

THE *MIRACLE RISING*[®] AS SOURCE FOR TEACHING HISTORY: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Now is the time for celebration, for South Africans to join together to celebrate the birth of democracy. I raise a glass to you all, for working so hard to achieve what can only be called a small miracle.

Nelson Mandela (Victory Speech, 2 May 1994)¹

Abstract

*Twenty years ago, all South Africans – for the first time – had the privilege to vote on an equal basis for the political party to govern the country in the years to come. It was an extraordinary and a momentous phase in the country's history – a historical milestone indeed. Mr Mandela referred to this occasion as a small miracle. This was undeniably so if one considers that colonial, apartheid, racial and cultural legacies have immensely contributed to divisions, distrust, violence and killings among people of all races and colour. To digestibly capture relics of these memories of reality in a single historical documentary accessible to the ordinary man through the Internet and other media, the producing of *Miracle Rising*[®] was and is welcomed in the public domain. To what extent educators of History in South Africa have responded to this documentary since 2012, and have considered using it in History classes, is not known. However, this paper intends to focus on its theoretical and practical value for teaching History that should be embraced in every History class. Teaching *Miracle Rising*[®] provides for opportunities to address a very difficult yet jubilant phase in the history of a country so long aspiring for equality and peace. The process leading to South Africa becoming democratic can be regarded as a sensitive topic to teach because of the racist, politically violent and culturally intolerant undertones that occurred decades before the April 1994 election. A maturity with regard to teaching, comprehensive knowledge, as well as an efficient application of teaching skills and assessment techniques will be pivotal in overcoming the moments of sensitivity, especially those captured in *Miracle Rising*[®].*

Keywords: History teaching; Teaching democracy; Leadership; *Miracle Rising*[®]; South Africa; History documentaries.

¹ S Friedman and D Atkinson (eds.), *South African Review 7, The small miracle. South Africa's negotiated settlement* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1994), back page.

Introduction

Several, or probably thousands of pens and minds in different forms and shapes recorded or revisited South Africa's most historical moment ever, namely 27-28 April 1994.² Those were two historical days on which all South African citizens had the opportunity to cast their vote for a democratic South Africa. At the time, I had already spent years as a school teacher. I passionately taught History despite still knowing so little about my country's deeply wounded past. Perhaps histories of countries and the histories of peoples are mostly groomed by the beautiful, the bitter, the sad and even the better days and years. I remember singer Laurika Rauch's captivating song *Hot Gates*³ in 1995, in which song writer Christopher Torr⁴ captured in this song several places all over the world as spaces of human hardships. The song also included some erstwhile black townships in South Africa, like Sharpeville (March 1960),⁵ Boipatong (June 1992),⁶ and Mitchell's Plain (1992⁷ and, alas, ongoing).⁸ It might just as well have been any other place in the country experiencing distress in the early 1990s. Think of Bekkersdal⁹ or Soweto¹⁰ or Alexandra,¹¹ perhaps thoughts about the demolishing of Sophiatown¹² in its original glory and pain? It is against the broader reality of the country's rich history and the

- 2 From a historical angle some standard publications that should be consulted when seriously engaging in gaining knowledge prior to 1994 and from 1994 the following can apply: S Friedman and D Atkinson (eds.), *South African Review 7...*, pp. 1-68; HB Giliomee & B Mbenga (eds.), *New history of South Africa* (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 2007), pp. 454; FJ Pretorius (ed.), *A history of South Africa. From the distant past to the present day* (Pretoria, Protea Book House, 2014), Chapters 17-19, 23-24.
- 3 The meaning of Torr's *Hot Gates* maybe a duality of meaning, referring to the Battle of Thermopylae in Greece, fought between the Spartans of Greece and Persia in August-September 480BC or/and also hinting towards life after death in a religious way. See E Bradford, *Thermopylae: The battle for the West* (Open Road Media, 2014), p. 256.
- 4 Torr is the husband of Rauch.
- 5 T Lodge, *Sharpeville a massacre and its consequences* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 423.
- 6 See P Noonan, *They're burning the churches: The final dramatic events that scuttled apartheid* (Durban, Jacana Media, 2003), pp. 285; MJ Evans, *Broadcasting the end of apartheid: Live television and birth of a new South Africa* (New York, I.B. Taurus, Oct 2014), p. 320.
- 7 B Dixon & L-M Johns, "Gangs, Pagad & the State: Vigilantism and revenge violence in the Western Cape", *Violence and Transition Series*, 2, May 2001 (available at <http://www.csvr.org.za/swits/papers/papvtp2.htm>, as accessed on August 2014; WG James & M Simons (eds.), *The angry divide. Social & economic history of the Western Cape* (Cape Town, David Phillip, 1989).
- 8 On 20 September 2013 gang violence in Mitchell's Plain was said to be the worst crime area in South Africa. See M Gebhardt, "Mitchells plain worst area of crime in SA" (available at BDALive: <http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/2013/09/20/mitchells-plain-worst-area-for-crime-in-sa>, as accessed on August 2014.
- 9 ES van Eeden, "Profiling another 'Bekkersdal marathon': Several angles from history on a community in the West Rand mining region of South Africa, 1949-2013", Draft Manuscript prepared for publication in 2015.
- 10 E Bornman, R van Eeden, M Wentzel, *Violence in South Africa: A variety of perspectives* (Pretoria, HSRC Press, 1998), p. 457.
- 11 DY Curry, *Apartheid on a Black Isle: Removal and resistance in Alexandra South Africa* (Johannesburg, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 224; L Sinwell, "Rethinking South Africa's transition: From transformative to mainstream approaches to participatory development", *African Studies*, 70(3), December 2011.
- 12 DM Hart and GH Pirie, "The sight and soul of Sophiatown", *Geographical Review*, 74(1), January 1984, pp. 38-47.

historical state of violence after 1990¹³ that the “small miracle” of successfully seeing through a democratic election in April of 1994 was to be coined by the first democratically elected President of South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela.¹⁴ The production of the documentary *Miracle Rising*[®] 17 years later can be viewed as a successful result in which noticeable efforts were made to view events and actions as contributions towards progressing to a democratic South Africa from diverse perspectives (however, not yet a “complete” perspective).¹⁵

Miracle Rising[®] is a 92-minute historical documentary on South Africa that was inspired by the companies MultiChoice and A & E Networks, and financially sponsored by Dimension Data. The South African company, Combined Artist, was commissioned – supported by History™ – to produce this documentary as from late 2011. Brett L Best (Writer and Director), Jonathan Sparks (Executive Producer) and Adam McDonald (Executive Producer for History) brought the project to completion in 2012. An impressive cast of interviewees from a variety of countries, professions and descent were involved by reliving their experiences and impressions of South Africa’s difficulties, its leadership and its becoming a democratic state. The production was efficiently combined with either true to life visual moments from the past or reproduced to reflect past events that led up to South Africa’s “miracle” democratic election of April 1994.

As *Miracle Rising*[®] is regarded as the most often watched documentary ever produced in South Africa, its value and usefulness deserves to be considered for application as teaching source in general, and in Further and/or Higher Education and Training environments. The focus of this paper will therefore be from the stand that learners will be exposed to parts of the documentary. Based on this exposure some ideas are exchanged and shared regarding constructive assessment as possibilities for using *Miracle Rising*[®] in an environment where History is taught.

What follows, is a historian and an educator’s approach to make sense of this documentary as a valuable visual medium and tool in the History classroom

13 Compare S Ellis, “The historical significance of South Africa’s third force”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24(2), 1998, pp. 261-299; B McKendrick & W Hoffmann, *People and violence in South Africa* (USA, Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 495; HPP Lötter, *Injustice, violence and peace: The case of South Africa* (Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1997), p. 223; Anon., “Comment”, *Sowetan*, 8 March 1994, p. 8.

14 S Friedman and D Atkinson (eds.), *South African Review 7...*, back page. See also the South African Democracy Education Trust’s, *The road to democracy in South Africa*, 4 (parts 1 and 2), 1980-1990 (Pretoria, Unisa Press, 2010).

15 Critical viewers and supporters of for example the Pan Africanist Congress, Inkatha, the erstwhile Conservative Party and the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging [*Resistance Movement*] (AWB) might argue an absence of voice or/and a visibility of only a negative side of their activities.

from the GET¹⁶ to the FET¹⁷ and the HET¹⁸ educational phases. The theoretical consideration of the article is embedded in the country's history (thus in historical knowledge) of progressing towards democracy (thus an understanding of democracy in theory). The practical side of the discussion (exposed in some additional knowledge and memories) with regard to the 1994-election and its assessment possibilities are pointers to themes in the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) curriculum document. Ways of engaging and forms of assessing are exchanged. Before doing so, however, a concise historical account of South Africa and the main contents of the documentary *Miracle Rising®* are also provided against the background of an understanding of democracy.

Political, intellectual, social and economic strides towards a “miraculous” democratic South Africa

Underlying historical and theoretical considerations

Though it may be tempting to simply view the history of any event from a mere anecdotal, event-detailed and perhaps parochial or sometimes trivial-seen-in-later-years view, most events that actually did happen¹⁹ remain rooted in deeper reasons, trends and developments.²⁰ Thus, for example, the Southern African region has as a result been exposed historically to the impact of modernism²¹ resulting from European industrialisation and territorial colonialism.²² In turn, several military rivalries,²³ political tug of war scenarios²⁴ and instances of *religious intolerance*²⁵ also allowed for circumstances in Europe and elsewhere to have further bearing on the incoming and indigenous

16 General Education and Training Phase, Grades 1-6.

17 Further Education and Training Phase, Grades 7-12.

18 Higher Education and Training phase which covers tertiary level education.

19 A reference and acknowledgement to the well-known historian-pioneer Leopold von Ranke.

20 Compare J Comaroff, *Body of power, spirit of resistance: The culture and history of a South African people* (USA, University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 303; G Rist, *The history of development: From Western origins to global faith* (New York, Zed Books, 2002), p. 286; JN Pieterse, *Development theory*, 2 (London, SAGE, 2010), p. 252.

21 JC Myers, *Indirect rule in South Africa: Tradition, modernity and the costuming of political power* (USA, University of Rochester Press, 2008), p. 140.

22 See CA Bayly, *The birth of the modern world, 1780-1914: Global connections and comparisons* (UK, Oxford, 2004), p. 568; T Pakenham, *The scramble for Africa* (London, Harper Collins, 1992), p. 800.

23 AJP Taylor, *Struggle for mastery in Europe 1848-1914* (Oxford History of Modern Europe, OUP, 1998), p. 690; M Howard, *War in European history* (UK, Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 192.

24 A Wendt, “Constructing international politics”, *International Security*, 20(1), 1995, pp. 71-81.

25 AH Anderson, *African Reformation: African initiated Christianity in the 20th century* (Eritrea, Africa World Press, 2001), p. 282; JLG Gray, *The French Huguenots: Anatomy of courage* (Barker Book House, 1981), p. 282; OP Grell and B Schribner, *Tolerance and intolerance in the European Reformation* (UK, University of Cambridge, 2002), p. 292.

peoples at the tip of Africa.²⁶ With time, other forces present in South Africa also contributed to the escalating violence, racism and politically inspired nationalism. Despite the impact of history, time has allowed for the realisation of a “small miracle” in South Africa in 1994 – one embedded in democracy.²⁷

According to an expert on democracy, Charles Tilly,²⁸ the concept democracy’s visibility in countries could include the following four features:

- Constitutional democracy (a focus on laws – legal arrangements);
- Substantive democracy (an emphasis on conditions of life and politics that a given regime promotes);
- Procedural democracy (the visibility of democracy through the appearance of elections and who may vote);
- Process-oriented democracy (attention to a minimum set of processes that must continuously apply to be recognised as democratic like effective participation; voting equality and enlightened understanding).

In progressing towards a democracy most countries experienced precursors that signalled an action as a result of dissatisfaction with a government. These precursors or signs could have been proactive responses by strong businesses (merchant oligarchies); a consolidated reaction by ordinary people (peasant communities); responses of discontent by for example non-governmental groups and denominations because of a perceived violation of human rights. Lastly, some revolutionary moments in a country’s history can also contributing in progressing towards a democracy.²⁹

Though, in Africa the concept democracy in a postcolonial phase rather signalled autocracy and dictatorships³⁰ since the end of the Cold War.³¹ Therefore, South Africa’s successful transition to a democracy in 1994 is meritorious and worth it to understand³² against the utilising of a visual tool

26 LM Thompson, *A history of South Africa* (USA, Yale University Press, 2001), p. 358; L Hartz, *The founding of new societies: Studies in the history of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada and Australia* (USA, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1969), p. 336.

27 A Lester, *From colonization to democracy. A new historical geography of South Africa* (London, I.B.Taurus, 1998), p. 288.

28 C Tilly, *Democracy* (UK, Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 313, with particular emphasis on pp. 1-24.

29 Compare RC Box, *Public Administration and Society* (USA, M.E. Sharpe, 2009), pp. 25-27.

30 Compare M Meredith, *The state of Africa. A history of fifty years of independence* (Johannesburg, Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2005). See Part III, Chapter 23, pp. 378-411 on the struggle for democracy; A Thomson, *An introduction to African politics*, 3rd Edition (London, Routledge, 2010), pp. 243-271.

31 A Green, “Democracy and institutions in postcolonial Africa” (available at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2120837>, as accessed on March 2012), pp. 1-28.

32 For more background on South Africa’s road to a democracy the writing of Laurie Nathan could be considered, titled “Accounting for South Africa’s successful transition to democracy”, *Crisis States Development Research Centre*, Discussion Paper 5, June 2004, pp. 1-10.

such as *Miracle Rising®*. This should be done with a solid emphasis on obtaining a thorough historical knowledge of the period before South Africa's becoming a democracy in April 1994, as well as consider using a meaningful variety of assessment possibilities for various grades that captures South Africa's road to democracy as is presented in the CAPS.

The road towards accomplishing the “small miracle”

Educators of History are encouraged to read the *South African Review 7* (1994)³³ in order to be able to follow a detailed account of events that led to the 1994 democratic election in South Africa as recorded at the time.

An interesting approach is followed by Doreen Atkinson in her contribution of the *South African Review*³⁴ towards discussing a very complicated political set up. Atkinson (like the world renowned Wangari Maathai) relies on a metaphor in the field of transport when discussing postcolonial political developments in Africa which, amongst others, led to the “small miracle” of 1994 in South Africa. Maathai, for example, does so when referring to poor leadership on the African continent since freedom was gained as a “travelling on the wrong bus”:³⁵

Like travellers who have boarded the wrong bus, many people and communities are heading in the wrong direction or following a wrong route, while allowing others (often their leaders) to lead them farther from their desired destination. I hold to the conviction that most of Africa is on the wrong bus today.

Atkinson, in her discussion of South Africa's “small miracle”, uses the metaphor of a train when she explains the difficulties among leadership and their parties to find consensus on “travelling” the way forward. Quite appropriately, the following historical events representing difficulties and hardships are listed briefly. Some are also highlighted in *Miracle Rising®*:

Back aboard the train

- Failure of CODESA:³⁶ both the ANC and the NP overestimated their strength and underrated that of their opponents. August 1992 marked a new phase

33 D Atkinson, “Brokering a miracle? The multiparty negotiating forum”, S Friedman and D Atkinson (eds.), *South African Review 7...*, pp. 13-43.

34 D Atkinson, “Brokering a miracle?...”, S Friedman and D Atkinson (eds.), *South African Review 7...*, p. 13.

35 W Maathai, *The challenge for Africa – a new vision* (UK, Heinemann, 2009), p. 336 (introduction).

36 CODESA known as the Convention for a Democratic South Africa and convened as from December 1991. Explore for some baseline information in standard works on South Africa's history as well as <http://www.sahistory.org.za/codesa-negotiations> in South African History Online. See also the reference to Appendix C questions and Vladimir I Tikhomirov, *CODESA: New realities and old contradictions* (International Freedom Foundation, 1992), p. 24.

of negotiations that led to a Record of Understanding between Mandela and De Klerk (made possible by “the channel”, alias Cyril Ramaphosa and Roelf Meyer;³⁷

- The ANC regarded a set date for the election as pivotal to continue constructive discussions.

The derailment danger

- As the NP and the ANC moved closer, it was the IFP that became restive. Their leader Mangosutho Buthelezi was enraged by the Record of Understanding, the prospect of possible exclusion of future negotiations and the fact that the issue of violence was not addressed;
- The rift was more about protocol than about principle;
- Under a group, known as COSAG,³⁸ Buthelezi, President Lucas Mangope (Bophuthatswana), Oupa Gqoso (Ciskei)³⁹ and the Conservative Party of Dr Andries Treunicht formed a loose alliance against the ANC and NP;
- Eventually a second “channel” was set up between the NP (Roelf Meyer) and IFP (Dr Frank Mdlalose);
- Draft laws in process to scrap the “homelands” and start an interim government caused alarm in COSAG. While Mdlalose seemed to have made progress with Meyer, Buthelezi warned of the possibility of civil war;
- The IFP wanted a constitution written before any election so that all parties could indicate either their approval or disapproval thereof;
- A possible refusal to negotiate was not popular among IFP supporters;
- After three days’ talks in seclusion between the IFP and the NP, the IFP agreed to enter into further discussions.⁴⁰

Shelter from the storm

- The PAC was another Party that needed to be spoken to because they threatened the order if excluded. There was a guerrilla army, the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA) under PAC command;
- The NP government initiated talks with the PAC;

³⁷ M Gevisser, *Portraits of power: Profiles in a changing South Africa* (New Africa Books, 1996), p. 175; A Butler, *Cyril Ramaphosa* (revised) (South Africa, Jacana Media, 2011), p. 442.

³⁸ COSAG known as the Concerned South African Group. See D Atkinson, “Brokering a miracle?...”, p. 16; K Cole (ed.), *Sustainable development for a democratic South Africa* (USA, Routledge, 2014), p. 256.

³⁹ Freedom House Survey Team, *Freedom in the world: The annual survey of political rights and civil liberties, 1992-1993* (USA, University Press, 1994), p. 650 and particularly p. 639 on Ciskei.

⁴⁰ For more on the IFP see KE Ferree, *Framing the race in South Africa: Political origins of racial census elections* (USA, Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 273; D Atkinson, “Brokering a miracle?...”, pp. 17-18.

- Factions within the PAC did not allow for progress. APLA commanders declared 1993 as “The Year of the Storm”;
- Eventually, the PAC joined the negotiations without APLA ending their military actions.⁴¹

Boarding the right train?

- The CP split in white circles allowed for the breakaway of the Afrikaner Volksunie under Andries Beyers. This group entered into discussions with the ANC as the major representative of black people to opt for a federal system in which an Afrikaner fatherland was to be the focus;
- Dr Treunicht and the CP also entered the planning conference under several preconditions.⁴²

Leaving the station: The sparring begins

- The first day of negotiations was mainly a scuffling around very important concepts, namely what “sufficient consensus” implied before any justification whatsoever for any resolution was possible. From the NP-member came the proposal that “all participants must be prepared to give up something to achieve consensus. This must go hand in hand with a positive and constructive attitude and “*to put settlement first, even if their [the participants’] concerns were not met*”;
- The PAC was also critical of the power of the chairperson;
- Fear of possible formation of elitist groups concerning the CODESA agreements featured amongst Ciskei’s delegates. Ramaphosa observed that “...*there was nothing wrong with elitism if it got things done*”;
- An 11-member subcommittee was formed;
- It was said that, “*Despite disagreements, there was remarkable bonhomie [cheerful friendliness; geniality] among delegates*” and only the CP remained in doubt.⁴³

Engineering the process⁴⁴

- To ensure a healthy flow of discussion and minimize conflict, an elaborative number of bodies contributed to making progress regarding united decision

41 D Atkinson, “Brokering a miracle?...”, pp. 19-20; N Worden, *The making of modern South Africa: Conquest, apartheid, democracy* (John Wiley & Sons, 2012), pp. 204, particularly pp. 156-169.

42 D Atkinson, “Brokering a miracle?...”, pp. 20-21.

43 D Atkinson, “Brokering a miracle?...”, pp. 22-23.

44 See also DL Horowitz, *A democratic South Africa?: Constitutional engineering in a divided society* (USA, University of California Press, 1991), p. 293.

-making for South Africa possible, namely:

- » Forum (highest decision-making body);
- » A negotiating council (each party's chief negotiator and one adviser);
- » Subcommittee;
- » Planning committee (meetings in secrecy, known as the "black box" from which processes were steered);
- » Facilitating Committee;
- » Technical Committees;
- » *Bosberaad* (opportunities organised in making decisions about critical issues by mainly the NP and the ANC).

Atkinson responds to these tools as devices by stating: "[They] could only ensure progress among those who wanted to make it. As events showed, they would not prevent those who wanted to slow or to stop the process from doing so".⁴⁵

Parties to the party⁴⁶

- Though the Forum was said to be more inclusive than the CODESA process, it still was a challenge to manage pressure from the participation of more parties. Criteria for Kempton Park Forum membership were laid down and, in order to address the gender imbalance, it was decided that each participatory delegation had to include at least one woman. The Forum criteria for parties or groups wanting to join, were:
 - » Proven support;
 - » Recognition in the political arena;
 - » Recognition in the world community;
 - » The existence of membership lists, and
 - » The extent of political activity.
- Tight chairing in the negotiating council made it difficult for delegates to raise issues outside the limits set by resolutions.
- Incidents beyond the control of negotiators threatened the process. Amongst others, the leaking of plans to end the independence of the TBVC states;

⁴⁵ D Atkinson, "Brokering a miracle?...", pp. 26-27.

⁴⁶ RB Horwitz, *Communication and democratic reform in South Africa* (UK, Cambridge, 2004), Chapter 3.

continuing violence and the IFP's Buthelezi accusing the ANC's Umkhonto we Sizwe; the murder of Chris Hani (though Hani's death fuelled an increasing pressure to speed up with talks), and "damage control" with regard to several matters was done by the planning committee or the "black box".

- Each party aimed at different priorities as reasons for participating, amongst others:
 - » the ANC wanted an election date;⁴⁷
 - » the NP worked towards a Transitional Executive Council and interim constitution;⁴⁸
 - » COSAG wanted a decision on the form of state.
- Pressure allowed for the planning committee to find "sufficient consensus" to agree on an election date within four weeks, while the ANC also expressed a "softer stance" on regional government.⁴⁹
- The IFP, however, left the process and the TEC bill was adopted in August 1993 in its absence.
- On 2 December, the TEC took office amidst several rejections of some parties and groups, but with limited standing to prevent the process from progressing in the direction of a democracy, and eventually boarded the "train" heading in the direction of an election – this despite continual incidences of violence, racism and conflicts in homelands like Bophuthatswana.⁵⁰

Atkinson remarks: *Some analysts argue that deals between elites are essential if conflictual societies are to be steered to democracy. The Kempton Park deal was a typical elite settlement.*⁵¹ Steven Friedman and Louis Stack then continue the discussion in the *South African Review* by discussing the magic moment that followed five months after the Kempton Park negotiations had ended.⁵²

47 Compare A Sa'adah, "Hope, disappointment, and self-restraint: Reflections on the democratic experiment", TK Rabb and EN Suleiman (eds.), *The making and unmaking of democracy: Lessons from history and world politics* (New York, Routledge, 2013), Chapter 5, pp. 66-79; A Lissoni, J Soske, N Erlank, N Niefertgodien & O Badsha, *One hundred years of the ANC: Debating liberation histories today* (Wits University Press, 2013), p. 396.

48 Compare H Klug, *The constitution of South Africa: A contextual analysis* (Oregon, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), Chapters 1-2.

49 D Atkinson, "Brokering a miracle?...", pp. 27, 36-37.

50 Y Ronen, *Transitions from illegal regimes under international law* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 53-54; A Kemp, *Victory or violence – The story of the AWB of South Africa* (South Africa, Lulu.com, 2008), p. 216.

51 D Atkinson, "Brokering a miracle?...", p. 35.

52 S Friedman and L Stack, "The magic moment. The 1994 election", S Friedman and D Atkinson (eds.), *South African Review 7, The small miracle...*, pp. 301-330.

The magic moment

Friedman and Stack observe the following⁵³ regarding the historical election days of 27-28 April 1994 (apart from hosts of difficulties faced by the IEC⁵⁴ in the preceding months:

The election's administration exceeded the fears of many; the behaviour of voters exceeded the hopes of most...the white right had been more subdued than anticipated...Rumours of impending action ranged from a strike or sabotage which would close down electricity supply...Fears of right-wing action proved justified; but it was restricted to bomb blasts directed at people and at voting stations which, while damaging, did not derail the elections. The patience [at polling stations] had little to do with indifference. Many white voters confessed afterwards that they had never realised how important the vote was to their black compatriots. This perhaps also explained the little miracle of the voting days and the sharp drop in violence which persisted in the days after the ballot.

Recordings of the days characterised by conflict and consensus leading to the 27 April 1994 election eventually found their way into the classroom under several themes as outlined in history curricula as well as in modules on tertiary level. The following sections were efforts to provide guidance with regard to ideas on how to utilise the arrival of a democracy in South Africa as a major historical milestone through a tool such as the documentary *Miracle Rising*[®].

***Miracle Rising*[®] as source for teaching History**

As miraculous as South Africa's 1994 historical turn-around was, equally so was the bloody⁵⁵ path on which it was paved, as well as the determination that would characterise it subsequently. It can rightly be assessed as very sensitive years and perhaps too difficult to come to grips with regarding moments and detail of the past in the classroom or lecture hall.⁵⁶ *Miracle Rising*[®] provides an opportunity to approach the content or parts of the documentary with the intention to visually remember how certain events actually occurred and were reported on, or were judged by both experts and ordinary people – both in South Africa and internationally.

53 S Friedman and L Stack, "The magic moment...", pp. 318-319. See also AP Brink's source, mention later in the Appendix B and C for a more explicit focus on ordinary voices regards the election days for exploring in the classroom.

54 The IEC was appointed in December 1993.

55 See on YouTube the 90 minute, *1994 Bloody Miracle*, downloaded by Sabido productions (available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_usdNcnJp0).

56 Compare JA Williams, *Classroom in conflict: Teaching controversial subjects in a diverse society* (New York, SUNY Press, 1994), p. 204, particularly pp. 85-86.

To visually engage with this past (whether in a more simplistic way on GET level, or perhaps a more thematic way on FET level and progressing towards a more mature critical analysis level on HET level) is always more beneficial for addressing curriculum content in the learning process. To follow an approach of consciously and deliberately understanding the diversity of people, their perspectives and political sentiments cannot be done justice to in a single documentary. Yet *Miracle Rising*⁵⁷ provides enough food for thought for the serious and responsible educator of History to utilise the documentary in several meaningful ways, even though it contains sensitive, perhaps conflicting⁵⁸ moments. Yet its utility is also reliant on the learners having prior content knowledge of chronological developments... which may limit its utility in terms of the GET phase, unless the educator fills the knowledge gap with a proper (but concise) narrative to overcome the learner's historical silence.

In *Miracle Rising*[®], the following histories (see the mind map below) are covered either concisely or in depth and not necessarily absolutely chronologically (but understandably so). The map of Africa on the democratic status of Africa by 2012 as well as the visual of the tree as metaphor for outlining the status and/or features of democracy in Africa are additional to *Miracle Rising*[®] and could be utilised to debate the status of South Africa's democratic miracle close to present times and people's thoughts about democracy in theory:

57 See YouTube, "Miracle Rising South Africa [Full Movie]", downloaded by Sambotin Alexandru (available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKDrRdfvUg8, as accessed on 17 April 2013).

58 See also G Weldon, "Post-conflict teacher development: Facing the past in South Africa", *Journal of Moral Education*, 39(3), 2010, pp. 353-364.

Image 1: A mind map outline on content as mainly covered in *Miracle Rising*[®]



Source: Compiled by author.

Themes from CAPS and others for assessing different levels of GET, FET and HET education when utilising *Miracle Rising*[®]

GET-level:

Grade 4

- Learning from leaders: Ask and answer questions about the lives and qualities of good leaders; Life stories of leaders who show the above qualities: Nelson Mandela. Guiding questions:

- » Focus: Leadership qualities as expressed in the documentary *Miracle Rising®* [an educator's effort to identify the leadership qualities, though the learners could be exposed specifically to the last parts of the documentary where there is reporting on the voting days and where Mr Mandela features in the announcement of the ANC victory at the ballot box].
- » Ways of utilising *Miracle Rising®* in this curriculum outcome: Outline the reasons (as observed from historical moments) why Mandela can be regarded as a good leader.
- » Additional sources for educators:

- Peter Limb, *Nelson Mandela: A biography* (2008);
- Nelson Mandela, *Long walk to freedom: The autobiography of Nelson Mandela* (2008);
- Jean Guiloneau, *Nelson Mandela: The early life of Rolihlahla Mandiba* (2002);
- Chris van Wyk, *Nelson Mandela* (2003);
- Nelson Mandela, *No easy walk to freedom* (1973);
- Anders Hallengren, *Nobel Laureates in search of identity and integrity: Voices of different cultures* (2004, pp. 215-232);
- Wangari Maathai, *The challenge for Africa* (Heinemann, London, 2009, chapter on leadership).

Grade 6

- Democracy and citizenship in South Africa: How people govern themselves in a democracy: our national government; Rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy; Children's rights and responsibilities; National symbols since 1994; Research project.

Grade 7

- Colonisation of the Cape in the 17th to 18th centuries: Dutch settlement: Reasons for the VOC's permanent settlement at the Cape in 1652; Results of the Dutch settlement: Slaves at the Cape; Free burghers; Land dispossession and consequences for the indigenous population.
- Co-operation and conflict on the frontiers of the Cape Colony in the early 19th century: Arrival of the British and expansion of the frontiers of the European settlement; The Eastern frontier of European settlement: Frontier wars; Case study; British immigration; Boers migrate and move to the interior.

- » Focus: Features of democracy (Grade 6) and aspects of the historical legacy of South Africa (Grade 7) apply.
- » Ways of utilising *Miracle Rising*[®] in this curriculum outcome: For Grade 6, the images of the election days as in *Miracle Rising*[®] and the counting of the ballot papers as a means to illustrate the process after an election as well as the value thereof. There was also the historical lowering of the “Union flag” to be replaced at the evening prior to the April 1994 election, which could be further explored.

FET-level:

Grade 9

- Turning points in South African history in 1948 and in the 1950s: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights after World War II; Definition of racism; 1948 National Party and Apartheid; Case studies: Group Areas Act and Bantustans; 1950s: Repression and non-violent resistance to Apartheid; Oral history and research project.
- Turning points in South African history in 1960, 1976 and 1994: 1960: Sharpeville massacre and Langa march; 1976: Soweto uprising; 1990: Release of Nelson Mandela and unbanning of liberation movements.
- » Focus: Turning points in South Africa’s history followed by the Soweto uprising as well as Mandela’s release.
- » Ways of utilising *Miracle Rising*[®] in this curriculum outcome: Parts of *Miracle Rising*[®] take its audience back to some historical moments in the heydays of apartheid. Boipatong as a turning point is accentuated and could be further explored. The National Party and apartheid (and the views of Meyer as well as De Klerk in *Miracle Rising*[®]) could be listed and extended with historical research on a diversity of views (such as that of Cyril Ramaphosa) on the Apartheid years. Also see Appendix B; the *Yesterday & Today* Dec 2011 issue, in its practical hands-on section, which provides memories of people regarding the Soweto uprising, Afrikaans and the apartheid years. The contributions by intellectuals who advised the De Klerk government of the day concerning the release of Mr Mandela can be further explored.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ The history of the PU for CHE/PU vir CHO, before amalgamation and becoming the NWU, should be considered. The chapter on the Stem of Potchefstroom/Voice of Potchefstroom as in ES van Eeden (Red.), “IN U LIG”: Die PU vir CHO van selfstandigwording tot samesmelting, 1951-2004 (NWU, Potchefstroom, 2005), provides insight into this era in history.

Grade 10

- The South African War and Union: Background to the South African War: mining capitalism; The South African War from 1899 to 1902; the Union of South Africa (a brief overview); The Natives Land Act of 1913.
- » Focus: South Africa becoming a Union is the point in the curriculum to be focussed on. Its history, and the exclusion of all South Africans by means of the British Indirect Rule system, could be accentuated. Because of this history and partly due to this history, the nurturing and entrenchment of racism were ultimately to be transformed into formal apartheid.
- » Indirect ways of using Miracle Rising® in this curriculum outcome: Parts of arguing the past and the process of transforming formal apartheid into a democracy could be used. An indirect focus on the exchanging of the Union flag for a new South African flag as symbol could also be investigated.

Grade 11

- Nationalism – South Africa, the Middle East and Africa: What is nationalism? Case study: South Africa: Rise of African nationalism; Rise of Afrikaner nationalism; Case study: Middle East; Case study: From “Gold coast” to Ghana; Review: The positive and negative factors of nationalism.
- Apartheid South Africa 1940s to 1960s: Racism and segregation in the 1920s and 1930s; Segregation after forming of Union; National Party victory 1948; Legalising Apartheid; From petitions to Programme of Action; Response of the Apartheid state; Sharpeville massacre; Rivonia Trial.
- » Focus: By identifying and understanding various forms of nationalism in South Africa, especially their status in recent times when South Africa became a democracy, can add value to an improved understanding of other forms of African nationalism as opposed to colonial and other autocratic leaderships. The response to the apartheid state is another complementary theme.
- » Indirect ways of utilising Miracle Rising® in this curriculum outcome: See Appendix B for some examples in the Example 2 section, especially the questions based on Njabulo S Ndebele’s memories of the election days of April 1994.

Grade 12

- Civil resistance in South Africa 1970s to 1980s: The challenge of Black Consciousness to the Apartheid State; The crisis of Apartheid in the 1980s: Government attempts to reform Apartheid; Internal resistance to reforms: International response; The beginning of the end.

- The arrival of democracy in South Africa and coming to terms with the past: The negotiated settlement and the Government of National Unity; How has South Africa chosen to remember the past? The Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Reasons for the TRC; Remembering past: memorials.
- » Focus: All aspects of the curriculum content apply.
- » Ways of utilising *Miracle Rising*[®] in this curriculum outcome: The full spectrum of *Miracle Rising*[®] can be utilised as it covers aspects of civil resistance in early days, international responses through journalists and respected leaders. Glimpses of the settlement process evolving into a Government of National Unity as well as the TRC proceedings are covered visually. A historical moment that could be accentuated more in the classroom as an operational effort from the level of ordinary citizens (an approach from below) is represented by the Peace Committees that were established all over the country after 1992 to address and reduce the flare-ups of violence and intolerance.

See Appendix B where examples 1 and 2 are fully applicable.

HET-level (AN EXAMPLE):

History 2nd year level re Africa, South Africa and politics

One of four broad AIMS: *Traces of democracy from early times through the pre- to the post-colonial era – reviewing its impact on Africa and the local area or region (with reference to leadership):*

- » Focus: South Africa's becoming a democracy⁶⁰ amidst traces of a “destructive” past.
- » Ways of utilising *Miracle Rising*[®] in assessments regarding this curriculum outcome: See Appendix C
- » Additional sources for educators post 1994 [Some are contentious or critical debates against or sceptical about the achievement of a 1994 miracle.]:

60 A source of value to use as a reflection on the 20 years of democracy can be that of A Johnston, *South Africa. Inventing the nation* (UK, A&C Black, Bloomsbury), p. 336.

- Elizabeth B van Heyningen, The “Small Greek Cities” of the Cape Peninsula” *Contree*, 10, pp. 5-8 on democracy traces in a regional context in South Africa in the early 20th century.
- Wangari Maathai, *The challenge for Africa* (Heinemann, London, 2009), Chapter 2 on leadership.
- Thula Simpson, “Indirect Rule in South Africa: Tradition, modernity, and the costuming of political power”, *African Historical Review*, 43(2), 2011, pp. 84-86.
- Elize S van Eeden, “Informing history students/learners regarding an understanding and experiencing of South Africa’s colonial past from a regional/local context”, *Yesterday & Today*, 10, pp. 1-24.
- “Frederick Lugard and the policy of Indirect Rule in British colonial Africa, <http://voices.yahoo.com/frederick-lugard-policy-indirect-rule-in-3900060.html>, 16 March 2014.
- SAHO, South Africa: Not yet post-colonial, 13 August 2008 as in Democracy, Featured South Africa: not yet post-colonial, by Johann Rossouw, pp. 1-20.
- Dare Arowolo, *The effects of Western Civilisation and culture on Africa*, *Afro Asian Journal of Social Science*, 1(1), December 2010, pp. 1-13. [OPTING AGAINST DEMOCRACY – Return to traditional governing systems supported. Nigeria-Muslim militancy in Boko-Haram also supportive of anti-Western thoughts and governing mechanisms].
- Jason C Myers on tradition and tribe in the days of *British indirect rule in South Africa* in his book: *indirect Rule in South Africa: Tradition, Modernity and the costuming of political power* (University of Rochester Press, 2008, 140 pp).
- Walter D Mignolo, *The darker side of Western Modernity. Global futures, decolonial options* (USA, Duke University Press, 2011), pp. 408.
- Development Research Centre (LSE), Laurie Nathan, “Accounting for South Africa’s successful transition to democracy” (Discussion Paper no 5, June 2004), pp. 1-10.

Some other teach-worthy themes and topics from the documentary *Miracle Rising®*

- * **Themes to be considered on their own or combined** for especially learners or students on FET and HET levels:
 - » History method: Source criticism; diverse perspectives and approaches
 - Oral history;
 - Visual history;
 - Biographical and leadership histories;
 - Regional and local historical events prior to 1994 (making up the broader history);

- Cultural histories;
 - Truth and Reconciliation memories and using memories concerning history, and
 - History from below input and history from above recount diversity of efforts and opinions.
- * **In some of the themes listed above, there are also ample possibilities to extend the learner's and/or student's level of thinking about themes or topics by asking questions related to:**
- » Social theory/ies and historical knowledge such as man's ability to distort the historical consciousness of his own mind and the minds of other people;
 - » Contentious debatable questions (after sufficient historical research) about violence, racism, economic boycotts; deeds of terror on soft targets; political blindness and human intolerance; the youth's present and future in histories of violence and political restrictions; gender issues etc.;
 - » A definite approach towards exposing the impact of individuals' actions on the masses and a minority group's actions or decision making allowance for major changes and their inevitable consequences;
 - » The history and the level of impact by the following community groups on expressing or enforcing societal and political change.⁶¹
- Merchant oligarchies or major businesses;
 - Peasant communities/ordinary people/communities;
 - Religious sects/groups/denominations;
 - Revolutionary moments – a combination of different classes and races and individual initiatives.

Conclusion

This discussion of Miracle Rising[®] was mainly an effort to open up opportunities for educators of History to see how this historical milestone of South Africa becoming a democratic country can be used in multifaceted ways for the instruction of both learners and students. Several themes in the current CAPS curriculum for History themes with regard to the GET as well as the FET levels, and equally so on HET-level, allow for an opportunity by educators and specialists to visually, theoretically and practically engage in

⁶¹ Question based on the writings of C Tilly (edited by T Skocpol), *Democracy, revolution and history* (USA, Cornell University, 1999), p. 273.

this particular past. To experience it live and virtually “first-hand” allows for a better understanding if educators of History will use the selected history sections and/or available informative material in *Miracle Rising®* responsibly and efficiently during assessment opportunities.

In the political order we have established there will be regular, open and free elections, at all levels of government – central, provincial and municipal. There shall also be a social order which respects completely the culture, language and religious rights of all sections of our society and the fundamental rights of the individual.

Nelson Mandela, Inaugural speech, 1994.

Appendix A: GET-level questions on *Miracle Rising®*

Learners or students can be provided with four to five photographs of Mr Nelson Mandela, celebrating different historical occasions demonstrating his leadership qualities. Learners or students could be asked to:

- i. identify the historical occasion;
- ii. provide reasons or motivation for the “good leadership” qualities Mr Mandela personified;
- iii. identify a famous quote/saying by Mr Mandela that fits the photograph and his thoughts in general as leader.

Examples of photographs:

A)



B)



Source A): <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/nelson-mandela-dead-how-power-2899459>

Source B): http://www.myhero.ws/images/guest/g242361/hero74775/g242361_u87123_1-freedom-nelson-mandela.jpg

C)



D)



Source C): <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/nelson-mandela-1/>

Source D): <http://www.news.com.au/world/many-of-us-dont-know-the-world-mandela-fought-in-but-we-live-in-the-world-he-fought-for-here-are-some-of-his-key-influences/story-fndir2ev-1226777006935>

E)



Source E): brianfobi.com

Appendix B: FET-level questions on Miracle Rising®

- » *Note that gaining a clear historical understanding of the past process [knowledge] in becoming a democracy is of utmost importance before engaging with task-specific assessments.*

EXAMPLE ONE

QUESTIONS FOR LEARNERS TO RESPOND TO, BASED ON THE DOCUMENTARY:

- 1. The importance of mature and/or matured leadership concerning democratic processes**
 - 1.1 Formulate an understanding of mature leadership. 2 marks
 - 1.2 Identify at least 8 leaders from this documentary that fall within the category of mature leadership (with a concise motivation in each instance). 20 marks
- 2. Forms of destruction aimed at democratic processes**
 - 2.1 What, in your opinion, can be regarded as forms of destruction aimed at preventing progress towards a democracy? 2 marks
 - 2.2 Describe four destructive movements featuring as obstacles that are accentuated in “Miracle Rising”. Briefly explain why they are to be regarded as being destructive. 12 marks
- 3. The role of ordinary people advancing towards democracy**
 - 3.1 Outline your understanding of ordinary people from different organisations that supported progress towards democracy. 2 marks
 - 3.2 Identify four ordinary people and/or organisations that contributed to the advance or progress towards democracy Describe in what way they made contributions. 12 marks

Some possible responses to the questions asked in example one (as above) regarding leadership maturity while progressing towards the realisation of democracy in South Africa:

<p>MATURE LEADER ALBIE SACHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Biographical history can be a task - e.g. Constitutional Court Judge after 1994 ❑ Some notable sayings by Sachs: ● "The bomb revived my spirit. I came back." ● "Apartheid robbed white and black people of their dignity." ❑ Reasons for being in the mature leadership gallery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Felt that all injustices committed by security police against innocent people should be overlooked to plan towards a broader goal and reason; ▪ Regarded jail as no option; praise for police agents for bringing truth forth at TRC, as their killings were motivated as war situations; ▪ Saw the sentencing to life imprisonment of those who acted on commands also as not reasonable or feasible; ▪ An eye-for-an-eye approach in the progress towards freedom would amount to reverting to the unacceptable situations of the past. 	<p>MATURE LEADER Bishop DESMOND TUTU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Biographical history can be a task, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chaired the Truth & Reconciliation Commission ▪ Always strove after peace (Nobel prize to his credit) ❑ Some notable sayings by Tutu (as reasons for his also being in the mature leadership gallery): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His TRC introductory remark: <i>Our greatness will be enhanced if we say we are sorry, sorry that things went terribly wrong...</i> • He also observed: <i>If we [the blacks] had had an opportunity to be the perpetrators we would not have been [handling the situation] any different [from the whites]</i>
<p>MATURE LEADER CYRIL RAMAPHOSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Biography history could be a task, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief negotiator: African National Congress, 1991-1994. ❑ Some notable sayings by Cyril (to motivate his being in the mature leadership gallery): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His openness an inimitable quality; • His introductory remark in the documentary is so true, also for everyday life: <i>- The hater can be so consumed with hatred that he or she fails to find moments of opportunity where one could actually resolve a problem...</i> • He also observed: <i>- Those proposing and nurturing apartheid did not even know what they were doing...they also had to be freed from this prison their history had locked them into...</i> 	<p>MATURE LEADER FW de KLERK</p> <p>He had to "activate" the NP-government and supporters at the time to make a paradigm shift. For that purpose he had to put his "head on the block", yet Roelf Meyer had his doubts about whether De Klerk would go to those lengths (according to Roelf Meyer): Prepared to admit that apartheid was morally irresponsible; Willing to listen to ineffectual leaders towards an improved, democratically inclusive way forward; Committed to peace and abandoning of nuclear weapons; Committed to change via installed structures.</p>

EXAMPLE TWO:

*Some notes on election day 1994 by 45 South Africans from a variety of professions, particularly writers, voicing their observations from different legacy stances in South Africa's history. Compiled by Andre P Brink*⁶²

The memories of some of the election days in April 1994, as selected below, can be efficiently used in assessment tasks as outlined in the discussion earlier:

Tatamkhulu Afrika on “Against all odds, my heart sings”, pp. 9-13.

Author, poet, political activist, World War II prisoner of war, founder member of Al-Jihad, member of MK. 1920-2002⁶³



I wake. Shortly before dawn...arthritis suddenly in every bone. Only then do I remember it is the Day: that there is a moment to grasp or be shamed, a brick to lay or be damned. I struggle to achieve excitement, anticipation, joy – but at 73, put out to graze, to die... Outside, my “brown” growing into “grey” suburb still sleeps... the queues already long. I stand in it for as long as an hour, fighting off the ennui and irritation that queues always breed in me, but I feel would be unmannerly now... I come away from the station. My mind tells me my cross has helped usher in a new nation, a new land. It also, deep down, slyly warns that even those who made no cross have helped secure these things... I think back to the queue I have just left: the so many different eyes. Self-mocking eyes that questioned their being there, yet stayed... Back home, I brew coffee, slice, butter bread. For the first time I sit down to eat... Drained, I lie down, stare a while at a fly circling the unlit bulb. On the highway, a stone's cast from my door, cars and trucks pass with sometimes shouting voters going to and from the polls. And sometimes exhaust sounds like a shot, reminding me that other violent men are violently about. Later, sun low... I bus into the township shack of my dear love... She is sitting in a corner of one of the two rooms... her crippled leg hidden under the blanket... at the forefront of the rallies in those bitter years... Will this Day heal her leg, restore to her what time and terror so remorselessly have taken away? She reads me, smiles... “It's done,” she whispers, “we have walked the last mile!”... Yes, against all odds, my heart sings.

62 AP Brink (compiler/samesteller), *S.A. April 1994 an author's diary * 'n skrywersdagboek* (Kaaipstad, Quellerie, 1994), p. 171.

63 Available at <http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/tatamkhulu-afrika>, as accessed in August 2014.

Questions that could be asked for example Grades 4, 6, 7, 9:

- i) *What Day is the author recalling?*
- ii) *List two observations by the author that's positive about the Day.*
- iii) *List four observations by the author that's negative about the Day.*

[The life and leadership contribution of Tatumkhulu Afrika to change in South Africa could also be explored].

Breyten Breytenbach, on “*Joernaal van wending*//*Journal with a curve*”, pp. 22-25

Poet, writer, painter and activist. South Africa's most prominent poet of the sixties. 1939⁶⁴



Original Afrikaans version – freely translated into English

...Laatnag ry ek óm die berg middestad [Cape Town] toe om te gaan kyk hoe die een vlag sak en die ander gehys word... Daar is toe nie wafers veel mense in Waalstraat voor die Provinsiale gebou nie... Kort voor middernag begin koggel die mense, duim-afwaarts: 'Down! down! down! Bo op die balkon bewerk 'n stewige kèrel met 'n snor die toue – van hier benede lyk hy kompleet soos pik Botha (hy oorleef ook alle omwentelinge!) – en langsaam styg die nuwe embleem. Die wind wil hom eers nie vat nie. 'Dis die ANC-kleure wat te swaar weeg', spot een toeskouer...Die Stem word doodgesing. Langs my juig Albie Sachs met 'n woese beduidende stompie van de arm wat in 'n motorbomaanslag verpletter is. 'Klap hande vir my ook' sê hy. Maar wat 'n lelike komiteevlag is dit! pure post-semiotiese lappiesgoed soos beding as kompromie deur 'n reklameagentskap! Dit maak nie saak nie (betig ek my), elke vlag is tog net 'n lap geroepe om gedoop te word in drek en bloed. En die volk moet seker 'n nuwe kopdoek kry...Een oud-stryder staan man, vuis omhoog, vir Nkosi sikelela, maar die lied is te omvattend, sy arm word moeg...27 April. In die vroegskemerte kom ons aan by die ... Jamestown se stemlokaal. 'n Tou bedeesde, waardige, rustige, vasberade kiesers in Sondagsklere en nuwe kopdoeke wag reeds. My mense... Ek het al dikwels oorsee kon stem maar nooit só 'n kruisie oor my hart getrek nie. Nou word ons oplaas gesnoer in 'n bindende ervaring (al sy dit ook tydelik) – één bevolking van dieselfde land in die uitvoering van 'n gedeelde burgervoorreg...wanneer ons stilhou...in Rondebosch...sak seënende reën uit. Maar die mense staan saam-saam vas – swart en wit en bruin... Mens se hart is seer; hoekom was dit so swaar, hoekom het dit so lank gevat? Mens se hart is bly: niemand gaan hierdie stukkiens toekoms wat die mense vashou weer kan wegneem nie...

... Late at night I drove around the mountain city centre [Cape Town] to go watch a flag being lowered and the other hoisted ... There were but few people in Waal Street in front of the Provincial building ... Shortly before midnight some people, in

64 Available at: <http://www.stellenboschwriters.com/breyten.html>, as accessed in August 2014.

a teasing mode and thumb-down, shout: 'Down! down! down! Up on the balcony a strong guy with a moustache manages the ropes - from down here he looks just like Pik Botha (he also survived all revolutions!) - and gradually raises the new emblem. The wind at first does not want to allow any movement. "It's the ANC colours that weigh heavily," one spectator jokes ... The singing of the Stem is overpowered. Beside me a cheering Albie Sachs in a frantic motion with his stump of an arm crushed in a motorcar bomb attack. "Clapping for me," he says. But what an ugly committee flag it is! Pure post-semiotic patches ("lappies") as a negotiated compromise by an advertising agency! It does not matter (I reprimand myself), each flag is just a rag called to be baptized in filth and blood. And the people should certainly get a new headscarf... One veteran was standing there, fists raised for Nkosi sikelela, but the song is too comprehensive, his arm gets tired... 27 April. In the early twilight we arrive at the... Jamestown's polling station. A queue – subdued, gracious, tranquil, determined voters in Sunday clothes and new head scarf saree already there, waiting. My people... I have often voted abroad but never drew such a cross over my heart. Now we are finally accorded in a binding experience (though temporarily) - one population of the same country in the implementation of a shared civil privilege... when we stop... in Rondebosch...

the blessing of rain comes down. But the people are standing firmly together - black and white and brown... One's heart aches; why was it so hard, why did it take so long? One's heart rejoices: no one will be able to take away these pieces of the future that people hold...

Questions that could be set for Grades 10-11:

i) Explore the author's mentioning of the following persons and songs and motivate, by means of some historical research, the author's statement with regard to each person:

- o Pik Botha*
- o Albie Sachs*
- o The Stem*
- o Nkosi sikelela*

ii) To which "ugly committee flag" is the author referring? Recall the flag's a) history and symbolic meaning and b) explore via Internet (and Media 24) the feelings of other South Africans about the so-called "ugly committee flag".

iii) Recall the a) historical development and use of the "Union flag" and to which extent it b) included and/or c) excluded South Africans symbolically?

iv) Briefly explain what Breytenbach meant by uttering the following words:

One's heart aches; why was it so hard, why it took so long?

"Mens se hart is seer; hoekom was dit so swaar, hoekom het dit so lank geneem?"

[Question (iii) mainly fits the Grade 10 curriculum and Question (iv) the Grade 11 curriculum on the Apartheid history]

André P Brink, on “A farm in Africa”, pp. 29-34.

South African novelist, playwright, literary critic and academic. 1935⁶⁵



We tumble out of bed when the doorbell rings. It is Atwell, the gardener... Atwell is really Jongibandla Bontsa, but in a market ruled by whites he has chosen the English tag to match the persona he has adopted for his job as a gardener... Atwell loves to start his day with a good conversation, but on this particular morning he doesn't bother to enquire about our trip [to France] or to solicit any comment on the immaculate state of the garden left to his care. All he asks is, “When are we going to vote?” When I return to the bedroom with tea – the joys of being home again – Marésa has already turned on the television. Not an auspicious beginning to the day: the bomb blast at Jan Smuts Airport; chaos at polling booths all over the country... Marésa tackles the first bundle of washing and gets a bredie going; I venture out into the cold grey gloom of the clouds obscuring Table Mountain. “When are we going to vote?” asks Atwell as I open the garage door, not yet having made any attempt to exchange his election outfit for his garden gear. “By midday,” I inform him. “The queues are too long right now.” Outside the café where I go for papers and some milk and fruit juice (in defiance of reports over the last fortnight about white South Africans cleaning out supermarkets to stock up for an expected siege, we have made no arrangements to make unusual provision for any but our daily needs), a black man in blue overalls is struggling against the gusty Northwester to get a stompie going. Inside, the Muslim owner and his family and a gangly bearded white youth are watching images of the bomb blast on the fly-speckled screen of the TV perched on the cold drinks fridge. “It's these Dutch who are doing it,” pronounces the young man with great conviction. “That's why I'll never vote for the National Party.” I return home. Both papers have front page reports on the lowering, at midnight, of the old Union flag and the hoisting of the bold and bright new one. The Cape Times carries photographs of both events; Die Burger, of course, features only the demise of the old. We have consulted with friends on the telephone; the polling station closest to our house is reported to have a shorter queue than most others. With a sense of historical fulfilment we set out. When we arrive there, just as the rain begins to come down, there is a formidable queue. This is going to take at least two hours, I tell Atwell. “We go,” he says. “Not in this rain,” says Marésa. “I'll vote tomorrow.” She drops off the two of us with a black umbrella. And so begins a memorable wait which is to last for just over six

⁶⁵ Available at <http://victordlamini.bookslive.co.za/blog/2009/06/03/podcast-with-south-africas-great-hommes-lettres-andre-brink/>, as accessed in August 2014.

hours...throughout the seemingly interminable day I remind myself that in a language like Spanish the word for waiting also means hoping – pools of conversation in the long crowd spill into each other to form one moving river of talk. At one o'clock Marésa arrives with coffee for Atwell and me. Four o'clock and Marésa returns with more coffee and a hamper of biscuits; this time there is enough for twenty or thirty members of the crowd. "Thank you, Mama," they call out after her. Occasionally, the conversations falter and subside; people are really getting exhausted now. But what the hell. Here I've been waiting for six hours: some of these people have been waiting for thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years! The country has been waiting for three and a half centuries...in the course of this day a quiet miracle has been taking place. A mere week ago some people have begun to barricade themselves in their homes, expecting a wave of violence to swamp them today. What is happening here is the opposite. We are discovering, through the basic sharing of this experience, that we are all South Africans...

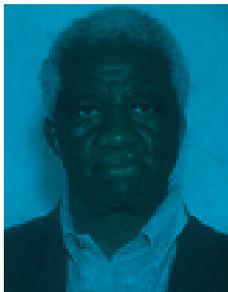
Questions that could be set for Grades 9-10s:

- i) *Identify some general historical pre-election and election day events that the author recalls to express the feelings of ordinary South Africans at the time.*
- ii) *What airport today (commemorating a new leader) relates to the former Jan Smuts Airport?*
- iii) *Explore the "new" leader's (mentioned in ii) contribution to South Africa's progress towards a democratic dispensation in 1994.*

[The leadership vision of General Jan Smuts with regard to South Africa could also be debated].

Mazisi Kunene, pp. 72-76.

Zulu poet laureate and ANC activist. 1930-2006⁶⁶



At first I had no intention of voting: I felt that I had already voted with my life...I could boast of having spent half my life in exile to demonstrate that a South African, born on this continent, had high ideals to live for... The whole idea of going to vote seemed to

⁶⁶ S Adenekan, "Mazisi Kunene. South African poet laureate and key player in the ANC", *The Guardian*, 17 October 2006.

me too formal. What was needed was simply a big celebration for all South Africans, particularly those who had fought to realise a new and great South Africa. In other words I felt that I was, had been, and will continue to be a committed freedom fighter. What would a mere vote mean? For me, the very idea of democracy had been debased by those who shouted the word and were either dictators or simply inept leaders. I could be forgiven if I shouted, together with many victims, "Oh Democracy, how many crimes have been committed in your name? I was puzzled by the bizarre claim that we were about to enter a paradise of democracy: all we had to do was vote for those we believed would do the job. Hadn't the various peoples of Africa chosen their representatives in the past? What was the difference between the word "vota" and "ukhetho" or "kheta"? Hadn't the dictators and tyrants traditionally been scathingly attacked by the poets and composers and eventually removed? Indeed, what was new in this democracy we were being called upon to celebrate? My thoughts turned to the urgent needs of people, particularly African mothers, living in the streets. How did these people feel as they saw their children shivering in the cold? Where were the husbands? What kind of family life can one live on the street, or in some broken-down shack? It is not Organisations, like political parties, that change things; it is organisation. Suddenly, like a flash of lightning, I realised that my act of voting was not simply physical...it must represent many of those people I knew who would have liked to have voted, but who died in the struggle. I had only five hours to submit my application for citizenship and to obtain my temporary voting card: I had no birth certificate or affidavit, so I was my own parent in the document I signed. I might mention that I was deeply moved by my countrymen and women (white) as they chaperoned me and my wife through all the different points. I felt a great relief and great satisfaction after my voting...

Questions that could be set for Grade 12-HET undergraduate level:

- i) How would the author prefer to define "real" democracy?
- ii) Recall examples from the histories of human kind where the following statements by the author about the ignorance of democracy (the people's voice) could have applied?:

Hadn't the dictators and tyrants traditionally been scathingly attacked by the poets and composers and eventually removed?

Njabulo S Ndebele on “Elections, mountains, and one voter”, pp. 93-95.

Academic, former Vice-Chancellor and principal of the University of Cape Town.

Known as academic, literary man and a writer of fiction.

Currently the Vice-Chancellor of UJ. 1948⁶⁷



... I do have a peculiar personal trait. It is that I tend to be at my calmest and most deliberate when some remarkable events... [have] made everybody else excited. When I opened my eyes on the morning of 27th April 1994, I sensed immediately the weight of the historical day, but although I felt awed, I registered no ebullient excitement. I already knew that I would not vote at the polling station nearest to me, in Pinelands. I had been informed that voting would take place in the Dutch Reformed Church. I reacted instinctively against that venue. I shied away from a heroic public gesture in preference for a neutral venue where I would participate in the most personal of public events: the election. After all, hadn't I made some powerful emotional concessions at midnight in the centre of Cape Town during the ceremony to lower the old flag and hoist the new one? It was a most joyful moment. As I watched the new flag go up, I felt for the first time in my life that this country was really mine, something I had hated and loved all that once. Now the ambivalence was gone. During that intense moment, my eyes happened upon two white policemen whose faces registered pain, bewilderment and resignation. They were watching the end of all that had given the deepest meaning to their lives. They seemed lost... My heart went out to them. I confirmed something else at that very moment: "It is not the people, but the policies, we had grown to learn. It had been hard to make that distinction. When the voting moment came, it was fast and disarmingly simple, but profoundly intense. As I left the Civic Centre to return home, I noticed that the queue was already going out of the building...

⁶⁷ Available at <http://randomstruik.co.za/us3rd0cs/Author1281519332.jpg>; See also "Who's Who Southern Africa" as accessed on <http://whoswho.co.za/njabulo-ndebele-1513>, as accessed in August 2014.

Questions that could be set for Grades 10-12:

- i) Concisely explain what the author means by:
- o The weight of the historical day
 - o “It is not the people but the policies.”
- ii) Identify a person in your hometown who voted in 1994, and ask him or her about any memories of 27-28 April regarding a) experiences of the people that voted; b) the town; c) the political parties; d) possible involvement in the counting of ballot papers and e) emotions after the announcement of the outcome locally and nationally.
- iii) The author refers to “two white policemen whose faces registered pain, bewilderment and resignation. They were watching the end of all that had given the deepest meaning to their lives. They seemed lost. My heart went out to them.” When recalling the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (also partially viewed in *Miracle Rising*⁶⁸) and the views of some interviewees in *Miracle Rising*⁶⁸ with regard to the police and forces in the service of the S.A. government, put into words (in one or two paragraphs) your understanding of their observations.
- iv) Explain nationalism, as expressed by the AWB, IFP, PAC and CP by 1994.

*Grades 11 and 12 could follow up the following personalities impressions of Apartheid and the Apartheid State:

- o Ruth First
- o Joe Slovo
- o Steve Biko
- o Chris Hani
- o Miriam Makeba

Albie Sachs on “The banality of good”, pp. 110-112.

Director of Research for the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional Court Judge and Author. 1935⁶⁸



68 P Barkham, “Albie Sachs: ‘I can’t tell my son everything’”, *The Guardian*, 8 October 2011.

The most momentous act in my life is the most banal. I've waited forty years and twenty minutes for this moment (twenty minutes because I forgot my ID at home). I have been telling people at quiet little house meetings all over town that this will be the most significant day in my life, that I will walk across a hall, pick up a piece of paper, make a cross, drop it into the box, and, for the first time be a South African, for the first time be a citizen, for the first time do something on an equal basis with the single-parent woman who does my laundry, and the municipal cleaners who take away the rubbish, and the wealthy people who live in the area where I am voting. The last time I got a ballot slip was in 1966, when I was in my second detention, in solitary confinement in Roeland Street Jail, recovering from torture by sleep, deprivation, with a double padlock on my cell-door, and Captain Rossouw of the Security Police holding his hand between the bars of the window with a voting slip in it and telling me: Advocate Sachs, it's a democratic country and you can vote, and I answering: Captain Rossouw, no thank you (you can see where Mandela gets it from, we are polite freedom fighters), I would rather not. With my left hand that writes just as my right hand used to do, I picked up the pencil... I wish I wasn't so tired and tense, my sleep last night crushed by the weight of history, my spirit destabilised by the shock of having arrived at the destination which no longer glimmers but is simply us walking in line, subordinated to the passionless anonymity of two pencil marks...and all TV-watching humanity marvels as we – black and white South Africans – start to discover ourselves and begin to appreciate the full dimension of our country.

Questions that could be set for Grades 9-12:

i) Conduct some additional historical research and then describe, i) the features of elections (going to the ballot) in pre-1994 years; and ii) the difference between the 1994 election and one of yesteryear (the past) as recalled by Sachs;

ii) Do a biographical study of Albie Sachs with regard to his resistance activities in the past to help change the apartheid landscape in South Africa into a more democratic dispensation.

Appendix C: HET-level questions on *Miracle Rising*®

» **Note that gaining a clear historical understanding of the past process [knowledge] in becoming a democracy is of utmost importance before engaging with task-specific assessments.**

Example of a question: Has South Africa chosen to be on the road towards allowing the “small miracle” to be a long-lasting democratic reality? Provide some intellectual views regarding possible stumbling blocks concerning:

- i. *Thoughts with regard to democracy; and*
- ii. *“Western” democracy in Africa or in South Africa.*

- JC Myers, *Indirect rule in South Africa. Tradition, Modernity and the costuming of political power* (University of Rochester press, USA, 2008), pp. 1-15;
- D Arowolo, “The effects of Western Civilisation and culture on Africa”, *Afro Asian Journal of Sciences*, 1(1), Quarter IV, 2010, pp. 1-13.