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"Emotionally Stunted Anarchists" or "Simply Teenagers"? An Alternative Reading of Enda Walsh's *Disco Pigs* (1996)

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Abstract

Enda Walsh`s *Disco Pigs* (1996), set in Cork in the late 1990s, is a play that focuses on the lives of two teenagers by dramatizing their various activities over a two-day period, soon before their seventeenth birthday. Having brought the Irish playwright great international acclaim while at the same time enabling him to establish his position as one of the most prominent playwrights of contemporary Irish drama and theatre immediately in his early career, *Disco Pigs* has remained in the centre of critical attention for many years following its premiere in 1996. While the play has mainly received positive criticism over the years with much praise for its highly dynamic performance, its two central figures have largely been approached negatively for the way they function in the public world and in their own private world. Setting out with such negative criticism raised of Walsh`s "disco pigs", the aim of this paper is to offer an alternative reading of the play through a detailed character analysis in the light of theories of adolescent psychiatry and developmental psychology and thus to show to what extent the two protagonists of the play display the features of adolescence. Since this play by Walsh has previously been analysed at length within the frame of postdramatic theatre by James (2020) and Gömceli (2017), this study will present a discussion of the play independent of its postdramatic theatre features. With this novel approach to the play, the present study hopes to initiate further discussion on *Disco Pigs* and to contribute to the existing scholarly studies on the play.

Keywords: Enda Walsh, *Disco Pigs*, adolescence, adolescence psychiatry, developmental psychology, teenage infatuation, teenage violence

"DUYGUSAL YÖNDEN BODUR ANARŞİSTLER" Mİ YOKSA "SADECE ERGENLİK" Mİ? ENDA WALSH'UN *DISCO PIGS* (1996) OYUNU ÜZERİNE ALTERNATİF BİR YORUM

Öz

Enda Walsh'un 1990'ların sonlarına doğru ve Cork'ta geçen *Disco Pigs* (1996) [*Disko Domuzları*] adlı oyunu iki gencin on yedinci yaş günlerinin hemen öncesinde, yaşamlarının iki günlük bir kısmında gerçekleştirdikleri çeşitli eylemleri sahneye koyarak onların yaşantılarına odaklanır. İrlanda'lı oyun yazarına kariyerinin henüz başlangıç yıllarında büyük uluslararası beğeni kazandıran ve aynı zamanda çağdaş İrlanda tiyatrosunun da en dikkat çeken oyun yazarlarından biri olarak kendini kabul ettirmesini sağlayan *Disco Pigs*, 1996 yılında gerçekleşen ilk gösterimini takiben uzun yıllar boyunca eleştirel ilginin merkezinde kalmıştır. Oyun, son

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derece dinamik bir tempoda sahnelenişine yapılan övgülülerle birlikte yıllar boyu çoğunlukla olumlu eleştiriler alırken, oyunun iki ana karakteri toplum içinde ve kendi özel dünyalarında sergiledikleri davranış biçimleriyle büyük oranda olumsuz açıdan ele alınmışlardır. Bu yazının amacı, Walsh`un "disko domuzlarına" yöneltilen bu olumsuz eleştirilerden hareketle, adolesan psikiyatrisi ve gelişimsel psikoloji kuramları ışığında ayrıntılı bir karakter çözümlemesi yoluyla oyun üzerine alternatif bir yorum sunmak ve bunun sonucunda oyunun iki ana karakterinin adolesan dönemi özelliklerini ne ölçüde sergilediklerini göstermektir. Çalışmaya konu olan Walsh`un bu eseri daha önce James (2020) ve Gömceli (2017) tarafından postdramatik tiyatro kapsamında ayrıntılı olarak ele alınmış olması sebebiyle, bu çalışmada oyun postdramatik tiyatro özelliklerinden bağımsız olarak incelenecektir. Oyuna uyarlanan bu yeni yaklaşımla, bu çalışma *Disco Pigs* üzerine daha başka tartışmaların yapılmasını teşvik etmeyi ve oyun üzerine yapılan mevcut bilimsel incelemelere katkıda bulunmayı ümit eder.

Anahtar sözcükler: Enda Walsh, *Disco Pigs*, adolesan dönemi, adolesan psikiyatrisi, gelişimsel psikoloji, ergen aşkı, ergen şiddeti

INTRODUCTION

Enda Walsh's *Disco Pigs* (1996), translated into numerous languages, staged regularly worldwide and adapted into a film with the same title, is one of the most remarkable works of the playwright, representative of his early career. *Disco Pigs* was the second play Enda Walsh produced and he had written the play only in five days (Crawley, 2016, para. 1); however, it ended up as the play that brought Enda Walsh an immediate and increasing recognition at a worldwide level, sealed with major awards, such as the George Devine Award and the Stewart Parker Award (see Gömceli, 2017, p. 261 for more). Continuing to be produced today, the play was given its recent international performance in 2017 at Trafalgar Studios in London to mark the twentieth anniversary of its first international staging in Edinburgh (Haider, 2017). This was followed by the play`s next production in New York by the Irish Repertory Theatre in the following year (Haider, 2018).

Originally produced for Corcadorca, the site-specific Irish theatre company founded in 1991 by Pat Kiernan, *Disco Pigs* had its Irish debut in 1996, first at the Triskel Arts Centre in Cork and then at the Dublin Theatre Festival, under the directorship of Pat Kiernan. Soon after these productions, this one-act play with only two characters on stage received remarkable attention from its Irish audiences, as reflected in a review by the *Sunday Independent*: "The disturbance lasts after the house lights come up again. Something has happened!" (Corcadorca, n.d.). Indeed, the Irish audiences had been given a theatre experience which was perhaps an unusually uncomfortable one, with two strange youngsters constantly moving on stage and using an almost unintelligible language, mixed with baby-talk and a heavy Cork accent throughout the performance (Gömceli, 2017; James, 2020).[1]

However, the same characters who had mesmerised the audiences with their bursting energy throughout the performance were to a large extent bitterly criticised for the world they

[1] For a detailed discussion of language and performance in *Disco Pigs*, see Gömceli (2017) and James (2020).

inhabited and the way they functioned in that world. For instance, just as Mary Leland (1996), writing for the *Irish Times*, sees Walsh`s characters as "thugs rather than gangsters" (para. 3), another critic Christopher James (1998), writing for the *Times*, describes them as "emotionally stunted anarchists" who are "wildly out of synchrony with the worlds they inhabit" (p. 31). In a similar fashion, the *Guardian`s* review presents the two characters as "emotionally retarded protagonists" (Gardner, 1999, para. 1), while a more recent review in the *New York Times* designates them "as a pair of marauding, hard-drinking hedonists" (Brantley, 2018, para. 8). A close analysis of the play, however, allows for an alternative interpretation that differs from such radical conclusions as in these negative critical reviews. The aim of this paper will therefore be to suggest an alternative reading of the play through a detailed character analysis in the light of adolescent psychiatry and developmental psychology research and thus to demonstrate to what extent the two protagonists of the play display various features of adolescence. Since this play by Walsh has previously been analysed at length within the frame of postdramatic theatre by James (2020) and Gömceli (2017), this study will present an analysis of the play independent of its postdramatic theatre features.

A CLOSE LOOK AT PIG AND RUNT

The two characters of *Disco Pigs*, suitably named Pig and Runt, are portrayed as bosom friends who are strongly tied to each other with an emotional bond since the day of their birth. As the play unfolds, we find out that Pig and Runt, preparing now to celebrate their seventeenth birthday, have grown up together as the children of two neighbouring families and they not only share the same birthday but also were born at the same hospital. Interestingly enough, the bond between the two friends has always been so strong that they have refused to engage with the people in their social environment, even with their parents, to the extent of ignoring communication with them via speech. As disclosed in the speeches of the characters, in order to set this barrier between themselves and the people in their surrounding, in their early childhood years Pig and Runt develop the strategy of keeping silent and only oinking like pigs in the presence of others. It is also in those years, while playing the pigs in an animal farm, that Pig and Runt stop using their real names Darren and Sinead, and start addressing each other by their invented names:

> RUNT. […] . . . an birrday in birrday out . . . us togedder. An peeplah call me Sinead an call Pig Darren but one day we war playin in da playroom be-an animols on da farm an Darren play da Pig an I play da Runt! An dat wuz it! An every beddy time our mams pull us away from da odder one. 'Say night to Sinead, Darren'. But Pig jus look ta me an ans (*Snorts an oink.*) An I noel what he mean. So we grow up a bit at a dime an all dat time we silen when odders roun. No word or no-ting. An wen ten arrive we squeak a diffren way

> den odders. An da hole a da estate dey talk at us. Look nasty yeah. But me an Pig look stray at dem. An we looka was happenin an we make a whirl where Pig and Runt jar king an queen! (Walsh, 1997, p. 15)

Indeed, feeling like the king and queen of their own private world created in "Pork Sity [i.e. Cork city]" (Walsh, 1997, p. 5), Pig and Runt find full satisfaction in entertaining themselves in their "clown-town" (Walsh, 1997, p. 15), regardless of any rule of public order and social norms of public behaviour. Runt`s retrospective monologue makes this clear:

> […] dis clown-town is run by me an Pig fun fun. An Pig look cross at me jus like he look when we were babas an he alla say 'Les kill da town, ya on?' An I alla say –corse I'm on– I'm ja pal, amn't I? An liddle tings we do like robbin an stealin is a good feelin, yes indeedy. An we read dem buuks on howta figh da peeplah ya hate. An Pig own has me . . . an Runt own have him. But we make a whirl dat no one can live sept us two. Bonny an Clyde, ya seen da movie! Fannytastic, yeah! (*Laughs*.) (Walsh, 1997, p. 15)

Leading indeed a "Bonny an Clyde [orig.]" kind of existence in their "Pork Sity [orig.]", Pig and Runt`s activities in celebration of their seventeenth birthday demonstrate to us how they might come into contact with their social environment on a typical day in their life. As part of their big celebration, every stage of which develops spontaneously, the two friends first go to a disco to start with a wild entertainment experience: "*Loud disco/techno music follows.* PIG *and* RUNT *scream and chat 'Seventeen'."* The subsequent stage directions inform us that the scene is now changing: "*Music eventually stops. Sound of a bus stopping.* PIG *and* RUNT *get on the bus*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 8). At this point, it should be emphasised that throughout the play the audience is informed about the scene changes through the dialogues and performance of the two actors on stage as well as the sound effect and music in the background. There is no direct representation of reality, the stage bears only two chairs as props and the audience is invited to imagine the scenes and locations of action through the physical, verbal and vocal performance of the two actors. Playing throughout the play the parts of all the other characters with whom they interact as well, in this scene, too, Pig and Runt present a dramatization of their exchange with the bus driver.[2] This scene, where Runt also plays the part of the bus driver, dramatizes one of the many occasions in which the `Bonny and Clyde of Pork City` deliberately violate public order and law. As they have always done, Pig and Runt again refuse to pay for the bus ticket, provoking thus a dispute with the bus driver:

> PIG. Las time Pig an Runt eva give mona to da bus . . . mus a bin a baba, a lease! Why nee ta pass wid any kish? Bus boss he well loaded yeah! Jacussi in sall da bedroams, I bed. So me an Runt jus barrel on!
> RUNT. Come here to me!!!!
> PIG. Scream da ugly wase fat […] diver!
> RUNT. Fook off!
> PIG. Say Runt. Problem solve yeah! Easy. He noel his place. Sits. Drive da bus on. Slow. I sees him liddle eyes in da mirror! He scare in da eyes! Pig raise da han . . . Bus fass now. Good. (Walsh, 1997, pp. 8-9)

[2] For a detailed analysis of the acting methods in *Disco Pigs*, see Gömceli (2017), pp. 264-267.

Following this scene above, where Pig adopts the behaviour of a rebellious, defiant teenager, Pig displays yet another act of public offence, which this time is combined with vandalism and violence. While still on the bus, he suddenly spots a friend in the off-licence shop on their way – this is Foxy, whom Pig hates. So, he quickly stops the bus, rushes into the shop together with Runt, and continuing in his provocative style, he urges Foxy to give him a bottle of drink for free. Upon being rejected, Pig once again creates trouble for nothing, and a scene of violence and vandalism is what follows. He smashes all the bottles in the shop, hits Foxy, and thus having released his violent energy, he heads off together with Runt to a "*quiet bar*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 10). Yet, soon, the two get bored of this quiet atmosphere in this setting, where people just sit and watch television, and so Pig suggests going to a different place: a "wild [disco]" (Walsh, 1997, p. 11), where they will be able to celebrate their birthday properly.

In the next scene, the action shifts to a nightclub: "*They dance. They are well gone. The music is loud*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 11). We later learn through the stage directions that this is in fact a "*poxy dance tune*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 12), but for Pig it is "real music", whose "luvly beat" going "thru da veins", "deep deep down thru [him]" (Walsh, 1997, p. 11), makes him go wild while dancing. As the "*poxy dance tune is faded up*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 12), Pig notices that the nightclub is populated by a group of male students dressed in nice suits, which distracts Runt's attention away from Pig. In order to prevent a potential attraction between Runt and one of those young men, Pig without delay finds a strategy to sidetrack Runt and starts to belittle the good-looking male students by creating of them the image of a "mammy's boy." Knowing well what would please Pig in such a situation, Runt joins him in his offensive deed; yet, in reality, she feels attracted to them:

> PIG. Das pugly, hey Runt!
> RUNT. Dem stoodent type got no soul! Style in't in it!
> PIG. Das righ, girl!
> RUNT. De men dey act like ol dolls, da ol dolls do up like men! No tuck an seamed, no press liedly wid da iron. [...] Like dancin bags a Oxfam, dey no shame! Shame! PIG. [...] Poor liddle lonely ting! War da mammy war da mammy? RUNT. I'm ja mammy! (Walsh, 1997, p. 12)

His self-perception being that of "the superior one" at all times and in any context in his imaginary identity as "the king of Pork Sity [orig.]," Pig thus establishes once again his superiority. Then, aiming to capture Runt`s attention, he throws himself onto the dance floor and begins to dance with a woman.

In this scene, where "RUNT *plays the woman*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 13), Pig performs a dance which shows that he is desiring a close physical contact with that woman: "Ja wanna dance?? Make no odds! I take her up anyhowways! I wine my charm about da waste! She say sometin . . . I don no dat squeak too well […] Kiss da face, will ya! On da lips, wait ya! […]" (Walsh, 1997, p. 13). As he expects, Runt soon interrupts his dance and feeling that now it is her turn to perform, she suggests doing the "piggy dance" (Walsh, 1997, p. 13) –one of their private games in their self-constructed world. In this game, where they combine entertainment with physical violence, Runt picks a man on the dance floor, gets close with him to the extent of making him approach her in an obvious physical way. Once the selected victim comes closer to kiss her, Pig rushes to attack his

prey and creates a scene of violence by beating his victim just for the sake of having fun. That evening, too, Pig and Runt follow the same rules as always. Yet, this time, seeing Runt almost being kissed by another young man, Pig really becomes jealous of her, which he discloses in his words reeking of jealousy: "Oud a da door a dis poxy disco an oud on ta Stoodent Straight I trow dis streaky stretch a bad bacon! See I play da par a da boyfriend, soap opera fans! Is jealous all ovur, in it! Smash! Ya fillty bollix! Smash smash smash smash smash smash smash smash!!!", he shouts, as he beats up the student -his potential rival- in his wild anger, and turns to Runt, expressing his disapproval of her convincing performance in this particular piggy dance: "[a]n Runt she nee an Oscar for dat, yeah, I almos give a liddle applause an all […]" (Walsh, 1997, p. 14).

Based on this close analysis of Enda Walsh`s protagonists presented so far, the critical perspective arguing that Pig and Runt are "pathological adolescents" (James, 1998, p. 31) who do nothing more than creating "waves of violent energy" (Barry, 1997, p. A7) in their surrounding could be agreed with. Pig and Runt are indeed unusual, exceptional teenagers who refuse to be in harmony with the worlds they inhabit and who tend to create violence for nothing in their almost lawless existence in the public sphere. However, rather than arguing that the characters Enda Walsh has constructed are simply violent young vandals transmitting a discomforting energy of violence throughout the play, this study will claim that the playwright in fact presents through Pig and Runt a very lifelike picture of what it is like "to grow up" for some teenagers and how they might experience "the process of falling in love" during their formative years. The subsequent analysis of Walsh`s protagonists will try to demonstrate this viewpoint in the light of theories of adolescent psychiatry and developmental psychology.

PIG AND RUNT AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

Adolescence, broadly defined as the period of transition from childhood into adulthood, is an evolutionary phase where the individual rapidly undergoes physical, sexual, emotional and cognitive changes, particularly between the ages of thirteen and nineteen. Theorists of adolescent psychiatry examining this specific period in the development of the individual agree that "adolescents need to go through a period of crisis to separate themselves psychologically from their parents and carve out their own identity" (Westen & Chang, 2000, pp. 64-65). They describe adolescence as the child`s "second individuation period" (Blos, 1967), where the child "continues the work of the initial individuation from the mother in infancy" (Westen & Chang, 2000, p. 72) by developing a new level of psychological detachment from the parents. Furthermore, it is pointed out that during this phase while some adolescents showing unruly behaviour are "relatively high-functioning, are able to maintain long and intimate relationships and show a very different quality of moral functioning", some others can be "remorseless" and "psychopathic" (Westen & Chang, 2000, p. 61). Hence, adolescent psychiatry underlines the fact that adolescence is "a time of enormous individual differences, with many alternative paths that vary according to the individual, culture and historical period" (as cited in Westen & Chang, 2000, p. 65).

Indeed, a close examination of Enda Walsh`s protagonists reveals that even though Pig and Runt have grown into their teenage years from the day of their birth as inseparably together and

share much in common with regard to their cultural, social and educational backgrounds, their personal development and the paths they follow for their identity construction differ considerably from each other. As reflected in its Latin origin, "adolescere", which means "to grow up, to come to maturity" ("Adolescent", n.d., *Online Etymology*), Pig and Runt now celebrating their seventeenth birthday are two "adolescents" who are indeed in the process of coming to physical, sexual, emotional and cognitive maturity and forming an identity for themselves. However, while Runt undergoes this process of identity formation in a relatively moderate way, displaying less physical aggression but more cognitive and emotional changes, Pig experiences his adolescence in a stormy way, revealing repeated patterns of problem behaviour.


Enda Walsh

As the analysis presented this far demonstrates, Pig`s problem behaviour shows itself not only in the way he communicates with the people he contacts, where he largely adopts an aggressive and rebellious tone, but also in the way how he functions in the public space: he ignores public law (e.g. as in the scene with the bus driver), deliberately damages public property (e.g. as in the scene at the off-licence) and goes into a physical fight with the people he simply does not approve of (e.g. as he does with his friend Foxy and later at the nightclub, with the young male student dancing with Runt). While Pig aims to create through such acts an elevated status for himself particularly amongst his peers, with this profile he actually qualifies for being considered as a teenager affected from a type of behavioural disorder. As pointed out by the psychologist Farrington (2004), "frequent, serious, persistent behaviours that are shown in several different settings are most likely to be defined as symptoms of a disorder" (p. 628). Correspondingly, Pig`s antisocial behaviour revealing examples of aggression, vandalism and physical violence should be examined more closely from the perspective of adolescent psychiatry and developmental psychology.

In the first place, existing research in these two areas giving particular attention to problems of conduct establishes that a large group of adolescents are known to have been involved in some sort of illegal activity, where the repetitive pattern of such behaviour reaches a peak level during the middle adolescence years, around the ages of 15 and 16 (Capaldi & Shortt, 2006, p. 471; Flannery et al., 2006, pp. 503-504; Farrington, 2004, p. 629). Marked in adolescent psychiatry as "conduct disorder", this problem behaviour is defined in literature, as established in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th ed. (1994) (*DSM-IV)*, as a "repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated" (American Psychiatric Association [APA], p. 95). As listed in the *DSM-IV* (1994), problem behaviours that fall into the category of `conduct disorder` include frequent aggression, deliberate destruction of property, theft, shoplifting and staying out at night (APA, p. 95). With

respect to the developmental stages of such problem behaviour, it has been presumed that "there is a series of trajectory of escalating behaviours leading from less serious to more serious offending" (Flannery et al., 2006, p. 506). Accordingly, in a study reviewing the existing research on the development of problem behaviours in adolescence, Loeber and Burke (2011) have specified three different pathways developing from the less serious to more serious and identified them respectively as the authority conflict pathway, the covert pathway and the overt pathway. Correspondingly, the initial less serious stage, authority conflict pathway, involves resistance to authority through such behaviours as rebellion, disobedience and running away. The second stage, the covert pathway, starts with minor acts such as frequent lying and shoplifting and develops into property crime. Finally, the overt pathway begins with minor aggression, such as bullying, and develops into physical fighting and severe violence (Loeber & Burke, 2011, p. 38). In their study, Loeber and Burke (2011) have also found out that these pathways usually reveal an overlapping structure and predominantly the covert and overt pathways often progress simultaneously.

Indeed, when the types and occurrence patterns of Pig`s problem behaviours are examined, it can be seen that not only do his acts fit all three pathways but they also reveal an escalating graphic, progressing from the less serious to the more serious, as observed in pathway research. For instance, Pig`s unruly behaviour and disobedient act in his contact with the bus driver, where he refuses to pay for the bus ticket, is an example of the authority conflict pathway. In the subsequent scene, his bullying and aggressive approach to his friend Foxy, ending up in conscious property damage corresponds to the covert pathway, whereas his next disruptive act in a later scene, fighting with the student at the nightclub out of his feelings of jealousy over Runt, fits the overt pathway. Moreover, these three developmental pathways Pig presents along with their representative types of problem behaviours, which easily identify him as an adolescent with symptoms of conduct disorder, also reveal an overlapping and simultaneously developing characteristic, showing compatibility with Loeber and Burke`s (2011) research findings. What is more, as will be shown below, the most aggressive and violent act Pig commits towards the end of the play, where he causes the death of a peer in a physical fight, marks the highest intensity in his series of problem behaviours, which thus establishes the rising graphic in these behaviours. This, too, complies with the observations of pathway research (see Loeber & Burke (2011) for more).

In the final scene of the play, where Pig takes Runt to her adored disco "The Palace" (Walsh, 1997, p. 23) to make her dream a reality as his biggest birthday surprise, he yet again resorts to violence in a social setting. In the Palace, Runt is overwhelmed with joy and wants to have a really good time celebrating their seventeenth birthday. So, for the first time ever, she approaches a young man on the dance floor not with the intention to start their piggy dance game with Pig, but to have a real dance with someone whom she truly feels attracted to. Yet, to her great shock, this move leads to the complete destruction of that young man, since Runt's closeness to him makes Pig furious with jealousy:

> RUNT. Kiss my hand.
>
> PIG. An das my queue!!! Ova I move! Move real fass, yeah! Scream ou loud I scream
>
> […]

RUNT. Jesus Pig no! No!!!
PIG. Oud oud oud oud oud oud OUD OUD OUD!!!!!! Take oud! Move oudda da […]
[y]ou dirty liddle fuck she my girlfriend bollix! Smash! Kassshhh! Open da nose da eye! Blood blood blood! […] She mine, luvver boy! She my girl! Me an her, king an quee ya bad boy!
[…]
PIG. Dead hun, jus like an action flic! Big mess dis! (Walsh, 1997, pp. 28-29)

Hence, Pig`s final act of violence resulting in the accidental death of a person, takes his various problem behaviours to a new level, making him liable for involuntary murder, as well.

At this point, however, it would be worthwhile to note that the escalation in Pig`s antisocial and disruptive behaviours occurs along with the increase in the intensity of his romantic feelings for Runt and his falling in love with her. During their close togetherness over the two days of their birthday celebration, both Pig and Runt begin to realize that their relationship as two close childhood friends is turning into something different which neither of them can identify and so are trying to understand "what sort of" feeling they might be experiencing. On the first day of their birthday celebration, in a scene at "Marbyke Park [Mardyke Park]" (Walsh, 1997, p. 6), out of the blue, Runt asks Pig what the colour of love is:

RUNT. Wa colour's love, Pig?
PIG. Love? Don no! Wa sorra love, love?
RUNT. Don no! (Walsh, 1997, p. 7)

Thus, just as Runt does not know what exactly she means when she asks Pig about love, so can Pig neither describe nor define the colour of love. However, as Pig gradually begins to realize that the love he feels for Runt is taking on a new form, at one moment, following his attempts to display his romantic love for Runt by describing to her all what she means to him, he instantly gives his first kiss to Runt:

PIG. Jar my bird day giff in life, Runt!!
RUNT. Pig the chrissy cracker! Bang bang bang bang!!
PIG. You're the one sweet ting!
RUNT. Better be better be!!
PIG. Jarr my bes pal in da whole whirl.
RUNT. Jarr my life, Pig.
PIG *grabs at* RUNT *and kisses her. She struggles and pulls away. A moment.*
(Walsh, 1997, p. 14)

As noticeable in this scene, while Pig is trying to communicate to Runt his romantic feelings for her, Runt deliberately continues to be playful with him and evades reacting in a responsive way, since she, too, begins to realize "what sort of love" Pig is expressing for her. Feeling confused and unsafe with their first kiss, she observes the sudden change in the nature of their relationship, also with some degree of sadness: "But ya know, we liddle babas no mo. Is all differen. All of a pudding, ders a real big differ-ence" (Walsh, 1997, p. 15), she concludes, reflecting her state of consciousness about the "new phase" in their transition into adulthood.

In the meantime, Pig is growing more and more intense in his romantic feelings for Runt, while at the same time he is reaching a new level of awareness about love itself. Taking Runt in a

taxi to "Crossheaven" [Crosshaven], which is their first ever taxi ride together and thus thrilling for them, Pig proudly reveals his birthday gift to Runt:

> PIG. Yer bird-day gif, Runt!
> RUNT. Where Pig?
> PIG. Taxi stop!
> *Car sounds stop.*
> PIG. Crossheaven, da colour a love, dis where it is hun!!
> *Sounds of the sea have been faded up over the above. The two look out.*
> (Walsh, 1997, p. 17)

This very moment where Pig not only reveals his birthday present for Runt but also associates the colour of love with the sea is highly significant, as it clearly demonstrates a key moment in the process of Pig's development from a childhood friend to Runt into her lover, who is starting to gain some consciousness about his feelings for the loved one. As different from the Pig of the earlier scenes, who was unaware of the significance of love even, Pig is now able to see love as something associated with the sea, which is symbolic of the magnitude and the endlessness of his love for Runt. "Der ye are, pal. Das da big blue der. All dat wator, hah. Is all yers Runt" (Walsh, 1997, p. 17), he says, in his excited state, as he is presenting his birthday gift to her beloved Runt, exposing thus the intensity in his romantic feelings.

Soon afterwards, as the lights fade to a "*New state*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 18), we see "PIG and RUNT *watching an episode of Baywatch which we hear under music. It's the next day*" (Walsh, 1997, p. 19). In this scene, which shows a new dimension in the emotional as well as sexual development of the two teenagers, we observe that while Runt reveals her blossoming interest in sexuality and men other than Pig, Pig has grown even more intense in his feelings for Runt, being almost infatuated with her. *Baywatch,* as the "true winner" of the TV, is a "top a da delly" show for both of them, as it has everything in it, "all 'da four 's'is", which they list as "[s]oun, sea an san", "[a]n sex" (Walsh, 1997, p. 19). It is in this scene, at a moment when Pig focuses his attention on the leading female actress, that he becomes aware of his strong sexual desire for Runt: "*Music.* PIG *stands out.* Why I kiss da honey lips a Runt? An now all dat I put my gob to is Runt I take an tase. I close da eyes […]. Da silk a da tighs […] I feel dis da time. Pig nee to be a man. […]" (Walsh, 1997, pp. 20-21). Dreaming in a long monologue about their intimate physical contact with Runt, Pig now feels that he is becoming a man and Runt a woman. Thus, he reveals his strong wish to take their relationship to a new level, while at the same time disclosing his sexual awakening, which is a further sign of his adolescent development.

As stated in Shulman and Connoly`s (2013) research, "the emergence of sexual and romantic interests" following the adolescent`s pubertal maturation is a "central development" (p. 28) in their formative period, where adolescents begin to "experience cravings for sexual gratification and to fantasize about emotional union with a partner" (as cited in Shulman & Connoly, 2013, p. 28). Accepted in developmental psychology as a major contributor to identity formation and a "form of self-development rather than true intimacy" (Moore, 2016, p. 550), the process of romantic involvement during adolescence has been described as a process where the adolescents "need to accomplish several tasks: become aware of their sexual cravings, accept themselves as sexual

beings, and learn how to express these feelings and accompanying fantasies in an accepted manner" (as cited in Shulman & Connoly, 2013, p. 28). Indeed, when examined carefully, it can be seen through Pig`s emotional behaviour that over the two days of his close togetherness with Runt, during which their dyadic relationship as best friends turns into romantic love, Pig is step by step fulfilling these tasks.

In the final scene of the play, where Pig takes Runt to the Palace, the upmarket disco of her dreams, Pig clearly reveals that he has now reached in his feelings the maturity also to "identify" the "colour of love", which was previously unclear to him. First, in order to be admitted to this posh disco, where bodyguards allow the visitors to go in selectively, Pig and Runt have to give the password. Interestingly enough, the question to the password happens to be what "the colour of love" (Walsh, 1997, p. 25) is, which functions to reveal Pig`s further emotional development. In this scene, it is again one of the two characters who also plays the part of the bodyguard asking the password, and significantly, this is Runt:

> PIG. Sorry boss? Password? Is that wat you say ol boy? Was da password, yeah?
> RUNT. You know, what's the colour of love?
> PIG. (*Pause.*) Wad sorra love?
> RUNT. The sort of love that you feel. The sort of love that only one colour can tell youabout. The sort of love that can pick you up with a stupid grin cut to ear and canthen cut your throat just as easily. (*Pause.*) An I look a Pig. An Pig he loss jus like daRunt is. Wad we know, hey? […] Seems like hours tic-by an Pig he jus look an starestraight ahead. (*Pause.*) An den, Pig, frum somewers he say PIG. Blue. Blue da colour a love. Is blue, yeah? (Walsh, 1997, pp. 25-26)

Strikingly, Pig's answer proves to be the correct password. Hence, by this means, not only do the two teenagers gain admittance to the disco of their dreams but also the developments in Pig's emotional domain are disclosed. Earlier in the scenes at Crosshaven (Walsh, 1997, pp. 16-18), when Pig was trying to show Runt the magnitude of his love for her, Pig could "associate" the colour of love with the sea but had failed to say what exactly the colour of love was. Here, however, it can be observed that Pig has attained the emotional maturity to "name" the colour of love, which can be interpreted as his most explicit declaration of his love for Runt. Moreover, by identifying the colour of love as blue, which symbolically stands for such feelings as tranquillity, trust and confidence, Pig makes it clear that his love for Runt means all what the colour blue suggests –trust, peace, harmony and confidence. This in return reveals the fact that he has now attained a new level of consciousness about his emotional tie to Runt, knowing "wa sorra love" (Walsh, 1997, p. 7) he feels for her.

For the purpose of this analysis, it is noteworthy to highlight that this highly significant phase in Pig`s emotional growth, where he also turns possessive of Runt, coincides with the incident which marks his most aggressive and brutal act, leading to the death of one of his peers in a physical fight. However, research in adolescent psychiatry and neuroscience has shown that "vulnerability of adolescents to harm is not caused by a wanton embracing of risk but is the natural consequence of puberty" (Thorpe, 2014, p. 220), during which the adolescent experiences dramatic hormonal changes along with significant structural changes in the brain. This in the end

makes the adolescent susceptible to risk-taking and poor judgement decisions (Moore, 2016, p. 549). As adolescent psychiatry and neuroscience research have revealed, particularly in environments where there is an expectation of self-satisfaction or social recognition from the peers, adolescents have been observed to be "unable to internalise or comprehend a risk that would be obvious to an adult" (Thorpe, 2014, p. 197), because during adolescence "when the 'emotional' part of the brain accelerates in activity […], the capacity of the 'reasoning' part of the brain to dictate sensible decision-making is overwhelmed and the individual is more likely to embrace risk" (Thorpe, 2014, p. 202). Thus, the teenage brain in "reward-sensitive" (Moore, 2016, p. 549) environments and in intense romantic love has been found out to be more inclined to take risks, to the extent of lacking sometimes the "capacity to `put the brakes on` impulsive responding" (Albert et al., 2013, p. 118).

At this point, it might be interesting to refer to research carried out by Brand et al. (2007) at the Depression Research Unit of the Psychiatric University Clinics in Basel, Switzerland. In this study, where 113 teenagers at the age of seventeen were interviewed and 65 of whom reported that they had fallen in love recently, it was observed that to a great extent it was the adolescents who were in their "early-stage intense romantic love" that were "goal-directed and change[d] their habits to impress or remain in contact with the beloved" (Brand et al., 2007, p. 70). Moreover, they slept less, felt more energetic, more creative, more active and were more likely to engage in risky behaviour, such as "getting into quarrels more frequently", "drinking more alcohol", "smoking more cigarettes" or "driving faster" (Brand et al., 2007, p. 74). Hence, it was observed that teenagers in their "early-stage intense romantic love did not differ from patients during a hypomanic stage" with their "increased energy and arousal", "elation, mood swings, irritability, increased interest in social and/or sexual contacts, accelerated thinking and increased self-worth" (Brand et al., 2007, p. 70). All these findings in the end made Brand and his colleagues conclude that intense romantic love in adolescents is a "psychopathologically prominent stage" (2007, p. 74), which therefore can also be described as a turning point in the developmental stages of an adolescent.

Indeed, as the close examination of Pig's emotional development shows us, the disruptive acts Pig commits result not only from his desire for self-satisfaction in an emotionally thrilling environment, as in the scenes at the nightclub and the off-licence, but also from his inability to control himself and his failure to see the risks involved in a potentially dangerous situation, as in the scene at the Palace. Additionally, it should be taken into consideration that Pig`s various problem behaviours showing an escalating scale occur at specific moments along with the intensification of his romantic love for Runt: as exemplified earlier, at times when he wants to create an elevated status for himself in the company of peers, by which he aims to impress Runt, and at moments when he grows jealous and possessive of Runt. Based on these observations, with these typical features, Pig clearly presents the profile of a "troubled teen in love" who fails to use his cognitive skills while living in a fantasy world and lacks the capacity to "put the brakes on" when a risky situation emerges. Pig`s instant reaction to his own ferocious act, for instance, exposing his astonishment with the shocking state he ends up with, shows that he was actually

unaware of the consequences of savagely attacking his potential rival in the presence of Runt: "Dead hun, jus like an action flic! Big mess dis!" (Walsh, 1997, pp. 28-29), he utters, in his befuddled state. Thus, when evaluated in the light of adolescent psychiatry, it can be concluded that Pig`s problem behaviours largely emanate from his peculiar adolescence development, which he experiences in a turbulent state.

In this respect, Runt, representing the female adolescent, presents a profile that diverges from that of Pig. As mentioned earlier, in the play, it is made explicit both in Runt`s speeches and through the dramatized acts of the two teenagers that Runt has always collaborated with Pig in his unlawful and disruptive acts from their childhood onwards. In one of her narratives on the nature of their close friendship, Runt`s response to Pig`s question, "Les kill da town, ya on?", for instance, reveals their close partnership in crime: "[…] corse I'm on –I'm ja pal, amn't I? An liddle tings we do like robbin an stealin is a good feelin, yes indeedy. […] (*Laughter*)" (Walsh, 1997, p. 15). As one study carried out with the goal of understanding how the "process of peer reinforcement" developed in "deviant dyads" during adolescence found out, deviant peers were more likely to "provide rich levels of positive reinforcement for antisocial behavior and modest levels of reinforcement for prosocial behavior" (Dishion et al., 1996, p. 374).[3] Moreover, this study also observed that "rule-breaking talk", which was mainly accompanied with laughter, as displayed also in Runt`s behaviour in the example above, "seemed to excite the positive affect in the dyadic exchange" (Dishion et al., 1996, p. 375). Thus, it was concluded that for the deviant dyads reinforcement of problem behaviour functioned as a socialisation process (Dishion et al., 1996, p. 377).

This conclusion seems apt for the dyadic exchange between Pig and Runt, too. However, here, it should be underlined that in their functioning, Runt almost never takes the leading role in the performance of antisocial behaviour. As disclosed in her own confessional words as well, Runt does collaborate with Pig in "killing the town" yet she largely remains in a supporting role in these problem behaviour acts, eventually coming to the stage of withdrawal. As Runt comes to realize that Pig`s gradually intensifying problem behaviours take the form of repeated physical violence, she not only loudly exclaims her distress with his unruly behaviour but also begins to emotionally detach herself from Pig. For instance, in one scene at a provo bar, when Pig attempts to avenge Runt`s physical violation by another girl again in the same way, Runt with her bleeding nose protests, wishing to put an end to the cycle of violence in their socialisation: "No figh no more!", "Off home, yeah!", "Leave!" (Walsh, 1997, p. 23), she shouts at Pig in her suffering. In this respect, it can be stated that Enda Walsh`s portrayal of a female adolescent, too, complies with the observations of adolescent psychiatry studies, as research in this field has extensively reported that not only do girls less frequently get involved in problem behaviour than boys do (Farrington, 2004, p. 629; Flannery et al., 2006, p. 506; Capaldi & Shortt, 2006, p. 472; Galambos, 2004, p. 246) but also that they are "likely to terminate their involvement in such behaviours sooner than are boys"

[3] This study (Dishion et al., 1996) was conducted with 186 delinquent and nondelinquent boys in dyadic relationships. In the analyses, not the gendered behaviour of the peers but the dyadic nature of the peer relationship was determined as the main focus of attention.

(Galambos, 2004, p. 247). Hence, Runt`s cognitive skills and decision-making ability when encountering a risk-involving situation show a more mature level than Pig`s.

Of the two teenagers in this dyad, it is again Runt who also shows the cognitive capacity to observe, to question, to assess and to reflect on the happenings, the surrounding people and the emotional changes in her inner world. As developmental research highlights, during adolescence along with the rapid advances in the cognitive development of the individual, adolescents grow "increasingly self-reflective" and develop the capability to "contemplate their own internal worlds of thoughts and feelings" (Furman & Simon, 1999, p. 87). Runt demonstrates such cognitive development on various occasions, becoming indeed more and more contemplative and self-reflective over the two days of their birthday celebration. In the scene at Crosshaven, for instance, she produces a melancholic view of her state of existence and her own self, which shows that she is in a new emotional phase, where she is evaluating her feelings and emotions and is trying to find a new self: "I wanna walk inta da sea an neva come back. I wan ta tide to take me outa me an give me someone differen. . . maybe jus fur a halfhour or so! Dat be good, wouldn't it Pig?" (Walsh, 1997, p. 17), she contemplates, when looking at the sea. Besides displaying one phase in her identity development, these words also show Runt`s emotional evolvement. Regarding the sea as a means of temporary escape from her present life, she discloses by this means also her unhappiness with her tight bond to Pig and her dissatisfaction with the isolated world they have created for themselves and have shared together since their birth. As Isherwood (2008) has commented, Runt's "emotional maturity" thus begins to "outgrow the cloistered games she shares with Pig, [she] sees in the wide sea and sky something more than their relationship can offer" (p. 3). So, in her emotions she gradually begins to detach herself from Pig. Similarly, in the scene where the two friends are watching the TV series *Baywatch*, Runt deliberately gives Pig further indications of her wish to be independent from him. For instance, if ever she imagines herself acting in one part of the film, this is a scene where she is not together with Pig but exists on her own. If Pig attempts to accompany Runt also in her world of imagination, she purposely remains indifferent to him in order to prevent any emotional contact with him. The scene below, in which Runt imagines herself as a resident of the beautiful house in the film, can be given as an illustration of this point:

> RUNT. Imagine me born der?
> PIG. An me too yeah! Two Baywatch babes, Pig and Runt!
> RUNT. Hoy mam! Wat time ya call dis, daff girl!! Dat da dins?! Runt she starve but who da you care, hey?! (Walsh, 1997, p. 19)

Furthermore, as the play develops, through their contact with various other youngsters in the diverse settings of their birthday celebration, such as the nightclub, the provo bar and the disco Palace, Runt gets the chance to make close observations of her peers. Ultimately, this provides for her the opportunity to compare Pig and herself with the other males and females in their surrounding, whereby she begins to see the differences rather than the similarities between herself and Pig. Strikingly, the biggest change in Runt`s feelings and emotional behaviour occurs following the first explicit conflict she had with Pig, where she showed her strong protestation of Pig`s continuing "friendship" with violence. In this regard, Runt and Pig`s entrance into the disco Palace is highly significant. The Palace, which serves for Runt like a passageway between her

world of imagination and the reality, functions to open her eyes to a social world different from the one she has shared with Pig for many years in seclusion. In this scene, which she describes as a "Cinderella ball" (Walsh, 1997, p. 26), Runt indeed feels like the Cinderella at the ball, surrounded by "frens [friends]" and trying to find her Prince. "Me in da Palace Disco!! Seventeen!!! All grow up! True story no fict!" (Walsh, 1997, p. 27), she exhilarates, and begins to imagine a harmonious togetherness and a friendly exchange with the group of youngsters she encounters there:

> All da beautys in here! All dancin good da on an off beat dat in real real dance! I spy sumthin begins wid Princess! She in black chambray dress fit an flare mid-calf, seamed. She know da fash! Real nice job! An I tink me as er dancin wid all da frens, yeah! All laughin, all dancing da same as one! Mayb we chit chat an I say, I don fancy, Frankie, no, ohhh does it really show? (Walsh, 1997, p. 27)

However, in this communal setting, desire for such social interaction with peers is only expressed by Runt, while Pig`s attention is solely focused on his beloved Runt. As research in adolescent development has shown, "girls are more strongly socialized to value relationships and connections with others" (Bouchey & Furman, 2006, p. 324). From this perspective, the Palace, as a setting, plays an important role in showing further aspects of adolescent development, revealing particularly Runt`s aspiration for a world that covers her need for a healthy social environment and interaction with peers.

The second significant function of this setting, which uncovers Runt`s "orientation towards others", is to highlight her strong wish for "autonomy" (Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2006, pp. 194-195). Autonomy, which could be broadly described as `personal independence`, has been defined in developmental studies in numerous ways over the years. Yet one common aspect of these suggested definitions is the focus on "freedom." In this regard, one of the definitions that reads as "the *freedom to* make choices, pursue goals, and regulate one`s own behaviour, cognition, and emotion" (Zimmer-Gembeck & Collins, 2006, p. 176, emphasis in original) would be the most relevant definition in the context of Runt, who is craving for emotional autonomy. To illustrate, in the Palace disco, she feels truly attracted to one of the young men on the dance floor and begins to dream about a romantic involvement with this person whom she describes as "a bloke dream cum true" (Walsh, 1997, p. 27). Imagining this man gently kissing her hand, Runt fantasises about a romantic exchange with him: "mayb he say nice dress an I say, tank you, I made it myself an he kiss my han" (Walsh, 1997, p. 27). However, this imaginary situation brings back the memory of Pig kissing her on the lips without asking her, and she admonishingly remarks: "an [he] not try to pickle my insize wid his Tayto tongue!" (Walsh, 1997, p. 27). Runt`s ensuing statement, "Mayb dat be good fun jus ta try, ya know!" (Walsh, 1997, p. 27), discloses also her wish to have the freedom, the autonomy, to regulate her own behaviour. As pointed out by Furman and Simon (1999), "[a]dvances in perspective-taking and self-reflection allow adolescents to compare existing views with potential alternatives and to conceive of their views as changeable rather than static constructions" (p. 88). In the process of undergoing all these significant changes in her emotional domain, Runt is trying to understand through self-reflection what is going on in her inner world. This facilitates for her the ability to understand and re-evaluate her own emotions and desires as well as her attachment to Pig. In this respect, the suitable environment of the Palace, bringing

Runt together with some potential alternatives to Pig, eventually makes her realize that she is not only longing for a love relationship that develops out of mutual attraction but is also desiring to experience a romantic relationship with someone other than Pig.

Towards the end of the play, Runt`s desperate longing for "[s]umethin differen" (Walsh, 1997, p. 29) in her (emotional) life is made highly obvious, again through the social atmosphere of the Palace, which serves as a catalyst in bringing about the turning point in Pig and Runt`s dyadic relationship of seventeen years. While Runt is trying to respond to the cognitive and emotional challenge of making a choice between staying in this relationship and leaving for a life independent from her dyadic partner, Pig`s brutal act causing the death of Runt`s imaginary "dream come true" lover in a physical fight in the disco brings her to the point of making a decision about her attachment to Pig. This incident that causes the dramatic collapse of her dreams in that very location which she has described as the "liddle carriage" (Walsh, 1997, p. 27) of her imaginary world, enables Runt to see clearly the realities of staying in this dyad. Awakening to a new state of consciousness via Pig`s most serious problem behaviour act, Runt comes to the conclusion that she does not want to have a future together with Pig, even though she still loves him as her best friend. Now she realises that Pig has not only drawn her into a life cut off from any healthy social contact with her male and female peers with his domineering presence in her life but has also caused emotional harm to her by turning (back) to violence. Runt`s final decision to leave Pig at the end of the play is at the same time her cry for freedom, which shows the new level of progress Runt has made in her adolescent development and identity formation:

> RUNT. Cheerio. So-long pal.
> PIG. Wat? Stay! (*Overlapping*). STAY STAY STAY STAY STAY STAY STAY!!!!
> RUNT. (*overlapping*). GO GO GO GO GO GO GO GO!! An Runt race good dis time! Mus ged away! No mo all dis play an pain! So so-long to all dat pox! Go girl! Leave! An it well ovur, drama fans! Runt race her ways up da piss-grey straight wid da Palace Disco an poor ol Pig on her back! Jus me! Jus da liddle girl all aloneys! An still I see Pig like he besie me, yeah. He my one an only, he da bes an da worse pal in dis bad ol whirl. An I wan Pig an I wan for all da buzz an all da disco we do dance but hey ho an wadda ya know I wan fur sumthin else! Sumthin differen! Sumthin differen! Fuckin freedom!! Jus me!! Jus daRunt!! (Walsh, 1997, p. 29)

Meanwhile, it is highly significant that it is for the first time in this scene that Runt calls the setting of their fictional world "Pork" as "Cork": "an I look a da sun creep up on my pal Pork . . . *Cork*. An da sun it really is a beautiful big thing (*Pause*.)" (Walsh, 1997, p. 29). This change in her language, shifting from the made-up baby-talk to standard English, is highly symbolic, as it indicates her *conscious exit* from their constructed world and her first step into the real world. As the play comes to a close, as Runt herself expresses, she is "alone now. But is okay now is all righ. (*Pause*.)" (Walsh, 1997, p. 29). Thus, eventually, Runt chooses to liberate herself from Pig and all what his world stands for: aggression, vandalism, violence, but above all, oppressive love.

CONCLUSION

As can be seen in this close analysis of the play, while making us part of Pig and Runt's physical and emotional world over the two days in their lives soon before their seventeenth birthday, Enda Walsh in *Disco Pigs* demonstrates to his audiences fundamental aspects of adolescent life, such as the emergence and evolution of romantic love in adolescence; the developmental changes that adolescents might undergo during their cognitive and emotional maturation process; and the relationship between adolescent development and antisocial behaviour. At this stage, it should be also underlined that the world of the teenagers Enda Walsh portrays in *Disco Pigs* should not be seen as the playwright's interpretation of the teenage world in general. As highlighted by adolescence psychiatry, the "stormy, moody, conflict-ridden adolescent is the exception rather than the rule" (as cited in Westen & Chang, 2000, p. 65). Furthermore, according to adolescent psychiatry, such conduct disorder as demonstrated in Pig`s antisocial behaviours, such as aggression, vandalism and physical fight, widely observed to be more common in boys than in girls (Westen & Chang, 2000, p. 63; Farrington, 2004, p. 629; Capaldi & Shortt, 2006, p. 472), are actually "normative for adolescent boys" (Westen & Chang, 2000, p. 65). With these aspects, Enda Walsh`s male protagonist Pig, who has mainly been approached with negative criticism for his aggression and problem behaviours, provides a rendition of how a male adolescent might undergo his transition into adulthood and how he might experience the process of falling in love during his formative years. Similarly, the cognitive skills and emotional behaviour Walsh`s female protagonist Runt presents correspond to the observations of developmental psychology, which accepts self-reflection and contemplation in girls as normative in their process of attaining maturity and search for an autonomous life (Collins, 1997; Zimmermann-Gembeck & Collins, 2016).

Consequently, this study claims that rather than roundly describing Pig and Runt as violent teenagers and discussing whether they are "anarchists" (James, 1998, p. 31), "thugs", "gangsters" (Leland, 1996, para. 3), or "emotionally retarded" (Gardner, 1999, para. 1) youngsters, it would be more true to state that Enda Walsh in *Disco Pigs* demonstrates in a very realistic way what it means to be a teenager, to fall in love and to develop an (autonomous) identity for some adolescents during their developmental stages, over a "transient period that is literally 'out-standing' " (Brand et al., 2007, p. 74). To conclude with a rare but fair critical review of the play that has appeared in *Herald Scotland*: "If you could take the essence of adolescence, a concentrate of aggression, sexual impulse and hyperactive energy, and reconstitute it in theatrical form, it would look a lot like *Disco Pigs*", which indeed "pulsates with hormonal urgency" ("Disco pigs, Traverse theatre, Edinburgh", 1997, para. 1; para. 2).

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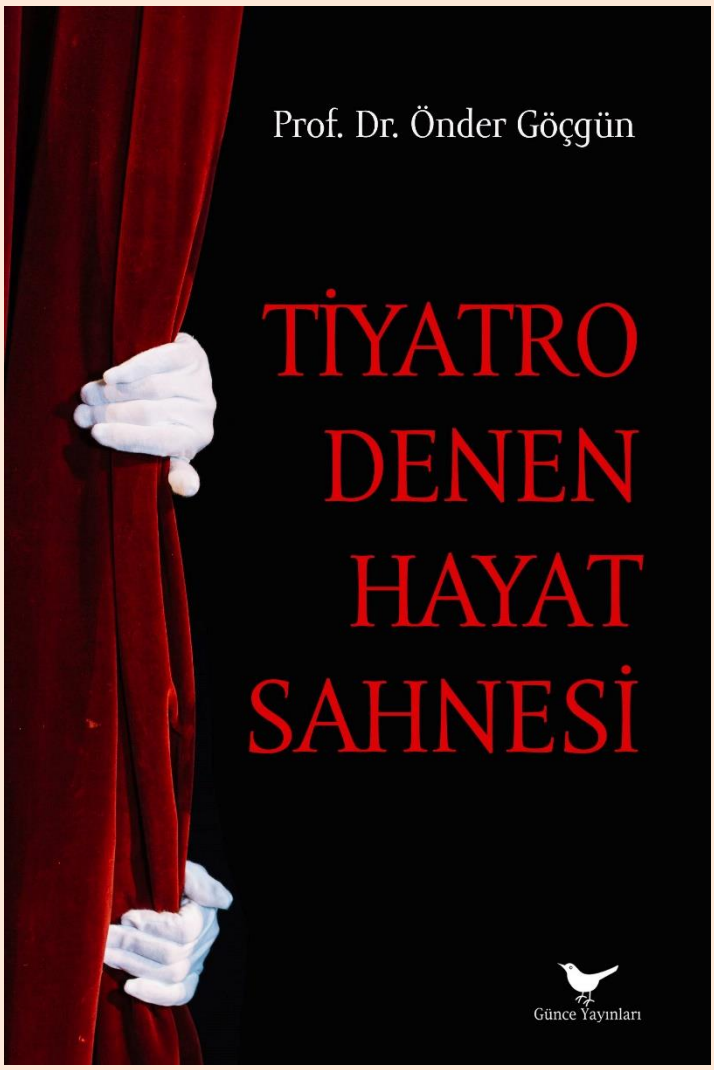

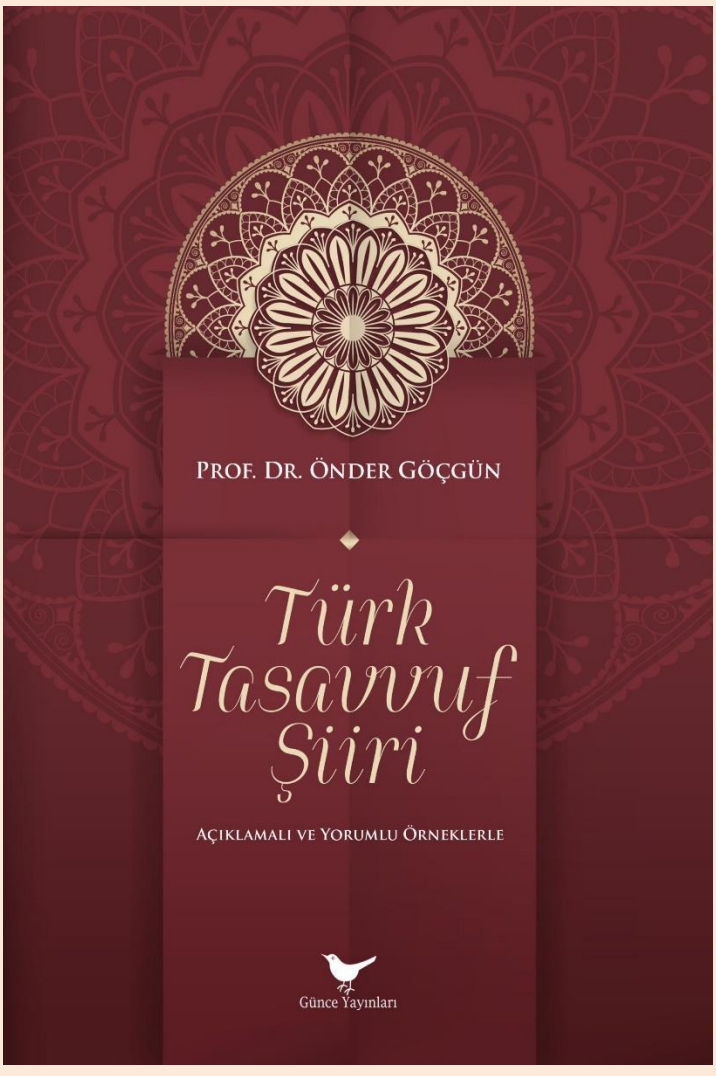

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