

The Sharpeville Massacre*

The Sharpeville Massacre in the 1960s was a turning point in South African history. For the resistance movements it marked the change from non-violent to violent protest. The peaceful protest at Sharpeville against the pass laws was organised by the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and met by shooting by the police. It is not clear what really happened on 21 March 1960; there were different versions of and perspectives on the events in Sharpeville. In the following text Humphrey Tyler, assistant editor of *Drum Magazine* at that time, reports how he experienced that day in his function as a journalist. – www.sahistory.org.za/pages/governance-projects/sharpeville/03_eyewitnesses.htm.



69 people were killed by the police during the Sharpeville Massacre

machine gun, then another, then another. There were hundreds of women, some of them laughing. They must have thought the police were firing blanks. One woman was hit about ten yards from our car. Her companion, a young man, went back when she fell. He thought she had stumbled. Then he turned her over and saw that her chest had been shot away. He looked at the blood on his hand and said: "My God, she's gone!" Hundreds of kids were running, too.

One little boy had on an old blanket coat, which he held up behind his head, thinking, perhaps, that it might save him from the bullets. Some of the children, hardly as tall as the grass, were leaping like rabbits.

Some were shot, too. Still the shooting went on. One of the policemen was standing on top of a Saracen, and it looked as though he was firing his gun into the crowd. He was swinging it around in a wide arc from his hip as though he were panning a movie camera. Two other officers were with him, and it looked as if they were firing pistols. Most of the bodies were strewn on the road running through the field in which we were. One man, who had been lying still, dazedly got to his feet, staggered a few yards, then fell in a heap. A woman sat with her head cupped in her hands.

One by one the guns stopped.

Before the shooting, I heard no warning to the crowd to disperse. There was no warning volley. When the shooting started it did not stop until there was no living thing in the huge compound in front of the police station. The police have claimed they were in desperate danger because the crowd was stoning them. Yet only three policemen were reported to have been hit by stones – and more than 200 Africans were shot down. The police also

1 We went into Sharpeville the back way, behind a grey police car and three Saracens. As we drove through the fringes of the township many people shouted the Pan-Africanist slogan "Izwe Lethu", which means "Our Land", or gave the thumbs-up "freedom" salute and shouted "Afrika!". They were grinning, cheerful, and nobody seemed to be afraid... There were crowds in the streets as we approached the police station. There were plenty of police, too, wearing more guns and ammunition than uniforms... An African approached... and said he was the local Pan-Africanist leader. He told [us] his organisation was against violence and that the crowd was there for a peaceful demonstration... The crowd seemed perfectly amiable. It certainly never crossed our minds that they would attack us or anybody...

15 There were sudden shrill cries of "Izwe Lethu" - women's voices it sounded – from near the police, and I could see a small section of the crowd swirl around the Saracens and hands went up in the Africanist salute.
20 Then the shooting started. We heard the chatter of a

65 have said that the crowd was armed with "ferocious weapons", which littered the compound after they fled.

I saw no weapons, although I looked very carefully, and afterwards studied the photographs of the death scene.
70 While I was there I saw only shoes, hats and a few bicycles left among the bodies. The crowd gave me no reason to feel scared, though I moved among them without any distinguishing mark
75 to protect me, quite obvious with my white skin. I think the police were scared though, and I think the crowd knew it.



The police used saracens to suppress riots

Vocabulary

3 fringe (n.): the part of s.th. that is farthest from the centre - **14 amiable** (adj.): friendly and likable - **18 to swirl** (v): to turn around quickly in a twisting circular movement or make s.th. do this - **26 blank** (n.): a cartridge that contains an explosive but not a bullet - **48 to pan** (v.): if a film or television camera pans in a particular direction, it moves and follows the thing that is being filmed - **52 dazed** (adj.): unable to think clearly, esp. because of a shock, accident etc - **57 to disperse** (v.): if a group of people disperses or is dispersed, they separate and go away in different directions - **57 volley** (n.): a large number of shots fired from a gun at the same time - **65 ferocious** (adj.): violent, dangerous, and frightening

Explanations

Introduction: pass laws: see p. 20 - **Introduction: PAC:** Pan Africanist Congress of Azania; it was a resistance movement established in 1959 and the major rival of the ANC (see p. 17). The PAC proclaimed Africanism and opposed multi-racialism; their key slogan in the past was "Africa for the Africans" - **Introduction: Drum magazine:** see p. 57 - **2 saracens:** armoured cars that were often used to suppress riots in the townships (see p. 28)

AWARENESS

- 1 What is meant by a turning point in history?
- 2 Can you find such turning points in German history?

COMPREHENSION

- 3 What was the atmosphere in the crowd like at the beginning of the demonstration?
- 4 Why did the situation change?

ANALYSIS

- 5 Compare the eye-witness account of Humphrey Tyler with an article in the British newspaper *The Guardian* (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/1960/mar/22/southafrica.fromthearchive>). The differences are significant. Try to find reasons for this. Can you find any similarities in the two accounts?

OPINION

- 6 What do you believe happened in Sharpeville in March 1960? Give reasons for your opinion.
- 7 To what extent can reporting on certain events be objective or neutral? What are the implications for journalists and the readers of such reports?

PROJECT

- 8 In groups of 4-5 students write an article about a recent event, but from different perspectives. Compare your articles. To what extent do they differ from each other? How could they be used to manipulate public opinion?

"An Ode to Bafana Bafana"

Soccer (football) is among the most popular sports in South Africa. It is a sport of the people that is mainly played in the streets and stadiums of the townships. South Africa's national team is called "Bafana Bafana". Though it did not qualify for the last World Cup in Germany in 2006, South Africa hosts the next one in 2010. Stadiums have been rebuilt or newly built in every major town or city all over the country. Phaswane Mpe (see p. 49) wrote a poem about the international team of South Africa in 1998 called "An Ode to Bafana Bafana". – Phaswane Mpe: *Brooding Clouds*, Scottsville/RSA: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008, pp. 168, 70.



1 ai

we sang...
 we sang shosholoza
 sent you off with rhymes
 of joy & hope stifled
 by our knowledge of your youth
 in matters of world cups
 we brooded over the deprivations
 & depravities of apartheid
 of amabokoboko
 beating ireland with scores
 of fists that frightened the irish
 made them fearful
 of scoring their own goals
 to fill oceans of nationhood
 flowing within their literature
 james joyce forgot about the artist
 as a young man
 & focused his sharp gaze
 on you bafana bafana
 playing your first round like boys

stranded in a zoo
 of noisy spectators screaming au revoir
 benny mccarthy magic
 & no wonder boys
 there was no madiba magic
 spurring you on from the maddening crowds
 of noises of shosholoza
 uprooted from its south african soil
 & stranded in the green lands [...]
 you lost bafana bafana
 but we knew you were stimela's franky
 wanting to go to the city
 it is enticing & menacing that hillbrow
 that you would go to
 softly now boys...
 tread softly as you wade your way
 towards 2002
 a big leap towards 2006 and beyond
 when we might watch from heavens
 as you soar like eagles [...]



Pure joy of life:
Bafana fans
at the first
game of the
Confederations
Cup, 14 June
2009

Vocabulary

8 deprivation (n.): s.th. you need or usually have that you are prevented from having - **9 to deprave** (v.): *fml.* to be an evil influence on s.o., esp. s.o. who is young or not very experienced - **34 enticing** (adj.): very pleasant or interesting so that you feel strongly attracted - **34 menacing** (adj.): making you expect s.th. unpleasant - **37 wade** (v.): to walk through water that is not deep

Explanations

Introduction: **bafana:** means "boys", the name of the national soccer team - **1 ai:** exclamation of surprise, pain or dismay - **3 shosholoz:** popular South African "working

song" sung at rugby matches by Springbok supporters - **10 amabokoboko:** African name for the international rugby team - **11 beating Ireland:** South Africa beat Ireland in two Rugby test matches in 1998. The results were 37-13 and 33-0. These were devastating defeats for the Irish. - **17 James Joyce** (1882-1941): Irish writer. He wrote the novels *Ulysses* (1922) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), among other important works. - **24 Benny McCarthy:** popular South African soccer player - **26 Madiba:** affectionate nickname for Nelson Mandela (see p. 27) - **32 stimela:** popular South African jazz group headed by Ray Phiri - **32 Franky:** an allusion to US-American singer and actor Frank Sinatra (1915-1998) - **34 Hillbrow:** see p. 47

AWARENESS

- 1 Do you know any players in the South African football team? Do you know any South African players in Germany? Who are they, and which teams do they play for?

COMPREHENSION

- 2 What is the name of the national rugby team given in the poem?

ANALYSIS

- 3 What is an ode? Why does Mpe use the form of an ode?
- 4 What literary devices can you find in the poem? What is their function in the poem?
- 5 Why does the poet mention a) James Joyce (l. 17) b) Franky (l. 32)?
- 6 What is meant by "madiba magic" (l. 26)?

OPINION

- 7 How important is football (soccer) in your country? Do you think it is overrated? Give reasons for your opinion.

PROJECTS

- 8 Imagine the final of the World Cup (2010 or later) is your national team against Bafana Bafana. Write a newspaper article or radio report about the game.
- 9 Find out about the two most famous South African soccer teams: Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs (<http://www.orlandopiratesfc.com/> and <http://www.kaizerchiefs.com/>).
a) What do they have in common? b) Which other nicknames do they have and what do they mean? c) How are they seen by their supporters? Explain why their supporters view the teams as they do.



Diese Beilage zeigt Schnittstellen zwischen dem fächerspezifischen Lehrplan und der Möglichkeit, das Thema Schulpartnerschaft mit Südafrika im Unterricht zu behandeln. Sie skizziert die Vorgaben aus dem Kernlehrplan und das Potential Südafrikas. Ebenso bietet sie Verweise auf Material- und Projektangebote sowie weiterführende Links zum Globalen Lernen.

Prozessbezogene Kompetenzen (Gymnasium):

Gemeinschaftskunde (Klasse 8-12)

Der Lehrplan ist Kompetenz orientiert. Schülerinnen und Schüler (SuS) sollen systematisch kommunikative und interkulturelle Kompetenzen erlernen und damit auf eine globalisierte Lebenswelt vorbereitet werden. Neben dem Erlernen von Text- und Medienkompetenz soll die Auseinandersetzung mit anderen Lebenswirklichkeiten die Selbstreflexionskompetenz stärken. Dabei soll folgendes erreicht werden:

➤ Analysekompetenz

Die SuS können politische, wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Sach-, Konflikt- und Problemlagen anhand sozialwissenschaftlicher Kenntnisse systematisch und zielgerichtet untersuchen und darauf aufbauend vorliegende Entscheidungen und Urteile hinterfragen.

Quelle: [Bildungsplan - Gemeinschaftskunde \(bildungsplaene-bw.de\)](https://www.bildungsplaene-bw.de/), [Bildungsplan - 2.1 Analysekompetenz \(bildungsplaene-bw.de\)](https://www.bildungsplaene-bw.de/)

Englisch (Klasse 5-12)

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➤ Sprachbewusstheit

Die SuS reflektieren beim Erwerb der sprachlichen Mittel die spezifischen Ausprägungen des Englischen auch im Vergleich zu anderen Sprachen. Sie nutzen die Ausdrucksmittel des Englischen

zielgerichtet, setzen dabei Stil, Register sowie kulturell bestimmte Formen des Sprachgebrauchs, zum Beispiel Formen der Höflichkeit, sensibel ein und gestalten auch interkulturelle Kommunikationssituationen verantwortungsbewusst. Ihrem Gegenüber begegnen sie respektvoll und tolerant, unabhängig davon, ob dessen Identität anders geprägt ist als ihre eigene. Die SuS erkennen sprachliche Kommunikationsprobleme und sind in der Lage, Kompensationsstrategien variabel und adressatengerecht anzuwenden. Darüber hinaus reflektieren sie die Rolle und Verwendung von Sprachen in der Welt, zum Beispiel im Kontext kultureller und politischer Gegebenheiten. In der Auseinandersetzung mit fiktionalen und nichtfiktionalen Texten erkennen, analysieren und bewerten sie über Sprache gesteuerte Beeinflussungsstrategien. Die Begegnung mit Literatur ermöglicht es ihnen darüber hinaus in besonderem Maße, Sprache in ihrer ästhetischen Dimension und als Mittel schöpferischen Ausdrucks zu erfahren. Auf diese Weise entwickeln sie Sensibilität für Sprache und sprachlich vermittelte Kommunikation.

➤ Sprachlernkompetenz

Die SuS können das eigene Sprachenlernen weitgehend selbstständig analysieren und gestalten. Dabei greifen sie auf ihr mehrsprachiges Wissen (Erstsprache, gegebenenfalls Zweitsprache, Fremdsprachen) und auf individuelle Sprachlernerfahrungen zurück, zum Beispiel indem sie Gemeinsamkeiten, Unterschiede und Beziehungen zwischen verschiedenen Sprachen reflektieren und für ihr Sprachenlernen gewinnbringend einsetzen.

Zur Erweiterung ihrer sprachlichen Kompetenzen nutzen sie vielfältige – direkte, medial vermittelte, simulierte und authentische – Begegnungen mit der Fremdsprache, auch an außerschulischen Lernorten. Sie verfügen über ein angemessenes Repertoire an sprachbezogenen Lernmethoden und Strategien, die sie ebenso wie digitale Hilfsmittel zielgerichtet und eigenständig anwenden.

Die SuS schätzen ihre Sprachlernprozesse und -ergebnisse eigenverantwortlich ein und ziehen Konsequenzen für ihr sprachliches Handeln und die Gestaltung weiterer Lernschritte.

Quelle: [Bildungsplan - Englisch als erste Fremdsprache \(bildungsplaene-bw.de\)](#), [Bildungsplan - 2.1 Sprachbewusstheit \(bildungsplaene-bw.de\)](#), [Bildungsplan - 2.2 Sprachlernkompetenz \(bildungsplaene-bw.de\)](#)

Empfohlenes Unterrichtsmaterial (Englisch)

- Klett Arbeitsmaterial [The Sharpeville Massacre](#)
Das Sharpeville Massaker 1960 lenkte international die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Gräueltaten der Apartheid und wird heute durch den Antirassismustag am 21. März gedacht.
- Klett Arbeitsmaterial [An Ode to Bafana Bafana](#)
Bafana Bafana ist die südafrikanische Fußballmannschaft, von der alle hofften, dass sie 2010 bei der Fußball WM in Südafrika den Pokal holen würde.

Weiterführendes Material

- [South Africa – from apartheid to reconciliation](#) Arbeitsheft zu Südafrika (Oberstufe Englisch)
- [Nelson Mandela – Der erste schwarze Präsident Südafrikas](#) 12-minütiger Videobeitrag mit vorbereiteten Fragen für Schülerinnen und Schüler
- [Nelson Mandela – Der lange Weg zur Freiheit](#) historisches Drama (150 Minuten)
- Sindiwe Magona: [Mother to Mother](#) Im August 1993 wurde die Fulbright Stipendiatin Amy Elizabeth Bill von einer Bande schwarzer Jugendlicher in Guguletu, Südafrika, überfallen und getötet. Amy, eine weiße Amerikanerin, war nach Südafrika gekommen, um schwarze Menschen politisch und moralisch zu unterstützen. In dem Roman Mother to Mother, der sich an den realen Vorfall anlehnt, versucht die Mutter eines Mörders die Beweggründe ihres Sohnes zu erklären, indem sie die Ereignisse der Vergangenheit analysiert. Dadurch legt sie die tragischen Folgen der Apartheidpolitik bloß. (mit Begleitmaterial erhältlich)

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