdependency taking place among the divergent peoples of the world due to the technological advances in the areas of communication and transportation (Owolabi 2001: 73). This results in reducing the barriers of space, time and national boundaries. No doubt that the introduction and development of the Internet have facilitated the freedom of human beings to interact and communicate without any restrictions. J.A. Scholte provides five meanings for globalization: internationalization, liberalization, universalization, westernization and deterritorialization (2000: 15-16).

In tracing the origin of globalization, we see that it has passed through a number of different phases. These may be classified as the premodern (the period prior to 1500), modern (1750-1970) and contemporary (1970 onwards) phases of globalization. In the first phase, globalization was severely limited because of the existing geographical and social obstacles. This phase is marked by the early human migration, the emergence of world religions, the early imperial systems and the development of transregional trade networks.

As for the modern phase, globalization moved to a new level of social relations and cultural exchange. This period is identified by European imperialism, the emerging of international economy, the spread of modernity, the rise of the nation-state and industrialization. Moreover, the discovery of America prepared the way for mighty industry and its creation of a truly global market. The growth of industry, trade and navigation were related to the rise of the bourgeoisie and capital with the desire to expand markets everywhere. The

bourgeoisie utilizes the "incessantly easing modes of communication to pull all nations into civilization-even the most barbarian ones" (qtd. in Steger 2009:32). In short, the European bourgeoisie creates the world in its own image.

The contemporary phase is marked not only by the greater intensity and extensity of cultural flows, in the form of the movement of peoples, ideas, goods, symbols and images, but also by the greater velocity with which they travel from place to place, and is in turn serving to deepen forms of global cultural interconnectedness (Hopper 2007:29). Major advances in communications and information technologies, notably in the areas of telephony, computing and digitization, ensure global interaction. This leads to cultural interaction and consumption, in comparison with earlier eras, through a combination of satellites, fibre-optic cabling, the greater access worldwide to television and radio, and the spread of the Internet. Hence Jan Nederveen Pieterse believes that globalization should be viewed as a long term historical process. He conceives globalization as human integration and hybridization (2004). Civilizations are not discrete entities; rather they are forged from the intermeshing of a range of influences over long periods of time (see Hopper 2007: 31).

Globalization is not a single process but a set of processes that operate simultaneously and unevenly on several levels and in various dimensions. According to Steger, globalization refers to the expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space (15). He states that there are four different patterns of globalization namely economic, political, ecological and cultural (37).

Economic globalization refers to the intensification and stretching of economic interrelations across the globe. Technology has stimulated trade in goods and services. Markets have extended their reach around the world creating new linkages among national economies. Huge transnational corporations and powerful international economic institutions become the cornerstones of the twenty-first century's global economic order.

Political globalization refers to the intensification and expansion of political interrelations across the globe. This helps in the growing impact of intergovernmental organizations and the future prospects for regional and global governance. Humans have organized their political differences along territorial lines that generate a sense of 'belonging' to a particular nation-state.

The ecological impacts of globalization are increasingly recognized as the most significant life-threatening danger for the world. Global environmental issues have received enormous attention in recent years. People everywhere on this planet are linked to each other through air, climate, food and water. The planet's ecosystems are subjected to

continuous human assault to maintain wasteful lifestyles. The major problem that threatens the ecosystem of the earth is the uncontrolled population growth and lavish consumption patterns in the global North. This leads to the current food crisis plaguing vast regions of the planet. The second problem that faces people nowadays is the transboundary pollution that threatens people's survival. The consequences of this problem are clear in the phenomena of global warming and climate change. These catastrophes will lead to partial meltdowns of the polar ice caps, causing global sea levels to rise by up to 90 centimeters by 2100 (Steger 2009:89). Indeed these issues are not merely environmental or scientific. They are economic, political and cultural that is intensified by globalization processes.

The fourth pattern of globalization is the cultural one. It refers to the intensification and expansion of cultural flows across the globe. Culture lies at the heart of globalization. This is because people are constantly applying their particular cultural frameworks during the course of everyday interaction with the global (Robertson 1992:170). Globalization underplays the significance of the cultural realm which includes the impact of race, ethnicity, nationalism and gender. Culture is used to describe the whole of the human experience. Thus, globalization can be defined more appropriately as a process of cultural interpenetration in which "culture" designates, not a narrow artistic sensibility, but rather the totality of ideas that sustains a group (Owolabi 2001: 73).

Since the beginning of the 1990s the West, especially America, has encouraged the interpenetration of ideas, in the form of exchanging ethos and values along former cultural and ideological divides. This homogenization of ideas, images and institutions, makes the global community appear so united as to warrant the metaphor of a global village (see Owolabi, 71). Therefore, globalization may be considered as a new way of sustaining Western domination of global society.

In this respect, globalization becomes the future monster of modern times. Maryse Conde calls this homogenization, the rubbing out of cultural specificity, life in one universe, one dimension (1998:29). Globalization may bring indigenous cultures to their death and cause national individualism to disappear. This is because globalization is essentially aimed at the promotion of the imperialistic interests of Western societies. It is considered as an imperialistic project in a new form. Globalization is purely and simply another form of the coercive socialization of non-Western societies into the Western cultural system for the sake of hegemony of the latter (Hurrell and Wood 1995:451). The impact of globalization in the cultural sphere has been associated with the destruction of cultural identities, victims of the accelerating encroachment of a homogenized, Westernized, consumer culture (Shepard and Hayduk 2002). Within this context, globalization is

perceived as an extension of Western cultural imperialism. Van-Lau maintains that global culture, being wholly Western, will be dominated by Western society. He says: "...global civilization is Western because science, technology, global trade and democracy it advances, is originally Western and it is promulgated most by Western nations" (1987:3). Similarly, Edward Said maintains that the motive behind globalization, like any other cultural effort initiated by the West, is ulterior: imperialism. He adds by saying:

One of imperialism's achievements was to bring the world close together and although in the process the separation between Europeans and natives was an insidious and fundamentally unjust one. (1994: xxi-xxii).

The aim of this research paper is to explore the aspects of cultural globalization and their consequences on the cultural identity in Anne Tyler's *Digging to America* (2006). There are various aspects of cultural globalization namely multiculturalism, cultural alienation (isolation), the clash of cultures and Westernization. These aspects are deduced from the study of globalization as a recent phenomenon in the modern age. This paper argues that Anne Tyler is an apologist for a process of globalization which is, in essence, Americanization and homogenization.

Anne Tyler, the Pulitzer Prize winner, is a contemporary American novelist who usually focuses on family relationships, alienation or loneliness, the failure of communication between individuals and the search for meaning in life (Willrich 2011:6). Her seventeenth novel, *Digging to America* (2006) examines family ties, cultural identity and the promises and perils of the American Dream. It examines the American society in the globalized world nowadays. It is set at the turn of the millennium. It focuses on the issue of the transnational adoption of Asian children by the Anglo-American Donaldsons and the Persian-American Yazdans which is greatly linked with the American Dream and multiculturalism. These two families are drawn together by their adopted Korean daughters despite the friction created by their different personalities and ethnicities. Tyler had first-hand contact with the Iranian culture through her marriage to Tagi Mohammad Modarressi, an Iranian psychiatrist. The fact that she is an American who is not exposed to the experience of exile makes her penetration into the lives of immigrants very unique.

The title of the novel refers to how each one of the characters perceives his identity in America. For instance, Bitsy Donaldson tries to individualize herself from others and raises her adopted daughters to be different by preserving their Korean and Chinese heritage. Ziba Yazdan, on the other hand, chooses to fit in the American culture with her

family. Six-year-old Jin-Ho envisions a world where people of different cultures can simply understand each other.

The aspects of globalization are clearly manifested in Tyler's novel. Multiculturalism is one of the most distinguished aspects that the novel deals with. It is often described as "salad bowl" or "cultural mosaic". It focuses on the interaction and communication between different cultures to create a globalized society.

Set in a multicultural society, Tyler's novel explores what is called a Transnational American Dream. This refers to the minorities' aspirations to succeed in the American society. Part of this success is the construction of a heterosexual nuclear family with children. David L. Eng maintains that "the possession of a child, whether biological or adopted, has today become the sign of guarantee not only for family but also for full and robust citizenship" (2003:7-8). Pirjo Ahokas asserts that transnational adoption of Asian babies has been seen as a means for childless American couples seeking to re-inhabit the conventional post-war structures of family and kinship. Until 1991, children from South Korea constituted the largest number of adoptees that had entered the United States, while adoption from other Asian countries, like China, have since increased (2010:2). Significantly, the two families in the novel meet for the first time at the local airport where they are awaiting the arrival of their adopted baby girls from South Korea. The whole family of the Donaldson is occupying the flight arrivals area to come upon what looked like "a gigantic baby shower" as if they were witnessing an actual birth.

The entire waiting area for the flight from San Francisco was packed with people bearing pink- and blue-wrapped gifts, or hanging on to flotillas of silvery balloons printed with IT'S A GIRL! And trailing spirals of pink ribbon.... At least half a dozen people held video cameras, and many more had regular cameras slung around their necks (*Digging to America*, 1-2).

According to Pirjo Ahokas, transnational adoption has not only proliferated alongside global consumer markets, but also represents a material and affective enterprise that exceeds the privatized boundaries of the nuclear family. Postethnic and postracial thinking celebrate the "happy mixedness" that runs across ethno-racial lines (2). Significantly, the transnationalism of *Digging to America* is exemplified in the adoption of Korean children by second generation American and American-Iranian families, which turns out to be a mixed experience. Gulerai and Neelakantan assert that adoption provides the Korean children with a genial family environment in America. Adopted by couples without children, the fate of the children transforms dramatically from being homeless to becoming scions of their foster parents and grandparents (Transnationalism 2009:2). These adopted

girls now have the chance to basic education, ballet dancing and art camp in their new environment.

Being an American in a multicultural society, Bitsy Donaldson, Jin-Ho's adoptive mother, likes to support the "salad bowl" variety of color-blind multiculturalism. She does not want to Americanize her daughter, but hopes to keep the style the Korean girl came with. Jin-Ho always wears

... that squared-off hairstyle she had arrived with, seemingly all of a piece, and although she too was in corduroys, her top was a multicolored, quilted affair with striped sleeves and a black silk sash (*Digging to America*, 25).

Actually Bitsy is trying to retain the ethnic heritage of her adopted daughter. She keeps the Korean name of the girl for good. She calls her "Jin-Ho Dickinson-Donaldson" (*Digging to America*, 24). Moreover, Bitsy encourages the idea of celebrating the Korean girls' arrival to the United States by organizing a special Arrival party every year to watch the tape of their arrival day to America. She dresses Jin-Ho "in full Korean costume—a brilliant kimono—like affair and a pointed hat with a chin strap and little embroidered cloth shoes" (*Digging to America*, 37). The celebration becomes a mix of American, Korean and Iranian culture with different food and people present.

The repetition of the Arrival party ensures and celebrates the "Asianness" of the girls for Bitsy also serves Korean desserts along with the American Arrival cake. This ritual "seems to be in accordance with the "postethnic perspective" which favors voluntary over involuntary affiliations in order to incorporate people with different ethnic and racial backgrounds" (qtd.in Ahokas,3). Bitsy's enhancement of multiculturalism makes her the spokesperson of Anne Tyler who calls for multi-ethnicity in the American society. This makes the society superior for embracing the different cultures. The American people encourage the cultural development of people from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds until they can take their place in the world by fully adopting Western ways.

As the first focus of multiculturalism is centered on culture interaction and communication, the second focus is on diversity and cultural uniqueness. Cultural isolation is a way to protect the uniqueness of the local culture of a nation. It also contributes to global cultural diversity. Maryam Yazdan is the Iranian grandmother of the adopted Korean girl, Suzan. Maryam always struggles with the feeling that she does not belong to America although she has been there for many years. She came to America when she was a teenager and is now an American citizen but she is reluctant to call herself American. She tells Dave, Jin-Ho's grandparent: "I was so sad to become American.... It was hard for me to give up being a citizen of Iran. In fact I kept postponing it. I didn't

get my final papers till some time after the Revolution” (*Digging to America*, 196).

Maryam suffers from negativity, isolation, and difficulties in her life. Although she has lived in the United States since before the fall of the Shah, Maryam is affected by three different cultures: Iranian culture, American culture and the culture of limbo, which is between, but not in, the Iranian-American culture. This situation isolates her from intimate relationships with new people. She always has this feeling of being an outsider, a foreigner. She tells Dave when they fall in love: “I am far too sensitive about my foreignness....One could even call it self-pity....A trait that I despise” (*Digging to America*, 211). She adds by saying:

You can start to believe that your life is defined by your foreignness. You think everything would be different if only you belonged. ‘If only I were back home,’ you say, and you forget that you wouldn’t belong there either, after all these years. It wouldn’t be home at all anymore” (*Digging to America*, 211).

This feeling of social isolation and alienation is a result of her adolescent memories. In Iran before her marriage, Maryam was a political activist against the Shah system. So her family wanted her to marry and travel abroad. She lacks the atmosphere of warmth that gives the feeling of inner security. She also lacks the good will of others who guide and encourage her to become a mature and fulfilled individual. She always feels alienated and isolated from other people even after her marriage. Both Guleraï and Neelakantan believe that Maryam’s immigration to America helped her to leave behind a rigid theocratic society and relocate to a predominately secular culture that values individual freedom (Transnationalism 2009:1). Being young, well-educated and ‘rendered a misfit in Iran’, she seeks an escape in her marriage to Kiyân, an Iranian pathologist, who has a good-paying job in America.

After Maryam’s marriage, she adopts the Western attire and acquires a driving license which acts as her passport to mobility and freedom. Her husband, Kiyân, was very obsessed by his work to the extent that this ‘incapacitates’ him from social life in America. After his death and after her son’s marriage, she gets a chance to be totally free from restrictions and to live her own life. However, she is depressed because she has chosen an isolated and empty life. Maryam is completely detached from her Iranian culture because her relatives are living away in other states. She is the victim of globalization and the difficult circumstances that make Arab Americans feel as outsiders in America, especially after September eleventh.

After the adoption of her granddaughter, Suzan, Maryam becomes involved in her son’s life. She helps her son and daughter-in-law with the new baby. She picks her up from play dates and activities,

as well as providing childcare while her son and her daughter-in-law work outside of their home. Maryam's role as a grandmother takes her outside her normal realm of work. She deals with isolation by taking care of Suzan and by falling in love with Dave, Jin-Ho's widowed grandfather. Although no one disapproves of their relationship, Maryam remains an 'eternal outsider'. Guleraï and Neelakantan think "Maryam's migration to America betrays her preference for being an outsider rather than live a life of unfreedom in Iran" (Transnationalism 2009:1). She chooses alienation and privacy in America instead of unfreedom in her own country.

Dreams are used as a technique to reflect Maryam's longing for security in her life. They are moments of revelation. They can be calls for the awakening of the self. They are considered outlet expression of reality. They reveal buried worries in her memory as a result of isolation and alienation. In *Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche* C.G.Jung asserts:

Dreams have a psychic structure which is unlike that of other contents of consciousness because, so far as we can judge from their form and meaning, they do not show the continuity of development typical of conscious contents. They do not appear, as a rule, to be integral components of our conscious psychic life, but seem rather to be extraneous, apparently accidental occurrences. The reason for this exceptional position of dreams lies in their peculiar mode of origin: they do not arise, like other conscious contents, from any clearly discernible, logical and emotional continuity of experience, but are remnants of a peculiar psychic activity taking place during sleep (1960: 237).

When Maryam visits her cousin, Farah, in Vermont, she dreams of her dead mother:

She saw her mother as she had looked when [she] was just a child—pure black hair and unlined skin, the beauty mark on her upper lip accentuated with an eyebrow pencil. She was telling Maryam the story about the nomad tribe she used to spy on as a girl. They had moved into the compound across the street, arriving mysteriously late one night. The women wore gold up to here (and she gestured toward one elbow). The men rode shining horses. One morning she awoke and all of them had vanished. In the dream, as in real life, she told this story in a slow, caressing voice, with a wistful look on her face, and Maryam herself awoke wondering for the first time if her mother might have longed to vanish also (*Digging to America*, 170).

After this dream Maryam realizes that she still "mourned her mother's death" (170). The thought of her mother makes her feel melancholic. She always feels isolated and detached from the society around her. For Maryam, alienation could be a self-assertive, self-creative experience liberating her will and endowing her with the right

to reevaluate social and moral norms. It is her means of survival in a hostile globalized world. In the American society nowadays, alienation is the predicament of the minorities. Maryam's alienation is increased by globalization. Maryam feels as an outsider because she can't fully assimilate in the American culture. Alienation becomes a reaction against multiculturalism. Being an Iranian-American, she faces problems of assimilation for being an outsider. She is always overwhelmed by the feelings of non-belonging and maladjustment in a rapidly changing world. She has distanced herself from the fast-paced American lifestyle. She does not have an answering machine or a cell phone. Maryam is half-assimilated but lacks the social interaction with the people around her.

Another aspect of cultural globalization that is closely related to cultural alienation is the clash of cultures. Samuel Huntington claims that there will be a cultural clash of civilizations marking the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world (1996: 22). In *Digging to America*, the society is in a period of rapid change where values and ways of living clash. From the beginning of the novel the difference is clear in the two cultures. Being Iranians, the Yazdans keep more events of their family life private than the American Donaldsons do. At the airport, for instance, the Yazdans have a very small group of people to receive the adopted girl, while the Donaldsons invite all of their family members to make it as a 'gigantic baby shower'. Moreover, Bitsy Donaldson arranges a party to celebrate toilet training for her daughter Jin-Ho and another party for Xiu-Mei, second adopted daughter, to get rid of pacifiers. The third incident that clarifies the clash of cultures is when Dave Dickinson proposes to Maryam Yazdan in front of their families in the leaf-raking party. Maryam is got horrified by the public proposal while Dave is very happy. Maryam's relationship with Dave reveals this clash. She is very conservative in this relationship:

All evening [Dave] stuck to Maryam like a shadow, although he never actually touched her. Maryam, for her part, seemed merely his acquaintance. She didn't set a hand on his when she spoke to him; she didn't take his arm as they moved toward Sami and Ziba to say hello (*Digging to America* 214).

Maryam and Dave are deeply falling in love and closely related until the leaf-raking party of the Donaldsons. During this party, Dave proposes to marry Maryam in public although they never discussed the issue. He asks her: "Will you marry me?...This is a formal proposal,...Will you be my wife?" (*Digging to America* 243). But instead of answering, she looked at Suzan and Jin-Ho whose hands are full of sugar cubes to be thrown over her head. In Iran the throwing of sugar is known in wedding ceremonies. The sugar should have been

cone-shaped and of six or eight inches tall. The people who grind it must be grown women known for their happy marriages. They must work over a veil so that the crystals would not be speckling the bride's hair like a very bad case of dandruff. This sugar ceremony only happens at weddings not at proposals.

Maryam is shocked and embarrassed by what Dave does. She is obliged to agree to his proposal because he did it in public. In the Iranian culture, proposing marriage is usually secretive until the bride accepts the proposal. In Western communities, on the other hand, the proposal for marriage can be done publically. However, she breaks up with him for she feels that "he had decided to redesign the whole tradition. Switch it around and embellish it. Americanize it" (*Digging to America* 243). In *Reconstructing America* James Caesar states that the word "globalization" seems to be synonymous with "Americanization" or "Americanism" (1998: 15). Maryam tells her son, Sami, that Dave

...takes up so much space. He seems to be unable to let a room stay as it is; always he has to alter it, to turn on the fan or raise the thermostat or play a record or open the curtains. He has cluttered my life with cell phones and answering machines and a fancy-shmancy teapot that makes my tea taste like metal (*Digging to America* 247).

Moreover, Maryam thinks that Americans are all larger than life. If any person keeps company with them, he will be larger too, but then "they will make him shrink; they're expanding and edging you out. I could feel myself slipping away" (*Digging to America* 247). She believes that Dave is stealing her Iranian culture and traditions. She has lost herself more with him. She says: "he is making me feel I don't have my own separate self. What was that sugar ceremony but stealing? Because he borrowed it and then he changed it, switched it about to suit his purposes" (*Digging to America* 248).

Maryam becomes more alienated from the Western civilization as she tries to move away from other people especially Dave. Her feeling of being an outsider obsesses her again. She realizes that "She had never felt at home in her own country or anywhere else" (*Digging to America* 314). She begins to put emotional distance between herself and others and to give the attitude that she does not need anybody even her son and his family. She suffers from cultural disintegration and a confusion of identity. Maryam seems to lack self-trust and self-confidence. In *Identity and the Life Cycle*, the psychoanalyst Erik Erickson states:

The first component of a healthy personality I nominate is a sense of basic trust, which I think is an attitude toward oneself and the world...By 'trust' I mean what is commonly implied in reasonable trustfulness as far as others are concerned (1959:57).

Maryam's refusal to this proposal is due to the fact that she is a Muslim Iranian while Dave is a Christian American. However, she could not state that reason for fear of being attacked by the Donaldsons especially after September eleventh. Maryam lacks the cultural identity of the Muslim Iranians. She is not a religious person. She always drinks wine and never prays. In the framework of globalization, being an Oriental Muslim equals being an inferior. Islam is the marker of the identity of the "Other's culture" and thus of simply the "Other" (Burgat, "Veils", 31-32). Haddad also confirms that "Subjected by the West, Islam as a faith and a cultural system is signaled as basically inferior to that of the West" (*Muslim Women 2006: 22*). Johan Meuleman in *Islam in the Era of Globalization* thinks that secularization is one of the main products generated by Western modernity (2002:4). It is engraved in the current moulds of globalization. Secularization is usually perceived as anti-religious.

In *Digging to America*, Maryam and Ziba never mention that they are Muslims to Bitsy Donaldson for fear of being inferiorized. From their physical appearance, both Maryam and Ziba are Westernized. Their appearance does not reflect the image of the Muslim women who wear veils or 'hijab' which is perceived by the West as an incarnation of "the mystery of Islamic culture and its backwardness" (Majid 2000:111). 'Hijab' is considered a "symbol of cultural difference (and thus inferiority), a threat to secularity" (Haddad 2006:39). Hence this entails considering it "an icon of the clash of civilizations" (39). By regarding globalization as Westernization, Islam is often considered as an "anti-modernist" movement that seeks to assert local identity and tradition against the Western civilization.

Globalization is usually perceived as a manifestation of an extended Western hegemony. Emanating from Europe and the West, it is a theory of "Westernization" replicating all the problems associated with "Eurocentricism" (Pieterse 2004:46-47). As the world is becoming a smaller place, local cultures and traditions are struggling to survive and cultural difference is being eroded. Thus cultural homogenization is considered to be the primary concern of ordinary citizens. Paul Hopper claims that cultures and societies are confronted with powerful homogenizing pressures to the extent that it is possible to talk of the existence of a global culture, often viewed as a form of cultural imperialism (2007:88). Similarly George Ritzer perceives global culture as "Americanization, MacDonaldization and Westernization" (1993:19). As the global culture is dominated by Western values and ideologies, this helps in eclipsing human creativity and dehumanizing social relations (Steger 2003:73).

Westernization is the last aspect of cultural globalization. It is a process whereby societies try to adopt Western culture in lifestyle, language, religion and values. It is considered as a part of the ongoing

process of globalization. Westernization can be also related to the process of acculturation which refers to the changes that occur within a society or culture when two different groups come into direct contact together (Kottak 2005:209). Globalization is initiated by intercultural contact that leads to cultural and individual change. In this sense, globalization refers to the transnational circulation of ideas or popular culture through acculturation.

Accordingly, acculturation can be conceived to be the process of cultural learning imposed upon minorities. Thus there will be no cultural conflict because the minority's culture is displaced by the dominant group's culture in a process of assimilation. In *Digging to America* this feature is obvious in Ziba's family which has been assimilated into the dominant American culture. Ziba and her family are Iranian-Americans who are totally Westernized. Ziba's clothes were "chosen carefully for their Westernness, stylish sheaths in electric prints of hot pink and lime green and purple; her hair lacquered into a towering beehive; her feet encased in needle-toed, stiletto-heeled pumps" (19). Ziba had enthusiastically adapted to fit into the American society. She listens nonstop to 98 Rock, hangs out at the mall, and drapes her small, bony, un-American frame in blue jeans and baggy T-shirts with writing printed across them. Hence "she seemed native-born" (*Digging to America* 13).

When Ziba and Sami Yazdan adopt a Korean girl, they change her name from Sooki to Susan. Ziba dresses her in blue jeans and "a red-and-white-striped long-sleeved T-shirt that could just as well have been a boy's, and little red socks with nonskid soles" (15). Ziba always speaks English to Suzan. She does not want to confuse her. Moreover, she tries to get the child's hair out of her eyes in order to Americanize her. She does not preserve the cultural identity of the girl. With her family, Ziba always asks her mother to speak in English not in Farsi. Ziba and Sami are totally Americanized for Sami is a second-generation immigrant who belongs to the white society. He does not have an accent and refuses to speak Farsi although he could understand it. For this couple, life is not regimented. Their union exemplifies a departure from the world of their first generation parents in many ways. Unlike his mother, Maryam, he shares a happy married life free from gender stereotyping. Since both of them are employed, Sami happily assists Ziba in household responsibilities including child care. Hence Ziba feels "a flood of appreciation" for all his different ways from others.

To conclude, Anne Tyler succeeds in portraying the resiliency of the hyphenated identities in America. In this novel she perceives America as a "salad bowl" instead of a "melting pot" that resonates with the social realities of a transnational globalized world. Both the Yazdans and the Donaldsons eventually overcome their bitterness that arises out of their cultural differences and try to accept each other in a multicultural society. Being an American writer, she calls for

globalization that erodes the barriers between the different races. Tyler handles the issue of cultural identity skillfully according to each one in the novel. Maryam's feeling of being an outsider is a natural consequence of her loneliness and cultural alienation. However, at the end she tries to join the two families in their celebration instead of locking herself alone in her home. Tyler gives a clear image of a multicultural society in a globalized world nowadays.

*Iman Raslan, Assistant Professor
Department of English Language and Literature
Helwan University, Ain Helwan, Cairo
Egypt
E-mail: im_raslan@yahoo.com

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