Making Sense of Chaos: A Crime Anthropological Approach to Understanding Strike and Protest Violence in South Africa

By

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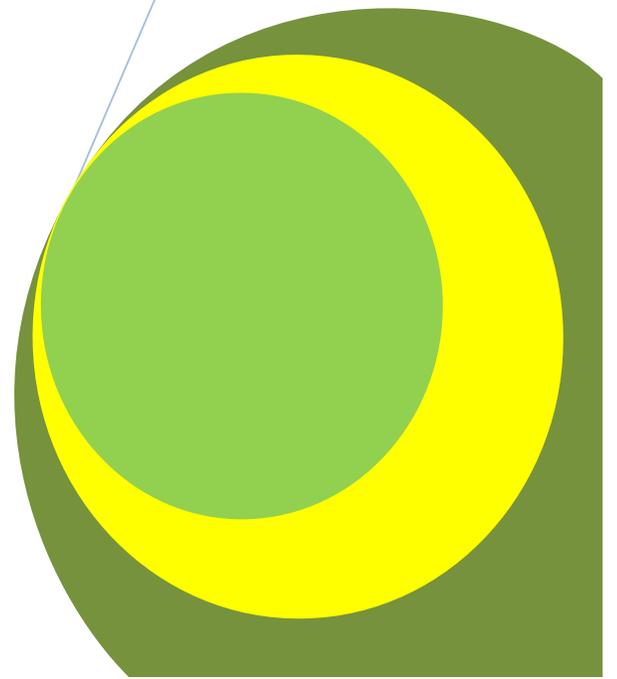
Research Article

Making Sense of Chaos: A Crime Anthropological Approach to Understanding Strike and Protest Violence in South Africa

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Abstract

Violence associated with strike and protest action has seemingly proliferated in South Africa over the last few years. The seemingly irrational chaos and devastation often associated with strike and protest action often raise questions about why these actions have a tendency to turn violent. Perhaps contrary to popular belief, the images of protesters as violent, purposeless thugs often reflected in the media are not entirely accurate. In this article I argue that there is an inherent logic and purpose to the use of violence in strikes and protests. This inherent logic can be understood using a crime anthropological approach, specifically in viewing the violent actions of protesters as part of what can be called strike or protest culture. With reference to relevant literature and within a crime anthropological framework, I attempt to explain the logic of violence as ritual in strike and protest culture. In addition, I also reflect on the role of police violence and protester violence as a symbol of justifiable violence.

Keywords: Crime Anthropological Approach, Strike and Protest Culture, Violence, South African Police Service, South Africa

Introduction

In April 2011, the South African public was captivated by the unfolding events in the town of Ficksburg in the Free State Province, where a protest action by community residents of an informal township turned violent following the death of one protester, Mr Andries Tatane, allegedly at the hands of the police. According to reports in the news media, Tatane had been beaten and then fatally shot by members of the South African Police Service (SAPS). Consequently, Ficksburg residents went on the rampage destroying buildings and blockading streets (*Mail and Guardian*, 14 April 2011). Earlier in 2011, in February the National Minister of Police, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, warned that 'violence in strikes and protests will be punished' (*Mail and Guardian*, 16 February 2011). This warning followed a flare up of protest and strike violence in a Johannesburg township, as well as in the truck driver wage strike. Security forces had been called in to patrol the township of Wesselton, approximately 200km east of Johannesburg, where a man had been killed following 'clashes between police and protesters complaining about poor government services' (*Mail and Guardian*, 16 February 2011). Here again, police opened fire with rubber bullets on protesters who 'trashed and looted foreign-owned shops', apparently as a warning 'after some demonstrators opened fire at the security forces' (*Mail and Guardian*, 16 February 2011). In addition to these most recent examples of strike and protest violence, South Africans still remember the crippling public servants strike of 2010, which was also marked by outbreaks of violence, as well as the various violent service delivery protests in various communities across the country (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, 2011).

The examples of strike and protest violence sketched above are examples of phenomena that South African citizens have become familiar with. This familiarity has come about largely through the significant increase in strike and protest actions in recent years. The one characteristic of these actions that invariably draws both the media and public interest is the almost unwavering tendency for these protest actions to become violent. In the South African context, when strikes or protests occur it has almost become expected that at some point there will be violence.

This article seeks to present a particular perspective on the question of why do protests and strikes tend to turn violent. The article posits a crime anthropological perspective on strike and protest violence which centres around two critical factors. First, the article illustrates how violence can be seen as being part of what I call "strike and protest culture". Second, the article explores the symbolic nature of violence, that is, violence as a symbol, within the context of the use of violence by striking or protesting groups, as well as the use of violence by the police.

The article hinges on an understanding of several key concepts which I briefly define. First, the concept *crime anthropological* refers to an anthropological approach to understanding aspects of crime. Crime anthropology has emerged as a subfield of the discipline of anthropology, particularly within applied anthropology (see, for example, Comaroff and Comaroff, 2006; Parnell and Kane, 2003). This subfield involves the use of anthropological knowledge to address, solve or understand real-life social, economic, political and cultural problems that affect communities and societies in their daily lives. Crime anthropology can thus be understood as the application of anthropological knowledge to understand crime as a social and cultural issue. Among other things, a crime anthropological approach would explore the dynamics of power in the creation of 'criminal categories' (Parnell, 2003: 2). In the context of this article, the approach focuses on the related issues of strike and protest action as a "culture", and the symbolism of violence as an aspect of that culture.

The second key concept is *strike and protest culture*. In the article, culture is understood in an anthropological sense. I use the same definition of culture as that used by the anthropologists Haviland *et al.* (2011), who state that 'culture goes deeper than observable behavio[u]r; it is a society's shared and socially transmitted ideas, values and perceptions which are used to make sense of experience and generate behavio[u]r and are reflected in behavio[u]r' (Haviland *et al.*, 2011: 310). Culture is thus a way of life or a way of doing that is particular to a group. In addition, culture also possesses certain key features that include, among other things, that it is learned, shared and based on symbols (Haviland *et al.*, 2011: 310-313). If one links the concept of culture to strikes and protests, then I take strike and protest culture to mean that there is a particular way of doing strikes or protests that is also learned, shared and based on specific symbols that have meaning for the members of the striking or protesting group, who have been brought together by virtue of their shared values, attitudes and perceptions of their reality or experience. The article shows how the characteristics of culture as outlined above can apply to strike and protest culture.

The third key concept is *violence*. It should be noted that violence is a complex concept as it can be understood in both literal and metaphorical senses (see, for example, Degenaar, 1990: 70). In this article, I use the term violence in a holistic sense, that is, as including both the literal and metaphorical uses of the term. Degenaar (1990) provided the following holistic definition of violence that incorporates both the literal and metaphorical meanings:

'I concentrated on the non-metaphorical use of the concept of physical violence, but by introducing the concept of violation, a metaphorical use has already come to the fore. Such violence not only hurts a person. It also desecrates him. The image of extreme force carried against a person's body is applied to another level, namely, his integrity as a human being.' (Degenaar, 1990: 74)

The complexity of the above definition of violence also necessitates the inclusion of the notion of *structural violence*. As indicated earlier, a crime anthropological approach also focuses on issues of power and it is particularly in the context of structural violence where the notion of power also features significantly. Again with reference to Degenaar, '[Structural] violence is built into structures which do not give citizens [of a country] equal power and equal life chances' (Degenaar, 1990: 78). In later discussions in the article it will become clear how and why the concept of structural violence is relevant.

The above concepts represent critical aspects of the article and hence I have taken some time to clarify their meanings within the context of the issues discussed. With the key concepts defined, I now turn attention to the first critical issue: why, how and to what extent is violence a facet of strike and protest culture?

Striking where it hurts: violence in/as strike and protest culture

While there may be those who would disagree that violence is not always a feature of strike and protest action, and they are correct, it should be pointed out that this tends to be the exception rather than the norm. The majority of strikes and protests that South African society has witnessed in recent years has been characterised by violence. What perhaps differed from one situation to another was the degree of violence that was employed. Consequently, we need to ask the critical question of why this is the case. Why must violence, more often than not, accompany strike and protest action? I would not argue that the answer is in any way simplistic however a part of the answer does lie in understanding the relationship between strike and protest violence and strike and protest culture. As indicated earlier, I refer to strike and protest culture as a particular way of doing strikes and protests. In addition, strikes and protests have also acquired certain characteristics that are features of cultures in general. In order to understand how violence exists both in and as strike and protest culture, it is necessary to devote some time to illustrating how the general characteristics of culture apply to the specific culture of strikes and protests, as practised in South Africa.

The feature of culture as being commonly shared by members of a specific group applies to strike and protest groups. This is a key factor because for strikes and protests to occur they require mass mobilisation of groups of people. Often the members who form these groups are bound together by commonly held attitudes, perceptions and value systems that ultimately inform similar behaviours within such groups. In the anthropological literature, it is generally argued that if members of a particular group share a common set of values, ideas, behaviours and perceptions, then culture represents the common denominator that makes the

actions of individual members of this group intelligible to each other (Haviland *et al*., 2011: 311; Ember *et al*., 2007: 216; Kottak, 2008: 280; Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, 2011). Members of strike or protest groups usually share similar attitudes, values and perceptions that shape their behaviour. Thus, the same frustrations and perceptions of reality that members may experience encourage them to behave in similar ways, which includes the use of violence as a common expression of commonly held perceptions and values. For example, in the municipal workers' strike in 2009, protesters uniformly engaged in public violence as a common mechanism of expressing their dissatisfaction with poor wages. This they did through 'throwing rubbish and other items at passing motorists', as well as 'assaulting police officers by throwing stones at them'. Consequently, some of the protesters 'were arrested on charges of public violence, malicious damage to property and organising an illegal gathering' (*Mail and Guardian*, 27 July 2009). In another example, this time the taxi strike in 2011, again protesters used violence as a common expression of dissatisfaction with the Cape Town traffic authorities because they 'regularly impounded taxis without good reason' (*Mail and Guardian*, 15 March 2011). According to reports, the protests turned violent when protesters set a bus alight and stoned cars (*Mail and Guardian*, 15 March 2011). These examples illustrate that violence is used not only as a common method of expressing dissatisfaction by protesters, but also that it is based on a commonly held acceptable value that violence is a justifiable means of showing discontent.

The notion that protesters may share a common perception that violence is justifiable is reflected in the second characteristic of culture, namely that it is learned. In an anthropological context, the learning of culture within human groups is the primary way through which people acquire cultural knowledge regarding socially acceptable values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. This acquisition of culture is done mainly through the transfer of cultural knowledge from one generation to another, a process that is referred to as enculturation by anthropologists (see Haviland *et al*., 2011: 310; Ember *et al*., 2007; Kottak, 2008). Through culture as learned behaviour, younger generations learn the socially acceptable behaviours, values and norms that are characteristic of their particular cultures. In this sense we can see the link between culture as commonly shared and culture as learned. Since members of a particular cultural group share certain commonly held cultural values, attitudes and behaviours, it is logical to deduce that they would have acquired these values, attitudes and behaviours through enculturation. The notion of learned culture applies to strike and protest culture in that the way in which strikes and protests are done in contemporary South Africa, particularly those that have a tendency to become violent, has been inherited from the strikes and protests of the past. There are certain common features of contemporary violent protests that resonate with protests of the past, such as intimidation, the use of violence, destruction of property, burning of tyres, blockading roads and stoning. All of these activities were features of protest actions during apartheid, yet they are still visible in protests and strikes in the contemporary post-apartheid context (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, 2011). One way of explaining why this may be the case is to argue that the values underpinning the use of violence in contemporary strikes and protests are the same values that underpinned the "struggle culture" during the anti-apartheid protests. During "the struggle", violence was used as a justifiable form of combating the illegitimate apartheid regime. In this context, those who became the "heroes" of the struggle were also, for all intents and purposes, terrorists who engaged in violence against symbols of the apartheid state, and instigated violence within their communities (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, forthcoming). Today, the commemoration of historically significant events such as the 1976 Soweto uprising, or historically significant "heroes of the struggle", serve to reinforce the values of the struggle and to ensure that they are never forgotten through transferring these values to the new generations of those emerging from the struggle. Ironically, it is in the constant reminders of the values of the struggle that the use of violence as a justifiable tool in expressions of dissatisfaction is perpetuated.

A third feature of culture is that it is often based on symbols which have meaning(s) for the members of a particular group. Anthropologists such as Haviland *et al*. (2011) emphasise the importance of symbols in human cultures by arguing that most of human behaviour involves symbols, which they define as any sign, sound or emblem that acquires meaning by being linked to something else in a meaningful way. Often the meaning(s) that symbols acquire are arbitrary and only acquire significance when people in a particular group agree on their meanings (Haviland *et al*., 2011: 316). As a consequence of the arbitrary nature of symbols they can take almost any form, ranging from the tangible, such as a physical object, to the intangible, such as a value, event or behaviour (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, 2011). Within the context of strikes and protests, symbols may form the basis of the values, attitudes and perceptions that protesters may use to inform and make sense of their actions. Also, the very actions or behaviours of protesters may be imbued with symbolic meanings that are significant to them. It is in this symbolism of violence where the rationality of protest behaviour surfaces. Symbols are often linked to a context and thus, to understand the meanings of specific symbols they need to be examined within their contexts. The use of violence as a symbol also requires understanding violence within a specific context. If looked at in isolation, protest violence may appear to be irrational. This is particularly the image of protest violence that is often portrayed in the media. However, Masiloane (2010: 34), quoting Cerrah (1998), argues that 'when [strike violence is] examined contextually, a rational message is transmitted'.

From the above, it could be argued that the symbolic nature of protest violence implies that violence itself takes on the form of ritual, thereby adding to its significance as both in, and as, strike or protest culture. The anthropologist Thornton (1990) defines ritual as 'a form of social action which recreates or repeats a previous

event, or which in breaking with the existing order reconstitutes and defines a moment charged with a new and wider meaning' (Thornton, 1990: 143-144). From this definition, two critical features of ritual are highlighted. First, ritual is repetitive in the sense that it is an action that recurs again and again. Second, ritual has meaning in that it symbolises or communicates something of specific significance to the group practising the specific ritual. In the context of protest and strike violence, certain aspects of violence are repetitive, such as the destruction of property, blockading roads, burning tyres and intimidation alluded to earlier (see *Mail and Guardian*, 27 July 2009; *Mail and Guardian*, 15 March 2011). Also, these acts are ritualistic in that they have meaning not only for protesters, but also for the targets of protests and the wider public. For protesters, the use of violence symbolises their struggle against injustice, inequality and exploitation. For state authorities and officials, as well as for the wider public, strike and protest violence symbolises chaos, anarchy and an indictment on the "new" South Africa.

In order to understand why violence has become both a symbol in and of strike and protest culture in South Africa we need to understand the relationship between enculturation and the particular meanings of violence within the context of "struggle culture". As alluded to earlier, there are significant similarities between the kinds of violence associated with strikes and protests in contemporary South Africa and those associated with the liberation struggle. In the past, in the struggle against apartheid, the armed struggle and the violence associated with it became an acceptable practice among the struggle fighters as they regarded it as morally justifiable to achieve political freedom and the end of an unjust, illegitimate and immoral regime (Crais, 2002). In other words, the structural violence of the apartheid system, which symbolised for many the violation of their humanity and dignity, provided adequate justification for the use of physical violence as retaliation, especially when such retaliatory violence was a response to the aggressive tactics of the apartheid state (Degenaar, 1990: 82). Consequently, the violence of the struggle came to symbolise a particular value system rooted in apartheid resistance culture (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, 2011). Within post-apartheid South Africa, violence as a symbol of the value system of apartheid-era resistance culture has become internalised, through enculturation, whereby contemporary freedom fighters, influenced by the histories of the liberation heroes of the past, fight against the unjust system of inequality. Thus, influenced by the apartheid-era resistance culture's value system, contemporary protesters continue to use violence as a symbol of the struggle against inequality and injustice which, in many ways, symbolise the "new apartheid" (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, 2011).

The particular meanings generated by the symbolic use of violence in strikes and protests are also linked to understanding the particular contexts within which these meanings are generated. Context serves a dual purpose as it not only influences how a particular event, such as a strike or protest, may be interpreted, but also in what way it is interpreted. Posel (1990) illustrates that the violent demonstrations of African people against apartheid, as well as the equally violent response of the apartheid state, played themselves out in symbols that took the form of specific events. Often these symbols were interpreted differently. For example, while African populist movements represented township conflicts as a "people's war" against the apartheid government, the state's right-wing critics interpreted the violence as a symptom of weak, ineffectual government (Posel, 1990: 154). To further illustrate the significance of context in how anti-apartheid violence was interpreted differently, Posel cites the role of the state media in how they represented township violence: 'News coverage of the clashes between vigilantes and "comrades" in Crossroads in June 1986...told the viewer of "heavily armed vigilantes brandishing traditional weapons"' (Posel, 1990: 160). The media had represented the context of events such as these as tribal wars among "savage" Africans, and the townships as war zones. Consequently, this context reinforced already held ethnocentric and racist assumptions of many white South Africans, which encouraged an interpretation of anti-apartheid violence as a symbol of the barbarism that would result if the state did not quell the uprisings. It is worth noting that even in contemporary media representations of strike and protest violence, it is usually African and Coloured communities that are portrayed as violent anarchists.

Within strike and protest culture, the ritual of violence elicits multiple meanings. For the protesters, violence may symbolise a particular value system; a justifiable reaction to an unjust system that exploits and undermines South African citizens; and a means of communicating the frustrations of striking or protesting groups. For those who would be targets of strike or protest violence, as well as those witnessing such violence, it may symbolise anarchy; the failure of democracy in South Africa; the rights of some are more important than those of others; and the failure of the ANC government to redress past injustices. Of interest are also the often competing interpretations of anti-apartheid symbols by protesters on the one hand, and the ANC government on the other. For example, in the aftermath of the violent township protests towards the end of 2009, President Jacob Zuma lambasted the violent protesters as being contrary to the liberation struggle: 'South Africa has had a proud history of protest against wrongdoing and injustice. This is our heritage...However, burning down libraries, torching houses of people, and looting spaza shops do not build a strong nation' (*Mail and Guardian*, 20 October 2009). This statement made by the President of South Africa is ironic as it was these very same acts of violence that the ANC encouraged in the past in its strategy to topple the apartheid government. In a certain sense, the manner in which strikes and protests play themselves out become a re-enactment of history, or history repeating itself. Hence it becomes much more difficult for the ANC now that it is in power to discourage violence among protesters, especially since many regard the ANC government as the new symbol of injustice and inequality.

Fighting fire with fire: The role of the police in strike and protest violence

The significance of and public spotlight on the Ficksburg protests not only emerged due to the death of Andries Tatane. As important in this event, and related to the Tatane death, was the role of the police in the violence that occurred during the protests. Media reports suggested that Tatane had died after being beaten and shot by members of the South African Police Service who were responding to the civil unrest generated by the protests (*Mail and Guardian*, 24 April 2011). This has once again exposed the problem of excessive force, or, as it is more popularly known, police brutality. But while other incidents of alleged police brutality have made the news, the actions of the police during the Ficksburg protest stand out from the rest. Perhaps it was the fact that a man died at the hands of police. However, another significant factor is what the police have come to symbolise in contexts such as this. As illustrated throughout this article, violence is a symbol used by protesters as a manifestation of an inherited resistance culture from the past. Within the context of that same resistance culture, the police occupied and, as was illustrated by the Tatane case, continue to occupy a very particular position in the popular imagination that informs strike and protest culture.

The police have played an instrumental role in South African society, both in the past and in the present. Some of the most significant events in the apartheid history of South Africa involved the police. Significant events that continue to hold much symbolic significance as markers of apartheid resistance, such as the Soweto Riots of 1976, were the result of deaths and injuries of protesters at the hands of the police and security forces (Brogden and Shearing, 1993: 18). The death of the Black Consciousness leader and activist Steve Biko was also attributed to the apartheid police as he was alleged to have died while in police custody (Brogden and Shearing, 1993: 34, 124). Also, there was the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 where sixty-nine people were killed by the police during protests against the Pass Laws (Brogden and Shearing, 1993: 18; Maduna, 1993: 43-44). Given the role of the apartheid police in these and other examples of brutality, it is no wonder that Reynecke and Fourie (2001) concluded that 'During the 1990s there was general consensus that the new political and constitutional reality in South Africa demanded fundamental reassessment of the nature of policing' (Reynecke and Fourie, 2001: 9). However, the question is to what extent has this fundamental change occurred?

The relationship between the police and the apartheid context of South Africa is one that had far-reaching implications for how the police were, and still are, perceived in the popular imagination. Historically, the oppressive nature of policing and the violence that it has employed, have created a sustained brutality that has been a central feature of public perceptions of the police. Consequently, 'South African policing has not simply promoted an order that devastated the lives of...South Africans but has been an essential part of that order' (Brogden and Shearing, 1993: 16, 43). This implies that the police were used as an effective tool to sustain the apartheid regime by means of what Brogden and Shearing (1993: 16-17) refer to as 'policing through violence'. This view was reinforced by the perception that the South African Police (SAP), as it was known before 1994, was too militaristic in its organisational structures. As a result, the kind of violent policing that the police became known for firmly established them as 'an enemy of the people' (Brogden and Shearing, 1993: 23). It was thought that the introduction of reformative measures such as the South African Police Service Act (No. 68 of 1995) would have helped to rid the new SAPS of the negative image it had acquired (Petrus, 2009: 200). However, not only has the SAPS returned to the militaristic image of the past, with the reintroduction of military ranks within the police force, but the violent response of the police during protests reinforce the image of the police as *the* symbol of the oppression of the past. The images that flash on our television screens when watching news coverage of protests in action almost invariably reflect apartheid-era images of protesters and the police at war with each other. These images reinforce the use of violence as symbolic action and reaction by both protesters and the police. However the question is how should the police respond when faced with violent protesters? If they do not respond with violence they place their own lives at risk. However, if they do respond with violence they risk similar consequences as that of the Tatane incident, further denigrating their image.

Masiloane (2010) has suggested that the police should respond to strikes and protests, especially if these constitute a threat to law and order (Masiloane, 2010: 37; see also Baker, 2001). As such, the police could respond through one of two possible approaches. One approach is to completely withdraw from becoming involved in protests and to treat them as civil and not criminal matters, but this limits the police in dealing with possible criminal acts that could occur during the protest. By contrast, the other option is for the police to adopt 'a strict law enforcement approach [in which disorder is] a realm that the police must conquer in order to preserve law and order' (Masiloane, 2010: 38; see also Hall and De Lint, 2003; Baker, 2002). However, this approach too has its weaknesses, specifically that it could lead to excessive force being used by the police. It appears that regardless of which approach the police may choose to use, in violent protests they will invariably be the targets of the aggression of the protesters. An important reason for this is that the police continue, as they were in the past, to be seen as a symbol of the state. In the past the police symbolised the brutal apartheid state, in the present they symbolise the "new apartheid state" of inequality and lack of service delivery in the poor communities and townships, where violent protests have regularly flared up in recent years. Conflicts between protesters and the police symbolise again this re-enactment of history, hence the recurring symbolic

representations of these conflicts in the media that immediately cause reminiscences of similar conflicts of the past. The interactions between the police and the protesters can be metaphorically encapsulated in the Turnerian concept of the 'social drama' (Turner, 1974: 33). The anthropologist Victor Turner, in his analysis of ritual in African societies, described the ritual acts he observed as social dramas, performances that people engaged in as a metaphorical way of resolving conflicts. In these dramas there were protagonists and antagonists, and each had a particular role to play, along with the expectations that went along with that role. In essence, for Turner social dramas were dynamic in the sense that they reflected societal conflicts and divisions (Moore, 1997: 231). Social dramas are often characterised by 'a regularly recurring "processional form" or "diachronic profile" – in other words, crisis situations tended to have a regular series of phases' (Turner, 1985: 74). The violent actions and reactions between the police and protesters are like the social drama metaphor of Turner. The entire episode or event involving clashes between the police and protesters is a ritual, with protagonists and antagonists, as represented by the police and the protesters. Which group occupies which category will often depend on interpretation, thereby implying that the (re)actions of both groups are imbued with symbolic meaning(s). Nevertheless, the ritual of violence by both groups is made sense of by virtue of certain preconceived expectations of the roles of both groups. The influence of history again cannot be underestimated. The symbol of the protesters as the struggle heroes and the symbol of the police as the oppressors are constantly repeating themselves, hence the immediate flashbacks to the conflicts of the past. The notion of the social drama thus helps us to understand why conflicts between the police and protesters tend to be so similar in nature.

Conclusion

At face value, and often this is all that we receive from the news media, protest violence may appear to be the result of the chaotic and irrational actions of the protesters. However, this article has presented a particular perspective of how we can make sense of this chaos by penetrating beneath the surface of media representations of strike and protest violence. The article has shown how a crime anthropological approach to understanding protest violence reveals an inherent rationality in the actions of protesters. Violence in strikes and protests does not occur in a vacuum, devoid of any context or relationship to other factors or variables. A crime anthropological approach reveals that protest violence is, in fact, ritualistic, a facet of strike or protest culture. The article has elucidated why and how strike and protest actions as they occur in the South African context can be seen as a culture. Strikes and protests conform to certain expected ways of doing them that often includes the use of violence. Strikes and protests also possess certain characteristics that are common to cultures in general. But the most important aspect of the culture of protest is the symbolic manifestation of violence. The influence of the apartheid past, particularly the resistance culture of the past, has been inherited by contemporary generations of resistance fighters, embodied by the strikers or protesters, who base their actions on this inherited value system. For them, violence is more than the mere act of destruction, intimidation or even harming others. It represents a justifiable expression of dissatisfaction towards those in power. What makes violence justifiable in this context? It is the fact that it was, and continues to be, regarded as an acceptable way of protesting against injustice and exploitation, whether structural or otherwise. It appears that the way towards a solution to the problem of violence in strikes and protests would be to change the meanings of the symbol of violence. However, this is easier said than done, especially considering the continued commemoration of historically significant events that reinforce the role of violence in resistance culture (Petrus and Isaacs-Martin, 2011). The police also, perhaps, have the most difficult task of developing alternative approaches to dealing with strike and protest violence. What specifically those alternative approaches may be is difficult to determine. However, the death of Andries Tatane has become yet another symbolic event that represents the police as "the enemy". Whether or not the police will ever be able to escape this image will perhaps be determined by how they deal with similar incidents of violence in the future.

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