

## German Literature in Bessarabia 03—Andreas Sandau

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To have a better understanding of the following translation, it would serve you well if you were able to view German Literature in Bessarabia 01—Introduction.

In the following document, Andreas Sandau uses two German languages—Hochdeutsch and the Schwäbisch dialect. I have struggled with how to show the difference of the two when translating everything into English only. My conclusion was to not only show an English translation in this document, but to also show the German Hochdeutsch and Schwäbisch (whenever used) so that the reader, who might have an interest in how the two differ, can compare the translation with the original.

[Note: Comments in square brackets in the document are those of the translator. Elvire Eberhardt was consulted for the correct translation of some of the Schwäbisch dialogue.]

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[Translation Begins]

### **Andreas Sandau (A.S.)**

Andreas Sandau, born 03 November, 1880 in Katzbach. Parents: Michael Sandau and Elisabeth, née Widmer. In his younger years, his father was a village clerk for several years (when the language of the chancellery was still Russian) in Krasna, later in his hometown. Andreas, the youngest of 3 brothers, enters the Werner School in 1895. After finishing in 1899—he took part in a year of pedagogical training at the Chortitza Central School, Governorate Jekaterinoslaw. My presentation and reception with Abraham Neufeld remains unforgettable. Wanted to give him my certificates and reached into my breast pocket. He said: “Oh no, just leave it, it is enough for me that you are a student of Mr. Mutschall!” The beginning of teaching—2 years tutor at a landowner in Crimea. In October of 1902, he obtained the teacher’s diploma in Tiraspol. 1902-1906, teacher of Russian subjects at the school in Gnadenfeld. From 1906-1908,

Alt-Arzis. 1908 until the outbreak of war—Leipzig. War participation until January of 1917. From there on, teacher and sexton in Fürstenfeld II. From 1919, still there, Romanian state teacher and sexton until September of 1927. From 1927-1928, sexton and state teacher in Wischnjowka; 1928-1930, only state teachers, just by himself. From 1930-1931—Câiet, Moldowa village, Kahul County. 1931-1933—jobless—because already from 1919 erroneously declared a substitute (*suplinitor*). 1933-1934, thanks to the efforts of our senior pastor, again employed in Wischnjowka as an assistant teacher. Why as an assistant teacher? Because my diploma was lost during the war. All efforts, despite all the evidence that I am a qualified teacher, in vain. Hence bitter suffering for quite a number of years. Despite the many sufferings and adversities, I must confess that I have also experienced many beautiful things in my years of service. For example, I find Gnadenfeld and Alt-Arzis unforgettable. Today, I remember the dear colleagues with whom I worked together at a school, with whom I had a close neighborly relationship: Wilhelm Koch, Rudolf Jundt, Michael Neumann, Jakob Fiechtner and the old Tschritter—old companions who could be young with the younger colleagues. Then teachers of the same age and younger ones, such as: Albert Jundt, Ferdinand Wagner, Reinhold Bogner, Albert Pippus and Gotthilf Jörke, with whom I spent unforgettable hours. Is the present dreary, one must remember the past: it brings gentle, sweet woe, but also sweet comfort.

[Two Stories by Andreas Sandau]

#### a) *Der Bevollmächtigte.*

*M. war ein wohlhabender Mann und wollte gerne etwas gelten. Sein ganzes Dichten und Trachten war, einmal ein Amt zu bekommen; dann würde Mann auch einmal in der Gemeinde eine Rolle zu spielen bekommen hätte. — “I weiß net, worom se di net eimol zom Schulz wähla den,” sagte sie öfter in traurig singendem Tone zu ihrem “Alta.” Sie nannte ihren Mann so, obwohl er noch nicht vierzig hinterlegt hatte. Der Mann glaubte aus den Worten seiner Frau einen leisen Tadel und Zweifel an seine Fähigkeiten herauszuhören und schnauzte sie mit “dumme Ganz eine!” an. Nach einer Weile, wohl das harte Wort bereuend, sagte er schon mehr sanft: “Weischt worom, Weib? — Weil älle Esel sen!” und ging zu seinen Pferden in den Stall.*

#### a) **The Authorized Representative**

M. was a wealthy man and wanted very much to amount to something. All his aspiration was to get an office one day; then one would also have had a role to play in the community. — “I don’t understand why they don’t elect you as mayor sometime,” she often said in a sad singing tone to her ‘old man’. That is how she called her husband even though he had not yet passed the age of forty. The husband thought he heard a faint rebuke and doubts about his abilities from the words of his wife and snapped at her with “totally stupid one!” After a while, probably regretting the harsh word, he said more gently, “Woman, do you know why? It’s because all of them are jackasses!” and went to his horses in the stable.

*Die Gemeinde hatte so manche brennende Angelegenheit; immer hatte man mit verschiedenen Instanzen zu tun, auch in dieser und jener Stadt. Immer wurden Bevollmächtigte gewählt, um irgend eine Sache ins Reine zu bringen. An ihn aber hatte man nie gedacht. — Endlich aber sollte er doch drankommen. Es galte wieder etwas für die Gemeinde auszuwirken. Die Wahl eines Bevollmächtigten fand statt. Man möchte einige Männer vorschlagen, forderte der Herr Schulz die versammelten Gemeindeglieder auf. Und man schlug vor — einen, zwei. M. reckt den Hals und lauscht gespannt. Da hört er auch seinen Namen nennen. — Seine Halsmuskeln entspannen sich, er knickt hinter dem Rücken des vor ihm Sitzenden zusammen, wird rot und fühlt ein Brummen in den Ohren ... Also doch! — Nachdem er sich einigermaßen gefaßt hatte, sagte er: “Ne, ne, Männer, mi len weg, i kann mr des net*

*übernehme, in han z' wenich Leit zom arbeite, i kann mei Wirtschaft net verliedricha, on do sen au soniche, wo dera Sach besser vorsteh kennt; i bitt, Schulz, streichet me aus." — "Was ausstreicha?" meldet sich der Jakob auf der hintern Bank, — "des gibts net!" — "Schulz, fasset d' Stemma ab!:" ruft ein anderer. — "Ja, ja, der M. muß en d' Wahl!" ruft einer nach dem andern auf der hintern Bank und hie und da eine Stimme von verschiedenen Seiten. Eine Stille tritt ein, die aber bald von einem dumpfen Murmeln unterbrochen wird. Dann wird es wieder laut, Stimmen von Für und Wieder lassen sich hören. "Nue," sagt der Schulz, "wie habt ihr's?" — "Abstemma! Abstemma! Hähla!" rufen immer mehr Stimmen durcheinander. Und man schreitet zur Wahl durch Händeaufheben. M. aber sitzt, wie auf der Folter, ihm slimmerts vor den Augen ... Der Schulze zählt die Stimmen und meldet: "Der H. hat 30, der B. 60 und der M. 75 Stimmen, M. ist also gewählt!" — Die Würfel waren gefallen; es trat Entspannung ein. Der neugewählte Bevollmächtigte saß und schwieg; er wehrte sich nicht mehr. Er hatte sich ja nur anstandshalber geweigert. — Wie war nun das Wunder geschehen? — Man munkelte Verschiedenes. Einige wollten gesehen haben, daß in der letzten Nacht vor der Wahl beim M. besonders lange Licht war, sowie daß man einige Mal eine dunkle Gestalt vom Hause zum Keller und wieder zurück hatte huschen sehen. Gedämpfte Stimmen wollte man in der Stube vernommen haben ... Doch auf so etwas darf man nicht achten, es gibt bei solchen Fällen ja immer Neidische. Die Sache war abgetan und den nächsten Tag fuhr der neue Bevollmächtigte nach K. Wie er dort vorgegangen, was und wie er alles durchgewirkte, davon wollen wir schweigen, denn es ist schon lange her, da hat man so manches vergessen. Eins aber erzählen sich die Leute immer noch. Nämlich, daß der Bevollmächtigte damals gesund und heil weggefahren war, dafür aber mit einem stark zerschundenen Gesicht heimkam. M. gab an, sich gestoßen zu haben, doch wie und wo, das verschwieg er. — Erst später erfuhr man auf Umwegen, daß der gute Mann so unglücklich war, auf dem spiegelglatten Fußboden in einem großen Saale auszugleiten und auf die Nase zu fallen. Die herumsitzenden Herren sollen zwar gelacht haben, doch habe man ihm auch Wasser gegeben, daß er sich das Blut abwaschen konnte. Es gibt also auch in der Stadt noch mitleidige Menschen. — Wie lange M. Bevollmächtigter war, ist Nebensache, es genügt zu wissen, daß er tat, was er konnte. Er kam später zwar noch manchmal in die Wahl, doch ist er immer durchgefallen. Man pflegte dann zu sagen, der M. sei "aus oder durchgerutscht."*

The community had many a burning issues of business; you always had to deal with different authorities, even in this and that city. Authorized representatives were always elected to settle something. But he had never been thought of. — At last, however, it should be his turn. There was again something to do for the community. The election of an authorized representative took place. The mayor urged the assembled community members to propose some men. And they suggested — one, two. M. stretches his neck and listens intently. Then he hears his name mentioned. — His neck muscles relax, he leans forward to those sitting in front of him, blushes and feels a buzzing in his ears...Oh! Yes. — After giving it some thought, he said: "No, no, gentlemen, leave me out, I cannot accept this position, I have too few people to work with, I cannot let my farm be declining, and there are others who understand the matter better than I; I request, mayor, strike me out." "What do you mean strike out?" says Jacob from the back bench, "that can't be!" — "Mayor, I call for a vote!" shouts another. — "Yes, yes, M. must be one of those nominated!" shouts one after the other on the back bench, and here and there a voice from different sides. A silence follows, but it is soon interrupted by a muffled murmur. Then it gets loud again, voices of pros and cons can be heard. "So," says the mayor, "how do you want it?" — "Call the vote! Call the vote! Right now!" shout more and more voices in confusion. And one proceeded to vote by a show of hands. But M. sits, as if in torment, his eyes in a daze... The mayor counts the votes and reports: "H. has 30, B. 60 and M. has 75 votes, so M. is elected!" — The die had been cast; relaxation ensued. The newly elected authorized representative sat and remained silent; he no longer resisted. He had only refused out of decency. — How did the miracle happen? — Various rumors were made. Some maintained that on the last night before the election the light at the home of M. was on for an especially long time, and that a dark figure had been seen scurrying from the house to the cellar and back again. Muffled voices were heard in the living room... But you can't pay attention to something like that, there are always envious people in such cases. The matter was dismissed and the next day the new authorized

representative drove to K. How he proceeded there, what and how he worked through everything, we want to keep silent, because it was a long time ago so that many things were forgotten. But one thing people still talk about to each other. Namely, that the authorized representative had left safe and sound, but came back home with a badly bruised face. M. claimed to have bumped himself, but how and where, he did not say. — It was only later that it was learned, in a roundabout way, that the good man was so unlucky to slip on the mirror-smooth floor in a large hall and fall on his nose. The gentlemen sitting around are said to have laughed, but he was also given water so that he could wash off his blood. So there are still compassionate people in the city. — How long M. was authorized representative is a minor matter, it is enough to know that he did what he could. Although he was sometimes nominated later, he always failed. It was then the custom to say that M. “slipped out or slipped through.”

### b) The Sprouting Reed Pipe.

Matz was a pipe smoker, a skillful storyteller and something more. . . The so-inclined reader should get to know him.

*Saß da beim Jockelbauer im Kellerhäusle ein Knäuel “auserlesener” Männer beisammen. Sie waren alle gleich gastfreundlich und stellten sich immer reihum, wöchentlich 2 Mal, bei jedem von ihnen ein. Obwohl nach Charakter und Anschauung verschieden, waren sie doch ein Leib und eine Seele. Sie waren nicht zu trennen, soviel auch einige ihrer Frauen bemüht waren, an dem Kreis zu rütteln und ihn zu sprengen. Seitdem die Liese, einen Stock unter der Schürze, ihren Theodor einmal gewaltsam heimholen wollte, hielt dieser sich nur umso fester an seine Freunde. In ihnen war vertreten: Politik, Gottesgelehrtheit, Mathematik, Dichtkunst und noch manches Edle, sogar Philosophie. Politiker gab es unter ihnen zwei, weil ihnen der Herr Schullehrer die Zeitung gratis zum Lesen gab. Gottesgelehrter war Vetter Christoph, der älteste von ihnen. Er hatte eine uralte Bibel und las sehr viel darin, er “studierte,” wie er es selbst nannte. Zu bemerken ist, daß er anstatt Konsistorium — “Konschtantorium” sagte. Die Mathematik war Johann, — weil er Geschäftsmann war. Der Philosoph war Peter; der schwieg fast immer und je mehr er schwieg, desto klüger schien er zu sein. Die schöne Kunst des Dichters aber war durch den Matz vertreten. Und diesen sollt ihr heute hören. Also, er war als erster beim Jockelbauern durch die niedrige Tür des Kellerhäuschens eingetreten, wo ihm der gastfreundliche Bruder sofort direkt von der Quelle weg einen großen Becher von seinem “Weißen” kredenzte. Zu bemerken: der Jockelbauer hatte immer einen guten “Weißen,” wie er sich selbst auszudrücken pflegte. Deshalb nannten seine Freunde ihn mitunter scherzweise den “Weißen.” Bis die Uebrigen nachkamen, war der Matz in der besten Stimmung. Wie der Matz, so wurden alle empfangen. Dann setzten sie sich, wie es eben kam—auf Kürbisse, auf den Hackklotz, auf das umgestülpte Waschfaß, einige ließen ihre Füße in den Kellerhals hineinhängen, der Philosoph aber nahm seinen gewöhnlichen Platz in der Ecke auf einem Schemel ein.*

A crowd of “selected” men sat together with Jockelbauer in the little cellar house. They were all equally hospitable and always came in turn with each other, twice a week. Although different in character and outlook, they were one body and one soul. They could not be separated, however much some of their wives tried to shake the circle and break it up. Ever since Liese, with a stick under the apron, once wanted to forcibly bring her Theodor home, he only held all the more firmly to his friends. In them was represented: politics, divine scholarship, mathematics, poetry and many other noble things, even philosophy. There were two politicians among them, because the schoolteacher gave them the newspaper for free to read. The scholar of God was Uncle Christoph, the oldest of them. He had an ancient Bible and read a lot in it, he “studied,” as he himself called it. It should be noted that instead of saying *Konsistorium* [Lutheran Church Council] —he pronounced it *Konschtantorium*. Mathematics was Johann, —because he was a businessman. The philosopher was Peter; he was almost always silent and the more he was silent, the wiser he seemed to be. The beautiful art of the poet was however represented by

Matz. And this is what you shall hear today. So, he was the first to enter were Jockelbauer was, through the low door of the small cellar house, where the hospitable brother immediately offered him a large cup of his “white” directly from the source. To note: Jockelbauer always had a good “white,” as he used to himself make mention. That is why his friends sometimes jokingly called him the “white one.” Until the others arrived, Matz was in the best mood. Like Matz, so all were welcomed. Then they sat down as they came—on pumpkins, on the chopping block, on the inverted wash tub, some let their feet hang into the throat of the cellar, but the philosopher took his usual place in the corner on a footstool.

*Man erkundigte sich gegenseitig nach dem und henem, was in der Zeitung “steht,” was dem sein Hutsch und henem sein krankes Weib macht, usw. Da fragte von ungefähr der Jockelbauer den Theodor, was er denn so emsig in seinem Garten geschafft habe. “No, was wer i geschafft han, Heckariedla (Schößlinge vom Weißdorn) han i rauszoga, des Teufelszeug wachst ja, wie verreckt!” antwortete der Theodor. Das Thema war angeschnitten. Jeder wußte da etwas zu erzählen von der Zähigkeit des “lebigen Holzes.” Der Matz aber fieberte vor Ungeduld. Er konnte es nicht erwarten, bis er zu Worte kam. — “Horchte, was i euch verzehla will!” — Alle schwiegen still; denn sie wußten, jetzt kommt was Schönes. — Und er erzählte, was er mit dem “Teufelszeug,” mit dem “lebige Holz,” erlebt habe. Er habe vor Jahren, beim Kartoffelpflanzen, sein Pfeifenrohr verloren, das er sich aus einer Heckenwurzel gemacht und bereits zwei Jahre lang benutzt hatte. Da kommt er einmal nach einem Regen, in seinen Garten und sieht da eine Menge von jungen Hecken. Er ärgert sich und fängt an, das Zeug auszuraufen. Er arbeitete mit großem Fleiß, will doch den Garten wieder rein haben. Wie er da einen ganz besonders großen Schößling herauszieht, fällt ihm die wunderlich geformte Wurzel auf. Er befreit diese von der daranhaftenden Erde und untersuchte sie genau. Was hat er entdeckt? Er wagt es kaum, es auszusprechen: es war sein Pfeifenrohr, das er verloren hatte! “Bravo!” rief der Hannes, — “des muß mer drucka lassa!” — “Drucka lassa? Des isch vielleicht au odruckt net ganz verloga!” — Man lachte, daß man es in der Nachbarschaft hörte. Sogar Vetter Christoph machte ein paarmal hi, hi, hi! Der Philosoph schielte zur Tür hinaus, ohne eigentlich dort etwas besonderes zu sehen und hüstelte khä, khä! Dann machte das große Glas noch einmal die Runde, und die Freunde gingen auseinander.*

They inquired among themselves about this and that, what was “written” in the newspaper, what about his pony doing and how his sick wife was, and so forth. Then Jockelbauer asked Theodor what he was so busy doing in his garden. “Well, what I have been doing is this: I pulled out Heckariedla (saplings of hawthorn), the devil’s stuff really grows, like crazy!” Theodor replied. The subject became the focus of discussion. Everyone knew something to tell about the persistence of the “vigorous wood”. But Matz was feverish with impatience. He could not wait to speak. — “Listen to what I will tell you!” —Everyone was silent; for they knew that something beautiful was coming. —And he told what he had experienced with the “devil’s stuff,” with the “vigorous wood.” Years ago, while planting potatoes, he had lost his reed pipe, which he had made from a hedge root and had already used it for two years. Once after a rain, he comes into his garden and sees a lot of young hedges. He gets angry and starts pulling out the stuff. He worked with great diligence, because he wanted to have the garden clean again. As he pulls out a particularly large sapling, he notices the strangely shaped root. He freed it from the earth adhering to it and examined them carefully. What did he discover? He hardly dares to say it: it was his pipe that he had lost! “Bravo!” shouted Hannes, “it must be allowed to be printed!” — “Let it be printed? Even if printed it is not all a lie!” —People laughed so that they heard it in the neighborhood. Even Uncle Christoph made hee, hee, hee a few times! The philosopher squinted out the door, without actually seeing anything special there, and coughed khä, khä! Then the big glass made the rounds again and the friends parted.

[Translation Ends]