



Michal Maroz

M.A. Student

Faculty of Education

Scholarship at the University of Heidelberg 2009-2010

E-mail: [michalmaroz\\_at\\_yahoo.com](mailto:michalmaroz_at_yahoo.com)

### Effects of the first encounter between young Germans and Israelis on the mutual perception on the others' country

For many decades the State of Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany have been trying to find a way to deal with the shadows of their traumatic historical past. Thus, since the state of Israel was established, there has always been a complex and special relationship between Germany and this new born country.

Germany and Israel have been trying to promote a dialog between the two countries about their common history, to build mutual understanding and to design a common future for both nations. Therefor they established a broad platform for youth exchange programs.

The informal and individual dialogs between German and Israeli youngsters, that have taken place on the number of youth exchanges, have had a big effect on the relationship between the countries. Over the years those youth exchanges have become one of the most important elements in the relationship.

In this paper I will analyze the German-Israeli youth exchange programs and will try to study the effects of the first encounter on the youngsters' mutual perception on the others' country. This research will be carried out as a case study of the German-Israeli relationship in general and specifically of exchange programs and their effect on the participants' perception. The research will take place before, during and after the exchange itself in order to catch the changes of perception the youngsters go through during the process.