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### Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP)

Since its establishment, the organization "Action Reconciliation Service for Peace" ("Aktion Suehnezeichen Friedensdienste") aimed to work in Israel, but was rejected on grounds of ill-feelings and the unwillingness of the local population to accept German volunteers. A change of popular attitudes related to the Eichmann trial, and a combination of practical considerations, enabled the first delegation to arrive in Israel in the early 1960s. From this time on they continued to work in Israel on a regular basis.

In the 1960s the organization switched from renovation and rehabilitation to a long-term (one and a half year) volunteer program and to actions focusing on social and educational aid. The volunteers are mainly engaged in educational activities in holocaust memorial centers, assistance to holocaust survivors, and on assistance to persons who were directly affected during the holocaust period (survivors), or assistance to those belonging to groups who were persecuted by the Nazis such as disabled persons. Another aim is facing up to Germany's past and confronting anti-semitic, racist, and extreme-right trends in the present.

The activity in the organization is voluntary. Volunteers must pass an admission procedure which includes a visit to a concentration camp and a preparatory seminar. A considerable portion of the (male) volunteers, declare themselves as pacifists and volunteer to the organization rather than serving in the army. In Israel, volunteers arrive after having made an explicit choice (due to the security situation), as opposed to other countries, to which volunteers are assigned according to manifold considerations.

In the thesis, I will seek to examine the foundation of the organization, its development throughout the years referring mainly to its activity in Israel. I will analyze the changing motives and activities of the volunteers, assuming that the processes of

"Vergangenheitsbewältigung" in Germany are reflected in the motives of the volunteers. I will examine the groups of volunteers as an image of the processes molding the German memory and identity after the war, and from this, I will examine the differences between the first volunteers who began work in the early 1960s, the volunteers of the 1968 period, to the present-day volunteers. I will refer to the influence of the volunteering period on their lives, and to questions of identity and their career path. I will examine a unique group of volunteers who chose to change their religion and their nationality.

I will analyze the changing activities of the organization in Israel throughout the years, referring to changes in the motives of the volunteers, in the aims of the organization, and in the Israeli society. Looking to the future, I will discuss the dilemmas the decision makers continue to face as they try to pursue the aims of the organization in a changing reality.