

Reconciling Two Opposing Cultures: *The Bamboo Stalk* and the Arabic Bildungsroman

Reham Fahad Al-Mutairi

Department of English Language
Qassim University
Almulayda, Qassim, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

Although many have discussed the complicated themes of culture and identity in the *The Bamboo Stalk* by the Kuwaiti novelist Saud Alsanousi, a few critics have examined its protagonist's coming of age journey. The present paper thus seeks to read *The Bamboo Stalk* within the context of the *Bildungsroman* tradition, especially with reference to the Arabic Bildungsroman's distinguished narrative and thematic concerns. Bildungsroman is a literary genre that presents a young protagonist's quest to search for meaning. While examining the novel against the characteristics of Arabic Bildungsroman, the present study highlights the success of the protagonist's coming of age journey wherein he painstakingly transitions from childhood into adulthood in a bid to realize his identity through reconciling two cultures and hence his bicultural identities. The key finding of this paper revolves around the demonstration that *The Bamboo Stalk* resonates with sufficient affinities to warrant its classification as an Arabic Bildungsroman.

Keywords: Alsanousi, Arabic novel, bildungsroman, Kuwait, The bamboo stalk

Cite as: Al-Mutairi, R. F. (2016). Reconciling Two Opposing Cultures: The Bamboo Stalk and the Arabic Bildungsroman. *Arab World English Journal*, 7 (2). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no2.24>

Introduction

Saud Alsanousi is a Kuwaiti novelist and journalist, born in 1981. He published his first novel *The Prisoner of Mirrors* in 2010, which won the fourth Laila al-Othman Prize, a prize awarded for novels and short stories by young writers. His second novel *The Bamboo Stalk* won the International Prize for Arabic Fiction 2013. Receiving this prestigious prize, he becomes the youngest author to win the prize. In 2015, he published his third novel "Mama Hessa's Mice." In his novels, Alsanousi raises complicated themes related to religion, discrimination and identity. His sharp criticism of Kuwaiti society particularly in his last two novels is an attempt to inspire a positive change in the way Kuwaitis view both others and themselves.

The Bamboo Stalk (2012) explores the sociocultural ramifications of ethnic prejudice and economic disparity in Kuwait. The novel recounts the Kuwaiti-Filipino protagonist José's coming of age journey, a quest to embrace his bicultural identities. In *The Bamboo Stalk*, Alsanousi employed a distinctive pattern of the thematic and narrative characteristics of the *Bildungsroman*, a type of novel that traces the moral, psychological, and intellectual development of a protagonist during his quest for authentic selfhood. This distinctive pattern is linked particularly to the Arabic *Bildungsroman* of which *The Bamboo Stalk* is an example.

The Bildungsroman

Coined by German authors, *Bildungsroman* emerged during the 18th century, with Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister Lehrjahre* (1795) long considered a prime example of the genre. One of the most typical definitions of this genre was supplied by Harmon and Holman in their *A Handbook to Literature* (1992): *Bildungsroman* is "A NOVEL which recounts the youth and young manhood of a sensitive PROTAGONIST who is attempting to learn the nature of the world, discover its meaning and patterns, and acquire a philosophy of life and 'the art of living'" (p.34). The German term "*Bildungsroman*" translates as a "novel of formation" and is also called a "novel of initiation" or a "novel of education" (Abrams, 1999, p. 193). Von Morgenstern coined the term *Bildungsroman* in the 1820s, but it was Dilthey who applied the term to particular German novels in which

a regulated development within the life of the individual is observed, each of its stages has its own intrinsic values and is at the same time the basis for a higher stage. The dissonances and conflicts of life appear as the necessary growth points through which the individual pass on his way to maturity and harmony. (as quoted in Swales, 1978, p. 3)

In *Season of Youth: The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding* (1974), Buckley further defined the genre, adding that a *Bildungsroman*'s plotline must include "childhood, the conflict of generations, provinciality, the larger society, self- education, alienation, ordeal by love, and the search for a vocation and a working philosophy" (p. 18). Though Buckley (1974) conceded that writers do not strictly follow this pattern while writing a *Bildungsroman*, he argued that no *Bildungsroman* "ignores more than two or three of its principal elements" (p.18). He also emphasized that the protagonist's journey towards self-discovery is key to the plot and that the journey must be initiated by some type of difficulty facing the protagonist. Grappling with tension and experiencing obstacles help the protagonist to gain self-knowledge and maturity.

The Arabic Bildungsroman

While the genre was first linked to European culture, Bildungsroman has also appeared in Arabic culture with “its definitive, culturally determined themes and structures, distinctive basic tension, and established literary conventions” (Al-Mousa, 1993, p. 223). The Arabic adaptation of the genre revolves mainly around the cultural-specific challenges that the Arabic Bildungsroman protagonist faces during his quest for reconciling two opposing cultures and achieving self-realization. In “The Arabic Bildungsroman: A Generic Appraisal,” Al-Mousa (1993) analyzed six Arabic novels in an attempt to draw the profile of the Arabic Bildungsroman tradition in Arabic literature. Al-Mousa (1993) defined the genre in the following way:

In a *Bildungsroman*, action hinges on the fortunes of an ambitious young hero as he struggles to live up to his poetic goals against the negative forces of prosaic reality. Typically, he grows up in a humble family in the provinces, but, endowed with an adventurous spirit, leaves home to seek his fortune and realize his ambitions. In the course of his adventures, the hero falls in love with an aristocratic lady whose inaccessibility awakens him to the harshness and complexities of life, which is part of his education. His adventures bring him into contact with various guides and mentors who volunteer to initiate him into life's realities and a series of disenchantments designed to contribute to his internal growth. Only by shaking off all the traces of his romantic orientation does he come to accept reality and his apprenticeship to life comes to its end. (p. 223)

However, though his definition of the Bildungsroman includes the same elements as proposed by Buckley (1974), Al-Mousa (1993) proposed three additional themes that distinguish the Arabic Bildungsroman from the Western Bildungsroman. The first theme is a cross-cultural conflict of the East and the West, the second is the occurrence of a spiritual crisis during the protagonist's journey, and the third replaces the typical theme of teaching the protagonist the art of living in the Western Bildungsroman with the theme of teaching the protagonist to reconcile two opposing cultures. In any Bildungsroman, the protagonist's journey should end in some form of self-realization or identification of life purpose. Though the protagonist in a Bildungsroman might be shown to have morally, intellectually or spiritually developed, the success focus of the protagonist's cultivation and edification process in the Arabic Bildungsroman is demonstrated by the protagonist's ability to reconcile two cultures. The development of the protagonist in the Arabic Bildungsroman thus “involves a great deal of bicultural stress and conflict” (Al-Mousa, 2006, p. 263).

The Bamboo Stalk and the Arabic Bildungsroman

José Mendoza/Isa al-Tarouf, the protagonist of *The Bamboo Stalk*, struggles to define an identity apart from the rejection he experiences. The result of an urfi marriage (a kind of marriage in which the marriage contract is not announced or registered officially) between parents of distinct social classes, his bicultural identity stems from his mother, Josephine Mendoza, a Filipino domestic servant, and his father, Rashid al-Tarouf, the Kuwaiti son of her employer. Since birth, José has experienced rejection and isolation at the hands of both cultures and so embarks on a pilgrimage to find his authentic self. Leaving behind his mother's land, the Philippines, José imagines that the Kuwaiti culture will provide him with the acceptance and, ultimately, the fulfillment he has been lacking. José believes Kuwait to be his true home, and that

only there he will find his authentic self. By undergoing the thematic stepping-stones common to the Arabic Bildungsroman, José will reconcile his feelings toward both cultures.

José's birth is socially unacceptable in class-conscious Kuwaiti society. Denounced for his relationship with a domestic servant, José's father, Rashid, succumbs to social pressure and sends José and his mother, Josephine, to the Philippines. Rashid ultimately rejects both mother and son by announcing that he is divorcing Josephine and remarrying. Though Rashid keeps his promise to send financial support, the money ceases when Rashid is killed during the Second Gulf War. At the cessation of the support, José begins a life in the Philippines now defined by poverty and loss. However, he retains his dream of one day experiencing prosperity in his native Kuwait, and with the assistance of his father's friend, Ghassan, José returns to Kuwait. Upon landing in Kuwait, José experiences discrimination for not being fully Kuwaiti; his partial Filipino ancestry, as well as his parents' scandalous relationship, engenders immediate rejection. José also begins to fall victim to the rigid, prominent Kuwait caste system. Again, he finds himself being oppressed by a culture and its people. Unraveling his complex ethnic and cultural roots enable José to transcend the confines of his birthright. Through his many struggles, and the power of his own experiences and observations, he gradually finds his place within both cultures. He learns he is able to transcend his past and define himself; he is both José Mendoza and Isa al-Tarouf. He is Kuwaiti-Filipino. The novel closes showing José, his wife and son, Rashid, leading a comfortable life in the Philippines. His self-concept is his own, and his journey to self is a success. In *The Bamboo Stalk*, the protagonist's strenuous journey toward maturation serves to recognize and resolve the complexity of bridging opposing cultures.

The general themes of the traditional Bildungsroman can be found throughout *The Bamboo Stalk*. In the Philippines, José endures emotional alienation, among many other challenges and obstacles. His maternal grandfather, Mendoza, mocks José as being fatherless and blames his birth for his mother's unemployment: "Although I was still young, Mendoza became openly hostile towards me. 'If there was any good in this boy, his family there wouldn't have abandoned him,' he said" (Alsanousi, 2015, p. 64). While the emotional rejection is particularly painful, it motivates the protagonist to begin the all-important quest for self. The many instances of societal reproach serve as necessary growth points. Rejected by both his maternal grandfather and parental family, he learns that he must become self-sufficient. The aspiration to develop his own mind and character is a controlling feature of the typical Bildungsroman protagonist, one who eventually learns that it is unwise to depend upon others for sustenance. The rejection in the Philippines does not destroy the young José, who ultimately endeavors to live in his homeland, Kuwait. He believes that he will one day live peacefully and prosperously in Kuwait, and be fully embraced by his father's people. At this point in the novel, José is a passive child who lacks all keys to self-realization. He pins his hope on his chances for individual fulfillment upon the unknown—another place, another time, and the actions of others. While José's mother naively supports this plan, she does supply him with something he will need throughout his journey: hope. Her encouragement gives José the motivation and fortitude he needs throughout his journey.

The Cross-Cultural Conflict Theme

At the age of 18, José gains the opportunity to begin the next leg of his quest. Here, the theme of cross-cultural conflict begins to evolve. Although the Arabic and Western

Bildungsroman both involve a journey, the Arabic protagonist heads not to a city, but to a foreign culture. Throughout, he will endure multiple challenges and experiences that will assist his understanding of self and world, and also help to reconcile the opposing cultures. Al-Mousa (2006) explained that “the young hero’s exposure to a foreign culture proves to be beneficial, in that it enables him to form better insight into himself and to develop a more accurate understanding of the native and foreign culture” (p. 263). Thus the outcome of the quest in the Arabic Bildungsroman pivots on the character’s coping with bicultural stress. That the journey to a foreign culture benefits the individual’s personal growth and the cultivation of his or her mind is best expressed by Said (2006) who pointed to the journey’s influence on the individual’s development:

The more one is able to leave one’s cultural home, the more easily one is able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment and generosity necessary for true vision. The more easily, too, does one assess oneself and alien cultures with the same combination of intimacy and distance. (p. 259)

In *The Bamboo Stalk*, José does not take his journey West, but rather returns to the East, specifically to Kuwait. Although no Western journey occurs, the educational benefits of a trip to another culture, as proposed by Said (2006), are comparatively dramatized in José’s journey to Kuwait, ensuring affinity with the Arabic Bildungsroman. Since José’s childhood had been spent in the Philippines rather than in his native Kuwait, his direction home conflicts only superficially with Al-Mousa’s (1993) model of the Arabic Bildungsroman. Being exposed to another culture allows José to evaluate things from “a cross-cultural perspective” (Al-Mousa, 1993, p. 224).

In Kuwait, José is immediately confronted by discriminatory treatment typically enacted against people from the Far East. José experiences discrimination as soon as he arrives in Kuwait when scolded by the passport officer for lining up with Kuwaiti passengers. He is not only subject to the prejudicial attitudes of strangers, but finds he is also disdained by his parental family. José discovers that his grandmother disapproved of his parents’ marriage. Thus, worried that José’s presence could irreparably damage their reputation, his aunts try to disown him from the family. His childhood dreams of Kuwait quickly begin to erode. While he would prefer acceptance, he is given the option of housing and money if he remains hidden. Ghassan explains to a bewildered José that Kuwaiti society is complicated, but José cannot initially comprehend the complexity of the class system:

I didn’t understand what Ghassan said about Nouriya’s attitude. Why was she so upset? What was it that threatened her reputation and made her the laughing stock of her husband’s family? Why did my presence complicate marriage for her son and her daughter? Those were the same words Grandmother had said to my father years earlier when she found out my mother was pregnant: “And your sisters, you selfish, despicable man. Who’ll marry them after what you’ve done with the maid?” These were things I didn’t understand. When I was in the Philippines my mother couldn’t explain them to me. I asked Ghassan what it all meant.

“It’s impossible to explain such things to you, Isa,” he replied, “and it’s hard for you to understand.” (Alsanousi, 2015, p. 195-96)

José's bitter disappointment nevertheless motivates him to act. Separated from the family, he gains financial independence and begins to make his own observations of Kuwaiti society. Meeting the Kuwaiti young men he had once known from the Philippines further helps José to sort out the country's complex class system. He learns through his own experience with rejection that in Kuwait, unlike the Philippines, class standing is paramount:

There was something complicated in Kuwait that I didn't understand. All the social classes looked for a lower class on whose back they could ride, even if they had to create one. Then they would climb on to the shoulders of those in the class below, humiliate them and use them to ease the pressure from the class above. (Alsanousi, 2015, p. 250)

Socio-economic classes remain distinct, and thus do not inter-marry. José finds that this imbalance is the reason why Kuwaiti cannot get to know "the other." However, this inflexibility enables José to appreciate memories of the Philippines, where everyone, except for the harsh treatment he received from his troubled grandfather, never judged his origin. While his growing disappointment with Kuwait is profound, it yields poignant lessons. His childhood dreams were naïve and based upon an unfulfilled promise. Having lived within both cultures, he is able to interpret his own experience within each. He perceives materialism as the controlling force within Kuwaiti culture. In particular, he is unimpressed with his wealthy paternal family's offer of money in return for his silence. Similarly, his father sent José money when he was a child, but neglected to give him a parent. While the family lives in luxury, José observes that their lives appear bereft of meaning:

Giving without love has no value. Taking without gratitude has no savour. That's what I have discovered. I looked at the floor in the middle of the sitting room. I imagined my mother there, sitting cross-legged by her suitcase a week after coming back from Bahrain. The family were around her on the sofas, everyone waiting for their present....

I can still remember how happy everyone looked. Why wasn't I as happy with the presents from my Kuwaiti family as Uncle Pedro was with a cigarette lighter that wasn't worth more than 100 fils? It's love that makes things valuable. (Alsanousi, 2015, p. 276)

Self-realization is achieved when the individual finally makes his or her own decisions and choices. Throughout his stay in Kuwait, José cultivates the habit of comparing and contrasting the two cultures. This process is integral to his gradual maturation. This stage, the conflict between two cultures, proves to be foremost in José's educational journey as it widens his vision to assess himself. He is able to identify and reconcile his own values and beliefs within a cross-cultural context. He neither needs others to offer him a sense of place, nor an explanation of his role within it. The exposure to these two opposing cultures enables José to gradually gain control over his life and further his growth. José's self-education through this stage prompts his quest towards reconciling these two cultures.

A love affair is a salient theme in the Arabic Bildungsroman that also helps to bring "opposed cultural values into dramatic focus" (Al-Mousa, 1993, p. 225). The male protagonist of the Arabic Bildungsroman typically falls in love with a female from an opposing culture, typically a Western country. The disparities within the relationship sharpen the conflict between the two cultures, thus furthering the protagonist's maturation. Although José does not experience

a romantic relationship with a Kuwaiti female, his correspondence and love for his Filipino cousin, Merla, serves a similar purpose. Typically, the Arabic Bildungsroman protagonist is ultimately rejected by the Western female, an event that drives him to compare his native culture to her own. In *The Bamboo Stalk*, José is not rejected by the girl he romantically loves, yet his love for Merla still sharpens the tension between the two cultures. Merla accepts him without any bias; she judges him on account of neither his rejection in Kuwaiti nor his father's abandonment. While he is in Kuwait, her emails are instrumental to José's progress. She warns that without seizing his own power, he will never realize his potential: "Prove to yourself who you are before you prove it to others. Believe in yourself, and those around you will believe in you, and if they don't believe that's their problem, not yours" (Alsanousi, 2015, p. 282). She aims at inspiring José to know himself better. By shedding light on both cultures, and more importantly on himself, this love guides and nurtures his maturation. José eventually marries Merla. This love affair, and eventual marriage, is the embodiment of bicultural unification. Two cultures can peacefully coexist.

The Spiritual Crisis Theme

Al-Mousa (1993) considers the spiritual crisis as a theme typical to the Arabic Bildungsroman. Like the love affair, this theme dramatizes the cultural values in the opposing cultures. In the West, the protagonist feels his spirituality fading, a feeling which causes him to adopt the materialism of the West, eschew it in favor of his devotion to the spirituality of the East, or else create a hybrid of the two, as Al-Mousa also concludes. In *The Bamboo Stalk*, José is without a previous devotion worthy of return; however, he still experiences a genuine spiritual crisis. Since childhood, José has questioned faith and pursued truth. Certain that he would one day return to Kuwait and become Muslim like his father, his mother ignores his questions. While exploring the religious diversity true to the Philippines, José attends services with Christians and Buddhists, but Islam remains foremost in José's mind. José believes that his Kuwaiti homeland will eventually resolve his religious questioning.

At his first visit to a mosque in Kuwait, José meets a young Filipino religious scholar, Ibrahim Salam, who has been living in Kuwait and working as a correspondent for a Filipino newspaper. Ibrahim gives him a DVD of the movie *The Message*, a movie chronicling the life of Prophet Mohammed, and begins to answer José's questions. This encounter encourages José to pursue his interest in Islam while continuing his search for universal truths. He observes that Islam encourages people to be kind, yet he has experienced mistreatment by Muslims in Kuwait. As he continues to engage in religious discussion with Ibrahim, he begins to question Ibrahim's stories about miracles. Here, José finds himself at a cross-cultural impasse. By using the skills of examination and assessment he has acquired throughout his journey, José is able to reflect on spirituality through a cross-cultural lens.

While still a boy in the Philippines, José had been christened in a church. He recalls the priest asking questions during the ceremony and how he, purely out of obedience, nodded affirmatively. José's personal beliefs were never questioned. Similarly, he experiences the Kuwaiti people holding tightly to the edicts of one religion, Islam, yet neglecting to honor José's appeal for spiritual knowledge. After a lifelong search, José openly critiques those who superficially ascribe to the tenets of religion, yet neglect its humanistic application. He argues with Ibrahim that Islam does not need superficial miracles to be credible and that people do not

need material objects to worship God:

Religions are bigger than their adherents. That's what I've concluded. Devotion to tangible things no longer matters as far as I'm concerned. I don't want to be like my mother, who can only pray to a cross, as if God lived in it. I don't want to be like one of the Ifugao and never take a step unless it's sanctioned by the anito statues, which help my work prosper, protect my crops and save me from the evil spirits at night. I don't want to be like Inang Choleng, tying my relationship with God to a favourite statue of the Buddha. I don't want to seek Baraka from a statue of a white horse with wings and the head of a woman, as some Muslims do in the south of the Philippines. (Alsanousi, 2015, p. 299)

These years of spiritual questioning precipitate a chain of events that assist José in clarifying his values, ones that positively contribute to his spiritual maturation and the likelihood of his self-actualization. Undergoing a spiritual crisis, José has refined a concept of spirituality based on his own understanding and not someone else's doctrine. This experience of the spiritual crisis typical of the Arabic Bildungsroman has paved the road for José's search for authentic self.

The Theme of Reconciling Two Cultures

The last stage of the Arabic Bildungsroman protagonist's journey is the reconciliation between two opposing cultures. For José, the acceptance of his biculturalism has been earned through cultural shock, his love affair with his cousin and his spiritual crisis. His three years in Kuwait have culminated in self-awareness. Through his painful experiences with his grandfather and father's family, he has come to understand that he, alone, is capable of assigning his worth. His value cannot be assigned by another, regardless of the person's cultural, socio-economic or spiritual standing. José has gained the wisdom to create a life devoid of classification. He returns to the Philippines where he marries his cousin Merla and has a son, Rashid, named after his father.

The essence of the Arabic Bildungsroman is the protagonist's ability to reconcile two opposing cultures; however, by returning to the Philippines, José neither turns his back on Kuwait, nor declares his journey a failure, but rather experiences his journey full-circle. He returns because he has achieved his ultimate goal: to know José. José went to Kuwait at 18 because he needed to harmonize his opposing cultures and prove and reconcile his bicultural identities. This point in the voyage afforded José the opportunity to both confront and challenge aspects of the life he had once dreamed of. At one time, José had perceived Kuwait to be his homeland—a place where he would experience religious mastery, peace, and prosperity. He had expected to find his personal, intellectual, and spiritual worth within its folds. On the contrary, Kuwaiti culture serves as a foil rather than a reflection. The challenges and hardships he has endured in Kuwait, including his spiritual search, were critical turning points in his journey. His marriage to his Filipino cousin is a sign of true cultural reconciliation.

When he returns to the Philippines, José brings a small bottle containing dirt from his father's grave, a Kuwaiti flag, a prayer rag and an English version of the Koran. These objects are meaningful symbols of his newfound peace with his bi-ethnicity. In the novel's final scene, José sits with his family watching a football game between the Philippines and Kuwait and roots for both countries: "I don't want one of my teams to defeat my other team. I don't want to take

sides” (Alsanousi, 2015, p. 370). The scene clearly shows that José has transcended the need to belong solely to one culture. His physical and spiritual journeys between both countries have availed him of the positive and negative aspects of both cultures, ultimately allowing him to form a hybrid self. At the end of his quest, José emerges different as his self-perception has been shaped and solidified and is no longer dependent on outside classifications. During the first months of his stay in Kuwait, José felt that his dream of belonging to Kuwait was false and that he would never become like the bamboo stalk, which even when cut and planted on the other side of the earth would grow its roots again. However, he eventually acquires a clear, and authentic vision of the real José, a vision follows his overcoming a series of trials and ordeals.

Conclusion

José’s journey follows strictly the Arabic bildungsroman pattern of steady growth culminating in the protagonist's reconciliation of two opposing cultures and thus possession of a whole and authentic self. Although some may read José’s return to the Philippines as an indication of the failure of his journey, reading *The Bamboo Stalk* against the thematic features of the Arabic Bildungsroman highlights, on the contrary, the success of José’s journey to self-realization and to reconcile two cultures. José’s return was preceded by awareness of his growth after going through many hardships and tribulations. Alsanousi wielded the features of the Arabic Bildungsroman to emphasize this process of maturation and growth. Just as personal growth and the reconciliation between two cultures in the Arabic Bildungsroman are journeys from the inner heart to the outside world, in *The Bamboo Stalk*, the protagonist’s inner dissatisfaction drives him to search for his identity by reconciling his bicultural identities. José goes through all of the stages of the transition of the Arabic Bildungsroman protagonist. This transition culminates in his return to the Philippines when he comes to the full realization of who José is and what his newfound principles are. The return to the Philippines thus becomes the culmination of Alsanousi’s story about his Kuwaiti-Filipino protagonist’s coming of age, as well as the culmination of his protagonist’s years of bewilderment and pain.

About the Author:

Reham Fahad Al-Murtairi is a teaching assistant at Qassim University where she teaches several courses including introduction to literature, stylistics and literary translation. She also holds an MA in English literature from King Saud University, Saudi Arabia. She is interested in young adult literature, comparative literature and film studies.

References

- Abrams, M. H. (1999). *A glossary of literary terms* (7th ed.). Massachusetts: Earl McPeck.
- Al-Mousa, N. (1993). The Arabic bildungsroman: A generic appraisal. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2(3), 223-240.
- Al-Mousa, N. (2006). The changing image of the heroine in the Arabic female bildungsroman. *Middle Eastern Literatures*, 9(3), 257-270.
- Alsanousi, S. (2015). *The bamboo stalk* (J. Wright, Trans.). Chennai: Bloomsbury. (Original work published 2013).
- Buckley, Jerome H. (1974). *Season of youth: The bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Harmon, W., & Holman, C. H. (Eds.). (1992). *A Handbook to Literature* (3rd ed.). New York: Macmillan.

- Said, E. (2006). *Orientalism: Western conceptions of the Orient*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.
- Swales, M. (1978). *The German bildungsroman from Wieland to Hesse*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.