

**AMAPASI  
ASIWAFUNI!  
TO HELL WITH  
PASS LAWS!**

**CLASS,  
RACE AND  
GENDER IDENTITIES  
IN THE ANTI-PASS LAWS  
CARTOONS PUBLISHED IN  
*UMSEBENZI / SOUTH AFRICAN WORKER,*  
1933-1936**

Deirdre Pretorius

**Introduction**

The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was founded in 1921 and dissolved in 1950 in anticipation of being banned under the *Suppression of Communism Act*. It was relaunched as an underground party in 1953, renamed the South African Communist Party (SACP) and eventually unbanned in 1990. The important role played by the Communist Party in the liberation struggle of South Africa is generally acknowledged. Despite this role, and the fact that the Party had used printed propaganda since its inception, the printed graphic propaganda of the CPSA has not yet received critical attention.<sup>1</sup> Propaganda was important to the CPSA,<sup>2</sup> and a sizeable volume of printed material produced by the Party survives in archives locally and abroad.<sup>3</sup>

This article<sup>4</sup> focuses on a narrow slice of CPSA printed graphic propaganda, namely the anti-pass laws cartoons<sup>5</sup> published in the official CPSA newspaper *Umsebenzi / South African Worker* (hereafter referred to as *Umsebenzi*) between 1933 and 1936, with the aim of examining the construction of class, race and gender identities in these cartoons. The *Umsebenzis* reviewed, and

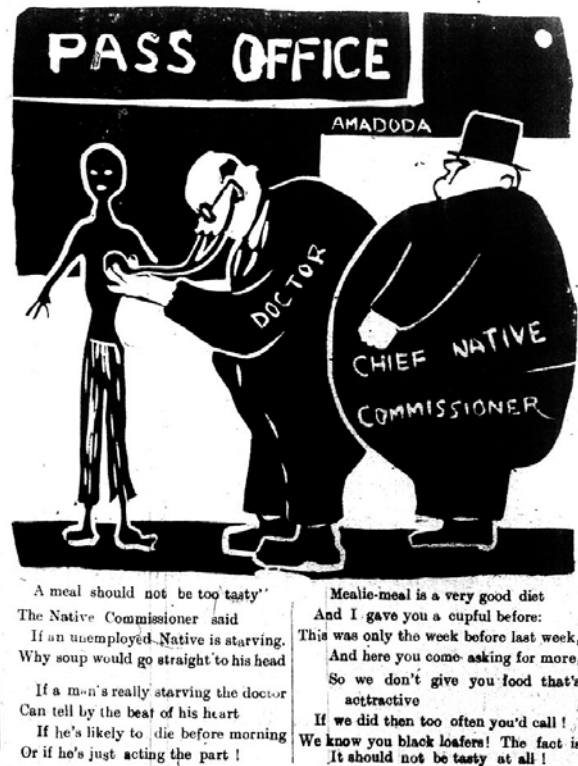


Figure 1 Roux, E? 1933. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 707, 26 August:3.

from which the purposive sample has been selected, are housed in the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) in Pretoria where the editions from 1933-1938 are kept on microfilm. The starting date for the purposive sample drawn is determined by the editions available in the NLSA. The

closing date is selected owing to the fact that the *Umsebenzi* cartoonist was expelled from the CPSA in 1936 (Roux & Roux 1972:216), and from the time of his departure until 1938 when the paper ceased publication (Ceiriog Jones 1997: 337) images in the paper became far scarcer and consisted mostly of photographs, cartoons imported from abroad and reprints of previously published cartoons.

The decision to focus on the anti-pass laws cartoons is determined firstly by the nature of the pass system and its contribution to shaping the class identities of Africans, and secondly by the legislative changes to the pass system during the 1930s. Doug Hindson (1987:x) explains that pass laws were initially designed to control slave labour, and following the abolition of slavery, the pass laws were adapted to sustain 'servile and forced labour'. Hindson (1987:11) defines<sup>6</sup> the pass system as 'a complex of legislation and machinery designed to exercise control over the movement, employment and settlement of population'. By the 1930s, the pass laws had directly contributed to the creation of an African proletariat (Terreblanche 2002:269) and an African 'petty bourgeoisie' (Hindson 1987:98). The pass laws therefore assisted in enforcing class identities onto Africans through the control of people's movement, labour and life choices and criminalising those who did not adhere to these pass controls.<sup>7</sup> Not surprisingly, these 'iniquitous and barbarous laws' (Karis & Carter 1987:312) met with opposition.

The 1930s saw a tightening of the pass system through a series of amendments to the *Urban Areas Act* of 1923. This included, for the first time, the explicit prevention of African women<sup>8</sup> from 'entering a proclaimed area without a certificate of approval,' which could only be obtained by proving 'that a husband or father had been resident and continuously employed in town for more than two years, and that accommodation was available' (Hindson 1987:44). Such amendments resulted in increased resistance to the pass laws and the CPSA and *Umsebenzi* played a leading role in the 1930s in the 'fight against the pass laws' (Harmel 1972: 211-212). As can be expected, resistance against the pass laws is reflected in some of the cartoons published in *Umsebenzi* in the 1930s, and this article examines the construction of class, race and gender identities in these 'anti-pass laws' cartoons.



Figure 2 Roux, E? 1933. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 711, 21 October:1.

Questions of 'identity' have become central in the human and social sciences in recent years (Du Gay, Evans & Redman 2000b:1-2) and although the study of identity has been on the research agenda of design for a number of years its exploration is far from exhausted. The notion of identity is complex and multifaceted<sup>9</sup> and a full review of its range of meanings as articulated by key theorists and fields<sup>10</sup> is beyond the scope of this article. One response to questions of identity that has developed in cultural studies is the 'subject-of-language' approach (Du Gay et al 2000b:2). Characteristic of this approach is the notion that identities are constituted through discourse and difference and are therefore dislocated, or 'dependant on an "outside" that both denies them and provides the conditions of their possibility', and that subjects are interpellated, or called into subject positions made available in discourse (Du Gay et al 2000b:2).

Stuart Hall (1996:4-5) argues that because identities are constructed within discourse

... we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies ... they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical,

naturally constituted unity – an "identity" in its traditional meaning ... identities are constructed through, not outside difference ... it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks ... that the "positive" meaning of the term – and thus its "identity" – can be constructed.

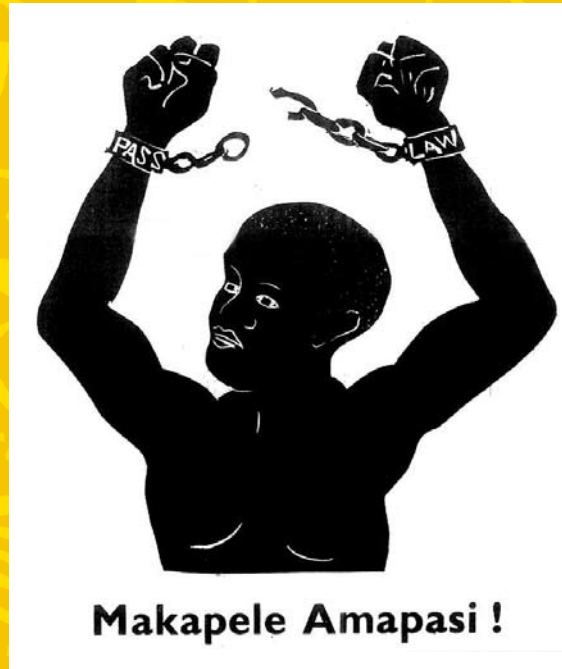


Figure 3 Roux, E? 1933. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 713, 30 November:1.

Drawing on Hall's argument, a three-step approach is employed to examine the construction of class, race and gender identities in the anti-pass laws cartoons. Firstly, a description of opposition to the pass laws and *Umsebenzi* provides understanding of the context in which the identities were constructed. Secondly, an examination of the visual and verbal articulation of the cartoons provides insight into the 'discursive formations and practices' and 'enunciative strategies' instrumental in constructing the identities. Lastly, an analysis of the relation of the Self to the Other in the cartoons reveals how class, race and gender identities are constructed in the cartoons.

### Opposition to the pass laws and *Umsebenzi*<sup>11</sup>

The CPSA accepted the importance of a Party newspaper at its founding conference in 1921 (Bunting 1981:58-62) and until 1925 continued to publish *The International*, started by the Party's predecessor, The International Socialist League in 1915. Initially the CPSA directed its efforts predominantly to white workers, but soon started to recruit Africans and in 1926, the name of the paper was changed to *South African Worker* in an attempt to draw a black working-class readership (Ceiriog Jones 1997:331-336). By 1929, the paper was



Figure 4 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 720, 10 February:1.

no longer published exclusively in English and more than half of the articles were written in Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho and Tswana (Roux & Roux 1972:79).

In April 1930, Eddie Roux<sup>12</sup> took over the production and distribution of *South African Worker*, which he renamed *Umsebenzi* (The Worker) and turned it into a weekly publication. Roux was involved in every aspect of the production and distribution of the newspaper, from raising the money to buy type, learning type-setting in order to typeset the paper, creating the cartoons, overseeing printing and dispatching, to selling the paper on Saturdays at the entrance to Cape Town station.<sup>13</sup> Under pressure from Party member

Douglas Wolton, Roux and *Umsebenzi* moved back to Johannesburg in 1931 so that the paper could be under the direct control of the Political Bureau of the CPSA. In Johannesburg Roux remained involved with the paper, and continued creating cartoons until 1936 when he left the Party (Roux & Roux 1972).

During 1930, the paper was sold by subscription, by agents and by CPSA and Cape African National Congress (ANC) Party members. Initial circulation figures of 3 000 increased to close on 5 000 by the end of 1930. Of this figure Roux (Roux & Roux 1972:96) said 'five thousand may seem little enough for a paper which aimed at educating and organizing eight million people; but I knew each paper sold was read by many people'. The paper appeared in 'English, Afrikaans and African languages' and was sold in 'working-class areas' and places such as the Grand Parade and station in Cape Town (Alexander Simons 2004:57). Roux (1948:240) comments that 'white employers and landowners noticed their workers reading the little paper and soon showed their disapproval'.

After being moved from Cape Town to Johannesburg, the paper was usurped by Douglas and Molly Wolton and Lazar Bach who insisted on having their longwinded theoretical articles printed. The paper became unreadable, circulation started falling, and after the first five issues in 1931 the paper was no longer a weekly, appearing initially every two weeks

and then at longer intervals. In less than a year the paper had lost its 'popular appeal' (Roux & Roux 1972:110-113) and by the end of 1931 sales were below 5 000 a fortnight (Bunting 1998:67).



Figure 5 Roux, E? 1933. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 728, 7 April:1.

By 1933, after 'two years of intense bolshevisation,' the influence of the Party and its membership had been reduced to almost nothing, but at the beginning of 1933 the Woltons, who were mainly responsible for this state of affairs, left South Africa (Roux 1948:277). The position of editor now passed to Moses Kotane (Ceiriog Jones 1997:336), and as a result the paper 'took on a new lease on life' (Roux 1948:283) becoming once again readable and a weekly publication (Roux & Roux 1972:146). After being overtaken between 1931 and 1933 by other African newspapers, notably by *Umteteli wa Bantu* and the *Bantu World*, *Umsebenzi* became, as in 1930, the most widely-circulating and read African newspaper (Roux 1948:283). One reason for this increase in circulation was ascribed to a strategy to attract new readership.

Roux (1948:283) explains that in 1933 *Umsebenzi* managed to attract the interest of 'African teachers, clerks, minor officials and other petit bourgeoisie' by using a 'more informative, less vituperative and less violently dogmatic' style, resuming education activities, and discussing topical problems such as 'What should we call ourselves – Bantu, Africans or Natives?' A number of African teachers now subscribed to the paper and others became sales agents, despite threats of being dismissed from their posts. In addition, *Umsebenzi* obtained the interest of the 'independent ministers and religious leaders' (Roux 1948:284).

Roux (1948:361) identifies two sales peaks for *Umsebenzi* in the 1930s. The first was during 1930 with the pass burning campaign, and the second in 1935 as a result of interest in the

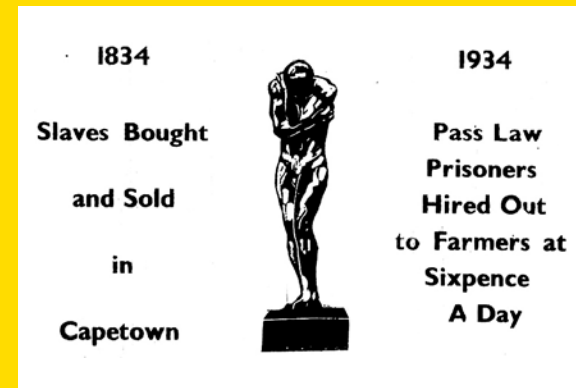


Figure 7 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 737, 9 June:1.

war in Ethiopia. In 1930, the CPSA initiated a countrywide campaign for burning passes on 16 December, 'Dingaan's Day,'<sup>14</sup> promoted months in advance in *Umsebenzi* with the slogan 'Prepare to burn passes on Dingaan's Day!' (Roux 1948:252). An article by Albert Nzula in *Umsebenzi* of 29 August 1930 under the heading 'Smash the passes!' captured the sentiment towards the pass laws:

... not only men but WOMEN ALSO must now carry passes! ... As a result of these pass laws we are slaves in Africa to-day. The pass system forces us to become criminals and thieves. We are slaves – not free men ... only by unity can we do away with these passes ... we are all subject to these badges of slavery (Bunting 1981:109).

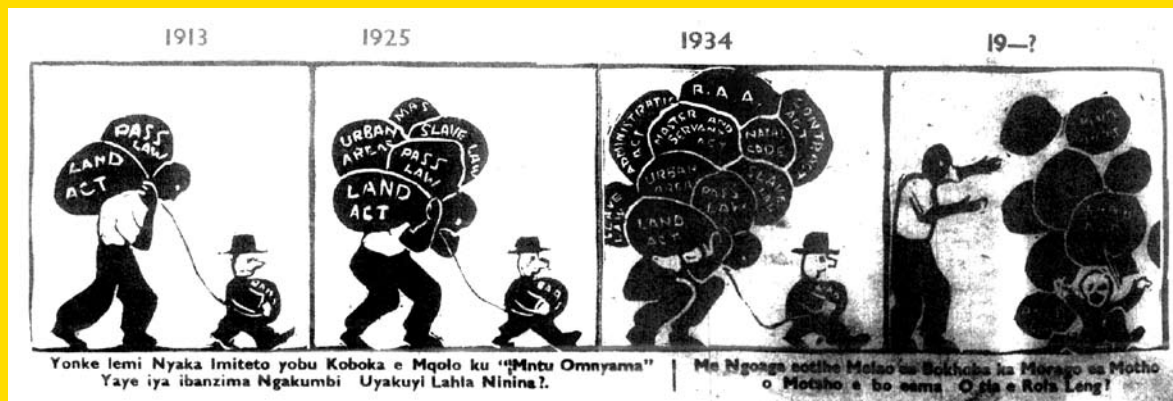


Figure 6 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 736, 2 June:3.

Although *Umsebenzi* of 9 January 1931 reported that 3 500 passes were burnt in Durban, the campaign was not considered a success (Bunting 1981:111). According to Roux (1948: 262), the result of the campaign appeared to be 'the destruction of the Party's most militant branch, the death of a young leader,<sup>15</sup> the imprisonment or deportation of many others: on the whole a setback to the Party'. Despite this setback, the CPSA and *Umsebenzi* continued to play an important role in opposing the pass laws during the 1930s. For instance, another notable example of opposition was the resistance initiated in 1930 against 'lodger's permits'<sup>16</sup> spearheaded by women in Potchefstroom and led by Josie Palmer, the head of the Communist Party's women's section (Wells 1993).

Opposition to the pass laws extended into the creation of anti-pass laws cartoons. Of the 124 cartoons examined that appeared between 6 January 1933 and 27 June 1936, 24 have been classified as anti-pass laws cartoons for the purpose of this article by identifying the use of the word 'pass', 'pas' or 'amapasi' in the cartoons.<sup>17</sup> The majority of the anti-pass laws cartoons appear on the front page of the newspaper, positioned under the bold *Umsebenzi* masthead incorporating the hammer and sickle, symbol of the Communist Party, and are executed in a highly recognisable visual style.

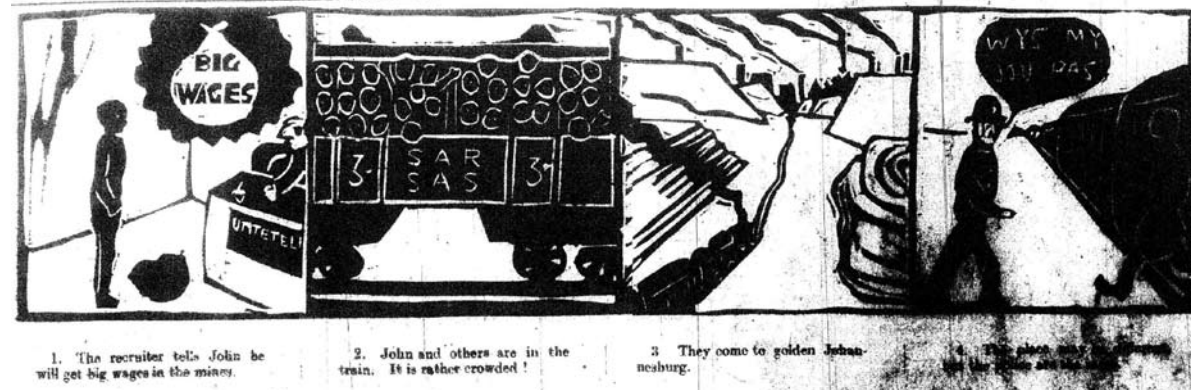


Figure 8 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 738, 9 June:1.

### Visual and verbal articulation in the cartoons

Linocut cartoons, most of which were created by Eddie Roux,<sup>18</sup> were characteristic of *Umsebenzi* during the first half of the 1930s (Roux & Roux 1972:95). Linocut was chosen because it was a cheap method for reproducing images (Roux 1948:240). In addition, the skill to use the medium is acquired relatively easily and linocut blocks can be re-used, as is evident in the verbatim repetition of whole images, or sections of images, in different numbers of the newspaper. For example, figures 3, 4, 5, 9, and 13 all appear twice in the sample selected and are repeated mostly within three months of

their first appearance. Roux (Roux & Roux 1972:95) comments on the linocuts:

The problem was not so much to execute the cuts, for I had always had some facility in drawing, as to think up a new subject each week. I had little time to think except at weekends. The cartoons were worth it, however, for they added considerably to the attractiveness of the little paper and as I cut the lino I encouraged myself by the thought that the space filled by a cartoon saved me so many hours of laborious type-setting.

In executing the linocuts Roux expressed a familiarity with visual propaganda that was probably acquired through exposure to local and international publications, a period studying in England and international travels.<sup>19</sup> Roux's knowledge



Figure 9 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 750, 8 September:1.

of visual propaganda is clearly discernible in the cartoons through the references made to European artists, the incorporation of socialist iconography and the use of European and American caricature and cartooning conventions.

The direct influence of a European artist is discernable in figure 7, which is clearly inspired by August Rodin's sculpture, while the policemen guarding a crucified body in figure 5 appears to be based on the German artist George Grosz's<sup>20</sup> work. In addition to quoting European artists, numerous references are made to socialist iconography, especially with regard to the well-established representation of the capitalist and the working class, which are discussed below. The image of the speared serpent in figure 16 is another image that recurs in socialist iconography. The destruction of serpentine creatures as symbols of evil is found in Christian mythology and legends such as that of St George and the Dragon and were effectively used to depict the enemy in First World War posters and Soviet propaganda posters (Bonnell 1997:194).

Roux would undoubtedly have been familiar with cartoons, especially political cartoons, which had been used in South African publications since the last quarter of the nineteenth century (Vernon 2000:13) and the conventions of caricature as epitomised in satirical and caricature journals such as the British *Punch*, published from 1841-1992 (Jobling & Crowley 1996:41). This familiarity is at its most obvious in the *Umsebenzi* cartoons that are direct copies of existing cartoons. For example, a cartoon opposing Mussolini's war in Ethiopia on the front page of the *Umsebenzi* of 22 January 1935 is captioned 'with apologies to a well known cartoonist,' and a cartoon from 10 November 1934 duplicates the wolf from Disney's animated film *The three little pigs* (1933) (Danks 2003). The image of the warrior in figure 9 shows a

strong resemblance to the depiction of pygmy warriors in *Tintin in the Congo* (Hergé 2006:49), which was published for the first time as a book in 1931 (Lonsdale-Cooper & Turner 2006).<sup>21</sup>

Apart from direct copying, Roux applied his knowledge of cartooning with cartoon conventions such as panels to narrate a story, the extreme simplification or distortion of facial features and the combination of image with text. Roux had a remarkable ability for simplifying and capturing essential details in the cartoons, an approach to cartooning that was arguably not only influenced by his knowledge of cartoon conventions, but also by his interest in language and communication.



Figure 10 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 752, 22 September: 1.

Roux (Roux & Roux 1972:189) became aware of the ‘problem of communication’<sup>22</sup> in the early 1920s at mass meetings where three languages were generally used: English, Zulu or Xhosa and Sotho or Tswana. Roux (Roux & Roux 1972: 189) knew some Zulu and noticed the incorrect translations of unfamiliar English words by translators during these meetings. During his time working on *Umsebenzi*, Roux attempted to find equivalents in the indigenous languages for Marxist terms. For example, he found the Xhosa equivalent for ‘capitalist’ in the term ‘*ungxowankulu*’ meaning ‘the man with the big bag’ (Roux & Roux 1972:99-100). From 1930, he began vocabulary studies with the aim of expressing in *Umsebenzi* ‘political ideas in words which would be familiar to African readers’ (Roux & Roux 1972:189). He tried to choose the simplest words and shortest sentences possible in writing for the paper, an approach that during 1930 succeeded in making *Umsebenzi* ‘the most readable of papers’ (Roux & Roux 1972:189).

In line with Roux’s approach to writing, the cartoon captions and the text integrated into the cartoons are short and simple, and although mainly in English, other languages such as Zulu, Xhosa and Afrikaans are also used. While only some of the anti-pass laws cartoons are captioned by way of serif or sans serif typeset text, all of the anti-pass laws cartoons, excluding figure 7, contain autographic text integrated into the image. This uppercase text is carved simultaneously

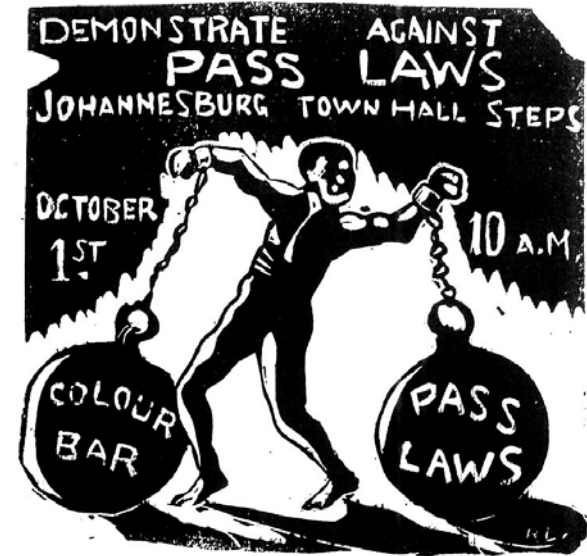


Figure 11 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon. *Umsebenzi* 753, 29 September:1.

with the image from the lino block and serves to fix the literal and historical meaning of the visual elements. In addition, this labelling of the visual elements is a simple but important device used to define the intended audience for the cartoons, or the Self, in relation to who they are not, their Other. While the Self remains unlabelled, the Other is labelled on clothing or skin by class position; ‘Doctor, Chief Native Commissioner, Police, Big Boss, Baas’; by name ‘Pirow, Smuts’ or by ideological position ‘Ngxowankulu,’<sup>23</sup> Boer Imperialist, British Imperialist’. The presence of a label fixes the



identity of the Other, while the absence of a label keeps the identification with the Self open and implies that because identification is obvious a label is unnecessary.

## The Self and the Other

In constructing the identity of the Self and Other, two distinct and binary opposed identities emerge in the anti-pass laws cartoons. The Self is black and male, extremely thin or muscular, clothed, partially clothed or naked. He is bare-headed and barefoot or wears boots. The Self is extremely stylised with facial features generally reduced to two dots for eyes and a line for a mouth. The Self becomes, in relation to the Other, a more universalised 'everyman'.<sup>24</sup> In contrast to the Self, the Other is white and male, and wears a suit or uniform, shoes and sometimes a hat. Although his features are stylised, his characteristics are described in more detail, and in certain instances the individual becomes recognisable.

The construction of these binary opposed identities corresponds with what Victoria Bonnell (1997:187) identifies as the Bolshevik 'binary model of thinking,' which she describes as the view that all societies were composed of two groups: 'the collective and individual heroes who advanced the march of history towards a classless society, and their

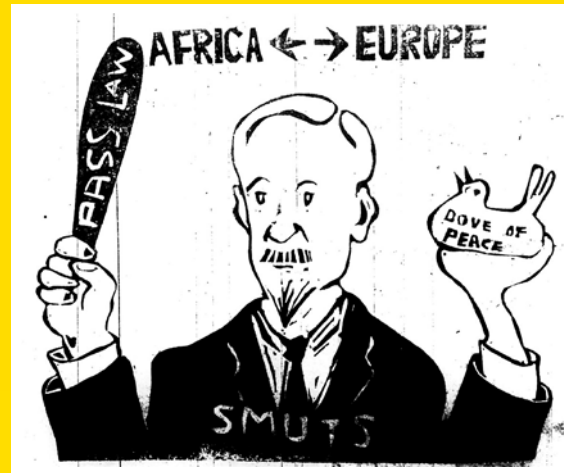


Figure 12 Roux, E? 1934. Anti-pass laws cartoon.

*Umsebenzi* 762, 1 December:1.

adversaries, the villains or enemies ... who tried to prevent the great march forward'. Bonnell (1997:187) finds the origins of this worldview in the stress placed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on the historic role of class and class struggle as well as the 'bipolar orientation in traditional Russian culture'. Bonnell (1997:188) identifies the challenge confronting the Bolsheviks after coming into power as providing people with an unambiguous image of the 'heroes and villains of the revolution'. This bipolar orientation appears in the construction of identities in the anti-pass laws cartoons where the Self, or the hero, is pitted against his Other, the class enemies.

The hero is depicted either 'realistically' as a worker, or 'symbolically' as a nude or semi-nude male. The 'realistic' depiction shows a black man dressed in a white shirt with rolled up sleeves, black pants and heavy worker boots, or parts of these (Figures 2, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16). This representation is based on the appearance of some South African workers of the time, as is evident in a photograph of black and white workers in white open necked shirts that appeared in the *Umsebenzi* of 23 March 1935. When represented 'symbolically,' the hero is shown naked or partly clothed, most often shackled or bound (Figures 5, 6, 11, 15) or in the process of breaking free from his restraints (Figures 3, 10).

The image of a man in chains struggling against his shackles visually echoes the final lines of the *Communist Manifesto* (Marx & Engels 2004:52): 'the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE!' The physically shackled male as symbol for the imminent liberation of the working class was an especially pertinent and powerful image within the context of South Africa's history of slavery. The anti-pass laws cartoons make repeated reference to slavery, as epitomised in figure 7, which incorporates a nude figure and draws a direct comparison between the practice of hiring out pass law prisoners to farmers in 1934 and slavery that existed in Cape Town a hundred years earlier.



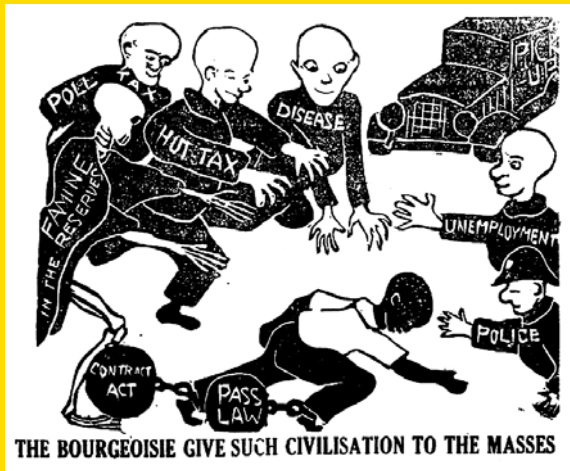


Figure 15 Roux, E? 1936. Anti-pass laws cartoon.  
Umsebenzi 830, 4 April:1.

retribution against enemies' (Bonnell 1997:193) that appear in Bolshevik posters, as well as the convention of showing the enemy as smaller in relation to the worker.

Although the politician is in certain instances depicted with the same signifiers as the capitalist, the politician is not a stereotype in the way that the capitalist is. The politician is always personalised with distinct characteristics and is therefore recognisable as an individual. Jan Smuts is typified by his goatee and moustache (Figure 12), while Oswald Pirow is recognized by his round, black rimmed glasses (Figure 9). The policemen are signified by their uniforms, headgear

and weapons. The heavily distorted facial features of the policemen in figure 5, labelled 'British Imperialist' and 'Boer Imperialist,' indicate the extreme resentment felt towards both the enforcers of the pass laws and the ideologies in which these laws were embedded.

The worker is placed in one of two relationships to the enemy; either suffering at his hands or striking out powerfully against him. The exploited and suffering worker is harassed, led by a leash, and whipped on by the enemy, while the powerful, oppositional worker attacks the enemy with hammer, heavy bundles, spear, or boot. Concurrently the enemy is placed in one of two relations to the worker: he is either a cruel power figure or a cowardly target of the wrath of the worker. Thus, the identity of the courageous and exploited worker is constructed through the existence of the cruel and cowardly enemy; without the presence of the enemy the figure cannot be recognised as a hero.

## Conclusion

The identity of the hero in the anti-pass laws cartoons is undoubtedly fixed as male and black, and that of his enemies as male and white. The hero is constructed either realistically as a clothed worker, or symbolically as the working class



Figure 16 Roux, E? 1936. Anti-pass laws cartoon.  
Umsebenzi 840, 4 April:8.

embodied in the nude or semi-naked male body. Equivalent to the hero, his enemies are also constructed as either recognisable, or symbolically as the instruments of capitalist and imperialist ideologies.

The absence of white workers from the anti-pass laws cartoons is to be expected, as white workers were not subjected to the pass laws. Only one cartoon (Figure 6) shows both a white and black worker, the white worker burdened under heavy loads such as 'unemployment' and 'no free speech' while the black worker shoulders bags labelled amongst other things, 'land act' and 'pass law'. What is more conspicuous is the absence of women in the cartoons; the only image of a woman in the anti-pass laws cartoons appears as part of a family group (Figure 4). The unequal enforcement of the pass laws offers one possible answer for the absence of women from the anti-pass laws cartoons. Another answer is found in Drew's (2002:179) contention that the CPSA during the 1930s was a male-dominated Party, with few female members and that female leadership was 'frowned upon.'<sup>28</sup> Bonnell's (1997:21) observation that 'every revolution needs its heroes' and Hobsbawm's (1978:124) thesis on the 'masculinisation' of the socialist movement's imagery, certainly rings true with regard to the gender identities constructed in the anti-pass laws cartoons of *Umsebenzi*.

The class identities of the worker, the working class and his class enemies are embedded in socialist binary thinking and draw on socialist iconography. As such, the arguments of the cartoons against specifically South African pass laws are converted into a broader argument for the destruction of capitalism and imperialism and for the liberation of the

working class. Within this argument, the construction of the South African worker, the black everyman in white shirt and black trousers, creates a localised class identity of the worker, while the naked and semi-nude male as representation of the working class aligns the South African Communists with the international Communist movement.

Although Roux (Roux & Roux 1972:95) might have considered the *Umsebenzi* cartoons to be decorative space fillers, and some of them have been described as crude (Vernon 2000:68), the cartoons offer a rare historical example of South African graphic design that grapples with the problem of communicating to a diverse, multilingual audience and constructing individual and collective working class identities. The cartoons were created more than seventy years ago, yet knowledge of this unexplored area of South African graphic design holds relevance for the challenges faced by the communication design field in South Africa today.

## Notes

1 Ceiriog-Jones (1997) briefly refers to the use of photographs and illustrations in the CPSA newspapers *Inkululeko*, *South African Worker* and *Umsebenzi* in a study devoted to the newspaper *Inkululeko*, and Vernon (2000) includes an *Umsebenzi* cartoon in his study of South

African political cartoons.

- 2 This observation is supported in a reading of *The Twenty-one Points – Conditions of Admission to the Communist International* (Bunting 1981:58-62), which was adopted in 1920 at the second Comintern congress and appended in 1921 to the constitution of the CPSA by its founding conference. The very first point revolves around the character and means of propaganda, and requirements for the 'party press.' Points four and five emphasise the importance of continuous and organised propaganda in the army and rural districts and point eighteen stipulates that the main press of the parties must publish the most important documents of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.
- 3 It is my intention to complete a comprehensive study of the printed graphic propaganda of the CPSA from 1921-1950 as a Doctoral study.
- 4 I would like to thank my colleagues at the University of Johannesburg for their support during the writing of this article and acknowledge the mentorship of Prof Marian Sauthoff, the comments on the final draft from Prof Grietjie Verhoef, the support and help with translations from Dr George Mukuka and Ms Elda Majola, and the assistance received in locating sources from Mr Norman Phokanoka and Mr Zanele Msomi.
- 5 The anti-pass laws cartoons are reproduced with the consent of the South African Communist Party.

- 6 Before the introduction of the *Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act* in 1952, the pass laws were neither uniform nor consistently applied in South African towns, cities and provinces (Horrell 1960; Savage 1984; Wells 1993). The definition of 'pass' remains elusive; passes were employed in a number of ways, took a variety of forms and were applied inconsistently during the course of South African history (Wells 1993:4). While an official definition of the term never existed (Savage 1984:4), passes have been described as 'identity documents' (Terreblanche 2002:317).
- 7 The average number of convictions under the pass laws between 1930 and 1934 was 94 000 (Hindson 1987:45).
- 8 African women were not 'technically liable to carry passes' from 1923 until 1956, but from 1923 to 1937 'a pattern of increasingly restrictive pass laws emerged' which included 'some limited provision for the control of African women' (Wells 1993:7). The carrying of passes on a 'comprehensive, national basis' became compulsory for African women for the first time following the introduction of the *Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act* of 1952 (Wells 1993:8). An earlier attempt in 1913 to extend the carrying of passes to African women in the Free State met with such strong resistance from women that the law was withdrawn (Roux 1948:125).
- 9 See Gleason (1983) for a useful 'semantic' history of the term 'identity' and Brubaker and Cooper (2000) for a critique of the over use of the term in the social sciences and humanities.
- 10 Ravasi and Van Rekom (2003:119-122) identify twelve categories of theory that inform research on identity 'ranging from strictly individual experiences of one self to society-wide phenomena'.
- 11 This section on opposition to the pass laws and *Umsebenzi* draws heavily on Rebel pity (Roux & Roux 1972), the biography of Eddie Roux and Roux's (1948) *Time longer than rope: a history of the black man's struggle for freedom in South Africa*. Although both sources have been important to the writing of the historiography of the CPSA, they have also been criticised by historians such as Simons and Simons (1983:404) and Roth (2000).
- 12 Roux helped start the Young Communist League in 1921 and joined the CPSA in 1923. As a member of the Young Communist League in the early 1920s, Roux wrote for the League's newspaper, took part in a 'chalking and sticker campaign' during the Miner's Strike of 1922, and distributed anti-militarist pamphlets at schools. In 1929, Roux returned from Cambridge where he had graduated with a Doctorate in Botany and resumed his involvement in the Party's activities. After leaving the Party in 1936, under some animosity, Roux wrote a number of books critical of the Party and the Comintern, which angered members of the CPSA (Roux & Roux 1972).
- 13 In a letter to the Executive Bureau of the CPSA dated 18 November 1930 (Drew 1996:112) Roux refers to the paper as a 'one-man-show'.
- 14 Ndlovu (2000) discusses how African workers aligned with the CPSA 'counter-commemorated' Dingaan's Day, an official holiday for Afrikaner Nationalists, in the late 1920s and 1930s.
- 15 Johns (1995:257-258) describes Johannes Nkosi, the leader of the Durban branch of the CPSA and one of four people shot dead during the pass burning campaign, as the 'first African communist martyr'.
- 16 Wells (1993:3) explains that the resistance offered by women in Potchefstroom in 1930 against the lodger's permits, which served many of the same purposes as passes, was not strictly speaking resistance against the pass laws, as 'formal' pass laws at the time did not apply to women. However, Wells (1993) considers the resistance against the lodger's permits to be of sufficient importance to be included as one of three case studies to illustrate the role played by women in protesting against the pass laws (the other two cases played out in Bloemfontein in 1913 and Johannesburg from 1954 to 1958).
- 17 The first anti-pass laws cartoon of 1933 appears in August, followed by cartoons published in October and November.

ber. Most of the anti-pass laws cartoons were published in 1934, appearing every month with the exception of January, March, August, October and November. The highest frequency occurred in September 1934 with five anti-pass laws cartoons published, followed by June and December with three anti-pass laws cartoons appearing in each month. In 1935, anti-pass laws cartoons were printed once in February and May and twice in August. The lowest frequency is in 1936 with only two anti-pass laws cartoons reproduced in April editions of *Umsebenzi*.

18 It cannot be assumed that all the linocuts in *Umsebenzi* were produced by Roux. For example Roux (Roux & Roux 1972:137) refers to the fact that in 1932 after being 'beaten up by Nationalist Afrikaners' he could not create 'the usual linocut cartoon for *Umsebenzi* and this Win (his wife) undertook, her first attempt at a linocut.'

19 Roux studied Botany in Cambridge in the second half of the 1920s and while a student at Cambridge had the opportunity to attend the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow in 1928 as a delegate of the CPSA (Roux & Roux 1972). Roux recalls that in Germany en route to Russia for the Sixth Congress he saw posters 'everywhere, chiefly Nazi and Communist' (Drew 2007: 157).

20 Jobling and Crowley (1996:130) note that Grosz's work had appeared in British publications since the mid-1920s

and that his 'work was so well known amongst left-wing intellectuals in Britain that it was used by some reviewers as a yardstick to judge political art'. Grosz's work formed part of a strong inflow of 'ideas and images from the Soviet Union and Germany', which by the early 1930s were absorbed in Britain (Jobling & Crowley 1996:130).

- 21 Nederveen Pieterse (1992:108-122) identifies the characterisation of Africans as 'antagonistic savages' as recurrent in western juvenile fiction. The representation of the pygmy warrior in *Tintin in the Congo* (Hergé 2006:49) exemplifies the 'antagonistic savage' caricature that is typically represented with bulging eyes and exaggerated lips.
- 22 Roux's interest in 'the problem of communication' resulted in him writing a book on the topic in the latter half of the 1930s (Roux & Roux 1972:189).
- 23 This Xhosa term for capitalist appears on the clothing of the demonic looking capitalist in figure 2 and is visible on the microfilm, but unfortunately did not reproduce.
- 24 According to McCloud (1994:31), the more simplified or 'cartoony' a face is drawn, 'the more people it could be said to describe'.
- 25 The use of religious imagery should be understood within the CPSA's view on religion in the 1930s. Regarding this, Roux (1948:285) wrote: 'communists began to realise that making war upon the missionaries, though many

of them enjoyed it exceedingly, was not good tactics. The latter were in many ways the natural allies of the communists' and he (Roux & Roux 1972:147) reiterates: 'we had found that attacks upon religion did not go down well with Africans ... reluctantly, for the Communists greatly relished anti-religious propaganda, we abandoned these attacks.'

- 26 The South African cartoonist Daniel Cornelis Boonzaaier created the caricature of the capitalist 'Hoggenheimer' in a cartoon drawn for the *South African News* in 1903. This caricature proved enduring and was still being drawn by South African cartoonists half a century later (Vernon 2000:27).
- 27 See Bonnell (1997:187-241) for an account of the representation of the capitalist and other enemies of the Communists in the political posters under Lenin and Stalin.
- 28 It is noteworthy that women appear in only eight of the 124 cartoons examined in *Umsebenzi* between 1933 and 1936. Of these eight women, five are represented as part of a family group, one shows a woman being throttled by a policeman and contains the words 'defend your women folk', one is an allegory for the League of Nations inspired by classical sculpture, and the last shows women marching along with large cordons of people. This last image is the only depiction that shows women taking up an equal position as workers alongside their male counterparts.

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