Culture and Identity in Diana Abu-Jabber’s *The language of baklava*(2005)

A ‘Dissertation’ Submitted to the Faculty of Letters and Languages, Department of English

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master in Anglo-American Studies

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2013-2014
Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My caring father and my dearest mother.

My sister, Ahlem, thank you for always seeing the best one.

My brothers: Achraf, Ali Aymen and specially Abd Rahim.
I would like to thank Miss. Haddad, my supervisor, for her support, guidance, and feedback.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the time and the efforts she did to achieve this work.

I am also grateful to the board of examiners for their reading and precious advices.
Abstract

This study discusses the two main concepts: culture and identity in Diana Abu Jabber's *the language of Baklava*. It examines Diana Abu – Jabber’s representation of culture and identity in the American Society. This work, too, analyses the use of a recurrent theme in the book which is food. It presents a rich depiction of food in Diana’s family and how it creates a kind of unity within it. Food, here, can be described as a symbol of unity and roots. Though Diana's family is unified and sticks to its origin, it has faced a lot of problems related to culture. Diana is persistently torn between her Jordanian and American identities. Finally, she accepts and adopts the American identity.

**Key words:** Culture, Identity, Food.
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General Introduction

In the last century, the literature of minorities emerged as an important body in America literature. The minorities, like Arabs underwent experiences that have affected their identity and culture. More clearly, their sons and daughter have faced a kind of tearing up between the culture of their ancestors and the one of the modern American society. Diana Abu Jabber depicts this conflict through the description of food. The Language of Baklava is a memoir that talks about the Jordan food which represents part of the Arabs culture and the American food which refers to the American culture. So, this work is about identity and culture in Diana Abu Jabber’s The Language of Baklava.

This research aims at investigating culture and identity in The Language of Baklava. This book examines a family from the Jordanian immigrants. It also analyses the main issues that faced the Arab American society. Indeed, the significant purpose is to make comments on culture and identity. The second purpose is to know how the Arabs delicate the balance between their cultural traditions and the different way of life they find in the US. The third purpose is to show the conflicts between the Arab culture and the American culture.

This research will address three questions: what challenges does the Arab American face in the US? Are Arab Americans more closely linked to their country of origin, or to America? What role does food play in the language of Baklava?

This work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter will define culture, then, it will discuss the Arab culture versus the American culture to show in the coming chapters how they are depicted in the novel. Since the minorities in the American society are always in search of identity that is lost between their mother culture and the newly found culture. So, the second part of this chapter will be devoted to the question of identity in the
contemporary American society. The second chapter will be about the mixture of Eastern and Western Cultures in *The Language of Baklava*. This marriage of cultures will be depicted through food. So the first part of this chapter will be about food as a part of culture, then; it will deal with biculturalism. Because the novel is a kind of memoir, so, it includes some autobiographical details. The last chapter will be about Diana, the writer, in search for identity.

The work is about the effect of two cultures, Jordanian which is traditional and American which is modern, on Diana Jabber who represents a category of Arab American group in the American society. The writer tells her memoir through food cooked and prepared by her father. So, this research will use a cross-cultural approach in which it will explain how two different cultures influence the identity of immigrants and their children.

In fact, there are important books that will help in this research, for instance, *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication: Identities in a Global Community* by Fred Edmund Jandt. Indeed, this book focuses on general definitions of culture. The main purpose for choosing this book is to show the main definition which is related to this research. On the other hand, there are some dissertations like: *Floating Islands” An Exploration of Cultural Identity and the “Tyranny of the Mean” in Three Food Memoirs* by Jaimie Michelle Hays. This dissertation is related to the topic which explains another opinion about a novel *the language of Baklava*. 
Chapter One: Arab American culture

America is well-known for its cultural richness because different ethnicities that come from the four quarters of the Earth as immigrants to America for several purposes such as freedom, richness, calmness, political stability and particularly to provide their children with opportunities to succeed and develop.

Subsequently, the American society is characterized by different identities which melt into one American Identity; however, this led to the creation of contradiction and paradoxes. This chapter focuses on what culture and identity mean and the explanations of the different views about the concept of Culture and Identity which are vague and complex because there are many definitions of both concepts which are united by most group sof society.

1-Arab Culture vs. American Culture.

Culture is a complicated term; it differs from a society to another and from Anthropologist to another. Firstly, the term was related to the western civilization. (Jandt, 15) Typically, it is the way of life for a society. One of the early definitions of culture is the one suggested by the British anthropologists Sir Edward Taylor’s between 1871, 1870. He is considered the first one to use the term culture: “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (Qtd in Spencer – Qatey, 2) It is a compound of meanings that contains diverse of beliefs and arts. It can be said that the concept of culture has known a historical development.

Later on, during the nineteenth century, both American anthropologists, Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn believe that culture “consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and [...], on the one hand, can be considered as products of action, on the other hand as conditioning elements of further action.” (Qtd in Spencer-Qatey, 2) It can be said that the
concept of culture is based on the traditional thoughts which are related to the values that are transmitted by symbols. However, there are other different definitions of culture.

In 1980, the anthropologist Hofstede describes the word culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another.” (Qt d in Belshek, 2) In other words, it is the mixture of human knowledge, beliefs and behavior that can be learned and passes from one generation to another. In fact, it has been changed throughout history from one generation to another, adding new thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. In addition, Hofstede classifies the elements that underlie culture into four patterns: symbols, rituals, heroes, and values. Symbols explain the verbal and non-verbal language whether the spoken or the body language (gestures). For rituals, it refers to the activities that reflect the traditions of every community. Concerning values, they represent abstract aspects that are related to ethics which members of the society share and use in judging what is good or bad. At last, Heroes are described in culture as Myths. (Defining culture and identities, 6) Furthermore, Hofstede provides another classification of culture based on four dimensions: power distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity and Feminity, and Uncertainty avoidance. In his study, Hofstede used 50 countries from the Arab world to explain these dimensions which represent the national culture of each country. The word culture can take different meanings according to its various aspects. (Birukou et.al, 12-13)

Generally, according to John Bodley, he demarcate diverse definitions of culture by differentiating subjects such as topical, historical, behavioral, normative, functional, mental.

First, Topical Culture contains a list of types and topics such as economy, religion. Second, historical culture is a tradition that is passed from one generation to another.
Third, behaviorist defines the term of culture which shared a way of life. Fourth, Normative Culture is considered as values, rules and ideals. Fifth, functionalists describe culture as the way Humans explain problems of adapting to the environment or living together. Mentalists define Culture as a complex of ideas.

Another definition is suggested by Sapir who tried to define culture in different way as he said “Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression in that society.” (Qtd in Cagle, 4) He explains that language is the central concept which defines the reality of culture through the communication and the interactions with the whole world. “This communication can be divided into three categories such as verbal, nonverbal, and provable which means the tone of voice.” (Qtd in Belshek, 3) For instance, nonverbal communication contains different attitudes, feelings which shown in various gestures. (Belshek, 3) It is impossible to separate between culture and language. Language is a means of communication that played a great role in exchanging the culture from one community to another. Language varieties represent an obvious sign of the differences in culture. For instance, the term language used to define the groups that is changed over times. i.e. American Black known as negro in 1960 but after that the term negro and colored define African American.

In addition, other anthropologists studied more the term of culture and they create a relationship between culture and identity. This relationship known as “Cultural Identity”. According to Collier and Thomas, they describe cultural identity as “Identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has a shared system of symbols and meanings as well as norms for conduct.” (Defining culture and identities, 7) In other words, Cultural identity refers to the identity of a group or culture, or of an individual. It is also noted that one person is influenced by one’s belonging to a group. In the same line of thoughts,
Spencer –Qatey in his Article What is culture? A compilation of quotations. GlobalPAD Core Concepts said that “culture is a ‘fuzzy’ concept, in that group members are [...] can distinguish definitively one cultural group from another.” (3) From what is said above, it can be claimed that the term culture refers to a group of information that has known a historical development. Therefore, according to Richerson and Boyd, they said that culture as “information, and information as mental states. Later on they qualify this mentalist Approach, stating that “culture is (mostly) information in brains” and noting that “undoubtedly, some cultural information is stored in artifacts.” (Qtd in Sperber and Claidier, 3)

In our research, we will be guided by two definitions of culture: the first definition can be described through a group of people within other groups or cultures within other cultures. This description is based on the most two elements. One of the main elements is subculture which define the complex society. (Defining of culture and identities, 8) It can be said that “subculture resembles a culture in that it usually encompasses a relatively large number of people and represents the accumulation of generations of human striving.” (Defining of culture and identities, 8) Another elements, ethnicity is the same meaning of the word Race. It reflects “to a group of people of the same descent and heritage who share a common and distinctive culture passed on through generations.” (Defining of culture and identities, 12) According to this chapter Defining the culture and identities, in 1921, the first term was used as one of the most description of ethnic groups. Generally, the word minority explained the benefits which are associated with the majority while the minority are represented by the weakness. In other words, the word minority is used to describe numerical a small groups. For instance, in the united state, the Arab Americans are considered as one of a group of people might be a minority which are a small groups who they lived with a larger number of people.
Moreover, the second definition is “Culture is like an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg is the smallest part. Most of the iceberg is submerged. The same is true for a culture. [...] It is inside people’s heads.” (Weaver, 2) Here, both parts define the two cultures which contain behaviors, beliefs, values, thoughts, and patterns which come together as people come together from various cultures. In fact, two cultures led to the coalition of internal side as a result the appearance of similarities and differences between cultural values. These major definitions explain the main basic of culture which represents the way of life of people. In our Research, this definition described the minorities who lived in the U.S.A because the minorities are lived this culture.

Culture and society are two words which have always gone together. In fact, culture and society are of particular use when exploring how norms and values are passed from one generation to another. This relationship becomes more difficult when it exists different cultural backgrounds in the same society. Besides, it can be said that culture relies on society in order to transmit the ideas and approaches of people through language from the recent years until now.

As society is lightly related to culture, likewise, language is an important means to pass cultures. It is one of the most significant cultural universals. Languages are a compound method of communication, which are fundamental to human social life. According to Sutton and Anderson said that “Culture is largely transmitted through language, which, as far as we know, is unique to humans.” (5) However, the society relies on culture to preserve its tradition, its identities, and its basic life and, therefore to draw the doctrine for future. In fact, the society is a system of relationship between people. It consists of members that share some sense of common identity and be small or large and shared culture is important in holding a society together. So, there are members who accept the norms and values of their societies as natural through the process of socialization.
However, America creates a sort of crisis for the term society as it is defined above. According to Weaver, the United States is considered as a Great Melting Pot. (3) Subsequently, the United States is characterized by various minorities that led to the cultural difference that has built a heterogonous society. We can say, culture is relative in America. For instance, the notion of time is important for the Americans and they know how to spend it. However, for some other minorities in American society find that the time is not significant. Another example, the family in America is not more important than other minorities such as the Arabs.

Indeed, the distortion of culture in American society is a result of the great immigration. This shift helped the rise of cultural diversity in American society. It can be noticed through the clothes, foods, and beliefs. A technology is considered as a means of communication with the others. Many people use some communication of technologies such as media which includes Telephones, Televisions, and Internet. The fact the technology accelerated the cultural change. It opened a canal of cultural exchange between the Americans and the other minorities in one single society. Therefore, it has become increasingly difficult to find culture that is shared within one single society. It also facilitated the interactions with others. Some cultures prefer to express the emotions through the means of communication but the other feel the express of emotion is not important.

Nowadays, one of the minorities that contributed to the change of culture in the American society is the Arab Americans. For instance, there is approximately population 4.2 million of Arab Americans. The Arab Americans located in small cities as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, Houston, Washington D.C. and New York City. (Arab Americans, 1-3) Arab Americans exercise diverse religions and have a variety of educational backgrounds and political institution. Despite these differences, Arab Americans
have a united sense of history, language and cultural heritage. Besides all above, Christianity is the religion which the Arab Americans are the majority. This religion is divided into three beliefs such as Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic. According to Hamdy, about 42 percent are Catholic. Only 23 percent is Orthodox and 12 percent is Protestant. (2)

Generally, the minorities live the same situation in the America Society. They are born between their ancestors culture and the American culture. The Arabs are not an exception as Irawan explains in his dissertation Girls of Riyadh: The Arab American Michel’s Search for a Cultural Identity that the tradition are important for the Arabs. These traditions based on religion norms and values which includes from previous time. (15)“Culture Middle East Region and North Africa is currently most strongly influenced by values and Norms of Islamic religion.” (Qtdin Irawan, 15)

In fact, the term Arab is first used in the Middle East and the Muslim world. It also reflects people who speak Arabic language. All Arabs beliefs and values cross national and social class boundaries because they are conservatives. However, Arabs present distinctive cultures, traditions, and religion. It is significant to speak about Arab culture which includes a great diversity between all the groups. In fact, Arab culture refers to the countries in which Arabic is the official language. It is divided into three main parts such as common cultural norms, values, traits of Arabic language.

Furthermore, Arab culture can be defined by other aspects: Family, Religion, and Food. Arab families are often large and strongly influence individuals’ lives. The Arabs families are considered as the most significant element of social life. The father is the head of the family and represents a role ideal. Besides, the father works more outside than women; through nowadays the number of working women has increased with urbanization. Then, the mother has the power over the house, raises the children do the housework,
including cooking. Another distinctive aspect which is children cannot leave home until they marry. In the case of children leave in the home until they marry because Arab family not supported to live isolation from family. According to Haddad and Smith explained that: “Islam established guidelines and the blueprints for socially acceptable and appropriate relations and behaviors between men and women. Women are the foundation of the family and prearranged and assigned to the home and the rearing of the children.” (J. Rabadi, 19)

Moreover, religion plays an important role in drawing the Arab Culture. Particularly, religion forbids the consumption of the meat of some animals. For instance, Arab Muslims is the religious exclusion on the consumption of some animals. Many Muslims are obliged to consume meat that is ritually halal. However, the Arab Christians, contrary the Arab Muslims, can eat foods without the restrictions.

In addition, religion guides nearly all the Arabs such as Muslims or Christian. The society, for instance, the boys cannot make any relationship with girls without marriage. According to the holy book is shown in el shura 24, Aya 2 explains: “Men who commit adultery are not married but with women who commit adultery but do not marry a man who commit adultery or idolatrous men.” (Qtd in Irawan, 17)

In addition, Arab Muslims based on some rules which are related to the Holy book. For example, “alcohol is forbidden in Islam.” (Irawan, 17) As the Coran Holy Book explains: “They ask the concerning wine and gambling. Say‘in them great sin, and some profit, for men but the sin is greater than the profit. “They ask the how much they are to spend; they; what is beyond your needs. Thus doth Allah make clear to you his sign in order to that you may consider.” (Qtd in Irawan, 17)

Arab cuisine is defined as the various regional cuisines across the Arab world. It differs from the Middle Eastern to the North Africa. Each region is used different recipes
to prepare their food for many reasons. One of the main reasons is the mixture of cultures as a result indirect colonization or direct colonization, particularly, the existence of western Europe like Turks, France, England in The Arab world. It can be noticed through various food from different Arab worlds. For instance, the Jordan cuisine is emphasized on the following foods such as the meat: lamb and chicken. Each region is different from one to another. Some Arab cuisines, for instance, chicken are eaten more often than lamb. For others are eaten lamb more often than beef. For the other regions, fish is eaten mostly in coastal places. This mixture of Arab foods led to the rich in the Arab culture. In addition, for Arab Muslims, there are other foods that are completely prohibited such as Pork and prohibited under Islamic law; many Christian Arabs do eat and enjoy pork products, especially in Lebanon, where cold cuts of ham are frequently consumed in Christian neighborhoods.

In fact, the Arabs bring with them all that conservative culture to America which is an open multi-cultural society. To understand the contrast, one need to know the American culture. So, American culture refers to the culture of the western culture. It’s influenced by northern European, most significantly from British, Irish, and German. For instance, in the united state, People come from many different homelands. They have a diverse of customs, traditions, and foods. As Irawan says in his Dissertation Girls of Riyadh: the Arab American Michel’s Search:“Culture in the Americas affected by Native tribes Americans continent, people from Africa, mainly in America state, and European immigrants.”(19)

Indeed, the American society is also based on the same several essentials: Family, Religion, and Foods. American Family is a significant part in the society. The white American family changed immediately after the ww2. From a conservative conformist to an open materialist. Today, American family is much different from the Arab family i.e.
there are some American people who live alone, their families are formed without marriage and of course the children do not have fathers. However, children are encouraged to live individuality without their families. For instance, the majority of young people are marrying and having children without marriage and after living within they think to live with them. Most parents have no control over whom are their children going to marry with. Indeed, American family bases on individual freedom of children which led to the conflict between fathers and children. It destroys the rules of American fathers. So that, it create a weak relationship and feelings distance between them. Another hand, the children must rely on themselves in decision without the help of the other parents because the American parents think that the best tools to learn the life and develop their opinions and take the decisions in order to find the solution for the problems for their children. This is what we called the Individualism. Evidently, the American society is individualism etc. According to Stewart & Bernart, “But American society implicitly accept that children should be encouraged to make decision for themselves, develop their own opinion, solve their own problems, have their own procession, and, in general, learn to view the world from the point of view of the self.” (Qtd in Irawan, 20)

Subsequently, the American emphasis on the individual affects children in a contradictory way: They get more attention and even more power than they should. They may not get enough attention from either parent American families tend to place more emphasis on the needs and desires of the child, than on the child’s social and family responsibilities. After the II World War, much stress was placed on the social needs of the children. The American emphasis on the development of the individual as their primary purpose. Although, Americans may not agree on how best to nurture and discipline their children, most still hold the basic belief that the major purpose of the family is the development and welfare of each of its members as individuals equality in the family
Along with the American emphasis on individual freedom, the belief in equality has had a strong effect on the family.

Thus, the Americans give equality between women and man. They think that women can live unique as man in order to build their future without helping the parents. Besides, the American parents gave the opportunity for the children to be the judgment themselves for life without allowed the other people to gave them the attention about their life what is correct or what is true. (Irwan, 20) According to Stewat and Bennat said that: “From an early age, the American children are encouraged to believe that they themselves are the best judges of they want and what they should do.” (20)

Therefore, Religion is considered as an important value for the American. It is also a strong cultural value. It is a significant aspect which defines each country. The Americans connected through common values and cultural heritage which give them their shared identity. The Americans also depends on social class and occupation. Indeed, American religion focuses on three main Beliefs: Christianity, Islam, Jewish, and the other religion. For instance, more than 75 percent of Americans identify themselves as Christians. About 70 of Americans are Protestant, about the presence of the churches is higher than another country. In addition to this, about 94 percent of Americans used the churches to express faith in god. (Weaver, 4) After Christianity, Judaism is the second religious affiliation. After that, the other population has no religious affiliation. For instance; American Jews are the second majority in America after the Christianity. This is what found through the influence of Jews American in the decisions of the American government. In addition, a religion is very important within families because it helps their children to care about their cultures in order to preserve their values such as Islamic values, Christian values and other religion values.
More importantly, food is considered as one of the most significant elements of culture. It plays a great role in ethnic literatures as ways of protecting tradition, creating spaces and of course preserving identity. Traditionally, Americans are rich in variety foods and dishes that represent American culture. These dishes must be quick, convenient, and cheap because the whole Americans do not prepare at home. They consume their foods through restaurants. For instance, for the most part, the super market and the location of fast food are the most sources of Americans that buy it. Americans consume more fast food than movies, books, magazines, newspapers, videos, music. However, the growth of American food helps to spread in the world. In particular, food plays a distinctive role in defining ethnic or religious culture. It became a defining symbol of national identity. It is also a remarkable fact that many dishes that we associate with American such as the American hamburger. In addition, media play a great role to define the American food throughout the world. Nevertheless, the Americans create the modern American food with the preserving of American tradition. They have a styling of cooking and the types of food. Each region has a specific dishes which is famous for example, Tex-Mex, popular in Texas but the same time, MacDonald is the largest purchaser of beef, pork, and potatoes in the United State. This term McDonaldization was first related by Ritzer George in his text “the McDonaldization of Society”. (24) Stephen and Lyon Phil (1995), they define McDonaldization as “the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world.” (24)

Eventually, in the United State, there is no official language. Thus, the population of the United State speaks and understands at least some English, and most official business is conducted in English. While almost every language in the world is spoken in the UnitedStates, Spanish, Chinese, French and German are among the most frequently spoken
non-English languages. Each region of the United States has its perspective on the language with unique pronunciations and phrases. From all the explanation above, it can be noted that the mixture of culture in the American society leads us to deal with Identity.

2- The Question of Identity in the Contemporary American Society.

Identity is a complex and difficult term to define this is why the researcher psychologists define it through differently according to time and place. Initially, the origin of the term refers to the Latin root “idem” . It can mean “the same”. (Buckingham, 1). It is used in different subjects for particular principles such as Personal Identity, National Identity, and Social Identity.

These subjects are partly considered as a question of what we share with other people. Firstly, Personal identity is an activity that differs from cultural Identity, individuality. It can be defined as the main characteristics which differ from one person to another. In other words, it distinguishes from one to other people as Hanna explained: “Personal identity, an identity is some distinguishing characteristic (or characteristics) that a person takes a special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less changeable.” (2) However, National identity can be considered as “condition in which a mass of people have made the same identication with national symbols { have internalized the symbols of the nation[...]” (Qtd in Farrow, 4) While, Social Identity is memberships that are particular to cultural identity. In fact, it is one of the aspects of person within groups. It is an aspect of meaning as Wendt explained: “Social identities are sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others, that is… ‘who I am/we are' in a situation and positions in a social role structure of shared understandings and expectations.” (Qtd in Farrow, 5)
While other psychologists discuss more the meaning of identity like Deaux who gives details for it as he said “Identity is a term that is widely used and, as a consequence, can mean many different things to different people. Identity is sometimes used to refer to a sense of integration of the self, in which different aspects come together in a unified whole.” (1) While, Hogg and Abrams identified the term as “one of the central concepts of people which define the existence of them and there is some question which people tried to ask such as who they are, of what sort of people they are, how they relate to others.” (Qtd in Fearon, 2) What we have said above, the term of identity differs from one person to another or from one society to another. Each one defines identity as they lived in every society. This is what led to the creation differences in every society in the whole world. For instance, the East is considered as collectivism whereas the west is Individualism. In other words, this distinctions led to the creation of different identity in different societies. Evidently, collectivism and individualism refer to the characteristic of social relations. This relation is important to make the coalition between people. These two aspects defined the identity of every person. According to Jenkins, “identity refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities.” (Qtd in Fearon, 4)

According to Agha in his dissertation From Homeland to Adopted Home: A Study on Identity Formation and Negotiation Among the Arab American Diaspora, identity is “a signifier of the self brought on by fluid affiliations based on culture, religion, ethnicity, affinity for a nation, experience, and preferences. Identity is both private and a public for it is what separate one individual from the next, yet it is also what binds individuals to larger collectives. The self then is at least partially determined by this larger collective.” (17)

Another definition, identity is related to the three main terms such as Person, subjectivity, and self. Firstly, Person explains the self of each one. Secondly, it contains
conscious and unconscious ideas as Woodwards wrote that “Subjectivity includes our sense of self. It involves the conscious and unconscious thoughts[...] positions within culture.” (39) Thus, it can be said the identity used as performance to show their selves. On the other hand, there are some sociologists begin to explain the relationship between the self and society. According to Stets and J. Burke, there is an exchange between both because the impact of the self on society through the actions of individuals, organizations, networks, and institutions. While society affects the self through its shared language and meanings that enable a person to take the role of the other, engage in social interaction, and reflect upon oneself as an object. (1)

Nowadays, identity is unique identifying characteristics which define themselves as the groups and individuals see them. Thus, each person defines himself as the other sees him. In fact, the identity of individuals and groups contain two main elements of personal choice and attitudes of others. Individual have a group of identities but at the same time are not restricted to take any identity they love, and factors like, their ethnic group. (Brown, 39) In addition, it formed through some basic principle and exactly the influence of social institutions such as the society, friends, and the family. According to Browne, the concept of identity is an important one, as it is only through establishing our own identities and learning about the identities of other individuals and groups. (38) He also explained with an example as he said: “If people did not have an identity, they would lack the means of identifying with or relating to their peer group, to their neighbors, to the communities” . (38) It can be said without the identity which define themselves and it is considered as method of communicating with the whole world. It can be noticed that the whole world is associated with the society and the society is related with the identity of each persons.

The issue and analysis of identity in the contemporary American societies is differing from a society to another. In other words, identity is the theme of debate and
discussion of societies. It changed all the time through each person from younger to older. Broadly, the theme of identify changed from traditional societies to the modern one. So, the traditional societies related to the elements of societies that are small space, and are copied from original and often ancient cultural practices. Whereas, modern societies linked to those practices that related to the industrial mode of production or the growth of worldwide often colonial societies. But at the present time, it is the clash between the two forms of culture has a great importance for everyone alive. For example, Anthony Giddens in his book *Modernity an introduction to modern societies* tried to show the distinction between modern societies and traditional one as he illustrated: “In traditional societies, the past is pleased and symbols are valued because they continue the experience of generation...” (Qtd in Hall et al, 599) In contrast, “Modernity is not only defined as...but is a highly reflexive form of life.” (Qtd in Hall et al, 599)

Modern American society is characterized by different identities such as Africa, Asia, and European. These identities changed over time for many reasons. One of the major reasons which led to the formation of identity is youth. It can be said that is an important period for each person. This period is characterized by different changes in life, minds and self. The young person started the separation from their family and they make independent plans for their future. This period define one of the main approaches i.e. Psychological Approach. In fact, it help to appear the conflicts between the self and society. According to Buckingham in his Article: *Introducing Identity Youth, Identity, and Digital media*, Erik Erickson used a great approach namely “Psychoanalytic Approach” which relies on two main principles ego and super ego to explain the self of young people as he said: “Individuals overcome uncertainty, become more self-aware of their strengths
and [...] Through this process of self-reflection and self-definition, adolescents arrive at an integrated, coherent sense of their identity as something that persists over time. (2)

In addition, in the same line of thoughts, the term of identity is widely used by other Psychologists, thus, led to the appearance of other definitions in the same idea. As we have seen, Fearon is one who defined the term identity with using of two main principles namely ego and superego as he explained “Every person’s Self was actually composed of two aspects: a transcendental subject or ego which is the ground of all knowledge and perception, and an empirical ego which is what we observe when we introspect, or the thing we impute to other people, with qualities, attributes, etc.” (14)

On the other hand, there are some influences on the creations of identity. Firstly, the role of family, teachers and schools is played a great role to form the identity of every persons, so, some psychologists think that the influence of outside on the self that is important. Another reasons, Religion is one of the most factors particularly in Arab Muslim Americans because they took the basic life from the religion while the American based on culture because they think that culture is an important factor in shaping identity. On the other hand, Technology is considered as a means of communication like the internet, music downloads, cable, television, and radio. For instance, some technologies enable to effect people which led to consume other cultural products. For all the time, the technologies help to transform the social relationships. On the other hand, technologies are considered as means of Acculturation. Acculturation refers to the exchange of culture between different people.

It can be concluded that all definitions above agree on the fact that culture and identity are difficult and complex terms to define it. Each one located in each society and everyone has a culture and identity. In other words, both concepts differ from one society
to another. For instance, Arab culture is so different from the American culture, so, these distinctions led to the appearance a mixture of culture and contradictions in one society. So, the two concepts: culture and identity are important to know the main similarities and differences between the Westerners and the Easterners, especially, when they met in one single society.
Chapter Two: The East meeting The West in *The Language of Baklava*

In recent years, the meeting between the East and the West is difficult in Politics and Economics while Culture is more different than these fields for many reasons. One of the main reasons is the location of East immigrations in the West society. In other words, culture is an important domain which helps to open the communication between the East and the West. So, both are two words which represent various cultures on the Earth. In our research, Western Culture represents the Americans while the Eastern culture is represented by the Arabs since the writer is the Arab origins. This marriage between the two cultures led to the creation of a mixture; however, it implies a deep disagreement between Westerners and Easterners in a single society.

In this research, the West and the East can be described through a memoir entitled *The language of Baklava* by Diana Abu Jabber. This memoir based on the lives of an Arab American family in American Society. The writer displays the food as one of the essential part of life and culture to express feelings, beliefs, views. Evidently, Diana chooses food as symbol to express the relationships between her Arab family and her friends whether in America or Jordan, particularly, she focuses on the experience of her father in the American society. Also, this chapter will base on the presentation of many delicious recipes which define the two cultures of her parent.

1-Food as part of Culture.

“We are Arab at home and American in the streets” (Abu – Jabber, 11).

As we have seen, culture is the most important thing for all people around the world. According to diversities in culture, tradition as well as the region in which person lives, there are various types of food found in different types of the world. In other words, each particularly food is the reflection the form of particularly society, thus, which reflects the
whole of human activity. Thus, each society has a certain dish and a certain way or recipes to prepare and enjoy it.

In our research, eating, food and cooking are related together in both Arab and American cultures. For instance, food is not simply prepared for consumption but the purpose is just a fundamental activity which is prepared in order to help people understand their feelings and emotions that cannot be explained through other ways. It can be said that food is considered as a means for expression of different views. Also, it is considered as a means of communication between different cultures without complexity. As Sceats in his Article says: “Eating is fundamental activity. It is more or less the first thing we do, the primary source of pleasure and frustration, the arena of our earlier Education and Enculturation.”(1)

Furthermore, the Arab families eat together as a family because they think that food and eating is in fact the primary purpose of a social gathering while the American families are opposite. In fact, both are reflected in the difference in family solidarity in the two cultures. Each society has its food which is any substance consumed to provide nutritional support for the body such as plant or animal. In this memoir, the use of food is like a memory to express love and desire between friends and families. According to Sceats, “Food is a currency of love and desire, a medium of expression and communication.”(11)

Generally, the preparation of food is due to the distinction of aspects: age, culture, gender. For instance, gender is one of the main aspects. It is divided into two facets: women and man. For most people, food and cooking is related to women. In this novel, food and cooking are the father’s task. More clearly, the writer chooses Jordan food as one of the Arab culture that due to the origin of her father and ancestors and also the importance of Jordan food in her life. In fact, food for the writer represents her happy days
either in Jordan or America. So, she makes from it a theme that gives her writing a particular touch. So, the writer “Diana” inherited love of food and cooking from her father who grew up over a large family as she says through her memoir.

The Language of Baklava is considered as one of the Anglophone memoirs which analyze the association and the communication between the East and the West. So, the Anglophone novels are characterized by the duality of place and the contradiction between the Western Pacific Ocean and the East. In general, some novels present the issues from the heart of the Arab Society such as honor, taboos, and traditional disadvantage and the struggle of women between two cultures. In other words, the majority of the Anglophone memoirs present different themes which relied on the crisis of Identity and culture of immigrants. So, Diana Abu Jabber was born and grew up in “new York” while her origin is from Jordan. Her memoir concentrates on the experience of her childhood between two different cultures in America society. The writer herself narrates the real life of the Arab immigration in the west and the difficulties that founded in the US in order to accept one culture with the existence of two different cultures, especially, the period of childhood. In other words, she grew up between both cultures i.e. culture of her expansive Jordanian, that have reserved and calmness of her mother (American). This marriage between various cultures is described through the traditional food. Each period is related to the place and the roots. Therefore, she depicts the variety foods of both parents through round trips between two different countries. Each dish present a happy moment and event that happened in both places through the Analyzing her memoir.

At the opening of her memoir, she begins with some praise and admiration of some writers about her stories which she attempts to create new recipes of food. Specifically; she describes the two worlds Jordan and America through using the real characters. She writes
about some views such as Patricia Volk is one of the author who gives the attention on her memoir *the Language of Baklava*. She is the author of Stuffed from Adventures of a Restaurant Family and she says: “I recommend *The Language of Baklava* to anyone who eats. Whether Diana Abu—she is the Ambassador of Big Heartedness[...] The prose will knock you flatter than pita bread.” (Abu-Jabber, 5) Patricia Volk gives the notices that a memoir *the Language of Baklava* is one of the cookbooks which describe the connection between the food and the identity. Even though identity is related to the home such as Jordi-American or Ameri-Jordanian, Diana represents the side psychological of the immigrations, especially, the emotions of nostalgia to homeland. Another criticism for her memoir is depicted by Elle who writes: “Diana Abu-Jabber reveals in the stories her father told her while she was growing up, which centered on cooking and eating but ‘turned out to be about something much larger: grace, difference, faith, love’—the same qualities that inform this passionate memoir.” (Abu-Jabber, 5) Evidently, Elle shows the real developments of relationship between the protagonist “Diana” and her father and especially the role of food which plays as way to create integration between all the characters within love and faith. It can be said that Diana’s father plays a great role in her life for many purposes. One of the main purposes is to encourage her son in order to preserve the origin culture. In other words, the central character in this memoir is Diana’s father “Bud”. Bud is not a real name. It means that he Americanized his name. He changes his name into “Bud” and the real name is called Ghassan Saleh Abu Jabber as she says: “Even though my father’s name is Ghassan Saleh Abu-Jabber, he becomes the original Bud.” (Abu–Jabber, 10) Besides, there are other names are changed such as the Uncles, Hall, Jack, Danny. All this persons are Arab Americans and they lived in America. When they came to America with her father, they changed the Arab names to American names. Those names are not real: Uncle Hal is Uncle Hilal, Jack is Jaffer, Danny is Hamdan, and
Frankie is Qadir. (Abu-Jabber, 11) In fact, this transformations and modification are not more important than cultures because the changes of names is not significant because there are some difficulties in the tone for the Americans or they American themselves found that the Arab names are difficult to speak this is why they changed their names into other names. More clearly, it is to facilitate the communication with the Americans in American society. But this doesn’t mean that this modification mean there is no cultures because there are many events that happened in this memoir which is related to the origins culture. It can be noticed through the presentation of delicious recipes which define Jordanian culture and American one.

Initially, Diana presents Jordanian culture into two places: America and Jordan. Evidently, Diana writes about Jordan culture through the interaction with the American in America society. Particularly, she gives the general description of life of her father in America society. i.e. the associations with her mother, sisters, friends and neighbors as she says:

On Saturdays Bud is in the kitchen. The old houses along our elm-lined streets seem to sigh, screen doors ease open, the air sweetens, and the sky leans back on one elbow. First my father will make breakfast On Saturdays Bud is in the kitchen. The old houses along our elm-lined streets seem to sigh, screen doors ease open, the air sweetens, and the sky leans back on one elbow. First my father will make breakfast. After that, any one of a number of miraculous things can happen: Go to Diplomat-Uncle Jack’s house and have stuffed grape leaves. Go to Professor-Uncle Hal’s house and have kibbeh. Go to Businessman-Uncle Danny’s house and have stuffed squash. Go to Crazy-Uncle Frankie’s house and have roasted leg of lamb. Go to Fair Haven Beach with everyone and have shish kabob. (Abu-Jabber, 11)
In addition, she gives a general depiction of America whetheras she writes

America is a cold breeze that snaps us awake. We’ve been gone for a year, but once we’re back, I keep recognizing types of trees, stores, buildings, and blurting out, “Oh yeah!” We’ve left Jordan, with its lush winds, dust, and sun-stained air. When I wake in a hotel bed on the first morning back in America, I’m dazed by a blankness around me: the sleekly painted walls, the air slack without the scents of mint, olive, and jasmine, and an immobilizing silence. (Abu-Jabber, 50)

Throughout her memoir, Diana tells about happy days with her father in the kitchen. She depicts the role of food and cooking through the images of her father. Especially, she describes her body through the tradition clothes like sandal and baggy shorts. Besides, Diana’s father are not getting a one word right but he loves listening the Arab songs to remember his origin his feelings to homeland. As she describes: “I love to be in the kitchen and watch my strong father at work in his undershirt, and sandals. He’s singing along with the radio and not getting a single word right. But what he lacks in accuracy he makes up for in gusto and verve.” (Abu-Jabber, 11)

Furthermore, she describes some delicious dishes of Jordan culture and she prepared it in America society. For instance, the shish kabob, Maglouba, Mensaf and others. Each dish is characterized by different recipes and each recipe describes one of the social relations. For instance, Shish Kabob is considered as a symbol of feelings and emotion which help to link the whole family, friends, and neighbors as she further explains as she says:

There’s a commotion on shore. My father and the uncles are shouting and waving their arms: Shish kabob is ready! Uncle Hal is ferrying the sizzling
skewers—we call them sheeshes—to a big platter on the table. Bud is turning more of them on the fire. The shish kabob comes like an emergency. It sizzles at the table, and Uncle Hal pushes the chunks of meat off the skewers with a piece of pita bread. They all go to one central plate. (Abu-Jabber, 12)

In this novel, the text contains various recipes for many of the cooks that mentioned it and the recipes are given as mentioned with humor, love, and warmth of her family. Most of the recipes are Middle Eastern; many give instructions for a variety of other form of food. As we have seen, one of many recipes is shish kabob that contributed to remind the rituals relationships between Diana’s father and his brothers as she says:

Making shish kabob always reminds the brothers of who they used to be—the heat, the spices, the preparation for cooking, and the rituals for eating were all the same as when they were children, eating at their parents’ big table. But trying to kill the lamb showed them: They were no longer who they thought they were. (Abu-Jabber, 19)

This extract is described the ritual relationship between Diana ‘father and the cooking with his family. This integration and interaction led to the birth a group of feelings and emotions between Diana’s family. It can be said that the making of shish kabob is contributed to express the meaning of family how they eat together with his family. In fact, these connections between the Jordanian food and her family who lived in America are contributed to the development of social relationships. Particularly, it helps to communicate between all people of the same origins and they remembered the actions and their culture traditions in the west country. This is what the writer depicts this emotion and feelings of nostalgia to the homeland through the real events that happened in western

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society. It can be noticed through the famous dishes and the traditional recipes in this memoir which is based on the experience of childhood.

Generally, Diana’s childhood has obviously been centered on food. Food is eaten on a social basis with cousins, aunts and uncles featuring heavily. Also, she depicts food in every season, every event, every feast day; every emotion has its special recipes. For example, Arabic reddish Ice Cream is amazing magic with hot chocolate baklava poetic and emotional need to sing to someone as she says:

Dissolve the sahlab in 1 table spoon of the cold milk. Put the rest of the milk in a saucepan with the cream and sugar and bring to a boil. Sprinkle in the milk-and-sahlab mixture, stirring. Stir themastic into the milk, lower the heat, and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally [...] Freeze again until ready to serve. Serve in small silver bowls, if you have any, and sprinkle the pistachios over the top. (Abu-Jabbers, 41)

These delicious Recipes are not only to encourage some persons to cook it but in order to show that they have a culture tradition. The stories that revolve around food and family are the weft of this work. In her memoir, it can be said that each event that is associated with the cooking and food such as American food or Jordan food. For instance, one of the famous foods in Jordan is Mensaf which can be eaten hot and with the use of hands as she explains: “Mensaf is to be eaten hot-hot, as soon as it emerges from the heat. The whole first month we lived in Jordan, my mouth [...] off a little [...] as the Bedu eat everything: You dip your fingers into the mixture, and the rice is hot and wet on your skin.” (Abu Jabber, 46)

In addition, Diana wrote about other things which are sad such as the restoration of inheritance of her father for many purposes. One of the main purposes is to express their
feelings whether happy or nervous. Then, all these events are associated with the idea of the food. In other words, the idea of the food is associated with delight, happiness, family and the bad events.

Later on, she narrates about the Jordanian food in Jordan. The writer describes Jordan to allow the reader to understand her ancestor’s land. For instance, she writes about her first visit in Jordan at the age of eight and the stories that happened there and they are linked clearly to the food. Through Diana is supposed to feel at case in her father’s society, she focuses on two situations that make her uncomfortable relatives because Diana inherited from her mother the skin and the whites of blond hair and blue eyes were weird between her Jordanian. They are surprising in some peoples in Jordan. For instance, when Arab women saw Diana. They were surprised by the girl’s the language. In other words, she is not like the Jordanian people. So, the first woman said why do you talk like that? The second women named Munira who lives in Maid said like a cat bite into bone and also said all people talk like this in the city. Suddenly, she opened her mouth and took a deep breath. And she writes:

One of the women points her tattooed chin at me. “What does she eat?” she asks Munira. “I like jameed,” I pipe up. “And ka’k and Zataar. And also chewing gum and hot chocolate at the big hotel.” The women all stop what they’re doing and stare at me. The crone hoots. “She speaks!” she says in her crackling voice. Bread, desk, mouse. The women bleat with laughter and the crone doubles over, almost toppling onto the heated rock. I glow with this unexpected triumph. tree, feet, water, a lizard, a bus, a neighbor, cloth nodded during the speech to increase the assertion. (Abu Jabber, 45)
Whereas, Diana writes about the American culture through the cooking of her mother particularly the meals. Clearly, there are some meals that are related with her mother but it is not more important than the cooking of her father such as “Comforting Grilled Velveeta Sandwiches” and “The Tenderest Angel Food Cake”. For instance, Diana gives the recipe about how to prepare Sandwiches that her mother prepare it as she says: “Melt the butter in frying pan place the cheese Sandwiches in the hot butter: cover and fry until golden on one side, the cheese should be organize and hot cut the sandwiches on the diagonal.” (Abu-Jabber, 26)

The writer describes Diana’s mother in America society, especially, the preparation of Sandwiches of cheese and goes out for a walk with her grandmother and her friends who have different origins such as Russian, Indian, and African. Thus, the link of family is very strong, especially with her father, who belongs to another generation. However, the writer is trying to extend this links through the age of adolescence specifically she defines her as a woman and as a human being and succeed in creating new culture which based into two cultures. This does not give her more space to get the other characters nearby. For example, the mother and sisters remain a mystery despite the clear influence them to Diana. Diana uses the conscience of the speaker which lists events are occurred in the past. In this memoir, she focuses on two main stages: The first stage is the years of childhood. While, the second stage is the years of adolescence. These two stages are important to Diana’s life in tracking the events of this memoir. Also, food played a great role on the two stages. Each stage can be defined the famous dishes that influenced in her life. For instance, as we have seen above, the first stage was characterized by different dishes such as Shish Kabbab. Whereas, the second stage is related with Magical Muhamaraa and Tabbouleh are two amazing dishes which show the Jordan culture. This both dishes does not need more time to prepare it as she says.
Eventually, food becomes a memory and conjure him places and tastes of the days of youth. In fact, the writer succeeded in cover the period of childhood and adolescence to open the debate about the changes in the two periods through the food.

2-Biculturalism in *The language of Baklava*.

Generally, there are many children of immigrants living with people of two cultures. Thus, the marriage between two persons from various cultures create bicultural in one family through the children who are born and raised in the receiving society. Indeed, the majority of the families of immigration refer to the origin culture of the parents, but inside they are affected to deal with the host culture. Most research on bicultural families with two cultures within the family focuses on the marital relationship. In fact, the distinction between two cultures in one family influenced from one child to another who became bicultural. Of course, most of studies explain this marriage between two cultures known as Biculturalism. Broadly, Biculturalism or bicultural identity refer to the existence of two different cultures in the same society. It can be said that the combination of two cultures this led to the conflict assimilating into both cultures or may be finding a balance between both. Evidently, Biculturalism can affected a positive way. It can mean that, in terms of the additional knowledge they acquire from belonging to more than one culture. Moreover, individuals that identify with more than one culture may have more linguistic capacity with the growing number of racial minorities in American society. Typically, biculturalism established in countries that have emerged from a history of national or ethnic conflict in which neither side has gained complete victory. This condition usually arises as a consequence of settlement by colonists. It has based on the cultural behavior such as language, use of median, and choice of friend’s. Also, it focuses on Ethnic minorities and mixed ethnic individuals. Most researches on bicultural families with two cultures within the family focuses on the marital relationship. This word based on children who speak two
languages or who have two cultures. For instance, a large percentage of Americans may be considered bicultural. (Nguyen and Benet-Martínez, 2) In addition to this, the increase the percentage of the children who are bicultural in the United State as a result the parents who have different cultures and of course the immigration from mother country to the new country. Approximately, 24 million of people who born in America from the emigrant parents. (Benet-Martínez et al., 1)

In addition, the issue of bilingualism has compared a lot of attention to the subject of cultural duality. It can be noted that the development of research in the field of language and culture for years which turned out more and more the concept of bilingualism. While the concept of Biculturalism did not have the same opportunity as we note there is no definition in the dictionary. The fact that more than a bilingual culture and they are dual effects associated with more than double dual language to be linked to culture. Thus, it can be defined Biculturalism as a person's double culturally. In other words, it is a person who is living in two different cultures who accept one without completely, so, it is culture belongs to the first culture and the second one. Also, Person double culturally does not replace the original cultural elements, but it is practiced as well as the elements of a new culture of another culture. There are some characteristics of Biculturalism of the person. Indeed, the person is characterized by double culturally three key features are: participate in at least part of the cultural life of the cultures of two different worlds, and this in a systematic manner. Second, adjusting the total or partial behavior, language, attitudes, values for these perimeters cultural. Third, coordinate between the attributes of each of the two cultures. It can be summarized that no person who has acculturation replaces some or all of the cultural elements of indigenous culture and embrace other elements that come into contact with a person double culturally does not replace the original cultural elements, but it is practiced as well as the elements of a new culture of another culture. The
relationship between bilingualism and biculturalism: Person double culture is not necessarily a double language as that person is not obligatory a double language live between two cultures. While he was there different cultures sharing one language and a common cultural duality is not always accompanied by a bilingual. This association resulted one of the main characteristic known as Acculturation. It means no person who has acculturation replaces some or all of the cultural elements of indigenous culture and embraces other elements that come into contact with it. And duplication of a cultural concept as simple as it is, and some see the existence of two different cultures in one society as a result of several factors, the most important of the existence of two different languages. And as we see that the link between language and culture linking strong and cannot be separated.

On the other hand, Diana Abu Jabber describes biculturalism in *the language of baklava*. Indeed, two various cultures lives in American society. Thus, Through her parents' mixed marriage, Diana was blessed with the best of both worlds, which probably helped her and her sisters to adapt themselves to any environment, except, that is, possibly that of food. One of the most descriptions of this bicultural in Diana Abu Jabber’s *the language of baklava* when she says: “Half my father’s brothers stayed in Jordan, but the other half came to America, for education or money or some sense of promise that was the opposite of homesickness.” (Abu-Jabber, 18)

Indeed, this expression embodied the idea that there are two cultures in this family. First, the origin culture is the Jordanian culture. Second, the new culture is the American one. In particularly, his brothers who lived between both worlds. And she tells about her parents and the origins. As she says: “She grew up in a shared bedroom with her own mother in an old New Jersey house full of extended Irish-German-Catholic family[...]only she is married to Bud, once and for all, so it’s difficult.” (Abu-Jabber, 26)
Moreover, there are some authors analyze the language of baklava. One of this authors is Michell Hays in his dissertation *Floating Islands: An Exploration of Cultural Identity and the “Tyranny of the Mean” in Three Food Memoirs*. According to Hays, Diana Abu jabber shows the distance between American and Jordanian through two different friends from two worlds but at the same place in “Jordan”. The first one is from Jordan who is called “Hisham”. Exactly, he born and grew up in Jordan. While the second one is English boy but he lived in Jordan for some years who is called Bennet because his parents are diplomatic. Therefore, he is the same her age. (9) As she writes in her novel:

I learn that even though he says he’s from England, Bennett has never actually been there, not even for a visit. His family has been moving around Jordan for over a year now, and he finds it “unbearable” but much prefers it to Singapore or Guyana. He doesn’t like the weather in Jordan: “It burns,” he says, rubbing his red-tipped ears, the skin ragged and peeling from his nose and cheeks. He doesn’t like the food: It’s dirty. “I only like clotted cream and crumpets or nothing,” he says. And he doesn’t like the Jordanians: “They’re much too loud and hairy. (Abu-Jabber, 32)

In other words, these two situations explain the difference between two cultures. Each one has a culture of her parents. It can be said that their children is difficult to accept other cultures. For instance, When Diana comes to Jordan, she makes the relationships with Jordanian. She loves playing with her friend “Hicham” in the street. She considers that Hicham embodied her father when he was child while Bennet is more different than Hisham. It can be said that Bennet is approximately like Diana because he lives between two cultures. At the same time, there are some differences between the two. For instance, Bennet has a negative opinion about the Jordanian food but Diana is opposite.
On the other hand, the mixture between two cultures means different uses of languages. As we have seen, this different language is known as Bilingualism. In this memoir, Diana lives between two languages: Arabic language and American one. In fact, American language is more used than Arabic language. Throughout this memoir, it includes different Arabic words which related to the food. The use of Arabic language is part of this memoir, however, she uses some Arabic words for many purposes in order to create paradoxes between two languages such as “Sahtain” and “alhumdullilah”. It means that “to your health, thanks be to god.” (Abu Jabber, 46) The first one is to express the Arabic language. Also, these words are used to give the essential culture of the Arab American children when they lived in Jordan. These events are associated with her Bud’s sister who is called “Anti Yusra” teaches Diana and her sisters this words in order to give Diana’s family the importance of tradition in the west society. This extract explain this idea:

It’s as if there’s only a certain amount of space in my brain, and the more space Jordan takes up, the less room there is left for America. Sometimes I lose track of what language I’m in and gibber between the two of them, substituting English words for Arabic and vice versa. My favorite breakfast is no longer pancakes, but bread doused with oil and zataar. [...] I stop and think: Am I still an American? (Abu Jabber, 42).

From the explanation above, it could be concluded that the mixture between the Westerners and Easterners in one society is difficult for children. However, the food play role to create bicultural in the society, so, the connection between the food and the origin is necessary in order to preserve their culture. In other words, the meeting between the East and the West face some challenges for the children of immigration to choose one of them. This memoir discusses the importance of food in the creation of integrations and
implications between all people. As a result, Diana was influenced by two cultures i.e. Jordan and American. Each culture influenced her in different periods. So, we can say Jordan Diana or American Diana.
Chapter three: Diana search for Identity.

The question of identity is always considered a debate theme in Diana’s family. For Diana’s family, identity is the only reason why the individual feels patriotism and nostalgia to her town. In this research, the question and the search for identity is related together with the meaning of “home” or “tribe”. Evidently, Diana lived between two homes Jordan and American, however, the influence of Jordan culture and American culture are different in Diana ‘identity. Each one has a diverse characteristic and meanings. In other words, the lost of Diana between two cultures led to search for identity that she will relied on it in her life.

In our research, Diana is the protagonist. She is a unique personality who tells about the events that happened about her family, friends and life. The fact her family played a big role in the formation of her identity, particularly, her father who lived between two cultures as a result Diana lived between two worlds which led to the creation of a new culture. She considers herself “in Between”, thus; she creates one identity which mixed the two cultures.

1- Jordanian Diana vs. American Diana.

Throughout reading the novel, Diana is divided into two halves: the first half is Arab and the second is American. This combination helped to create a kind of separatism and soul-searching that makes here either U.S. or Jordanian.

Initially, through this memoir, there are some sentences that give proof about Diana’s Jordanian half because the origin of her family is Jordanian. Evidently, when Diana’s father immigrated to the United State, hemet Diana’s mother and they founded a family that combines the East and the West. So, Diana’s internal conflict starts within her family, then, it is intensified outside in the American Society. Therefore, Diana describes
the real life of her father and his brothers in Jordan when he was a child. Also, the conditions in which her father arrived to America as she writes:

On that day, the day of the lamb, Bud and his brothers were all still young men, in their late twenties and early thirties, none of them all that far away from their childhood in Jordan. When they were children, their parents had owned orchards of olive trees, figs, and lemons and fields of corn, thyme, and jasmine, watering holes and greenhouses, herds of horses, goats, and lambs. They drew their silvery drinking water from a well, baked bread in a stone oven, and in the desert nights my father and his eight brothers had liked to sleep under a sky scrawled with stars or inside the billowing goat-hair tents that the Bedouins used. (Abu Jabber, 17)

In addition, this is a discourse of her father “Ghassan” when he says: “Half my father’s brothers stayed in Jordan, but the other half came to America, for education or money or some sense of promise that was the opposite of homesickness. They thought, even after ten” (Abu Jabber, 18). It can be noted that Diana writes about one of the main reasons which help many Jordanian to emigrate from Jordan to the US. As she says half father’s brothers come from Jordan for many reasons like the education.

Therefore, Diana’s identity is more influenced by Jordan culture. Jordan culture is an important part which affects Diana’s self. In fact, Jordan is based on the elements of culture of Middle Eastern with the influence of Western culture in a large newly emerged such as the cooking of Baklava or Baklawa (Arabic language). As she explains:

Aya’s face is direct and bold. She tosses back a few strands of hair, then looks at me. “But how do you feel about baklava?” Something large and
heavy opens its wings and begins to lift from my rib cage.

Baklava?“The Arabs say baklawa, of course, but the Greeks call it ‘baklava.’ I can’t imagine what the Turks call it. And I don’t know who made it first, but we can call it baklava since we both hate Arabic food.

(Abu Jabber, 117)

In fact, Jordan was always the intersection with three continents of the ancient world and it seems that there is always a form of diversity in any particular points due to its location. The main aspects of Jordan culture including foods, beliefs and especially family, as well as other aspects mainly imported from Western Europe and the United States. All the aspects of Arab customs will be found in Jordan. In fact, the communication between people and others will not find a lot of difference between Jordan and other Arab countries. Indeed, the distinctions of Jordan is the homogeneity and the intermingling between the culture, and the culture of the country surrounding it such as the western culture particularly America. This is what Diana dealt on it. So that, in this memoir, she describes the great influence of the origin country of her father on the formation of her identity.

More generally, the impact of Jordan culture on Diana’s Identity is more different than American culture. Diana lived in Jordan for some months, when she was a child. She lived with a large family i.e. cousins and uncles. As she says:“My first months in Jordan are like that—I attach to and detach from various People, toys, and foods willy-nilly.”

(Abu-Jabber, 31)

Through this memoir, it seems that Diana’s life split into two periods: childhood and the age of youth. It can be said that the first period she considers herself as more Arab than American. In other words, at the beginning of life, she feels in relating to Jordan culture. Later on, these idea is changed through the age of youth. Thus, this extract explains this
discussion between Diana and her father “Bud” about the beliefs and communication with the ancestors and his family in Jordan as Diana explains:

[...]I’m sending you back home to Jordan! You’ll go live with Auntie Aya. She’ll straighten you out a hundred percent.” “I’ll never go back there. You can’t make me,” I retort like a movie tough guy, driven by the same surge of rage as Bud’s. “That isn’t my home. I don’t care what you say. My home is here.” “You say this to your father.” [...] “You deny your ancestors and culture and your whole family!” “My family isn’t Jordanian,” I throw back at him, the refrain of my. “My family is American! (Abu Jabber, 115).

This Situation makes Diana feels the great difference of living between two Societies with diversity of traditions. Besides, Diana is the girl who loves the cooking of her father. So, she is related to the foods of Jordan culture without complexity. In other words, the childhood is related to the food, especially, which related to Jordan culture.

Jordan Diana is a result the formation of her father. In reality, there are some overlaps in Diana’s life. Through this memoir, For instance, Bud’s father is the responsible for choosing Diana the origin country. Evidently, she lives in Jordan because her father makes the decision to move from the U.S.A to Jordan for many reasons. One of the main reasons is that Jordan Society is more welcome for Diana’s Family than America Society.

In fact, from this two extracts below, Diana’s father attempts to teach his children the basic Arab life i.e. Bedu. She gives a small depiction about the real life of Bedu in Jordan, especially, this life is more natural than the cities as she says:

Bud’s father wanted to raise his children in the country among the Bedu. But their cityraised Palestinian mother had other ideas. She bought a house in town
close to the school and taught her children to sleep in beds and eat from plates. Then in the summers she turned them over to her husband, who let them sleep outside with the animals and, as my grandmother put it, “run around like savages.” (Abu Jabber, 43)

This image of Bedu is one of the Jordan culture which are described through this memoir. As she writes:

Jordan, it seems, reveals itself slowly. There are layers of mysteries like scarves in a scarf dance. There is the mystery of the traffic circles all over town that have no clear rhyme or reason. There is the mystery of the Jordanian drivers, who drive partially by steering and partially by hanging out the windows and yelling at one another (Abu-Jabber, 42).

In this novel, Diana triesto define Bedouin culture through the presentation of some ritual/natural recipes in order to give Jordanian people as treatments. This treatment are unique and knowing for what alternative. Therefore, this treatment is associated with the Jordan culture.

It can also be noted that there are others pictures which express the importance of Jordan culture in Bud’s father. Particularly, music is considered as a part of Arab/Jordan culture like the songs of AbdelhalimHafed. These songs take an significant elements to preserve his identity. Through these real stories, she describes her father when he sings the Arabic songs. The main purpose is to express the nostalgia to homeland as she further explains:

Today Bud is wound up; he sings Arabic love songs about nightingales and broken hearts and theseashore, and he drums lightly on the steering wheel. This is the most upbeat we’ve seen him in the past several months, as he’s
come home increasingly dejected from this or that “donkey animal” of a boss, this or that “blistering nightmare” of a job. (Abu-Jabber, 43)

This extract below, she tells about the stories what is happened in America and the relationships which related with the Arab culture. For instance, she draws the image of her father when he listens the Arabic songs at home as she portrays:

Sounds of Arabic wash through the room. There is a flash, a soothing memory of my aunt’s stone house. I breathe; I begin to edge back down to earth. [...] This never would have happened in Jordan: “Yes, yes, of course you’re right, I know, I know[...]” Then he is getting instructions. He thanks her, hangs up. There is the sound of water bursting into a pot, then the pot banging onto the stove. A scrambling of cabinets opening, jars clinking. “Hon?” Mom calls out, her voice taut. “What are you doing in there? What did Aya say?” “She said make soup!” he cries. (Abu-Jabber, 52-53)

On the other hand, the relationship between Diana’s Father and the origin is different from his personality to his daughter “Diana”. All the time, Diana’s father lived with Jordan culture even though he lived another society as a result his children are connected with the traditions and Jordan cooks. However, it can be noted that there are some differences and similarities between two characters. The first Diana’s father lived his childhood and adolescence in Jordan but Diana lived her childhood and adolescence in America. Though, she was more influenced by Jordan culture than American culture. Therefore, her father speaks very well two languages: Arabic and American. Diana’s father learned the second language from the streets as she says: “Bud learns English not from books, but from soaking in the language of work, of the shops and restaurants after he arrives in this country.” (Abu-Jabber, 10)
However, it can be noted that Diana lived between both situations because she lived in the two countries. This led to considers Diana is half Arab American. This two extracts explained the first generation and the second generation. So, Diana is half Arab American. According to her novel, Jordan life is more difficult than in American, especially, the language. But at that time, she tries to accept these changes in her life. Also, she attempts to learn some Arab words as she says:

> Even though it’s just been a year or two since we’ve returned to America, it’s already too long away from Arabic. English is clear as a glass mirror, and Arabic is the silver inside the glass—hidden and essential. The languages show me different things. I hear words I know by heart—war, soldiers, the English, the Israelis, and more, words like mishakkel: problems, craziness, turmoil. The voices grow louder, they leap into flames. My father, my uncle, and my adult cousins are all shouting as loud as they can. I can see the pulse in my father’s throat. (Abu-Jabber, 81)

Another image that describe the Jordan culture is the presence of Aya who is the sister of her father as she says “Anti Aya”. The relationship with Aya is like her father. It means that Aya is related with the cooking and Eating especially “Baklawa”. In the chapter thirteen, she tells about the effect of the Arab culture in her life as she depicts: Aunti Aya comes to the U.S. Auntie Aya is in town. You can tell by the way all the uncles and older cousins’ drive over to the Route 57 Chalet, a mile from my parents’ house. It’s a grim cinder-block motel the color of dust, but she picked it out on the driven from the airport. The existence of Ayain the community in which they live either directly or indirectly influence.
Indeed, the society where the origin of Diana is complex and complicate that take Diana to ask herself about her life and pushes her to search for her identity between both of cultures such as the west and the East. This is what led to use Orientalism theory in order to analyze Diana’s experiences because she lives between two direct influences in the personality such as the East and the West. In her memoir, this extract show this idea. As she says:

[...] He’ll be off, stomping upstairs and threatening to go back home, where they really love me.” And we won’t be sure if he means to take us along at all. By this point, we have lived in Syracuse for several years, consuming American culture, TV, music, and especially its lavish, oily fast foods—fried fish burgers, fried chicken, and quart-size icemilk Fribbles from Friendly’s restaurant. [...]— dressing like them, talking like them, acting like them! I don’t react when he makes his announcement. I’ve heard this plan so many times, it doesn’t seem like a real possibility anymore. It’s more like a refrain to a country-western song: Someday I’ll see my old home again. (Abu Jabber, 86)

Moreover, this extract below explain the role of Bud’s father, especially, when he gives an advice for his children about the living in the Arab world i.e. the difficulties that his children found in it in order to make the decisions about the Arab world that faced who lived there, particularly, beliefs and traditions as she says:

Throughout my childhood, Bud has informed me that I am “in charge” of my younger sisters, speaking as if they were my employees or personal possessions. He says that if we lived in Jordan, I would be responsible for guiding the shape of their lives, approving of their choices for husbands and other assorted life decisions. (Abu-Jabber, 88)
In contrast, Identity is the concept which defines the selves. In addition, in this memoir, Diana was influenced by American culture when she lived there through the communication with Americans themselves at Streets and School.

Above all, the first influence started with Diana’s mom. Evidently, Diana’s mom played a great role in Diana’s Identity. Diana's mom was American Irish, and a good cook too! It's all about stories and remembering, specially, when her father returned to Jordan. She lived with her mother and grandmother “Gram”. Gram is a catholic religion. She is from Germany. Throughout this memoir, it is not just references to Middle Eastern cooking and recipes such as Magloubeh, a casserole of lamb, rice, onions, eggplant and cauliflower but there are other recipes which are related to the American culture particularly mom culture such as Sandwiches and cakes. Though, Diana’s mom is characterized by calmness, serious, and well-educated as she writes:

The next day is the long, dull blank of Sunday. My mother sits on the couch reading one of her textbooks, studying to become a master. I once asked her: How much college is there? Does it end, or does it go on and on? She told me there’s a bachelor, a master, and a doctor. I reeled at the thought of such infinite education but was most impressed by the idea of becoming a master. (Abu-Jabber, 14)

According to Diana, when mom returned from the school, she gives her some books to learn because Diana’s mom considers the education so significance to draw her life. Evidently, Diana’s mother gives her books from the school in order to educate and learn the American Culture. Also, the main purpose is more reading than speaking. As she describes: “She brings me books from her school all the time, and I will proudly tell anyone, whether they ask me or not, “My mother is a reading teacher!” (Abu Jabber, 26).
So that, those extracts portray the influences of American culture when her parents decided to send her inside school. However, she deals the rules of her mother and Grandmother exactly when her father did not exist at home as she says: “Gram, my mother’s mother, is Catholic, and she says I will get a better education at Saint Mary’s school than out among “the hoi polloi”[…] This is my first indication that my parents don’t know much about me. (Abu Jabber, 21) Another extract, she reinforces the same idea as she illustrates:

During the time that Bud is away, Mom cooks:[…]. Without Bud, we are living according to Mom’s rules. In the evenings, I get to stay up late, and we watch more somber, sepia-toned television shows together on my parents’ big bed. Monica and Suzy are unusually cooperative and go to bed peacefully. Bud is somewhere, I don’t know where. Everything is suffused with an air of uncertainty. (Abu-Jabber, 26)

On one hand, she deals with the cooking of her mother. The fact, the majority of American women cared about the work more outside than at home. It can be noted that the cooking is not important from other cultures. In fact, mothers can be prepared fast food such as sandwiches. So that, she takes American culture through her mother and the American society.

On the other hand, there are some sentences which define the idea that Diana’s father attempts to learn his children the basic Arab life. He concentrated on Jordan culture and she describes the house which found in the Bedu as she portrays:

Bud’s father wanted to raise his children in the country among the Bedu. But their cityraised Palestinian mother had other ideas. She bought a house in town close to the school and taught her children to sleep in beds and eat from plates.
Then in the summers she turned them over to her husband, who let them sleep outside with the animals and, as my grandmother put it, “run around like savages.” (Abu-Jabber, 43)

Through the analyzing of her memoir, she tells about the best friend in America society who is called Sally. Sally is the best American friend and neighbor. Diana defines Sally as the real American. She depicts the thinking of Sally and her family as she writes:

My favorite neighbors are my new best friend, Sally Holmes, and her parents. Bud says that they are “real Americans.” Sally has a pert turned-up nose and pink freckles and ringlets of ribbon red hair. Her mother wears her hair in a glorious upright pillar called a bouffant. Every year, Sally’s parents put up a ceiling-high, rotating, carol-piping, aluminum-silver Christmas tree in their family room. (Abu-Jabber, 51)

In addition, this relationship and communication deals to the importance of friendship in the different traditions in the same countries. It can be said that the choose the boy friend in American culture is considered as the freedom to choose any one who love her. While, the Arab tradition is very difficult to accept this idea. So that, this challenges helped Diana to express this thoughts through her experience with real characters. As she said:

Sally and I sprawl stomach down on the floor of her darkened living room and play Ouija board by the red, green, and white strobe lights of her tree. We ask, “Who does Harry Meyer like?” and, “Will I ever in my life have a boyfriend?” The planchette flies over the board, spelling out hostile maniac answers like “You wish you, HA HAHA” and “Never you you never now.” (Abu Jabber, 51)
Therefore, Diana describes the American country which represents the calm while the Jordan represents the noise. One of the main changes in the Arab country (Jordan) is food culture. Exactly, this is what happen in Jordan. According to Diana, Magloubah is one of the dishes that is related to French and Britain. This dishes developed through the tradition of the Arabs. Thus, the influence of other cultures from one year to another is contributed many changes in minds and self as she depicts:

Magloubeh is one of the dishes that people think might actually have originated somewhere within the region of Jordan. Before Jordan was created in around 1921 by the French and British and an assorted tribunal of other European men who liked to say they owned it, it was loosely and unattractively called Transjordan. It also had other names and owners before that. There were Assyrians, Nabataeans, Romans, Alexander the so-called Great, Persians, Jews, Christians, Muslims, Crusaders, Mamluks, Turks [...] you can’t imagine the comings and goings! All of them stomping over the broadbrowed Jordan Valley and announcing: This is mine. But Bud says through all those name changes and political deals and horse trading, there was always this same bunch of Bedouins living there in their goat-hair tents with their wars and their loud arguments and their big mustaches and their music and their prayers and their night stars over the white desert floor and their big pots of upside down. (Abu-Jabber, 82)

Therefore, the politics played a big role in the establishment of their children, especially; the problem of the Arabs phalastain and Jews. These problems shaped the abhorrence and hatred between the Western world and the Eastern world. Thus, it helped to become the politics in the meeting between Arab family this is what happen in this family as she says:
In the dining room, the fight simmers on even after dinner has appeared on its steaming tray. “In this country, the Arabs are seen only through the lens of politics,” Cousin Yahia complains. “The TV says we’re oil sheikhs or fundamentalists or terrorists or all three at once. It’s all stereotypes! We have no charm or texture! When do we get to have homes and parties and jokes and children? We need strong, national identity! We’re held hostage by ideology, by things like Hollywood and politics and Palestine. (Abu Jabber, 82)

Diana’s Father thinks that the returned to the American. He worried about the acceptance of American culture. Especially, it contributed his children as more American than Arabs as she illustrates:

After few years, Diana’s thoughts have changed at the age twelve. She starts to feel more American than Jordanian. In other words, Diana changes from that little girl to a more stable young lady. As a result, the communication with the American themselves help to choose American culture. As we have seen, her childhood differs from the age of youth as she tells:

They present me with a five pound album swollen with Polaroids and handmade glitter-dusted cards and personally inscribed farewell poetry surrounded by curlicues of glued-on yarn. The one from Jamie Faraday reads, “I had a friend / She went away / And now I am crying / Tears of icicles.” We have moved to Jordan before, but this isn’t the same—this time I’m twelve, I have friends, clothes, and opinions. And my opinion is: I don’t want to move to Jordan. (Abu-Jabber, 86)

Gradually, she starts to accept her reality and construct herself as an American as this extract illustrates:
It hasn’t been easy for me to construct this American self. I’ve had to observe closely. I have finally acquired hip-hugger jeans and a long shag haircut, in the posthippie fallout look of the seventies. I lie awake at night, trying to imagine Jordan. I retain vivid impressions worked into my body, sharp and inexorable—the whiteness of the streets, the stone houses, the running children (Abu-Jabber, 86).

Therefore, when she lives in America, she forget about Jordan. In fact, the changes are not just in the self but in the minds as she says:

But when I deliberately try to reimagine it, it turns to dust. Two years older than me, my friend Hisham will be almost fifteen by now, but in my imagination he’s frozen into a bony, wide-smiling, smart-guy ten-year-old. I’ve lost my sense of Jordan. If we move back there, I don’t know what I’ll be any longer. (Abu-Jabber, 87)

Moreover, it can further be elaborated that Diana’s relation with America is so different from that of her father’s. She does not behave the same way within and outside her home. When she goes out, she forgets about her roots and turns into an American as she says: “My family isn’t Jordanian,” I throw back at him, the refrain of my adolescence. “My family is American!” (Abu Jabber, 115). Another extract portrays the search for identity:

I lean forward, perverse and obstinate. There is a fine, nictitating tremor in my right hand. I narrow my eyes and say, “I hate Arabic food!” Then I look away quickly, afraid to see her reaction and frightened of my terrible words. Worse even, it seems at that moment, than saying, “I’m not an Arab.” It is like a rush of cold air after holding in my breath for too long. I am dizzy. (Abu Jabber, 117)
In addition, those extracts explain the importance of Diana ‘s identity in the life. Exactly, who I am is a question that Diana persistently asks herself. Who I am between two cultures i.e Jordanian or American. She answers about these question when she became the youngest girl. As she portrays in following:

I wait. I wrap my hands around my waist. “I don’t think I—” “Who am I?” she snaps. “I am America, Israel, England! What am I doing?” She waits another long moment, her eyes shining. “I’m shutting up and listening.” She draws the last word out so it hisses through the air. “I am the presidents, the kings, the prime ministers, the highs and the mighties—L-I-ST- E-N[...] She puts down the plate and brushes imaginary crumbs from her fingers. “So now what did I just do? “You ate some baklawa? (Abu-Jabber ,120).

In addition, there are other extracts that describe the identity in other way. For instance, the decision of her father for choosing what is better for his children. He decides for his children to move from America to Jordan for many reasons as she writes:

My sisters and I are chief among Bud’s reasons for moving back to Jordan. And I feel guilty for this, as if becoming American is a weak-minded decision I’ve made. A better girl would have embraced the Saturday morning Arabic lessons in the old church basement downtown, would have cheerfully made all the Arabic foods and Arabic coffees her father wanted. I believe that if only I had willed myself more fully Arab in America, all this dislocation might have been averted. (Abu-Jabber, 88)

The impact of the Jordan culture and American culture on Diana ‘s identity led to the creation a new identity. So, The writer “Diana” expresses her feelings about the
formation of identity and the implication through the complex of cultures, societies, and traditions. This merger led to the development of the gap between the two cultures: American and Jordan. Finally, she accepts the Jordanian culture but she considers herself as an American.
General conclusion

Culture is an important, systematic and complex principle in defining societies. It allows humans to communicate and interact within their society. However, it leads sometimes to failure of communication when people take their cultural heritage to another land. In fact, culture is a dividing line that creates boundaries between societies. We cannot generalize about culture, though we live in an international society.

Diana Abu Jabber and her family are an illustrative example of those who carry their culture from the East, Jordan, to a multicultural American Society. They lived a kind of dilemma and they are torn up between their home culture and the new one. Fortunately, this Arab family has found a symbol of unification. Food, as a significant cultural element, has unified Diana’s family. One can learn about this from the recipes is provided by Diana, and the nice feelings and good memoirs associated with food either in the American Society or the Jordanian Society.

Not only does Diana present the Arab food but also gives a space to the American, generally, fast food. Here, one can say that Diana marries the East and the West. The language of Baklava is a meeting point between the Arab and the Americans cultures.

At the surface, the mixing of the two cultures seems very helpful to Diana, however, it created a crisis in her identity question. One can learn that Diana has live a long internal – conflict period to identify herself, to choose which personality she would choose. In fact, identity is always associated with culture. They are two faces of the same medal.

At the end of the novel, Diana manages to draw her personality and identity without destroying the American or the Jordanian heritage. Evidently, when she was little child, she felt confused about choosing the culture. However, when she grew up, she realized that preserving the two cultures is the appropriate way of living. One can conclude the
conception of culture and identity changes over time. As the language of Baklava illustrates that Diana’s question for identity passed through phases that are related to her periods of life.
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