



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

English Language and Literature MA

READING IAN McMILLAN AS A POSTMODERN BRITISH POET

Ozan EKİCİ

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2019

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Ozan Ekici tarafından hazırlanan "Reading Ian McMillan as a Postmodern British Poet" başlıklı bu çalışma, 17 Haziran 2019 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.



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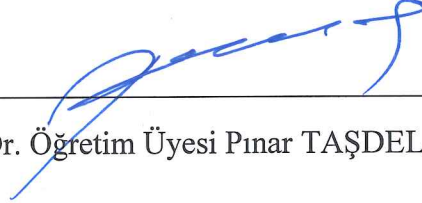
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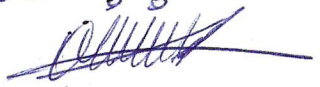
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06.07.2019


Ozan EKİCİ

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ABSTRACT

EKİCİ, Ozan. Reading Ian McMillan as a Postmodern British Poet. Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2019.

British poetry that is produced after 1960s coincides with the same period when postmodernism as a philosophical attitude dominated all fields of life and especially literature. The British poet Ian McMillan's poetry is influenced by postmodernism of the period and it practices postmodern devices. Some of these are parody, pastiche, stylistic mélange and playful inventiveness. McMillan's poetry deconstructs the normative understanding of traditional poetry and reconstructs a postmodern poetry which employs its devices to create new grounds for poetry to exist. Accordingly, this thesis analyses Ian McMillan's poetry collections *A Chin?* (1991) and *Jazz Peas* (2014) in accordance with their use of postmodern devices so as to illustrate what makes Ian McMillan a postmodern poet and to what extent his poetry represents postmodern British poetry. In Chapter I, McMillan's use of formal postmodern devices in his poems are studied and it is argued that the selected poems in *A Chin?* show that McMillan's attitude towards postmodernism in his early work deals with the political concerns of its time as well as employing formal postmodern devices in the poems. Chapter II argues that McMillan employs postmodern devices and experiments with postmodern poetry to extend the use of postmodernism in poetry. Thus, this shows that the political concerns of the first collection shift towards aesthetic concerns about the condition of postmodernism in poetry in *Jazz Peas*. Hence, this thesis argues that the practices of postmodernism through formal postmodern devices that are observed in *A Chin?* and the use of formal postmodern devices as well as experimentation with postmodernism in *Jazz Peas* make McMillan a postmodern British poet. It is observed that McMillan's *A Chin?* is concerned with the political matters as well as the aesthetic ones whereas *Jazz Peas* problematizes the aesthetic practice of postmodernism in poetry.

Key Words: Postmodern British Poetry, Postmodernism, Ian McMillan, *A Chin?*, *Jazz Peas*, Postmodern Poetry.

ÖZET

EKİCİ, Ozan. Ian McMillan'ı Bir Postmodern İngiliz Şair Olarak Okumak. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2019.

1960'lerden sonra üretilen İngiliz şiiri, postmodernizmin felsefi bir tutum olarak yaşamın tüm alanlarına ve özellikle edebiyata nüfuz ettiği dönemle aynı zamana denk gelir. İngiliz şair Ian McMillan'ın şiiri, dönemin postmodern akımından etkilenmiş ve postmodern tekniklerin kullanımına yönelik örnekler vermiştir. Bu tekniklerin bazıları şunlardır; parodi, öykünme, metinlerarasılık, oyuncu buluşçuluk, stilsel karışım, ve öz-düşünümseleci yaklaşım. McMillan'ın şiiri bu teknikleri kullanarak İngiliz şiirine yeni postmodern örnekler sağlar. McMillan'ın şiiri geleneksel şiir algısının normatif anlayışına meydan okur ve bu anlayışı ortadan kaldırma görevini üstlenir; bunun karşılığında postmodern tekniklerin kullanılmasıyla yeniden oluşturulan alternatifler, şiirin yaşaması için yeni alanlar oluşturur. Buna göre, bu tez McMillan'ın şiir koleksiyonları olan *A Chin?* (1991) ve *Jazz Peas*'i (2014) postmodern teknikleri kullanmaları açısından inceler ve böylelikle McMillan'ın ne denli postmodern bir şair olduğunu ve McMillan'ın şiirinin postmodern İngiliz şiirini hangi noktaya kadar temsil ettiğini örnekler. Birinci bölümde, daha önce bahsi geçen postmodern tekniklerin McMillan'ın şiirlerinde nasıl kullanıldığı çalışılmıştır. *A Chin?*'den seçilen ve incelenen şiirler dâhilinde McMillan'ın postmodern teknikleri kullandığı ve bunu yaparken dönemin politik sorunlarına, aynı zamanda postmodernizmin içerisindeki estetik sorunlara değindiği gözlemlenmiştir. İkinci bölümde, McMillan'ın aynı şekilde postmodern teknikleri şiirlerinde kullandığı ve buna ilaveten, postmodern şiirin üzerinde, postmodernizmin şiirlerde kullanımını yaygınlaştırmak amacıyla denemeler yaptığı gözlemlenmektedir. Bu sebeple, bu bölümde McMillan'ın *A Chin?*'de dönemin politik olaylarına karşın izlediği tutumda bir değişiklik olduğu, *Jazz Peas*'te temel kaygının postmodern şiirin estetik unsurları üzerinde yoğunlaştığı gözlenir. Sonuç olarak, birinci bölümde erken dönem eserlerinden *A Chin?* içerisinde bahsi geçen postmodern tekniklerin kullanıldığı, ikinci bölümde ise son dönem eserlerinden *Jazz Peas* içerisinde postmodern tekniklerin yanısıra, postmodernizm üzerine McMillan'ın yeni denemeler ortaya sürdüğü gözlenir. Bu durum McMillan'ı bir postmodern İngiliz şair yapmaktadır. Buna ilaveten,

McMillan'ın *A Chin?*'de izlediđi politik tutumun, *Jazz Peas*'te yerini postmodern Őir içindeki estetik unsurlara bıraktığı gözlemlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Postmodern İngiliz Őiri, Postmodernizm, Ian McMillan, *A Chin?*, *Jazz Peas*, Postmodern Őir

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INTRODUCTION

“This is a period of slackening - I refer to the color of the times.” (Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* 71)

Lyotard describes what postmodern period meant for humanity by naming it as a “period of slackening” (*The Postmodern Condition* 71). This term portrays an epoch which experienced two world wars with hostilities. It is an exhausted period, yearning for reconciliation, peace and serenity after the catastrophic events that humanity and nature endured. From the perspective of postmoderns, modernism failed to represent the needs of its age because it lacked understanding colours, in other words, the colours of the *others* because “... modern culture had aspired to universalism and totality, [on the other hand] postmodern culture prefers pluralism, particularism, and local knowledge” (McHale, *The Cambridge Introduction* 68). Modernism prioritises rationalism over representation and forces a singular reality for societies and arts. Therefore, people seek new ways to rewrite, re-explain, reintroduce, reconstruct, reinterpret, replenish, and refashion the new age they experience so that they celebrate plurality within arts, literature and science. Lyotard gives the purpose of postmodernism as follows: “Let us wage a war on totality; let us be witnesses to the unrepresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honour of the name” (*The Postmodern Condition* 82). On the other hand, Ray Linn explains the outcome of postmodernism: “[I]t becomes possible to imagine a more open world in which we play with the Other, instead of obsessing on a unity in which the Other is sacrificed to reason” (105). A similar restructuring takes place in poetry; especially after the 1980s, British poetry tends to voice the unvoiced and represent the underrepresented.

In the light of these statements; this thesis argues that Ian McMillan is a postmodern contemporary British poet whose poetry employs postmodern devices and techniques such as parody, pastiche, intertextuality, playfulness, and direct challenge to the grand narratives with the aim of deconstructing and reconstructing the hegemonic and the dominant norm of the uniformity in poetry.

The aim of this chapter is to provide the necessary information about postmodernism and postmodernism in literature, especially in British poetry to understand what makes Ian McMillan a postmodern British poet. In this sense, the origin and the meaning of postmodernism, postmodernism's appearance on literature, especially British poetry, the definitions and purposes of postmodern devices are given in this chapter. The use of postmodern devices in the selected poems from McMillan's poetry will be analysed in the following chapters to show that McMillan skilfully engages with postmodernism in British poetry.

1960s is the period when "the first wave of postmodernism" (McHale, "Postmodernism and Experiment" 143) as a philosophical attitude blossomed in architecture, literature and arts. Terry Eagleton suggests that "[p]ostmodernism is a style of culture which reflects something of this epochal change, in a depthless, decentred, ungrounded, self-reflexive, playful, derivative, eclectic, pluralistic art which blurs the boundaries between 'high' and 'popular' culture, as well as between art and everyday experience" (VII). These given qualities or characteristics exhibit themselves in different conditions; postmodernism in literature exhibits challenges directed towards the grand narratives, hegemonic norms and cultural dominance which are performed through the attitude of playfulness. There are the devices that are identified as postmodern, which follow and support this playful attitude. These devices can be broadly listed as parody, pastiche, intertextuality, stylistic *mélange*, bricolage, blurring of genres [Sci-Fi, Steampunk], irony and mingling high and low arts. These devices help postmodern texts undermine the authoritative and dominant grand narratives and they deconstruct these grand narratives for the aim of reconstructing so that they can create a subjective truth, since the postmodern attitude requires ironic, sceptical and distrustful thinking towards the grand narratives as they tend to serve a singular power and neglect plurality.

Postmodernism cannot be limited to a single definition or statement, as McHale states "[p]ostmodernism multiplied and juxtaposed worlds; it troubled and volatilized them" (*The Cambridge Introduction* 15). There are postmodernisms, of each and every person, of each and every country: "If you do a database search on postmodernism today, you will at last

turn up the titles of articles and books not only on American literature but on everything from francophone African (and North African) to Chinese writing, from the literature of the South Pacific to that of Latin America, Ireland, or Central Europe” (Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* 172-3). However, French and American postmodernisms take most of the credits from the critics as “[their] responses to the postmodern condition are frequently significantly different in temper” (Zurbrugg 27). Cornel West states: “... American attacks on universality in the name of difference, these ‘postmodern’ issues of Otherness (Afro-Americans, Native Americans, women, gays) are in fact an implicit critique of certain French postmodern discourses about Otherness that really serve to hide and conceal the power of the voices and movements of Others” (Anders and West 273). Clearly, it can be inferred that “[p]ostmodernism ..., is several things at once” (Bertens 3). Thus it does not have a single definition. Therefore, it is able to secure its position within a motion in which it freely encapsulates various perspectives from different backgrounds and cultures. In this way, it creates an equal ground for various definitions to represent themselves. It stands on an equal distance to diversified explanations and serves no dominant authority. Evidently, “[p]ostmodernism is not something we can settle once and for all and then use with a clear conscience” (Jameson XXII).

The first appearance of postmodernism’s effect “is in the realm of architecture” (Jameson 2). As Hutcheon states architecture is the field “... the term ‘postmodern’ first found general usage” (*The Politics of Postmodernism* 2). To suggest a specific date for the beginning of postmodernism or postmodern era in literature and arts, Fredric Jameson claims that “[t]he case for its existence depends on the hypothesis of some radical break or *coupure*, generally traced back to the end of the 1950s or the early 1960s” (1). Ihab Hassan, similarly explains that “[i]n 1959 and 1960, Irving Howe and Harry Levin wrote of postmodernism rather disconsolately as a falling off from the great modernist movement. It remained for Leslie Fiedler and myself, among others, to employ the term during the sixties with premature approbation, and even with a touch of bravado” (261). However, the origin of the term postmodern is “... uncertain, though we know that Federico de Onis used the word *postmodernismo* in his *Antologia de la poesia espanola e hispanoamericana* (1882-

1932), published in Madrid in 1934; and Dudley Fitts picked it up in his *Anthology of Contemporary Latin-American Poetry* of 1942” (Hassan 260-1). There are multiple opinions about the etymological meaning of the term postmodern: Adalaide Morris states that “[i]f for a while prefix ‘post’ – as in post-Newtonian, post-industrial, post-structural, or postmodern – stems confusion by pointing to paradigms we no longer trust, its consolations are temporary and largely negative” (146). On the other hand, Lyotard claims that “[t]he ‘post-‘[of postmodernism] indicates something like a conversion: a new direction from the previous one” (“Note on the Meaning of 'Post-'." 410). This is a direction from modernism to postmodernism and according to Lyotard what gives a new direction to postmodernism is that “... the ‘post-‘ of ‘postmodern’ does not signify a movement of *comeback*, *flashback*, or *feedback*, that is, not a movement of repetition but a procedure in ‘ana-‘: a procedure of analysis, anamnesis, anagogy, and anamorphosis which elaborates an ‘initial forgetting’” (“Note on the Meaning of 'Post-'." 412).

Clearly, postmodernism signals a transformation rather than a repetition or continuation of the precedent material. This phenomenon prescribes a new procedure that promotes “initial forgetting” of the collected data by far. Similarly, McMillan’s poetry follows a related pattern to this “initial forgetting” and creates the necessary environment by making use of the postmodern procedures, as this thesis argues. Brian McHale in his *Postmodernist Fiction*, further questions and explains the etymological meaning of postmodern. He explains that the “ism” part in the word postmodernism is multifunctional as it both refers to a chronological division and an organised “poetics”; while at the same time, it highlights the “*post*” of postmodernism. He claims that “[p]ostmodernism is not postmodern, whatever that might mean, but post modernism; it does not come *after the present* (asolecism), but after the *modernist movement*”. Moreover, the term postmodernism “signifies a poetics which is the successor of, or possibly a reaction against, the poetics of early twentieth-century modernism, and not some hypothetical writing of the future” (5). By addressing postmodernism as “the successor of, or possibly a reaction against” (5) modernism, McHale describes the attitude of the majority of the postmoderns. Ihab Hassan supports that postmodernism is the successor of modernism by claiming that “THE

POSTMODERN SPIRIT lies coiled within the great corpus of modernism ...” (139), so it rises and evolves from modernism. Jameson confirms Hassan by stating that “[t]he various logical possibilities, however, are necessarily linked with the taking of a position on that other issue inscribed in the very designation Postmodernism itself, namely, the evaluation of what must now be called high or classical modernism” (55). Kristin Ross evaluates postmodernism against modernism as a form of competition; she states that modernism “was a period so powerful that it was able to make all of the rest of history nothing but its own precedent or antecedent. The least postmodernism can do is become eternal” (201).

To understand the true nature of postmodernism, a third and a more inclusive perspective would lead further than a dead-end argument. It is necessary to acknowledge that on one level there is the anti-modernist attitude in postmodernism but “... on another level, the residue of modernism is characteristic of the period code of postmodernism” (Kennedy 20). Hassan suggests that “[m]odernism and postmodernism are not separated by an Iron Curtain or Chinese Wall; for history is a palimpsest, and culture is permeable to time past, time present, and time future. We are all, I suspect, a little Victorian, Modern, and Postmodern, at once” (264). Lyotard also sides with this third perspective and he suggests that “[a] work can become modern only if it is first postmodern. Postmodernism thus understood is not modernism at its end but in the nascent state, and this state is constant” (*The Postmodern Condition* 79). Therefore, postmodernism has a dynamic nature; it reshapes, it changes and transforms itself. It aims to subvert modernism but it must be in “*motion*” to avoid being part of grand narratives and totalitarianism. Jameson states that “[i]n this new machine, which does not, like the older modernist machinery of the locomotive or the airplane, represent motion, but which can only be represented in *motion*, something of the mystery of the new postmodernist space is concentrated” (45).

Evidently, it is clear that postmodernism “is a term that is inseparable with the study of other known philosophies [especially modernism]” (Fischer and Graham 29). But briefly, as Stuart Sim suggests, “postmodernism is to be regarded as a rejection of many, if not most, of the cultural certainties on which life in the West has been structured over the past couple of centuries” (Sim VII). Clearly, it is seen that the element of subversion and

redefinition of the structured narratives are critical elements of postmodernism. It questions the meanings presented and made truth by the norms of hegemony; it forces new perspectives against totalitarianism for a better understanding of the contemporary world and contemporary experience. Furthermore, "... [postmodernism] has called into question our commitment to cultural 'progress' as well as the political systems that have underpinned this belief" (Sim VII). In this regard, postmodernism can be understood as a turning point: It is an intense search for rebuilding and re-approaching the ideas that have been constructed by the Enlightenment. Postmodernism and postmoderns demonstrate "... how consolatory paradigms express a bourgeois ideology: one that both reinforces a capitalist status quo and facilitates the forgetting of lost others and lost histories by insisting on closure." (Clewell 3). By consolatory paradigms, Clewell refers to the hegemony of the power holders on cultural paradigms. In this sense, postmodernism shows resistance to the imposed order of dominant and hegemonic cultures and opens a space for those who want to represent and express themselves: "Lost histories and lost others" can have the opportunity of sharing their realities with their own styles through the philosophy of postmodernism. Postmodernism provides the other and the traditionally othered a space where they can confront their oppressors and reclaim their own part in the history of truths. However, what is mentioned here "... is not so much a process of completion, then, as a complex manoeuvring between ending and renewal.

To carry out this manoeuvre, philosophical postmodernism has performed a comprehensive demolition job on western orthodoxies" (Sheehan 21). Therefore, Sheehan exemplifies the crucial characteristic of postmodern thought; being in *motion*, being in between the ending and renewal. Postmodernism associates this *motion* with subjectivity and challenges the totalitarian world view by deconstructing its grand narratives. Briefly, "[p]ost-modernism could be summed up as a belief that large-scale ideas and political philosophies are inherently dangerous. (The terror of the totality). In its place we need to celebrate the fragmentation of subjectivity" (Graham 61). It can be suggested that the central idea within the postmodern phenomenon is "[c]ollapsing traditional boundaries between elite and

popular, conservative and idiosyncratic, and exceeding geographical and national restrictions ...” (Edwards 81).

Accordingly, Foucault in his preface to *Anti-Oedipus* associates postmodernism with the promotion of multiplicity and difference over uniformity and totalitarianism. (“Preface to *Anti-Oedipus*” 382-3). These statements can be interpreted as the ethics of postmodern philosophy; distribution of power among the cultural mosaics can only be achieved as long as the discourse of cultural hegemony prefers multiplicity instead of totalising dominancy of the social norms. As Sarup states “[n]o one can grasp what is going on in society as a whole” (145). Therefore, there is no singular truth that is valid for all. There are individual or communal perspectives which cannot be disregarded and, in fact, they are to be included in the pool of perspectives in order to sustain a world with multiplicity of realities. The formula for application of postmodernism to the social environment on this account is framed by Nancy Fraser and it is explained under three main points, which are:

- (1) a postmodern conception of the public sphere must acknowledge that participatory parity requires not merely the bracketing, but rather the elimination, of systemic social inequalities;
- (2) where such inequality persists, however, a postmodern multiplicity of mutually contestatory publics is preferable to a single modern public sphere oriented solely to deliberation; and
- (3) a postmodern conception of the public sphere must countenance not the exclusion, but the inclusion, of interests and issues that bourgeois masculinist ideology labels "private" and treats as inadmissible. (295)

Specified points aim to provide a sustainable postmodern society where there is no absolute dominancy over the traditionally othered and oppressed groups. A postmodern society aims to create an inclusive community where everybody respects and tolerates differences through which they celebrate plurality. Postmodernism is an answer for inequalities and opportunity for those who are forced to be conditioned as “inferior”.

Postmodernism carries and applies its philosophy to the areas that it affects. Literature is one field that is affected by the postmodern philosophy. Hassan presents the key characteristics of the postmodernism that are observed in literary works. Hassan deals with

postmodernism opposite to modernism. In this regard he draws a comparative schema in his work, *The Dismemberment of Orpheus* which introduces the characteristics of postmodern devices. Firstly, Hassan introduces the idea of “antiform” and he associates this with a deconstructive approach towards the forms of texts. Postmodern works aim to undermine certainties as they do not embrace novelty in both forms and contexts. In this regard, antiform exhibits the promotion of being formless, thus, it is difficult to subvert and it gives more space for postmodernism to challenge the established structures of texts. Secondly, the idea of “play” upon the narratives, forms and ideologies enables postmodernism to approach texts from different angles for a wider perception of the events. “Play” here, stands for the playful inventiveness in forms and contexts of works. It may appear as an unexpected mixture of things that are unlikely or it may exhibit itself as a challenge to the norms in a playful attitude. Thirdly, the idea of “anarchy” is embedded in the postmodern philosophy as it requires challenging totalitarian ideas and grand-narratives. It also aims to deconstruct them to strip them of their power, for a plural response to the authorial, totalitarian attitudes. Thus it requires the act of decreation, deconstruction, antithesis. These lead to the creation of mutant recreated texts, and reconstructed narratives which aim to represent the contemporary reality and they base themselves on the idea of difference (Hassan, 267-8). Hassan draws the earliest characteristics of postmodern ideas and these ideas feed the purpose of postmodern devices; parody, pastiche, intertextuality, stylistic melange, bricolage and self-reflexivity.

David Harvey finds Hassan’s definitions as a useful starting point “... to depict complex relations as simple polarizations, when almost certainly the true state of sensibility, the ‘real structure of feeling’ in both the modern and postmodern periods, lies in the manner in which these stylistic oppositions are synthesized” (42). Hence, Harvey interprets postmodernism as a phenomenon where contradicting styles co-exist, in which variety of experiments can be performed. Postmodern literature provides inclusiveness for genres, styles and forms to become mutants, and thus it aims to be the last paradigm of its kind. As Kristin Ross defines, “[p]ostmodernism [is] a conceptualization of the present that seeks to historicize the effacement of the historical – thus, in some ways eternalizing itself, freezing

the movement of time” (200). Ross points out that postmodernism aims to be an everlasting philosophical phenomenon that includes every other product of thoughts that have evolved until this new age. In this sense, this phenomenon wants to be the trunk of the tree of philosophy that holds every difference on its branches.

The necessity of moving towards a postmodern literature is felt when John Barth published *The Literature of Exhaustion* in 1967 and suggested that literature has exhausted its materials and it needs a new direction by stating that “[b]y ‘exhaustion’ I don’t mean anything so tired as the subject of physical, moral, or intellectual decadence, only the used-upness of certain forms or exhaustion of certain possibilities – by no means necessarily a cause for despair” (310). Barth points out that there is a kind of “used-upness” of forms and structures which affected the creativity of writers of the period. It can be said that the need is compensated with a whole new reality that is called postmodernism. Postmodernism opens a new field for writing, for creating differences in literature. Even the attitude directed towards literature and its own definition is challenged. Niall Lucy states, “[w]hat, then, is literature, that it may sometimes appear in its absences ... as a blank page, a row of asterisks, a picture of a cunt – or a work of literary criticism?” (2). This can be interpreted as a new perspective where what used to be regarded as non-literary and what used to remain as unidentified within literary works start exhibiting themselves through the borderless inclusiveness of postmodern ideology. Broadly speaking, *no, this cannot be a literary piece* is replaced by *this can also be a literary piece*.

One example to this shift is the postmodern critics’ acceptance of *Tristram Shandy* which is a work published by Laurence Sterne in 1750s as the earliest example of postmodernism in literature. Cohen underlines that *Tristram Shandy*’s marbled pages, nonlinear narration, insertion of sermons, letters and stories are all postmodern features (294). Clearly, postmodernism is not something new, but it is something rediscovered, renamed and recognised “as it was termed in the 1980s and early 1990s” (Edmond 4). Briefly, it flourishes at the beginning of the 1960s and it is critically taken into consideration at the beginning of the 1980s and the early 1990s. Looking back to *Tristram Shandy*, it can be said that this literary work provides the first applications of postmodernism in its body. As

McHale argues, “breaking through the ‘fourth wall’ to address the reader, fragmentation and lack of closure, encyclopaedic scope, unstable irony, manipulation of the material resources of the printed book (typography and spacing, diagrams, blank, black and marbled pages) – it’s all here in this eighteenth-century novel, 200 years before anybody ever called anything *postmodernist*.” (*The Cambridge Introduction* 9). *Tristram Shandy*, once accepted as a marginal work of eighteenth century, with the rise of postmodernism becomes a central attraction point among postmodern literary works.

The change in view of postmodern literature finds British literature when Ian Gregson, in his chapter “John Ashbery and British Postmodernism” also explains British postmodernism as a “departure” (209) from British modernism. This departure is caused by the new instruments and devices that the poets brought to their works. Additionally, the search for plurality of voices in contemporary British literature and especially poetry is one other reason for the departure. As Gregson and Kennedy argue, the developments and new devices brought to literature such as Hutcheon’s parody, Jameson’s pastiche, Kristeva’s intertextuality, Gregson’s approach to stylistic *mélange* and bricolage, Hassan’s and Edward’s idea of play and last but not least Gregson’s self-reflexive fictiveness have brought along a progress towards postmodernism in British literature. However, David Kennedy comments on Ian Gregson that he may be the only person to suggest that the British postmodernism exists as a distinctive field (Kennedy 79) and both Gregson and Kennedy distinguish British postmodernism from other postmodernisms because British postmodernism particularly engages with the political reality of its time and place. Evidently, it can be said that postmodernism in Britain presents itself through postmodern devices and postmodern attitude towards the search for plurality of voices to represent, and in addition to these, it particularly engages with politics of its time. On the other hand, Timothy Brittain-Catlin, refers to British postmodernism as “a magnificent Edwardian revival” (“Understanding British Postmodernism”) in terms of architecture. So, in general, it can be said that British postmodernism is widely conceived as the whole postmodern effect reflected in British art, literature, architecture and philosophy.

As Ian Gregson argues it: British postmodernism in poetry is a phenomenon that "... assimilated postmodernist concerns with self-reflexive fictiveness and with the way that language distorts and even constitutes the experiences in the reality of the political and moral issues it addresses" (5). David Kennedy, inspired and influenced by Gregson, more specifically states that "British postmodernist poetry does indeed share general characteristics with other postmodernist art, its most accomplished (and thorough) practitioners combine to sketch a poetic that assumes a healthy scepticism about postmodernism itself and a wide degree of selectivity about the practices it involves" (78). Clearly, British postmodernism shares common characteristics with other postmodern arts as Kennedy claims, but there are some different qualities of British postmodern poetry such as "[p]arody and pastiche are marks of something else that is crucial not only [to] postmodernist art in general but to British postmodernist poetry in particular" (82). The essential existence of parody and pastiche are visible in British postmodernist poetry according to Kennedy. This is one of the elements that differs British postmodernism from postmodernism in general. As Kennedy argues: "[t]he postmodernist artist recognises that the "master narratives" inscribe totalising and universalising impulses which either seek to homogenise difference or, simply, to exclude it and, consequently, works against these impulses" (82) through parodying them. Postmodern devices that are used in postmodern British literary works and especially in poetry problematize social phenomena and politics of the period. They interact with real life elements and make use of real life events happening in Britain and the world (Kennedy 83 – 107). Redell Olsen believes that this interaction of postmodernism with real life elements, politics and new subjectivities that "modernism produced" is the part of anti-modernist attitude that postmodernism [in Britain] performs (46). In this sense, this reveals another characteristic of postmodern poetry in Britain that is the challenge against what Kennedy defines as "master narratives: English narratives" (86). By master and English narratives, Kennedy refers to the authoritative texts that dominate English literature. These texts define the norms in British literature, and thus, they do not allow pluralisation to happen in contemporary British poetry. Postmodern works aim to subvert the master narratives and undermine their power to provide pluralisation in the new poetry (Kennedy 86-7). Postmodern works deconstruct

these master narratives and they reconstruct them for a critical review of their purpose from a different perspective.

Another feature of postmodern British poetry is that “British postmodernist poetry is indivisible from ex-centricity” (Kennedy 83). By ex-centricity Kennedy refers to the poetry produced by the margins and the marginal. It does not represent the popular opinion of the mainstream but, on the contrary, it represents the poets who are unheard, underrepresented in terms of sex, gender, race, political opinions and social class. Therefore, contemporary British poetry is the poetry of the ex-centric and it is the poetry that deals with ex-centric issues by using poetry as a medium to represent and discover the othered’s identity. This can be related to the cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic community of British culture. The colonial past of Britain which oppressed the minorities confronts its past through postmodern poetry. However, there is also the impulse of critical regionalism in the ex-centricity that Kennedy mentions. He describes this critical regionalism as “... a term [he] borrows from postmodernist architectural practice [which] was coined by Alex Tzonis and Liliane Lefavre in ‘The grid and the pathway’ (1981). It is a way of distancing architecture from both Enlightenment progressivism and reactionary nostalgia for pre-industrial forms” (102). Therefore, authors and poets outside progressive London represent this attitude.

In this sense, Ian McMillan represents local Barnsley, Yorkshire as a reactionary alternative to pro-industrial ideas by focusing his poetry on the idea of ex-centricity through making representations of his local surroundings. McMillan makes use of the local language and the accent, places and problems of Yorkshire and its behaviour in his poems. What Kennedy defines as “critical regionalism” in parallel with ex-centricity is also valid in McMillan’s approach towards poetry. “Critical regionalism” is defined as a strategy to “mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived indirectly from the peculiarities of a particular place” (Kennedy 102). Evidently, this is what McMillan does, as he never steps back from being a Yorkshire-man both in his poems and as a person. In his work *Neither Nowt Nor Summat – In Search of the Meaning in Yorkshire*, McMillan particularly tries to represent the identity of Yorkshire. In his words, he defines Yorkshire as follows: “Yorkshire persists; it changes and it stays the same. ... It is a place I will spend

my life trying to figure out” (McMillan *Neither* 340). Clearly, McMillan’s will to discover and represent the idea of “critical regionalism” and “ex-centricity” from the perspective of Yorkshire is explicit. McMillan’s selected poems from the selected collections discussed in this thesis also support the point that Ian McMillan represents the ex-centric postmodern poetry in contemporary British poetry.

Kennedy believes that some of the features that add postmodernism a British meaning are coined by contemporary poets such as Ian McMillan, John Ash and Peter Didsbury through the themes of master narratives and English master narratives, ex-centricity with its relation to critical regionalism and the use of parody, pastiche and intertext within the English master narratives as in the example of “Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley” by Ian McMillan (Kennedy 96-103). Furthermore, the exclusive elements provided by these authors are “the dialogues with realism”. By “dialogue with realism” Kennedy explains that these poets do not hide behind the curtains of mixed realities that postmodernism provide to them. They tend to touch the real world behind the surreal compositions of their poetry. The mixture of realities of postmodernism provides poets a wider space to represent their positions (107-111). Moreover, Kennedy believes that “the ghosts of politics” are always felt within the works of these poets. They tend to include the political occurrences of their times and criticise what is happening from their own perspective. Kennedy states that postmodernism in British poetry offers “... generalised images of oppression, oblique critiques of the class system, non-specific barbs against the status quo” and thus it “may in fact, reflect the largely ineffectual nature of opposition during that period” (112). In British postmodern poetry, hence, “... the presence of political material usually works to disturb a fictive, typically post-modern surface which suggests that, as with realism, British poets do not view the problematizing poetics of the postmodern as unproblematic ‘manna’” (Kennedy 112). Clearly, what Kennedy assumes as postmodern in British poetry is “a pinch of scepticism” (117) and the battle between “aesthetic practice [and] social reality” (117). Some of the poets deal with aesthetic issues, whereas, some others problematize social issues and on the other hand, some others do both, such as Ian McMillan (Kennedy 117-9).

British poets of the 1980s understand poetry as a place to experiment and go against the totalising norms of their period. As Kennedy states that:

British poets since 1980 may often have felt they were living in an old country in which 'master narratives' were either breaking down or being actively deconstructed. ... [P]ostmodernism continues to be such a positive influence for a number of British poets because it has liberated them from the totali[s]ing and consequently exclusive impulses of the inherited British poem. ... postmodernism has enabled a younger generation to 're-envision' the poem as a 'laboratory' of the systems and codes that structure culture and society. (Kennedy 119)

Evidently, the poetry produced after the 1980s becomes a laboratory of the traditionally unvoiced, the othered, the marginalised and the silenced (Hulse et al. 15-6). Hence, it is plural, multi-voiced and it represents poetries rather than a single uniform, traditional perception of poetry. Postmodern British poetry can be considered as one of the many voices of this plurality. Ian Gregson characterises postmodernism in British poetry as a "phenomenon to the extent that it self-consciously upsets expectations and destabilizes any authoritative vision of the world, and the writing of postmodern poets is often playful, self-reflexive and parodic in the approved Postmodernist way" (4-5). Therefore, it can be suggested that the postmodern attitude in British poetry creates a form of protest against the totalising understanding of poetry. Instead of creating boundaries in front of creativity, it is open to multi-coloured, multi-layered, multi-voiced texts to redefine what poetry means. It specifically "has assimilated Postmodernist concerns with self-reflexive fictiveness and with the way that language distorts and even constitutes the experiences it is supposed merely to describe, it has also persisted in believing the reality of the political and moral issues it addresses" (Gregson 5).

Ian McMillan (1956-) a prolific British poet from Yorkshire, is one of the representatives of postmodern British poetry with his "... overtly literary playfulness" (Smith "Ian McMillan"). Although his contemporaries appear in the "New Generation Poets" (Forbes "New Generation Poets") McMillan is not selected as one of twenty contemporary British poets that are credited as the new generation poets. However, McMillan is included in *The New Poetry* collection published in 1993 by Michael Hulse, David Kennedy and David Morley. *The New Poetry* is a collection that advocates novelty in contemporary British

poetry that is especially written after the 1980s. This novelty involves plurality, eccentricity and prioritisation of multiplicity over totality, unlike the two other collections made by Blake Morrison and Alvarez about contemporary British poetry.

In Morrison's *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry* (1982), it is argued that "British poetry is once again undergoing a transition: a body of work has been created which demands, for its appreciation, a reformation of poetic taste. It is in the belief that this shift is genuine and important, and needs to be brought to the attention of a wider public ..." (11). Morrison, for the first time, acknowledges a shift in the paradigm of contemporary British poetry and argues against Alvarez's collection in that it does not reflect the truth and novelty within the new British poetry. Morrison criticises Alvarez and states that "The word 'new' conspicuous in all these titles [included in Alvarez's anthology], and making it new is the oldest of all anthologists' art" (11). Thus, Morrison accuses Alvarez of trying to force newness although Alvarez's *The New Poetry* (1962) has nothing new, and is not built around "the new" contemporary authors except for a few, such as Ted Hughes and Thom Gunn. Moreover, his anthology does not concentrate only on British poetry; it also introduces few American poets in order to enable comparison. On the other hand, Alvarez claims that his anthology "makes no claims to give a sample of every kind of verse now being written in Great Britain. A number of more or less well-known names have been left out – though none, [he] hope[s], by oversight" (17). It is a high probability that the criticism he receives on not reflecting the true contemporariness of British poetry that Alvarez is forced to claim that "this is a personal anthology" (17) in his prefatory note to the revised and enlarged version of *The New Poetry* in 1967. It can be understood that neither Morrison's nor Alvarez's collections could really compensate the needs of the new contemporary poetry.

The editors of the book *The New Poetry*, published in 1993, Michael Hulse, David Kennedy and David Morley state that "[t]hirty years ago, A. Alvarez published his pioneering anthology *The New Poetry*. We make no apology for using his title for an anthology of poetry that is fresh in its attitudes, risk-taking in its address, and plural in its forms and voices" (16). So, the name itself is actually re-branded and adapted by these

editors to define the new phenomena in British poetry. They use the word “new” to refer to a new understanding in British poetry which represents the characteristics of the poetry produced after the 1960s and especially after the 1980s. It is argued that the poems written after the 1980s represent contemporary poetry. The editors explain their purpose as follows:

The new poetry emphasizes accessibility, democracy, and responsiveness, humour and seriousness, and reaffirms the art’s significance as public utterance. The new poetry highlights the beginning of the end of British poetry’s tribal divisions and isolation, and a new cohesiveness – its constituent parts “talk” to one another readily, eloquently, and freely while preserving their unique identities. (Hulse et al. 16)

The passage above contains information to help understand postmodernism in the British poetry. It is a poetry that promotes plurality, a new cohesiveness and negation over dominance and hegemony of a totalitarian poetic understanding. Unlike the modernist attitude’s totalising singularity, this new understanding celebrates plurality, variety of identities, freedom, democracy, and humour which comprises a postmodernist attitude that started building itself in the British cultural and literary fields. Therefore, the poets included in *The New Poetry* of 1993 by Hulse and et al. reflect the voice of the unheard, underrepresented and marginalised. From now on, postmodern contemporary British poetry focuses on the significance of representation of the traditionally marginalised. *The New Poetry* changed the poetry paradigm in Britain. But, before it came into recognition “[t]he poetry scene in 1950s in Britain was overwhelmingly white, male, middle-class and centred around Oxbridge and London, and in Ireland (where class and regional relationships are differently inflected) it was overwhelmingly white and male” (Broom 1). The centre of the poetry experiences a massive change with the postmodern poetry. Broom states that “[s]ince 1960s and 70s there has been a gradual but radical diversification of the poetry being published and reviewed, so that women poets, poets from working-class, rural and non-metropolitan backgrounds, and poets from ethnic minorities have become prominent and recognised figures within the poetry world” (1). This is a transformation of British poetry, since it moves from a totalitarian and totalising understanding towards the world of pluralities of postmodern Britain where the representation of the othered and the subversion of authority begin. As stated by Barry, “[u]ntil the late 1980s contemporary British poetry was usually mapped as a stark oppositional polarity, with a conservative (anti-modernist)

mainstream, which is implacably opposed to the excluded, embattled and experimental *margins*” (11). Clearly, the anti-modernist postmodernism is inevitably observed in the works of this period.

Ian McMillan plays an important role in this emerging postmodern poetry movement. McMillan opens a space for himself through his poetry which combines his Yorkshire dialect and playful attitude with his local, regional Yorkshire position. He challenges the idea of poetry by providing reconstructions –alternatives– to what can be poetry and how it should be written. His poetry is considered as “a unique combination of stand-up comedy and surrealism” (Smith “Ian McMillan”). It challenges the grand-narratives and introduces new themes and new ways of treating his subject matters. He redefines what a poem is; for example, he can use a newspaper page, pudding recipe or phone book numerals and address them as poems (Carol, “Yorkshire Pudding Rules”). The way McMillan experiments with postmodernism to establish a new understanding in poetry seems to dominate McMillan’s purpose of writing. The majority of the poems analysed in the chapters of this thesis reveal that McMillan strives for expanding the limits of poetry by introducing it new forms, techniques and subject matter that can be considered as postmodern.

Lyotard states that:

A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by pre-established rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgement, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. Those rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what *will have been done*. (Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition* 81)

According to Dragana Obradovic, “[p]ostmodernist art can be summarized through its features of ironic, self-reflexive playfulness, formal inventiveness, and heterogeneity of genres. In certain currents, it can be especially hermetic, closed off from outside influences and concerns” (20). The postmodern play exhibits itself as a form of experiment in a playful attitude with genres, styles and forms. Brian Edwards argues that “... [p]ostmodernism affirms difference, resists appropriation and manifests itself in playful invention” (79). As Edwards defines it in his *Theories of Play and Postmodern Fiction* the

idea of play in postmodern fictions involves "... matters of bemusement and entertainment and intellectual exchange however serious the stakes" (80). The postmodern play interacts with taboos, reinterprets norms and deconstructs authoritative powers as well as providing language games, mixture of realities, blurring of styles, genres and forms. In McMillan's poetry, we have a *playful* approach where he experiments with the taboos of British poetry and poetry in general through his *un-poetic* alternatives, language games, and intertextual plays.

Intertextuality is another postmodern device which questions the idea of originality but also gives new opportunities to the writers that could afford a work of *mélange* through which a new concept of originality is created. In fact, originality does not concern postmoderns, in the end they prefer a little pla(y)giarism over serious mentality of modernism. As stated by Mevlüde Zengin, "the term intertextuality was coined by Julia Kristeva in 1966" (300) and "[i]ntertextuality, in its broadest sense, is a poststructuralist, deconstructionist and postmodernist theory that changed the concept of text, recognizing it as an intertext owing to the interrelations between texts and texts' absorptions of other texts" (300). Clearly, intertextuality is a postmodern device for the creation of an intellectual playground where one can mix and create novelties; change and reconstruct old narratives. This creates new advantages for contemporary British poetry to establish a communication between texts which leads them to be equally recognised. Furthermore, the intertext also allows postmodern works to undermine the texts that they borrow from as the texts gain new bodies with the application of intertextuality. However, intertextuality also pluralises perceptions upon those texts by creating alternative readings to them.

Parody, is defined as "a perfect postmodern form, in some senses, for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies" (Hutcheon *The Poetics of Postmodernism* 11). Parody is often an "ironic quotation, pastiche, appropriation, or intertextuality" (Hutcheon *The Politics of Postmodernism* 89). However, Hutcheon claims that:

[P]arody in postmodern art is more than just a sign of the attention artists pay to each other's work and to the art of the past. It may indeed be complicitous with the values it

inscribes as well as subverts, but the subversion is still there: the politics of postmodern parodic representation is not the same as that of most rock videos' use of allusions to standard film genres or texts. This is what should be called pastiche, according to Jameson's definition. In postmodern parody, the doubleness of the politics of authorized transgression remains intact: there is no dialectic resolution or recuperative evasion of contradiction in narrative fiction, painting, photography, or film (*The Politics of Postmodernism* 102).

Unlike the other critics, Hutcheon sees parody as the most efficient device of subversion that both subverts and pays attention to the works of other artists.

Accordingly, Jameson's definition of pastiche generally appears as an anti-definition of Hutcheon's parody. Jameson argues that "[p]astiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style, the wearing of a linguistic mask, speech in a dead language" (17). By dead language, Jameson means that pastiche is a parody without purposes it is just like speaking in a dead language. He adds that "it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter and of any conviction that alongside the abnormal tongue you have momentarily borrowed, some healthy linguistic normality still exists" (17). In this regard, Jameson actually associates pastiche with the postmodern play explained above. Pastiche seems to have no motives but it inevitably interacts with the postmodern play as it provides access to other texts and materials. Jameson summarises pastiche as follows: "Pastiche is thus blank parody, a statue with blind eyeballs: it is to parody what that other interesting and historically original modern thing, the practice of a kind of blank irony" (17). The main difference between parody and pastiche are their purpose in postmodern texts. Parody, as Hutcheon suggests, has the aim of subversion whereas Jameson's pastiche has no such purpose. That is the reason why Jameson defines it as a blank parody, a parody without purpose. Interestingly enough, although they may be offered as things that should take one another's place, they both can appear in the same postmodern work.

Stylistic *mélange* and *bricolage* are some of the other postmodern devices which are just as important. Stylistic *mélange* is defined as "mingling of the real and the surreal ... [It] is a postmodernist phenomenon to the extent that it self-consciously upsets expectations and destabilizes any authoritative vision of the world" (Gregson 4) and moreover, "it is not

mere eclecticism – it reflects a genuine concern to oppose single-minded visions of experience with a self-conscious emphasis on diversity and mutability” (Gregson 5). So basically, stylistic *mélange* refers to the double-layers of texts which provides multi-realities for texts to expand and express themselves. Multi-realities provide texts to operate different meanings in different layers to deny an authoritative vision over themselves. Stylistic *mélange* shows the postmodern concerns of authors with the sustainability of diversity; therefore, it is intentionally performed in their works.

Bricolage, on the other hand, is explained as “the multiple quotation of elements taken from earlier styles or periods, classical and modern ...” (Lyotard, "Note on the Meaning of 'Post-'. " 409). *Bricolage*, in this sense, is an open-buffet for postmodern works; it allows works to collect from diverse range of available things; as in *Tristram Shandy* where sermons, marbled pages and blank pages serve to the novel as vast range of diversified materials (McHale, *The Cambridge Introduction* 9). Both stylistic *mélange* and *bricolage* allow postmodern works to interact with the authoritative grand-narratives more by making use of mixture of old and new styles and materials. In a postmodern text in which *bricolage* is applied, one can easily detect the residues of other materials and enjoy the intellectual pleasure to understand the postmodern play.

Accordingly, in the light of this information about postmodernism and postmodernism in literature, this thesis aims to provide an analysis of Ian McMillan’s poetry so as to illustrate what makes Ian McMillan a postmodern poet and to what extent his poetry represents postmodern British poetry. His poetry is going to be analysed under two main chapters with two of his collections; the first chapter studies *A Chin?* (1991) as a representative of postmodern qualities through its protest attitude directed towards normative poetry. The second chapter introduces his collection *Jazz Peas* (2014), one of his latest poetry collections, which has a similar attitude compared to his late twentieth century poetry collection. The second chapter, hence, compares and contrasts McMillan’s earlier (late twentieth century) and later collections (twenty-first century) through which it reveals that McMillan’s attitude towards postmodernism has shifted from the representation of political concerns to aesthetic concerns about the condition of postmodern poetry and it also created

postmodern British poetry with McMillan characteristics such as Yorkshire humour filling local poems, that play on the seriousness of poetry writing. Furthermore, McMillan as a postmodern poet represents the voice of the other from a local-critical perspective and he experiments with postmodernism in contemporary British poetry.

A Chin? and *Jazz Peas* are intentionally selected because first of all, they are rich sources of postmodern devices; secondly, *A Chin?* presents McMillan's early attitude towards postmodernism and this attitude predominantly engages with politics of its time while it also experiments with forms and techniques of postmodernism. On the other hand, *Jazz Peas* presents his current attitude in postmodern poetry which seems to have shifted its politic concerns and replaced them with aesthetic concerns about the condition of postmodernism in poetry. To observe the shift in his approach towards postmodern poetry, one collection is selected from his early works and this is *A Chin?* published in 1991, and the other collection is selected from his latest works and this is *Jazz Peas* published in 2014.

In conclusion, this introduction analyses postmodernism as a philosophical phenomenon that rejects the previous traditions by challenging their authoritative position by employing deconstruction to their established norms. Postmodernism in literature exhibits itself in the British poetry produced after the 1960s through variety of devices that are considered to be postmodern. These devices challenge the forms, techniques and structures of the previous traditions by deconstructing and reconstructing them. Some of these devices are parody, pastiche, bricolage, stylistic melange, playful inventiveness and intertextuality. Postmodernism in British poetry includes these devices and adds a British attitude to postmodernism with the concerns about politics. Ian McMillan, a postmodern British poet from Yorkshire, makes use of postmodern devices in his poems to represent his approach to postmodernism as well as his local background in his poetry. While doing so, McMillan provides new alternatives to postmodern British poetry with his experimentations on postmodernism in poetry.

The reason for the emergence of this thesis is that McMillan's labour for postmodern poetry has not been repaid and thus, he is not as recognised as his contemporaries. This thesis will prove McMillan's contributions to postmodernism in poetry by showing that he uses postmodernism skilfully and with diversity in his poems through the postmodern devices explained above. The use of postmodern devices in the poems selected from the collections *A Chin?* and *Jazz Peas*, as a methodology of this thesis will be examined. To what extent the selected poems from these collections represent postmodernism in British poetry will be shown with examples of poetry of ex-centricity and engaging with politics in postmodern poetry. The selected poems from the collections are intentionally taken for the analysis since they exhibit variety of different postmodern devices observed in McMillan's poetry. The selected poems from *A Chin?* provide an early example of McMillan's attitude towards postmodernism which is concerned with politics of the period, while, the selected poems from *Jazz Peas* provide a current example of McMillan's practice of postmodernism in poetry in which the concerns about the politics are replaced by aesthetic concerns about practicing postmodernism in poetry.

It is important to note that there are very few secondary sources written about the poet McMillan and his works. This has caused difficulties in writing this thesis, but the biographical materials in McMillan's works have provided very informative facts. Moreover, this thesis prefers to narrow down the study of postmodernism with the given authors above with the aim of providing substantial material for analysing literary works. Postmodernism still stays as a subject matter of contemporary arguments. Therefore, to underline a workable plan and applicable thought; it is essential to do a mapping of thoughts of the philosophy of postmodernism.

CHAPTER I

INTERTEXTUALITY, PLAYFUL INVENTIVENESS, PARODY, PASTICHE, STYLISTIC MELANGE AND BRICOLAGE IN *A CHIN?*

“It is good to think that the poetry will continue” (“Family Man – Interview with McMillan” 44)

“World-class – one of today’s greatest poetry performers.” (Carol Ann Duffy “Review”)

This chapter studies *A Chin?* which is published in 1991 from the perspective of how it employs postmodern devices and how his poetry in this collection represents postmodernism in British poetry. Therefore, this chapter argues that the majority of the poems in *A Chin?* deliberately make use of postmodern devices with the aim of deconstructing the idea of uniform poetry with the purpose of reconstructing poetry of plurality from a local-critical position. Postmodernism in McMillan’s *A Chin?* serves as a tool of protest against social norms, aesthetic norms and poetic norms of its time.

A Chin? is one of the early collections of Ian McMillan who has over thirty collections of poetry. The majority of these collections have been written before 2000. His first collection is *The Changing Problem* which was published in 1980 (“Ian McMillan - Bibliography”). His latest collection is *To Fold the Evening Star* and it was published in 2016. However, his most recent collection is a book of new and selected poems. Therefore, the latest single completed collection appears to be *Jazz Peas* that was published in 2014 (McMillan *To Fold* “Contents”). Among many collections, *A Chin?* has been selected for this thesis because it provides rich examples to prove the practice of postmodern devices that are suggested in the introduction. Furthermore, this collection includes poems such as “Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley”, “Pit Closure as Art” which bring McMillan’s poetry to the critic reviews. The collection has twenty-two poems in total and eleven poems of this collection have been selected for the analysis in this chapter, as they provide sufficient examples of the postmodern devices.

The period in which this poetry collection was produced coincides with the Thatcher's era. Most of the poems in the collection talk about the socio-political events of Thatcher's period and it is observed that they are discussed in a critical language. The period can be summarised as follows:

Britain changed more in the 1980s than in almost any recent decade. The rise of the City and the fall of the unions, the wider retreat of the left and the return of military confidence, the energy of a renewed entrepreneurialism and the entropy of a new, entrenched unemployment – more than twice as high even in the mid-80s boom as when Margaret Thatcher took office in 1979 – all make the decade feel like the hinge of our modern history. (Beckett “Bang! A History of Britain in the 1980s”)

Those who think against Thatcher interpret the period as follows: “Thatcher is the prime minister who wiped out more than 15% of Britain's industrial base with her dogmatic monetarism, squandered the once-in-a-lifetime windfall of North Sea oil on unemployment pay and tax cuts, and made the UK the unbalanced, unequal country it is today” (Elliott “Did Margaret Thatcher”). The most memorable events of the period, as reflected in the poems of this collection are the closure of the pits and the start of the miners' strike. According to Daniels,

The coal industry was publicly owned and the vast majority of coal miners favoured this arrangement. The two most powerful trade unions of the time – Arthur Scargill's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and Roy Lynk's Union of Democratic Mineworkers (UDM) – both clashed with Margaret Thatcher's government as it sought to privatise coal. (“New documents”)

Britain witnessed one of the greatest strikes in its history with the decision to close the pits which are the gate of income of the working class. The Miners' Strike “was one of the hardest fought industrial disputes in British history. Its battlegrounds were the old mining areas including the Notts and Derbyshire coalfields. Thousands of miners came out in protest against proposed pit closures and job losses” (“The Miners' Strike Revisited”). The mentioned unemployment figures and the number of workers participating in the strike are quite high: “In March 1984 more than 187,000 miners came out on strike when the National Coal Board announced that 20 pits in England would have to close with the loss of 20,000 jobs. It was the start of one of the most confrontational strikes ever seen, marred by picket line violence and clashes between police and miners.” (“The Miners' Strike

Revisited”). Poet McMillan grew up in a pit town in rural England and lived in that culture. Therefore, he was influenced by socio-political events of the period. Most of the poems in his collection *A Chin?* address these events and deal with them from a critical point of view.

McMillan is described as “world-class” by Carol Ann Duffy who is the poet laureate in 2009-19 (“Review”). It shows that he is a recognised poet, although his popularity is not common among the readers. It is important that Carol Ann Duffy defines McMillan as a performer as it shows a characteristic of McMillan’s poetry which is performing. While Duffy defines McMillan as “one of today’s greatest poetry performers” (“Review”), Radcliffe defines McMillan as the “poet laureate of a parallel universe [...]” (7). To learn more about McMillan, it is necessary to examine his own works as they are rich sources of self-reflexive materials. McMillan depicts himself as follows in his poetry:

Face a red planet
Smudged by glasses, he’s
Slumped in the bus seat

As the sun rises, illuminating
The little bits of whisker
He’s missed, iron filings

On the nodding red planet.
How small his hands are.
How Elvis his hair is.

He may be a collapsing balloon,
Chins folded like dough,
Sun reflects on the glasses. (“Self Portrait” 1-12)

In fact, nothing less would be expected from McMillan, but this self-reflexive poem where he employs his favourite pop cultural icon, Elvis, to build up a self-depiction. It is normally difficult to find information about contemporary writers because they are not given enough

space within current curriculums but thankfully, Ian McMillan provides enough material for the audience to learn more about him in his collection, *Talking Myself Home, My Life in Verses*. “Just a Few Bones” is the introduction part of this collection, where he provides autobiographic information. This work is significant in its postmodern interpretation of biography writing, because, besides being a biography it is also a deconstructive postmodern text as it subverts the normative way of how formal biographies are submitted to the books. Instead of making use of formal introduction material, McMillan introduces us a short story, which is his autobiography.

For his autobiographical details, his poem “Just A Few Bones” is used, and according to this ‘poem’, Ian McMillan was born at 34 North Street, Darfield, near Barnsley on 21 January 1956. His father was in the Royal Navy. He was aware of his surroundings such as the pits, mills and the lives around those. It means that he had a childhood with people from working class around him. He went to Low Valley Junior and then Wath Grammar School. He was a member of a group named Jaws which aimed spreading “poetry, comedy, folk act” (3). He graduated from North Staffordshire Polytechnic and got a degree from Modern Studies. He published his first booklet *Batteries Not Included* in 1980 and his first poetry book *The Changing Problem* in the same year. He claims to be unusual because he has stayed in the same place all his life. About both poetry and life, he states that “the old certainties have become uncertain ...” (4) and perhaps most importantly he adds that “[b]ut I’m still convinced of this: words are important, and everybody can create them” (5).

The traces of postmodernism can be observed in his words as they promote the representation of multiplicities. By stating that *words can be created by everyone*, McMillan simply subverts the totalitarian approaches towards literature that aim othering the marginal. In this understanding, nobody can say women; black or gays cannot be brought to the centre. This idea of inclusiveness represents the new pluralities within contemporary British poetry. As Juha Virtanen suggests “... [the] texts [of Contemporary British poetry] and artworks are more fluid than stable; are permeable rather than closed; and are perhaps even open to retrospective revision and reinterpretation” (5). On the one hand, this shows that McMillan’s poetry represents postmodern philosophy and on the

other hand, there is his poetry which makes him technically postmodern as it employs devices which are credited as “postmodern”.

As stated above and in the introduction, a postmodern work makes use of playful inventiveness, postmodern and ironic self-reflexivity, parody and pastiche, bricolage and stylistic *mélange* and postmodern intertextuality through which the idea of originality is questioned, challenged and re-approached. In this regard, *A Chin?* is postmodern in two ways; first, it uses postmodern formal devices stated above, and second, it employs these devices to question and criticise the contemporary political ideologies of its time. The second point shows what Kennedy and Gregson call postmodernism in British poetry. According to Kennedy and Gregson, as stated in the introduction, if the postmodern work represents the ex-centric, if it makes use of critical regionalism and refers to the condition of politics, then that is the work of postmodernism in British poetry, in other words, British postmodernism (Kennedy 79-119).

Although McMillan’s postmodernism is not limited to only humour and playful inventiveness, they are always present in McMillan’s poetry. Ian McMillan is a playful poet who employs humour in the seriousness of things; it does not necessarily mean that the event is comic, on the contrary, it is subversive and it is effective as in the example of the first poem in *A Chin?*, “*Kake Yourself Comfortable*”. Briefly, this is a poem about a person talking to the reader and inviting them to discuss his problem with the letter ‘s’. Throughout the poem, nearly all the words’ first letters are changed to the letter ‘k’ and the persona in the poem says that it is because in all his childhood he only saw the letter ‘s’. At first sight, it does not make any sense why he uses the letter ‘k’ to transform all the words instead of the letter ‘s’. However, this is the playfulness McMillan introduces in this poem; the last line is the punchline of this comedy. The title suggests a language or a word-play where the letter ‘m’ is replaced with letter ‘k’ in “*Kake Yourself Comfortable*”. At first it may appear as a part of an inventive joke, but, on a second level it works as a subversive language deconstruction where McMillan invents a new language in his poetry. In this language, most of the words are starting with letter ‘K’ just like in the children’s games. This playful attitude provides an alternative look towards poetry through McMillanesque

humour. The poem starts with an invitation: “Kome in. Sit Kown./ Kake yourself comfortable” (1-2). The reader is directly surprised with the language play they experience and then this situation continues throughout the poem. A little bit of Britishness is introduced right after the invitation: “Kup of Kea? Bit of Kake?/ Kilk? Kugar?” (2-3).

Clearly, serving milk in tea is generally associated with Britishness. These cultural residual materials are always available in McMillan’s poetry, especially the ones about Yorkshire. However, the main concern in this poem is different, McMillan addresses the elephant in the room in the lines: “Ah yes. The letter K. /Well, Kit all goes back” (7-8). Until this moment, he performs the play of the letter K throughout the poem by changing most of the first letters of words with letter ‘K’ and then all of a sudden, in the middle of the poem he addresses the situation but still continues to play until the very end of poem where he introduces a plot twist or more like a punchline of a well-constructed joke. He suggests that all throughout his childhood: “I Konly Kever saw Kone letter./ The letter S.” (15-16). Whole poem constructed with the postmodern play that manifests around the usage of letter K is explained by childhood obsession over the letter S. At first, it seems like a practical joke but on a second level this is a performance poem in which the sound is as important as the meaning, which means that it is a joke which is covered in a poetic form. Mark Radcliffe praises McMillan's service for language because McMillan symbolises “... the celebration and treatment of our own language. If anyone has done more to engage the nation in wordplay and literary badinage, then I’m a merganser.” (Mark Radcliffe “Foreword”).

The experimental language play introduced here has a purpose according to David Kennedy:

Viewing McMillan’s work as reports on the lived experience of postmodernity sheds useful light on his departure from one of the most fundamental poetic narratives of all: the poem as page work. More than anyone else of his generation, McMillan consistently produces work which blurs the distinctions between page poem and performance poem just as his readings typically combine elements of traditional poetry readings and stand-up comedy routines. ... This may offer us linguistic fireworks at the expense of the kind of emotional truth we are taught to expect from poetry but, again, this is typical of McMillan’s determination not to produce poems that look and [sound like poems]. (96)

“*Kake Yourself Comfortable*” is a performance poetry that requires reading aloud which makes it a subversive text that directs challenges towards the master narrative that a poem is a “page work” (Kennedy 96). With this concept, Kennedy means that poetry has long been regarded as a text written on paper. Poems are no longer written for reading aloud and their purpose is to stand on page just like in a novel (Kennedy 96-7). McMillan challenges this ongoing system as he writes poems that require reading aloud. In this sense the playful attitude that McMillan introduces with the wordplays, serves as a tool of this purpose. It experiments and invents a new language where it parodies page work poem and provides a postmodern wordplay which “... foregrounds the category of world by laying bare the operations by which narrative worlds are constructed. It typically does so by *deconstructing* them right before our eyes. For instance, a narrated event can be *unnarrated*, rescinded, or contradicted, or a character or other entity of narrated world can be erased” (McHale, “Postmodernism and Experiment” 147). Evidently, playful inventiveness observed in this poem deconstructs the understanding of viewing the poem as a page work. It suggests that poetry requires performance and this performance can make use of playful inventiveness; it can mix the poetic and the practical joke and turn it into a poem.

Similarly, McMillan in his poem, “*Dad, the Donkey’s on Fire*” makes use of postmodern playful inventiveness by introducing the condition of a burning donkey that speaks donkey language. The poem also introduces an example of stylistic *mélange* in which the surreal is introduced by the donkey speaking in English and the real is introduced with the family’s experience. The poem is briefly about a donkey which is burning and a family passing by the burning donkey. The child and the dad witness the burning donkey by the side of the canal. The donkey says “hee haw” but the child understands it as “Look at me, you bastards, I am on fire” (McMillan 40). This is a very short poem that consists of eight lines. It opens with a remark on the condition of a donkey which is at the side of a canal: “There is a burning donkey/at the side of the canal./It lights up the sky” (1-3). A burning donkey lighting up the sky is a surreal picture that mixes into the reality that the family experiences. This family is taking a stroll by the canal on an ordinary day and the burning

donkey transforms their reality and this exemplifies the stylistic *mélange* of the work. The story continues as follows:

Look at the burning donkey.
 In Donkey Language it is saying
 ‘Look at me, you bastards,

I am on fire.’
 Although it sounds like hee haw. (4-8)

Clearly, the way the poet approaches idea of representation by translating the donkey’s “hee-haw” into English, shows that the language is a device to construct and deconstruct. It can be used to reshape ideas; a burning donkey may be burning because it wants it. The playful inventive attitude that makes a donkey speak deconstructs the former attitudes attached to poetry. Poetry is a new platform where donkeys may have their own languages; anything and anyone can be represented and voiced. This attitude stems from the excitement of the future potential of poetry. In this regard, the title “Dad, the Donkey is On Fire” can be associated with McMillan’s excitement for the potential of the new British poetry. It is on fire, it is alive. It is not a poor animal but a cool one that likes burning. This burning donkey image McMillan depicts in his poem shows his playful and humorous attitude that he directs towards contemporary British poetry. The seriousness of forms, norms and stylistics of poetry writing are no longer significant at this point. Poetry becomes a playground that postmoderns experiment and play upon; they talk about anything they want, their choice of subject matter is based on their creativity.

Similarly, McMillan’s experimental poem, “Lilian’s Poem” is one of those poems in which subject matter is highly creative. As Epstein states “[w]ithin the world of poetry, the use of found language as a vehicle for poems has drawn a good deal of attention and discussion, some of which has moved far beyond the precincts of experimental poetry” (312). Found poetry is basically making use of “... the creative potential of found materials” (Epstein 312). This style of poetry is formed by the use of the existing sentences, words and stories

around the poet without adding his/her own words. The definition of found poetry is as follows:

Found poems take existing texts and refashion them, reorder them, and present them as poems. The literary equivalent of a collage, found poetry is often made from newspaper articles, street signs, graffiti, speeches, letters, or even other poems. A pure found poem consists exclusively of outside texts: the words of the poem remain as they were found, with few additions or omissions. Decisions of form, such as where to break a line, are left to the poet. (“Found Poem: *Poetic Form*”)

“Lilian’s Poem” explores the creativity of found poetry and makes use of its characteristics. The poem consists of lines that are readily found in the poet’s surroundings. In this regard, it is an example of found poetry. The poet borrows his lines deliberately from his house maid’s daily discussions and uses his creative intervention for the found material to transform it into a poem. It is safe to suggest that “Lilian’s Poem” is an experimental postmodern poem that is inspired by the characteristics of found poetry. This poem is briefly about the stories and gossips that Lilian, the housemaid, tells the owner of the house. What is significant about it is that the poet picks some romantic lines, and structures them to create this poem. The poem starts with a romantic description of “A white box/ with a bunch of violets on/ That’s what I remember most” (1-3) and ends with the same statements in a different order: “But I remember most/ the violets/ on the blue box” (16-18). These words are selected and put in an order by McMillan in order to create an aesthetic product. McMillan states that “Lilian was a housebound woman I worked with when I was writer-in-residence with Age Concern Leicester in 1987/8. The words are all hers” (*Dad, the Donkey’s on Fire* 14). “Lilian’s poem” with two symbolic boxes of violets, discovers various events of daily life’s ordinariness such as: “A man came round every month/ to put poison on the floor/ poison on the floor for the rats” (10-12) or such as “The gaffer’s name was Jones/ and he wouldn’t let you sing/ The girls liked to sing” (4-6). The selected lines from the words of Lilian which are organised by McMillan put forth a very successful Romantic poem. It is successful as it pays attention to the depiction of self-expression and individual feelings of Lilian. It may also serve as a parody of the poem “Lilian” of Alfred Lord Tennyson where he portrays Lilian as a cruel beloved (Tennyson “Lilian”). McMillan’s Lilian is a housebound woman who tells her own story whereas Tennyson’s

Lilian is a passive beloved where her voice is unheard in the poem. Moreover, McMillan's poem is an open space in terms of perspectives as it voices Lilian whereas Tennyson's provides only one perspective of the given situation which is the perspective of the lover and not Lilian's. On the other hand, Tennyson's "Lilian" is a poem about Lilian whereas McMillan's "Lilian's Poem" is a poem by Lilian herself. In terms of British postmodernism, it can be said that this poem is essentially making use of parody and stylistic *mélange* in terms of technique. On the one hand, making use of found poetry, it parodies the master narratives of normative poetry writing, and on the other hand, Lilian's representation of a housebound woman parodies the classical portrayal of a maid's decorum. Therefore, it presents a subversive postmodern attitude. The ordinariness of the reality of Lilian and the surreal story the poet writes at the same time create an environment for the stylistic *mélange*. What Lilian says and how it turns out in the poem offer different realities. Therefore, there is a shift between these two realities. The real world is the one in which Lilian tells the gossips and stories she hears and the surreal reality is the one that presents Lilian as the poet because of the things she lists. Clearly, this poem presents McMillan's experimentation with the form and the subject matter of poetry in general. It is different from the two other poems analysed above in that this poem explores new forms for poetry, whilst the others mix the current forms with playful inventiveness.

Differently, "Pit Closure as Art" is one of the strong poems that reflects "the ghost of politics" (Kennedy 86) of Britain. First of all it should be noted that Ian McMillan started his career in the 1980s and this collection was published in 1991. Thatcher became the prime minister in 1979 and served until the 1990s. In this context, McMillan's poems in this collection bear traces of political phenomena of this period. This is the period "[that] represents a belief in free markets and a small state. Rather than planning and regulating business and people's lives, government's job is to get out of the way" ("What is Thatcherism?"). This led to privatisation of every government owned sector which resulted in mass unemployment. Mass strikes and a serious crisis between working class and the government started in Thatcher's period: "She was eventually pressured into resigning by members of her own Conservative Party" ("Margaret Thatcher"). In the 1960s, the decline

of pits started and then it continued until the 1970s. At the beginning of the 1970s, strikes and blackouts started and they continued until the 1979. The 1980s was the time when there were harsh disputes between the miners and Margaret Thatcher over wages and pit closures. Then at the beginning of the 1990s privatisation started; instead of mining, Britain preferred having cheap imports from Russia and Poland, which resulted in unemployment for many mine workers. In the 2000s even “the superpit” in Yorkshire was closed which resulted in imports overtaking the UK output (“The demise”). These were the pits that gave life to the people in the rural parts of Britain. McMillan in his book *Neither Nowt Nor Summat* shows the effect of pits on human life with an anecdote: “I glance at the clock: 04.06. Pit time, my wife would call this. It used to be time for the early shift, the shivering wait for the miners on the corner of Nanny Marr Road and School Street, hoping the Houghton Main Colliery bus would turn up soon” (2). Briefly, these pits affected people's lives so much that even people who did not work in the pits began to determine time according to pit shifts.

“Pit Closure as Art” exhibits the common elements McMillan finds between art and pit closures. Interestingly enough, the poem contains no mention of pits, except for the title. However, it provides an experience where pit closure as an idea is presented as “the” art. Briefly, this poem is about the individual experience of an artist affected by the pit closures, and the artists’ opinion on how pit closures resemble art. The entire poem is a depiction of what art is, and, what the role of the artist in it is. Pit closure that is mentioned in the title is not mentioned in the poem; however, it is possible to infer that the feeling the poet experiences with pit closures results in making him an artist. The poem starts with these lines:

In the centre of
The major retrospective
There is a door
Which you open (1-4)

McMillan opens the poem with nostalgia for the past, the past which contains the pits. The title tells the reader to see pit closures as art. Thus, the lines which refer to art actually refer

to the pit closures as well. Pit closures are what art is in this poem. He describes many doors and openings of the doors as the art and the artist become, but, on the other hand, these doors are the symbols for the pits. He constructs a resemblance between pits and the purpose of art and the artist. But, on a second level, it is a criticism of the pit closures as the doors symbolise the openings of pit closures through which “artificially:/ you smile” (9-10) but “The smile becomes/the property of/ The Artist” (11-13). The emotions of joy and sorrow as in “artificially:/ you weep” (30-31); the “tears” (31) and the “smile” (10) all become “the property of/ The Artist” (33-34). All people's emotions turn into the artist's personal property. In this context, if government is assumed as an artist, all the feelings of people become the property of the state. The lines 19-25 explain the way the pits are closed:

The catalogue says
 ‘The door will not be locked’
 But the catalogue also is part of The Art

The door is locked.
 The door you came through
 is locked. The Artist
 has served The Art well. (19-25)

He explains the tricks that have been played on the workers and the false hopes given to them in the form of art. The effort is in vain as “you dig to keep warm/ The Artist arrest you for digging./ The Artist smashes your head/ for pounding on the door” (35-38). The artist can be taken as Thatcher’s government which started privatisation and the pit closures and the entire situation experienced by the reader represents the condition of the workers of the time. They try to open the doors to take their jobs back and make a living out of it; however, all they discover is an artistic conspiracy through which sometimes they get false hopes and sometimes they lose themselves in sorrow as a work of art can do to its viewer. McMillan underlines that “All this part of The Art./ The Artist has refined The Art well” (41-42). By making a clear resemblance between pit closures and art McMillan makes use of “blurring of high and low” (Eagleton VII). In terms of “British postmodernism”

(Kennedy 79) or postmodernism in British poetry, the poem subverts the master narrative of normative, traditional poetry by presenting working class as a part of art and it employs all British postmodern devices; “[t]he dialogue with realism” (Kennedy 107) as it criticises the real events of the given period, “[t]he ghost of politics” (Kennedy 111), as it satirises Thatcher’s politics of the time, “[a]esthetic practice vs. social reality” (Kennedy 117), as the poem represents the social reality of working class and concerns about practicing postmodernism in poetry. “[t]he dialogue with realism” (Kennedy 107) is basically the postmodern work’s interaction with realism that concerns the real life events. In this case, this poem takes pit closures as its concern. It represents the problems of its time, looks at the problem from a postmodern perspective by combining aesthetic and social concerns. Thus, pit closures are represented as art. On the other hand, what Kennedy calls “the ghost of politics” (Kennedy 111) is that in British postmodern works, there are criticisms of the politics of their period. In this sense, this poem criticises Thatcher’s era’s pit closures which resulted in mass unemployment that affected the poet McMillan’s life because his and his community’s life were shaped by pits. Consequently, as this poem mixes aesthetic concerns and social reality and represents both of them in a single poem, it exemplifies what Kennedy calls “[a]esthetic practice vs. [s]ocial reality” (117). Kennedy states that, in the postmodern poems of contemporary British poetry, the postmodern poets have a dilemma between aesthetic concerns and representing the social reality. Some poets focus on their concerns about aesthetic practice of postmodernism, on the other hand, some other poets concentrate on the representation of social reality as poems in the contemporary world serve as a media device to inform the reader. There is also the third group of poets who do both of them, such as Ian McMillan. In this poem, McMillan both points out his aesthetic concerns about practicing postmodernism in poetry by introducing pit closures as a part of art, and also he presents his social concerns by introducing the problem of pit closures.

“Pit Closure as Art” is a postmodern poem with criticism of social reality of the time. It works on two layers of signification process. The first one is that pit closures are a problem experienced by the working class and this represents the condition of the social reality of the 1980s. The second one is that presenting pit closure as a form of art shows that it is a

problem of aesthetic concerns as well. This poem represents the voice of the working class which was until then underrepresented in society. In this sense, the poem is a representation of the ex-centric, the voice of the othered mine workers of Thatcher's era. McMillan's engagement with realism does not stop with the pit closures as he is an eye-open man of contemporary times.

McMillan makes use of various postmodern devices in explaining the social realities of the time. One of them is a postmodern bricolage. "Deaths from Ice Cream" is a postmodern poem because it introduces the bricolage apparently by making use of the museum and the news. In this poem, McMillan explores the deaths presumably caused by ice cream. In fact, it again leans on the reality of the period as the article "Welcome to the National Ice Cream Death Museum" by Miles Kington explains:

National Ice Cream Death Museum, Derbyshire

Perhaps the most unusual display anywhere in Britain this small but lively museum is devoted to major accidents, deaths and disasters caused by ice cream, from the great M65 pile-up of 1981 (caused by a discarded vanilla tub, on which a lorry skidded) to the case of the Sussex child who swallowed a wooden ice cream spoon in 1967 and still walks around happily with it inside. Anyone who has any new ice cream disaster to report should ring their Cones Hot Line (sic). ("Welcome to the National Ice Cream Death Museum")

It seems that McMillan's poem is based on this material or a similar one. As in the example of "Lilian's poem", "Deaths from Ice Cream" may also be inspired by found poetry because the events described in the poem are similar to the events that were actually published in the newspapers. In the poem, there is a chaotic list of unfortunate events which resulted in deaths because of ice cream. It is open to play and humour which would redefine the concept of death as funny. Death seems to be ridiculed and deconstructed through events that sound "funny" as in Mr. Beanesque moments of the opening lines: "Man killed by eating whole cone too/quickly. Woman died after slipping/on ice cream, falling under bus/carrying brass band" (1-4). Although these may sound realistic, the poem reaches such a point that the situation sounds too fantastic as in "... Child dies of depression/after ice cream melts away" (10-11). However, these are all possibilities and shocking news that create National Ice Cream Death Museum. The reports of news such as

“Spanish woman murders man and hides body in ice-cream shop freezer” (Eleftheriou-Smith “Spanish Woman”) or “Mother of two dies after falling into a vat of molten CHOCOLATE at a Russian sweet factory” (Stewart “Mother of Two”) are in the newspapers. Injecting this reality into the world of poetry is a playful inventive attitude of McMillan’s which leads to the subversion of master narratives of “normal” poetry. Thus, the poem creates an alternate universe where newspaper news exhibits a poetic potential and turns into poems through a creative reorganising. Moreover, in the poem a criticism towards the social reality of time can be observed: “... Man/killed by razor placed in ice cream/by crazed methodist” (11-13). The poem criticises real life happenings and uses them as a tool of subversion. Briefly, this poem makes use of postmodern playful inventiveness by reorganising news to create poetry, while it also makes use of postmodern bricolage as it adopts news and reports of museum to its lines. Thus, this poem deconstructs the normative ideology of how poems should be written and provides new alternatives for poems to exist.

Similarly, in “Henry’s Skeleton, George’s Leg” McMillan makes use of the myths about King Henry I and King George VI. Thus, he makes use of postmodern bricolage as in “Deaths from Ice Cream”. One of the attempts of contemporary postmodern British poetry is to present the poem as an alternative to the media. In his book *The Poetry of Saying*, Robert Sheppard argues that “[w]hether or not this is strictly true, traditional poetic artifice can be found in media design and advertising copy. One answer to this anxiety is to attempt to become the media ... but this appears to only accentuate the anxiety, as the New Poets’ obsession with the media and its relation to poetry demonstrates” (136). Similarly, the poem is briefly about a teacher’s conference and its unusual participants, George who carries his leg with him and Henry who carries his skeleton with him. Clearly, these figures in the poem are reference to the myths of Henry I and George VI. The popular news of the 1980s and 1990s always have read-bait titles about body remains of Henry I and the health condition of George VI. McMillan seems to parody and make fun of these news by creating a surreal world where George VI and Henry I are represented as teachers. There is also a local family’s interaction with these characters which reveals the real problems of their

social reality. In his poem “Henry’s Skeleton, George’s Leg”, McMillan “accentuate[s]” (Sheppard 136), the news about the myths of Henry I’s skeleton and George VI’s leg.

The background information about the stories about Henry I’s skeleton and George VI’s leg in history is provided by Science Museum of the UK: “The royal family are not immune from poor health, despite their access to the very best [of] health care. As a child, George VI did not enjoy good health. He had knock knees and was forced to wear painful splints on his legs to correct the problem. He also suffered from chronic stomach problems and a stammer, which made him shy around people” (“George VI”). About Henry I’s skeleton, it is not certain where Henry I is buried. Thus, some archaeological excavations excited the people in the 1990s which intended to lead to the remains of Henry I. One of the recent news published in 2016 shows that there are still some obscurities. In the article “Another car park, another King: 'Henry I's remains' found beneath tarmac at Reading Gaol”, Patrick Sawyer explains that “Britain’s Kings appear to be making a habit of this. First it was Richard III, whose bones were found under a car park in Leicester. Now it appears that Henry I may have met a similarly undignified fate” (“Another car park, another King”).

With the background information provided about the stories of Henry I’s skeleton and George VI’s leg, McMillan’s poem “Henry’s Skeleton, George’s Leg” parodies media narratives through irony. McMillan seems to be inspired by the news about kings and transforms the news into a new medium which is poetry. He turns these stories into figures in the poem and characterises them with attitudes, then plays around with them to create a myth out of the deconstruction of the material provided by the news. In McMillan’s poem: “Every year they come/for the Head Teacher’s conference: Henry with his skeleton, George with his leg.” (1-3). At first glance, the reader is confused about the identity of Henry and George. They do not know whether they are the subject matters of the conference’s discussion or characters. However, they seem to be interested in the story behind the history of George VI’s leg and Henry I’s skeleton. As the poem continues, it is understood that they are not topics of discussion but characters of this reconstructed story. McMillan introduces a setting to open a space for critical regionalism where he underlines the condition of pits: “This used to be the big house, all the big windows/facing away from the

pit, down the formal gardens./Now they use it for courses, the Authority.” (4-6). The big house which seems to represent the upper class, is not concerned with the pits and they do not intend to see the problem with the pit closures. It is an avoided subject matter but McMillan subverts the Authority presented and reminds people of the pits. It seems that McMillan's aim to use kings in his poetry stems from using them to attract people's attention. McMillan wants to talk about pits; however, the reader wants to hear less important stories about the dead kings. McMillan finds a way to do both and this seems to be the reason why this poem is written. He continues and depicts the characters in a comic manner:

This year, George has put his leg
into a purple tracksuit bottom. Last year
it was a fishnet stocking. Every year
Henry sits the skeleton next to him at dinner. (7-10)

As in “Pit Closure as Art”, this poem also reflects the political concerns of the poet McMillan about pits. Comic character depictions seem to ridicule the news that the media is interested in, on the one hand, there are pits which are being closed and hundreds of thousands of people are unemployed and the media is interested in the less important stories about the remains of the old kings. McMillan seems to enjoy the irony of the situation; therefore, he adds more layers to the story provided by the media through his characters Henry and George. There is a third unnamed character who introduces his/her story through his/her interactions with Henry and George:

I clear away the plates.
Last night
Henry took his skeleton out
and sat it on a bench in the ground; an ambulance
screamed along the motorway. George's leg hung from a window. (12-16)

At this point, Henry and George's existence has no meaning in the life of an ordinary person. They are the symbols of less important information which hides the reality of life from people. The persona says the following:

I went home. I live in the village. My husband

Wanted us to make love but I said No.

Not even if I wear my boots? He said.

No, I said, not even if you wear your boots.

My husband works in a sportswear factory.

Anything since the pit shut, he says. (17-22)

Here, the poem introduces the real problem behind this surreal story. It is the story of a family that is affected by pit closures. McMillan uses the media's weapon against them. He attracts the reader's attention by the absurdity of the title and the characters. He introduces a title which can affect the common reader. It is a story that they love to hear. However, this story is different because it serves as a challenge to the norms of the media. McMillan explains the facts as an eyewitness, as a person who lives in and knows Yorkshire, through the story of a family. In this sense, the poem makes use of critical regionalism by introducing the real problems of Yorkshire and offers a dialogue with realism as it refers to the problems of real life. It further exemplifies the media of the period, ghost of politics as it criticises the political agenda behind the pit closures. Thus, indirectly it refers to the Thatcher's era, and the results of rapid privatisations. As suggested above in the analysis of "Pit Closure as Art", the Thatcher's era led to mass unemployment which resulted in strikes, unhappiness and uneasiness in the working class. This poem exhibits an example of the life they experience.

The poem associates the life of the family related to George's leg and Henry's skeleton through the unnamed woman:

Tonight I will wear a single fishnet stocking

And I will ask him to wear his purple tracksuit,

Just the bottoms. He stole the tracksuit from work

Under his coat with NCB on the back. (23-26)

The images injected to people's life through the media are criticised. On the one hand, people have to steal to compensate their needs as they cannot afford their things because of unemployment, on the other hand, the media's attention is on what colour the tracksuit is and how important it is to the people. In the following lines, the poem starts directly accusing the source of these problems by stating that "... In London/men in suits slam doors shut and put files/back in cabinets. Lights go out. Schools close." (28-30). What people in suits do is to serve authority. As long as these people serve power, the lights and schools are shut down and education has no purpose. People continue to be sedated by these news: "George sleeps with his leg./Henry hugs his skeleton close. So close" (31-32). Therefore, the media or what the media promotes puts people to sleep. The media does not respond to the needs of the people. The poem ends with information about what happens to the family: "My husband tugs on his boots and I look over the motorway/ To where the pit used to be. I try to shield my breasts/ From the noise of the boots." (33-35). Pits are gone, no one talks about them. The last line of the poem states that "My nipples will soon be very sore." (36). This last line represents the sorrow and suffering of the people. It is unheard of and not represented as the media serves people in suits as stated in the poem. This poem responds to the need of representation of the common people. It makes use of irony, parody and postmodern bricolage in turning George's leg and Henry's skeleton stories into a playground where McMillan criticises the banality of the news and its lack of power in representing the social reality. He uses media pool's tricks and baits to lure them into his playground in which he criticises them for not showing people the reality. By turning George VI and Henry I into passive characters, McMillan shows that these trivial stories make nothing happen.

Similarly, McMillan in his poem "Poem Occasioned by High Death Incidence of Suicide amongst the Unemployed" uses poetry as a media as in "Henry's Skeleton, George's Leg" to represent the period's harsh conditions. However, in this poem, he is more direct and does not play with myths to attract the attention of the reader. To exemplify how postmodern poetry's inclusiveness subverts and undermines the authority of the dominant in poetry, "Poem Occasioned by the High Incidence of Suicide amongst the Unemployed"

shows the reader the importance of the representation of the unvoiced. The poem uses a local language in a song form, rhymed to be easily remembered. It lists series of serious events about how people committed suicide because of the life they experience after unemployment as a result of rapid privatisation of the Thatcher's era. First of all, the technical devices that are used in this poem are parody, bricolage and irony. This poem brings musicality back to postmodern poetry and introduces the social reality of the time. It reminds one the dilemma between "[a]esthetic practice v. [s]ocial reality" in British postmodernism. In this poem, McMillan again introduces social problems while he also shows his concerns about practicing poetry. All the stanzas start with a question addressed to "father" figures about their sons and their wives:

Now then, fatha, how's your Fred?
 They found him in the kitchen
 With a bullet in his head.

Now then, fatha, how's your John?
 They found him in the river
 With his donkey jacket on. (1-6)

Random names are given to the sons reflecting the social reality of the 1980s and 1990s. The poem criticises without making comments, directly mirroring the events and leaving the comment to the reader. The deaths are voiced and represented. In this sense, this poem becomes the voice of the unemployed people, as it witnesses and presents their condition. Although names may change, events are similar. The poem shows how the suicides are committed. McMillan turns his satiric attitude into a rhythmic song that resembles the country music and employs two mediums: Poetry and country music. As it borrows its style from the country music, it makes use of bricolage. In terms of theme, it can be said that it is an example of dark theme as the deaths become the subject matter of country music that is highly dynamic and musical:

Now then, fatha, how's your Bill?
 He jumped under a bus

On Spital Hill.

Now then, fatha, how's your Tom?

He blew hissen to pieces

With a home made bomb. (7-12)

All the stanzas follow a similar pattern as above, repetitively asking fathers about their sons who commit suicide. It is also remarkable that the language used by the poet is local when transferring suicide incidents. The reasons for the suicides refer to the social reality of the 1980s and 1990s: Bombs explode, there is a serious economic trauma, people are worried about their welfare ("Bang! A History of Britain in the 1980s"). State-based privatisation left many people unemployed and led them to commit suicide. Many British living in rural areas have become unable to feed their families and support themselves because of unemployment. This poem sheds light to Thatcher's era and shows its effects on people. The dynamic musical rhythm that the poem follows with repetition while talking about the sad incidents, makes a parody. It undermines the seriousness of themes such as death and suicide while at the same time it questions what causes them. Briefly, this poem, similar to "Deaths from Ice Cream", "Pit Closure as Art" and "Henry's Skeleton, George's Leg", criticises the social reality of its time by employing postmodern devices.

Furthermore, McMillan's poems in this collection not only reflect social events as in the previous poems. In poems such as "Jesus Died from Eating Curtains", he only expresses his aesthetic concerns about postmodern poetry and offers them alternatives. "Jesus Died from Eating Curtains" is about self-reflexive attitude in which McMillan reveals his concerns about the language, form and style in poetry. This poem, quite different from the ones analysed so far in that, it is directly about the aesthetic practice of postmodernism. McMillan's postmodern concerns are not limited to political and social issues, there are concerns about the aesthetics, too. In this sense, McMillan offers a read-bait title and invites the reader to discuss the state of poetry in this poem. By state of poetry, he means that poetry is no longer what it used to be, it does not concentrate on the sound anymore. Poems are written for reading only and not to be performed. Therefore, they are no longer ambitious about being poems that expect to be read aloud. This seems to bother poet

McMillan as he clearly states it in the poem. In the first layer, an ordinary life of a family of three is introduced with their occasional conversation. The poem begins as follows:

My daughter said that
To me the other day.
As she said it my watch
Stopped, and my wife asked me what I was doing
A week on Sunday. (1-5)

The ordinariness introduced in this first stanza gradually disappears as the second stanza provides intertextual material that refers to the work of Carl Gustav Jung and his *Synchronicity*. His psychoanalytic approach is exemplified through an experience in which the husband associates stopping of his watch with synchronicity: “Synchronicity, I suppose/Jung would have called/It. My wife turned back” (6-8). With the introduction of topics such as psychoanalytic, it can be thought that the poet is preparing the reader for an intellectual conversation. As in the following stanza McMillan creates a shocking moment in which he states the famous line: “Jesus died from eating curtains” (17) for his discussion about the state of poetry:

my daughter began to weep,
so I turned her cassette on
and I heard Postman Pat
say to Jess ‘Jesus died from eating curtains.’ Okay
I didn’t hear that. But (13-18)

In the third stanza, it is no longer possible to understand what this poem talks about and what the intention of the poet is. He makes use of a popular children’s TV show “Postman Pat” and also he discusses Jung’s ideas by which he provides a blurring between the high and low cultures. Popular culture and high culture are together, mixed, reconstructed and preserved. They cooperate to create a new text which discusses the state of poetry. The line “Jesus died from eating curtains” catches attention since it challenges the normative, unquestioned dogmas of the master narratives such as the Bible. Attracting the attention immediately, the poet starts talking about the purpose of the poem and his “holy” concerns.

The first three stanzas in the poem actually prepare the reader for the last two stanzas. In the final two stanzas, the poet directly talks about the state of poetry as follows:

I am concerned about the
 State of Poetry, hear?
 I'm concerned about its
 Lack of ambition, about how
 You don't often see the word
 Galoot or the word galosh

in poems. I'm concerned
 About the shape of poems,
 And I'm concerned that
 Poems often sound like
 Poems. Oh, galoot
 Galosh, galosh, galoot. (19-30)

McMillan's subversive and protest attitude is observable in these lines. He attracts the attention of the audience by the holy figure and discusses the condition of poetry. This poem, which is normally written in the manner expected of an essay, has a very postmodern attitude. Because now it shows that poems can be texts written to talk about poems. He explains his concerns about the sound and shape of the poems. He seems to criticise how mainstream poems are no longer ambitious about making use of novelties in them, how uniform they have become and are not progressive to experiment. He provides an alternative universe for the poems to exist. In this world, there are no restrictions, one writes what he/she enjoys; poets are free to play around lines. McMillan deconstructs the norms of poetry writing and points out the importance of sound, he points out the significance of how words sound as in the example of "galosh, galoot". The normative poems seem not to respond to the needs of the contemporary world and they revolve around the sameness of their totalitarian perspective. In McMillan's view, anything the poet enjoys to play around with words becomes a poem. Accordingly, the postmodern device observed here is the use of postmodern self-reflexivity as the poem talks about the writing of poetry

and explains directly the thoughts of the poet. The poem becomes a ground for the poet to communicate with the reader through which the fourth wall of the text is broken. Moreover, McMillan blurs the line between high and low cultures by introducing “Postman Pat” and Jung on the same page of his poem. Thus, he writes a poem that is technically and thematically postmodern.

Similarly, McMillan’s “Realism (Nothing is Ever Finished)” is one of the particular poems to exhibit aesthetic concerns about practicing postmodernism in poetry as in “Jesus Died from Eating Curtains”. In this poem, a story between a father and a child is given through their discussions about the colour of the night, and choice of the wallpapers. The depictions that the father uses to describe the night move from experienced material reality to a surreal reality. In the poem, McMillan shows the reader the importance of representing material reality in the postmodern world and how it serves the multiple realities of postmodernism. This allows postmodernism to function in a wider field and blurs the reality that the reader experiences. The combination of the surreal and the real worlds points out that this poem makes use of stylistic *mélange*.

The opening stanza introduces what material reality is: “Whoever said/Night is Black/wasn’t kidding.” (1-3). What can be inferred is that the material reality is something that reflects nature around as it is without interpretation. After introducing the material reality, McMillan introduces a surreal reality in the second and the third stanza to provide a combination of both to exemplify stylistic *mélange* in postmodernism:

The children want
Wallpaper. You buy them expensive toys
But all they want is wallpaper.

Black wallpaper. Night is really an empty swimming pool
that you do not realise
is empty so you make
swimming motions in it. (4-11)

Wallpapers present the material meaning in the poem as they refer to the concrete facts; however, they also evoke surrealism by their connotations and they turn the night into a swimming pool that the father pretends to swim in. However, in the material reality, there is no swimming pool and therefore, the person cannot swim in it. McMillan points out that surrealism is not something that is independent from the material reality. In postmodernism, surrealism is an opposing part of the material reality but not a separate part. Thus, postmodernism offers a movement from reality to surreal reality. The poet describes the experience of surreal swimming in the following lines: “Like this/Like this/But you are not wet.” (12-14). With the examples given, the poet breaks the reality of poetry and creates an area where the surreal and real can manifest themselves together. There are plural realities represented in a single poem which break the master narratives of uniformity in poetry. This poem “... upsets expectations and destabilizes any authoritative vision of the world” through the use of stylistic *mélange* (Gregson 4). The poem, in this regard, follows a pattern that starts as formal reality which gradually becomes an example of surrealism. The father and the child talk about drinking the wallpapers and they give them flavours related to their colours and motifs as in the following lines: “Daddy, I want/a drink of wallpaper.” (15-16). The father responds: “what kind do you want?/The kind with flowers on?/The kind that looks like a brick wall?” (17-19). Now the reality is distorted and the reader does not recognise on which ground s/he stands. The poet plays and experiments with styles and words. He, thus, challenges the uniformity of the poetry writing. The poem that starts with “Night is Black” ends with “Night is really/a box of spent matches./No light, you see.” (24-26). To present the childish demand for the play the last lines end with “Daddy! More/wallpaper!” (27-28). McMillan, with this poem, illustrates that a poem can be about anything; it has its own reality as the title “Realism (Nothing is Ever Finished)” suggests, poetry no longer something that is limited by strict and restricted rules, it is open to experiment and play. The use of stylistic *mélange* in this poem shows how McMillan experiments with postmodernism and its aesthetics by presenting variety in terms of techniques.

Similarly, in “Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley” McMillan presents his views about his aesthetic concerns in postmodernism. McMillan increases the number of postmodern devices and introduces several devices in this poem; namely parody, pastiche and intertextuality dominate the poem. This poem is about the resurrection of Elvis Presley as Ted Hughes. Elvis Presley does not die; he fakes his death to have a new life. For a new life he needs a new identity, so he becomes Ted Hughes. The way that this story is told requires certain devices and McMillan makes use of parody as the title suggests. He also makes use of intertextuality by including Ted Hughes’ poems in his poem. It makes use of pastiche by parodying Ted Hughes’ “Pike” without any motive in the last stanza. All makes this poem a “classic” among McMillan’s poems.

Peter Childs explains the period this poem is written in, as follows: “In the early 1990s, the latest resurgence of poetry, like that of stand-up comedy in the 1980s, led to its acquisition of the label ‘the new rock and roll’. This voguish ‘sexy’ image is satirized in Ian McMillan’s ‘Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley’, a poem included in the book which capitalised on poetry’s latest rejuvenation”. (155-156) “Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley” represents the final evolution of poetry of the time by blurring “high and low culture”, as the title suggests. In this regard The Poet Laureate, Ted Hughes represents the high culture whereas Elvis Presley represents the popular culture and their mixture represents a blurring between high culture and popular culture.

As Kennedy argues, the poem has three key postmodern characteristics, “[p]arody, pastiche, intertext” (96). Briefly, the poem offers the story of “Poet Laureate Superstar and a surreal fantasy in which Elvis Presley reincarnates himself as Ted Hughes; and which ends with a reference to Hughes’s poem ‘Pike’” (98). The poem starts with a reconstruction of Elvis myth, he says “I didn’t die/that hot August night/I faked it,” (1-3). From then on, McMillan starts reconstructing the story of Elvis Presley and the poem continues with an explanation of how he has survived; he “stuffed a barrage balloon/into a jump suit/Left it slumped/on the bathroom floor.” (4-7). Then he watches his own funeral on TV and talks to a woman who loves him, pretending he does not like Elvis (17-28). He searches for a new identity as it would be risky to walk around looking like himself. Then he goes to London

where he sees a man who turns out to be Ted Hughes. He “followed him down the alley/put [his] blade into his gut/and as the blood shot/[he] became him” (40-43). At this point, the famous pop culture icon turns into one of the representatives of high culture, the Poet Laureate Ted Hughes and he says “I am Elvis Presley./I am Ted Hughes” (46-47). This is an important point as it represents “the blurring of high and low” (Eagleton VII). At this point, the reader is not aware of who Elvis and Hughes are and whether they are supposed to be the same person.

We observe postmodern blending of cultures blurring the certainties. With the abolishment of certainties, prejudices towards cultures, people and the othered are also abolished. Thus, plurality in culture and community is achieved. On the other hand, Elvis turning into Ted Hughes parodies the labels given to the people and it parodies what is labelled as high and what is labelled as low and popular. By creating a mixture of Ted and Elvis, McMillan undermines the normative subject matter of poetry. McMillan’s portrayal of Ted Hughes as Elvis Presley shows a protest which suggests that anything can be the subject matter of poetry. Trying to separate high and low cultures is futile; instead, creating a mixture opens up new gates to play, to experimentation. Elvis as Ted Hughes claims also the lines of Ted Hughes as his own, through which the intertextual play occurs:

I look up. Outside a fox peers at me.
I sing softly to it,
Strumming my guitar.

Soon, all the foxes
And the jaguars and the pigs
And the crows are gathering
Outside my window, peering in. (60-66)

These are references to Ted Hughes’ poems “The Thought Fox”, “The Jaguar”, “View of a Pig” and *Crow*. McMillan, through Elvis, makes use of Hughes’ animal poetry as a symbol for his own poetry, and this serves as a tool of reconstruction of the precedent material.

Thus, this poem employs pla(y)giarism to create novelty from the old material. The poem concludes with Hughes' "Pike":

I sit here,
 I can feel the evening shrinking me
 Smaller and smaller.
 I have almost gone. Ted,
 Three inches long, perfect.
 Elvis, Ted. (74-79)

The line, "Three inches long, perfect." (78) is directly taken from the poem "Pike". Making use of Hughes' "Pike" without a particular motive employs pastiche. Pastiche requires parody without a purpose, the cooperation of Elvis and Ted to tell the story of "Pike" seems to have no particular purpose. Kennedy states that in this poem, "[b]eneath the surreal mockery are some serious questions about poetry. What is the meaning of poetry and what kind of poetry has meaning for a generation for whom the cheap potencies of popular culture have more meaning than the eternal of High Art?" (98). In other words, "Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley" is a direct challenge to the normative understanding of poetry, and it subverts the uniform ideas on high art and the place of poetry in it. It deconstructs the idea of "... poetry as a truly popular art" (Kennedy 98). The poem, moreover, asks "... what literary/cultural world is this? To what does it allude? How does this determine my actions in it? And my self in it? The poem becomes a fictional zone in which the poet is free to play around with the dominant and any number of answers to those questions can be made, explored and enjoyed" (Kennedy 99).

McMillan's "The Force of His Storm Knocked Me from My Stool" follows "Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley" and parodies "The Force That Through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower" by Dylan Thomas. McMillan plays, laughs and plays again. Dylan Thomas' Neo-romantic poem's title turns into a playground where McMillan provides laughter for laughter's sake. In this poem, McMillan shows the practice of parody, self-reflexivity and playful inventiveness. Throughout the poem, the romantic attitude is replaced by comedy.

Moreover, the reader never knows who talks in the poem as the persona always shifts and sometimes McMillan himself talks through the lines. Sarah Broom explains that:

Romanticism's elevation of the lyric has meant that for the last few centuries our very idea of poetry has been intimately tied up with the idea of the authentic, personal, speaking voice. Although throughout this period (and indeed within Romanticism itself) there have been myriad challenges to the notion that poetry can be the direct expression of a unified and autonomous self, the most forceful questioning of this idea has emerged in modernist and postmodernist poetry. In the case of postmodernism this has been energized partly by poststructuralist theories of selfhood and subjectivity. (181)

In this sense, "The Force of his Storm Knocked Me from my Stool" can be taken as the challenge to the self against the romantic understanding of the authenticity of the personal speaking voice. Postmodern poetry aims to go beyond being personal and strives to move poetry beyond it. Thus, it brings poetry writing into poetry and includes the reader in the formation process of poetry. Hence, poetry becomes a common product beyond being personal. This challenges the romantic notion of subjectivity and selfhood. McMillan introduces his poem by a game rule. The rule is explained in the first two lines: "Please for this poem assume/ that the word tired equals the word fat" (1-2). This is a subversive start compared to conventional normative poetry as this poem introduces its own universe where the rules are provided by the poem itself. In this sense, the reader is surprised and confused and does not know where to situate her/himself. The poem continues with a postmodern self-reflexive attitude and McMillan starts to talk about himself and his life:

I went to see the doctor about feeling tired
all the time. Waking up tired. Falling
asleep holding a child's Barbie Horse
Snoring through a guitar being painted (3-6)

It should be noted that the word "tired" is replaced by the word "fat" (1-2). Thus, the postmodern language play in the lines above turns the bohemian attitude of a person into a comic situation where the person complains about his/her overweight. The following lines create confusion and it leads the reader to question who is talking in the poem. Because there seems to be a change of the persona; now the persona wants to wear skirts and the tops:

The doctor advises me to squat on water.
 'Feel it soak into your kex' he says. But
 I don't wear kex I wear skirts and tops.
 On fine days I wear skirts and tops and but and no hat. (7-10)

Kex may refer to wafers and biscuits which soak water. The lines above create a comedy where the miscommunication creates laughter. This also prevents the formation of an authoritarian perspective on poetry as the reader is confused about who the persona is, whose story is being told. There is no single explanation of these situations. At this point, when the reader is confused, the poem introduces self-reflexivity as McMillan starts talking to the reader through the lines and explains how the poem is written. The poet explains that "Sometimes in a poem you have to put words in to make/t' rhythm. Sometimes you put in silly words to/make the rhyme. Like that word 'water'" (11-13).

Then it turns back to the original story of the poem and introduces the life of the doctor in a stanza: "At home, the doctor moans he says he says/I feel so tired, so tired all the time./His wife says Eat less you tired slobber" (14-16). Now the joke passes into the life of the doctor. There is another confusion produced as the reader does not really know whether the doctor is tired or he also feels "fat". This play in obscurity leaves the reader in a playground where one can do several readings according to one's understanding of comedy. McMillan introduces another rule to the game, when the poem states: "For slobber read doctor, if you would." (17). The reader is allowed to play around the rules provided by the poet. The borders of the poem are being arranged by the poet throughout the reading experience which subverts the normal expectations of the reader and makes them active participants of the text. Therefore, there are at least two ways of reading the text: the first, one may accept to be a part of the text by following the game rules produced by the poet. The second, one may take a critical approach and observe a bohemian persona who feels rather tired and seeks help. The double layered open-endedness is another challenge directed towards the conventional poetry. It is no longer a personal voice of the poet but the collaboration of the reader and the poet that produces the poem.

Accordingly, the poem ends the main story with the persona the audience accepts as the main figure, he or she says “At home, I squat in a wet dish./The water soaks into my skirt. I’m still tired” (18-19). Clearly, the persona follows the prescription of the doctor and it seems not to help at all. There, the poet interferes and creates a metanarrative character and talks to him:

Hi, my name is Tony.
Did you know
That the inhabitants of my head
Have fifty-two different words
For the word you know as ‘tired’? (20-24)

Tony seems to be the muse of the poet McMillan; it explains what the game is about and what it refers to. In the end, the reader learns that the word play is Tony’s doing and the poet also suffers from it. This metafictional character explains how the poem is written; it is a battlefield between the poet and the world inside his head which seems to be working out of his personality. Thus, the character talking to its creator presents a postmodern battle where the reader witnesses the surreal play between the creator and the creature. The poet talks about Tony and states that “I hate it when Tony comes into a poem./ I have a capacity for hate” (25-26). In the end, he accepts how the poems are written and Tony’s games by saying: “Hi Tony. Come and sit here./By the fire.” (27-28). This poem challenges all the traditional, established norms of poetry and creates its own world where comedy and play become the norms of poetry. It turns the poem’s personal ground into a co-operative playground where the reader is no longer a passive consumer but an active participant of the text. The poem also parodies conventional poetry, maybe especially Romantic subjectivity. It ridicules and criticises the formal poetry and provides an alternative that is full of laughter and comedy.

In conclusion, in *A Chin?*, McMillan makes use of a variety of postmodern devices. In terms of playful inventiveness provided by language games that deconstruct the master narratives of the poem as a page work, “Kake Yourself Comfortable”, “Lilian’s Poem” and “Dad, the Donkey is On Fire” create new alternatives for poetry readers for an enhanced

poetry experience. They distort language and redefine what poems are. McMillan with his poems, “Deaths from Ice Cream”, “Henry’s Skeleton, George’s Leg” “Poem Occasioned by the High Incidence of Suicide amongst the Unemployed” and “Pit Closure as Art” criticises news by parodying them. He reflects the period’s social reality from his perspective. These poems represent and reconstruct the stories of people, not allowing any authoritative norms to oppress their voice. In terms of representing the aesthetic concerns in postmodernism in British poetry with a self-reflexive attitude, “Realism (Nothing is Ever Finished)” and “Jesus Died from Eating Curtains” show McMillan’s self-reflexive expectations from his postmodern poetry and postmodern poetry in general. McMillan’s poems in *A Chin?* develop variety of different ways to practice postmodernism in poetry. Successfully borrowing and exemplifying the postmodern devices all together but specifically showing the practices of parody and pastiche, “Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley” and “The Force of His Storm Knocked Me from My Stool” exhibit the limits of postmodernism in poetry.

CHAPTER II

JAZZ PEAS: GOING BEYOND THE POSTMODERN – WHAT ARE THE LIMITS?

“If ‘rational’ textuality is the prison house of language then poetry is the gymnasium, even the play-room, of language” (Brown 12).

McMillan uses the postmodern devices such as parody, pastiche, intertextuality, stylistic mélange, bricolage, self-reflexivity and playful inventiveness to deconstruct the established structures, forms and language of the traditional, normative poetry in *A Chin?* (1991). Moreover, it is observed that his postmodernism in *A Chin?* engages with political problems of its time as well as it engages with aesthetic concerns of postmodernism in contemporary British poetry. This chapter analyses one of McMillan’s latest collections, *Jazz Peas* (2014), as a collection of British postmodern poetry. Accordingly, this chapter argues that McMillan continues to engage with postmodernism and its devices in his poetry and questions the normative, authoritative understanding of poetry, and thus, presents alternatives to undermine the hegemony of grand narratives in poetry. Hence, this chapter also highlights the postmodern changes and concerns that are seen in McMillan’s choice of subject matter in one of his latest works. *A Chin?*’s political concerns appear to be replaced by aesthetic concerns about how poetry should be written and discussions on what makes a poem a poem in *Jazz Peas*. McMillan’s concern with the politics of his Yorkshire region, seems to have shifted to postmodern concerns about art and poetry in *Jazz Peas*. There is a noticeable change in *Jazz Peas* in terms of the use of postmodern poetic devices that are observed in *A Chin?*. McMillan develops new alternative ways of practicing postmodern devices instead of being heavily dependent on their previous uses in this collection.

Brown identifies poetry as “the play-room of language” (12) by which he refers to the potential of experiments that can be done in poetry. This idea dominates McMillan’s *Jazz Peas* as the collection discovers the limits of language games, playful inventiveness which can be experimented in postmodern poetry. Some of the postmodern devices that are observed in *A Chin?* are used in *Jazz Peas*; however, *Jazz Peas* is clearly more

experimental. What Kennedy and Gregson observe in postmodernism in British poetry is also valid and observed in *Jazz Peas*. Basically, they claim that postmodernism in British poetry is the poetry of the ex-centric, it deals with political problems of its time by representing them, and it challenges the grand narratives and English narratives by employing the postmodern devices. Moreover, as explained above postmodernism in British poetry exhibits a dilemma that the poet experiences about the representation of social reality and aesthetic concerns. Thus, while some poets engage with aesthetic practice, some focus on the representation of social reality; McMillan does both (Kennedy 79-119).

In postmodern poetry, there is a clash between the grand narratives and the alternatives provided by the postmodern poets. Moreover, postmodern poetry is the poetry of the other; therefore, the poetry of the ex-centric, as argued above. It carries margins to the centre and gives voice to the traditionally unvoiced, oppressed and the suppressed. In British poetry, as argued in Chapter I, London is no longer the centre of literature; new places and regions are voiced and represented. On the other hand, in postmodern British poetry “the ghosts of politics” (Kennedy 111) are dominant through which the politics of the contemporary age are always discussed and criticised.

Jazz Peas is McMillan’s latest complete collection as the one that is published after this is *To Fold the Evening Star* which came out in 2016, is a book of new and selected poems and the new poems contain uncollected collage of poems; therefore, it is not a complete collection like *Jazz Peas*. *Jazz Peas* collection consists of twenty poems in total. This chapter analyses thirteen of these poems as these poems present the postmodern devices and the change that occurs in McMillan’s attitude towards postmodernism in poetry. Hence, this chapter asserts that McMillan’s poetry noticeably changes from political concerns, to aesthetic concerns. Furthermore, *A Chin?* exemplifies McMillan’s attitude towards postmodernism in his early career as it was published in 1991, whereas *Jazz Peas* exemplifies McMillan’s attitude in his late career as it was published in 2014. Thus, this chapter provides an analysis of the change that occurs between one of McMillan’s early works and his latest work by looking at the difference between *A Chin?* and *Jazz Peas*.

Therefore, it is argued that McMillan in *Jazz Peas* engages with experimenting with postmodern poetry more than he does in *A Chin?*.

Accordingly, the first poem of the collection “Me and Dave and Thelonious Monk Waiting for the 14 Bus” is delivered as an example of “true postmodernism [as it places] emphasis on the playful exploitation of instabilities of meaning and identity than on their further application” (O’Brien 574). The poem situates itself within an unrepresentable situation in which un-presentability is presented through poetry. This is why Gregson calls “McMillan [as] postmodernist to [the] extent that, in Lyotard’s words, he searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unrepresentable ...” (Gregson 233). In this poem, McMillan introduces a mixture of a real and a surreal story in which a character that is referred to “me” hangs out with his friend Dave, and waits for the bus “14” while at the same time he jumps from one reality to another as they listen to jazz. In the storyline, the friends listen to jazz music in their room, waiting for Dave’s mother to cook mushy peas, but while waiting they enjoy the surreal experience in which the music transforms their room with the help of the lights of “14” bus. The poem introduces an unrepresentable situation, where the reader is not informed which reality they experience, so the sense of being lost is strong in the reading experience. Thus, the poem subverts any authoritative vision that can be established upon the poem’s reality as it is unrepresentable. In this particular poem, McMillan makes use of postmodern stylistic *mélange* as he mingles the surreal and the real.

The poem starts *in medias res*; the first persona, “me”, claims to be with Dave Sunderland in his room. The poet starts listing some fragments of realities about music and its representation of life through the character “me”. It is introduced as follows: “Another new LP bought in the jazz section of Casa Disco./Another night when Dave’s mam was out at the Chapel” (2-3). Then, the poem uses italics to voice the first persona and his/her inner thoughts about the events that are experienced; for example, when the music is played, the italics point out that the first persona wants it louder. Thus, it presents two realities at once which collide into one another. The reader is uncertain about what to expect and from which perspective he/she should read the poem. The italics continue to talk and they voice

“me” in the poem. It says: “*Turn it up. Dave, turn it/ Right up. Turn the lights out, Dave/ And Let’s wait*” (4-6). At first glance, it seems to be a conversation between two friends; however, the following lines create the unrepresentable situation through which raises two questions, “in which reality he/she is”, and whether “Dave is a real person”. The distortion of reality is layered when the poem introduces how facts are vulnerable to the effects of music: “Another track on the Underground album: Ugly Beauty./ Another rearrangement of time and space and coincidence./ Another listen, Dave. Put it on again, mate. Soon be time.” (7-9). It seems clear that the music the persona is affected by changes the reality around them, and thus, the world reflected in the poem is also reshaped according to the mood of the music. Individuals and characters seem to be part of this postmodern play with realities; the songs shift each reality of the poem. Thus, it provides multi-layered realities which subvert one another and prevent any authoritative view. Creating a multi-layered, unrepresentable condition of reality is an example for the use of postmodernism. The provided multiple realities support one of the critical arguments of postmodernism that poetry: “... offer[s] us a cinema of differentiation and of the political imagination, flowing value onto the colourless fragments of unmediated reality” (Andrew Duncan 46). In this sense, this poem embraces the idea of presenting cinema of differentiation by experimenting with multiple worlds to represent the unmediated reality.

One of the reasons that create the unrepresentable reality is the existence of Monk whose effects are given in these lines: “*Round the corner by The Station Inn,/The 14 bus; Monk’s music redefines*” (16-17). The monk changes objects and the way they behave by his existence. He is Thelonious Monk who is an “American pianist and composer who was among the first creator[s] of modern jazz” (“Thelonious”). By introducing Monk to his poem, McMillan creates a mixture of high and low cultures as the poem now deals with friends waiting for mushy peas to eat while listening to jazz. This is what Eagleton calls postmodern, he states that postmodernism “... blurs the boundaries between ‘high’ and ‘popular’ culture, as well as between art and everyday experience” (VII). By creating a mixture of high and low culture and good variety of realities which provide alternatives to escape from the authority of the hegemonic culture, the poem puts postmodern resistance at

the centre and thus protests uniformity. The last two stanzas of the poem summarise the whole story and introduce the purpose of the stylistic mélange. The whole distorted reality seems to be used to describe a jazz moment that two friends experience together while listening to the music. Therefore, their everyday experience is turned into a piece of art by the postmodern play provided through the mingling of the surreal and the real. The last two stanzas are as follows:

Another hour to wait before the next 14 bus, Dave.
 Another biscuit from the tin. Let's pretend it's a whisky biscuit.
 Another magical moment, Dave: Thelonious, the 14, the light.

*Play it again, until your mam
 Comes in. She said she was bringing chips
 And mushy peas. We'll pretend they're
 Jazz peas, Dave; jazz peas. (20-6)*

Italics in the end change the time, space and the reality of the poem once more and for the last time. The reader finds himself/herself in Dave Sunderland's room waiting for his mother to bring snacks. The idea of "pretending" seems to be the power behind the transforming force, in fact "pretending" is the keyword in understanding the poem and to move between the realities because the first persona, "me" pretends to create new spaces through music. He pretends that the music changes the reality that he experiences. Therefore, every time he listens to jazz the reality surrounding him changes according to it. The last lines suggest that mushy peas became Jazz piece and this underlines the power of the music to transform things. In this poem, the music can literally turn anything to anything else and this is provided by the use of stylistic mélange as stylistic mélange enables the poet to move between the surreal and material realities.

To sum up, the idea of presenting unrepresentable experience as it is observed in the shifting realities and blurring the boundaries of high and low cultures are examples of practicing postmodernism in the poem. Moreover, in terms of its practice of postmodern ideas and not including political issues, "Me and Dave" is an example that illustrates the postmodern

aesthetic practice in British poetry. Therefore, this first poem of the collection signals the change in McMillan's poetry towards the practice of aesthetic concerns.

In the second poem of the collection, "An Archaeologist Finds an Umbrella" McMillan questions the aesthetic problems as he does in the first poem. But now in this poem the problems are about presenting history and understanding the past. In this poem, McMillan defines the past and deconstructs the idea of history and what it stands for. The poem briefly introduces an umbrella as a historical artefact that an archaeologist finds. What is important about this poem is that it parodies the idea of history and writing of the past by use of ridicule. It creates a reality in which an umbrella is an antique object, and the scientific attitude of the archaeologist creates a comic situation as s/he tries to understand the purpose of an umbrella. Thus, McMillan points out how the histories of objects are temporary and when one looks at things from the future, everything is past and everything is part of history. Hence, in this poem problematizing history writing is criticised through the use of postmodern parody. As Mutlu Konuk Blasing argues:

[P]ostmodern memory, which does not recall the past as an authority and is not motivated toward the future, has a different rhetorical function: it opens up a historical perspective, from which the construction of the present and the self becomes apparent. Such memory allows for a critical distance on the present, without investing any given tradition with metaphysical or historical authority and without rejecting the past, which would only recuperate progressive, humanist models of history. (24)

In this regard, "An Archaeologist Finds an Umbrella" presents several questions about understanding the past or the historical past. In the poem, the fragments of the past define the present as collective knowledge creates meaning out of them. McMillan depicts a timeless archaeologist, as the poem does not mention any specific time or space but it just tells a moment in which an archaeologist discovers an umbrella. McMillan begins the poem with an introduction to alternative ways of using titles in poetry; he does not separate the title from the poem, the title positions itself as the first line. It starts as: "An Archaeologist Finds and Umbrella" and continues as "Not a particularly old one,/ at the dig's edge" (1-2). This postmodern play in form of using the title as the first line of the poem challenges the normative understanding of poetry. Because, this way, the traditional use of the title is

questioned, as normally, the titles are expected to represent the whole poem. Hence, it can be suggested that this poem deconstructs the use of the title in a poem and reconstructs it by giving it new purposes, as in this case serving as the first lines of the poem. At first, this poem may appear as a traditional one, that is why it is important to understand this particular poem by looking at the whole as single lines do not help convey the meaning of the poem. After series of lines that describe the place that where the umbrella is found, "... The archaeologist/ Made a thing of opening it," (7-8). It is clear that an archaeologist finds an umbrella and tries to understand its purpose by touching it. It does not suggest anything else; however, the following lines reveal the poem's intention:

Stood there, half a broolly
Above her head like a fossil.

And it wasn't even raining.
Now try and guess

What this says about the past. (9-13)

The poem transfers an absurd image into powerful criticism of history-making by using an umbrella as an image to symbolise the past. The whole storyline that leads an archaeologist to discover an umbrella and not understanding its purpose is the symbol of how people interact with the past; they do not know what to do with it. It seems to be a useless artefact to feel safe under, as McMillan proposes in this poem. As Blasing states, the past is not something rejected; it is taken and deconstructed, acknowledged and reconstructed to put a critical distance between the past and the present. In this poem, the past is not allowed to be authoritative enough to control the present but it is a fragment of the current reality that co-exists within the mosaic channels of postmodern culture. It is an umbrella that an archaeologist found and nothing more is important. In this sense, this poem defines postmodernism's view of the past through parodying it with an umbrella as an archaeological artefact. It is clear that, in this poem, as before in "Me and Dave", McMillan acts with an aesthetic concern outside the representation of social problems.

The third poem in the collection, “Annual Report” displays a similar attitude with the first two poems in terms of aesthetic concerns about practicing postmodernism in poetry. This poem investigates the purpose of language and how a poem is produced. It redefines what poetry may be and how it can be understood from different perspectives. “Annual Report” presents poetry just like any other business, where meetings and annual reports are given on and about. By this way, the poem makes use of postmodern bricolage as it mimics annual reports and presents them in the form of poetry. McMillan makes use of postmodern irony, too, by portraying poetry as “just another work place” of life, nothing more and nothing less. Therefore, it theoretically undermines the authoritative view that poetry is one of the most appreciated art forms. It parodies poetry’s position in art as it deconstructs it by presenting it as an ordinary business. Poetry is nothing but a business in this poem, therefore, McMillan starts giving its annual report. The first stanza explains the condition of poetry in work life:

Poem are not big employers, poems are
SMEs. We gather by the watercooler
and we discuss, lyrically, how many
watercooler moments make a watercooler (1-4)

First of all, SME stands for: “Small to medium-sized enterprise, a company with no more than 500 employees” (“SME”). McMillan describes poetry business as an unpopular, under-demanded job model which does what other jobs do. The only thing that may differ is that they discuss what they discuss “lyrically”. The postmodern irony here directly challenges the very place of poetry and its traditions. It deflects and strips the elitism that is built around this art form. Poetry can no longer be what it was. The poem continues to engage in the reconstruction of the idea of poetry as a regular business:

Hour. Poems import and export at the same time
And every day’s an AGM or an EGM
Or a Genda. Any other business? No,
no other business but this one. Making do (5-8)

AGM stands for “Annual general meeting” (“AGM”) and EGM stands for “Extraordinary general meeting” (“EGM”). There is a word play on “a Genda” which seems to ridicule the word agenda. McMillan’s postmodern irony commodifies poetry and changes it into a concrete matter or a product that can be imported and exported. There is nothing new performed but regular necessities are conducted. The last stanza, which consists of three lines unlike the other two stanzas that consist of four lines, explains the condition of the current poetry and its purpose briefly:

[Making do] with the old machinery alongside the new
and the machinery that you make yourself,
that you discard after one pressing, one smelting, (9-11)

It is important to note that the last line ends with a coma instead of a full stop which may refer to an un-ending process. This also explains why the other four-line stanzas do not match with the last three line stanza. The poet explains that the condition of poetry is a postmodern one, it is inclusive; it works with “the old machinery alongside the new” and “the machinery that you make yourself” which underlines the importance of stylistic *mélange*. As Ian Davidson proposes, this stylistic *mélange* allows postmodernism to perform in a wider range of field. He states that: “... [postmodernism] becomes a collection of styles that can be plundered in order to decorate the present. Rather than an aesthetic developing over time in the development of a tradition, all possible styles are spread out and simultaneously present, allowing a contemporary response to be constructed” (Davidson 14). Therefore, the use of stylistic *mélange* truly represents the contemporary times by making use of the old and the new together.

Moreover, “Annual Report” presents the challenge to the English master narratives because poetry is redefined through its transformation towards a job model in the market. Therefore, it points out how the mass-consumer affects what is used to be related to high culture, the art of poetry. The blurring of the high and the low is reflected discreetly. Besides, the “[a]esthetic Practice” (Kennedy 117) plays an important role in the whole poem. Clearly, McMillan’s *Jazz Peas* separates itself from the dilemma and chooses the concerns about aesthetic practice of postmodernism in poetry. *A Chin?*’s “Jesus Died From Eating

Curtains” uses a read-bait title and situation to attract attention, however, “Annual Report” directly introduces ideas on postmodern poetry and redefines poetry in relation to postmodern ideals. It states that postmodern poetry is now a business model that “make[s] do with the old machinery alongside the new” (“Annual Report” 9-10).

The fourth poem of the collection, “Approaching Those ‘Ruddy’ Belisha Beacons Near the Post Office Again”, problematizes the condition of regionalism with respect to the representation of locality through Belisha beacons. Unlike the other three poems analysed so far, this poem does not focus on aesthetic concerns about employing postmodern devices in poetry, but instead, it concentrates on the representation of localness. It is important to understand the meaning and the origin of Belisha beacon to convey the meaning of the poem. Belisha beacon is “a flashing light in an orange globe mounted on a post, indicating a pedestrian crossing on a road [moreover, it is] named after Leslie Hore-Belisha (1893-1957), British politician” (“Belisha Beacon”). The word “ruddy” that is used in the title means “(of a person's face) having a healthy red colour.” (“Ruddy”).

Regional politicisation is a significant characteristic of British postmodern poetry; as Alan Robinson argues, “[t]he analytic self-awareness in ... regional politicisation parallels an increasing self-consciousness in stylistic matters, evident both in technical experimentation and in ethical introspection about the pragmatic role of the writer's artful 'representations' in the social construction of the self” (IX). Accordingly, Ian McMillan discovers the potential of his regionalism in this poem making use of local colours. Belisha beacons in this poem represent regionalism whereas everything else represents mass urbanisation that takes place in the contemporary world. Moreover, beacons are the centre of this poem; they reflect the postmodern concern with critical regionalism, which stands against the impact of universal civilization by making use of local elements, local colour, culture and architecture (Kennedy 102). Therefore, what is postmodern in this poem is that it practices postmodern philosophy that challenges totalitarianism by foregrounding localism. In terms of postmodern devices, this poem makes use of stylistic *mélange* as it introduces a surreal reality with the use of Belisha beacons. In the poem, every time the poet makes a reference to the beacons, the time and place are affected and they bring the antiquity to the

contemporary time. As Sean O'Brien argues, "... work[s] of a number of poets have invited questions about what the term 'British' might mean" (571). This poem brings the elements of Britishness by bringing cultural artefacts related to it to the foreground. In the poem, Belisha beacon is an artefact that exemplifies the difference of British culture among other cultures. Evidently, McMillan recognises this difference, thus, he prioritises the local colour to challenge a totalitarian world in which the differences are abolished.

The ruddy Belisha beacons define the central concerns of the poem and the first stanza starts with a direct reference to them:

You can see them from a long way off,
From when you pass the half-visible ponies
In the field where the school was (1-3)

The poem describes a world where half-visible ponies and ruddy Belisha beacons exist and exhibit themselves. This brings to mind what happens in "Me and Dave"; when the jazz music is introduced, the main reality of the poem shifts into a surreal reality. Here, McMillan again layers his poem with multiple realities by introducing the real world into the postmodern one making use of Belisha beacons as a transformation device. What is significant here is that Belisha beacons are the symbol of local architecture, therefore, they promote localism. As it is clearly observed in the first stanza, when the beacons are mentioned, the ponies come out of nowhere, and they are half-visible. Therefore, they seem to be not real, but they are the visions of the past. In this regard, it differs from "Me and Dave" because this poem deals with local architecture, whereas "Me and Dave" makes use of music. In the second stanza, the surreal reality created by the existence of Belisha beacons is distorted with the reality in which the material reality strikes:

By the bus shelter with the bloke in it,
The bloke whose face is lit by his iPhone
Like a tallow-maker's face is lit in an old master. (4-6)

As the second stanza introduces the reality of the contemporary age, there seems to be a criticism of it. Because, it seems that the magical world created by the existence of Belisha

beacons is now disrupted by the existence of a “bloke whose face is lit by his iPhone”. Here, the poem starts to create a mixture of realities because it shows that when the beacons are mentioned the magic starts, and this magic is attacked by the symbols such as smartphone which turns the magical reality into an ordinary one. McMillan shifts the reality back to the surreal one as he mentions the beacons in the third stanza:

One Belisha Beacon off. One Belisha Beacon on.
 Small parcels of light sent first class to each other;
 Moons chucking glowing balls across the road’s net. (7-9)

When the Belisha beacons become the centre of the poem’s reality, the attitude reflected becomes more romantic and it promotes the artefacts of Britain. As mentioned above, Belisha beacons are specific to the UK and McMillan makes use of “critical regionalism” in promoting them. It seems that he chooses the beacons over the faces that are lit by their smartphones. However, it is clear that McMillan does not make a bad review of the use of these phones. What he does in this poem is briefly representing the powerful effects that are caused by the appearance of the beacons. In the fourth stanza, McMillan introduces another local element which is the use of local language:

A car slows by the Post Office and a woman jumps out
 And gives me a letter. ‘Can tha stick this int’ box for mi?’
 She asks. I will, in a minute. Jogger walks by, gasping-gasp (10-12)

Although the previous stanzas shift in the realities between the real and the surreal, this one makes the surreal one permanent as it grants details to the surreal reality. The realism of the contemporary age is left behind after this stanza. Now, in the surreal reality of the world of this poem, people speak their local languages. It points out that, the reader is in the surreal world of localness that is provided by the beacons. Moreover, it shows that the poet makes his decision and instead of representing the things as they are, he seems to be inspired by the aesthetics of the beacons. The last stanza presents the end of transformation or permanent change in the reality of the poem. The poet decides to stay within the surreal of the localness in which beacons are lit:

First I'll hold the envelope up to the Belisha Beacon.
 Not to read the letter inside, you understand,
 Just to gaze at light on paper, light on writing. (11-13)

The last stanza presents that the poet takes delight in the existence of the beacons. The reality which transforms by the sight of beacons seems to satisfy his curiosity as the persona in the poem does not prefer to stay in the same reality as the man “whose face is lit by his iPhone”. He runs towards the beacons, acts together with them, he does not lose any opportunity to interact with them. This passion for the “ruddy” beacons shows this poem’s concerns with the promotion of localism. The poem wants to create a world in which the contemporariness is fed by the local colours, and thus difference. This poem makes use of stylistic *mélange* as it introduces a multi-layered world in which the surreal and the real mix with one another. The local colour provided by the local artefacts such as Belisha beacons and local language in this case challenges the totalitarian world where individuals and cultures become similar. Thus, it deconstructs a singular authoritative vision in the poem; it provides a postmodern reality which respects the difference by prioritising localness over totalitarianism.

The fifth poem of the collection “As Thoughts” goes back to the aesthetic concerns about practicing postmodernism in poetry and provides a highly experimental example of it. “As Thoughts” is a revolutionary poem in the sense that it changes every element of how poems should be written and read. It employs a playful inventive attitude that deconstructs the idea of uniformity in a poem. In this poem, there are seventy-three lines starting with “as though” and these lines draw a different perspective on everyday events. None of the lines is linked to one another; therefore, there is no uniformity between them. It is like seventy-three different one-line poems. The poem employs playful inventiveness to construct a new alternative in poetry. Hence, it is important to understand how play functions in postmodernism. Brian Edwards explains the function of play as follows:

The play in postmodernism, then, may be read as simultaneously destructive, in its subversion of totalities (including "postmodernism" itself as an entity), and constructive, in its affirmation by theory and demonstration of the positive cultural effects of difference. Working against unity, it opens history, artefacts and authority to continuing interpretation;

and whether or not this activity is held to be progressive or reactionary will depend not upon its "postmodernism" but upon analysis of the performance detail in its reception by the heterogeneous audience. (86)

As stated above, the play provides subversion of totalities through which it achieves "positive cultural effects of difference" (Edwards 86). It is suggested before that contemporary British poetry aims to achieve plurality as it represents the multiple ethnicities and cultures of Britain. Plurality can only be defined by plural sources. Therefore, in both form and theme the seeking of plurality is aimed. McMillan's "As Thoughts" suggests an alternative for plurality of forms in poetry through making use of playful inventiveness as a postmodern device. The lines which start with 'as though' are not formed into stanzas; the poem is one whole stanza. McMillan defines the rule of the play and guides the reading of the poem, it is "*to be read in any order*" ("To Fold" 206). Every statement is a different journey, and has a different topic. There is no order or unity between lines, it is possible to read the poem from any line and the meaning does not change because there is no uniformed meaning. All the lines provoke a thought about something surreal, unreal or fantastic. The thought provoking play takes the reader from one world to the other. There are seventy three different worlds in seventy three 'as though' lines. In this manner, "as thoughts" in McMillan's poem function to represent these worlds through which it achieves a postmodern reality. In this postmodern reality, the reader is not passive and s/he is an active participant because if the reader does not participate in the postmodern play, then "as thoughts" do not function as it can be seen in the following lines:

As though morning has ting-tinged its glass with a fork to get us
to listen.

As though a turtle suddenly began to sprint urgently across the
beach and thousands of other turtles followed, some playing
instruments. (1-5)

As though Sunday wasn't a day but a pebble in your sock. (25)

As though the King Of Sardinia lived in my pocket. (51)

As though translation will always be perfectt. (72)

As though, at The Last Supper, there was no pepper. (75)

As though taxis are sovereign states with their own currency and

laws. (101-102)

As can be observed, the lines taken from the beginning, middle, and the end of the poem do not match or get linked to one another. All the lines offer a different thought. The idea of uniformity in poetry is shattered and replaced or reconstructed with a new body. The poem does not have a structure anymore, or this is the structure it can offer. At this point, the postmodern parody in form can be observed. The normative, traditional poems do offer a structure to give their elements in an order but this understanding is challenged, parodied and changed in this poem. In this way, it provides a new way of reading, a new experience to the reader. Thus, the way that the poem plays with the form also challenges the master narratives about poem writing. One more detail about the poem is that, the word “austerity” is repeated in five different lines. Therefore, it can be seen that McMillan seems to be obsessed with the use of the word “austerity”. He seems to enjoy how the word “austerity” sounds different each line. The lines written about “austerity” are listed below:

As though austerity was an anagram not a solution (14)

As though austerity was a fence not a caged bird’s song (28)

As though austerity is a colour chart. (57)

As though there is a constellation called Austerity that has no stars,
just buckets. (68-9)

As though spiders understand austerity’s subtle subtleties. (94)

The obsession with the word “austerity” presents a purpose about the length in poetry. Austerity is the thing that McMillan does not employ in this poem. McMillan challenges the limits of length and provides a hundred and two lines poem. Therefore, he redefines what the forms of poem can be through his exemplary alternatives. In this case, the alternative is to write a poem that has no uniformity but he enables the reader to read it however s/he likes. McMillan’s postmodern play upon the form exhibits the possible areas that poetry can perform in. It is not limited to the pages, lines and stanzas. This poem is one of the examples that McMillan experiments with postmodernism to go beyond to see its limits.

In his poem “The New Punctuation” McMillan problematizes his concerns with postmodern language in poetry. He challenges the form of poetry in “As Thoughts”, and now in this poem he explains his concerns about the language that is used in poetry. The poem deconstructs the use of punctuation symbols in language and redefines their being used. Thus, “The New Punctuation” explores new possibilities of using punctuation symbols to the extent that it reaches the limits of postmodernism. The poem discovers what comma, demi-colon and full-stop mean from the perspective of McMillan; while doing so it deconstructs the established use of language itself. McMillan, who seems to enjoy deconstructing with his playful humour and inventive attitude, reforms the forms of poems, recreates worlds for poems to exist, and now re-establishes language itself within this poem. “The New Punctuation” at first does not seem to be a poem, but it is in the collection and McMillan does not specify what a poem is and as far as the reader is informed even a pudding recipe can be a poem in McMillan’s verse. The poem consists of a single passage rather than a stanza, so the appearance is deceiving. The poem is as follows:

a demi-colon is a pause in a sentence as light as a breath on your neck a full-sto [Poet does the typo intentionally] takes a sentence and seems to suspend it in the air letting it down slowly a comma/comma makes you laugh no matter how tragic the sentence a question Geoff gives the question you ask a kind of music a fool stoop bends a sentence like you might bend a snake to get it off your neck a colonnnnnn is heavy and seems to make a sentence drag and finally stutter to a stutter end (“To Fold” 222)

One of the first things to be recognised is that there is no or very little use of punctuation within the poem that is about punctuation. No full-stop or comma is placed. Rather than explaining the purpose of punctuation symbols, McMillan defines the feelings they create in the reader. The word plays in the poem reveal the necessity of vocal performance of the poetry rather than only reading it as in the example of “full-sto” the ‘p’ is intentionally discarded, creating a comic functionality. A similar case is also seen in the “colonnnnnn” which refers to its heaviness to language. From the perspective of postmodern devices, this poem is rich in use of the devices such as postmodern playful-inventiveness, parodying the forms through de-construction of normative poems and replacing them with reconstructed alternatives. It has a sense of postmodern protest against the established norms of poetry writing on what poems should look like and how they should be literally written. This little

poem is a powerful representation of how postmodernism reshapes poetry. It definitely challenges the grand narratives in that it gives new definitions, opportunities, possibilities and a playground to be played in poetry. Here, McMillan again employs his postmodern playfulness through which he rearranges the established use of punctuation symbols by his way of using the punctuation symbols.

In his poem, “Elegy, Eulogy, Eeegy” McMillan questions the use of words in a poem. He seeks answers for how words are selected for use, and tries to represent this postmodern self-reflexive attitude about poetry writing with his playful attitude. He makes the reader an active-participant in thinking about word selection. He writes an elegy about the dead words which are not used in poetry and then he turns the elegy into a eulogy of postmodernism because postmodernism resurrects the use of unlikely words. The result becomes an invented word that is “eeegy”. “Eeegy” is a new genre that McMillan defines, and this genre provides poetic language with a variety of words in which the slippery words like eel can be employed in poem. McMillan points out postmodernism’s positive effect on poetic language as it exemplifies how postmodernism creates new room to experimentation with poetic language. At this point, the connection between the words, language and the poem are necessary.

Gary Day explains the connection between poetry and words as follows: “[P]oetry explores issues by enacting them. Its peculiar alchemy is that it can turn words into the experience they describe. Poetry galvanises words giving them a charge and vitality they lack in ordinary usage. It rouse[s] them from the sloth of habit to shine in use” (6). This is actually what McMillan performs with words. He rearranges them to be used in different contexts and forms. By building a metaphor between “elegy”, “eulogy” and “eeegy”, McMillan represents the very existence of words and their death. He writes an “elegy” about how words die, a “eulogy” about the postmodern poem he writes, an “eeegy” about what he recreates. In the poem, the first stanza introduces the poet’s concerns about the dead words which are no longer used. Later in the third, fourth and fifth stanzas the poet introduces words like “food”, “asylum”, “seeker”, “bank”, “food seeker” “food asylum, “asylum bank”. He writes sentences with these words. The reason for using these words stems from

the belief that such words are no longer seen in poems. This poem is an elegy for the dead words. But as he writes about them and uses them in the sentences, the elegy turns into eulogy in which the postmodern poem holds these new words and they are praised. He calls this resurrection of words, “eelegy” in which the dead words are resurrected and the poetic language becomes much more experimental than before. The poem starts with a direct rhetorical question and addresses the reader: “Who died, then? Words did. Heart failure/ Spreading like a sudden stain across the straining/ Chest; pins and needles in your arm. Literally.” (1-3). He explains the reason why the words die, just like what happens to human beings. Words also may suffer from heart failure. Then, he continues to rationalise his statements: “It’s indecipherable, with its door so wooden/ You can’t see its emotions, just hear them/ Squeaking? Words. They died. *Food*” (7-9). Trying to understand the anatomy of words, he tries to understand what is concrete and what is not. One may hear the message of doors through their squeaking but words, he tries to understand. “Food” is the first dead word in the poem that McMillan introduces and then he lists other dead words: “That’s a word. *Asylum*. That’s a word. *Bank*./ That’s a word. *Seeker*. That’s a word. They died/ Perhaps because we tried to force them together” (10-12).

The elegy he has written upon the death of words and eulogy on how this postmodern poem resurrects the use of new words point out that practicing postmodernism in poetry creates new alternatives for poetic language. The last two lines with playful humour explain the reason for all this effort: “*Asylum Bank. Food seeker. Food Asylum. Bank Seeker*./ Words, you see: dead as breeze blocks. Slippery as eels” (13-14). The final line defines the new genre McMillan has founded, “eelegy”. “Eelegy” in this poem means understanding how words exist, live and die. His playful inventiveness deconstructs the idea of elegy and makes it available for nonhuman things, even abstract things such as words and meaning invented by humans. In return, he reconstructs a new field to discover the potential of postmodern language and its limits. His self-reflexive attitude on poetry writing and explanations on how words are used and consumed provide new alternative answers to the poetry writing. In this sense, this poem challenges the authoritative understandings of normative poetry by making use of postmodern self-reflexiveness and postmodern playful

inventiveness. From the British postmodern perspective, the way he puts his words and logic is identified as "... a kind of bafflement, akin to that experienced in the face of the question of what is funny and why" (Gregson 235). This is what McMillan is specifically attributed with and "[c]omedy is likely to erupt anywhere in McMillan's work, but in contexts like this it is as though comedy itself is being interrogated" (Gregson 235).

The poem "Figs" exhibits postmodernism in poetry through its selection of subject matter. Considering the other postmodern poems which exhibit themselves through their practice of postmodern devices and experimenting with postmodernism in poetry, this poem is different because it is postmodern not because it employs the postmodern devices but it engages with postmodern ideals as a worldview. In this sense, it is actually similar to the poem about Belisha beacons in that they both provide insight to the postmodern worldview. The poem "Approaching those 'Ruddy' Belisha Beacons" specifically prioritises regionalism, this poem repeats it by indicating its appreciation for difference. This poem is about looking at humanity from the perspective of figs. In this perspective, just as all figs are the same from a human point of view, all people are the same from a fig point of view. But there are differences in humans, too, as there are differences in figs humans are not aware of. For example, figs actually contain wasps' stings and generally humans are not aware of this fact. This poem promotes differences that are contained inside; therefore, the appearances are not significant. What matters is the difference in opinions and McMillan shows it through making figs speak.

"Figs" is one of the few poems to explain the ideals of postmodernism. In this sense, it distinguishes itself from the other poems. "Figs" is just like a manifesto, it defines what postmodernism does and how it affects the social constructs of communities. Postmodernism promotes plurality and it aims not to marginalise but aims to give voice to the unvoiced and the othered. Postmodernism tries to include every culture and individuality in its representation. This is what McMillan does in the poem "Figs". Perhaps, the title "Figs" is the symbol for the idea of representation as one fig contains hundreds of seeds inside covered under one thick layer of skin; the world covers hundreds of different

cultures, personalities, communities, ethnicities. The first two stanzas indicate how every human is actually equal and the same from the perspective of figs:

He leans over to pick up the
Figs. I lean over to pick
Up the figs. You lean over

To pick up the figs. And Him,
Me, and You are the same man,
The same fingers lean (1-6)

One's trying to look at life with empathy from different angles, is a sufficient force to take the authoritative power from the hands of discriminatory ideologies. Looking at people regarding their colour, ethnicity, religion, and culture and discriminating them according to what they embrace are subverted in this poem. Figs are at the centre and from the perspective of figs, all humans are the same. Furthermore, the poem continues:

[Lean]Ing over to pick up the figs.
At different cupboards
Of our lives, we're an I, a He

A You. But here's the thing,
Here's the *tingaling*, here's
The *waspy's sting*, here's (7-12)

The way how people perceive figs is not different from how figs perceive humans. Humans generalise figs, figs generalise humans. From the figs' eyes humans are all the same; from humans' eyes figs are not different from one another. However, "*the waspy's sting*" and "*tingaling*" introduce something unique about the figs, something unknown. Therefore, actually they are not how humans perceive them to be. These clues about figs lead to a scientific result. Luis Villazon explains the secret of figs in the following passage:

Certain types of fig are male and female and so require a special breed of wasp to pollinate the females. The female wasp crawls inside through a hole so narrow that she loses her wings in the process and becomes trapped. If the fig is a male, she lays her eggs inside.

These hatch into larvae that burrow out, turn into wasps and fly off, carrying fig pollen with them. If the wasp climbs into a female fig, she pollinates it, but cannot lay her eggs and just dies alone. Luckily for us, the female fig produces an enzyme that digests this wasp completely. The crunchy bits are seeds, not wasp parts. (“Is it true”)

McMillan seems to realise that dilemma and plays upon it. Although until the fourth stanza he seems to assume that “all we’re same just like figs”, in the italics he gives what is not known about figs might actually be valid for humans as well. He continues his play and writes that:

The *songyouising*:

The. Figs. Are. Always. Figs.

The POV remains the same. (13-15)

But the fig remains a fig.

Me? I’m everybody.

But where does that leave

The verser trying to write

About figs? You see my dilemmer? (19-23)

The last line presents the fact that the poet lives a dilemma by comparing figs and humans. He claims to be representing “everybody”, but at the same time, how can he be the verser if he is representing everybody? It can be inferred that the word “dilemmer” stands for a mutant word that is made of dilemma and grammar which explains the language McMillan invented for this particular poem. The poem itself is a big dilemma that is constructed by a new grammar that requires the figs’ language to be understood. The words that represent figs are in italics. This unrepresentable condition actually explains and promotes the acceptance of difference. Trying to put people in categories does not work for societies, it just leads to a dilemma that cannot be solved. What remains is the acceptance of plurality, to understand difference, to negotiate and most importantly to communicate with one another. The poem, thus, is a call for representation and it explains the necessity of it. It builds up an ex-centric world as it voices the othered and the underrepresented which is shown through the examples of figs. Additionally, the poem also employs what Kennedy

calls “the dialogue with realism” (107) through the scientific facts employed in the poem, for example, the fact that figs contain wasps’ stings in them.

McMillan follows the traces of realism in postmodern reality in the shortest poem of the collection: “The Indoor Glider: a Miniature”. In this poem, McMillan portrays a realistic depiction of a suburban house and explains how he feels the postmodern reality inside his head by being able to transform the realistic image of the house into the surreal image in which he is a pilot that lands from one image to another. He is the pilot of his imagination and thus he lands wherever he likes. He has the control of his thoughts and this is what this poem is about. Hence, McMillan self-reflexively shares the way he writes his poems with his reader. He discovers the lands inside his head, these are real images that he later twists and mingles with surreal elements. The result of this process is how his poems are made. Therefore, this poem shows that McMillan actively makes use of postmodern self-reflexivity and he employs stylistic *mélange* by mixing the real and the surreal. The first stanza depicts how McMillan chooses images in his head as follows:

Shadows of wings
Falls over settee
So this isn’t a hut
Or a tent. This be
A suburban home. (1-5)

He sees images in his mind and turns those images into concrete objects before he introduces the surreal. So, the first image in his head is the suburban home. In the second stanza, he explains how he handles the image that his imagination produced as follows:

I’m the pilot
Swooping over this
Domestic scene. In
My head of course
Not in ‘real life’. (6-10)

While the poem discovers the realism within the postmodern world, it also self-reflexively defines how subject matter of a poem is selected for a poem. Just like Tony in “The Force

of His Storm Knocked Me from My Stool”, Tony becomes a pilot in McMillan’s poem. The poetry writing process is reflected in the poem itself; in this way while the poem double-codes multiple worlds, it challenges the grand-designs of poetry through which it achieves new techniques to be employed in writing of poetry. Therefore, it deconstructs the idea that a poem is a finished indivisible work, and even the writing process of poetry can create poems. The use of postmodern self-reflexivity in this poem enables McMillan to create a new notion in postmodern poetry. This new notion is that poetry writing cannot be limited with definitions; it is open to be redefined and reshaped as long as creativity allows.

In his “We’re doing the Quick Crossword”, McMillan reconstructs the form of poetry by introducing it a crossword puzzle. McMillan, who turns pudding recipes, annual reports, figs, jazz peas and “as thoughts” into poems, recreates a crossword puzzle as a poem. Just like the instructions in crossword puzzles, the lines ask questions and the poem’s persona answers them quickly through which a playful comedy full of satire is presented.

Slowly. *Violent disorder. Riot,*
Ruckus, rampage. Outside,

A slow motorcycle slows,
 Stops. *I’ve got summat O*

Summat summat, T,
Summat. My brow

Wrinkles until it looks older
 Than almost every other

Part of me. Violent disorder. (1-9)

The poem presents a condition in which the reader is part of the puzzle that is being solved by the poet. This playful invention of the poet takes the poem out of its page and challenges its form by turning it into a crossword puzzle. Granting poems new forms and subject matters, McMillan makes use of postmodernism’s deconstructive tools in order to create

options for poems to perform. The persona in the poem tries to find the word for “Violent disorder” and the process is reflected in the poem. Just like the poet himself, the reader experiences the process line by line. This process evokes the self-reflexiveness as the reader witnesses how the poem is written line by line. It all starts with a basic question, what is “Violent disorder”? The poet begins to notice violently disordered changes in himself such as his “brows”. The poem continues and so does the persona to explore the “self” that he introduces in the puzzle:

T, summat. How difficult
Can language be? The motorbike

Accelerates away, slowly.
Of course we're both

Looking at different clues,
Of course we are. Silence

Hangs in the evening waiting
For the motorbike. *Ruckus.* (11-8)

The sudden realization that the persona experiences with the motorbike's existence, comes in contact with the answer of the puzzle. The persona also realises the clues he looks for and how people get their answer from their surroundings. The recognition of the outside, the multiple existences in this case, the existence of puzzle and the outer world help the persona get his answer. To be clear, there are two worlds presented: The world constructed around the puzzle which the reader experiences and the world that the writer experiences as in the case of how he is affected by the motorbike while writing the poem. Thus, the poem double-codes the text and it challenges the authoritative visions that possibly try to overwhelm the poet's universe. The poem subverts the traditional understanding of individual poetry and creates a new alternative world for it. It can be an interactive work in which the reader can participate while the poet enjoys the individual-ness of it. Moreover, the poem makes use of local language through which it represents critical regionalism of

the ex-centric. The Yorkshire word “summat” used for the word “something” exemplifies the local colour of the poem. Secondly, the way the poem deals with the crossword game has a sense of realism in the postmodern background, therefore it can be suggested that the text introduces new way of experimenting with postmodern reality.

“Language and Politics” trilogy of *Jazz Peas* represents McMillan’s concerns about the aesthetic practice of postmodernism in poetry. In addition, these poems also exhibit some of McMillan’s political concerns as well. They reflect the postmodern dilemma between aesthetic practice and social reality that is observed in *A Chin?*’s poems, such as “Jesus Died from Eating Curtains”, “Realism (Nothing is ever Finished)”, and “Pit Closure as Art”. This trilogy mixes the linguistic concerns with political concerns. The first poem of the trilogy is “Language and Politics”, the second one is “Language and Politics 2: Maps and Dog Ventriloquism Combined in the Same Tale”, the third one is “Language and Politics 3: Complexity and Simplicity, a Debate”. In the first poem, McMillan argues the use of language in postmodern poetry by challenging the traditional use of language. In the second poem, he problematizes the form of postmodern poetry. In the third one, he shows what postmodernism is capable of in poetry by making use of different postmodern devices. All three poems commonly contain arguments about the use of language in poetry and politics reflected in poetry. In this sense, they are concerned with “aesthetic practice and social reality” (Kennedy 117) and “the dialogue with realism” (Kennedy 107).

Accordingly, the first line in the poem “Language and Politics” problematizes the notion of language by referring to a quote by David Bellos. It is a quotation stating: “... the illusion that language consists of things called words” (qtd In. McMillan “To Fold” 210). This reference points out the poet’s concerns with language. So, the poem opens itself up with questions about the obscurity of words that people use to communicate with one another. It seems that McMillan agrees with Bellos and constructs his poem upon this thought. Hence, to think that language consists of words is an illusion, the poet demonstrates how easy it is to misunderstand words. The first stanza introduces a misunderstanding of the word Shangri La: “So when Terry (pate gleam) from Speke/ Says ‘is she angry, la?’ he’s really saying Shangri La./ It’s a *drive by shouting*. Listen: *Mock-Gloucs*,” (1-3). The concept of

language is challenged in the first stanza, as it shows what words are used for may not refer to what they want to mean. It is not easy to distinguish spoken language as one may confuse “Shangri La” and “is she angry, la?”. Here, the poet stresses the fluidity in the understanding of language. In the following stanza, he introduces a new performance upon language, which he calls “tacks” in the poem. Tack means “a small, sharp broad-headed nail” and it also means “a method of dealing with a situation or problem; a course of action or policy” (“Tack”). It seems that McMillan uses tacks to mean both as it can be observed in these lines: “The man in the scarf really does tell me to turn left/ At *Toys Yam We*. Okay, another tack: Alan and Marilyn/ Bergman, lyricists, describe a line with too many S’s in” (7-9). He uses tacks as if he hammers down nails on the use of language. Every tack brings new use to the language of the poem; it shifts the poem’s time and place. They create an unrepresentable, and uncertain reality in the poem that represents the condition of language within postmodern reality. Thus, McMillan shows that reshaping language affects the poetic experience that the reader experiences. The fifth stanza shifts into another “tack” “*Through the canyons of my mind is he still singing/ The Way We Were?*” Okay, another tack: on the radio/ The man describing the Udinese-Arsenal match” (13-5). He introduces pastiche here, making use of song names and lyrics without any particular reason. It plays upon the possibilities of intertextual material. With another tack, another layer is added upon the poem without any particular reason, maybe to confront the presentation of the unrepresentable. In the following lines, he gives the punch-line of his poem and explains why he makes use of these tacks:

All this tacking: my little language-yacht must be
In choppy choppy waters! My flowery language-carpet

Must be very loose to need all this hammering down!
So maybe we should leave it to the professionals. They
Know how talk should be talkytalked. ‘*I have made it*

Very clear ... ‘Heck fire! He even *sounds* like a Prime Minister!
Q: what has he made clear? A: the window. The view is now

Sensational. Depending of course where you are standing. (20-7)

The poet claims that “tackings”s are one way to deal with language in postmodern reality of the poems. He points out the boring way the politicians, such as prime ministers, use language as in “I have made it very clear” part. They are not adding to language, they are not developing it. They are not using language that people speak and that is “window clear”. The opposite meaning can also be understood “depending of course where you are standing”. McMillan, in this poem, presents the possibilities that can be achieved through playing with language. Language is not defined by the authoritative powers such as politicians and prime ministers. Language is open to everyone to be experimented with and to be used. “Tackings” are the possible experiments and plays that can be done with language. It is not something strict, it is pliable. The poem specifically promotes the features of postmodern play and its deconstructive power to re-create and reshape a new model of language that is not created by “words” but also imagination and creativity. Thus, it is more accessible to anyone who wants to perform with it. Briefly, the poem by making use of pastiche as in the lyrics of songs, postmodern intertextuality, and playful attitude deconstructs language in poetry to challenge its normative traditions, to build plural novelties in it.

The second poem of the trilogy, “Language and Politics 2: Maps and Dog Ventriloquism Combined in the Same Tale”, explores what can be done to the form of poetry. In the first poem of the trilogy, the poet discusses the condition of language in postmodern poems. In this second poem, he introduces what possibilities that can be played with or experimented on poetic forms are. In the poem, there are two subject matters discussed interchangeably: One of them is about maps and the other one is about the performing of the dog ventriloquist. The poem introduces both tales first and then mixes them together, making use of stylistic *mélange*. The first stanza introduces the tale about maps:

Here’s a map Chris once drew me.

It was how to get from the centre of Stoke

To his school:

STOKE ----- SCHOOL

It was folded up, of course. (1-5)

The story of maps starts with the drawing of a map that is practical and comic to some extent. Then the second and third stanzas introduce the second tale of the poem which shows a performance of a dog ventriloquist and her/his dog. The ventriloquist speaks in italics:

What's that, Lassie?
There's a fire in the old barn?
It's spreading, Lassie?

When, in 1972, I visited Lundy Island
 I had to leap the last two feet
 From the boat to shore. (6-11)

The sixth stanza starts blending two tales into one:

Here's a map of how to get to Lundy Island
 From the mainland:
 MAINLAND ----- green trousers ----- LUNDY (21-3)

The last stanza presents the combined new tale:

What's that, Lassie?
What does my wife say?
 She says I've got the gift of the gab,
 Lassie, but I prefer to think of
 That little-known miracle when Christ
 Jesus walked on Tomato Soup.

CHRIST ----- soup ----- STOKE SHORE (29-35)

What this poem does is to perform transformation in poetry. It can introduce stories, it can mingle them, it can mix them, separate them. Basically, it can play upon them as if they are pliable materials, they are fluid. This poem indicates to what extent a poem can exist, and challenge the limits that surround it. It redefines what a poem is, what it can be. It introduces new forms that are applicable to poems such as the use of maps, the use of ventriloquism and how it represents it with the words and the language the poem requires. Use of italics, dashes, and formal writing, all of them can be changed to serve postmodern fragments of poetry writing. In the first poem, McMillan points out how language can be reshaped and in the second poem he shows how the form can be played upon.

The third and the last poem of the trilogy, “Language and Politics 3: Complexity and Simplicity, a Debate” demonstrates what is going beyond in postmodernism in poetry because this poem takes the poetry out of the page and makes the reader perform the postmodern play with the poet. This poem is the mixture of the other two poems of this trilogy. It deals with the form as well as the language while presenting the postmodern dilemma between social reality and aesthetic practice. The poem starts with a note suggesting the reader how to read the poem: “*NB: Please imagine me reading this aloud as I walk on stilts and and [repetition is intentionally done by the poet] sport a pink tutu and wear the mask of a prime minister. Any PM, except De Rouge of course.*” (“*To Fold*” 213). McMillan forces the reader to mix politics, language, poetry and life into one reality, which is a postmodern one, by including in the poem reading instructions that require additional information about the author, PM’s and politics of Britain. In this poem, McMillan creates a universe in the poem in which he is free to do anything he wants. He can insert politics, jokes, short stories, and interactive communications with the reader. This poem introduces a postmodern evolution in poetry in which new devices can be discovered, named and defined. The first stanza questions the way one perceives images in poetry and opens it to discussion:

Looky, was this squirrel
 Too complex to understand?
 Is the fact that I’m standing

Looking at it some kinda
Metaphor? (1-5)

The debate between simplicity and complexity is given through a squirrel image. Is complexity achieved by the reader, or is it the intention of the poet? While writing about the poem, the poet directs questions to the reader and invites them to be part of the text they are consuming. This is no longer a work to be read from a page; it is in the brain of the reader as if they are watching a TV show. The first poem of the trilogy deconstructs the language of poetry, and the second one, deconstructs the form of poetry, and in this third poem he reforms and reconstructs everything about poetry in that it is no longer on the page. The reader has to engage with the politics of real life, while at the same time s/he also has to be informed about the current trends in literature to discuss simplicity against complexity. Also, they have to engage with the poet's postmodern play to fully experience the poem. If the poet says "read the poem while standing", then that's what the reader is expected to do. Therefore, the poem is not on the page anymore, in McMillan's postmodern universe.

The second stanza introduces the insight of the squirrel because the lines are provided in parentheses and they respond to the first stanza:

(Come into the green house and 'say' a prayer and 'light' a candle.
Be careful of the fork. Ah, too late. Still, the candle throws
... What year was it
that gardeners got the vote?
What's that you say?? They haven't got it yet? And that's why they
Spend so much time in the garden because there's nothing else they
can influence. Oh, really, that's
Too too too too sad.) (6-13)

The comedy is introduced with the case of squirrel and it is understood that it actually is not a complex metaphor but a real creature. It has its own thoughts, it responds on behalf of the reader. The reader does not need to ask questions to it; it has questions, asks them and seeks

answers. This is the simplicity of poetry. Then, the complex part is injected with a surreal intervention of the poet in the third stanza:

Here's a confession:
 I don't speak English.
 I can't speak English.
 But I can write it.
 In fact, I'm Finnish. Not Finnish, Finish.
 Okay then, let's look over the shoulder
 Of this man on the train and see what he's writing
 In his journal: (14-21)

This intervention causes an inexplicable chaos through which the poet achieves what he aims; presenting the unrepresentable that portrays the complexity. The reader is left in confusion and is not sure who speaks now; is this the squirrel or the poet or a new person? These questions are not answered; instead, it is led to be even more confusing with the scene of an anonymous person writing in his/her memoir:

Apple trees by railway line: south. Grantham: two trees, small
 Green apples. On closer examination: conkers. 1 tree big red
 Apples by retail park. Do I miss some when I write others down?
 Mainly close to stations. One tree near a level crossing south of
 P/boro, bright green apples. Red apples near Stevenage 1 tree.
 Bright red apples v close to Stevenage Station. 1 impaled on a
 Fence post. (21-8)

McMillan layers his poem by adding more different elements to it. In this case, this memoir writing man is a realistic story of no one and nowhere through which McMillan ridicules uniformity in poetry. McMillan with this attitude highlights that poetry is an inclusive genre that is free to experiment upon postmodern reality. The use of local names for the places exhibits instances of regionalism and ex-centricity. In this poem, the poet points out what else a poem can take and be able to perform. He tries the limits of postmodern experimentation by making use of variety of postmodern devices, blending realities upside down while at the same time self-reflexively addressing the reader. The memoir writing

wo/man goes to the abyss of postmodern reality and the following stanza introduces another story:

So, Im walking up the street in Mapplewell
 And a man in braces comes out of a house and says
Hey, pillock, what day is it?
 And I say *Thursday* even though of course it isn't.
 And the man in braces says
Reyt and shouts into the house
Telld thi! (29-35)

Where is the persona, what happened to the man on the train, to the squirrel and who do the readers listen to now? These are all uncertainties presented; it is no longer surprising because it is now clear that this is the complex part of the poem. The simple part stated that understanding a squirrel is not that hard as it speaks for itself. Now, the poem also speaks for itself, this is the complex part and is not built to be understood, to be analysed. However, what it does is to bring more local colour, the representation of the ex-centric into the poem. The debate is presented yet it is unsolved or answered, and the poet is well aware that as the last line of the poem states: "Yep, I know, the debate's un-resolved" (36). In this poem, McMillan presents the ongoing debate about whether poetry should be simple or complex. Accordingly, he represents it and leaves it unanswered for the plurality of answers from the audience that also participate in the debate about poetry. This may be the most subversive poem of McMillan's as it specifically states what the poem does concerning the conflicts with grand narratives. It presents the ongoing debate concerning the aesthetical practice and social reality in British postmodern poetry. Therefore, McMillan turns this poem into an active ground for debate as well as he practices postmodern experiments in his poetry.

To conclude, in this chapter an analysis of *Jazz Peas* as a postmodern work shows that McMillan still makes use of postmodern devices in his poems while he also experiments with postmodernism in his poetry by representing postmodern attitude as in critical regionalism, the dilemma between social reality and aesthetic practice, concerns about the

form, language and subject matter. However, it is clear that in *Jazz Peas*, McMillan's early concerns about political matters that are observed in *A Chin?* are replaced by aesthetic concerns that engage with the practice of postmodernism in poetry. Evidently, McMillan still engages with some political matters in this collection as it is seen in "Language and Politics"; however, the emphasis is on the experiments with postmodernism in poetry as the majority of the poems exhibit. Accordingly, the poems such as "Me and Dave and Thelonious Monk Waiting for the 14 Bus", and "The Indoor Glider: A Miniature" present the postmodern device stylistic *mélange* through which McMillan explores reality by mixing the surreal and real. While at the same time, he self-reflexively presents the reader how his works are written. On the other hand, in his poems "Annual Report", "We're doing the Quick Crossword" and "As Thoughts" McMillan presents new forms of postmodern poetry by experimenting with playful inventiveness. In this case, an annual report, a crossword puzzle and chaotic listing of tens of "as thoughts" can be poems. Similarly, while he practices postmodern devices in "Figs", "An Archaeologist Finds an Umbrella", "Approaching Those 'Ruddy' Belisha Beacons Again" McMillan also introduces postmodern issues about ex-centricity, history and regionalism. He indicates the importance of looking at things from figs' perspective, he argues how significant it is to have local colour to represent regionalism as in the Belisha Beacons, and he parodies history-making through making use of an umbrella as a historical symbol. Lastly, in his poems "Elegy, Eulogy, Eeegy", "The New Punctuation" and "Language and Politics" trilogy he introduces issues about the language and form in postmodern poetry. These poems provide new practices of forms and poetic language through which they challenge the normative poems of the previous traditions. They provide alternatives for poetry to experiment. They show that it is possible to invent new genres as in "Elegy, Eulogy, Eeegy", and it is possible to change the established structures of punctuation symbols for the sake of experimentation and play. On the other hand, "Language and Politics": "1" provides representation of language of postmodern poetry through tacks, and it criticises what politicians call a formal language, "2" provides representation of form of the postmodern poetry by bringing a tale of a map and a dog ventriloquist in the same poem and making both of them perform their skills. So, in the poem the reader observes how maps are made,

while at the same time they become the audience of a ventriloquist talking to his/her dog. “3” exhibits the unlimited capacity of postmodern play by performing all what stated above.

CONCLUSION

“Those of us who *tell* the stories of postmodern poetry are usually more invested in polemical distinctions than those of us who *live* them” (Longenbach 5).

In conclusion, it is clear that McMillan is a poet who *lives* the stories of postmodern poetry and at the same time he is the one who creates those stories. This study of McMillan has taken postmodernism and postmodern devices such as parody, pastiche, intertextuality, bricolage, stylistic *mélange*, playful inventiveness, postmodern irony, postmodern self-referentiality and self-reflexivity as the significant elements of understanding postmodernist poetry. This study indicates that Ian McMillan is a postmodern British poet as he employs the postmodern devices suggested above. Poetry that is produced after the 1960s, especially the 1980s in Britain is considered to be *The New Poetry* and postmodern poetry does consist of an important part of it. Postmodern poetry in Britain is postmodern because it challenges the hegemony of the authoritative grand narratives by deconstructing them through postmodern devices. In return, postmodern texts create alternatives by reconstructing the grand narratives to provide a critical distance for the reader. Postmodern poetry in Britain exhibits political concerns of the representation of the other and the othered. Therefore, it manifests itself as the poetry of the ex-centric. The marginalised groups are no longer marginalised and they are brought to the centre of representation. In this sense, McMillan represents the postmodern poetry in the rural Britain, Barnsley. He represents the othered from the perspective of the othered as previously the rural regions are not centred in literature. It is not an exaggeration to state that contemporary British poetry leaves London and the urban to take a stroll around the British Isles.

As argued in chapter I, *A Chin?* manifests many of the postmodern devices with the aim of deconstruction of the traditional understanding of poetry. Each of the poems analysed in the chapter exhibits a variety of different postmodern devices and some of the poems have multiple postmodern devices in them. The postmodern devices such as parody, pastiche, stylistic *mélange*, intertextuality, bricolage, postmodern irony, postmodern self-referentiality and self-reflexivity turn McMillan’s poetry into a playground through which

he criticises the condition of poetry and draws new spheres for postmodern poetry to exist. The poems from the collection such as “Deaths from Ice Cream”, “Henry’s Skeleton, George’s Leg” “Poem Occasioned by the High Incidence of Suicide amongst the Unemployed” and “Pit Closure as Art” present the struggle of postmodern poetry to serve as a mass media device, as the poems reflect, represent and criticise the real events of their times through a postmodern behaviour. Furthermore, these poems parody the news and their lack of power in representing the social reality. They deconstruct the condition and the position of poetry and reconstruct it by giving it new means to represent the voice of the society. Accordingly, “Realism (Nothing is Ever Finished)” and “Jesus Died from Eating Curtains” reflect McMillan’s concerns with the aesthetics in postmodern poetry. These poems exhibit the concerns with the language, form and subject matter of postmodern poetry and they illustrate McMillan’s self-reflexive attitude which gives his opinions about how poems should be written. On the other hand, “Kake Yourself Comfortable”, “Lilian’s Poem” and “Dad, the Donkey is On Fire” leave the politics aside, directly enhance the poetry experience of postmodernism by making use of the playful inventiveness. These poems challenge the very identity of traditional poetry; they create playful variety of options to it by making use of language games and found materials. Similarly, “Ted Hughes is Elvis Presley” and “The Force of His Storm Knocked me From My Stool” are the laboratories of postmodernism through which every aspect of postmodern devices can easily be observed and understood.

Chapter II that analyses *Jazz Peas* observes a shift from politics to aestheticism in McMillan’s poetry. The selected poems in this collection predominantly are busy with the condition of postmodernism in poetry. The chapter shows that there is a change in McMillan’s attitude towards postmodernism, that is, his political concerns are replaced by concerns about the aesthetic practice of postmodernism. The selected poems create different visions to look at postmodernism; they are all the experiments to carry postmodernism to a new dimension. In this sense, poems such as “As thoughts”, “We’re doing the Quick Crossword”, and “Annual Report” offer new forms to poetry that challenge uniformity in poetry. The poems in the selected works appear as crossword puzzle, annual

report, and a distorted reality of “as thoughts”. All of them are exclusively dealing with the understanding of form in poetry. They reconstruct it through the new forms they create. On the other hand, the poems such as “Me and Dave and Thelonious Monk Waiting for the 14 Bus”, “Figs”, “An Archaeologist Finds an Umbrella” and “Approaching those ‘Ruddy’ Belisha Beacons Near the Post Office Again” represent the postmodern ideals of the 2000s. They act like little brochures of manifesto of postmodernism. These poems are enhanced with the use of formal postmodern devices and they make use of these devices to present the locality, regionalism and the ex-centric. Accordingly, the poems, “The New Punctuation” and “Elegy, Eulogy, Eeegy” represent the playful inventiveness in postmodern poetry and they present questions about the use of language in postmodernism. They create new definitions for *what else can be poetry* in their unique way. Lastly, “Language and Politics” trilogy represent postmodern attitude in three categories; “1”: the practice of postmodern language, “2”: the practice of postmodern form, “3”: the capacity of postmodernism is experimented. All of the poems in both collections experience and practice postmodernism in poetry through different alternatives of structures, forms and postmodern devices. Furthermore, what Kennedy and Gregson call postmodernism in British poetry is also observed in both collections. Thus, this is what makes Ian McMillan a postmodern British poet.

Finally, in this study, it is observed that McMillan makes use of postmodern devices and creates new devices for postmodernism while practicing postmodern poetry. However, there is a shift observed in his latest collection compared to his early collection; it is that his attitude towards the politics in postmodern poetry changes towards the practices and experiments in postmodern language and form in poetry. *Jazz Peas*, in this sense, represents the new practices with postmodernism in poetry and concerns aesthetic issues in postmodernism in British poetry. On the other hand, *A Chin?* reflects postmodernism’s struggle with the period’s politics by making use of formal postmodern devices. In conclusion, it can be stated that McMillan develops postmodernism to a new phase as he is not fully satisfied with the existing use of formal postmodern devices.

This thesis is written to provide recognition to the postmodern poet McMillan, who has not received enough critical attention. It is now clear that McMillan is a poet who uses postmodernism skilfully and produces quite different examples of postmodern poetry through postmodern devices. It is very important to acknowledge the poet McMillan because of the innovations and changes he introduced to poetry through postmodernism. It is known that the prolific poet McMillan continues to produce literary works today and his son Andrew McMillan is also a poet who produces literary works. Perhaps in another study, postmodernism in Ian McMillan's forthcoming works can be examined. Obviously it is not surprising if McMillan's view of postmodernism changes. Moreover, Andrew McMillan's poems will inspire the exploration of innovations in contemporary poetry for future studies.

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APPENDIX 1: ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORM

	HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES ETHICS COMMISSION FORM FOR THESIS
HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES TO THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENCY ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE	
Date: <u>2/7/2019</u>	
Thesis Title: Reading Ian McMillan as a Postmodern British Poet	
My thesis work related to the title above:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people. 2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.). 3. Does not involve any interference of the body's integrity. 4. Is not based on observational and descriptive research (survey, interview, measures/scales, data scanning, system-model development). 	
<p>I declare, I have carefully read Hacettepe University's Ethics Regulations and the Commission's Guidelines, and in order to proceed with my thesis according to these regulations I do not have to get permission from the Ethics Board/Commission for anything; in any infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility and I declare that all the information I have provided is true.</p>	
I respectfully submit this for approval.	
Name Surname: Ozan EKİCİ Student No: N15225357 Department: English Language and Literature Program: English Language and Literature MA Status: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D. <input type="checkbox"/> Combined MA/ Ph.D.	Date and Signature <u>02.07.2019</u> 
<u>ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL</u>	
<p style="font-size: 1.2em; color: blue;">Approved</p>  _____ Prof. Dr. Huriye REİS	



**HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ETİK KOMİSYON MUAFİYETİ FORMU**

**HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA**

Tarih: 2.7.2019

Tez Başlığı: Ian McMillan'ı Bir Postmodern İngiliz Şair Olarak Okumak

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmam:

1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır,
2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.
3. Beden bütünlüğüne müdahale içermemektedir.
4. Gözlemsel ve betimsel araştırma (anket, mülakat, ölçek/skala çalışmaları, dosya taramaları, veri kaynakları taraması, sistem-model geliştirme çalışmaları) niteliğinde değildir.

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kurul/Komisyon'dan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

Tarih ve İmza

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Öğrenci No: N15225357
Anabilim Dalı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Programı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Yüksek Lisans Programı
Statüsü: Yüksek Lisans Doktora Bütünleşik Doktora

02.07.2019

DANIŞMAN GÖRÜŞÜ VE ONAYI

Uygundur

Prof. Dr. Huriye REİS



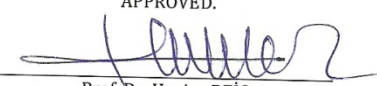
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APPENDIX 2: ORIGINALITY REPORTS

	HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES MASTER'S THESIS ORIGINALITY REPORT
HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES TO THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENCY ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE	
Date: <u>3/7/2019</u>	
Thesis Title : Reading Ian McMillan as a Postmodern British Poet	
<p>According to the originality report obtained by myself/my thesis advisor by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options checked below on <u>02.10.2019</u> for the total of <u>114</u> pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction, c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled as above, the similarity index of my thesis is <u>2</u> %.</p>	
Filtering options applied:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Approval and Declaration sections excluded 2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bibliography/Works Cited excluded 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quotes excluded 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Quotes included 5. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Match size up to 5 words excluded 	
<p>I declare that I have carefully read Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences Guidelines for Obtaining and Using Thesis Originality Reports; that according to the maximum similarity index values specified in the Guidelines, my thesis does not include any form of plagiarism; that in any future detection of possible infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility; and that all the information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.</p>	
I respectfully submit this for approval.	
Name Surname: Ozan EKİCİ Student No: N15225357 Department: English Language and Literature Program: English Language and Literature MA	Date and Signature <u>03.07.2019</u> 
<u>ADVISOR APPROVAL</u>	
APPROVED.  Prof. Dr. Huriye REİS	



HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORJİNALLİK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 3/7/2019

Tez Başlığı : Ian McMillan'ı Bir Postmodern İngiliz Şair Olarak Okumak

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 114 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 03/07/2019 tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda işaretlenmiş filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 2 'tür.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:

- 1- Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç
- 2- Kaynakça hariç
- 3- Alıntılar hariç
- 4- Alıntılar dâhil
- 5- 5 kelimedenden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

Adı Soyadı: Ozan EKİCİ
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Programı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tarih ve İmza

03.07.2019

DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

Prof. Dr. Huriye REİS