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Friendship in Die rote Zora und ihre Bande and Peter Pan

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Roswitha-Maria Moldovi entitled "Friendship in Die rote Zora und ihre Bande and Peter Pan." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in German.

Stefanie Ohnesorg, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Maria Stehle, Dan Magilow

Accepted for the Council:

Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Dean of the Graduate School

**Friendship in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* and
*Peter Pan***

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Roswitha-Maria Moldovi
August 2009

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ABSTRACT

Children's books often show recurring themes. One such theme is friendship. My thesis is a comparatistic work between the German book *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* by Kurt Held and the English book *Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie, as those books have recently been turned into movies recently advertising the theme of friendship.

I compare these two books for parallel friendship constellations. This research reveals two types of friendships: cross-sex friendships and same-sex friendships. In both books cross-sex friendships can be seen within a group, 'Zoras Bande' and Wendy and the Lost Boys. I analyze these friendship constellations according to the features found in realistic friendships: companionship, reciprocity, acceptance, cultural background and other similarities.

Additionally, both books offer dyads (Zora-Branko, Zlata-Branko, Wendy-Peter) made up of a boy and a girl who stand out from the group. In comparing these dyads I use gender perception as a basis, for it reveals the similarities and differences within those dyads.

This research shows that that same-sex groups of friends' share other similarities than the cross-sex friendships. Both authors basically used these group constellations ("die Gymnasiasten", the pirates and the Indians) as a narrative device to propel the story.

In my research I came to the results that even though both books seem to be similar at core due to the similar friendship constellations, there are nonetheless some differences. I trace these differences back to the different time periods the books were written and published in.

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1. Introduction

My thesis compares the German book *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* by Kurt Held and the English book *Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie because they depict several parallel friendship constellations. The goal of my work is to explore, compare and contrast these relationships.

Die rote Zora und ihre Bande was published in 1941 and is a story about friendship, growing-up and adventures. Branko, the son of a violin player and a factory worker, loses his mother and thus turns into an orphan, since his father travels through the country. The inhabitants of the little town Senj in Yugoslavia do not feel responsible for him, and Branko has to take care of himself. When he picks up a fish from the ground because he is hungry and does not know how to get food, he is accused of stealing and is put in prison. Die “rote” Zora rescues him and lets him become part of the group she is leading, “die Uskoken”, a group of three orphan boys and Zora, who has lost her parents as well. They try to survive in the streets at best they can. However, they not only cause the inhabitants of Senj many troubles, they also experience a lot of troubles of their own. Held's story offers an insight into the daily life of these orphans, their growing-up and becoming an accepted part of society.

Peter Pan treats to some extent the same topics, e.g. friendship, adventures. One evening, Wendy wakes up to Peter Pan crying in her room. He cries because he has lost his shadow. Wendy can quickly solve his problem, which cheers him up. Peter then invites Wendy and her brothers to Neverland, where he is the leader of the Lost Boys. The Lost Boys are a group of male children who have all left their mothers because they heard

them talk about them when they would be grown up. However, none of the boys want to grow up and in Neverland they can stay children forever.

At first sight, the books only seem to share a few superficial parallels. They were both written and published in the same century, a century that is considered “das Jahrhundert des Kindes”¹. Barrie published *Peter Pan* because he knew how much the Davies boys², for whom he had invented several Peter Pan adventures, enjoyed them.³ Held too wrote his books to be read and enjoyed by children.

Both books have been made into movies more than once: a series based on *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* appeared first in the 1970s and then, in 2008, German director Peter Kahane again made a successful movie out of it. *Peter Pan* has an even longer history of film adaptations. The first movie adaptation was a silent film in 1924 under the directorship of Geronimi, Jackson and Luske. Walt Disney produced the well-known cartoon in 1953. In 1991, Steven Spielberg adapted Barrie's book under the title *Hook*, featuring A-list movie stars Robin Williams, Dustin Hoffman and Julia Roberts. In 2003, P.J. Hogan produced yet another *Peter Pan* movie. The most recent one was produced only one year later, starring Johnny Depp and Kate Winslet. *Finding Neverland* captures the story of Barrie meeting the Davies boys and how he came about to write *Peter Pan*. The Hollywood productions, *Hook* as well as *Peter Pan*, were very successful adaptations

¹ Ellen Key wrote a book about the change of educational ideas. Children were put in the center, thus, the literary movements set out from the child (“vom Kinde aus”) (Kaminski 25).

² Barrie became acquainted with the family in 1897, when he met three, of the later five, children with their nurse in Kensington Parks. After making their acquaintance, he keeps entertaining them with stories. The friendship extends to the parents of the boys and when both of them die, the father in 1907, the mother only three years later, Barrie manages to become, along with their nurse Hodgson, the boys' guardian and trustee.

³ While *Peter Pan* and *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* raise the impression to fit into the category of books being written for children, it must be kept in mind that it is not my intention to over generalize as there are enough examples of other children's books that were written during the same time period but had a different intention.

and nominated for various awards. Both received “Young Artist Awards” and an award for best family movie.

That both books were turned into movies fairly recently shows that the stories have not lost any of their timeliness. What encourages directors to renew film adaptations? Why are they interested in such old stories?

One reason could be that the books share many similarities, which make them commercially appealing. Barrie and Held were inspired by real children in writing their books. Barrie was inspired by Peter, the youngest Davies' boy and he started fictionalizing him and sending him on adventures in his stories.

Held's book is based upon the stories of real children as well. “Kläbers⁴ Geschichten haben alle einen wahren Kern, manche spielen wörtlich selbst Erlebtes nach.”⁵ During his life in exile Kurt Held and his wife tried to travel as much as possible. In 1949, Held decided to spend a longer period of time in Senj, Yugoslavia due to a sickness. Walking through the streets one day he saw a boy who caught his attention. He told his wife, “[d]er Junge da ist es.”⁶ He invited the boy to lunch who then came with his friends.

Darunter auch ein Mädchen mit brandrotem flammendem Haar. „Zora La Rouquine“, erklärt der Kellner. Immer sei die Polizei hinter ihr her, aber nie weise man ihr etwas nach. Am Nachmittag klettert Kläber mit den Kindern zu ihrem Versteck in einer verlassenen Burg über der Stadt – und wenige Monate später ist das Buch fertig.⁷

⁴ Kurt Held was born Kurt Kläber. He was arrested for political reasons in 1933. After his release, he and his wife lived in exile in Switzerland, where Kläber published all of his books under the pseudonym 'Kurt Held'. As this is the name that appears on his works it will be the name used throughout the thesis.

⁵ <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/magazin/wissen/geschichte/Rote-Zora;art15504,2458958> 01/09/09.

⁶ <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/magazin/wissen/geschichte/Rote-Zora;art15504,2458958> 01/09/09.

⁷ <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/magazin/wissen/geschichte/Rote-Zora;art15504,2458958> 01/09/09.

In this conversation, Held found out that Zora La Rouquine was the leader of a group of boys and that the police was constantly looking for them, yet were never able to prove anything. Kurt Held built a story around the girl's gang which was published successfully and is today one of many well-known German children's books.

Even though both authors based their books upon real children, they still fictionalized them. While Barrie does this to a greater extent than Held, Held even claims that he took the children's actual experiences and wrote a book about them. To what degree this may be true however, is difficult to prove. Thus, it needs to be kept in mind that real happenings might be mixed with fictional additions. Still, the situations depicted in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* appear very realistic and could have happened that way. In Barrie's story, on the other hand, one can easily discern the unrealistic parts as it contains more fantasy. Many situations simply could not have been experienced by the children in that way. However, both books still share one realistic feature, namely the friendship between those children.

These models of friendships are the overarching theme of this thesis. Both books depict different types of friendships including same-sex friendships and cross-sex friendships. Thus, the following questions will be used to analyze and compare these books:

- Why is friendship so important for these children and how does it constitute itself? Which features are important?
- What kind of friendships are there in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* and *Peter Pan*?
- How do cross-sex friendship groups function differently from same-sex friendship

groups? Do they operate differently at all?

- How are cross-sex friendships depicted differently?
- To what extent do these friendships differ from each other? How do the girls influence the boys?
- What role does gender play?

Following this brief introduction that establishes the common basis of these books, chapter 2 and 3 will focus on *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* and *Peter Pan*, respectively. The first part of chapter 2 analyzes gender roles as this text depicts them, with a special focus on the female protagonist Zora.

The analysis then turns to the cross-sex friendships between Zora, Duro, Pavle and Nicola in 'Zoras Bande'. The first boy Zora befriends is Pavle, whose father evicted him. Like Zora, he tries to survive on the streets. She befriends him because she does not want to be alone anymore. The reason for her to befriend him is motivated by the fact that children look for friends who have similar traits or traits they themselves would like to have (Erwin 1993, 146-153). Each member of Zora's group has his own strength. Thus, in their daily lives the children contribute to their common welfare. Zora has the quality to lead and protect her gang. Duro on the other hand is very good at holding watch and spying on the inhabitants of Senj. His skill benefits the group in difficult situations. As they all contribute their best qualities for the common good, they are able to protect themselves for a very long time.

Within the group, Branko and Zora form a dyad because Zora considers Branko more attractive than the other boys. She shares many things with him that she has not shared with anybody else. This special friendship triggers the following questions: In

what way is Branko different from the other boys? And how can the relationship between Zora and Branko be categorized?

The friendship between Branko and Zlata, the mayor's daughter, is of a somewhat different nature. Children often look for friends who share the same traits; however, they sometimes befriend children who do not fit into that category. Not only does Zlata come from a wealthy family and is well-educated, but she is also a lot older than Branko. While he is twelve she is already seventeen years old. It is not easy for them to be friends and thus they meet in hidden places or secretly. Additionally, Zlata is not accepted by the other members of 'Zoras Bande'. Nonetheless, Branko's and Zlata's friendship seems to be stable for quite a while. However, the question is, why does Zlata turn against Branko in the end? And could that have been avoided? It will be analyzed whether Held tried to suggest that it is better for children to stay in the milieu they are born in or whether he wanted to stress the fact that it is good that they tried to break out of the group (maybe even social class) they are 'put' (born) in?

The relationship between Branko and Zlata needs to be compared to Branko's relationship to Zora. Children within a group provide intimacy and support. This intimacy is established when they start telling each other personal facts as sharing their past life with each other or talking about their fears and dreams. Especially Zora and Branko share a special friendship full of trust. When Zora shares her past she does so with Branko and tells him that he is the first person, she told this to. Thus, he plays a more important role to her than the other boys.

The second part of chapter 2 focuses on another group of friends, “die Gymnasiasten”⁸, who share common interests and goals and therefore understand each other very well. “Die Gymnasiasten” functions as a contrasting group to ‘Zoras Bande’. They are a group of middle school boys who all come from rich families and constantly bully ‘Zoras Bande’. Born into wealthy families, they are unable to understand and grasp the difficulties homeless children face and see them as burdens to the community. “Die Gymnasiasten” hear from their parents about the unworthiness of ‘Zoras Bande’ and so they bully and beat them. Additionally, “die Gymnasiasten” try to catch ‘Zoras Bande’ so they can be put in prison. Just like Zora's group, the individual members share the same traits, but they are different from those that promote bonding in Zora’s group. The difference between ‘Zoras Bande’ and “die Gymnasiasten” leads to constant clashes and misunderstandings between both groups.

Chapter 3 divides into two parts as well. It begins with an analysis of Peter Pan, the leader of the Lost Boys. The friendship within that group differs from the one in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande*. Not only do they have a male leader indeed, it is Peter who holds the group together. Without Peter, the boys are really lost and do not know what to do. They depend on him significantly.

When Peter brings Wendy and her brothers to Neverland, he changes the group dynamics. The Lost Boys were not used to having a girl around, as some scenes demonstrate. A change in their behavior becomes obvious as the book develops. All of a sudden, they will not only ask for Peter's guidance and opinion but also for Wendy's. It is

⁸ I will keep using that term to differentiate them from ‘Zoras Bande’. They are referred to as “die Gymnasiasten” in the book as well, especially by ‘Zoras Bande’.

important to the Lost Boys to follow Wendy's guidance as well, which creates a dual leadership situation. Another friendship that needs to be analyzed is the one between Wendy and Peter. Similarly to the friendship between Zora and Branko, Peter plays a more important role for Wendy than for the rest of the boys. Why is that so? Peter does not talk about his past at all or shares any personal facts. Wendy, on the other hand, tells the Lost Boys many stories about her home and the life she used to lead before she came to Neverland. Still, she likes Peter more than them.

The second part of chapter 3 discusses whether Wendy and Peter have a friendship or what kind of relationship they share. When Peter brings Wendy and her brothers to Neverland, one group of friends meets the other and they merge. How does the group dynamic of the Lost Boys change with the arrival of Wendy and her brothers?

Chapter 4 summarizes and contrasts the results of chapters 2 and 3. The similarities and differences within these existing friendships will be broken down. Reasons for the existing differences will be offered, e.g. the different roles and expectations of girls at the times both books were published.

2. Die rote Zora und ihre Bande

Held's book *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* is a story about 'Zoras Bande', a group of five children, one girl, Zora, and the four boys Duro, Pavle, Nicola and Branko. They live in the streets of Senj, Yugoslavia. Due to their similar backgrounds and experiences, the children slowly find each other and start building a gang that rules the streets of Senj. In their gang, the children learn about the importance of friendship. Held depicts several different types of friendships which will be analyzed in this chapter with regard to gender and type of friendships, e.g. same-sex friendships or cross-sex friendships. The various friendship constellations that are depicted are

- the cross-sex friendship between the children of 'Zoras Bande'
- the cross-sex friendship between Zora and Branko
- the cross-sex friendship between Zlata and Branko
- the same-sex friendship between "die Gymnasiasten" and
- the same-sex friendship between Duro and Branko.

Gender seems to be a major factor in defining the distinct group dynamics in each of these constellations. Therefore, it will be necessary to consider various gender role definitions in the context of the constellations of these groups. This chapter starts off with a definition of gender and the role it plays on the one hand in 'Zoras Bande' as well as in the dyads 'Zora – Branko' and 'Zlata – Branko'. Do these girls influence boys and if so how? How is this influence depicted and why? How does it reflect and/or counter gender roles of that time?

Considering the types of friendships, the question arises, how do mixed friendship groups operate differently than same-sex friendship groups? What features are important in friendship?

2.1 Gender Roles: Zora - a “Tomboy” and/or a Girl?

Held portrays Zora as the leading and linking character in the group of friends 'Zoras Bande'. She calls herself “die rote Zora” [red Zora] and many of Senj’s residents know her by this name as well. The attribute “rote” (red) refers to her flaming red hair. Zora, a girl of twelve years, starts a life in the streets after her mother's death. In a short period of time she succeeds in becoming the female leader of a boys' gang.⁹

In *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* Held plays with the perception of the main female character Zora. While Held portrays her mostly as a girl with 'masculine' attributes and behavior, there are also situations where she can be perceived by other characters and the readers as a girl with 'feminine' qualities. In her article “Junge oder Mädchen? Der kleine Unterschied in der Erziehung”, scholar Lilian Fried lists attributes commonly used to describe what people associate with “boyish”¹⁰ and “girlish” to question their validity. She claims that many women are labeled as caring while men are labeled aggressive.

⁹ Krappmann defines a gang as a group of members whose behavior violates adults’ rules and regulations (365). The section “Zoras Bande – die Uskoken” focuses on the definition of a gang and the children's behavior as such.

¹⁰ “Tomboys” are girls who fully cross the gender divide”. They “will then fully participate in the adventurous play, fighting and teasing which is typical of boys groups and seem to be fully accepted in this spirit” (Erwin 1998, 67).

So werden Frauen gemeinhin folgende Eigenschaften zugeschrieben: fürsorglich, emotional, ausdrucksstark, empfindsam, passiv usw. Demgegenüber ordnet man Männern im allgemeinen folgende Charakteristika zu: rational, intelligent, selbstbewusst, aktiv, dominant usw. Zugespitzt kann man sagen: Frauen zeichnen sich vor allem durch Emotionalität und Wärme aus, Männer durch Kompetenz und Aktivität. (Fried)

Keeping these attributes in mind, the focus of this section is to interpret Held's intention in depicting a female character in such a way.

The inhabitants in Senj are afraid of Zora. Police inspector Begovic calls Zora “Teufelsmädchen” (53). This metaphor associates her with the devil, “an evil spirit”. A person called a devil is “an extremely wicked person” or “one who is mischievous” (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/devil>). Zora can be considered such a person since she causes a lot of mischief. In many situations Zora has adapted so much to the boys' behavior that she seems more boy than girl. I am aware of the fact that it is far too simplistic to strictly divide the characteristics and attributes associated with Zora into simply 'feminine' and 'masculine'. However, in Held's book the characters are depicted very traditionally. He depicts boys as aggressive and girls, such as Zlata, as emotional and caring. Zora, on the other hand, seems to have adopted more 'masculine' characteristics. For a lack of better terminology, I will therefore, keep using the words 'feminine' and 'masculine' when referring to the semantic fields associated with “boyish” and “girlish” when referring characters' behavior. First of all, a broader definition of gender shall be given.

When Held first published *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* in 1941 the scientific establishment distinguished boys and girls far more so than it does today and in this

regard, the book is a product of its time. The boys present in the book, like Zora's gang and "die Gymnasiasten", constantly engage in aggressive behavior like fighting each other. The "traditional" girl Zlata is shown as a girl who is dressed in girl's clothing and cares for others and displays 'feminine' attributes according to Fried. The figure of Zora however, combines "boyish" and "girlish" attributes. On the one hand, she is a girl who takes care of her own gang by providing them with food and shelter. But on the other hand, she participates in every fight the boys have with "die Gymnasiasten". Therefore, Zora is a character who is difficult to grasp.

Judith Butler's theory of gender performance provides a basis to show why Zora can neither be categorized simply as "girlish", nor as simply a "tomboy" either. Butler's work on power, gender, sexuality and identity has been ground breaking. In her influential book *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler argued that feminism made a mistake by trying to assert that 'women' were a group with common characteristics and interests. That simplification reinforced a binary view of gender relations that divides human into two clear-cut groups, women and men. Instead, she defines gender as fluid, not fixed. This fluidity gives 'men' and 'women' a choice. Men can have 'masculine' or 'feminine' traits, just as women can have 'feminine' and 'masculine' ones, because neither sex is restricted by their biologically given sex. Sex in this context will be defined as the biologically given. However, no matter what "biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the casual result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex" (Butler 8). If gender is a cultural construct, Butler continues, "then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way" (9). "Assuming for the moment the stability of binary sex, it does not follow that the construction of "men"

will accrue exclusively to the bodies of males or that “women” will interpret only female bodies” (Butler 9). Butler continues with the following observation:

the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one (9)

Here Butler means that people should be allowed room for choice, where they can either resist socially constituted positions or be therefore different. In other words, gender should not be seen as a fixed attribute of a person but rather as a fluid variable that shifts and changes in different contexts and times.

In the 1940s, when *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* was written, gender had yet to achieve academic currency. Yet in the character of Zora, the discrepancy between biological sex and culturally constructed gender becomes very obvious. While Zora's biological sex is female, the gender role that she assumes makes her appear more similar to the boys surrounding her. Zora's fight with “die Gymnasiasten” in chapter 11 is a case in point. After “die Gymnasiasten” attacked the farmer's boy Stjepan, a friend of Zora and her gang, Zora decides to take revenge on all the members of “die Gymnasiasten”. From now on, 'Zoras Bande' sets out to look for each of the members of “die Gymnasiasten” to avenge Stjepan. One afternoon, Pavle and Branko follow Skalec and Marculin, two boys of “die Gymnasiasten” and hear how the two boys brag to Zlata, and another girl, about beating up the boys in 'Zoras Bande'. The situation escalates and Branko is soon cornered by the rest of “die Gymnasiasten”. When Zora becomes aware

of his plight, she and the boys come to rescue him. In the description of the fight, Zora is mentioned several times, always fighting with one of the “die Gymnasiasten”.

Die Bande war da, Zora an der Spitze. Der zweite, der nach dem dicken Skalec den Hang hinunterkugelt, war Marculin, dann stürzte sich Zora auf Smoljan. Inzwischen waren Pavle, Nicola und nach einer Weile auch Duro gekommen. (166)

This short passage reveals Zora's zeal and effort in fights. She does not stand back and let the boys take care of the matter. She is right at the center of the action. She engages in aggressive behavior typically linked to boys rather than girls. Yet Held breaks up this cultural convention by having a girl participate in aggressive behavior. Additionally, he uses Zora's body as a medium onto which he inscribes cultural meaning.

Judith Butler explains

“the body” appears as a passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed or as the instrument through which an appropriative and interpretive will determines a cultural meaning for itself. In either case, the body is figured as a mere *instrument* or *medium* for which a set of cultural meanings are only externally related (Butler 12)

Throughout *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande*, the question of gender and appropriate behavior comes up again and again. Even though Held breaks with the expectation that a boys' gang has to have a male leader, textual hints nevertheless point to an implicit gender hierarchy. About a quarter of the way through the text, Zora is introduced as the leader of 'Zoras Bande'. While none of the boys question Zora's leadership, the text nonetheless implies that it is something yet unheard of. This can be best shown with Zlata's utterance of disbelief, when she learns from Branko that a girl leads the gang. After Branko told her: “Die rote Zora ist unser Kapitän” (255); she inquires: “Ihr Buben

gehört einem Mädchen?“¹¹ (255). Her question indicates not only her astonishment but also her disbelief. However, Branko justifies Zora's leadership in the text. The explanation given to Zlata is based on Branko's conception that Zora is the most courageous of the group. Therefore, she is their leader. Zora “ist aber die Tapferste von uns, und auch bei den alten Uskokern¹² gab es eine Frau, welche die Tapferste war” (255). Branko's comment about Zora's courageousness justifies why the boys have accepted her as their leader. However, Zora is depicted in several other situations as a person who organizes and holds the group together. Held again plays with the conventions of 'feminine' and 'masculine' attributes. Courage is not an attribute traditionally associated with girls. Therefore, Zlata does not believe that boys would obey a girl. Held breaks this convention by letting a boy say that a girl is the most courageous in their group. Just because Zora is a girl does not mean that she must be dependent and weak.

Held does not depict Zora as a girl who physically dominates the other group members. Yet, her leadership becomes visible nonetheless; for example in Zora's decision not to leave before all of the “Gymnasiasten”¹³ boys were punished. None of the other group members dare to leave without Zora (Held 151). Zora is also the mastermind behind the plan to avenge Stjepan. She has written down a list with the boys' names and is determined not to rest until each one of them has been punished properly. Zora thus displays assertive behavior that, when Held wrote his story, was attributed to boys. It was

¹¹ All quotes are taken from Held, Kurt. *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande*. Aarau: Verlag Sauerländer, 1989.

¹² “Die Uskokern” were a group of fugitives who originated in Croatia, Herzegovina and Bosnia. They had to leave their home country due to the Ottoman conquering of their home country. In 1537 “die Uskokern” moved from, Senj where they led a grim fight not only against the Ottomans but also against the republic of Venice.

¹³ It is also important to note that “die Gymnasiasten” belong to a different social group than Zora and her gang. A “Gymnasium” is a school where a higher level of education is offered. In contrast, Zora and the boys do not seem to obtain any education at all.

considered inappropriate for girls to act in the way Zora does in this situation. However, Krappmann's theory¹⁴ offers an explanation for Zora's leadership role within the group. He argues that younger children are geared by physical dominance while older children compete on other levels, such as scholarly and sporting activities, social behavior or leadership qualities¹⁵. He continues by saying “in der mittleren Kindheit [entwickeln sie] eine Auffassung von Autorität, die deren Anerkennung an spezifische Fähigkeiten für situative Erfordernisse bindet und verlangt, daß die temporär zugestandene Vollmacht gruppendienlich ausgeübt wird” (Krappmann 356).

Another reason why the boys in Zora's gang do not question her leadership may lie in the fact that Zora started the group and the first boy she befriended saw in her a person who would protect him. Zora's role is defined from her first encounter with Pavle onwards. Any other group member meets her as the leader of a pre-existing group. It is her group of friends and therefore, there is no reason to question her leadership. Zora has the ability to hold her own ground within the group. The boys accept her as an equal and do not question her authority. Held clearly shows that it is possible for a girl to have leadership qualities that allow her to be the head of a boys' gang. Such qualities include her assertiveness when making decisions, her knowledge of ways to escape when the gang is once again in trouble or simply the fact that she started the gang in the first place.

¹⁴ Krappmann is an acclaimed researcher for childhood psychology. His dissertation on *Soziologische Dimensionen der Identität* (1969) has been published in the 10th edition. In his article *Sozialisation der Gruppe der Gleichaltrigen* offers an overview of the social childhood world. Krappmann establishes a background of existing research before he continues to elaborate on the development of children's socialization in peer groups. In doing so, Krappmann goes into details about internationally accepted features of friendships, such as acceptance or the development of one's self. However his focus lies in children's socialization.

¹⁵ “[J]üngere Kinder [orientieren] sich vor allem an physischer *Dominanz* [...], während ältere eine Vielzahl von Dimensionen wie sportliche und schulische Leistungen, Sozialverhalten und Führungsqualitäten benutzen.” (Krappmann 355)

Thus, while Zora is a female protagonist, the attributes which Held inscribes into his character often show 'masculine' traits.

Zora's leadership can be understood even better, when taking a closer look at Branko's statement that the boys do not obey anybody: "Wir gehorchen niemandem.". On the one hand, this claim could mean the members of the group do not obey Zora. On the other hand, it could also mean the entire gang does not obey anybody. 'Zoras Bande' has its own rules the children follow¹⁶, but they do this equally. This implies that everybody in the group of friends has an equal position as can be seen in the following excerpt:

"Ich denke, Zora führt die Bande." [...] "Das schon", erwiderte Duro. "Aber wenn einer von uns etwas vorschlägt und es angenommen wird, so führt er das auch durch, und die anderen gehorchen ihm. Brankos Augen streiften Zoras aufs neue. "Ist das wahr?" Zora nickte. (87)

Although Zora is the leader, the other group members have a chance to assume leadership roles in certain situations, which means that they share responsibilities equally. This sharing suggests a relationship of equality and reciprocity within the group. Krappmann calls this aspect "ein Verhältnis der Gleichheit und Wechselseitigkeit" (355). The equality and reciprocity within the group is not contradicted by the fact that important decisions are not made by Zora alone but together with the rest of the group. Still, Zora functions as a role model for the other children, or as Krappmann puts it: "Kompetentere Gleichaltrige dienen den Kindern als *Modelle*." (358).

Zora also shows behavior that is perceived as 'feminine' in Western cultures. Branko thinks that Zora looks serious and boyish, sometimes even harsh and angry. But

¹⁶ One rule, for example, is to always support each other. I will go into more detail about their rules in the section "Zoras Bande' - 'die Uskokent'".

her facial expression changes when she has time to lie down and relax. Then it takes on soft and girlish qualities. Indeed, Branko thinks her almost pretty:

Es lag etwas Weiches und Mädchenhaftes in ihrem Gesicht, während sie bisher ernst und knabenhaft, ja manchmal sogar hart und böse ausgesehen hatte. Das rote Haar war durch die Hände verdeckt, und die Sommersprossen waren im Schatten der Ranken kaum sichtbar. Sie sah jetzt nicht nur mädchenhaft, sondern geradezu schön aus. (58)

Held's diction demands that readers perceive Zora as a girl. With the adjectives “weich” and “mädchenhaft” he clearly ascribes those as 'feminine' characteristics, while the adjectives “ernst” and “knabenhaft” signify masculinity in this same situation. It is not only Zora's appearance but also her behavior that can be defined as womanly behavior. Such behavior can be seen when she acts like a housewife, such as when she tells Pavle to get oil to bake the fish she caught (123).

Butler understands these acts and gestures as performative: “Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means.” (185). Performance serves as a strategy that helps to survive within a certain system:

[G]ender is a project which has cultural survival as its end, [thus] the term strategy better suggests the situation of duress under which gender performance always and variously occurs. Hence, as a *strategy* of survival withing compulsory systems, gender is a performance with clearly punitive consequences. (190)

Zora's behavior can be categorized as performative and a strategy of survival when she changes her outer appearance into something that was considered then more 'feminine'. This transformation is very easy for Zora. All she has to do is buy attractive

girl's clothes. While Held initially inscribed 'masculine' attributes onto Zora's character, he now changes her outer appearance to that of a girl. Zora goes to town and buys herself a pretty dress and girly attire, notably high heels and pearls.

Um den schönen, schlanken Hals zogen sich dicke rote, blaue und grüne Ketten. [...] Das Mädchen hatte sich auch geschminkt. Ihre Augenbrauen waren mit zwei schwarzen Strichen nachgezogen, auf ihren Backen leuchteten rote Farbkleckse, die wieder mit einem rosa Puder bestäubt waren, und die schmalen Lippen leuchteten so rot, als habe sie das Mädchen mit frischem Ochsenblut bestrichen. (307)

The question is where her motivation for this transformation originates from. Up to that point, Zora cared neither about her looks nor about how the other boys in the gang perceived her.

Zora's motivation lies in the fact that Branko befriends another girl. He spends time with the mayor's daughter Zlata, who is throughout the book described as pretty. Zora objects to Branko's regular visits and develops strategies to distract him by becoming more "girl-like." She is not prepared for the reaction of Branko, who is not used to seeing her in a girl's attire. He is totally surprised and laughs aloud when he sees Zora. "Nein', meinte er unter Lachen 'du hast aus unserer stolzen roten Zora nur eine häßliche Vogelscheuche gemacht.'" (307). Zora's dressing up as a woman leads to a conflict in Branko's perception. Even though he knows she is a girl, he is not used to seeing her dressed up as one. Held portrays Zora as a figure who fully crosses the gender divide. For the boys to accept her as a legitimate member of their gang it is easier *not* to see her as a girl. Since she participates in their adventurous play, they seem to fully accept her in that spirit (Erwin 1998, 67). However, as soon as Branko perceives Zora as different, he can no longer accept as he did before. Yet, Held also shows clearly that

gender *is* performative. Zora clearly chooses to perform her gender according to culturally perceived 'masculine' or 'feminine' understandings.

Branko's reaction hurts Zora's feelings: "Zoras Gesicht verzog sich und wurde hart und böse. 'Verspottete mich noch', sagte sie. 'Aber das merke dir, deiner Zlata kratze ich morgen die Augen aus!'" (307). Zora's reaction can only be understood if it is seen as her first attempt to attract the affection of the other sex. The change in her behavior is not only motivated by Zlata but also by her sexual attraction to Branko. Her physical attraction becomes even more apparent in another situation: Branko has once again left the group to spend time with Zlata. Zora is pre-occupied with finding reasons for what he could possibly be doing for such a long time at her house, "Ich möchte nur wissen, was er so lange bei ihr macht." Auf Zoras Stirn zeigten sich wieder Falten." (278). The crinkles on her face could result from concern about the things Branko could tell Zlata. It is far more believable, though, that they signify her jealousy. They instantly disappear when Branko returns. "Du bist hier?" rief Zora erfreut, und ihre Falten verschwanden." (278). Zora's behavior towards Branko shows subtle physical attraction and can be interpreted as an indication of a romance. However, that romance is not further pursued in the text.

Held's intention is to show that being a girl does not necessarily need to be equaled with 'feminine' behavior. While Zora is introduced as a girl, Held definitely plays with the perception of her gender. He is aware of the cultural boundaries and depicts in Zora a character that can be perceived as a "girl" as well as a "boy." In his description of Zora, he shows that these categories are defined through performative aspects and that gender performance adapts to external and situational circumstances.

In *Zora*, Held created a character who performs different gender roles. While in some situations she appears more like a girl, her behavior is more often closer to the behavior of the boys in her gang. Her gender is not fixed. She is presented as 'different' and as such accepted in her peer group. In portraying *Zora* in such a way, Held makes his readers confront existing cultural conventions. He also shows however, that one has a choice and does not have to comply with social expectations. Erwin summarizes this appropriately by saying,

[I]t is possible for an individual to have stereotypically male and female qualities (e.g. competence, assertiveness, leadership, independence, self-reliance *and* nurturance, warmth, sympathy, kindness, gentleness, cheerfulness). Such a person would be androgynous.” (1993, 164).

2.2 Cross-sex Groups of Friends

As *Zora*'s group of friends consists of boys and a girl, it is also important to analyze the cross-sex relationships. The dealings of this cross-sex group of friends make up the greater part of the book. Additionally, there are two cross-sex dyads, *Zora – Branko* and *Zlata – Branko*, which deserve a closer look. In this context it is important to have a closer look at the children's influence on one another. This influence varies, depending on factors such as age, experience, or gender.

2.2.1 'Zoras Bande' – as Friends

'Zoras Bande' developed because *Zora* felt lonely. Children ideally have parents or caregivers who keep them company, but nonetheless, they start looking for company

outside the family to make friends. One important feature that motivates children to seek friends is their need for companionship. “Companionship is operationalized most frequently as spending time together and as having fun together, that is, as social preference or proximity” (Howes 70).¹⁷ Proximity means the seeking out of particular partners for interaction. Once companionship is considered as having content [...] the issue of social skills must be considered as well (qtd. in Howes 70).¹⁸

As Zora does not have any parents, she looks for other companions. This does not imply that she was looking for a specific companion but rather one day she stumbles over Pavle. She tells Branko, “Ich sah ihn eines Tages untem am Quai” (111). Pavle is described as a tall, plump and clumsy boy with a big head. Everything about his body seems bigger than normal.

Der erste war groß, plump und sah ungemein tolpatschig aus. Auf einem breiten Körper saß ein genauso breiter, schwerer Kopf. Die Haare standen in die Höhe wie bei einem Igel, die Ohren waren größer als gewöhnlich, die Nase dick und fleischig, und wenn nicht die Augen so melancholisch gewesen wären, hätte man annehmen können, der ganze Junge sei ein ausgesprochener Raudi. Er kam mit großen Schritten, die Hände, die genauso ungefüßig waren wie sein Körper, etwas vorgeschoben, auf sie zu” (54)

While the text initially implies that Pavle is a big, strong boy, this appearance is contradicted, when Zora first meets the boy. In their first meeting, Pavle cries, which

¹⁷ Carollee Howes is a nationally and internationally recognized child care researcher. Her research focuses on children's experiences in child care as well as their concurrent and long-term outcomes from child care experiences. Additionally, Howes has made great efforts to improve child care quality (<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/~ciccq/howes.html>).

¹⁸ Social skills are skills that are an important set of abilities a person should have in order to be able to interact with other people. Such skills are for example listening skills, showing interest in others, maintaining eye contact during conversations, etc.

contrasts with his physical description. Once again, Held questions the gender role expectations of his society.

Zora soon finds out that Pavle's father kicked him out of the house because he is so clumsy. Hearing his story, Zora decides to take him 'home' with her. She offers to take Pavle to a secure place, where nobody will beat him. Zora is ready to offer Pavle shelter and food when nobody else wants to take care of him. Still a child herself, she is nevertheless perceptive to another child's needs. "Komm nur', habe ich geantwortet, 'ich werde immer satt, und da wirst du auch satt werden.'" (111).

Zora's and Pavle's first encounter determines her role as a leader¹⁹ and his role as a follower. Everything Pavle says to Zora during their first encounter determines that role allocation. Not only does Pavle assume his follower role. He also gives Zora the responsibility to take care of him, when he says "[d]u mußt aber auch auf mich aufpassen" (112). Even though the children are both twelve years old, Zora is presented as the more mature character.

The next boy admitted into Zora's and Pavle's group is Nicola. Pavle meets Nicola when he tries to steal apples. He takes Nicola back 'home' with him and tells Zora "Da ist noch einer, [...], der keinen Vater und keine Mutter mehr hat" (112). Zora takes him in, which demonstrates her ability to show empathy and to put herself in other persons' situations. This compassion is important in friendships. "Als ein wichtiges Korrelat gelingender Interaktion wird die Fähigkeit zum Perspektivenwechsel betrachtet [...]" (Krappmann 368). Held describes Zora as an empathetic person. Zora is perceptive to

¹⁹ Page 14 and the following pages of this thesis talk about Zora's role as a leader within the group.

Nicola's, and all the other boys' situations, when she admits them into her group. They have undergone similar situations and thus relate to each other.²⁰

Researchers generally agree that friendship cannot be forced. Reinders points out correctly that there is an essential difference between friendships and family relationships.²¹ “Als ein wesentlicher Unterschied zwischen Familienbeziehungen und Freundschaften muss aber angesehen werden, dass Freundschaften auf freiwilliger Basis beruhen” (1). A child might desire friendships with others, but if the other child does not reciprocate, then friendship is not possible (Dunn 2).²² Dunn also points out that “[m]ost people agree that a crucial feature of friendship is that it is a reciprocal relationship between two people with both affirming it” (2). Reciprocity is important because it distinguishes a child's desire from being liked and accepted by one whose desire is not returned. As long as a child is not liked or accepted by another, the relationship cannot be called friendship. Thus, acceptance is a key element of friendship. In contrast to reciprocity, acceptance is a 'one-way' construct because it only shows the behavior of an individual or a peer group towards a particular individual. It is unimportant how that child views the group (Dunn 2), meaning a child can be accepted by a peer group, yet, the child does not have to accept everybody in the peer group. To understand what Held does

²⁰ Nicola had similar experiences and is even younger than Pavle. After his father's death he must care for himself. Gorian, an old fisher, whom the children befriend later, describes Nicola's living situation as follows: “Dem kleinsten, einem Fischerbuben, ist der Vater [...] tödlich verunglückt. Seitdem hat er keinen Menschen mehr, der für ihn sorgt.” (366).

²¹ Reinder's article “Freundschaften im Jugendalter” offers a brief overview of friendships in adolescence. Reinder's first defines friendship agreeing upon accepted friendship features before he gives a brief overview on girls' and boys' friendships as well as romantic relationships.

²² Judy Dunn's book *Children's Friendships* focuses on the beginnings of intimacy. Dunn's book includes the development of friendships from a very young age onwards to later friendships. These early developments condition children's friendships in their middle childhood and adolescence. Certain concepts such as companionship, reciprocity etc. are continuously applicable, as they recur in friendships at any age.

when introducing the character of Duro, it is important to broaden Dunn's definition. Krappmann quotes Youniss who explains the interaction between children by the fact that they have a relationship of equality and reciprocity. Thus, children do not let themselves be dictated by an authority within the group.

Nach Youniss (1980) besteht die besondere Herausforderung der Interaktion unter Kindern darin, daß sie zu einander ein Verhältnis der Gleichheit und Wechselseitigkeit aufbauen. Daher ließen sie sich in ihrer Kooperation nicht von einer *Autorität* bestimmen, sondern würden gemeinsam nach einer ihnen sinnvollen Einigung suchen. Dem scheint die alltäglich Beobachtung zu widersprechen, die zeigt, daß Kinder immer wieder versuchen, andere zu bevormunden, zu übervorteilen oder mit Gewalt zu zwingen." (qtd. in Krappmann 355)

Again, Held is aware of these different notions of friendship. Not only does he show the reciprocity within the group, for example, when Zora voluntarily accepts Nicola and Pavle. He also depicts the exact opposite when introducing Duro. The penultimate to join the group more or less 'forces' his way in. According to Zora, he had spied on them for a while and one day simply told them, "Ihr müßt mich in eure Bande aufnehmen, sonst verrate ich es dem Begovic, daß ihr hier oben haust" (113). Duro already tries to impose his own will onto the group members before he joins them. Pavle reacts aggressively to this demand, and offers to Zora that he would throw Duro into the well. Yet, he is not allowed to do so. This situation once again shows that Zora controls the group's internal dynamics.

Held depicts different types of children with quite different characters. While children like Pavle and Nicola submit easily to rules and regulations, children with Duro's character prefer to set the rules. Duro's behavior needs to be seen in the context of the children's social environment. While ideally, children can freely choose their friends,

these children are not in school and thus do not live in an environment that affords such possibilities. Today's friendships develop in kindergarten and later in school, where there is a large number of children to pick from; this is different for Zora and the boys. They are severely restricted in their possibilities of choosing friends. They come together because they share one or two factors like their homelessness and their longing for companionship.

By describing the different ways the boys access this group of friends, Held portrays an element of friendships quite realistically that accords with theories of early childhood. He shows the development of all stages of friendship between the members of 'Zoras Bande' over an extended period. He can thus show the different facets apparent in friendships but important *for* them.²³

Duro's attempt to enter into 'Zoras Bande' can be better understood when taking into account theories of the development of childhood social skills. According to Krappmann children need social skills and strategies to gain access into a group. "Interventionsstudien, die Kindern helfen, in die Sozialwelt der Kinder aufgenommen zu werden, sprechen dafür, daß Kinder soziale Fähigkeiten [...] und Strategien des Eintritts [...] benötigen" (Krappmann 370). Duro does not yet possess these social skills, but he can still develop them. Krappmann continues:

Vormals bereits abgelehnte Kinder scheinen in neue Gruppen Verhaltensweisen mitzubringen, die zu ihrem erneuten Ausschluß führen. [...] Dagegen können die vernachlässigten Kinder in neuen sozialen Konstellationen Verhaltensweisen entwickeln, die ihnen eine vielseitigere Teilnahme an Interaktionen sichern und neuartige Erfahrungen erschließen. (370)

²³ Features of friendship include caring for the other person, the sharing of the same experiences as well as conflicts and many more.

Again, Held recognizes this development. He develops Duro's character in such a way to make him useful to the group. Zora says, "Duro ist ein ganz brauchbarer Junge, und wenn wir ihn nicht gehabt hätten, wäre es uns schon manchmal sehr schlecht ergangen." (113). Held's intention is to show that even socially deprived children like Duro will develop positively if given the chance. At the same time he shows that not all socially deprived children develop characters like Duro, Zora, Nicola and Pavle are his counter examples.

In Branko's acceptance into the group, Held shows yet another possibility of entering an already existing group. Neither does Branko force his way into the group nor do all group members reciprocally accept him. For Branko to enter into the group, Duro insists on him playing the knife game. The knife game situation offers an insight into the rules and regulations of the group of friends. "Die Fähigkeit der Kinder, aufeinander einzugehen und zu kooperieren, erscheint einerseits als Voraussetzung ihrer Aufnahmen in die Gleichaltrigenbeziehungen, andererseits jedoch auch als ein Resultat der Erfahrung mit Gleichaltrigen." (Krappmann 368). Even though Zora leads the group, she accedes to Duro's request. This is even more surprising as Nicola and Pavle are in favor of accepting Branko into the group at once. The situation is depicted as though they are voting democratically. Zora says she wants to accept Branko into the group and Nicola and Pavle do not have any objections (62). Nicola even seems to be proud to have Branko as a group member. Yet, Duro argues against accepting Branko unless he plays the knife game. This situation shows that a single child can un hinge the group dynamic. For the children to resolve their conflict, cooperation is necessary. Instead of arguing, Zora and

the other boys accept Duro's condition and submit to it. A later situation helps explain this reaction. Duro again sets the rules for the group.²⁴ Even though any group member can establish rules and regulations, Held nonetheless depicts Zora as the one character who holds the group together and has the final say in conflict situations. When Branko succeeds in the knife game and is officially admitted into the group, Duro refuses to shake hands with Branko or accept him as a new member. Zora's reacts by saying: “Wir sprechen später noch darüber” (66). This exclamation clearly shows that even though Zora is willing to accept other members' bending rules, she is still the leader.

Held's description of the formation and shaping of 'Zoras Bande' shows the different ways in which children can influence each other. In Zora's case, she influences the children through her ability to relate to their personal situations. In contrast, Duro has a tendency to impose his own will onto the group. No matter how the children influence each other, Held definitely shows that friendships form in more than one way.

2.2.2 'Zoras Bande' – “die Uskoken”

While the previous section focused on 'Zoras Bande' as a friends group, this section will focus on 'Zoras Bande' as a peer group. In “Sozialisation in der Gruppe der Gleichaltrigen”, Krappmann describes a peer group as follows:

[P]eer [...] ist nicht nur der gleichaltrige Gefährte, sondern [meint auch] *Gleichheit* der Stellung im Verhältnis zueinander” [...] Ein Peer ist der als Interaktionspartner akzeptierte Gleichaltrige, mit dem das Kind sich in Anerkennung der jeweiligen Interessen prinzipiell zu einigen bereit ist. Verlangt wird eine gewisse „Soziabilität“, also die Disposition,

²⁴ See p. 86 in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* as well as p. 17 in this thesis for further details.

Handlungspläne miteinander abzustimmen, und zwar ohne das Streben, einander zu *dominieren*, und mit dem Vorsatz, grundlosen Streit zu unterlassen.” (Krappmann 364).

This definition shall be used to analyze the structure of 'Zoras Bande', “die Uskoken”. The children like to call themselves “die Uskoken” alluding to a military alliance of Catholic fugitives.²⁵ Just like the historical “Uskoken,” the children live in the old castle Nehajgrad, where each child has his or her own spot to sleep and keep his or her belongings. Zora explains to Branko, “Wir nennen sie die Uskokenburg, weil wir uns selber >die Uskoken< nennen. [...] denn wir wollen auch so tapfere Helden werden, wie es die Uskoken waren” (77).

By organizing their lives like their 'role models', “die Uskoken”, and by calling themselves “die Uskoken,” the children engage in a form of pretend play:

Das zentrale sozialisatorische Objekt ist das *Spiel* der Kinder, zunächst in der Form des *play*, in dem das Kind auf konkrete Gegenüber reagiert, dann in der Form des *game*, das verlangt, sich in ein Regelsystem einzufügen. Die Gruppe der Spielenden ist somit der soziale Ort sozialisatorischer Erfahrung, die die *Kompetenz*, Handlungen zu koordinieren, über zwei Stadien des Spielens vorantreibt. (Krappmann 360).

In their play, the children in Held's book establish their own rules. Some allude to the rules of “die Uskoken,” while others are their own. Even though there is not any specific point in the book, at which the entire set of rules are described, there seem to be rules nonetheless. Zora's dispute with Branko, when he refuses to save Duro from drowning, can be taken as an example for the existing rules (308).

²⁵ A definition of “die Uskoken” has been given on p. 15 of this thesis.

Zora denounces Branko's behavior by accusing him: “[h]ast du bei deiner Zlata schon verlernt, daß bei den Uskoken Kameradschaft bis zum Tod herrscht?” (308). Even though this rule has not previously been stipulated, the accusation makes it clear that the peer group has rules. These unspoken rules evoke Krappmann's “Soziabilität”, which claims that peer groups have the disposition to organize their behavior in ways that facilitate peaceful interaction. They have the ambition to avoid unnecessary disputes, but if a dispute cannot be avoided, the children engage in dispute resolution.

'Zoras Bande' is not simply a peer group, but also a gang that many people in Senj fear, because the children trespass onto private property and steal. According to Krappmann, peer groups become gangs when members show behavior that violates adults' rules and regulations.²⁶ The text offers this depiction of the children, since everybody else calls the children's group 'Zoras Bande'²⁷, which means Zora's gang. While the children do everything to keep their social life free from disputes among themselves, they take out a lot of their aggression on “die Gymnasiasten” and the social life of the inhabitants of Senj. They beat up “die Gymnasiasten”, steal from anybody they can, and regularly cause social upheaval.

The question arises why the children are presented in such a way. Held depicts the inhabitants of Senj as highly indifferent as to the children's behavior, e.g. stealing food. The residents are shown as happy and unconcerned as long as 'Zoras Bande' does not bother them. However, when the gang causes them trouble, they are only concerned with

²⁶ “Jugendliche in “gang”-artigen Gruppen [zeigen] häufig ein gegen die Normen der Erwachsenenwelt gerichtetes Sozialverhalten” (Krappmann 365).

²⁷ “Du bist die rote Zora. Ich habe schon allerlei von dir und deiner Bande gehört. Nicht viel Gutes.” (104) This is only one example, where one of the other characters, here Gorian, refers to the children as “Bande”.

how to catch and imprison them rather than discover why the children behave as they do. The inhabitants do not care about children's problems.

Held reveals a discrepancy between the children's situation and the ways adults perceive it. By showing the residents' indifference for the situation of 'Zoras Bande', the author illustrates an unacceptable social behavior on the part of adults. One illustrative example is when Zora shows Branko where they live and says: "Daß wir hier wohnen, ist verboten' [...], 'aber wo sollen wir sonst bleiben?'" In this short sentence, Held, on the one hand, depicts both the children's misery and the adult's indifference. The children do not have any home, thus they have to take, what they can get.²⁸

In this thesis however I want to focus primarily on Held's depiction of the children. It is important to understand that Zora and the boys are depicted as a group of children who have to organize their entire lives on their own. They are not supervised by any parents or adults because they do not have anybody who takes care of them.

Krappmann argues that

[w]enn die Entwicklungsanstöße der Sozialwelt der Kinder damit verknüpft sind, daß die Kinder ihre Beziehungen und Interaktionen zunehmend eigenständig auszuhandeln haben, dann müssen die Kinder bereits auf einer Stufe ihrer Entwicklung angelangt sein, auf der sie der ständigen begleitenden Fürsorge und Kontrolle der Eltern und anderer Erwachsener nicht mehr bedürfen. (357)

²⁸ In the final two chapters of Held's book, the adults' indifference becomes extreme. But Held also shows how they change their behavior when they realize their mistakes. Held first described the peculiar situation of the children and inhabitants to find a solution for it in the end. The children are divided between different people and put into families, where they can grow up in a more traditional environment. To take a closer look at the social sphere Held depicts of the inhabitants in Senj could be a next step toward understanding the children's behavior better. However, this cannot be done at this point.

The children have, in other words, reached a stage of development where they no longer need constant parental or adult supervision. But not everybody in 'Zoras Bande' has reached this developmental stage yet. Held depicts one or two of the children as if they had already reached that stage since they are more inclined to take matters into their own hands and organize their peer group life. Zora is one of them. Her readiness to account and care for the other children may lie in the fact that she has lived on her own for about four years. Even though she was put in the care of an orphanage Zora was unhappy and escaped several times. She says to Branko: "Bei meiner Mutter durfte ich machen, was ich wollte; bei den Grauen Schwestern sollte ich den ganzen Tag >brav< sein, schreiben und lesen, oder singen und beten." (110). The last time Zora escaped, the supervisors of the orphanage failed to relocate her.

Zora is described as a child who ran away because she could not adjust to the new situation in the orphanage. Having been on her own for four years made it necessary for Zora to develop ways to look after and protect herself. Once she acquires these skills, she can more easily transfer them later to the group. Zora is therefore a role model.

The second child in the group who shows initiative in organizing the children's life is Duro. Duro's motivations are unclear, because Held presents no information about Duro's past life. He just seems to have a natural talent for looking out for his friends, notably Pavle and Nicola, who have not yet reached that developmental stage. At age nine Nicola is the youngest of the children and still needs adult supervision. Zora substitutes for these adults. Pavle displays a lack of development. He puts himself under Zora's supervision almost from the first moment on, when he tells her she needs to take care of him.

2.2.3 Zora and Branko

Zora and Branko form a dyad within the group of friends. They share a special friendship. Even though Branko is the last boy accepted into Zora's gang, it is obvious from the beginning that he has a special status and plays an important role for the girl. Zora and Branko meet for the first time when Branko steals a fish that lay on the ground. When he is accused of stealing it and the police ask for witnesses, Zora comes forward and says: "Ich habe es gesehen." (43). Zora helps Branko although she does not know him. Branko does not understand why and asks her: "Warum hast du mich eigentlich gerettet?" (58). Zora answers: "Ich habe gesehen, daß du hungrig warst, und ich weiß, wie es ist, wenn man Hunger und nichts zu essen hat. Ich habe dir dann helfen wollen, als dich Karaman erwischte, und ich mußte dir eben weiterhelfen, als dich Begovic ins Gefängnis brachte." (58). She then adds: "Ich tue einfach immer, was ich muß." (59). Zora is motivated to help Branko by the similarity of their life experiences. She can empathize with him. In her article "Determinants of friendship selection and quality" Frances E. Aboud writes of the features that friendships have and according to which children select friends. She says: "People select friends who are similar to themselves" (Aboud 88). Similarity in research on friendships is restricted to "the similarity-attraction hypothesis, which states that liking is associated with similarity in one or more characteristics" (Aboud 89). As a consequence, "[s]imilarity is presumed to be rewarding in at least two ways: The first one involves consensual validation of one's attitudes and beliefs, which is provided by others, who hold similar views. The second involves participating in enjoyable activities with others who have similar interests." (Aboud 89).

Zora and Branko share such similarities. Both lost their parents and now try to survive on their own. When they first meet, the children share the same interest: to free Branko. They also share what all of the children in Zora's group share: they are their own caregivers. Zora feels obliged to help Branko because she can relate to his situation.

Even though all the children spend a lot of time together, Branko and Zora spend more quality time together than anyone else, and often talk about their experiences. Children realize soon that in order to build up a friendship of “intimate and mutual sharing” they need to find children who “share [their] interests and [...] have mutually agreeable personalities” (Rubin 33). The experience of friendly interaction with children of both sexes may be useful for boys and girls. “It provides them with the opportunity to encounter a wide range of behavioural styles and activities, reduces negative stereotyping of the opposite sex that derive from children's experience of cross-sex interactions” (Erwin 67). Additionally, these experiences put the child in good stead in his or her ability to establish satisfying relationships in later life.

Held does not portray Zora as a child who opens up towards other people. She has not told anybody about her past. The only other child depicted in this way is Duro. By contrast, Pavle and Nicola are portrayed as children who easily open up to others. Yet when Zora is out fishing with Gorian and Branko, she opens up to Branko. She tries to find out more about Branko and in doing so begins to tell Branko about her past, too. However, Branko must first encourage her before she opens up entirely. Her answer to Branko's reassurance is:

Ja, ich glaube, dir kann ich sie erzählen. Ich weiß nicht, ich hatte schon das erstemal, als ich dich über den Markt gehen sah, das Gefühl, dir könnte man alles erzählen, und wie du heute so tapfer warst und nicht wolltest,

daß mich der alte Gorian prügelte, dachte ich sogar einen Augenblick, ich möchte einen Bruder haben, der so ist wie du. (109-10)

This description of Zora's behavior underlines that some children need encouragement first before they are able to open up. Held shows Zora as someone who will not open up to anybody unless she finds a person whom she can trust. The girl finds this person in Branko. Finding someone to trust and confide in is important for children, especially for these children. Krappman writes: "Eine zentrale Dimension ist das Bedürfnis nach Vertrauen unter Freunden, das von der Kindheit zur frühen Adoleszenz deutlich ansteigt; auch wächst das Bemühen, aufeinander einzugehen" (Krappmann 366).

The quote above reveals that Zora has a different notion about Branko than about the other boys. The first time she saw Branko she felt she would be able to share anything with him. This feeling implies she would like to have a brother like Branko which narrows her relationship to Branko down to trust, at least in this situation. Comparing Branko to a brother means she is attracted to him but not sexually. It concurrently shows that Branko is more important to her than the other members of the group, since siblings are a family relation, which is supposedly closer than friendship.

The narrator provides another reason for Zora to like and appreciate Branko when he describes Gorian beating Branko. Branko stands in for Zora and does not want Gorian to beat her as well, just because he was beaten. This intercession is shown as an act of courage on Branko's side and Zora appreciates it. Their emotional attachment to each other becomes obvious when Zora says: "[i]ch wußte gar nicht, was ich machen sollte, als er dich so schlug. Mir war es immer, als schlug er mich selber." (108). Even though Zora is not beaten by Gorian, but Branko, it is as if she can feel his physical pain.

Held must depict Zora in this way to reveal the triangular relationship between Zlata, Branko and Zora. So far, Zora has only been shown as a character who leads the group and has a special friend in Branko. However, her relationship to Branko changes once he meets Zlata. To show this change in Zora's behavior it is important to define and analyze Zlata's and Branko's relationship first.

2.2.4 Zlata and Branko

Branko and Zlata form a dyad, albeit a totally different one than Branko and Zora. Zlata and Branko always meet alone, but the friendship between Zlata and Branko is triangular, since Zora plays a big part in it. Zora knows of Branko's friendship with Zlata, but she only tolerates it. Throughout the book Zora, seizes more than one opportunity to talk badly about Zlata. Zora does so because of her own attraction to Branko. During the first part of the book, Zora is described as the girl who saw a brother in Branko, but she later becomes sexually attracted to him. In more than one situation, Zora is perceptibly afraid that Branko likes Zlata more than her. She therefore makes several attempts to 'win' him back.²⁹ Several differences between the girls, explain Zora's jealousy, however. Zlata is the mayor's daughter, a girl of seventeen years who plays the violin very well and dreams of becoming a famous singer. The first time Branko meets her, she helps him when “die Gymnasiasten” are fighting against 'Zoras Bande'. Branko pays scarce

²⁹ Zora's attraction towards Branko has been explained in section 2.1 Zora – a “tomboy” or a girl of this thesis?

attention to her and hardly remembers her the second time they meet. It so happens that Branko is able to help Zlata this time, as she has a flat tire and he can fix it.

During their second meeting Branko starts to develop an interest in the girl. He eyes her closely and considers her pretty.³⁰ Branko starts to look for places where he can meet Zlata and get to know her better. Branko's behavior can be explained by the fact that children “view friendships as relationships that continue beyond single encounters” (Rubin 34). The question at hand is: What is so attractive about Zlata that Branko wants to be her friend and how is their friendship possible?

Not only is Zlata, at seventeen, already five years older than Branko but additionally, she was born into a different social class. She is the mayor's daughter, while Branko's parents were only simple workers. Zlata has more life experience than Branko. Additionally, she received a different education, which means she can broaden Branko's knowledge. Zlata for example teaches Branko how to behave appropriately towards elders, when Branko calls her “du.” She criticizes him and tells him to call her “Sie” out of respect, pointing out that she is many years his elder and therefore demands respect. She also teaches Branko to play the violin.

By portraying Zlata in this way, Held not only differentiates Zlata and Branko, especially as far as their educational background is concerned, but he also shows a distinct difference between the two girls, Zlata and Zora. Zlata has attractions that Zora

³⁰ “Unter dem welligen, bräunlichen Haar war eine hohe, weiße Stirn. Die Augen schienen gelb und von einer solchen Helle, daß er kaum in sie hineinsehen konnte. Die Nase war kühn und groß wie die Nase ihres Bruders. Sie war aber da, wo sie bei Slavko spitz und kantig war, mädchenhaft und rund. Der Mund war klein und die Zähne blendend weiß. Aber das allein war es nicht, was Branko so in Erstaunen versetzte und gleichzeitig so freudig betroffen hatte. Es war das ganze Gesicht. Das helle Rot der Backen, die bräunliche Schwärze der Augenbrauen, die roten Lippen, die leichte Bräune, die über dem Kinn lag und sich im Hals verlor.” (p. 253).

cannot offer Branko. Zora cannot play the violin, thus she cannot teach Branko how to play it either. These differences help readers understand Branko's attraction to Zlata. Yet Zora's jealousy is also understandable. As Branko has found another friend in Zlata, he tries to spend time with her as well, which decreases the time he could be spending with Zora. This change bothers Zora and she vents her frustrations to the other boys. (Held 278).

The attraction between Zlata and Branko is presented as mutual. During their second meeting, Zlata admits, “[i]ch habe mich auch vergeblich nach dir umgeschaut.” [...] Immerhin hat es mich interessiert, wohin der Bub verschwunden ist, den mein Vater und alle Polizisten von Senj wie eine Stecknadel suchen.” (254). Zlata's attraction to Branko can be explained as an attraction to “the other”, or “the unknown”. Just like Branko is attracted to her upper-class world, she is attracted to his proletarian ways. At the beginning of their friendship both children are depicted as lacking access to each other because of their different backgrounds. But with the development of their friendship they gain the possibility to understand each other's point of view. Zlata introduces Branko to new things and Zlata can better understand Branko's situation.

The following conversation typifies Zlata's interest in Branko:

“Wir waren”, begann Branko, aber plötzlich verstummte er. Er kannte das Mädchen ja gar nicht weiter. “Ihr wart”, setzte Zlata schon seinen Satz fort, “auf der Burg Nehajgrad, bis euch die Polizisten vertrieben haben. Ich weiß alles.” “Ja, und dann”, fuhr Branko fort, aber er stockte wieder, vielleicht wollte sie ihn nur ausfragen. Das Mädchen spürte, was Branko dachte. “Du mußt es mir nicht erzählen, wenn du nicht willst”, meinte sie, “aber das glaube mir, ich bin kein Verräter, und ich werde besonders dich nicht verraten. (254)

In this conversation, Zlata is depicted as a person, who firstly, takes enough interest in Branko to motivate her to try to find out more about him and, secondly she is characterized as an understanding person. Even though she would like to get some information from Branko about his well-being, she does not force him to say anything. She understands that he wants to be loyal to his friends. But at the same time she tells him that she is not a traitor and even if she were, she would never betray him. Additionally, this conversation reveals Branko's mistrust. While Zlata simply asks questions because she is interested in him, he withholds the information, unsure what to make of her interest. He cannot trust her because her father aims to capture 'Zoras Bande'. Sharing information with Zlata could mean the discovery of him and his friends. To protect them, Branko holds back all of the information. Again, Zlata and Branko are portrayed as two contrasting characters with different views of the situation.

This motif of Branko not wanting to reveal too much but still wanting to be Zlata's friend recurs throughout the book. In Branko, Held has created a character always torn between his friendship and loyalty to Zora and the boys and his attraction to Zlata. Two girls compete for his friendship, which results in conflicts. This tension can be seen in the fact that Zora "tolerates" rather than accepts Branko's friendship with Zlata. In Branko's absences, 'Zoras Bande' regularly wonders where he is. They always conclude that he has gone to Zlata. Zora and the boys cannot understand the friendship between Branko and Zlata and are always in fear. While the Zlata – Branko friendship is shown as a functioning one, it has negative side effects. Branko knows that others only tolerate his friendship with Zlata, and so he does not reveal much about himself or 'Zoras Bande'.

However, the conflict, resulting from Branko's and Zlata's friendship, is taken by Held into Zlata's immediate environment as well, which is displayed in another fight between “die Gymnasiasten” and Branko which Zlata witnesses.

Da warf Zlata ihren Schirm auf die Seite, schnellte in die Höhe, stieß Karaman und ihren Bruder zurück und sagte: “Ihr laßt den Buben in Ruhe.” Das Mädchen sagte es so eindeutig, und ihr Gesicht war dabei so ernst und zwingend, daß die Gymnasiasten einen Augenblick zurückwichen. [...] “Ich mische mich nicht in eure Händel”, antwortete das Mädchen genauso bestimmt, “aber der Bub hat mich besucht und steht unter meinem Schutz.” [...] “Wahrscheinlich liebt sie diesen Spitzbuben sogar.” (264)

In this dispute, Zlata sides openly with Branko even though that means she has to confront her brother and his friends. Branko is her friend and under her care and protection, at least temporarily. Just as Zora offers Branko protection from the residents of Senj, Zlata can partially protect Branko against “die Gymnasiasten.” She knows that she has that power and she puts it to use, which also shows how much she cares about him. However, Zlata's brother and his friends do not even 'tolerate' her friendship with Branko. They mock it and suggest that she is probably in love with him. Held demonstrates how difficult it is for children coming from different backgrounds to be friends. While Branko and Zlata like each other, neither 'Zoras Bande' nor Zlata's friends accepts their friendship.

The clash between these two groups leads to the final clash and dispute between Branko and Zlata. 'Zoras Bande' played a trick on Ivekovic, Zlata's father, to avenge their friend Gorian, the fisher. They replaced the biggest fish, which was supposed to be handed to Ivekovic during a ceremony on the market place, with a dead dog. Every member of 'Zoras Bande' was equally part of planning and acting out the trick. The

children think about avenging their friend Gorian, but they do not think about the consequences.

When she embarrasses her own father, Zlata herself feels embarrassed. She is part of the family and when everybody laughs at her father publically, they laugh at her as well. When Branko follows an upset and crying Zlata to her home, he finds a furious girl, her eyes full of hate. He does not recognize her when he sees her: “Eine Zlata, die wüten, schreien, schlagen konnte, und sie starrte ihm mit einem solchen Haß ins Gesicht, daß Branko am liebsten geflüchtet oder in die Erde gesunken wäre” (343).

Again, Held depicts the difference between Branko's and Zlata's social backgrounds. The boy is completely unable to grasp Zlata's hate, frustration and disappointment. As Branko is only twelve years old, he sees only the fun aspect of how the group avenged Gorian; he does not see its consequences for his friendship with Zlata. Zlata, at seventeen, does not consider the situation funny at all; all she can see is the embarrassment for her and her family. Zlata is at a developmental stage where she will think about the actions' consequences before acting them out. Branko, however, is yet still too young to do that.

Held shows Zlata's and Branko's friendship as one destined to fail. Zlata feels betrayed by her friend. During their friendship she trusted him and was ready to protect him against pain and hurt. He seems to repay her with embarrassment and frustration as he is not even able to understand her disappointment. The question arises why Held would have portrayed such a friendship at all. The way the friendship was depicted from the beginning, it was clear that it was destined to fail. Nobody was ready to accept the growing friendship between the girl and the boy. Zlata as well as Branko follow certain

conventions accepted in their social environments. As soon as they overstep the boundaries of those conventions, by trying to befriend each other, the two worlds collide. There are too many differences between them and there is not enough encouragement from either side for the children to pursue their friendship further. Held shows how the other characters try to do their best to break up the friendship between them. It seems that those conventions have gotten the better of Branko and Zlata. They part in dispute, unable to overcome their differences.

However, in the end, Held decides to turn things around again and shows that such a friendship, as shown between Branko and Zlata, can work out. At the end, when the citizens of Senj decide about the children's future and when Ivekovic's vote could send them to prison, Zlata asks her father to vote against imprisonment. As a consequence he abstains from voting and the children are free. Later on, Zlata gives a message for Branko to Gorian. He shall tell the boy that she is not upset anymore and she regrets telling on him.³¹

Held demonstrates that you only have to be willing to accept the differences between the two worlds yourself and then such a friendship can work out. Yet, the author goes only half way, because the friendship cannot continue as Zlata goes away to become a singer. Her departure can be viewed as a failure of the friendship to some extent but at least it did not come to a literally bad end. Zlata's apology satisfies both children. They parted in anger, but her apology restores the relationship.

³¹ "Sagen Sie Branko, daß ich ihm nicht mehr böse bin. Sagen Sie ihm auch, ich bereue es bereits, daß ich ihn verraten habe. Sagen Sie ihm außerdem, daß ich meinem Vater eben die Geschichte von den Gespenstern erzählt habe und daß ich in nur um eines bitte, er und die ganze Bande sollen das wie ein ewiges Geheimnis für sich behalten. Das wird sie weiterhin vor dem Zorn meines Vaters schützen." (375).

2.3 Same-Sex Groups of Friends

2.3.1 “Die Gymnasiasten”

Same-sex friend groups differ to some extent from cross-sex friend groups.

However, they also share some similarities like,

the same age, the same sex, the same size, the same level of intelligence, and the same degree of physical maturity. Many of the observed similarities between friends can be explained in part by the fact that children can make friends only with others with whom they have an opportunity to interact. Prevailing patterns, residential arrangement and school assignment dictate that these opportunities will be restricted in large measure to children who share demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as the values and attitudes that are associated with these backgrounds. [...] These resemblances breed friendship because they encourage interaction and facilitate social comparison. Moreover, the discovery that one resembles another child in a previously unknown way is sometimes the occasion for jubilation, because it demonstrates that one is not alone in one's tastes and views (Rubin 71).

This theory also applies to “die Gymnasiasten” even though readers lack much information about them. “Die Gymnasiasten” form a group of six to seven boys. They received their name from 'Zoras Bande.' Their ages or other obvious common traits, apart from their “demographic and socioeconomic background”, are not revealed either. However, they can definitely qualify as an example for “a collective entity, emphasizing loyalty and solidarity”. Even to a greater extent than 'Zoras Bande' the boys are never shown by themselves. Whenever they appear in the group, there are at least two boys together.³² Within the group, each member supports the other. This state of affairs supports Douvan's view that a boy needs a group “to support him in his quest for

³² When the rest of “die Gymnasiasten“ find out that two of their members are circled by Branko and Pavle, they show solidarity and loyalty to the group members by coming to their rescue.

autonomy”. Often boys want “a band of rebels with whom [they] can identify.” Within this group, a boy gains “the strength he needs for a stance against adult authority” (Douvan 201). Held seems to have been aware of this convention, because that is exactly how he describes the boys. A situation that has been analyzed in a previous section shall function as an example again. When Marculin and Skalec brag to the two girls of how they gave some boys from 'Zoras Bande' a thorough beating, they only feel strong and safe in the absence of any boys from Zora’s gang. When Branko and Pavle show themselves, the security is suddenly gone. The boys grow afraid and try to flee. Yet, they display a high self-assuredness when they are in the group and their opponents are in the minority. In these situations they feel strong and superior. Similar to his depiction of 'Zoras Bande', Held shows the boys' solidarity for each other, which evinces a strong bonding. The author sets up the same-sex group as a group of rebels in which every boy identifies with the other. Their common employment is the bullying³³ of 'Zoras Bande'. The boys gain their strength from oppressing and dominating the weaker members of 'Zoras Bande'. In this case, Held demonstrates that boys do not only use their strength “for a stance against adult authority” as Douvan says. Rather, they use it against a weaker party.

Another feature the author portrays in the boys' friendship is more negative. In contrast to 'Zoras Bande' they do not display a variety of traits. They are only

³³ “Olweus (1991) proposes an all-encompassing definition of bullying. It includes four criteria:

1. It is aggressive and intentionally harmful.
2. It is carried out repeatedly.
3. It occurs in a relationship where there is an imbalance of power.
4. It usually occurs with no provocation from the victim.” (qtd. in Harris 1-2).

All these criteria appear in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande*, thus the behavior of “die Gymnasiasten” can be called bullying.

characterized by their misbehavior towards Zora's friends. Whenever they appear in the book, they are in another fight. Their attempts to catch and imprison Zora and the boys dominate their lives. These attempts again contradict Douvan's claim that a group of boys tries to rebel against adult authority. In this special situation, the exact opposite is the case. "Die Gymnasiasten" conform to adult authority by trying to catch 'die Bande' by themselves. Considering this aspect it would be interesting to analyze the influence of adults on children's friendships³⁴.

Held's depiction of "die Gymnasiasten" shows that there are also other types of friendships. The same-sex friendship between "die Gymnasiasten" are motivated by aspects other than those that motivate the cross-sex friendships described previously. Physical dominance over Zora's group determines their internal group dynamics. Held uses the group of "die Gymnasiasten" as a narrative device to show the struggles of 'Zoras Bande'. They further complicate the gang members' lives since 'Zoras Bande' does not only have to deal with their own material hardships, but also with the hate of "die Gymnasiasten".

2.3.2 Duro and Branko

The relationship described by Held between Duro and Branko cannot really be called a friendship, but the specifics of this same-sex relationship still merit analysis. For Branko to be admitted to the group, Duro insists that he play the knife game. He explains this decision with the fact that he opposes any new member, not just Branko. However,

³⁴ However, even though this analysis would be interesting it exceeds the scope of this thesis.

insisting on this trial of courage is especially interesting considering that Duro 'forced' his way into the peer group. Held depicts in Duro an ambiguous character. Even though the boy he was accepted into the group by himself, he does not want to accept a new member although he also knows that Branko is all by himself.

Branko's and Duro's first meeting determines their relationship for the rest of the events. Duro displays his antipathy towards Branko from the beginning. When Branko is admitted into the group, everybody shakes his hand except Duro. Branko knows he has gained three new friends but also one enemy.³⁵ Duro and Branko are best described not as friends, but as "peers." Krappmann's definition of a peer shall be quoted again:

Ein Peer ist der als Interaktionspartner akzeptierte Gleichaltrige, mit dem das Kind sich in Anerkennung der jeweiligen Interessen prinzipiell zu einigen bereit ist. Verlangt wird eine gewisse "Soziabilität" [...] und zwar ohne das Bestreben, einander zu *dominieren*, und mit dem Vorsatz, grundlosen Streit zu unterlassen. (Krappmann 364)

Duro and Branko accept each other, but only because they must. Even though the boys belong to the same gang, they are never depicted as sharing the same interests. Their differences become obvious when Duro comes back after he stole two chickens from Gorian. When Branko finds out where he stole them from, he becomes furious and says that he does not want to have anything to do with it.³⁶ However, later on, Branko and Duro are shown as developing more and more the same interests as far as food. The longer they live together, the more Branko becomes like the rest of the boys.

³⁵ „[U]nd er wußte, er hatte heute drei neue Freunde, aber auch einen Feind gewonnen, nach der Sache mit dem Messer zu urteilen, sogar einen sehr gefährlichen.“ (66).

³⁶ „Ich [Branko] will nichts davon haben. Nichts. Von dem Huhn des alten Gorian esse ich nicht ein Stück.“ (87).

Another factor that determines the two boys' relationship is their mutual surveillance of each other. Krappmann says, “[w]ährend in der Familie Kontrolle und Unterstützung an Rollen gebunden sind, unterstützen und kontrollieren sich in der peer group alle gegenseitig. Das setzt voraus, daß die peers sich einer für alle in gleicher Weise gültigen Regel unterwerfen” (361). Duro, who was always responsible for surveillance to protect the entire group from discovery by Begovic, starts observing Branko after the boy meets Zlata.³⁷ Branko, in turn observes Duro, which the following excerpt shows:

Duro lachte. “Wo wird er sein. Er sitzt sicher noch bei seinem Fräulein.”[...] Duro lachte laut. “Er wird ihr etwas vorspielen.” [...] “Ich habe dort hinter dem Baum gestanden und Pavles Erzählung gehört”, und mit einem Blick auf Duro, “auch was der da gesagt hat.” Duro gab sich nicht so leicht geschlagen. “Es ist ganz gut”, meinte er grinsend, “wenn man einmal hört, was seine Freunde über einen denken.” “Ich wüßte nicht, daß du mein Freund bist, außerdem haben die Uskokken nie hinter dem Rücken ihrer Brüder schlecht voneinander gesprochen, und solche Schleicher wie du, die es doch getan haben, wurden gestäupt und zu allen Teufeln gejagt. (278).

The conflict in this conversation shows that the mutual surveillance drives an even greater wedge between the two boys. Branko tells Duro to his face that he does not consider him to be a friend because friends do not talk badly behind each other's back. One of the rules of “die Uskokken” is an example that supports Krappmann's claim that in a peer group all children submit to generally accepted rules. In describing this relationship, Held shows that it is possible for children to be part of the same group but not necessarily like each other or be friends.

³⁷ „Er war bei seinem Freund Ringelnatz. [...] Er hat nach einem Mädchen gefragt.“ (260).

Their mutual dislike lies in the discrepancy between trust and mistrust. Neither boy trusts the other, which leads to a disordered relationship that negatively impacts the entire group. This deleterious consequence can be seen because the other group members are often included in the arguments afterwards. Held depicts how two group member's disordered relationship can cause an imbalance in the entire group dynamic.

This mistrust and spying is rivalry on the part of both boys and its roots date to their first meeting. “*Konkurrenz* scheint unter befreundeten Jungen stärker ausgeprägt zu sein als unter Nichtfreunden” (Krappmann 365). Held disproves this claim, in the way he depicts the relationship of Duro and Branko. Their rivalry and hostility goes so far that Branko is not ready to save Duro from drowning when a squid attacks him. When Zora asks him to help Duro, he replies, “[n]ein, ihm helfe ich nicht. Der Schleicher ist mir sicher wieder nachgeschwommen.' [...] 'Nein', sagte Branko, der Duro seine Spioniererei nicht verzeihen konnte, noch einmal.” (308). Not only does he reply he will not help him but the text adds that “Branko hatte keine Lust”. While one child fights for his life, the other one does not feel like saving him. At this point, Branko's rivalry cannot simply be considered as rivalry anymore. It seems to have turned into hatred. Only that can explain his refusal to save another person's life. Held takes drastic measures to describe the hostility between those two boys.

When Zora yells and screams at Branko due to his improper behavior, he is so perplexed that he finally attempts to save Duro. In saving Duro, Branko risks his own life, but he somehow succeeds in saving them both. Duro wants to reward Branko with a

gift.³⁸ While Branko admits that he would not have saved him if it was not for Zora, Gorian's comment for Duro is: "Es wird manchmal Schlechtes mit Gutem vergolten." (313). The near-drowning experience might be seen as a warning for both boys. For the group to function as a genuine group of friends, it is important that everyone trust everyone else. Talking and acting behind each other's back only leads to complications and disruptions.

³⁸ "Duro fate in seine Tasche und brachte eine silberne Kette mit einem Kreuz heraus. "Ich wollte es eigentlich Zora schenken. Nun sollst du es haben." Branko winkte ab. "Ich will es nicht. Denn wenn Zora es nicht verlangt htte, htt ich dich bestimmt nicht aus dem Wasser geholt." (314).

3. Peter Pan

In contrast to *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* lacks any single group of friends. Rather, there seem to be three groups plus one lonely child, Peter. Although Peter leads the Lost Boys, he nonetheless often goes off by himself. Therefore, this chapter will be divided into three parts.

The first section focuses on Peter Pan, since he is the most important character and it was him who brought the two groups, Wendy and her brothers and the Lost Boys together. For this part, as well as for the second part, which analyzes the friendship between the Lost Boys and Peter Pan I use the criterion of reciprocity to analyze the friendships between the boys. Additionally, I analyze and interpret the group dynamics before Wendy's arrival.

The third section stresses the cross-sex friendships between Wendy and the Lost Boys, followed by an analysis of the relationship between Wendy and Peter. While the criterion of reciprocity can be used to analyze the previously named friendships, a different set of criteria needs to be taken into consideration when looking at Wendy and Peter Pan. I will also determine whether the friendship between Peter and Wendy may be called a friendship or whether it should be considered a relationship.

3.1 Same-Sex Friendships

In this section of Chapter 3 I focus on describing and analyzing the character of Peter Pan and his role as a leader. I also seek an answer to the question to what extent the

Lost Boys and Peter Pan can be called a group of friends or a peer group. Even though Barrie presents Peter and the as a group of children who spend their time together and live together it still needs to be established whether they can be called friends and if so why. The most important criterion necessary to answer this question is the feature of reciprocity in friendships. As has been shown in chapter 2 “[m]ost people agree that a crucial feature of friendship is that it is a reciprocal relationship between two people with both affirming it” (Dunn 2). Reciprocity is therefore important because it distinguishes a child's desire from being liked and accepted from one whose desire is not returned. As long as a child is not liked and accepted by the other one, their relationship cannot be called friendship. The friendship between Peter Pan and the Lost Boys and the Darling children shall be tested according to this feature. The feature of companionship, which was discussed in the chapter on Zora and her friends will not be included in this analysis because the characters in *Peter Pan* are not brought together to keep each other company. In addition, the feature of acceptance, which played an important part for Zora and her friends, cannot really be analyzed here either: The Lost Boys accept all the Darling children and even elevate Wendy to their “mother.” This move takes their acceptance a step further than in a friendship.

3.1.1 Peter Pan

Peter Pan, referred to as a boy who does not want to grow up, is a fascinating character, who has received considerable attention in literary criticism. However, in this

thesis the focus will not be laid on Peter Pan's wish of not wanting to grow up but rather on his role as a leader of the Lost Boys.

Peter Pan ran away from home, because he did not want to grow up. He has lived in Neverland ever since, where he is the leader of the Lost Boys, a group of boys who fell “out of their perambulators when the nurse [was] looking the other way.” Barrie further explains: “If they are not claimed in seven days they are sent far away to the Neverland to defray expense” (30)³⁹. In the entire book, Wendy is the only female character (not counting Tinker Bell or Tiger Lily). Peter explains to Wendy why there are not any girls in Neverland by pointing out that girls “are much too clever to fall out of their prams.” (30). This distinction is the first one Barrie makes between boys and girls: He divides them based on their gender into categories that he correlates with their level of intelligence. In *Peter Pan*, Barrie generally distinguishes quite clearly between boys and girls and their social roles. I will focus on this division later in this chapter, but first, I will concentrate on Peter and the Lost Boys.

Peter calls himself the “captain” which equates to “leader.” He claims the leadership role all for himself, leaving everybody else in a lower position in this hierarchy. In the case of Peter Pan and the Lost Boys, the Lost Boys voluntarily submit to Peter's leadership. It is interesting to note, as the narrator explains, that the number of the Lost Boys constantly changes: “The boys on the island vary, of course, in numbers, according as they get killed and so on; and when they seem to be growing up, which is against the rules, Peter thins them out [...]” (49). One reason none of the other boys can be leaders of the group is simply that none stays long enough to take over the leadership.

³⁹ All quotes are taken from Barrie, J.M.: *Peter Pan*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2005.

The only permanent member is Peter. He is described as follows: “[A] lovely boy, clad in skeleton leaves and the juices that ooze out of trees, but the most entrancing thing about him was that he had all his first teeth” (15). Although the attribute of still having his baby teeth implies that Peter cannot harm anybody, Peter’s features and attitudes make him appear conceited: “It is humiliating to have to confess that this conceit of Peter was one of his most fascinating qualities. To put it with brutal frankness, there never was a cockier boy.” (27). Even though the narrator marks Peter’s cockiness as a negative character trait, it is a helpful quality for him as a leader as it helps him to take initiative.

In their article, “Leadership: Do Traits Matter?” Kirkpatrick and Locke describe different the qualities a successful leader.⁴⁰ The authors argue that certain traits or characteristics lead to effective leadership:

[These] key leader traits include: drive (a broad term which includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative), leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself), honesty, integrity, self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability), cognitive ability, and knowledge of the business. (Kirkpatrick & Locke 48)

Yet, according to Kirkpatrick and Locke's research, there is less clear evidence for traits such as charisma, creativity and flexibility (56). Peter also displays certain characteristics that Kirkpatrick and Locke describe. Peter's cockiness, for example, can be substituted with self-confidence. When the children first arrive in Neverland, Peter displays his self-confidence when asks Wendy, John and Michael if they would like to witness an adventure. By “adventure” Peter means killing a pirate who is asleep. While John is

⁴⁰ Kirkpatrick and Locke's article is written for managers of companies. It surveys leadership qualities that are apparent in both Zora and Peter, the characters analyzed in this thesis who assume leadership roles.

described as sheepish, because he is afraid the pirate will wake up, Peter exclaims: “You don't think I would kill him while he was sleeping! I would wake him first, and then kill him. That's the way I always do.” (45). This situation clearly displays Peter's self-confidence. He does not show fear of pirates and even claims with certainty that he could kill the pirate were he awake. Such self-confidence helps him to lead the Lost Boys.

Peter is also described as one who takes initiative. When it comes to making decisions, he never hesitates. At the beginning of the story, he decides to take Wendy with him to Neverland. He neutralizes her initial resistance by repeatedly confronting her with new reasons. He does not give in until she agrees to accompany him. Peter is presented as someone who knows how to persuade girls. It seems as if he has an omniscient knowledge about what would attract Wendy to Neverland and he names these things one after another. He knew that Wendy would be able to tuck in the boys at night or darn their clothes as well as being able to see mermaids (32). Peter is described as a boy who, once he has set his mind on doing something, he will take as much initiative as needed in order to achieve his goal. According to Kirkpatrick and Locke's article, Peter's drive for power and success typifies a “personalized power motive.” “A leader with a personalized power motive seeks power as an end in itself. These individuals have little self control, are often impulsive, and focus on collecting symbols of personal prestige.” (Kirkpatrick & Locke 53). Thus, Peter's drive to lead and to take initiative is not always depicted as benefiting the common good. Leaders with a socialized power motive, “exercise power more for the benefit of the whole organization and are less likely to use it for manipulation” because they are emotionally more mature (53). Peter, however, uses his power and knowledge to manipulate others more for his own good than theirs. When

he tries to convince Wendy to go with him to Neverland, the reasons he names focus primarily on how Wendy's coming to Neverland will better his life (erg. darning clothes). He scarcely mentions how it would enrich her own life. Coats, who concentrates in her essay on the relationship between Hook and Peter in the context of child-hating in the Victorian period:

In fact, insofar as Peter seems to have no lack, he is a difficult character to love. Wendy must convince herself that he is sincere in wanting a mother, but that becomes harder fantasy for her to sustain as she comes to spend more time with him, indeed Barrie lets the reader know quite clearly that Peter is simply playing on Wendy's desire to be his mother in order to keep her on as a chronicler of his exploits. (8)

It is true that Peter achieves his goals, which explains why he is the leader of the Lost Boys. However, it also has to be taken into account that as soon as Wendy sets foot in Neverland, Peter shares his leadership role with Wendy. In this dual leadership responsibilities are distributed according to traditional gender roles. The father, here Peter Pan, is the family's ultimate authority, while the mother, namely Wendy, makes decisions about the domestic sphere. Both Peter and Wendy possess the leadership qualities named above, which help them arrive at decisions when necessary.

3.1.2 Peter Pan and the Lost Boys – a Group of Friends?

The Lost Boys consists of six boys: Tootles, Slightly, Nibs, Curly and the unnamed twins. With Peter as their leader, they number seven altogether. But even though the boys build a group together, can one characterize the relationship between Peter Pan and the Lost Boys as a friendship?

The following paragraph is important for interpreting how the Lost Boys are depicted and therefore perceived:

Tootles [is] not the least brave but the most unfortunate of all that gallant band. He had been in fewer adventures than any of them, because the big things constantly happened just when he had stepped round the corner; all would be quiet, he would take the opportunity of going off to gather a few sticks for firewood, and then when he returned the others would be sweeping up the blood. This ill-luck had given a gentle melancholy to his countenance, but instead of souring his nature had sweetened it, so that he was quite the humblest of the boys. [...] Next comes Nibs, the gay and debonair, followed by Slightly, who cuts whistles out of the trees and dances ecstatically to his own tunes. Slightly is the most conceited of the boys. He thinks he remembers the days before he was lost, with their manners and customs, and this has given his nose an offensive tilt. Curly is fourth; he is a pickle, and so often has he had to deliver up his person when Peter said sternly, “Stand forth the one who did this thing,” that now at the command he stands forth automatically whether he had done it or no. Last come the Twins, who cannot be described because we should be sure to be describing the wrong one. Peter never quite knew what twins were, and his band were not allowed to know anything he did not know, so these two were always vague about themselves, and did their best to give satisfaction by keeping close together in an apologetic sort of way. (50)

The description above shows that each boy has a distinct character trait. However, within the story, the boys are not shown as assuming certain roles within the group. It is only from the short passage above that the reader finds out about the differences among them. In situations where they are shown as a group, each boy behaves similarly. However, now and then, one of them tries to get more attention than the others, for example Tootles, who tries to kill Wendy to please Peter (60) and – during their make-believe tea – tries to tell a joke that none of the others want to listen to.

In her essay “The earliest friendships” child care researcher Carollee Howes explains how early friendships develop. She argues that one important feature of children who seek friends is their need for companions. As has been pointed out in the first

chapter, “[c]ompanionship is operationalized most frequently as spending time together and as having fun together, that is as social preference or proximity” (Howes 70). Proximity means seeking out particular partners for interaction. However, the relationships between the Lost Boys are described as totally different. The boys do not seek each other, but are sent to Neverland, where they – by default – become part of the Lost Boys. Yet, even then, none is guaranteed a permanent place within the group (50).

The relationship between Peter Pan and the Lost Boys is not described as a friendship. Neither do any of the boys decide to become a member of this group of friends nor does Peter treat all members equally. In his article “Sozialisation in der Gruppe der Gleichaltrigen,” Krappmann cites the work of Youniss on children's peer groups and their contribution to socialization. Youniss explains the interaction between children through the fact that they have a relationship of equality and reciprocity (355). According to Youniss, children do not let themselves be dictated by an authority within the group. Rather, they find solutions together. However, this explanation does not apply to the Lost Boys' relationship with Peter Pan. Even though Peter is described as a member of the group, he has more authority than any of the other boys. Peter Pan sets the rules and expects the boys to submit to them. Any violation of those rules gives Peter the chance to excommunicate the “offender” from the group. The best illustration of these group dynamics occurs when Tinker Bell, Peter's fairy, tells the boys that Peter supposedly had ordered them “to shoot Wendy.” Tootles – without questioning any of this – shoots her. At this point the narrator explains that “[i]t was not their nature to question when Peter ordered ‘Let us do what Peter wishes,’ cried the simple boys.” (59). Here, the boys are described as “simple,” which implies that they give no thought to

morality. In the given situation it is more important to them to please Peter. That the boys uncritically submit to Peter's will shows, on the one hand, how they respect him, but on the other, it also reveals their fear of him. When Tootles exclaims, "I have shot the Wendy. Peter will be so pleased with me" (59), he does not know that Tinker Bell lied. Peter never expressed any such wish. When Tootles finds out that Tinker Bell lied, he cries, "I am so afraid of Peter" (60). When Peter discovers Tootle's mistake he tries to punish him by killing him. Here Peter's behavior reveals his despotic character.

Another example illustrates that Peter is depicted as someone who controls discourse. He dictates who can speak and what can be said: "It was only in Peter's absence that they could speak of mothers, the subject being forbidden by him as silly" (54). The way the boys are described, they can never be as independent as Peter. The book suggests a clear hierarchy with Peter at the top and the boys at the bottom.

The relationship is one of total imbalance and therefore cannot be called a friendship. Equality and reciprocity are non-existent, and companionship is limited to the Lost Boys. Peter is rather displayed as a lonely figure who always searches for adventures and occasionally even forgets about the others. "Indeed, sometimes when he returned he did not remember them, at least not well" (40). Only after Wendy reminds him who they are does Peter seem able to remember.

While the relationship between Peter Pan and the Lost Boys may not be a friendship, the question remains whether it is a peer relationship.

Krappmann's definition of a peer group and peer group interactions shall function as a basis in determining whether the Lost Boys and Peter are a peer group. A peer "ist nicht nur der gleichaltrige Gefährte, sondern [meint auch] *Gleichheit* der Stellung im

Verhältnis zueinander” (qtd. in Krappmann 364). Krappmann builds upon Hartup's definition:

Ein Peer ist der als Interaktionspartner akzeptierte Gleichaltrige, mit dem das Kind sich in Anerkennung der jeweiligen Interessen prinzipiell zu einigen bereit ist. Verlangt wird eine gewisse „Soziabilität“, also die Disposition, Handlungspläne miteinander abzustimmen, und zwar ohne das Streben, einander zu *dominieren*, und mit dem Vorsatz, grundlosen Streit zu unterlassen.” (Krappmann 364)

Krappmann describes peers as children of the same age groups who accept others as equals. Additionally, they cooperate and avoid unnecessary arguments. No single member should dominate another. If we apply this definition to Barrie's description of Peter Pan and the Lost Boys, the label of a peer group still does not apply because Peter definitely dominates the other boys.

Yet in some situations, the children act as a group. In those situations, some sort of bond unifies the boys as a group. In one example, the Lost Boys build a house for Wendy when she is injured. The scene in which the boys build the house is described as harmonious. “They gurgled with joy at this, for by the greatest good luck the branches they had brought were sticky with red sap, and all the ground was carpeted with moss. As they rattled up the little house they broke into song themselves” (65). The Lost Boys then start to sing their own song about the house they are building. Here, they are depicted as a group that jointly works towards a common goal.

Even though Peter is a despot, he nonetheless seems to care for the Lost Boys, the last scene on Neverland shows. When Hook and his pirates abduct the Lost Boys, Wendy and her brothers, Peter sets out to their rescue. Interestingly enough, it is Wendy—not the Lost Boys—who motivates Peter to go out on this mission. While at first sight this

motivation might appear as a sign of emotional attachment to the Lost Boys I agree with Coats who claims that it is not the saving of a human life that motivates Peter:

Surely, Peter saves the lives of Wendy, John, and Michael, as well as Tink, Tiger Lily, and the Lost Boys, on regular occasions. But as Barrie's narrator tells us, "you felt it was his cleverness that interested him and not the saving of human life" (37). So far is he from the desire to possess "the power to feel with others" that he is quite indifferent to the discomfort of the others who cannot, with him, pretend that they are full from an imaginary meal, nor does he have any inkling as to what Tink or Wendy wants from him in terms of affection." (14-15)

Yet, some of Peter's despotic traits resonate positively among the children. "He had taught the children something of the forest lore [...] and knew that in their dire hour they were not likely to forget it. Slightly, if he had an opportunity, would blaze the trees, for instance, Curly would drop seeds, and Wendy would leave her handkerchief at some important place." (119). Peter is well aware that he knows more about the world and its dangers than do the Lost Boys. Therefore, he prepares them for situations, as when he teaches them to mark their paths. The description of this character trait implies that even though he is often cocky and careless, Peter recognizes his position as a leader and his responsibility towards the other children. Yet, in his actions towards the children, his concern about his responsibilities towards the Lost Boys seems minimal. Peter shows another lack of responsibility in the way he provides food for the Lost Boys. He and the children often pretend to have dinner, rather than really eat (64). And when he actually provides food, he does so in an odd manner:

His way was to pursue birds who had food in their mouths suitable for humans and snatch it from them; then the birds would follow and snatch it back; and they would all go chasing each other gaily for miles, parting at last with mutual expressions of good-will. But Wendy noticed with gentle

concern that Peter did not seem to know that this was rather an odd way of getting your bread and butter, nor even that there are other ways. (38)

Peter's way of getting food can be considered as a part of pretend play. The boys often engage in pretend play, for example, when Slightly pretends to be a doctor who will cure the injured Wendy. However, the way Peter is portrayed, it is never quite sure if he knows whether something is pretend play or not. "The difference between him and the other boys at such a time was that they knew it was make-believe; while to him make-believe and true were exactly the same thing. This sometimes troubled them, as when they had to make-believe that they had had their dinners." (64). Roth, whose essay "Babes in Boy-Land" focuses on how Barrie's female characters display alternating visions of girls as "innocent" and "worldly," writes,

[t]hroughout the story, the narrator reminds readers that Peter is often unable to distinguish make-believe from reality. One role is just as real as the other. The lines between childhood and adulthood blur completely, and he [Peter] is both father to the boys and "devoted son". He is completely polymorphous, while the girl figures remain incarnations of two extremes between which Barrie constantly negotiates Peter's paradoxical boy/man image (63).

Engaging in pretend play is a feature of friendship and peer group relations. Pretend play is a form of socializing in which one child reacts to another child. Children set up rules to which they will have to submit as a consequence. In their pretend play, children develop the competence to coordinate actions that occur in the pretend play. Krappmann explains:

Das zentrale sozialisatorische Objekt ist das *Spiel* der Kinder, zunächst in der Form des *play*, in dem das Kind auf konkrete Gegenüber reagiert, dann in der Form des *game*, das verlangt, sich in ein Regelsystem einzufügen. Die Gruppe der Spielenden ist somit der soziale Ort sozialisatorischer Erfahrung, die die *Kompetenz*, Handlungen zu koordinieren, über zwei Stadien des Spielens vorantreibt. (Krappmann 360).

Although Barrie portrays play as a space of socialization, he also shows its dangers. While some children can distinguish between make-believe and reality, others might lose this ability. Peter, for instance, has just such difficulties. To him, make-believe and reality are interchangeable. Peter is more or less portrayed as a content character who wants to have fun, while the other Lost Boys are dissatisfied with their lives.

The only activity the Lost Boys engage in together is fighting with other groups, such as the pirates or Indians. In these fights, they display their group cohesion. The Lost Boys' behavior can be explained due to “the same age, the same sex, the same size, the same level of intelligence, and the same degree of physical maturity” (Rubin 71).

It can be concluded that the Lost Boys and Peter comprise neither a friendship nor a peer group. Even though Barrie ascribed the characters some features that can be found in both types of relationships, the Lost Boys cannot accurately be called friends. It is more appropriate to view the boys as a group of children that simply spends their time together temporarily. An indication for this is the absence of an aspect of time during which the Lost Boys and Peter Pan developed their friendship. In her book *Freundschaften im Jugendalter*, social scientist Petra Kolip deals with the question in what way friendships contribute to problem solving during adolescence. She cites Auhagen, who defines for friendship a time dimension, saying that friendship includes an aspect in the past and one in the future (qtd. in Kolip 71). In *Peter Pan*, the narrator clearly points out that the boys are secluded from the group as soon as they develop negative attitudes that Peter does not approve of. Therefore, this time dimension is not

visible in the story. This dynamic is, again, another indication that Peter and the Lost Boys cannot really be characterized as a group of friends.

3.2 Cross-Sex Friendships

This section deals with the various cross-sex friendships in *Peter Pan*. However, before these friendships can be analyzed, the gender roles that Wendy and Peter assume throughout the text must be considered. The description and perception of Wendy in particular influences the cross-sex relationships. One cross-sex friendship described in the book is the relationship between Wendy and the Lost Boys. In this friendship, Wendy's importance for her own brothers can be included because by the way Wendy is depicted her brothers seem to see her the same way the Lost Boys do.

As Barrie spends lengthy amounts of time describing the relationship of Peter and Wendy, this second cross-sex friendship also demands analysis. It is necessary to establish whether that relationship can be called a friendship or whether it is more.

3.2.1 Gender Roles: Wendy Darling and Peter Pan

Wendy Darling is the oldest of three children, who is “always glad to be of service” (20). Even though her age is never given explicitly, from the way she is depicted, she must be between ten and twelve years old. Wendy's readiness to help others supports this view. Researchers on child development confirm that children in their early adolescence start to view situations from another child's point of view (c.f. Erwin, Dunn,

Rizzo). They can imagine themselves in another person's situation. This ability plays an important factor in friendships, as Krappmann explains. “Als ein wichtiges Korrelat gelingender Interaktion wird die Fähigkeit zum Perspektivenwechsel betrachtet [...]” (Krappmann 368). According to Erwin “[f]emales have a greater tendency to imagine themselves in the other's place” (1993, 171). Wendy displays such traits when she first meets Peter and he tells her how the boys live in Neverland. It is difficult for Wendy to imagine that the boys can live all by themselves without a female, here meaning a mother-figure, who takes care of them. For this reason, she is very receptive to Peter's pleas to go to Neverland with him, where she can take care of the boys. Wendy is described as a child with extreme 'feminine' traits. She never engages in any 'masculine' actions. To understand what is meant by 'masculine' and 'feminine' traits I again refer to Judith Butler's research about gender identity. Butler claims that sex is biologically given, meaning a person's sex can be either female or male. However, no matter what “biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence, gender is neither the casual result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex” (Butler 8). Whether a person's sex is female or male does not determine that his or her actions have to follow the biologically given sex. Rather, people behave according to their biological sex because that behavior is culturally expected from them. However, “gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way” (9). Therefore, “men” do not necessarily have to accrue to the bodies of males or that “women” will interpret only female bodies (9). Butler therefore defines the body of a person as a “passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed” (12). She continues to explain that the body “is

figured as a mere *instrument* or *medium* for which a set of cultural meanings are only externally related” (Butler 12).

Before the work of Butler and others, gender identity was generally considered as fixed through cultural conventions. However, the formation of gender identity starts with conception. Current research in gender studies recognizes that the concrete behavior of individuals is a consequence of both socially enforced rules and values, and individual disposition, whether genetic, unconscious, or conscious. A person's gender role is thus composed of several elements and can be expressed through clothing, behavior, choice of work, personal relationships and other factors.

When Peter Pan was published, the general understanding of men's and women's societal roles differed greatly from what it is today. The general belief at that time included the perception that women were responsible for the household and the education of children. A man's preoccupation was to support his family by pursuing a profession that would generate income. Additionally, men, as the head of the family, were considered as ultimate authority in decision making (Parsons⁴¹ 318).

When Barrie created Wendy's character, he bought into traditional gender roles: Wendy is woken up by Peter's crying because the boy cannot re-attach his shadow to his body. When Peter explains that he tried to soap it back on, Wendy smiles and thinks: “How exactly like a boy!” She then exclaims “[i]t must be sewn on,” and immediately gets out her container for needles and threads. In many situations Wendy's traits can be associated with what traditionally was considered 'feminine', but in this scene, this

⁴¹ In his book *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process* (1995), Talcott Parsons developed a model of the nuclear family that consists of mother, father, daughter and son. His model compares a strictly traditional view of gender roles to a more liberal view. The type of nuclear family Talcott describes in his book is the same type of family that Wendy sees in her parents and wants to set up in Neverland.

characterization becomes most obvious. These two sentences tell a lot about the perception of male and female children in *Peter Pan*. Not only does Wendy – the girl – know how to solve the problem but she is also equipped with the necessary instruments. Barrie's description of the girl continues like this, e.g. Wendy makes supper for the Lost Boys, sews or darns. Throughout the story Wendy displays only “girlish” behavior.

According to Erwin, girls “are encouraged to show more dependency, affectionate behaviour, and expression of tender emotions” (1993, 156), which is called nurturing by the Erwin. Wendy is described as extremely nurturing when she comes to Neverland. But even before she arrives, she openly displays her desire to care for the boys. When Peter tells her that she could care for them all in Neverland, Wendy's arms go out to him and she exclaims: “Of course it's awfully fascinating!” (32). When she then arrives in Neverland, Wendy almost immediately takes over all the traditionally female activities (e.g. housekeeping, cleaning, cooking) for the boys. The boys ask her to be their mother and even though Wendy says that she is only a little girl and therefore does not have a lot of experience, they insist: “What we need is just a nice motherly person.’ (68) they say, to which she replies affirmingly: ‘you see I feel that is exactly what I am.’” She then continues: “Come on at once you naughty children; I am sure your feet are damp. And before I put you to bed I have just time to finish the story of Cinderella” (68). In his research, Erwin mentions a study by McGrew (1972) who gives an account on what it means to be a nurturant girl. In McGrew's studies, girls were more likely to attend to new children than were boys. “Several showed maternal attentiveness and verbal and non-verbal comforting, often in response to the newcomers' specifically expressed fears.” (Erwin 1993, 160). Wendy is shown as such a girl too. In one of the last scenes in

Neverland, when Captain Hook captures the Lost Boys and Wendy, Wendy comforts the boys even though she is afraid herself. Although still very young, she recognizes the boys' needs of the boys and acts accordingly. Her knowledge about appropriate behavior comes from watching and mimicking her mother. Yet, Fox, who “posits Peter as a successful aesthete, living in the moment, continually recreating himself in order to defeat creative stagnation” (White & Tarr xxii), correctly points out in his essay “The Time of His Life: Peter Pan and the Decadent Nineties” that although Barrie shows Wendy as the one character with all the answers, she does not really belong anywhere.

It is worth noting, however, that Wendy is described as spending the major portion of her time in the home underground, domestically harried (although thoroughly enjoying the role) with darning, washing, and cleaning. Her place in Neverland, as with her role as mother, is performed in liminal spaces, neither a full party to Peter's adventures nor disbarred from them as an “adult” nurturing a family” (Fox 26).

When Barrie introduces the children, he presents Wendy and John Darling as playing family in pretend play (18). Dunn explains that in

children's enthusiasm for pretend play narratives with their close friends we see their eagerness to explore and understand the social world. And it is particularly interesting that experimental studies have now provided evidence for the significance of narratives in children's understanding of other minds. (28)

Barrie keeps to the culturally accepted gender boundaries of his time in his description of Peter Pan: “Peter kept watch outside with drawn sword, for the pirates could be heard carousing far away and the wolves were on the prowl.” (68). While Wendy is inside taking care of the Lost Boys, Peter is outside protecting them from dangers. Additionally, Peter engages in all kinds of behavior that was considered

'masculine' behavior. For example, one description of him reads: "Where all this time was Peter? He was seeking bigger game. The others were all brave boys, and they must not be blamed for backing from the pirate captain" (84). Peter is described as a brave boy who seeks to fight and intends to kill Hook, the captain of the pirates in Neverland. The way Peter interacts with the Indians underscores his authority. In this context Barrie's narrator explains: "Always when he said, "Peter Pan has spoken," it meant that they must now shut up, and they accepted it humbly in that spirit; but they were by no means so respectful to the other boys, whom they looked upon as just ordinary braves" (91). Peter is described as a person who is respected by others.

Barrie replicated the differences between boys and girls that were culturally accepted and expected at this time.

3.2.2 Wendy and the Lost Boys

As described in section 3.1.2, the Lost Boys are a group of children led by Peter Pan. Because the children are only boys, they seem to engage only in 'masculine' adventures, which include fighting pirates and Indians. When Peter first meets Wendy, he tells her that he comes "to the nursery window not to see her but listen to the stories." He adds, "[y]ou see I don't know any stories. None of the Lost Boys know any stories." (31). These few sentences show that the group dynamics among the Lost Boys differ from the group dynamics in a mixed group. Telling short stories is attributed to girls, while engaging in adventures is attributed to boys. This gendering implies that the introduction of a girl into a group made up exclusively of boys will change the group dynamics.

Barrie shows as much in Wendy's stay with the Lost Boys: Peter takes Wendy to Neverland for her housekeeping skills, and Wendy readily submits to her new role as a "mother." The Lost Boys then build a house for "the Wendy lady." She becomes their "mother" and treats the boys as her children (she even goes as far as to call them that) and the boys call Wendy their mother.⁴² At a late point in the story, even Hook calls the girl the boys' mother: "Bring up their mother" (124).

Wendy sets forth children rules for the children, which they follow: "[S]he simply would not have them grabbing things, and then excusing themselves by saying that Tootles had pushed their elbow. There was a fixed rule that they must never hit back at meals, but should refer the matter of dispute to [her] by raising the right arm politely and saying, 'I complain of so-and-so [...]' (92). With Wendy as a "mother," Peter as a "father" and the Lost Boys as children, the family seems complete. The following dialogue shows that Peter accepts this new role as a "father": "'Ah, old lady,' Peter said aside to Wendy, warming himself by the fire and looking down at her as she sat turning a heel, 'there is nothing more pleasant of an evening for you and me when the day's toil is over than to rest by the fire with the little ones near by'" (95). Peter himself describes his situation with Wendy and the Lost Boys as a family and seems to enjoy it.

Barrie changed the make-up of the entire group by introducing a girl. Even though Wendy joined the group with her brothers, John and Michael, they do not play an

⁴² In her article "Babes in Boy-Land: J. M. Barrie and the Edwardian Girl" Roth describes Wendy's transformation as a fall from death into life: "[t]hus, as the boys build around her, Wendy is transformed into a wife and mother figure, and as she passes from death back into life, she mimics Carroll's Alice by recovering from her fantastical fall to find herself a young woman." (59). Roth reads Wendy's fall from the sky to the earth as a fall from death back into life that also transforms the girl into a young mother.

important role. They adjust very quickly to the behavior of the Lost Boys.⁴³ Even before the boys have the idea of adopting Wendy as their mother, Michael says: “John, [...] let us wake her and get her to make supper for us” (63). As Wendy continues to treat her own brothers as her children just like the Lost Boys, they become part of the group too. Erwin explains in his book *Friendship and Peer Relations in Children* that “[c]hildren that have been caretakers of very young children also behaved in a more nurturant way to peers more often. Girls tended to be given such responsibility, perhaps as a preparation for their later adult roles” (173-4). Barrie describes this state of affairs in Wendy's behavior. She already took care of her brothers before coming to Neverland, and she now projects her nurturing behavior on the Lost Boys.

The introduction of Wendy and her brothers into the group of the Lost Boys is a form of reciprocity. Both groups, Wendy and her brothers on the one hand, and the Lost Boys on the other, voluntarily accept each other. However, instead of presenting this new constellation as a bigger group of friends, the narrator turns the entire group into a “family”, whose members, namely the children, constantly engage in pretend play to sustain the idea of being a “family” by, for example, engaging in domestic rituals such as drinking make-believe tea.

Problems associated with pretend play have already been discussed previously (60-61): The Lost Boys must pretend to have supper when indeed they have not and remain hungry. This is a first indication that pretend play can become dangerous. The conversation between Peter and Wendy, which follows a previous discussion positions

⁴³ Coats supports the claim that not a lot of the boys' behavior changes, least of all Peter: “[w]hen John and Michael first come to the island, Peter makes great sport of sitting around and doing nothing, which is what good little Victorian boys seemed to do all day. He, rather anxiously, plays at being their father, but he eventually despises that role as well” (18).

Peter Pan in the context of pretend play: “I was just thinking,’ he said, a little scared. ‘It is only make-believe, isn’t it, that I am their father?’ [...] ‘You see,’ he continued apologetically, ‘it would make me seem so old to be their real father.’” (95).

He only plays at being their father but does not really want to be a real father. With the children's group (the Lost Boys and Wendy), Barrie describes rather the existing patterns of a family of his time rather than a real group of friends. “Both Wendy and Peter seem to be adult figures here. Wendy's brothers are now her sons and Peter is her husband.” However, when Wendy demands to know Peter's feelings for her, “Peter becomes a child again, leaving Wendy alone in her parental role” (Roth 63) as he replies that his feelings for her are “[t]hose of a devoted son [...]” (Barrie 95). Peter then says: “‘You are so queer,’ he said, frankly puzzled, ‘and Tiger Lily is just the same. There is something she wants to be to me, but she says it is not my mother’” (95).

Barrie confronts his readers with the consequences of pretend play in yet another situation: After Wendy and her brothers have left Neverland, Michael asks his sister: “Then are you not really our mother, Wendy?” [...] “Oh dear!” exclaimed Wendy, with her first real twinge of remorse, “it was quite time we came back” (146).

While reality and make-believe are interchangeable for Peter, for Michael pretend play has consequences: Since he is still very young and has spent some time in Neverland it becomes more and more difficult for him to distinguish between reality and pretense. Michael started to believe that Wendy really was his mother. While John and Wendy know that they are engaging in pretend play⁴⁴ and that Wendy is really not the mother of

⁴⁴ The game of pretend play does not always work the same way for John and his younger brother as they cannot always fully differentiate between make-believe and reality. While John knows that he and

all the children, Barrie also shows the dangers of pretend play. It makes it difficult for children to distinguish between reality and pretense if they have been pretending for too long a time. Wendy's attempt to recall details about the world from which she and her brothers came also shows this difficulty. She writes down simple questions on a slate, and her brothers must answer them:

What did disturb her at times was that John remembered his parents vaguely only, as people he had once known, while Michael was quite willing to believe that she was really his mother. These things scared her a little, and nobly anxious to do her duty, she tried to fix the old life in their minds by setting them examination papers on it, as like as possible to the ones she used to do at school (71-72).

In these situations, Barrie again describes the character's attempts to cope with the situation into which they have been placed. Even though Wendy and her brothers like Neverland, Wendy at least does not want to forget about the home she came from.

Yet as Fox points out, Wendy's "family" with her "children" is not exactly portrayed as typically late-Victorian.⁴⁵

[I]f the role [Wendy's] is traditional, the family certainly is not. This is no picture of late-Victorian, nor of Edwardian, domestic bliss (neither is the family life of the Darlings in the adult world for that matter, happy though it might have originally been). And it cannot be overemphasized that Wendy is indulging in a performance and indulging Peter and his Lost Boys at the same time. Positioned in the time between childhood and

Wendy "make believe" at home, "the Lost Boys, Michael and John, assume the roles of Wendy's children [in Neverland]. Of course, they are already children, so the stretch of the imagination is lessened considerably." (Hsiao 162). The same applies to Peter. "Peter playing father to the Lost Boys has no effect on his maturation, or lack thereof, and when Wendy asks Peter, 'What are your exact feelings for me?'" Peter's reply, 'Those of a devoted son, Wendy' (95), is not strange as much as it is a sad awakening for Wendy about the nature of relationships." (Hsiao 162-63). While Wendy takes on responsibility and is shown as mature during her stay in Neverland, neither of the boys mature at all.

⁴⁵ In a typical Victorian family, the father was the head of the family and obeyed by all other members. The ideal Victorian mother would subscribe to the cult of True Womanhood, which consisted of "four cardinal virtues – piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity." Elaine Showalter describes the mother as a "Perfect Lady, an Angel in the House, contentedly submissive to men, but strong in her inner purity and religiosity, queen in her own realm of the Home" (14).

adulthood, Wendy constructs an identity which is distinctly her own in a momentary act of aesthetic self-definition. (26)

When Wendy assumes the mother-role in Neverland, it is only pretend play, a performance to the Lost Boys a sense of home. She is shown as loving and caring, and hence boys develop a “mother-child attachment”. By contrast, Peter is depicted as the father-figure who keeps watch of the house or goes on an adventure. He is not often inside the house, and thus the boys' attachment to Peter lessens during Wendy's stay.

Roth describes Wendy's role correctly by saying: [Peter] “removes her [Wendy] to a distant quasi-imperial setting that builds layers of conflict, both internal and external to the child. So Wendy is not only both daughter and mother but she is also civilized English middle-class daughter and mother of primitive island 'savages’” (57). Compared to the other two female characters, Tinker Bell and Tiger Lily, Wendy is innocent and childlike as far as sexuality is concerned. Yet,

she seems ladylike and knowing when she interacts with Peter and the boys. By juggling these two identities in one little girl, Barrie is able to further explore the subtle boundaries that balance child and adult, innocent and knowing, civilized and savage without collapsing them, and girls like Wendy are able to simultaneously embody and distinguish between the exotica and familiar territories prevalent in an era of imperial expansion and culture exchange” (Roth 57).

Another way to interpret Wendy's decision to stay in Neverland is to perceive it as an intrusion into an innocent and naïve group of boys: “As a “lady”, Wendy also intrudes into the game by interrupting the innocent, even naïve, homosociality of Neverland with a

more 'grown-up' English heterosexuality” (Roth 61).⁴⁶ Before Wendy arrived in Neverland, the Island was mainly inhabited by male characters. The only female characters in Neverland are Tiger Lily, the Indian princess, Tinker Bell, Peter's fairy and the mermaids. However, none of the Lost Boys have any relationship with these characters while the other female characters take a predominant interest in Peter Pan. Wendy is the female character the Lost Boys interact with because she takes an interest in them. They transform her into a mother-figure and this change underscores that the relationship between Wendy and the Lost Boys differs from a friendship between peers.

3.2.3 Peter Pan and Wendy – a Friendship?

This section determines if the tie between Peter Pan and Wendy Darling is a friendship or not. And, if they are not 'friends', do they then have a relationship?

Morse, who deals in her essay with the ambivalent position of wives and mothers in the nineteenth century, correctly points out that Wendy desires power:

While the role of mother holds strong attraction for Wendy, a desire for power has, from the beginning, been at the heart of Wendy's interest in Peter. In their first meeting, Wendy presents herself as the epitome of motherliness. In introducing herself, Wendy only calls upon the power of

⁴⁶ According to Roth the most striking example for this observation is Wendy's wish to exchange “kisses” with Peter who is unaware of what a kiss is or how it is exchanged. “Wendy is able to trick Peter into thinking that acorn buttons and thimbles are 'kisses', so he is able to exchange kisses with Wendy without being overtly romantic or adult-like. As the narrator explains, Wendy “said she would give him a kiss if he liked, but Peter did not know what she meant, and he held out his hand expectantly” (27). Wendy is surprised and proclaims, “Surely you know what a kiss is?” to which Peter replies, “I shall know when you give it to me” (27). Wendy gives him a thimble. Wendy is aware of what a kiss really involves, and Barrie reminds us that this knowledge “cheapens” the little girl: when Peter offers to give Wendy a kiss [s]he made herself rather cheap by inclining her face toward him, but he merely dropped an acorn button in her hand; so she slowly returned her face to where it had been before” (27-28) (Roth 61). Peter's ignorance of what a kiss is only demonstrates that the homosociality of Neverland has gone on too long.

one middle name, Angela, which conjures up all the domestic power of the “angel of the house,” but also her second middle name, Moira, a derivative of Mary, possessed of all the iconic power of the Virgin Mother. While Peter is deeply impressed, Wendy mistakes his motivation and attempts to emulate the sexual influence of wife over husband, making herself “rather cheap by inclining her face toward him” for a kiss (27). Peter responds by desexualizing the encounter and offering to return the thimble she has given him. Wendy, however, achieves a success in attaching Peter to herself that greatly outstrips the accomplishments of the other females. [...] For Wendy however, the promise of the thimble is not fulfilled. Instead, Peter continues his resistance to her sexual advances, stripping the power of sexuality from her role as mother (297-98).

While Barrie clearly points out that Wendy is attracted to Peter, he also shows that Peter does not understand her attraction. When Wendy insists on knowing why Peter comes to the nursery window, “she was just slightly disappointed when he admitted that he came to the nursery window not to see her but to listen to the stories” (31). She had much rather seen him come because of her instead of the stories. Aboud says that “[p]eople select friends who are similar to themselves” (88). Related research that focuses on reciprocity as key feature is restricted to “the similarity-attraction hypothesis, which states that liking is associated with similarity in one or more characteristics” (qtd. in Aboud 89). This hypothesis was already used to analyze the friendships in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* (33). If it applies in this case, it would imply that Wendy wants to be Peter's friend because he is similar to her. However, as the text illustrates, no two children differ more than these two. Wendy and Peter do not share the same beliefs or the same views. While Peter never wants to grow up and therefore is not able to assume responsibility, Wendy is portrayed as his total opposite. She does not have any difficulties with growing up and assuming adult responsibilities. Additionally, while Wendy is always concerned about everybody else, Peter is highly egocentric. He likes to

be independent of others and enjoys showing off his own talents. This behavior leads to a first clash between Wendy and Peter during their first meeting. When Wendy sews on successfully Peter's shadow, the boy takes all the credit for himself: "I can't help crowing, Wendy, when I'm pleased with myself.'[...] 'Wendy,' he continued, in a voice that no woman has ever yet been able to resist, 'Wendy, one girl is more use than twenty boys.'" (27), Peter says after he insulted Wendy.

Even though Peter did not do anything to effect the re-attachment of his shadow, he nonetheless behaves as if he did. As a result, Wendy calls him a "conceit", a label that aptly describes all of Peter's behavior in Neverland. Peter's and Wendy's first meeting determines their behavior towards each other during the rest of the story. Wendy is aware that Peter has more knowledge about the place where they are going than she, and therefore accepts that she and her brothers are dependent on Peter. Without him they would not be able to find their way back home. Thus, she asks of her brothers to show respect for him: "Do be more polite to him,' Wendy whispered to John, when they were playing "Follow my Leader." 'Then tell him to stop showing off,' said John. [...] 'You must be nice to him,' Wendy impressed on her brothers. 'What could we do if he were to leave us!' (39). While Peter does not need Wendy, John and Michael, those three children definitely need Peter in order to survive in Neverland. Nonetheless,

Wendy assumes, presumably due to their similarity in ages, that Peter is her male counterpart and partner in the Neverland games. If she is going to act as female guardian to the boys, it seems only logical to her that he will be their male guardian. She sees Peter and herself as parents to the Lost Boys; if she is their "mother" she assumes that he is their "father". (Roth 62)

Yet, Barrie's narrator tells the reader that Peter does not act like a child who is interested in his new friends. Rather, he often goes off by himself and forgets⁴⁷ about Wendy and the rest: "Peter was not with them for the moment, and they felt rather lonely up there by themselves. He could go so much faster than they that he would suddenly shoot out of sight, to have some adventure in which they had no share." (40). Reciprocity that – according to Aboud – is important for friendship is not present in the early relationship between Wendy and Peter. It seems that Wendy seeks Peter's friendship more than he seeks hers.

As human development researcher Dunn points out – "[m]ost people agree that a crucial feature of friendship is that it is a reciprocal relationship between two people with both affirming it" (2). Reciprocity is therefore important because it distinguishes a child's desire from being liked and accepted from one whose desire is not returned. As long as a child is not liked and accepted by the other one, it cannot be called friendship. Thus, acceptance is a very important element of friendship. The acceptance seems reciprocal, however, only as it concerns the roles that each child in Neverland plays. The role Wendy assumes is the one of a "mother." Clark explains in "The Female Figure in J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan" that

[i]n the Nursery, Wendy, a child mimicking grown women, exercised unusual authority over Peter, a child ignorant about the "real" world. However, in Neverland, Wendy discovers the difference between her experience of "reality," where she enjoys pretending to perform adulthood, and the false reality of Neverland. Wendy, a child in the

⁴⁷ "Indeed, sometimes when he returned he did not remember them, at least not well. Wendy was sure of it. She saw recognition come into his eyes as he was about to pass them the time of day and go on; once even she had to call him by name. [...] He was very sorry. "I say, Wendy," he whispered to her, "always if you see me forgetting you, just keep on saying 'I'm Wendy,' and then I'll remember"." (40). This quote again testifies to Peter's indifference. to his new friends. He is so preoccupied with his own adventures that he simply forgets he made new friends.

Nursery, chooses to perform the positive aspects of adulthood at will.
(306)

Clark then adds that “Peter, a child consumed with pretending, forces Wendy to imitate both positive and negative aspects of adulthood in Neverland. For example, although Wendy commands the respect of the Lost Boys, she struggles to clothe and feed them in an illusory household with an often absent father figure” (306). A positive aspect for Wendy is the fact that she enjoys taking on adult responsibilities. Even so, she has no other choice but to accept those responsibilities and is therefore marginalized. In Clark's opinion “[t]his unusual situation causes Wendy to confront the marginalization of women into domesticity by an increasingly unstable and insecure British patriarchal society” (306). Ann Wilson argues that Neverland “is a place of a play within a play,” a place both “nostalgic and gendered” and “a boy's world” (600). This claim “augments the idea of Wendy as trapped in a seamlessly male-dominated environment where she no longer controls her performances of domesticity” (Clark 306). Wendy's marginalization into domesticity becomes also obvious in her “mock courtship,” which becomes a child's game for Wendy and Peter (Roth 61). Peter's and Wendy's relationship lacks any potential sexuality “by substituting innocuous objects for the kisses. The exchange is full of suggestion and paradox, but the tension remains in balance” (Roth 61). Once in Neverland, Wendy is turned into a girl “pretending to be a matron, a spinster by qualification, co-habiting so many roles that she is bound to none” (Hsiao 162). Hsiao interprets Wendy's role-playing as “the freedom to experiment and reject, and in doing so, she can discover what she likes and doesn't like. More than just playacting, the game teaches Wendy how to become an adult and, specifically, what kind of adult she might

want to become” (162). However, it is exactly Wendy's attempt to become an adult that leads to confusion. The reason for this lies in “adult” attitudes meeting children's standards. There is a discrepancy in the expectations and friendship skills of the various characters. The younger child (in this case Peter) is unable to progress to the deeper level of relationship sought by Wendy, which is especially frustrating to her. While the key features of friendship – reciprocity and acceptance – have already been established at the beginning of this chapter it is now important what defines a relationship. The basis of a relationship is a friendship with the additional feature of intimacy. Erwin states:

As adolescence approaches, children undergo dramatic physical and psychological changes which are reflected in their social relationships. This is a paradoxical time in that intimacy is a considerable preoccupation of the adolescent and yet this is also an age at which it is difficult to achieve intimacy and many relationships are maintained at a functional level. (1993, 218)

That many relationships are maintained at a functional level becomes “evident in Peter's disquiet when confronted by Wendy about their relationship.” (Fox 33). Although Wendy knows she is only pretending to be the Lost Boys' mother, her affections for Peter are real. Yet, Peter is not able to return her affection. He is ignorant “of stable, adult relationships [which] is well chronicled throughout the text, with his three female admirers, Tinker Bell, Tiger Lily, and Wendy, all making attempts to bind him to themselves in greater affection than he knows how to return” (Fox 33). Additionally, he is afraid of the outcome if he accepts Wendy's affections. He is scared that his childish behavior and roaming around would come to an end if he finally accepts his role as a “father”. Barrie underscores Peter's anxiety in a conversation between Peter and Wendy. They discuss their roles as pretend mother and father:

“Dear Peter,” she said, “with such a large family, of course, I have now passed my best, but you don't want to change me, do you?”

“No, Wendy.”

Certainly he did not want a change, but he looked at her uncomfortably; blinking, you know, like one not sure whether he was awake or asleep.

“Peter, what is it?”

“I was just thinking,” he said, a little scared. “It is only make-believe, isn't it, that I am their father?”

“Oh yes,” Wendy said primly. (95)

This conversation both portrays Peter's fear of really being the father to those boys and also his inability to distinguish between pretense and reality. Pretending has become reality to him. For Fox, this dialogue combines multiple elements:

the role-playing of Wendy; the “fatherhood” of Peter; the actuality of those roles creeping into the pretence; the affection Wendy feels for Peter, his discomfort in the possibility that the roles may become reified through this affection; her incipient awareness of the “proper” manner to be displayed discussing things sexual; the liminal position, between dream and the real, of life in Neverland; and, at base, the importance of change in adventuring of the children (34).

Having more closely examined Peter's and Wendy's relationship, I conclude it cannot be called a friendship because it lacks the key features of reciprocity and similarity. Peter is only concerned about himself but not whether Wendy actually gets pleasure out of her stay in Neverland. Additionally, he presses her into an adult role, while he always tries to escape his responsibilities. Wendy's and Peter's “courtship” thus can only be seen as a farce. Even the knowledge about it is one-sided. Wendy expects more from Peter than he is ready to give or would even know how to give to her. His inability to see in Wendy more than a mother and refusal to develop more affection for her than the love of a “devoted son” result in a failure of a relationship. Therefore, I agree with Clark that “[a]s a result of Wendy's actions, two things occur: she establishes her

command of the Lost Boys and her brothers, who quickly choose the Nursery over Peter's world, and she asserts her ability as a storyteller whose mastery of language trumps Peter's" (Clark 307). It is true that Wendy established her command of the Lost Boys and even over Peter because she is a better storyteller. At the same time Wendy stays in control of her life the entire time. Even though she enjoys her stay in Neverland, she knows nonetheless that it is only a childish delight that she indulges in. Eventually, she must return to reality and leave Neverland behind.

Fox summarizes Wendy's adventure in Neverland in "The Time of His Life: Peter Pan and the Decadent Nineties" as follows:

The "escape" of Wendy into Neverland allows her the aesthetic ability to recreate her identity as the mother of the boys on the island. But she never fully forgets her past and, as such, is not fully included in the ludic creativity of the boys' games. The character of Wendy exists in a liminal position in the drama. She role-plays the mother of the Lost Boys at Peter's behest, remaining capable of comprehending Neverland in childish delight, yet knowing her delight is childish" (26).

These few sentences encapsulate the friendship dynamics (or lack thereof) of. The difficulty lies in their nature and their different levels of maturity. While Wendy understands that her adventure in Neverland is only temporary Peter has lost the ability (or never developed it) to differentiate between the world in Neverland and reality.

4. Discussion and Results

This study has revealed significant commonalities in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* and *Peter Pan*:

- In each of the two books we have one group of friends, one centers around Zora, the other one centers around Peter Pan and later Wendy.
- The focus of both authors lies on the female protagonists.
- To understand the female protagonists' significance, it is important to analyze them in the context of gender role expectations and performances.
- Both female lead characters develop affections for one of the boys.
- The children experience different adventures, which are a form of pretend play and thus this play aids their development.
- While these features are common, the books differ in their description of the same-sex friendship groups. The complementary group for 'Zoras Bande' are "die Gymnasiasten." The complementary groups for the Lost Boys are the pirates (Captain Hook and the Indians). Both main groups need the respective complementary groups for the story line to advance. Barrie and Held use them as narrative devices. The common factor shared by "die Gymnasiasten", the pirates and the Indians is their use of violence.

Having analyzed individually in chapters 2 and 3 each book, I compare the two works in this conclusion. In doing so, I focus on the books' five common themes.

Depending on the subject, I will work out only similarities or differences or both. It is also the aim of this chapter to offer explanations for the occurring differences.

To compare the friendships depicted in Held's and Barrie's books it is useful to summarize briefly those features of friendships identified in the previous two chapters: Friendships consist of at least two people who form dyads or larger constellations. Friendship depends on reciprocity, which can vary in regard to content and the value for both persons. Another key feature of friendship is that it needs to be voluntary. Children cannot force other people to be their friends. Even though friendships are reciprocal, in groups one member often stands out as the leader while the other group members submit to that child's leadership. As the case of Peter Pan shows, however, dual leadership is also possible. Having someone in a leadership role does not imply, however that children within the friendship groups simply follow a leader; rather, consensus building and compromise are distinguishing elements of friendships. Based on these assumptions the friendships depicted in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* and the group of the Lost Boys, which initially centers around Peter Pan and later around Wendy, shall be compared to each other.

In *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* Zora, the only girl in a group of boys is the main character. She establishes her group ("ihre Bande") gradually by admitting one boy after the other. Initially she just looks for another person to keep her company, but in the end, Zora finds a total of four boys. When the author describes the social backgrounds of these children, he implies that similar childhood experiences spur them to bond: all of the group members can relate to one another because they understand each other's background. In *Peter Pan* the group forms differently because Peter brings Wendy and

her brothers to the Lost Boys in Neverland. Even though Peter is part of the Lost Boys from the beginning, there are not any indications that he can relate to them. By contrast, Wendy possesses this ability and thus in the end, the group is made up of Wendy and a number of boys, just like 'Zoras Bande'.

In spite of all these similarities, there are also key differences. A closer look at the group dynamics in both books reveals different internal group dynamics. Even though 'Zoras Bande' is a group of friends, each member is still an individual. Branko, for example, seeks an additional friend outside of 'Zoras Bande' and for that purpose approaches Zlata. He befriends her and even though their friendship is destined to fail, it shows that Branko is not tied to the other members of the group, but is able to lead a life apart from 'Zoras Bande'. Another boy who does not always stay together with the group is Duro. He often leaves the group to be by himself. This love of solitude indicates that the relationship between him and the other members of the group is voluntary and thus qualifies as friendship according to the criteria listed above.

By contrast, the way Barrie depicts the group of children around Peter Pan/Wendy, they cannot leave the group. Throughout the book they are always together. Not a single boy leaves the community except for Peter. But Peter is described as a "lonely figure", which explains why he occasionally leaves the group. However, it seems that none of the other six Lost Boys could survive outside the group. Another indication that the Lost Boys exist only as a group is their hesitation and/or inability to make decisions by themselves or even to arrive at decisions at all. When they are asked something the first boy hands the question to the next. That boy then in return asks the question to another boy and so on. In the end, either Wendy or Peter must decide, as in

the case of the boys' reaction on the pirate ship after Wendy gave them the following instruction: "Don't irritate him [Hook] unnecessarily" (123). Tootles reacts by addressing Hook: "You see, sir, I don't think my mother would like me to be a pirate." He then immediately turns to Slightly and asks: "Would your mother like you to be a pirate, Slightly?" (123-24). Slightly answers and then poses the question to the next boy. Clearly, the Lost Boys follow Wendy's instructions rather than make their own, which shows their dependency on either Wendy or, in other cases, Peter Pan. Wilson pointed out that "[w]ithout Peter Pan, their leader, the other boys in Never Land are 'lost'" (601). Based on my findings the Lost Boys are not only "lost" without Peter but also without Wendy as she takes over Peter's leading role to a certain degree.

In 'Zoras Bande' the decisions are made as a group. However, if any of the boys has an idea he takes charge of the group and makes the decision. Duro explains this dynamic clearly in a conversation with Branko "[W]enn einer von uns etwas vorschlägt und es angenommen wird, so führt er das auch durch, und die anderen gehorchen ihm." (87). This statement implies that none of the boys refuses to arrive at decisions.

The main difference between 'Zoras Bande' and the Lost Boys, when it comes to outlining the inner mechanisms of the children's groups around Zora on the one hand and Peter Pan/Wendy on the other hand, lies in the experience the children bring to these groups. Before Branko and the other boys joined 'Zoras Bande' each boy lived on his own for a while. Each had experienced situations in which he was forced to make his or her own decisions. In contrast the Lost Boys are seldom on their own in Neverland and prior to their arrival in Neverland did not face situations in which they needed to take charge. From the moment they arrive in Neverland, they are simply members of a group. As

such, they are used to Peter leading and making decisions for them. Later on Wendy arrives and takes over the responsibility of making decisions and leading the boys into the right direction (e.g. the situation with Hook on the pirate ship).

In this context, it is noteworthy that the boys in both books submit to female characters. In Held's book, this submission comes more or less naturally because it is Zora who builds up the group of friends. Therefore, she takes over the role as the group's leader from the beginning. When Peter decides to bring Wendy to Neverland, the group dynamics of the Lost Boys change. As soon as the girl sets foot on the island, the Lost Boys demand of her to be their 'mother'; thus giving her the power of making decisions. This change leads to a dual leadership within the group. On the one hand, Peter remains the leader. On the other, Wendy also takes over some responsibilities and acts as a leader.

Both Held and Barrie introduced female lead characters in their stories. Held even stresses the importance of the lead character Zora, by making her name part of the title. None of the boys' names are mentioned in the title. They are instead reduced to their function with regard to Zora by being called "ihre Bande". Barrie's title, in contrast, does not reveal Wendy's existence at all. However, *Peter Pan* has had many titles. The story of Peter Pan is based upon a play written by Barrie called *The Little White Bird* (1902) (Hammerton 246). The author turned this play into the story *Peter and Wendy* (1911) (Hammerton 257). This story is today known as *Peter Pan*. Even if the title does not show anymore that Wendy is part of the story, the story itself definitely stresses her importance. Roth emphasizes this point in her essay "Babes in Boy-Land":

Peter and Wendy begins and ends with a mother and a daughter (not a father and son) and a nostalgia for lost girlhood. The first scene, indeed

the first lines, show Wendy and her mother discussing her inevitable maturation and degeneration (55).

This structure may cause a reader to believe that the book is pulling Wendy and not Peter the center of attention, which the characterization of Wendy further supports. Peter Pan remains a static figure – after all, he is the boy who never wants to grow up – while Wendy changes throughout the novel. Even though she is still a child she seems to mature into a woman as she takes on over more and more adult responsibilities of an adult before returning (back to 'girlhood' when she goes) back home. According to Roth, Barrie really

emphasizes the story's primary lament for little girls' inevitable maturation and degeneration from daughters into mothers. [...] The girl figure is always part woman and part child, which, for Barrie, means that she is never completely a child. Just as class dictated who was a girl and who was a woman in nineteenth-century England, a character's role, not age, dictates who is a child and who is an adult in Neverland (54).

Thus, Wendy's behavior categorizes her as an adult, whereas the others are simply children. Zora, on the other hand, is never categorized as 'the adult' within the group. She is simply a girl, just as the boys are still boys.

While Held and Barrie both placed major importance on a female character, the two girls could not be any more different. Zora can relate easily to the other children, which is an important factor in friendships. This skill also helps her in gathering her new friends around her. Barrie's Wendy displays this ability as well, but in a different way than Zora. When Peter invites her to go with him to Neverland, Wendy can only be persuaded because she feels sorry for the Lost Boys because they do not have a mother. Motherhood and the Lost Boys' need for a nurturing mother motivate Wendy to join Peter

Pan and the Lost Boys in Neverland. While Wendy simply cannot imagine children living and surviving without a mother⁴⁸ Zora relates to the boys in 'Zoras Bande' because she understands what they have gone through. She had similar experiences to theirs when she was younger: Zora had a family just like the boys and then lost it. Wendy's family situation prior to coming to Neverland is totally different from the experiences of the Lost Boys. While the Lost Boys fell out of their perambulators and as a consequence were sent to Neverland, where they live without parents, Wendy has not had such an experience. Pavle, Nicola, Duro and Branko gather around Zora due to their similar experiences, but two worlds clash when Wendy and her brothers meet the Lost Boys in Neverland. Consequently, Peter Pan and the Lost Boys on the one hand and the Darling children on the other hand melt together into a family rather than into a bigger group of friends.

The differences between Zora and Wendy to some degree explain the childrens' diverse experiences in each story. In both *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* and *Peter Pan* one soon recognizes that "girl" does not necessarily mean "girl." Even though both girls are the center of an otherwise male group of friends, few characters differ more from each other than Zora and Wendy. They nevertheless share the following: Both girls are about the same age and experience similar situations, they have only male friends, they assume leadership roles in the respective groups, and they take care of the boys. Yet, compared to the traditional understandings of gender roles, Zora behaves more like a 'boy', while Wendy displays characteristics traditionally associated with girls. Fried lists some of the supposedly 'feminine' and 'masculine' characteristics in her essay "Junge oder

⁴⁸ Surprisingly, Peter Pan has no problems living and growing up without a mother. The narrator explains that he considers them overrated persons. Peter's attitude towards mothers explains why he cannot accept Wendy as a mother just like the other Lost Boys do.

Mädchen? Der kleine Unterschied in der Erziehung“: “So werden Frauen gemeinhin folgende Eigenschaften zugeschrieben: fürsorglich, emotional, ausdrucksstark, empfindsam, passiv usw. Demgegenüber ordnet man Männern im allgemeinen folgende Charakteristika zu: rational, intelligent, selbstbewusst, aktiv, dominant usw.” As a traditional consequence of an education that fosters different behavior in boys and girls, girls are conditioned to be more communicative and help others. Yet, Fried criticizes that society considers a woman or a man, who does not behave according to these attributes, to be a social outsider:

Eine Frau, die sich nicht immer fürsorglich verhält, oder ein Mann, der nicht jederzeit aggressiv auftritt, erscheinen dann, durch die Brille der Geschlechtsrollenstereotype betrachtet, als soziale Außenseiter und werden dementsprechend gebrandmarkt (z.B. Rabenmutter, Mannweib, Softie, Schlawfi) - selbst wenn ihr Verhalten eigentlich mit den gegebenen Gruppenzusammensetzungen, Zeitumständen und Kultureinflüssen stimmig ist.

Butler defines gender as radically independent of sex, meaning that 'masculine' traits can easily signify a female body as a male one. The same applies to 'feminine' traits, which can signify a male body as a female one (Butler 9). Butler further explains if

the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one. (9)

In the second chapter it has been shown that Zora performs femininity (she dresses like a girl and cooks) or masculinity. One example of the latter is her regular engagement in fights whenever Branko and the other boys are in trouble.

In her group of friends Zora is characterized as the strongest person, which causes the others to accept her as the leader. Zora's character traits resemble Peter Pan's, which explains why both are recognized as leaders. Yet, in contrast to Peter, Zora is a girl. Held is able to depict Zora as the leader of a group, on the one hand, because of the way the group developed; and on the other hand, because he wrote his book in the 20th century. The concept of how women and girls were perceived was different compared to 1911 when *Peter Pan* was published. This characterization of Wendy also supports this interpretation. She is attributed what were then commonly understood as 'feminine' characteristics and not exclusively those of a girl her age. Hsiao refers to Wendy

as the adult-figure in the Lost Boys' community, Wendy is actually [...] depicted as a child adopting adult speech. When Wendy and the others arrive on the island, she is called upon to be the mother of the Lost Boys, resulting in a game that attempts to mimic adult domestic patterns. Cooking and cleaning and chores and rules are the very activities one would expect a child to want to escape (although that's perhaps more of an adult fantasy, especially considering children "playing house"), but these things are transposed in whole to the "happy home" in Neverland. However, the re-creation of adult behaviors is just that: recreation. As in any game, there are rules and a bit of sweat or tedium, but these elements are necessary: they inform the player that the activity is fully willed. [...] At the same time, there is a certain unconsciousness to a child pretending to be an adult." (161)

In Hsiao's interpretation, Wendy behaves like an adult woman, taking over household chores. This difference between Zora and Wendy explains their different roles within their groups. Even though Zora shows motherly features towards the boys, for example, by cooking for them and often trying to protect them, she does not display adult behavior. Instead, Zora acts her age. She can extend the same nurturant behavior towards the boys, like Wendy, without pretending to be a "mother".

While the girls display totally different behavior within their groups and in their daily life, it is interesting to note that their behavior is very similar when they interact with Peter Pan and Branko respectively. Zora shows a high interest in Branko. She even makes attempts to change her outer appearance by putting on more “girly” attire (a dress, make-up and pearls) as compared to her usual pants and a simple shirt. Zora seems convinced that in her new clothes she will make an impression on Branko. However, Branko only laughs at Zora and tells her that she looks ridiculous with her new dress and make-up, which hurts Zora's feelings. Barrie depicts a similar situation in *Peter Pan* between Wendy and Peter. Wendy shows an interest in Peter from the beginning: “[S]he was just slightly disappointed when he admitted that he came to the nursery window not to see her but to listen to the stories” (31). The other two female characters in Neverland, Tinker Bell and Tiger Lily, who were not included in the analysis of this thesis as they do not make up a part of the Lost Boys' group, show a sexual interest in Peter as well. However, Peter is totally ignorant of this type of attraction as he demonstrates in this situation when he says: “‘You are so queer,’ he said, frankly puzzled, ‘and Tiger Lily is just the same. There is something she wants to be to me, but she says it is not my mother’” (95). This similar behavior suggests that Wendy and Zora are depicted as characters with sexual desires and needs while the boys are not yet mature enough to decode these advances. Zora's and Wendy's behavior indicate that girls develop more quickly and thus are at a higher developmental stage than boys are of the same age.

Scholar Petzold explains the girls' more mature behavior differently. He does not characterize *Peter Pan* as a children's book. As evidence, he cites the constant change between reality and fantasy and Barrie's ironic depiction of an idealized child-centered

view. Additionally, Petzold also argues that Barrie plays ironically with the concept of childish innocence, to which one can add ignorance in Peter's case. Petzold says,

Wie die meisten Klassiker ist *Peter Pan* nicht eindeutig als Kinderbuch einzustufen. Es bietet zwar einerseits eine mit typisch kindlichen Wunschtraumelementen angereicherte Abenteuerhandlung, präsentiert sie aber andererseits ausgesprochen ironisch-distanziert. Für den aufmerksamen erwachsenen Leser wird dadurch der Blick auf eine zweite, symbolische Sinnenebene geöffnet, während Kinder von dem Changieren der Geschichte zwischen Phantasie und Realität und den illusionszerstörenden auktorialen Einschüben wohl eher verwirrt werden. Auch mit seiner sentimentalischen Idealisierung des Kindlichen, seinem herablassend-ironischen Spiel mit kindlichen Denk- und Sehweisen und seinem Kokettieren mit der kindlichen »Unschuld« hat Barrie offenbar das Erwachsenenpublikum im Auge" (83).

Yet another commonality between the books are the adventures the children experience. The stories are only similar in the way that they can be called adventures, but the adventures themselves are still quite different. Zora and her friends have experiences that could have happened as they are described in the book, especially because Held claimed to tell the life story of Zora LaRouquine. Zora and the boys perceive their life in the castle Nehajgrad, where each child has his or her own place to sleep, as an adventure. The experience when 'Zoras Bande' dresses up as ghosts to convince the police that the castle is haunted, so their hiding place is not discovered, can again be considered an adventure. In contrast, the adventures Barrie tells in his book take place in the realm of fantasy. Peter Pan and the Lost Boys experience adventures without the limitations of reality: Barrie's children are, for example, given the chance to fulfill their dream of flying. Once Wendy and her brothers arrive in Neverland, other adventures begin. The children learn about mermaids and fairies and additionally find out that pirates live on the island. As Peter loves to get into fights with the pirates, which he calls adventures,

Wendy and her brothers have similar experiences, especially towards the end of the story when the pirates kidnap the Lost Boys and Wendy to kill them.

The difference between the adventures in *Peter Pan* and *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* lies in their nature. Peter Pan's adventures are mere make-believe:

[W]hen Peter remarks to the children that there are pirates in the Neverland, John, grabbing his tall Sunday hat, exclaims: "Pirates! Let us go at once!" What's more natural? Lives there a boy since the days of Mayne Reid or W. H. G. Kingston who would not have responded with equal alacrity? [...] The building of Wendy's house by the Lost Boys, what is it but the most natural of all the make-believe games of childhood?" (Hammerton 255)

The last theme that needs to be covered in this comparative chapter is the same-sex friendships in both books. While in younger years same-sex friendships predominate, cross-sex friendships start to develop with the beginning of the middle childhood. Erwin has found out in his studies that "[b]y about the fifth or sixth grade this sex segregation in children's play and relationships starts to break down" (1993, 174). *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* displays both types of friendships. However, it is quite interesting that the displayed same-sex friendships in *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* and *Peter Pan* are of a boys' group. It is even more striking that these two groups, the Lost Boys and "die Gymnasiasten", are described in such a similar fashion that it seems they could be interchangeable. The boys engage in the same activities, namely fights. While "die Gymnasiasten" regularly fight 'Zoras Bande', the Lost Boys fight Captain Hook's pirates and sometimes fight with the Indians, as Barrie's narrator tells the reader. In those fights, the main purpose is to make the other group feel inferior. Held portrays this dynamic to a greater extent than Barrie. 'Zoras Bande' is looked down upon by "die Gymnasiasten"

because they are street children. “Die Gymnasiasten” call Zora a thief: “Wir haben die größte Diebin von Senj! Wir bringen sie auf die Wache! Sie kommt ins Gefängnis! Der Magistrat soll sie hängen!” (346). These few sentences show that “die Gymnasiasten” and 'Zoras Bande' are rivals. Both rival groups, “die Gymnasiasten” and Hook's pirates but also Wendy and her brothers are necessary to complement the main group of friends in each book. Held and Barrie use the former groups as a narrative device of the story line.

In Barrie's book the fights also concern power. It is especially important for Peter to defeat the pirates in their last fight. He shows his determination when he exclaims “Hook or me this time!” (127). It also shows that it is a matter of life and death to him. Yet, the two groups in *Peter Pan*, the pirates and the Lost Boys, are described as equals in their fights, even though the Lost Boys are practically still children, while the pirates are grown men. Nonetheless, there is not one clear superior group towards the other.

Violent behavior marks the same-sex friendships in these two books. Yet it is, necessary to note that the degree of violence differs in Held's and Barrie's books. The violence in Held's book is limited to fist fights and bullying while the violence in *Peter Pan* involves weapons, namely sword fights. It is this violence and dominance over the other groups described in each of the books that seems to bond the members of the same-sex groups the Lost Boys and “die Gymnasiasten”. An exchange on a deeper level, as for example between Zora and Branko or Branko and Zlata, does not take place between any of the boys. They are kept together by the activities they engage in as a group and not by their mutual sharing of conversations about things that are important to them. This exchange takes place between cross-sex friendships, at least in these two books.

While the behavior of “die Gymnasiasten” towards 'Zoras Bande' has been characterized as bullying, the fights of the Lost Boys are not. As has been defined in chapter 2.3.1 of this thesis, there are four characteristics of bullying (44). One of those characteristics is that bullying “occurs in a relationship where there is an imbalance” (qtd. in Harris 2). Even though there is an imbalance between the group of the Lost Boys and the pirates (they are stronger, older, supposedly wiser and additionally outnumber the Lost Boys) the imbalance is turned upside down. The pirates are defeated by a group of boys even though they themselves are adults. Regularly, the group bullying is the stronger one. The Lost Boys with Peter's help walk out as the winners of the last fight with the pirates. However, throughout the story, the pirates⁴⁹ are displayed as the bullies and not the Lost Boys. Therefore, the Lost Boys are the equivalent of 'Zoras Bande' and the pirates the equivalent of “die Gymnasiasten”.

⁴⁹ As the pirates are described by Barrie as adult characters, they were not included in the interpretation of this thesis. However, it was necessary to mention them in the comparison of the same-sex friendship in this part.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

I started this thesis with the intention to compare two children's books, which seemed to have a lot in common. At the end of my analysis and interpretation it seems that even though the themes like friendship, adventures, growing up and others are the center of both, their depiction and perception differ significantly.

One major reason lies in the fact that the books were written so many years apart. *Peter Pan* was published during the Victorian age, when books were written for children but full of fantasy. Held published his book in 1941, in the mid- 20th century. Authors who wrote books for children during that time tried to write about realistic themes and experiences. Children were supposed to be able to identify with the themes in the published books as the expectations of the younger audience were different. Therefore, even though both books are works of fiction, they approach common themes differently. Yet, both books were very popular when they were first published and have been ever since. Movie producers have also recognized the ongoing potential of these stories to appeal to a younger audience. The newer versions of *Peter Pan* and *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* in particular focus on various types of friendships depicted. They try to remain true to the content. Nevertheless, they sometimes take liberties. The movie *Die rote Zora und ihre Bande* (2008) takes it even beyond the limits set in the book itself, which indicates that interests again have changed in the last years. A bigger love story between Zlata and Branko may be more appealing to the viewers of the movie than it was at the time the book was published.

This thesis focuses only on children's friendships. However, there are also other relationships present in the books, especially relationships between children and adults. It would be interesting to analyze to what extent both authors depict adults as a social role model for the children. Are those relationships there for mere entertainment or are there pedagogical elements that can be detected which might function as a way of socializing the children? This would be a step that could be taken next in analyzing these books.

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