

## **Interview with A.**

My name is A. and I am the child of repatriates of German origin, who came back from Russia to Germany in 1990. I was born in Germany (Hanover) and I don't talk Russian, although I understand a large part of the language. Both of my parents were born in Russia, but they speak nearly perfect German. My mother has a noticeable accent.

In the 1980s my parents were thinking about going to Germany because of the fact that the political and social situation was very difficult in Russia. Basic human rights were only partly given, e.g. the right to vote. Besides, my parents had to live with prejudices as Russian Germans. They were called traitors and "Nazis" and they were not allowed to speak German.

The fact that my grand-parents and other relatives had dared to leave their country of birth heartened my parents to go back to Germany, too. They needed much courage for a big step to something new. In 1990 they sold their farm and left for Germany. At this time my mother was pregnant with me in the eighth month and many of the relatives were afraid whether she could travel without any difficulties.

After arriving my parents and sister had to live in a house for asylum seekers for two years. They lived in different three-room apartments. My parents had to visit a language course to be able to talk to the Germans and my sister was in kindergarten. After the language course my father worked in the same job which he had in Russia. My mother does not have a professional education, so she is still a housewife. One of the problems my mother had was her accent so, for example, she didn't go to parents' evenings at our schools. Furthermore the teacher said that they had to speak German at home.

I try to help my mother often because she thinks that the Germans don't like her because of her accent. I was afraid of prejudices so I never talked about my parents' origin. Nowadays I am more open with this issue.

I don't want to learn Russian because I feel like a German citizen. I am glad to live with two cultures - it's an enrichment for me.

*Translated by Sarina Steinborn and Ghadir Ballout*