

Interview with Anton Bosch

Conducted by Ron Vossler (RV) and Bob Dambach (BD)

1 June 1997, Nuremberg, Germany

Transcription by Josh Watson and Peter Eberle

RV: Today is May the 29th 1997 and we are in Stuttgart at the (LundsmenshowA5), and we are doing an interview with Anton Bosch. Anton can you describe briefly some background information about yourself, auf deutsch?

AB: Ya, ich bin (well) ich bin Geboren um 28 Oktober 1934 in eine deutschen kolonie und settlement Kandel bie Odessa, um shwatzen meer, das heute zu ein (grune erbA8). Und ich bin (DotA8) in der Funfen generation zu welt gekommen meine vorfahren kommen aus sud-wes Deutschland ausen (elsas, federlicker seidsA10) und aus swabenland heir bie Stuttgart (mittelickerzeitA10) im jarhe 1808, in deise (stadtA110) und haben deise (stadtA11), das (stadtA11) kondel mit gegrundet. Ya, 1941 kommen zu ich, zu uns die Rumanisch soldaten. Da war ich damal seiben jahre alt, und wir waren under der rumanisch (InverfaltungA13) und der Bukarest mehrere jahre. Die deutsche soldaten kommen ers zu uns 1944 und als nach Stalingrad, die (freundeA21) zuruckgehen. Ers ist dann komplett, das ganze Dorf Kondel 3700 Einwohner, im dem westen (UmgezetaA22) worden.

RV: Could you say part of that out in English? A little bit more about the settlement of the (...A25)

AB: I was born on 28th of October in 1934 in village Kandel on the Black Sea by Odessa, and when I was 7 years they come to our village, the Romanian soldiers, and we are, the management from Bucharest, was in our country for three, four years. Romanian soldiers and Romanian management, and in middle of March in 1944, we settled in the west in the Polish country, and the end of 1944 before Christmas we go west about over the river to Saxonia country. And end of April in 1945 came to our village American soldiers and they stayed in this country, in this area only six weeks, in Saxony. In end of July, the American army go west to the Elbe river, and three days later come the Russian army to us. And then on this day when came American soldiers in our village in 28 April 1945, my mother became two children, twins, one boy and one girl. And this day, and I go on this day to the American tanks and the soldiers give me lunch cakes and candy and gum and cigarettes for my father.

RV: (German...A55)

AB: Ya, ich kann mich nach gut, (und dem zeitA56) vor dem kreig, alls war das Dorf war gross, ich spreche jetz vom dem Dorf Kondel. Es war 2 kilometer lang und das war die lange Dorf strasse um wasser, also am see entlang, (neimanA58) entlang, und in da mitte das Dorfes auf Mohen, die Barack, die kircke, und dan lebend dan, die schule, die schule bestand aus 2 gebauten, unten on da hauptstrasse und da 2nd haus schule gebaute, es war oben laben die kircken, und ich habe auch deise shule von 1941 bis 1944 besucht. Ich habe doch noch 3 classen, im deutsch gelernt. Deise Dorf, hat aber noch eine 2nd barack strasse gehabt, es geht auch parallel zu hauptstrasse. Und hinter, oben hinter die barrack strasse warren den (GevinegartenA68), und die obst garten, und da hinter dan das steht wo man weizen und getreide umgebaut hat. Und mir ist (...A69) noch also. Diese (LemonA69) diese see wo wir kinder

gefahren, gebadet haben im sommer, und im winter immer dan schneeshuh gelaufen, und Schlitten gefahren auf dem eis. Wir hatten also heir ein (auch kontakt gehabtA75) mit dem nachbar dorf, mit der Ukraine, mit den Ukrainen, mit (GradinitzeA76). Er ist auch in da region, das also, meine elten hatten freund auch nich nur un den Deutchshen dorf, und den auch mit Ukraine, die man sagt dan damal, (SachuhnA79), das ist also ein Ukrainian wort, und heist zu veil wie ein gute freund or oft English word friend. Und die haben sie (helt, king zeitig besuchtA80), und haben auch kleine geschafte gemacht obst, (honeycreamA81) oder vein, gekauft und verkauft, aber auch ein frietaggen ein frietaggen kommen zu ich (King zeitig besuchtA82), und auch die kinder haben einen Ukrainian onkel das war so brauche Ulbrick, das man auch (BesungA84) hat von familie zu familie. Aber on sonstag hat sich das leben in dorf, (AutonomA85), also geschlosen (obgespeilA85), das war ich ien rhine, (kondolishnikA86) dorf, und no ya schule, kirche, und die ganze woche aufen welt oder aufen bauenhof, man hat der auch ein obst garten, man hat ein gemuse gaten, man hat dan auch farde und steklt, 2, 3 mal, man hatten veir farde

RV: So in 1944 then that whole village was...all of the people were taken to Saxony, moved to Saxony. Could you tell a little bit in English perhaps about what happened after 1944, when the American soldiers left and the Russians came, and then your life later underground?

AB: After 1945 when the American soldiers go to west outside the Elbe River, three days later come Russian soldiers to our village, and assembling in a big place, four thousand people was assembled in these places, and end of August in 1945 we go by railway to east of Russia, north of Iran, and place a area, it was very cold in the winter, and we was in this railway more than two months—for two thousand kilometers—on the railway. It was a very difficult life, without hot eating, without water, without normal sanitary conditions, and at the end of this trip, last two days, died my small sister and small brother, the twins.

RV: How big a family did you have, what was the size of your family?

AB: My first sister was died in Polish country, and this twin sister and brother died in Siberia when we arrived in this country. In end of October it was, very cold, all was snow and ice in this area, and we come in the summer house, and it was very cold without water, without heating, and other conditions. And the first problem was my sister and my brother, to bury them, that was a big problem. And we don't know where the place is, forgotten it.

BD: When you went to Siberia then; was it your mom, your dad, and you?

AB: In the last time? No I wasn't.

BD: No, I mean in 1945.

AB: Yes, it was in northern Ural in an area called (Multia A142) and the end of the Ural road, in the Tiger, in the forest. And the place name is (Killmos A145).

RV: Were there others of your brother and sisters, besides the twins and your older sister who died in Poland, and you that's four, were there other brothers and sisters?

AB: No, I'm one. I'm the last, the first and the last.

RV: Only child to survive through this.

- AB:** And my father was in the German soldiers and was in the west side in Bavaria, coming to the American army, and still here in West Germany. My mother with children deportation to the Urals, and we are living ten years in this place with a small group Germans, more than 365 persons, closed in-between Russia and other ethnics, isolation from other ethnics, ten years.
- BD:** What other ethnics were there?
- AB:** The most was Russia and the countries (Multia A159) it's a (UgrafenicA159) group, ethnic group. Their own country.
- RV:** And after that, so that was ten years of (Comindetoura A161) time, and then after that did you stay some more?
- AB:** After Stalin died in 1953, two years later come (...A163) to Moscow in 1955, and that was a big question, and (Hotenour A169) wanted us to go to west Germany, and Khrushchev said no they are our soviet Germans. We became a passport, but the passport allowed only around 100 kilometers to travel, and two years later allowed us to travel to east, but not in the west part of Soviet Union, not in Ukraine, not for Black Sea, not for my village, homeland in Kandel, but only on the east side, from Ural to the Pacific.
- RV:** And your family did go east?
- AB:** We go south east to (Kaligerdam A180). Why we go in this direction, because my grandfather and my grandmother and my uncles lived in this city, they came earlier from Germany direct to the (Kaligerdam A184), and we are going to him together to this city. I married my wife, (Hilmer A185) and we lived in (Kaligerdam A186) from 1961 to 1973. And I go in the high school, after this (housegibtskomendatour A188) it was allowed study in the high school in the evening time. In the normal time I'm going working in the factory, in the power station, and in the evening I studied six years in the high school. And after this time I closed this study in 1968, and then five years later we go from (Kaligerdam A195) to the west border to (Kishendorf A195) on the Rumanian border, and from this point I was very happy. We went then in 1974 to west Germany to Nuremberg city. And our father was died earlier in 1964, I don't see him.
- RV:** You never saw him after 1945, that's very sad.
- BD:** How did your wife get to the city from Landau where you met her? You said you met your wife after you moved from the camp. How did she come from Landau in the Ukraine?
- AB:** Yes, well Landau is a neighbor village—ten or twenty kilometers or more I think, but it's not a problem, Germans have contact together, and when came Romanian soldiers to our area, it was allowed come back from Landau to Baden to Kutschurgan villages. The parents of my wife were born in Baden, in a neighbor of Kutschurgan, and in Stalin time he must going to Landau and when came Romania soldier he went back to his house, in his home village, that's the reason.
- RV:** So your wife has the same history, from Bavaria to the Urals back to Poland, and then home?
- AB:** Yes. My wife has the same way he come from Baden parallel three days after us, to Poland and then to Saxon country, and then the Russians come and transport us to the north of Ural, and another city four hundred kilometers on the north side of our place. I met my wife in the year 1958, and we contacted with brief letters and I go to this railway, or this plane more times, and after three years we married, in

1960, end of July. Then in (Kalingundar A230) we had two girls; our first girl was born in 1964, and the second girl was born in 1967, and we came to Germany when the first was ten years old and the second seven years old. The first is now thirty-three years old, she is doctor in the high school, professor for economic and sociology and the second is after finishing high school is an advertising company in Munich, and the third daughter, was born here in Germany in Nuremberg, she is in office in bureau.

BD: After you got here to Germany, what did you do for a profession, you spoke German?

AB: That is a good question. We spoke two languages, in the home in my family only German, my own dialect, also wir (related du herm zu mir, Schwartz mir deutsche A244) ein alten dialect, und der tausend im buro, und oft der strasse, in the street or in the office in the manufacturing we spoke only Russian. My studies four classes, four years in grade school in German language, and since the fifth class in Russia, we changed and study only in Russian, my grade school, and then the high school only in Russian, and my technical language and my technology language and my financial language was only Russian, and in my home with my family was only German dialect. We are thinking in two languages and here the dictionary in my hat.

BD: After you were married, and still living in Russia, did you speak Russian in the home or German in the home?

AB: No, we spoke never in my home in Russia, never in the flat. It is a problem when the television came in the flat in 1962-63, in the home we had Russian language it was problem for my children, for my mother, for my wife, it was a battle, a language battle I would say.

RV: You mean your children then struggled with which language to speak, did they speak Russian instead of German when the TV came in, can you explain more about how that effected you when the TV came into your home, your children began to speak more Russian and the problem with your mother?

AB: No we spoke only in my home German dialect. We switched the television, or we turn off when the children sleeping, and when the children go to the Russian school, they can't speak Russian, this started with the school, another language. And when we came to Germany, there was another problem for our children, you started to hear very quickly, and another problem with integration in this culture, in West Germany, for my family and for the children.

BD: Was it a problem for you and your wife?

AB: No, it wasn't a problem. For me it was a little bit, by the (A282) in the big firm, in the company, that the technological language was for me a little bit new. Here the progress is higher than in Russia. It was for me and you a little bit difficult though after two-three years I was of the same level.

RV: ...later Germans who came out of Kazakhstan, Siberia, and now to Germany struggle because they only know...

AB: Yeah, I think this is a generation problem as all (A292) generations in fifty years have a rest from old dialect spoke good. And there's a good start, a good base for the new German language here. Younger people cannot speaking the old dialect and they must hear change from Russia to the high German language. It's very difficult and he needs more time for this process. I think 3-5, maybe 10 years he needed for this switching, for this changing in the language and in the culture. It's two problems here—

he must learn here a new life what is (A 306) hills, what is computer, what is a car, what is the labor, and the highway and more—a lot of problem.

- RV:** So that's on the one side, but what about the cultural or the thinking. Could you speak more about the
- AB:** The greatest problem I think is not the political issue but rather the older way of thinking and older patriarchal way that the German-Russian still have (A320) resistant to change and new ideas and still follow the manner of making the decisions. That's the problem between the old generation and the young generation you know, the old generation is more the father is the big boss and the younger in this level, and it was in the old life, in the old time before come the Soviets the same problem and he must here in the democracy he must learn what it new places here in technology, in the office, between the young peoples and the young and older peoples, and that's a long way here. I think that longer than maybe learning the German language. I think maybe one generation needs..
- BD:** Anton, I was wondering what happened politically in the world that allowed you and your family to come back to Germany and now allows other Germans to come back to Germany?
- AB:** I didn't understand you.
- RV:** He is asking what is the political situation that allowed your family to come here so probably to begin with...
- AB:** I understand now. When I come to Germany in 1974, for us it was another life, liberty here. It was a little bit difficult for us. This political meeting of several parties and we must changing our opinion, the biggest problem was the tolerance from the oldest generation, then we have one meaning, that our (356) way is the right way but the Communists and the Soviets is wrong way and we in the family a right life, but here in the (A359) it has several meanings; we must choose between several difficult political rights. It is a problem for the older and for the younger peoples, it's a long process.
- RV:** (A369)
- AB:** (German A371-482)
- RV:** (German)
- AB:** I'll try. In 1917 we (A482) came to Moscow to (A483). He go to get on the Black Sea, the Crimea and after this time allowed two or three hundred families to go to East and West Germany. The most of this three hundred families go to the West Germany. I think fifty or seventy or one hundred families go to East.
- RV:** And you were the first (A496 auf..)
- AB:** It was the first test. And there was this explosion. There was more and more and more Russlandeustche tried to go after us to West Germany. And then after January, 1974, they closed this action in Moldavia, in (A507). They said this office is closed, we must do here preparation in this building, you know. And my relationships, my cousins and my (A514) to Kazakstan, but not the flats, but not places under (A519 Kolkhoz), or manufacturies, not work for him and they go back to the Karaganda and after twenty years he come to Germany. We was very very happy this time that we was successful in our way. I think that the bases—my father lived here in West Germany and we have the same contact and when he died and we became from office here information that our father is died and a few

thousand marcs here for us and the bank and I answer in my letter here in the office I wish (A538) a few thousand marcs, a minimum for his grave and was released information from government became in Karaganda and then the Communists and the government in Russia saw that I will go to the west, that's my opinion, that's my way and so successful.

BD: Do you know if any of your friends when you were living in Russia were able to go back to Ukraine.

(Begin side B, side B repeats some dialogue from end of side A)

AB: (B41 German)

RV: So basically nobody was allowed in...Perhaps you could say that nobody was allowed back to home villages in the Ukraine after the ...

AB: After the (B65) was not allowed to go in our villages in European parts. Not Kandel or Black Sea area, but was allowed only settled on the east side from Ural, Kazakhstan to the Pacific in the Tiger only. After 1916, 465 was allowed go to the European area, but not in their home villages, but in the neighbor cities, in the neighbor villages, one or two kilometers from old home. And after 1990 and 1992 was allowed go back to the old villages, Kandel or Selz or the Kutchurgan or the Landau or the home villages. In this time the most go to West Germany, but not to the Ukraine—that's the reason, when the Soviet's allowed (B75) in the 15 or the 16 years I'm sure that the most of them go to the Ukrainian. The most 90 or 95 persons, but not to Germany but go to the old settlements of the old homes.

RV: Do you have any relatives that have returned to Selz area...(B81 German)

AB: (B82 German)

RV: Maybe you could look at question 9. Have we answered that? What to you think is the effect of the deportation and displacement on the Germans from Russia?

AB: That is a good question. Our people, the Germans from Russia are the result of all the deportations and displacements as a group was more than fifty years was isolated from West culture, from democracy, from West life here, was closed, was isolated here on the east side from Ural, was not allowed contact with West Germans, with French, or with Switzerland, or with Austria, or with American, Russlanddeutsche, only was allowed briefing, letters after 1956 was one biggest contact without relationship in the west.

RV: What was the result of that isolation do you think?

AB: I think that we isolation more than fifty years from culture, from German culture, from European culture, from this progress, from technologies, from all this new life and this new problems, we hadn't contact, we hadn't information. Only we can have a radio since 1956, we at night listened to the German wave, (B102), and I heard at night, listening at night, the voice of America liberty. The most information I had here from Voice of American and liberty, American radio, from Munich, but only from me I contact all of my friends or my colleagues it was forbidden. I have good information, that's the reason why I so early came to West Germany, I was in the first group the go this way. And the most of my groups from Russlanddeutsche was isolated from this information. Until they were in the culture was very low and was allowed only contact with European or West hemisphere through the Russian language; it was selected, it was filtered.

- BD:** Also, I ask that somewhere on the tape you tell us what your profession is now.
- AB:** My profession is electrical engineer for the power station and for the transformers from the electrical network. I studied in 1968 in Karaganda and I worked in the office, the network authority for power stations and electricity power company. I was group leader in my group was four and five engineers about network and transformer stations. In this big area between Chinese border to (B143) and from east to west and from south from (B145 Almata) to the (146). We have in our group helicopters and planes visiting for this planes for this transformer stations and the same we had the feeder for the power for the Soviet's shuttles. That was in our area that was in our authority. But for me, I was German, was not allowed to visit this (B155), it was forbidden for me. You know, (B156) the office was not allowed at all for me visiting or study this papers for (B160) was for me forbidden. I was for the villages or for the factories for civil technologies, energy for these factories, but was not allowed to higher in this position or forbidden for me to go to manager and the Soviet's said when you go to Communist party you can go up, but that for you absolute ceiling the first you're a German the second you're not in the party, that's the reason. It's a problem. It was the same why I go to the west, I wouldn't this system. And with my wife and my family it was the result, we go west.
- RV:** Can you perhaps tell us about your welcome?
- AB:** When we came here to Nuremberg, to the Bavaria, we was very welcome here. We have after six weeks we have a new (B178 flat). We became a new flat here from Nuremberg from the city. We go for six weeks in the language school in Munich in the university, learned a little high German, but it's not a problem for us, we spoke fluently high German language. At the end of 1974 I was a few months employed here. It's a new for me. I (B185) this situation and end of 1974 I go on this company, electrical company and I worked more than twenty-two years in my profession, electrical engineer. Here the same position, a leader from the electrical group in our department. I saw here was a more business trips, I was in all countries in Europe, in Iceland, in Sweden, in England, in Iran and Belgrad; I had two visits in Moscow, was doing two weeks exposition for my (B194 Fuhrer) in 1978 and 1981. It was not a problem for me, I was very very welcome here and the technique was a little bit difficult in the first two years. I learned this language is a technological language, I learned English a little bit, you heard; I spoke never English before; I learned here in my company, I need it for my profession you know. I have more colleagues in England perhaps or in other countries and I go for six seven months in my pension and I a private man now and I go since 6-7 months in the university. I studied east European history and (B208) now. I maybe good for the future.
- RV:** So your welcome was a good one, a positive one. What do you know of the more recent (B210) and the welcome they got here?
- AB:** Well, I can say that it's my experience that the younger (B212), younger than fifteen years is not a problem. After 2-3 years, he's speaking fluently high German language, but it's not a problem for the older generations, more than fifty years, its not a problem, this is a old knowledge about dialect or German high language, but it is a big problem for the middle generation from the fifteen years to the fifty years, it's the most of them cannot speak German language, speaking only Russian. In the school, in the offices, and in the factories spoke only Russian, and in the families speak only Russian; this generation, it's a big, big problem. I think after five or ten years maybe thirty years, maybe one generation for this changing in language and in culture, that's a problem. I think it maybe would be better to go to another part, to Ukraine and settled and started a new life, maybe would be better and

we can help them from here, from Germany, or from another. (B231) this life, we can this culture, what we (B232) bring back to the (B231) helping this settlement, this people, would go this way, it's a private opinion. I can't here that you must go to this country, you must go to the west Germany, it's a private opinion, I can help, I can help (B239) in the books, or in the maps or in the dialect, what we assembled and published.

RV: We are now talking with the wife of Anton Bosch. (German)

AB (wife): (German)

(English resumes at B366)

AB: Our life was the old life I would say. In the kitchen my mother prepared the (B372)... I think the same like sauerkraut, or (B374 lists German foods). I liked, my wife prepared it the same what my mother and my grandmother, we like it, this is the same eating what my parents or what my grandparents prepared in Kandel or in Baden. We like the Borscht, that's a Ukrainian soup, a vegetable soup with tomatoes or another vegetable, tastes very good I think and my colleagues here and my friends here prepare this the same. (B389) my colleague in the factory in the office come to us or we visit him and we offer this (B393).

RV: Was there any celebration, maybe a Christmas celebration, do you remember?

AB: Yeah, the Christmas we celebrated, it's an old tradition. Long before Christmas we started at the end of November or the beginning with this ceremony, in the night we (B401) , the toys, yeah the toys, we showed from the outside for the children (B405) three-four weeks before Christmas and the children's waiting and waiting and waiting and then (B407) Christmas evening come the Krist Kindle, the same outfit as the modern one, (B409) two hundred years with a mule, donkey, and with a bell. Say to them (B415) holy Christmas come to them from the sky and bring toys, I'm bringing apples and other fruits, and their good, the children, and if they're not good come the Belzanickel (B419). The good children got the toys and the fruit and the bad children became both of them. (Laughter) Yeah, we like it and here in the (B424 lundsmanshop) here in Nuremberg we have a small group, we celebrate it now.

BD: You told me earlier about your bus trips back to Ukraine. Could you just tell us about your trips back to Ukraine?

AB: Yes, before three years, in the middle of (B432) 1994 we go with my wife, it was our first time after fifty years to Kandel, to Baden, to Landau, was with a group here by bus, more than 2000 kilometers, visited all the villages. I remember the old school, I visited three years in my young life and I remember in the church, I remember on the street, I'm afraid not found my father's house is broken and this place a big store for wine, a firm for a wine company is on this place and I found the house from my grandfather and grandmother, but the (B449 haupt) street, the main street is another outfit, it changed, the big trees was not here earlier, the street was clean, was long, was only (B455) houses on both sides, it was a wide road, and a long road, more than two kilometers and I cannot find my picture from the old Kandel, it's absolutely another in the street. It was for me interesting, I have not found the churchyard, was destroyed, was liquidated, all this was destroyed from the new government. I think they told the old man and (B471) with a tractor and (B472) this place.

BD: Your wife was with you as well?

AB: Yes the (B475) and we said building for his father was teacher in Landau, but not in function, built a new technical school and the old destroyed. Very (B483), was very hard for us.

BD: Did you feel a lot of emotion though, did both of you have a lot of feeling to be able to visit after fifty years your birthplace?

AB: No the building was my home, an old home you know, and here in Germany is my other home, I have both, I love both. Our new house is here in Germany. It's a historical country, it's a new country, I think our place is here.

(end of tape)