

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

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### 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

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