



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***MAJOR PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL CONFLICTS AND
TASKS IN SELECTED MIDLIFE BILDUNGSROMANS OF
SAUL BELLOW AND ANNE TYLER***

KEYHAN BAHMANI KOLOOR

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SAUL BELLOW AND ANNE TYLER**

By

KEYHAN BAHMANI KOLOOR

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

February 2013

DEDICATION

To my dear family: my mother, sister and two brothers
And my dear father who is not with us anymore



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

The fact that the practices of defining a Bildungsroman as a novel narrating the formation of personality, or indiscriminately labelling novels with young or adult protagonists as Bildungsroman, are controversial and show the vagueness of this subgenre. Given that developmental psychology has shown that the quality of man's personality development is different at different stages of life—with the personality development of an adult literary character differing from that of a young character—there is a need to classify a subgenre of the Bildungsroman which deals with protagonists who are middle-aged. The first to recognise this need is Margaret Morganroth Gullette, who not only coined the term “midlife Bildungsroman,” but also attempts to show that only authors who have undergone midlife transitions themselves can write such novels. However, Gullette's approach suffers from a number of drawbacks, primarily from her employment of an eclectic intertextual psycho-biographical method, in which intrinsic and extrinsic approaches are mixed together with psycho-biographical analyses of the authors' lives. This study will

therefore explore the possibility of presenting a more complete theoretical framework to analyse the major psychological and psychosocial conflicts faced by the protagonists of four such midlife Bildungsromans, namely Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day* (1956) and *Herzog* (1964), as well as in Anne Tyler's *Morgan's Passing* (1980) and *Back When We Were Grownups* (2001). This framework will be based on two phenomena, individuation and midlife identity crisis. To discuss these concepts, a triangular theoretical approach, based on Jungian, Eriksonian and Levinsonian adult development theories will be used to show that midlife Bildungsromans are structured on a series of related psychological conflicts and tasks that allow for the classification of the subgenre as distinct from the conventional Bildungsroman. This study indicates and tests a pattern of adulthood individuation, consisting disintegration-midlife crisis-reintegration, as a fixed narrative pattern in midlife Bildungsromans.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KONFLIK DAN TUGAS PSIKOLOGI DAN PSIKOSOSIAL UTAMA
DALAM NOVEL-NOVEL BILDUNGSROMAN PERTENGAHAN UMUR
OLEH SAUL BELLOW DAN ANNE TYLER**

Oleh

KEYHAN BAHMANI KOLOOR

February 2013

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Mendefinisikan sebuah novel *Bildungsroman* sebagai novel yang menceritakan pembentukan personaliti seseorang protagonis, atau melabelkan apa-apa novel yang memaparkan cerita tentang protagonis muda sebagai *Bildungsroman* memang merupakan isu yang kontroversial, dan menunjukkan bahawa genre ini belum diklasifikasikan dengan sempurna. Memandangkan bahawa psikologi perkembangan (*developmental psychology*) telah membuktikan bahawa perkembangan personaliti individu itu berbeza mengikut umur—dengan perkembangan personaliti seseorang protagonis dewasa ternyata berbeza daripada perkembangan personaliti protagonis muda—wujudlah ruang juga untuk mengklasifikasikan novel *Bildungsroman* yang memaparkan protagonis pertengahan umur sebagai *subgenre* yang berlainan daripada *Bildungsroman* konvensional. Untuk mengisi ruang ini, Margaret Morganroth Gullette mewujudkan terma “Bildungsroman pertengahan umur” (*midlife Bildungsroman*), dan juga memperajukan pendapat bahawa hanya penulis yang telah mengahrunji krisis pertengahan tahun secara langsung boleh menulis

Bildungsroman pertengahan umur ini. Namun, kerangka teori yang digunakan oleh Gullette mempunyai beberapa kelemahan, terutamanya dalam penggunaan teori psikobiografik (*psychobiography*) yang menganalisis biografi penulis, dan pada masa yang sama, teori intertekstual (*intertextual*) yang menandakan adanya perhubungan antara karya-karya penulis tersebut. Oleh itu, tesis ini akan mengembangkan hipotesis Gullette dengan menggunakan kerangka teoretikal yang lebih mantap, bagi tujuan menganalisis konflik psikologi dan psikososial utama yang dihadapi oleh protagonis-protagonis dalam novel *Seize the Day* (1956) dan *Herzog* (1964) oleh Saul Bellow, dan juga *Morgan's Passing* (1980) dan *Back When We Were Grownups* (2001) oleh Anne Tyler. Dua konsep utama akan menunjangkan kerangka ini, iaitu *individuation* dan krisis pertengahan umur. Untuk memahami kerangka ini, teori-teori Carl Jung, Erik Erikson, dan Daniel Levinson akan digunakan dalam tesis ini. Penggunaan kerangka ini akan menunjukkan bahawa terdapat konflik-konflik tertentu yang boleh digunakan sebagai asas yang lebih kukuh untuk mengklasifikasikan subgenre *Bildungsroman* pertengahan umur. Kajian ini menunjukkan dan menguji corak *individuation* dewasa, yang terdiri perpecahan *midlife* krisis reintegrasi, sebagai corak naratif tetap dalam *Bildungsromans* *midlife*.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 28 February 2013 to conduct the final examination of Keyhan Bahmani Kolor on his thesis entitled “Major Psychological and Psycho-Social Conflicts and Tasks in Selected Midlife Bildungsromans of Saul Bellow and Anne Tyler” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106], 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously and is not concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or any other institutions.

KEYHAN BAHMANI KOLOOR

Date: 28 February 2013

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