CHALLENGING APARTHEID

Posters from the United Democratic Front and the End Conscription Campaign

Deirdre Pretorius and Marian Sauthoff

Since 1994 there has been a concerted effort to record the period of apartheid in South African history. This includes the collection and exhibition of materials and artefacts. Some of these materials, for example propaganda posters and apartheid signage, are displayed in public spaces such as the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg. The South African History Archive (SAHA), located at the William Cullen Library at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, houses a growing number of political ephemera (t-shirts, banners, buttons) and propaganda posters.

An exhibition of posters from this archive, entitled *Images of defiance,* opened on 26 April 2004 at Museum Africa in Johannesburg. The exhibition derives its name from the title of the book *Images of defiance; South African resistance posters of the 1980s* compiled by The Posterbook Collective in 1991. This book was for many years the only source that dealt exclusively with examples of South African resistance posters of the 1980s drawn from the SAHA. Since the 2004 exhibition, the book has been reprinted by STE Publishers and plans are afoot to 'develop a comprehensive catalogue of the exhibition, which will act as an update to the original book' (Gerber 2004). The book provides a sample of approximately 320 posters that are broadly associated with the Congress[1] movement and categorises them in the fields of politics, labour, community, education, militarisation and repression, and culture. Although the book and subsequent exhibition of posters present a valuable visual documentation, they are limited in their scope and depth of engagement relative to the totality of the SAHA collection.

The SAHA collates materials from all South African groupings regardless of political persuasion and comprises nearly 4000 posters from the twentieth century, with the earliest dated 1921 and the latest 1995. A total of 3420 posters are currently archived by way of the DB/Textworks database into the following fields: record number, source – issued by, keyword, references, and slide number.[2] This article examines and compares a purposive sample of five sets of propaganda posters from the SAHA that were disseminated during the 1980s by two prominent anti-apartheid groups, namely, the United Democratic Front and the End Conscription Campaign. It specifically considers in manner in which the two organisations challenged apartheid visually and sought to shape the attitudes and influence the behaviour of their respective constituents. The comparison is preceded by a brief introduction to the United Democratic Front and the End Conscription Campaign in order to provide a context that facilitates a reading of the selected posters.

ORGANISATIONS FOR CHANGE

Many voices challenged apartheid and argued for change in South Africa during the 1980s. Prominent voices considered to have been pivotal to the transformation of South African politics include the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the African National Congress (ANC), the United Democratic Front (UDF) and to a lesser extent other smaller anti-apartheid groupings (Seekings 2000). An example of such a smaller anti-apartheid grouping is the End Conscription Campaign (ECC), which according to the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR 1989:10) was a significant, although 'relatively small part of the broad and multi-faceted struggle against apartheid'.

While the UDF and the ECC shared many similarities, they differed in a number of important aspects. Both came into being in 1983, stayed active during the decade of mass resistance in the 1980s, and disbanded in the early 1990s. During the 1980s both organisations publicly opposed apartheid and endured extensive harassment and periods of being banned. Both organisational structures provided a common front that accommodated a range of affiliates that held that apartheid was based on unjust and unequal values and must be replaced by a democracy based on values of equality, freedom, human rights, justice and peace. Although the underlying sentiments of the organisations were the same, their objectives, membership base and the audiences they addressed differed considerably.

The question of precisely what the UDF stood for is one that repeatedly appeared throughout the movement's

existence. Even at its national launch there was 'no clear understanding' of this question (Seekings 2000:115), and the history of the UDF was 'one of chronic diversity and disagreement' (Seekings 2000:323). Seekings (2000:298) concludes that:

> in so far as the UDF was integral to a broader movement, that movement was primarily a 'people's movement' standing for freedom and democracy, and proclaiming a message of hope and freedom, more than for radical economic or social change.

The aims of the UDF were broadly articulated and the specifics shifted as the political landscape changed. Seekings (2000:3) summarises the role played by the UDF throughout the 1980s in South Africa as follows:

> The UDF inspired and mobilised people across South Africa to resist the state's institutions and policies; it helped to build an unprecedented organisational structure from the local to the national levels; it co-ordinated diverse protests and campaigns; it promoted the profile and underground structures of the ANC; and it nurtured a political culture that emphasized democratic rights and claims indivisibly by race.

In contrast the ECC held a very specific aim throughout its existence. The organisation was founded to oppose conscription[3] and militarisation in South Africa and became 'one of the biggest and the most significant anti-apartheid groups working amongst white South Africans' (CIIR 1989:10). At its inception, the ECC defined its objectives quite clearly. These were: to build pressure on the government to end conscription; to raise awareness and opposition to militarisation and the South African Defence Force's (SADF) role in South Africa, Namibia (then South West Africa) and Southern Africa; to win support for non-military and non-governmental forms of alternative service for all conscientious objectors; and to work for a 'just' peace in South Africa (CIIR 1989:36).

Both organisations established similar structures that served as fronts for numerous affiliates. Both organisations thus advanced a common goal, while allowing affiliates to retain their individual characteristics, which often differed considerably. Almost six hundred organisations[4] attended the UDF's national launch on 20 August 1983, bringing together coloured, Indian, African, and white activists (Seekings 2000:71). The UDF was thus conceived as a broad front seeking to involve any organisation willing to accept a non-racial, non-collaborationist approach (Seekings 2000:49). Although the UDF claimed a membership of close to two million, Houston (1999:90) suggests that it is almost impossible to settle on a final number. Seekings (2000:316) points to the lack of research on the social bases of the organisations that were affiliated to the UDF. He speculates that their active membership was in all likelihood drawn from mostly upwardly mobile members of working-class families and generally not from blue-collar workers, and 'certainly not' farm workers, the rural poor, domestic workers or mine workers.

ECC branches were formed as coalitions of human rights, religious and political organisations. The broad range of fifty member organisations proved to be one of its greatest strengths, and was the first successful attempt at building unity between different anti-apartheid groups in the white community (CIIR 1989). ECC activists were mostly 'middle-class English-speaking[5] young people who had been politicised in church or student organisations'.[6] The ECC expanded to include parents, professionals, school pupils,[7] teachers and Afrikaans-speaking people as the campaign developed. Half of the ECC's membership was female. As a result of the military experiences of young conscripts, the ECC Parents and Supporter Group was formed in mid-1986 and expanded rapidly when the call-up was extended to older white men (CIIR 1989:89).

The UDF claimed a position as the 'only body representing all sections of the population' (Seekings 2000:290). Seekings (2000:216) comments that the UDF attempted to broaden 'political and moral influence over the widest possible range of South Africans' and in so doing, it addressed a great diversity of people. The ECC primarily addressed the white community. It saw its constituents essentially as white men who were liable for military service and those white families widely affected by conscription. The ECC never encouraged conscripts to contravene the Defence Act by not going to the SADF as this would have been equivalent to advising them to go to jail or into exile. Instead, the ECC aimed to provide 'accurate information about SADF activities and allow people to make independent decisions about their call-ups' and to 'inform and challenge whites about the role of the SADF and its use of conscripts to enforce and defend the policies of apartheid' (CIIR 1989:88, 10).

Both The UDF and the ECC made extensive use of mediated communication to propagate their ideals. According to Van Kessel (2000:56), the UDF was very aware of the significance of propaganda and media and produced a 'massive outpouring of newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, T-shirts, banners, buttons, posters and songs'. Both organisations employed posters as a direct and economical means to elicit support. A search of the SAHA poster archive database in the field 'source – issued by' revealed a total of 127 records attributed to the UDF, of which 27 records are listed as being issued in collaboration with other organisations or as calendars. The search resulted in 216 records for the ECC of which 20 are listed as collaborations. The identification of the specific communication aims of the 296 posters issued solely by the UDF or ECC suggests that they could be located in the functional categories of announcements, calls, demands, declarations, educational and ceremonial.[8] The strongest arguments for democratic change are found in the voicing of demands.

For the purposes of this article, five selected sets[9] of demand posters[10] are examined and compared. A set comprises one UDF and one ECC poster matched on the basis of immedi-

ate similarities of subject matter and/or objects depicted. The primary objective of the examination of the poster sets is to highlight that although the UDF and the ECC were united by a common ideology, and often dealt with a similar range of themes and concepts, the manner in which they presented visual arguments differed considerably. This difference in visual argumentation is particularly apparent in the ways the posters construct an authorial voice and provide an implied audience with a vision of itself.

ARGUMENTS FOR CHANGE

The idea that design may be regarded as a form of visual rhetoric has been adopted by a number of theorists and utilised as a means to examine closely various forms of design outcomes.[11] The examination of the UDF and the ECC poster sets draws from the ideas of these theorists, particularly the proposal that communication design as visual argumentation may be reviewed using a critical framework consisting of four cardinal factors. These are subject matter, implications based on that subject, an authorial voice, and an implied audience. The ultimate objective in the application of the framework in an examination of visual communication materials is to demonstrate how visual rhetoric attempts to create, reinforce or transform an audience's view on the world and to convince an audience to adopt a belief or take some form of action. The audience is accepted as an active participant in the argument and particular attention is devoted to how argumentation is influenced by an audience's responsive capacity and the manner in which the experiences, beliefs, and values of an audience are referred to in an argument.

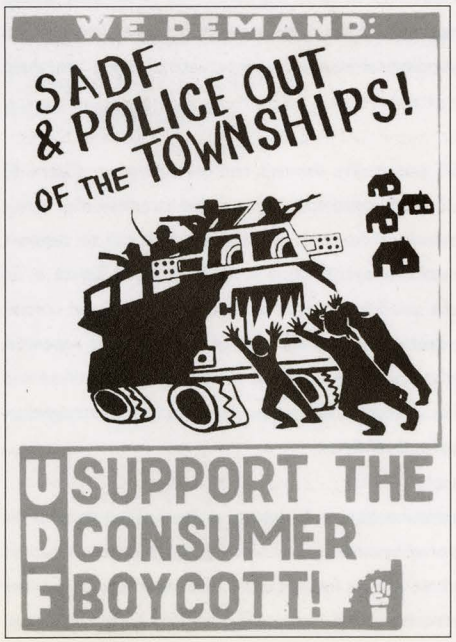
The propaganda poster aims at proclaiming an ideology, and its argumentation is directed by a speaker by means of an authorial voice to a particular audience who is considered to hold a specific viewpoint embedded in a system of values. Ideological values, authorial voice and implied audiences are constructed and visually manifested in a poster through the selection, presentation and interplay of slogan and graphic image so that they elucidate and complement each other. The following comparison of the selected UDF and ECC poster sets reveals how tone and familiarity of language, choice of scenes and objects depicted, visual techniques employed for their representation, viewing position of the audience and methods of reproduction all contribute to persuasive visual argumentation.

1 *We demand: SADF & Police out of the townships!* The Posterbook Collective 1991:31.

2 *No apartheid war.* SAHA record number 2496.

3 *Wat soek jy in die townships troepie?* SAHA record number 1352.

1



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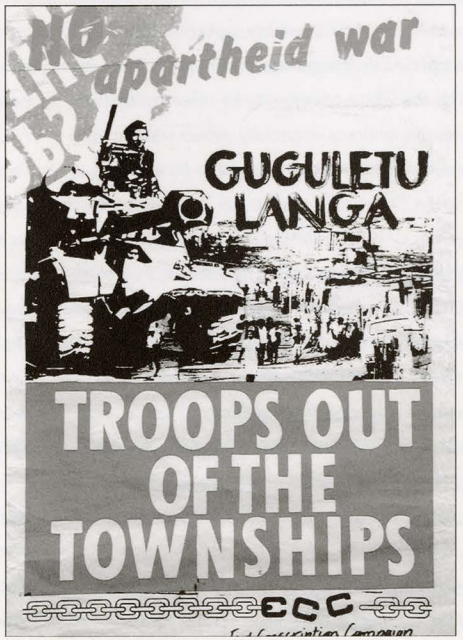

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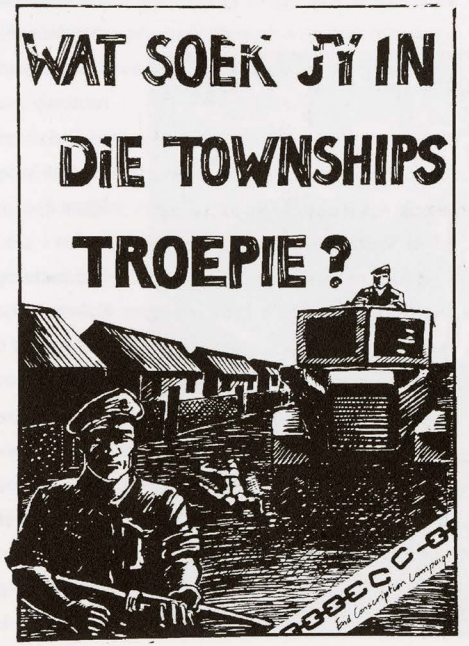


Poster set 1

The posters in this set depict military presence in the townships by means of a military vehicle, armed soldiers, and township residents and their homes. Both posters in the set adopt a colour palette of black and red only and identify their affiliations through the use of a recognisable symbol or logo. These visual identification marks are a clenched fist in the case of the UDF, symbolising the collective struggle, and the ECC logo that consists of a chain, which breaks to form the letters of the organisation. The two marks not only confer legitimacy, but also reiterate the core values of the organisations.

The UDF poster *We demand: SADF & Police out of the townships!* (figure 1) functions as both a demand for the enforcers of apartheid to leave the townships and a call for participation in the consumer boycott. The slogan 'we demand: SADF & police out of the townships' intimates a unity of speaker and audience with the collective right to make direct demands. The slogans are produced by means of the linoleum relief technique, a method of printing commonly used by community groups to disseminate a wide range of materials, and thus familiar to most South Africans. The authorial voice is consequently familiar, and by virtue of the language selected, the quality of the relief print, and the potent colour palette, it is powerful, assertive and straightforward. Furthermore, the authorial voice leaves no room for

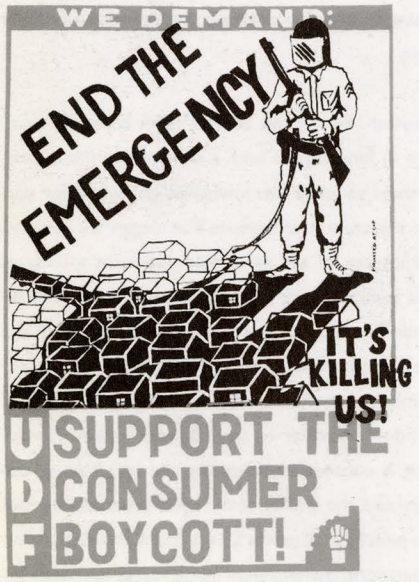
the audience to disagree and accordingly the tone becomes authoritarian, reinforcing the idea that action is imperative.

The poster employs a series of metonyms to convey its theme. The houses depicted in the image represent the entire township, the single military vehicle and soldiers refer to the bigger armed force, and the group of man, woman and child, refer to all the township residents. The soldiers are rendered anonymous, as no facial features are evident, and threatening, as their weapons point towards the township. The military vehicle overwhelms the scene through its size, which contrasts with the group of small houses. The vehicle is portrayed as a 'monster' possessing a human face with eyes, teeth and ears. It is against this monster that the man, woman and child physically take up the struggle, straining against its approach. The collective strength of the group is so enormous that the wheels of the vehicle are forced backward.

4 *We demand: end the emergency.* The Posterbook Collective 1991:31.

5 *Stop the call-up.* SAHA record number 1452.

4



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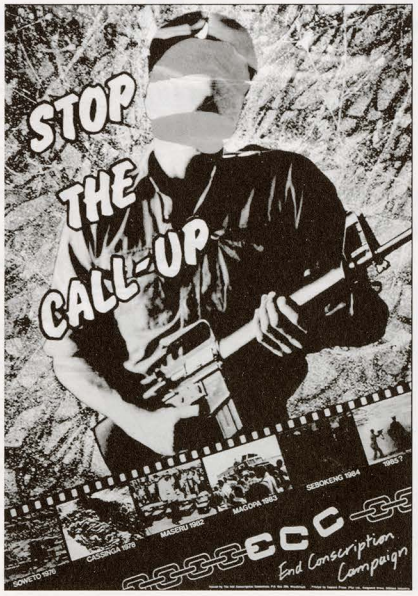


The representation of the scene serves to construct the audience as powerful and brave. It illustrates that 'we', the township residents, children and adults alike, are powerful enough to gain our demands and drive the entire SADF out of the townships if we resist together. The image is produced in a rough-hewn linoleum relief print that is similar to the treatment of the slogans, thus strengthening the link between them. When image and slogans are read in combination, their message underscores the aggression of the apartheid system and the urgency of direct action to protest the injustice of deploying the military in residential areas.

The ECC poster *No apartheid war* (figure 2) poses dual demands; firstly a cessation of the deployment of South African soldiers against fellow citizens and secondly, an end to the armed enforcement and defence of a political system. The names of the townships 'Guguletu Langa' provide a concrete identity to the areas affected by the military presence. As in figure 1, this poster employs the word 'townships', thereby articulating solidarity with the black struggle against apartheid. However, the ECC notably opts for the word 'troops', instead of SADF. Troops is a softer term that was routinely used by the white community to refer endearingly to 'our boys' in the military, especially when used in the form of 'troepie', a diminutive of the word in Afrikaans (see figure 3).

The authorial voice in figure 2 thus addresses the white community and soldiers directly by inferring their involvement in the military. The message is emphasised by the large, reversed out, starkly typeset text, which contrasts with the hand lettering of the two township names. Although omnipresent, the authorial voice becomes firm, direct and challenging through the typographic presentation of the slogan, direct address of the audience and the colour choice.

The image (figure 2) is produced by superimposing an illustration of an advancing tank manned by one soldier over a photograph depicting a township with people walking in the street. A powerful and terrorising manifestation of might is achieved by placing the figures in the street far removed, undefined and therefore non-threatening to the audience. The township residents go about their daily lives peacefully despite the disruption caused by the military presence. On the other hand, the soldier and tank are clearly defined and face the viewer. The soldier is not a stranger to the viewer, he is a family member, friend or even the viewer himself. In combination with the image, the slogan centres the attention of the white audience on the injustice of the military presence in the townships and encourages them to accept responsibility and take a stand against this situation.

Poster set 2

The second poster set continues the theme of armed aggression by highlighting its inhumanity by conveying the cruel effects on both society and the individual, whether an ordinary citizen or a member of the armed forces. The posters feature a faceless, and ominously positioned, armed policeman and soldier respectively, and suggest the physical and psychological injustices perpetuated by the apartheid system.

The UDF poster *We demand: end the emergency* (figure 4) adopts the familiar colour palette and template that amalgamates various demands and the constant call to support the consumer boycott seen in figure 1. As in figure 1, an image of a small fist appears in the lower right hand corner of the poster and the treatment of the slogans is repeated. Correspondingly, the authorial voice may be identified and defined as collective, familiar, powerful, assertive, straightforward, and authoritarian.

The illustration (figure 4) depicts a riot policeman with his face covered by a visor. He holds a gun, a sjambok is tucked into his belt and his figure casts a disproportionate shadow over numerous small houses. The call for collective action

and protest is not as direct as in figure 1. Instead, the image employs a metaphor to visually depict the dire consequences of the state of emergency. The policeman connotes the emergency and appears both anonymous, due to the visor covering his face, and menacing, through his exaggerated size and shadow that is cast over most of the township. It is his shadow that is most threatening, not his gun that points upwards and away from the viewer, or his sjambok, which is safely tucked away, The shadow creeping over the small vulnerable homes connotes a chilling and ominous message of death. The declaration 'it's killing us' stresses the nature of the situation as life threatening and urges the audience to take action.

The central image in the ECC poster *Stop the call-up* (figure 5) is a close-up photograph of an armed soldier with his face covered. While the soldier is depicted photographically, his face has been illustratively altered to give it the appearance of being bandaged, blindfolded and gagged in the colours of apartheid South Africa's flag. The overall monochromatic quality of the poster accentuates the blue and orange mask over the soldier's face. This representation of the soldier provides a persuasive argument for the need to end conscription. The representation has the simultaneous effect of connoting the soldier, who is placed in a close, looming position over the audience, as anonymous and threatening, but paradoxically, also as vulnerable and powerless. The treatment of the face illustrates starkly the influence of the apartheid military system on the individual: robbing a person of choice, individuality, freedom of speech, and the ability to see beyond what is taught in military training.

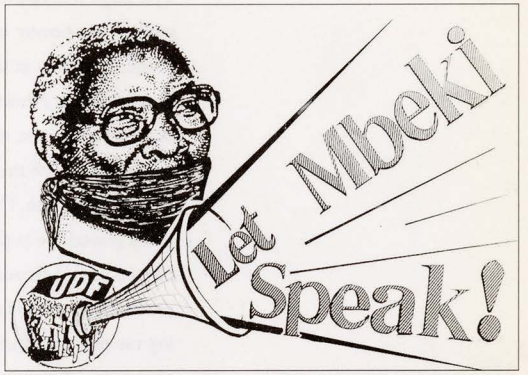
Running diagonally below the soldier is a filmstrip of six photographic images showing SADF involvement in South Africa and neighbouring countries. Read from left to right the photographs are captioned as follows: 'Soweto 1976, Cassinga 1978, Maseru 1982, Magopa 1983, Sebokeng 1984, 1985?'. The expanding presence and brutality of the military, and by implication the soldier's personal involvement, is repeatedly pointed out by the row of photographs, which 'realistically' depict violent SADF operations.

Although the demand for an end to conscription is framed as a definitive statement and spoken in an omnipresent voice, the large type and interplay of the slogan with the image create a firm, challenging authorial voice. In pointing out the negative aspects of conscription the poster subverts the heroic tone and imagery traditionally employed in recruitment posters. This method of representation constitutes an important strategy with which to break down the continuous positive reinforcement and normalisation of the military experience that was endemic in white society during the time. The viewer is confronted by the soldier, and challenged to identify with him. However, no person of sound mind would aspire to be this faceless, mute, blind and brutal soldier.

Poster set 3

Both posters in this set allude to popular ideas of empowerment. The UDF poster draws on the entrenched belief that it is through both the stand of individuals and the collective effort of people, that claims to democratic rights such as freedom of speech may be realised. The ECC poster seeks to empower the viewer by reducing the might of the military to the level of a child's game. Peace is held up as a positive value that may be attained through education and constructive social participation. Both posters employ gagging devices to strengthen their arguments.

The slogan in the UDF poster *Let Mbeki Speak!* (figure 6) is hand-lettered to make it appear as if it is emerging from the megaphone. The typographic presentation of the slogan creates an authorial voice that is powerful, loud, protesting and authoritarian. Enlarging the slogan to dominate the poster, placing the type in perspective, using an exclamation mark, and including echoing lines all serve to amplify the demanding tone of the poster. Although the slogan does not use 'we' to identify the speaker, it is clear that it is 'the people' speaking, as the slogan 'blasts' from the large megaphone



6 *Let Mbeki speak!* SAHA record number 1141.

7 *Stop the call up.* SAHA record number 2866.

protruding from the UDF logo, thereby constructing the audience as powerful, collective and enraged.

The huge megaphone acts as an antithesis to the gag, suggesting the power of people to defy the apartheid government's attempts at suppressing dissident voices. The illustration of Govan Mbeki is realistically executed and he appears dignified and calm, despite being gagged. He does not make eye contact with the audience and instead stares ahead into the distant space. This portrait intimates that he has previously gained the audience's support and there is no need for him to appeal directly to them now. Moreover the portrait proposes that he is a resolute, visionary man, notwithstanding his dire circumstances, and is therefore an example for all to follow. By implication this constructs the audience as courageous. Like Mbeki, they too can be heroes in the struggle.

In keeping with figure 6, the ECC poster *Stop the call* up (figure 7) employs a gagging device to emphasise its demands. The illustrated image portrays a tank with a corked barrel, superimposed over an abstracted target, with the demand for an end to conscription stamped on the base of the cork. Below and to the left of the tank, are framed blocks of text announcing a peace festival and providing details of the event. Although the slogan is identical to the one in figure 5, the difference in the typographic treatment conveys a contained authorial voice that is less firm and challenging, more friendly and informal. The 'typewriter' style font of the slogan and text blocks suggests the 'official' style of military documents, thereby turning the authority of the military voice into a vehicle for voicing the 'unofficial' demand of the ECC. A reading of the details of the peace festival indicates the ECC's focus on education, as well as its strategy of using 'fun'[12] activities to draw young people into becoming involved in its cause.

The image of the tank rendered impotent by the cork in its barrel and placed in the centre of a target, serves as a visual translation of the slogan. The visual style adopted connotes comic books, an effect heightened by the extreme perspective in which the tank is depicted, the framing of the text and the primary colour palette in which the poster is printed. The playful treatment trivialises and subverts the 'seriousness' of the military. This visual approach, in combination with the details and venue of the peace festival, constructs a youthful and, most probably, a student audience and implies the ability of the audience to disrupt the military system.

Poster set 4

The basic democratic rights and claims of individuals such as choice, life and freedom of speech were the premises on which many UDF and ECC arguments and demands for change were based. The denial of these rights by the apartheid system, more specifically reference to individual cases, provided a potent emotional appeal that both organisations directed to illustrate an untenable situation and garner the support of poster audiences.

The image in the UDF poster *Support Sharpville Six* (figure 8) portrays six figures lined up in the foreground and identified by labels stating their names and details such as their occupations, marital status and number of children. Behind them five figures reach up towards six gallow nooses hanging down from the top of the picture plane. The background is partially covered by a roughly painted red area with splatters around the edges. The Sharpville Six, condemned to die

8 *Support Sharpville Six*. SAHA record number 187.

9 *Conscripts need alternatives*. SAHA record number 1473.

for a political killing (The Posterbook Collective 1991:154), are literally expressed through the six figures whose individual identities and humanity are revealed by means of poignant hand-lettered labels. The lined up figures face the viewer directly, their tortured gazes cannot be avoided. The immediate threat to their lives is illustrated by the menacing figures preparing the nooses, and the background connotations of blood splatters. The reality is that these individuals are facing death and desperately need the audience's support. The horror of the situation and the emotional appeal constructs the audience as involved, compassionate, enraged and determined.

The construction of the audience and the authorial voice reinforce each other. The slogans, set in a combination of bold type and hand-lettering, create an authorial voice that is powerful, urgent, angry and collectively opposed to apartheid. The lettering on the labels, and the hand-lettered slogan, with double underscoring and exclamation mark, echo the fluid, expressive drawing style of the image. This style, with the depicted objects and the colour choice, creates a highly emotive argument.

In contrast to the illustration in figure 8, the photograph of conscientious objector Ivan Toms in the ECC poster *Conscipts need alternatives* (figure 9) seems far less emotive. However, the emotional connotations that this image holds for the audience, renders it very authoritative. The photographic code is that of a studio portrait, a style used to capture treasured moments such as 'my child in grade one', or 'my son, the graduate'. Ivan Toms looks the audience squarely in the eye; although unsmiling he does not appear antagonistic, but rather serious. He is clean-shaven, with short hair and dressed in a manly chequered shirt. At the time, Ivan Toms promoted values that differed radically from the values accepted by the majority of whites, however, the photographic depiction renders him 'normal', and 'like us'. He could be the husband, brother, uncle, son or friend of any white South African. He is presented as someone who needs support, but he also stands for every conscript who should be afforded an opportunity to choose alternative means of service if he happens to be a conscientious objector.

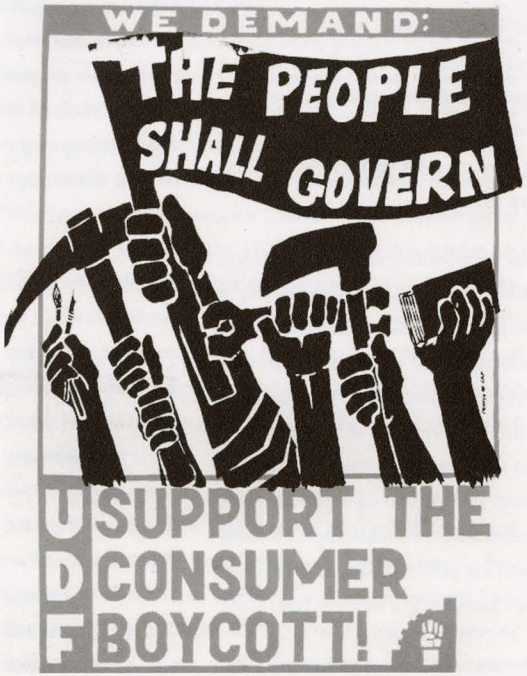
Ivan Toms' individual and human dimensions are bolstered by the script font used for the call to 'support Ivan Toms conscientious objector', and its enclosure in a diagonal banner isolated from the rest of the poster. The demanding slogan 'conscripts need alternatives' is placed at the top of the poster and is supported by information about a public event where alternative forms of service will no doubt be pointed out. The bold sans serif reversed type ensures legibility and visibility and by implication, clarity. In comparison with the urgent slogan in figure 8, the omnipresent authorial voice in the ECC poster seems straightforward, measured, and earnest, indicating a rational audience that bases its decision on factual information.

Poster set 5

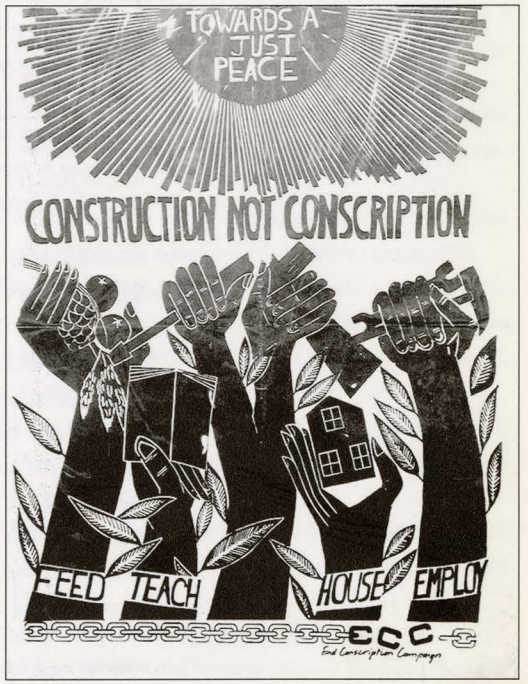
The posters in the final set present an aspirational view of a democratic future as a counterfoil to a society where values are defined by unacceptable policies and dictated by military enforcement. Both the UDF and the ECC posters depict upraised arms with hands holding symbolic objects and use a technique of close up framing to place the viewer in the midst of a group of people. In each case the posters visually and verbally quote from formal declarations and documents subscribed to by the organisations.

The demand 'the people shall govern', contained within the

10 *We demand: the people shall govern.* The Posterbook Collective 1991:30.



11 *Towards a just peace.* SAHA record number 1040.



shape of a flag in the UDF poster (figure 10) is a direct quote from the *Freedom Charter* (The Congress of the People 1955) as are the objects selected for depiction in the image. The symbols of learning (book), work (spanner, hoe, pick), culture (artist's brushes), and governance (the flag), refer to specific democratic changes demanded in the *Charter*. For example a book and artist's materials refer to the *Freedom Charter's* call that 'the doors of learning and of culture shall be opened' (The Congress of the People 1955). Positioning the audience within the group fighting side by side for freedom and the above mentioned democratic values constructs them as fearless, active participants in the struggle, not as observers or outsiders.

The restricted colour palette, small clenched fist and the choice and presentation of the slogans employ the standard template identified in figures 1 and 4, with the resultant authorial voice declaring itself collective, familiar, powerful, protesting and authoritarian. As in figures 1 and 8, the slogans and images in figure 10 are stylistically linked through expressive technique and medium, here linoleum carving and relief print. The conjunction of slogans and image unite the audience and authorial voice in a commitment to collective action in working towards a democracy based in the values of the *Freedom Charter*.

A commitment to similar democratic values (feed, teach, house, employ) is expressed in the ECC poster *Towards a just peace* (figure 11). This phrase is a direct quote from the opening of the ECC Declaration and supports the demand statement for the alternative of 'construction not conscription'. The slogans direct the interpretation of the image to a statement of the need to work together towards the ideal of a just peace, and an illustration of the constructive work that can be done as an alternative to conscription. The idea of construction and growth are echoed by the colour green, leaves, and radiating sunrays executed in a linoleum relief print.

In contrast to the bold linoleum technique employed in figure 10, the lettering and the image of the upraised arms and symbolic objects in this poster are delicately carved. The result is a much milder authorial voice, couched in the omnipresent that specifically states the requirements for a just peace. In response to the factual and instructional tone the audience may be construed as rational decision-makers. The close-up viewing position draws the audience into direct involvement in the ECC's quest, while the connotations of the delicate technique, leaves and sun simultaneously portray them as idealists.

CONCLUSIONS

Propaganda posters argue from an ideological base, and ideology as a 'conception of the world', is embedded not in facts, but based on ideas, ideals, beliefs, passions and values (Bullock & Trombley 2000:414). Perelman (1986:3-4) considers values to be purely subjective expressions of emotions, and asks: how do we reason about values, what kinds of structures do people use when reasoning about values and are these structures empirical in nature? He argues that logical value judgements do not exist, but what does exist is 'only a study of the ways by which one presents all kinds of arguments, or good reasons, designed to persuade people that this or that is preferable or reasonable' (Perelman 1986:3-4).

The ideology and values of the UDF and the ECC, and the manner in which these are articulated, may be clearly discerned in the poster sets. In each case the aims formulated in the posters link directly back to the distinct and varied stated aims of the organisations. The intent of the UDF posters is to inspire and mobilise the audience to oppose and resist apartheid systems and structures collectively. Four of the five UDF posters examined include the word 'we' in their slogans and employ images showing collective action. The audience is inspired to participate in collective protest through the examples of others, for example, a family fighting a military vehicle, the bravery of the Sharpville Six, or Govan Mbeki's fortitude. Members of the audience are continually reminded that the dire physical and psychological circumstances in which they find themselves, place them in a position where they have no choice but to act in immediate, united and assertive ways.

The ECC's opposition to militarisation and its intention to build awareness of the role of the SADF emerge in scenes of military action and widespread military presence, more particularly in civilian townships. Here the heroic tone and imagery adopted by the political system to reinforce apartheid policies is subverted. Resistance to conscription and support for alternative means of service and conscientious objectors, like Ivan Toms, are expressed in constructive and reasonable terms. In contrast to the UDF, the posters do not attempt to inspire the collective, but rather announce events where information may be gained, for example a peace festival and public meeting. The audience is called to introspection and challenged to question the role of the SADF and its soldiers, and by implication, individual members of the audience are asked to consider their personal role and responsibility. In each case, the respective audience is interpellated in terms of Althusser's view of ideology. According to Althusser, ideology has 'always already' determined a particular subjectivity and a set of specific roles into which an individual will be inserted. This pre-allocated 'subject position' dictates the way in which an individual will be systematically addressed or 'hailed' (Hawkes 1996:123).

In arguing for democratic changes, both poster sets demonstrate the rhetorical strategy of revealing the negative values (unjust, brutal, aggressive, inhumane) of the political system. In general the posters protest against apartheid by pointing out the detrimental effects apartheid institutions and policies have on ordinary people. Only one poster set (the final one) directly provides a counter vision to apartheid by overtly depicting the positive values of a democratic society as envisaged in organisational declarations. The interplay of

visual image and verbal slogan in both organisations' posters guide the ideological interpretation of the message. The ideological message in the UDF posters revolves around the worth of collective action in working towards democratic values based in justice, human rights, and solidarity. The ECC posters employ the consequences of conscription and the idea of a just peace to argue for democratic changes that are embedded in moral responsibility, freedom of conscience, and personal choice.

The speaker is identified in all except one UDF poster either directly by name in the slogan, or by including the organisation's logo on the poster. On the whole the authorial voice in the UDF posters is shaped as collective, powerful, protesting and autocratic through the choice and tone of language and its typographic treatment. In contrast, the ECC speaker is not identified overtly in the slogans, but by the presence of the ECC logo. The authorial voice in all the ECC slogans is omnipresent, and when compared to that of the UDF, gentler and more measured. Overall the tone in the ECC posters can be described as firm, challenging, rational and earnest. In comparison to the reliance on the direct autographic lettering seen the UDF posters, there is less manipulation of the letterforms and more of an adherence to 'professional' typographic conventions, lending the authorial voice an air of objectivity. The differing authorial voices in the poster sets are reinforced by the treatment of the images. With the exception of two ECC posters that solely employ photographs, all the posters examined in the poster sets utilise illustrated images. Illustrative techniques in the UDF posters tend to be more emotive and expressive in comparison to the contained and controlled depictions of the scenes and objects in the ECC posters.

Both poster sets are unequivocal through their use of the popular idiom, familiar experiences, and appropriate treatment. The posters employ a limited repertoire of objects, situations, symbols and visual techniques that may be easily understood on denotative and connotative levels. The framing of arguments, the manner in which objects are illustrated, allocated viewing positions, and authorial voices, imply two distinct audiences. The UDF audience is constructed as brave and active participants in a potentially powerful and forceful collective, while the ECC audience is in certain instances constructed as involved individuals, but mostly as rational and moral decision makers. The strongest appeal to the first group is for collective action based on a survival imperative. A basic assumption in the argumentation is that authorial voice and audience are united in their commitment to a cause and that they subscribe to similar values. For the second group, the strongest appeal is for individual introspection based on an imperative of morality. The assumption is that the audience needed to be brought to a point of personal identification with the cause and to a reconsideration of values.

FINAL COMMENT

How successful the posters actually proved to be in persuading South Africans to accept the values of the UDF and the ECC is open to speculation, as there is no existing empirical evidence that establishes a causal link between the posters and the response of specific audiences. Nelson Mandela (in The Posterbook Collective 1991:vii) feels that the posters issued by the UDF were effective and he acknowledges the important contribution they made to the struggle. McQuiston (1993:74) comments that South African resistance posters from the 1980s 'provided the visual bonding and solidarity that carried the democratic popular movement … and achieved the beginning of the dismantling of apartheid'.

This article suggested that the five poster sets discussed advanced convincing visual arguments that resonated emotionally with audiences and thus with the respective constituents of the UCF and ECC. This was achieved by placing subject themes within the immediate context and experiences of audiences and by presenting each audience with a persuasive vision of itself. In the case of the UDF, the audience was encouraged to see itself as an active, brave and powerful collective, and in the case of the ECC, as rational and moral individuals. Ultimately, the posters provide an interesting insight into a period in South African history from two perspectives – those who considered themselves the oppressed and those who strongly objected to being cast in the role of oppressor.

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Notes

1 The Congress movement included the African National Congress, the South African Coloured People's Organisation and the (white) Congress of Democrats (The Posterbook Collective 1991:15; Seekings 2000:8).

2 Very little information of particular interest to design historians is included in the database of the SAHA. Names of designers or specific community groups responsible for creating the posters, dates and locations where poster were first displayed etc are matters that need the attention of design researchers.

3 During the apartheid years, the government relied on the South African Defence Force (SADF) and the security forces to 'crush and subdue black resistance to apartheid' (CIIR 1989:11). The foundation for the SADF was created by an army of white conscripts, as by the 1980s all South African white men were conscripted to serve in the military at the age of eighteen.

4 According to Houston (1999:89-90) 565 organisations with a total of 1.5 million supporters registered delegates at the inaugural conference of the UDF. He divides these organisations into student/youth organisations, trade unions, civic organisations, women's organisations, and other organisations, including political, religious and sports organisations.

5 Until the mid-1980s, the war resistance movement was almost exclusively English, but the ECC's long-term goal was to become a fully bilingual organisation. An important breakthrough was made in 1986, when the ECC formed branches at Pretoria and Stellenbosch Universities. An Afrikaans wing of the Johannesburg ECC was set up with the name *Eindig Nasionale Diensplig* (End National Service) (CIIR 1989:100-101).

6 The National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) was one of the first groups to take up the issues of conscientious objection and militarisation in the late 1970s and its members were instrumental in the formation of the COSG and the ECC (CIIR 1989:104).

7 The ECC identified white schools as a priority from the outset. Schools had been increasingly militarised since the late 1970s when the then Defence Minister PW Botha declared: 'Our education system must train people for war' (CIIR 1989:97). The SADF was preparing pupils physically and psychologically to 'combat total onslaught' through Youth Preparedness programmes, veld schools and the cadet system. ECC branches formed school sub-committees, whose members included pupils and teachers (CIIR 1989:97).

8 The identification of the specific communication aims of the SAHA poster sample formed part of the MA dissertation *Propaganda posters as visual rhetoric: an exploration and case study* (Pretorius 2004). The communication aims were classified as an announcement if the slogan simply acts as an announcement, for example for an upcoming event or campaign, as a call when some action is required of the audience, as a demand when the demands of the organisations are voiced, and as a declaration when an explicit proclamation is made of what the organisation is for or against. An educational aim refers to posters that provide more lengthy information, but also includes posters that express an apparent intent towards educating. Ceremonial posters were classified as such if the poster celebrates, praises or commemorates the organisation, a specific individual, or event.

9 Twenty-three UDF and 57 ECC posters listed in the SAHA were categorised as 'demand posters'. It was subsequently found that seven UDF and seventeen ECC posters were missing from the archive. Three of the missing UDF posters were sourced from *Images of defiance; South African resistance posters of the 1980s* (The Posterbook Collective 1991) for inclusion in the examination of the poster sets.

10 The posters either function in a single capacity, for example as an announcement only, or combine more than one function, for example an announcement combined with a demand. For the purposes of this article, when the poster is multifunctional, focus is placed on the demand function.

11 Traditionally rhetoric was orientated toward words and verbal arguments (Buchanan 1995:44; Ehses 1989:188). However, since the 1960s studies have emerged that apply the concepts of rhetoric as a method of construction, analysis and interpretation to design (Buchanan 1989:91). This includes studies of design types such as products (Buchanan 1989), advertisements (Bonsiepe 1999), information design (Kinross 1989), posters (Ehses 1989), political cartoons (Morris 1993), magazines and other printed communication materials (Tyler 1996, 1998).

12 The CIIR (1989:90) comments that the ECC campaigns reflected a 'level of creativity and dynamism unique in white politics'. The Posterbook Collective (1991:127) ascribes this to the fact that the ECC had a different constituency from most anti-apartheid groups and therefore used new tactics. Cultural events such as art exhibitions, film festivals, rock concerts and cabaret, and other social activities like fun runs, kite flying and street theatre complemented conventional political activities such as mass meetings, press conferences, and seminars.