# Ethnic violence and peace in southern Kyrgyzstan:

## Intragroup policing and intergroup non-aggression pacts.

Joldon Kutmanaliev

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

Florence, 29 September 2017

European University Institute
**Department of Political and Social Sciences**

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**ABSTRACT**

The paper attempts to explain the following question: "why ethnic violence and riots broke out in some neighborhoods but not in others? It contributes to our understanding of communal violence and ethnic conflict with a novel approach that will widen our perspectives on the relationship between ethnic politics and security studies at local level (micro-spatial scale). While other works try to explain ethnic violence at highly aggregated national or regional levels, this dissertation analyzes the problem at neighborhood scale.

To analyze the spatial variation in violence and peace, this research employs the concepts of security dilemma and pact-making that are usually used in international relations and security studies. I would like to show that theoretical insights drawn from international relations and security studies literature can be applicable not only to the analysis of inter-state wars and civil wars but also to the analysis of local dynamics of ethnic violence and interethnic peace at disaggregated spatial scale such as ethnic communities based in one town or in one neighborhood. I compare violent and non-violent neighborhoods in Osh city across different dimensions.

The main argument of this research is the following. The spatial variation in violent and non-violent outcomes across towns and villages and urban neighborhoods, districts, and blocks within these towns can be explained to the great extent by the presence and absence of intragroup policing and non-aggression intergroup pacts among village- and neighborhood-scale subgroups of both ethnic communities. In-group policing, a concept advanced by Fearon and Laitin (1996) is a crucial mechanism for understanding ethnic violence and peace in southern Kyrgyzstan. By itself, effective in-group policing – even in the absence of a non-aggression pact with out-group members – increases the likelihood of peaceful outcome or significantly decreases the possibility of intensive violent outbreaks in respective localities. Intracommunal policing is a necessary condition for the efficient intercommunal pacts as strong in-group policing establishes firm discipline and order within community and signals to an out-group about the credible commitment to the terms of a pact. On the other hand, intercommunal pacts reduce uncertainty and lessen fears (McFaul 2002, 217) by re-embedding trust and re-assuring in peaceful intentions between residentially-segregated Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities. However, whether intergroup pacts and in-group policing are successful depends also on several contingent and structural factors and the spatial environment of neighborhoods.

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My acknowledgements probably sound too dry and short. But those who know me well will probably understand that this does not reflect the real extent of my gratitude towards people who supported me and shared with me good moments as well as stress throughout six-year period of my doctoral study. I am sure that I forgot to name some, especially those with whom I haven't recently been in contact. For this, I would like to apologize in advance.

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During my study at the EUI, Stefan Malthaner, Lorenzo Bosi, Xabier Itcaina, and Frank O'Connor read and commented parts of my thesis. Before my first fieldwork trip to Kyrgyzstan, Stefan provided me with many invaluable hints and tips about how to conduct ethnographic research and interviews in post-conflict settings.

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My stay at the EUI and in Florence has been one of the best periods in my life. This is mostly because I found there many interesting persons. Particularly, I would like to highlight friends and voluntary 'babysitters' of my children Aybike, Aykut, and Ayluna. While my kids had many friends in their primary school and kindergartens, they became friends also with Vera, Antonio, Leonidas, Chiara, Frank, Pancho, Bogi, Nick, Maskeiko (Francis), Pietro, Markos, Myrssini, Alberto Caselli and many others. These great people happen to be also my friends whom I met at the EUI in a capacity of my classmates, teammates, drinkmates, and so on. Flora and Ed helped us with our children in Tubingen. I hope my children will never forget them.

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My father would be happy to see my defense. This dissertation is dedicated to my mother Roza Mukasheva and to the memory of my father Bolot Kutmanaliev.

Joldon Kutmanaliev, Bishkek 3 September, 2017

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# Part I. Introduction

## Chapter I. The puzzle and the argument

In the early morning of 11 June 2010 violent riots between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities broke out in the southern city of Osh in Kyrgyzstan. The conflict raged in the city for several days and then spread to several neighboring towns and villages with mixed Kyrgyz and Uzbek populations. However, the distribution and intensity of violence across space were uneven. Not all ethnically-mixed and segregated settlements experienced violence. Some towns suffered property damage but no deaths; some towns remained peaceful. Even in Osh – the epicenter of the conflict – some districts saw bloodshed and suffered from property damage, while other districts remained free of violence. These riots were the second wave of ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan. In June 1990, similar ethnic violence between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz broke out in several southern towns and villages. At that time, ethnic violence affected localities in Osh oblast (province), especially the cities of Osh and Uzgen (or Ozgon), while Jalalabat oblast remained untouched by ethnic violence. Ethnic riots of 1990 were suppressed several days later by the law-enforcement troops.

The recent episode of violence in June 2010 presents very interesting empirical puzzles and potential theoretical contributions to the literature on ethnic conflicts and political violence. Since this conflict has not attracted close attention among scholars and policy-makers from outside the region, before introducing the research puzzle, I provide a short overview of the ethnic violence in June 2010 in southern Kyrgyzstan. The mass violence in Osh continued for four days, from 11–15 June. Sporadic violence in the form of kidnapping, hostage taking, and random killing continued for several more days. This conflict was characterized by an unusually high death toll (around 500 killed and several thousand wounded people) and large-scale destruction (more than 2000 buildings and houses destroyed).

In general, the whole city was affected by riots in one way or another. However, while some neighborhoods suffered from intense violence including killings, tortures, clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbek rioters with the use of firearms, mass arson, sexual violence, and hostage taking, other

neighborhoods remained silent and peaceful or experienced only minor violent incidents. The housing policy and practices of the town administration conducted since the 1960s transformed Osh into highly ethnically-segregated city. This created a unique situation – the boundaries of ethnic neighborhoods became too well distinguishable and were recognized by local residents and even by outsiders. Once violence broke out and fear induced by uncertainty divided people across ethnic lines, the segregated neighborhoods transformed into natural subjects and objects of violent dynamics.

The most active phase of the riots with the highest escalation of violence was on 11 June and especially on 12 June. As violence escalated, armed clashes looked as full-scale military combats with intensive gunfire. On 11 June, the riots touched mostly three areas in Osh city – the eastern outskirts in Furkat (the city's eastern entrance), the western Uzbek *mahalla*[1] in Cheremushki (Ak Tilek district), and the north-western part in 'Oshskii raion' neighborhood (Alymbek Datka district). The Kyrgyz mobilization from rural areas was strongly driven by retaliatory emotions based on actual provocation by Uzbek militants (as in Furkat) or false rumors, or both. The most powerful rumor about alleged mass rape of Kyrgyz female students triggered strong retaliatory mobilization of Kyrgyz from rural mountainous areas. Uzbek groups initially were very active. In the early morning of 11 June, Uzbek youths dominated in the city. They roamed the city streets in big crowds, burned shops and cafes, and engaged in violence against Kyrgyz including some killings. In the northern Uzbek dominated areas, Uzbeks attacked state facilities and Kyrgyz border guards in the central Kyrgyzstan–Uzbekistan border check point. The Kyrgyz, initially unarmed or weakly armed with sticks, became frustrated with the inability of state authorities to keep order. Some rural Kyrgyz came to Osh to save and evacuate their children and relatives. In the eastern entrance, unable to enter the city because of gunfire from Uzbek road blocks they tried to get weapons too. As violence escalated, the Kyrgyz groups mobilized in rural areas stormed several military depots in various locations across the southern region. After they got weapons, including two or three APCs (armored personnel carriers), the dynamics of violence changed. Furious Kyrgyz forced through Uzbek road blocks. The balance of power shifted towards the rural Kyrgyz, now armed sufficiently to fight with Uzbek self-defense groups also armed with firearms.

On 12 June, violence escalated to its peak. Violence spread across many neighborhoods. Kyrgyz rural militants started massive attacks on Uzbek *mahallas* – in the eastern part: Furkat, Shark, Amir Timur, and *mahallas* in Ak-Buura distircts close to the Provincial Hospital; in the western part: Cheremushki and Kyzyl

[1] Mahalla is a traditional Uzbek neighborhood.

Kyshtak; and in the central and northern parts mahallas located around the grand bazaar: Teshik Tash, Sheit Tepe, Majrimtal, Jiydalik, and Besh Kuporok. Their attacks were now more organized

> and demonstrated some planning, unlike the previous day, when the attackers were driven by strong emotions. … The character of Uzbek defenses also changed, becoming more conscious. The Uzbeks did not try to move around the city, but concentrated on defense of their mahallas and mounted a few successful counterattacks" (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 24).

The southern neighborhoods remained peaceful. The largest southern *mahalla* Turan and surrounding Kyrgyz communities negotiated non-aggression pacts. The residents in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods also cooperated among themselves to prevent violence and aggression from outside groups. Virtually all communities and neighborhoods constructed barricades where it was possible to do so. Consequently, many neighborhoods turned into isolated ethnic enclaves.

The Kyrgyz attacks on *mahallas* were characterized by intensive gunfire, killings, and mass arson. In a number of cases, opportunistic behavior included atrocities such as gang rapes and tortures. On the other hand, Uzbek self-defense groups retaliated against Kyrgyz residents living in Uzbek-dominated neighborhoods which also involved gang rapes and torture. The certain number of instances of sexual violence from both sides is difficult to establish.

The attacks on *mahallas* were facilitated by APCs which Kyrgyz participants seized from the military. The APCs demolished barricades and opened way for militants to get deeper inside *mahallas*. In several cases noted by the Human Rights Watch (hereafter HRW), the Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission (hereafter KIC), and Memorial Human Rights Center (hereafter Memorial), the military demolished barricades without protecting residents inside *mahallas*. On the other hand, Uzbek self-defense groups used armored trucks to counterattack APCs and attacking Kyrgyz groups. In general, the role of the police and military during this conflict was ambiguous and mostly inefficient. These institutions failed to curb violence in initial stages of the riots. At the number of hotspots, their actions contributed to violence rather than preventing it. They were especially ineffective in very tense situations but more effective in clashes in which participants were weakly armed or/and were in small numbers. When the police and military reinforcements arrived in Osh from Bishkek and other regions the role of state in containing violence increased. This was one of the reasons why violence subsided after 12 June.

However, the main reason of de-escalation was the rumor about Uzbekistan's army invasion. It had a strong effect on de-escalation of violence at least in the western part of the city as hundreds of rural youths fled the city. Other factors contributing to the de-escalation were weak self-organization of rioters and their physical and moral exhaustion. Rural mobilization provided new arrivals for Kyrgyz militants only

on 11 and 12 June. These were early risers who came to Osh immediately when they heard the rumors about mass rapes of Kyrgyz female students and 'killings of the Kyrgyz in Osh'. By 13 June, more or less plausible information about the developments in Osh became available. Regional authorities in rural districts tried to mediate and police local Kyrgyz communities. In Uzbek-dominated towns of Karasuu and Uzgen, local authorities in collaboration with community leaders also policed local Uzbek communities and restrained them from involvement in violence. Finally, with fresh reinforcements, the police and military took the situation under control. At later stages of the conflict, they even managed to put the curfew into real effect across the city and some other districts. However, communal violence and sporadic riots continued in Osh city on 13 and 14 June. Hostage taking and separate deadly skirmishes and beatings became the dominant form of violence in those days. Nevertheless, mass attacks on Uzbek *mahallas* in Osh totally stopped but violence diffused to Jalalabat – the second largest city in southern Kyrgyzstan. Although the scale of violence was less intense, Jalalabat still significantly suffered from armed interethnic clashes and property destruction[2].

## The puzzle

I chose the recent conflict in Kyrgyzstan as my case study research as it poses theoretical and practical challenges for both researchers and state officials. Many political scientists and experts have theorized about ethnic violence in conflict societies. However, the majority of them fail to account for town-level variation in the patterns of ethnic violence within one country. In international practice, many official reports on ethnic violence underline the role of poverty, economic exploitation, and interethnic labor market competition as causes of violence (Wilkinson 2009, 332). Many scholars and experts provide similar accounts for the recent ethnic conflict in Kyrgyzstan. Although such explanations identify some of the motives behind and preconditions favorable for ethnic violence, they do not explain variation in violence.

The puzzling question that guides this research is why did towns and villages with similar ethnic composition and social and economic contexts exhibit variation in, and different levels of, ethnic violence? Why did violence break out in some towns but not in many others? Why did ethnic violence break out in some of Osh city's neighborhoods but not in many others?

[2] More detailed overviews of the ethnic violence in Osh and Jalalabat will be provided in chapters 5 and 9, respectively.

This puzzle was already signaled by some scholars working in different fields of political violence One of the central puzzles addressed by Fearon and Laitin in their model on interethnic cooperation is the following: "Why in some cases do interethnic relations often remain cooperative for a long time yet periodically break down in the form of spiraling violence, while in other cases peace is quickly restored after violence breaks out?" (1996, 730). De Figueiredo and Weingast (1999) distinguish the similar problem in the studies informed by theoretical approaches from international security and neorealist traditions. They note that: "Although most ethnic groups face a security dilemma, the spiral dynamic occurs only occasionally" (de Figueiredo and Weingast 1999, 262). Walter draws attention to the same puzzling problem in the context of decline of multinational empires: "For every case of internal violence that erupted after the breakdown of the Soviet Union there are numerous cases that remained peaceful" (Walter 1999, 8). In this dissertation, I attempt to address this question by applying Fearon and Laitin's theoretical model of interethnic cooperation to the case of the ethnic riots in southern Kyrgyzstan, in June 2010. In accord with Fearon and Laitin, I suggest that utility of communal policing norms and non-aggression pacts in some neighborhoods and towns helped local leaders and mediators to prevent violence at local level. I provide some conducive (and non-conducive) factors for in-group policing and illustrate some empirical examples of mediation and intercommunal pacts during the June 2010 violence in southern Kyrgyzstan.

If pacts are a viable solution, why are conflicts not resolved through pacted agreements? Walter (2009, 244) identifies the theoretical puzzle that is why given high-costs of civil wars governments do not negotiate more political settlements. My research partly addresses this question by analyzing factors that mitigate or hinder the negotiation of micro-scale[3] agreements.

The secondary questions are the following. What factors/mechanisms account for efficient in-group policing and is it in fact conducted efficiently? Why do peaceful negotiations and non-aggression pacts take place only in some instances? What are the conditions that account for the production of such pacts? How does the spread of violence and riot contagion dynamics account for the violence variation? How was violence prevented in peaceful towns and in peaceful neighborhoods within violent towns? What explains urban neighborhoods' divergent responses to the emerging violence?

[3] By 'micro-scale' or 'micro-spatial scale' I imply the spatial dimension of analysis referring to spatial units as small as neighborhoods and villages. This should not be confused with the 'micro-level" analysis which normally refers to the analysis of individuals and motivations.

The main aim of this dissertation is to explain a short but a very intense episode of mass violence between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities which took place in 11–15 June 2010 in Kyrgyzstan. The explanation of the problem of ethnic riots in southern Kyrgyzstan requires investigation of several problems. However, these problems indicate the potential theoretical and methodological contributions that this thesis can make in the relevant literature on political violence and ethnic conflict. First, I will distinguish and describe the spatial patterns of violence. For this, I look at instances of interethnic violence and peace at different levels of territorial aggregation and identify violent and non-violent towns, villages, town districts, and neighborhoods.

Second, I want to identify and understand causal factors and conditions that lead to instances of ethnic violence and ethnic peace at local level. More precisely, the aim is to explain why during the conflict some locations with similar ethnic, social, and economic characteristics – namely towns, villages, and town districts – experience ethnic violence while others manage to remain peaceful. Most scientific works in this field with few exceptions (Brass 2003; Kalyvas 2006; Straus 2006; Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2006; Wood 2003) seek to uncover general causes of violence but they do not account for variation in violence. As Varshney points out, “variations across time and space constitute an unresolved puzzle in the field of ethnicity and nationalism” (2002, 6).

Third, this research explains a short episode of violence as opposed to long-term forms of mass violence such as civil wars and repeated multiple violent riots, continuous over the long period. Studying such a (relatively) short episode of violence presents its own theoretical and methodological challenges. Fast changing dynamics of events requires us to place more focus on interactional and contingent factors along with structural conditions. In other words, the explanatory power of interactional and contingent variables significantly increases in the analysis of short-term events.

Fourth, in explaining the causes of ethnic violence this study also aims to establish bridges between the literature on political violence, contentious politics, ethnic conflict on the one hand, and international relations and security studies on the other. There is a bulk of research on mass violence in these theoretical traditions. They have built distinct approaches to the study of ethnic violence and yet these traditions rarely intersect. Scholars of ethnic violence have already recognized this gap (Brubaker and Laitin 1998).

Fifth, as this research explains micro-scale spatial variation, its main analytical focus is at the meso-level (neighborhood-level ethnic communities). At the same time, it also examines macro- and micro-level factors to a significant extent.

## Definitions: Ethnic riots (communal violence)[4] or civil war?

Various scholars of political violence and contentious politics have defined violence in several different ways. Political violence includes "repertoires of collective action that involve great physical force and cause damage to an adversary in order to impose political aims" (della Porta 2006). In this dissertation, I will look at a specific type of political violence – ethnic conflict. Riots were the most visible form of violent mobilization during the ethnic conflict in Osh, however, they very quickly progressed into more violent and organized forms of violence. As different forms of violence assume varying degrees of intensity, organization, and state involvement as well as specific types and the scope of collective action (Beissinger 2002, 305), it is important to identify forms of violence that took place in June 2010. In this regard, the term 'ethnic violence' is convenient because it contains several related forms of violence: ethnic and communal riots, pogroms, and armed ethnic conflicts.

So, we can regard the ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan as comprising multiple forms of violence separated from each other by a sequence of events and/or by geographical distance. In the course of events, ethnic riots and communal violence escalated into an armed conflict. In locations where local Uzbek groups were defeated, ethnic violence transformed into ethnic pogroms. The ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan largely contained elements of civil war and ethno-communal riots. Below, I will provide definitions of ethnic riots and civil wars and conceptually operationalize the ethnic conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan to determine its dominant form. In chapter 5, however, I will analyze, in more details, how the dynamics of events and diffusion in Osh shaped and transformed diverse forms of violence at local level.

Ethnic riots assume mobilization of rioters along ethnic, racial, communal, or religious lines (Brubaker and Laitin 1998; Horowitz 2001; Olzak 1992; Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2009). Religious, ethnic, and communal affiliations play an important role as the onset of violence tend to reify group differences and group

[4] In this dissertation, I use interchangeably the terms 'ethnic riots' and 'communal violence'.

identities. Victims and target groups are carefully chosen based on their group affiliation. However, "[e]thnicity is not the ultimate, irreducible source of violent conflict … [r]ather, conflicts driven by struggles for power between challengers and incumbents are newly ethnicized, newly framed in ethnic terms" (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 425). My understanding of a violent ethnic riot adopts Horowitz's definition. According to Horowitz, a "deadly ethnic riot" is "an intense, sudden, though not necessarily wholly unplanned, lethal attack by civilian members of one ethnic group on civilian members of another ethnic group, the victims chosen because of their group membership" (2001, 1). Brubaker and Laitin further summarize Horowitz's conceptual approach to the study of ethnic riots:

> Arguing for a disaggregated approach to ethnic violence, Horowitz distinguishes the deadly ethnic riot defined as mass civilian intergroup violence in which victims are chosen by their group membership from other forms of ethnic (or more or less ethnicized) violence such as genocide, lynchings, gang assault, violent protest, feuds, terrorism, and internal warfare. The deadly ethnic riot is marked by highly uneven clustering in time and space, relatively spontaneous character (though not without elements of organization and planning), careful selection of victims by their categorical identity, passionate expression of inter-group antipathies, and seemingly gratuitous mutilation of victims (1998, 432).

Brubaker and Laitin define ethnic violence as:

> violence perpetrated across ethnic lines, in which at least one party is not a state (or a representative of a state), and in which the putative ethnic difference is coded by perpetrators, targets, influential third parties, or analysts as having been integral rather than incidental to the violence, that is, in which the violence is coded as having been meaningfully oriented in some way to the different ethnicity of the target (1998, 428).

Based on this definition, I distinguish the ethnic violence of 11–15 June in southern Kyrgyzstan from violent events in the same region – more precisely in Jalalabat city and Teyit village – which took place one month before, in May 2010. The events in Jalalabat city in May 2010 exemplify non-ethnically framed political violence. Hundreds of loyalists of the toppled dictator, Bakiev – who was originally from Jalalabat oblast – stormed and occupied government buildings. In response, Kyrgyz supporters of the interim government along with Uzbek groups mobilized by the prominent Uzbek leader, Batyrov, attacked and drove away Bakiev loyalists. Although both Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities were involved in these events, the main focus of the Jalalabat street clashes in May 2010 was not along ethnic lines. However, these events had direct consequences that led to the escalation of interethnic tensions and eventually to the ethnic violence that broke out one month later, in June 2010, in the south of Kyrgyzstan.

Gersovitz and Kriger (2013, 160–61) define civil war as "a politically organized, large-scale, sustained, physically violent conflict that occurs within a country principally among large/numerically important groups of its inhabitants or citizens over the monopoly of physical force within the country". The temporal

and spatial dimensions contained in this definition reflect main conceptual criteria found in the relevant literature. Scholars mainly offered various indicators to operationalize the concept of civil war aimed at quantitative coding of cross-national research on civil wars. Studies have been generally focused on two main indicators: 1) a death threshold that distinguishes civil war from other internal conflicts and 2) the duration of civil war (the onset and termination). Although a number threshold is an arbitrary cut-off point usually aimed at operationalization and coding for cross-national quantitative analyses of civil wars, it provides a useful ground for discussion of this phenomenon and conceptual operationalization of the violence in Kyrgyzstan. The main conceptual criteria offered by quantitative studies help us to structure our analysis around those indicators of civil war.

According to the first indicator, the June 2010 ethnic violence falls short of being categorized as civil war. While most scholars determine 1000 deaths as the threshold for counting violent conflict as a civil war (Fearon and Laitin 2003, 76; Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 783; Licklider 1995, 682; Kirschner 2014, 34), this conflict's death toll of nearly 500 reached just in four days of violence. On the other hand, some studies proposed much lower thresholds with range of 500 - 1000 deaths combined with a large-scale destruction. However, these studies count this as a cumulative number of deaths with the requirement of 100 – 500 deaths in the first year considering it a threshold for the onset of war (Sambanis 2004, 820). This specification brings us to the second indicator – the duration of civil war. To be counted as civil war, violence has to be sustained. Ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan could be qualified as the onset of civil war should the armed conflict be sustained. It does not reach the classic cut-off point of 1000 deaths but it does reach the threshold proposed by Sambanis (2004), Fearon and Laitin (2003); and Gleditsch et al (2002). Most importantly, the violence between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities was not sustained over time.

Yet there are other indicators in the literature that can help us distinguish the type of the ethnic conflict in Kyrgyzstan. Important requirements for civil war that this conflict meets are 'effective resistance' measured by 100 deaths on the side of the stronger party (Sambanis 2004, 823–25; Fearon and Laitin 2003), large-scale destruction (Sambanis 2004, 820), and mass-scale internal and external displacement of civilians and refugees as an additional measure of human cost (Sambanis 2004, 823; Doyle and Sambanis 2000). This conflict estimates for more than 100 deaths registered on the side of the Kyrgyz – the stronger side, more than 2000 buildings razed and burnt, and around 400 000 of refugees and internally displaced persons on both sides.

Another indicator that makes this ethnic conflict resemble a civil war is the fact that both sides used automatic weapons, (Kalashnikovs and rifles) – the majority of deaths resulted from gunshots rather than from stabbing and cerebral injuries common in riot violence (see death toll statistics in chapter 3). Moreover, some heavy weapon such as armored personnel carriers (further on APCs) and armored lorries were used in these clashes. Rural Kyrgyz who came to Osh from various areas captured several APCs from military garrisons to attack Uzbek mahallas, while Uzbek self-defense groups used armored lorries to counteract these attacks. Opportunistic violence common during civil wars such as gang rape, hostage taking, and torture was excessively perpetrated. On the other hand, the majority of participants were weakly organized and armed with knives, sticks, axes, and other simple self-invented weaponry common in riot violence. Other important indicators such as neutrality of state and level of organization of armed groups suggest that the violence in Kyrgyzstan falls short of being labelled as civil war. These criteria connote the Kyrgyz-Uzbek violence to Varshney's (2007, 279) distinction of riots that refers to "a violent clash between two groups of civilians, often characterized as mobs. While, in riots, the neutrality of the state may be in doubt, the state does not give up the principle of neutrality".

The 2010 ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan had every chance of being transformed into a full-fledged civil war if it had not been contained in the short-term by local communities and the government's late efforts.

Table 1.1. Conceptual operationalization of the June 2010 ethnic violence

| Indicators | Riots | Civil war |
|---|---|---|
| **Number of deaths** | | + |
| **Duration of violence** | + | |
| **Neutrality of state** | + | |
| **Scale of destruction** | | + |
| **Level of armament** | + | + |
| **Effective resistance** | | + |
| **Level of organization** | + | |
| **Refugees** | | + |

The ambiguity of this ethnic conflict as a form of violence was reflected in conversations with ordinary people. Many referred to the June 2010 violence as "war" [*sogush*][5] while other respondents regarded it as "disorders" [*topolong*]. This underlines the 2010 ethnic violence as a borderline case which contains

[5] Throughout the dissertation, I place the original terms in square brackets as narrated by my respondents in local languages.

patterns of both civil war and ethnic rioting. The intensity of violence during ethnic riots in southern Kyrgyzstan approximate them to a short but an extremely intensive civil war. As a result, some of theoretical assumptions usually applied to the analysis of civil wars can also be employed in the current study.

Indeed, the ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan has features of both civil war and ethnic riots, as the table 1.1 shows. By the intensity of violence, the death toll, and the number of wounded people, refugees, and internally displaced persons this conflict can be qualified as a civil war. However, the characteristics of spontaneous outbreaks of violence, poorly-organized violent mobs and the duration of the conflict have more in common with rioting. Although this ethnic conflict falls short of definition of civil war, the similarity with both types of political violence makes the analysis of this conflict more complex but also more interesting. Therefore, in the analysis of the June 2010 ethnic violence, I seek to draw advantages from the theoretical and empirical insights of both fields of study. As Varshney notes (2007, 279): "Riots or pogroms typically precede civil wars … but all riots and pogroms do not lead to civil wars."

One important implication of the conceptualization of the ethnic conflict in Kyrgyzstan has particular importance for civil wars studies. There is a significant gap in the study of civil wars. Most studies are mainly focused on explaining causes (onset), mechanisms and processes, and termination of civil wars (pacts, third-party-interventions, conflict resolution) but insufficiently explained instances of prevented civil wars in which high-scale violence – considered by scholars as the onset of civil war in the positive cases – was contained [see Fearon and Laitin (1996) and Varshney (2007, 276) for the same observation regarding ethnic conflicts]. This constitutes the selection bias (selection on the dependent variable) in the study of civil wars because most studies analyze positive cases[6]. As the ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan fully fulfils criteria for the onset of civil war, we can regard it a prevented case. Assuming the existing selection bias, this study's one possible contribution is to diminish imbalance by analyzing a negative (prevented) case and show how local-level mechanisms and informal institutions combined with the state-level measures help to prevent the escalation of the local armed conflict to a full-scale civil war.

Empirical findings and theoretical assumptions of some studies on ethnic riots have already received considerable attention by scholars of civil war. For instance, several studies on the Hindu–Muslim riots in India conducted by Varshney (2002), Wilkinson (2006), and Brass (1997, 2003) were regarded in influential theoretical reviews as civil wars (Kalyvas 2008). Several other works on Indonesia, Nigeria, and some other

[6] One possible reason for this imbalance is generally associated with the difficulty to identify and analyze non-events, especially when it comes to the construction of data-sets for large-number studies.

countries can easily be classified and fit the same category (Klinken 2009; Bunte and Vinson 2016). This is an important development in the theoretical literature on civil wars as it shows increasing appreciation of the studies on ethnic riots by the scholars of political violence and the exchange of theoretical insights between both fields of studies.

The importance of this research can be emphasized by the fact that very few riots in the world can be compared by the intensity of violence (mortality and property damage rate) with what happened in southern Kyrgyzstan in 2010. The factual significance of this ethnic conflict cannot be overestimated. It can be well highlighted not only by the high level of property destruction but also by the unusually high death toll. More than 2000 residential buildings were burned and around 500 people were killed, several thousand injured, and hundreds of thousands internally displaced just in four days of ethnic violence. This is especially evident when compared with some notorious violent riots that took place in other parts of the world. For example, the total death toll for Aligarch, one of the most riot-prone cities in India, was 195[7]. This comprises all killed victims throughout Aligarch's history of Hindu–Muslim violence for different years from 1925 to 1995 in more than twenty large-scale riots that broke out in this city (Brass 2003, 63). The total death toll of 195 in Aligarch is considerably smaller than in Osh (which experienced higher mortality rate) just in one riot. The same is true for other riot-prone Indian cities. Only in two Indian cities, Mumbai (Bombay) and Ahmadabad [1137 and 1119 killings respectively (Varshney 2001, 372)], the total death toll of a half-century long Hindu-Muslim violence (1950 – 95) exceeded the number of killings in the Osh ethnic violence, in June 2010. Other examples of intercommunal violence include racial and commodity riots in the United States (U.S.) in the 1960s, resulting in 250 deaths in about 500 riots (Waddington 2007, 61). Fifty-two people were killed in three days during the infamous Los Angeles riots in 1992, the most murderous racial riots in the history of interracial violence in the U.S. (Waddington 2007, 60). This highlights the highly violent nature of interethnic riots in Kyrgyzstan. The high death toll was due to the paralysis of the central state and inefficiency of the local police but was also the result of the widespread use of firearms. Around three quarters of all killings in the June 2010 violence resulted from gunshot wounds (see fig 3.4 in chapter 3). That such a high number of killings resulted from gunshots from automatic weapons, guns, and even APCs gives us ground to qualify these riots as an armed conflict.

[7] According to Varshney (2001, 372), the death toll in Aligarch (1950 – 95) is 160.

## Theoretical frameworks and hypotheses

In the three most recent decades, the study of ethnic conflicts and violence has gained considerable significance in the international literature. As ethnic conflicts become more abundant in the contemporary world, they attract increasing attention from the academic community. In the study of ethnic conflicts and violence, scholars offer various approaches and employ diverse research methods. This research problem is also being investigated from various disciplinary perspectives. Political scientists, sociologists, social anthropologists, and historians more than others pay scholarly attention to the issues of ethnic conflict violence.

The problem of ethnic violence can be considered through several theoretical perspectives: collective/political violence, studies on riots and disorders, social movements and contentious politics, diffusion theory and modular collective action, and international relations. Each of these research programs can provide valuable insights into the proposed problem. The literature on these theoretical approaches is vast and not homogenous. Conditionally, I group these theoretical approaches under the following headings: political violence and contentious politics, ethnic conflict, and security studies.

Inspired by Tarrow's (2011, 2005) concepts of "modularity" and "mobilizational cycle", Beissinger (2002, 2007) has developed an eventful approach in the study of contentious politics related to nationalist mobilization, electoral revolutions, and tides of contention. His study on nationalist mobilization and violence in the Soviet Union distinguishes three levels of structural influence on actions: pre-existing structural conditions (structural facilitation), institutional constraints, and "power of example"; that is, the influence of example on subsequent events. Events or tides of successful nationalist mobilization travel to places where they face a minimum level of institutional constraints and a maximum level of structural facilitation. In his later article, Beissinger (2007) uses the same model to explain electoral revolutions in the post-communist countries. The model accounts for the success and failure of diffusion of mass electoral protests. This approach is useful for identifying effects of events on dynamics of ethnic violence during the conflict in 2010.

Susan Olzak (1992) uses an eventful approach similar to Beissinger's. In her study of race riots at the crossroad of 19$^{th}$ and 20$^{th}$ centuries in the U.S., Olzak employs history–event analysis and explains the dynamics of race and ethnic riots. She argues that an ethnic minority's growing access to economic resources, including to labor market, and consequent professional, occupational, and residential

desegregation triggers ethnic violence between economically competing ethnic communities. This perspective of ethnic labor competition may also shed light on ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan.

The scholars of ethnic conflict produced several influential works on Hindu-Muslim riots. The research design of this dissertation draws heavily from Varshney's (2002) research on ethnic conflict and civic life in India. Varshney argues that nationalist politicians in India try to incite violence between two communities to gain more votes by consolidating their constituencies on nationalist grounds. However, in those places where strong everyday interethnic associational ties (e.g. reading clubs, economic cooperation, NGOs, professional associations, etc) are well established, the local population manages to resist the polarizing electoral strategies of politicians and ethnic entrepreneurs. Varshney maintains that an outcome of variation "violence/nonviolence" depends on the intensity of interethnic civic and associational interactions. He pays equal attention to the instances of interethnic violence and peace.

However, there are some problems with Varshney's arguments. David Laitin's (2001) critique of Varshney highlights some shortcomings such as the lack of micro-foundations in his work (2001, 101). Moreover, his theoretical approach of cross-cutting cleavages and intercommunal civic ties appears to be incomplete to explain violence in southern Kyrgyzstan. Varshney's theoretical model would predict violence among segregated communities with no quotidian and associations links to other ethnic communities. But not all such neighborhoods and towns suffered violence. Particularly, this model would anticipate violence in Uzgen (see chapter 8) and in segregated neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat. However, these segregated ethnic communities avoided violence. They managed to develop intragroup mechanisms such as in-group policing that would prevent violence between opposing ethnic groups. As Varshney's approach mainly considers long-term structural factors and quotidian/associational intergroup interactions, it neglects effects of intragroup factors and short-term contingent events. These critical points provide my research with important clues for testing and refining Varshney's theory. They also raise the question "what factors and mechanisms explain peace in and between segregated communities". This part of the problem has not been explained by the mechanism of intercommunal civic engagement. However, Varshney's general argument is plausible. The evidence from my fieldwork in southern Kyrgyzstan suggests that in peaceful towns, villages, and city districts people from both ethnic communities cooperated to prevent violence. This kind of cooperation was especially evident in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods.

Electoral incentives argument appears in works of some other scholars working on Hindu–Muslim riots. Like Varshney, Wilkinson (2006) and Brass (1997, 2003) make similar arguments about the polarizing strategies of Hindu politicians. Brass argues that ethnic violence in some Indian cities is a result of an

"institutionalized riot system". Polarizing politicians in cooperation with gangs of thugs incite violence in poor Muslim neighborhoods to increase their electoral gains by consolidating Hindu population against Muslims.

Wilkinson suggests a focus not only on "push" factors that lead to violence but also on understanding the response of the state to riots. Political (electoral) incentives and the state's motivation to rioting is a key factor in understanding variation in violence (Wilkinson 2009, 330). However, in my view the discussion of differences between a state's preventive and coercive action can lead to a mere discussion of state (coercive) capacity. In Kyrgyzstan, for instance, during the onset of violence, on 10 June 2010, when mobs began burning shops, beating by-passers, and attacking the police, the latter started to shoot people but were unable to prevent ethnic violence. The use of force, on the contrary, escalated the violence. This shows that law enforcement efforts are often ineffective in preventing violence. Second, the theoretical assumptions of this model work under conditions of democratic regimes and electoral politics, whereas Kyrgyzstan, in the years preceding to this violent conflict, had been subject to an increasingly authoritarian regime, in which electoral competition was nominal. Wilkinson's electoral incentives model is good for explaining ethnic riots in multi-ethnic electoral democracies, and especially in federal and decentralized states and ethnically-polarized societies like India but it cannot sufficiently explain about what happened in Kyrgyzstan. Electoral incentives for fomenting violence cannot be attributed to local politicians in Kyrgyzstan simply because of the fact that the electoral institutions were not designed in a manner which would allow electoral competition among parties at regional and local levels.

Nevertheless, despite identified shortcomings, Varshney and Wilkinson's works propose a new way of studying ethnic violence – that of studying violent along with peaceful instances. These works have triggered lively debates and reflections on ethnic violence. In her review article of Varshney's "Ethnic conflict and civic life", Kanchan Chandra (2001) proposes an approach which attempts to modify Varshney's main argument. She suggests that economic interdependence is the main factor which precludes Hindu–Muslim ethnic riots. Business and other economic actors dislike political instability. Ethnic violence is typically bad for business. In locations where such economic interdependence is very high, business actors will probably cooperate to cool down ethnic tensions. On the contrary, where economic life is segregated, conflicting parties will seek to destroy the economic bases of the rival ethnic group (see also Varshney 2002). Her approach underlines the economic aspects of my main argument on interethnic cooperation. Economic interdependence may create civic and business networks and relations that are not interested in interethnic violence as it may damage property and private businesses owned

by members of both ethnic communities. This argument underlines the importance of economic conditions for ethnic peace.

However, this approach poses some problems too. The test of this hypothesis requires data on the ownership of small and large business and economic structures and ethnic composition of workers in these enterprises. This kind of data was largely not available for me during my fieldwork. The main problem, however, is that this approach – while useful for identifying the variation in violence at cross-town level – does not account for the cross-neighborhood variation of violence; in this case, in Osh and Jalalabat. Cafes, restaurants, commercial shops in bazaars, and trade business are owned by both the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. Economic life tends to concentrate in and around large bazaar areas usually located in the central parts of those cities, while in many residential neighborhoods large trade and other business establishments are practically absent. However, the violence took place both in commercial and non-commercial neighborhoods.

Fearon and Laitin's (1996) hypothesis also refers to interethnic cooperation. The implication and mechanisms of their theoretical model are different from what Varshney proposes but both are key for my central hypothesis. Fearon and Laitin's interethnic cooperation model assumes interactions between two segregated ethnic communities. Cooperation is sustained almost at a diplomatic level when interactions and negotiations are conducted between community leaders and mediators of local neighborhood communities. In this model, some ethnic neighborhood communities act as unitary actors. I describe this model in more details in the section on in-group policing. Similarly focusing on intragroup dynamics, in his study of the Rwandan genocide Straus (2006) argues that Hutu leaders forced ordinary members of the community to kill Tutsis by threatening the security of their life and family.

Finally, the third group of literatures on ethnic violence comes from security studies in international relations. The scholars of international relations have offered their accounts. Application of IR approaches including "emerging anarchy", in analyzing ethnic politics was one of the most fertile and fast-growing fields in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s. McFaul contends that the concept of anarchy in international relations can be extended to domestic politics: "The same could be said about confrontation and reconciliation between competing forces within a domestic polity, especially during periods of revolutionary change when domestic anarchy begins to approximate the anarchy in the international system".

Barry Posen is one of the first international relations scholars who has brought new insights and valuable contribution to the study of ethnic conflicts. In his article "The security dilemma and ethnic conflict" (1993), Posen considers the problem of ethnic conflict from a realist perspectives in international relations. He employs the concept of "security dilemma" to explain the causes of ethnic conflicts. According to Posen, a security dilemma usually emerges when a multiethnic imperial power collapses. Newly formed states try to enhance their security by strengthening military forces. However, when "state A" strengthens its military forces to increase its defensive capacity, the neighboring "state B" considers such moves as a threat to its own security. Posen explains that "because neighbors wish to remain autonomous and secure, they will react by trying to strengthen their own positions" (Posen 1993, 28). For Posen, there are two conditions when a security dilemma becomes especially intense: first, the military forces of two countries are approximately equal and, second, hostile sides believe that offensive actions are more effective than defensive ones. He also adds that an uneven process of state formation produces "windows of opportunity and vulnerability" which are integral parts of a security dilemma.

The concept of a security dilemma introduced in ethnic conflict studies by Posen can be a good model for explaining ethnic conflict and violence despite the fact that his model mainly concerns interstate relations whereas most research on ethnic violence is concentrated on intergroup relations. Ethnic violence is often an outcome of a "window of opportunity" which emerges as a result of a central state's decline. Under such conditions, one ethnic group's nationalist mobilization is perceived as a threat by the other ethnic group and triggers countermobilization. This cycle of mobilizations and countermobilizations eventually may incite ethnic violence. Variation in the dependent variable (ethnic violence/peace) can be explained by the existence of small organized radical and militant bands controlled by ethnic entrepreneurs and criminal leaders.

Some other theoretical propositions have been proposed in the literature on ethnic violence. As preliminary frameworks, these propositions helped me to formulate interview questions and my argument and to clarify the focus of my research fieldwork. In other words, these theoretical propositions served as the analytical framework for my research.

Several studies on violence focusing on the interplay between intergroup and intragroup levels propose that *Inter-ethnic violence is contained, conditioned, and fostered by intra-ethnic mechanisms and processes.* Although such mechanisms and processes are not the immediate and main causes of ethnic violence they causally shape particular modes, patterns, and the scope of this phenomenon. These mechanisms can include, for example, in-group policing; "deliberate instigation, provocation,

dramatization, or intensification of violent or potentially violent confrontations with outsiders"; and ethnic outbidding (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 433; also Brass 1997, 2003; Fearon and Laitin 1996; Straus 2006; Wilkinson 2006; Caspersen 2008; Christia 2012). This hypothesis is essential for the main argument of this dissertation precisely because it looks at intragroup rather than intergroup dynamics.

## Contributions

The research on ethnic conflict and particularly on ethnic riots is relatively well developed. Ethnic and intercommunal riots have been carefully conceptualized and their multiple dimensions, implications, and forms in various geographical, historical, and contextual settings thoroughly analyzed by scholars working in the fields of contentious politics, political violence, and ethnic conflict (Brubaker and Laitin 1998; Horowitz 1985, 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2007; Olzak 1992; Waddington 1989; Waddington, Jobard, and King 2009; Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2009; Brass 1996). The majority of these works try to identify causal factors and conditions that trigger and facilitate riots and ethnic violence (Lieberson and Silverman 1965), analyze their internal dynamics (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2007; Klinken 2009) or consequences and implications (Brass 2003).

However, there are several gaps in the literature on ethnic conflicts, riots, civil wars and other forms of political violence identified by scholars from relevant fields. First, there are still few works aiming at explanation of spatial and temporal variations in violence (Brubaker and Laitin 1998; Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2006). Second, the category of space and place has for long time been an understudied topic in the studies of riots and contentious politics (della Porta, Fabbri, and Piazza 2013, Sewell 2001, Martin and Miller 2003, Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008, Nicholls, Beaumont, and Miller 2013). Third, studies employing research design with comparisons of within-case or sub-national units at the micro-scale of analysis and different levels of aggregation are fruitful and effective but still rare (Brass 2003; Kalyvas 2006; see also Brady and Collier 2010; Straus 2006; Wood 2003). Works employing cross-neighborhood scale of analysis are especially infrequent. For example, to the best of my knowledge interethnic non-aggression pacts among neighborhood and town-level community leaders and their effects on violent or peaceful outcomes across locations have not been discussed in the literature on political violence, contentious politics, and ethnic conflict.

Fourth, studies on civil wars, riots, and ethnic conflicts have insufficiently analyzed the connection between within group and intergroup processes and interactions, usually focusing just on one of these two dimensions. They often overlook internal divisions among groups and within conflict processes (Christia 2012) linked to intergroup negotiations (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006; Moravcsik 1993). The interplay between intergroup and within group interactions suggests closer examination and application of theoretical assumptions drawn from international relations. Fifth, as discussed above, the theoretical and analytical links between the studies on violent ethnic riots and civil wars have been largely overlooked. Linking theoretical insights from these two fields will help us to understand the dynamics of ethnic violence. Identifying these gaps, this research aims to contribute new insights into discussions on understudied topics and methodological dimensions specified above by specialists and mostly ignored in the literature on political violence and ethnic conflict.

This dissertation seeks to explain the spatial variation in ethnic violence and to contribute to the analysis of ethnic conflict from the interdisciplinary perspectives by linking the theoretical concepts and approaches coming from different fields and disciplines that otherwise rarely speak to each other. For instance, the security dilemma is the concept that is usually used in international relations. A security dilemma – here simply defined as preemptive attacks out of fear, distrust, and uncertainty – usually applies to the interstate or intergroup relations at high level of aggregation (nationally aggregated ethnic groups within one state). However, in contrast to macro-scale approaches that have been common in relevant studies in political science, this research analyzes the problem at the micro-spatial level. I would like to show that theoretical insights drawn from international relations and security studies literature can be applicable not only to the analysis of inter-state wars and national level ethnic conflicts but also to the analysis of local dynamics of ethnic violence and interethnic pacts at the disaggregated spatial scale such as ethnic communities at town- or neighborhood-level.

On the other hand, the same assumptions are also pertinent to the studies of intergroup pacts and in-group policing that are usually prevalent in comparative politics in the fields of democratization and transition studies, social movements, contentious politics, urban sociology and studies of political and social (dis-)order. One of the contributions of this paper is the bridging literature on political violence, ethnic politics, and international security studies.

This research is not the first attempt to study ethnic violence from the perspective of international relations and security studies. Scholars of international relations have already applied strategic dilemmas, including the security dilemma, to analyze large ethnic conflicts (Posen 1993; Fearon 1998; de Figueiredo

and Weingast 1999; Lake and Rothchild 1996, 1998a, Roe 2004, 2014; Weingast 1998). Some scholars juxtapose intra- and interethnic relations in ethnic politics to intra- and interstate relations in international relations (Lake and Rothchild 1996, 1998a; Kaufman 1996; Saideman 1998). Analytically, the two perspectives regard similar points of analysis. In intergroup relations, strategic dilemmas such as the security dilemma, alone or in combination with other factors are sufficient to produce violent conflicts (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 11). An analytical core of the security dilemma (and of the problem of credible commitment) assumes that states resort to preemptive force to secure themselves in the world of anarchy and "states are dependent upon self-help for their security and must therefore maintain and perhaps expand their military capabilities" (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 17).

While the aforementioned literature focuses on relations between ethnic groups at interstate or national level (macro-scale), this research deals with the same problem, but at the town and neighborhood levels (micro-scale). In this research, I would like to show that theoretical insights drawn from the neorealist tradition in international relations and security studies can be applied, not only to the analysis of interstate and national-level ethnic conflicts but also to the analysis of local dynamics of ethnic violence and interethnic pacts at disaggregated spatial scale such as ethnic communities settled in one town or in one neighborhood.

Ethnic groups are not homogenous. Neighborhood-based local ethnic communities can act differently depending on many factors. Holistic approaches pertinent to the literature on ethnic politics and political violence tend to ignore micro-scale analysis. As existing theories on intergroup pacts mostly pay attention to the cases at highly aggregated level, my task is to test these theoretical assumptions at the lower level of aggregation.

Many scholars, especially those who have adopted a "security dilemma" approach have underlined the importance of fear as a causal force/mechanism for violent ethnic conflicts. However, one weakness of such approaches is that they do not specify why fears are able to cause conflicts in one place but not in another. This especially concerns the analysis of local-level variations in conflicts. When large-scale violence breaks out, there are often islands of peace. This is evident even in forms of ethnic violence as mass-scale as genocides. Straus (2006) observed that amidst mass killings in Rwanda some districts such as Giti remained non-violent. So, what conditions account for the existence of islands of peace? The conditions and factors that these scholars cite usually equally apply to both violent and non-violent communities and locations. Why should people living in the same country, region, or town, or those in certain locations or neighborhoods be more fearful than in the others? This puzzle is not yet sufficiently

explained in the literature on ethnic conflicts. This research attempts to address this question by adopting a micro-comparative approach. Basically, my aim is to localize big theories by “replication of large-scale hypotheses at smaller scales” (S. Tarrow 2010, 252). I do it by applying theoretical hypotheses at town and neighborhood level.

Although explaining variation in violence by neighborhood lies within a methodological tradition of (urban) sociology (Sampson and Wikstrom 2008, 99), I argue that the same level of disaggregation can be applicable to the analysis of violent conflicts based on the theoretical models that come from the neorealist traditions of international relations and civil wars.

The literature that analyzes ethnic conflict from the perspectives of IR is gaining increasing importance (Chandra 2001, 8–9; Kaufman 1996). However, one distinction in this research is that usually the IR informed ethnic conflict literature deals with long-term processes whereas my analysis is focused on very short period under the anarchy and violence. Although the literature on ethnic conflict analyzes ethnic relations with a focus on long-term dynamics, many assumptions of these studies are still relevant and useful for the analysis of short-term dynamics of ethnic riots in Kyrgyzstan and other places. Another provision is that scholars of conflict study ethnic politics at aggregated/macro-level. For them, a unit of analysis is an ethnic group defined as a whole population of one ethnic community at national level. They analyze the relations between two or more ethnic groups within national borders of one state or one region. My approach is different. I examine the conflict and relations between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks at the micro (spatial)-scale with smaller local neighborhood and village communities.

This dissertation is one of the first attempts to explain the local dynamics of the 2010 ethnic riots in Kyrgyzstan.  Apart from several investigative reports produced by governmental and international organizations, no scholarly work has attempted to systematically analyze the 2010 ethnic violence and its local dynamics at the neighborhood scale. Moreover, explaining variation in violence/non-violence at the neighborhood scale fills a gap in the knowledge in the general literature on riots, civil wars, and ethnic conflict. In general, very few works studying riots and ethnic violence have examined local dynamics and spatial variations in the outcomes of violence on the neighborhood scale (see Brass 2003; Brubaker and Laitin 1998). This dissertation aims to shed light on this gap by analyzing neighborhoods’ responses to the emerging violence in the city of Osh. This dissertation research does not limit itself to mere idiosyncratic investigation of one particular episode of ethnic conflict in the Eurasian region. On the contrary, it seeks to place itself within the broader field of literature on ethnic conflict, political violence, urban politics, and

contentious politics and aims to contribute new insights, which I will briefly discuss in the next section and analyze in subsequent chapters.

In addition to contributions to the literature on ethnic violence, I see one of the valuable aspects of my research in providing policy recommendations for local state authorities and international NGOs and development agencies operating in Osh (and other parts of the world that have seen violence similar to what happened in Kyrgyzstan). Some are specifically focused on the problems of conflict resolution and mediation and building networks of mediators. Hopefully, my recommendations will contribute to the policy agendas of concerned authorities and organizations working on conflict resolution which will eventually eliminate conditions triggering violent conflicts or at least substantially mitigate their consequences.

While this research analyze in details the role of local leaders in preventing ethnic violence, it does not address the issue of elite-led violence. The main reason for this is difficulties and constraints in getting this kind of data. Many violence-implicated Uzbek leaders at national level fled the country and some local-level leaders followed their example out of fears to be implicated for real or fabricated cases On the Kyrgyz side, main mobilization took place among rural groups coming from outside Osh. I did not manage to identify local-level leaders who tried to conceal their involvement. Some criminal leaders took on board during violent mobilization feeling good opportunity to benefit from the violence. Future research should address these unexplored issues.

## The argument

*Short description of the dissertation's findings*

The main argument of this research is the following. The spatial variation in violent and non-violent outcomes across towns and villages and urban neighborhoods, districts, and blocks within these towns can be explained to the great extent by the presence and absence of intragroup policing and non-aggression intergroup pacts among village- and neighborhood-scale subgroups of both ethnic communities. In-group policing, a concept advanced by Fearon and Laitin (1996) is a crucial mechanism for understanding ethnic violence and peace in southern Kyrgyzstan. By itself, effective in-group policing – even in the absence of a non-aggression pact with out-group members – increases the likelihood of

peaceful outcome or significantly decreases the possibility of intensive violent outbreaks in respective localities. Intracommunal policing is a necessary condition for the efficient intercommunal pacts as strong in-group policing establishes firm discipline and order within community and signals to an out-group about the credible commitment to the terms of a pact. On the other hand, intercommunal pacts reduce uncertainty and lessen fears (McFaul 2002, 217) by re-embedding trust and re-assuring in peaceful intentions between residentially-segregated Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities.

The linkage between in-group policing and out-group non-aggression pacts requires analysis of the dynamics of intragroup and intergroup interactions. This logic of two-level game of interethnic and intra-ethnic cooperation corresponds to international and domestic arenas in international relations (see Putnam 1988; Evans, Jacobson, and Putnam 1993; Lake and Rothchild 1998a; Christia 2012). However, whether intergroup pacts and in-group policing are successful depends also on several contingent and structural factors and the spatial environment of neighborhoods that I will explain in more detail below and in the theoretical review in chapter 2.

## Neighborhood responses to emerging violence: Divergent micro-scale outcomes under similar environmental changes

*The security dilemma at the micro-spatial scale*

The literature on the security dilemma and civil wars argues that the “decision to fight, to negotiate, or to remain at peace” is contingent on the strategic environment (Walter 1999, 2). The change(s) in environmental conditions can induce actors and groups to start a war or to negotiate a peaceful agreement to reduce uncertainty and fears caused by sudden collapse of the state or an exogenous shock. These are meso-level responses to the changing macro-level environmental conditions and external threat. However, in this research, I argue that despite the similar environmental changes, responses to the changes can be different across various locations and subgroups among rival ethnic communities. I will show how the temporal breakdown of the central state and the “emerging anarchy” produced the divergent outcomes across towns in southern Kyrgyzstan and urban neighborhoods in violent cities of Osh and Jalalabat. For understanding the divergent responses by various neighborhoods to the emerging

violence it is helpful to analyze the ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan through theoretical models offered by the scholarship on civil wars and international security.

What does a strategic dilemmas approach drawn from the neorealist traditions in security studies and more commonly used in international relations make applicable for the analysis of ethnic riots in southern Kyrgyzstan? Many of their assumptions are relevant for the analysis of ethnic riots and at disaggregated/local level (micro-scale). Based on my fieldwork interview data and observations, I argue that the absence of the central state, which resulted from disengagement and inability of state to deal with ethnic violence during the 2010 ethnic riots, produced similar situation of the emerging anarchy – a necessary condition for the security dilemma model and for the international security literature in general. The central state had already been declining in the southern provinces of Kyrgyzstan since the violent regime change on 7 April 2010 that had taken place just three months before the June 2010 ethnic riots. After first ethnic riots broke out in the southern city of Osh on 10 June 2010, state authorities lost control of the situation. The police and military failed to contain violence and were completely paralyzed. Soldiers were afraid of raging crowds and did not prevent ethnic violence. As the local population realized that the state was not capable (or not willing) to provide protection for the civilian population, neighborhoods in Osh (and later in Jalalabat and other towns) erected barricades and road blocks to protect themselves from aggressive mobs and possible attacks from the territory of adjacent neighborhoods. As a result, entire neighborhoods in such cities as Osh, Jalalabat and some other smaller towns "had been turned into isolated enclaves, where roads of entry had been closed off" (Memorial 2012, 82).

During those four days of anarchy, such isolated neighborhoods acted much like individual units or states do in world politics and pursued the same kinds of strategies. These neighborhoods' main interest and motivation in interactions with out-group members was physical survival. Strategic dilemmas and strategic interactions between ethnic neighborhoods and intragroup dynamics produced different violent and non-violent outcomes across space. Fear, uncertainty, and interethnic distrust that arose under condition of the emerging anarchy triggered various responses from neighborhoods. As I discussed above, the survival strategies produced three types of response outcomes, typically common in large-scale interethnic conflicts: 1) confrontational attitudes and "fight now and negotiate later" type of preemptive attacks against adjacent ethnic communities; 2) interethnic cooperation based on neighborhood solidarity and the formation of interethnic alliances against outsiders (mostly in ethnically mixed neighborhoods) and; 3) non-aggression pacts between residentially-segregated ethnic neighborhoods. These outcomes mainly resulted from the dynamics of intergroup and within-group strategic interactions within and

between neighborhood-level ethnic communities. In many cases, outcomes were determined, in combination with other structural and non-rational factors, by within- and inter-group power balances and power shifts during ongoing violence.

Despite the similar threat, neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat chose different strategies to avert violence and responses to uncertainty depending on:

- opportunities and constraints for constructing non-aggression pacts
- the strength of local self-policing
- the dynamics of intergroup and within-group strategic interactions (inter- and intra-group shifts in balance of power)

These factors can reveal why towns and neighborhoods in southern Kyrgyzstan responded to the emerging violence in different ways. In the next sections, I will indicate the importance of intragroup policing and intergroup non-aggression pacts for determining outcomes in violence variation at micro-spatial scale and shaping neighborhoods' strategic responses to the "emerging anarchy". In chapter 2, I will discuss these issues in more detail, placing them within broader interdisciplinary theoretical literature on related topics.

*In-group policing*

Successful in-group policing during riots was complemented with intercommunal non-aggression pacts among Uzbek and Kyrgyz neighborhood leaders and elders between adjacent neighborhoods and neighboring villages. On the other hand, pacts are meaningless without effective self-policing. Negotiating parties must guarantee non-aggression and punishment of culprits. Pacts complement self-policing and the strength of self-policing indicates credible commitment and creates trust between communities. The success and failure of in-group policing and intercommunal agreements are often determined in the dynamics of inter-group and within-group strategic interactions and also contingent on spatial and structural factors.

In-group policing is essential in the absence of interethnic quotidian and civic links among ethnically-segregated neighborhoods. I argue that in many instances, peaceful outcomes can be explained by

successful self-policing of traditional community leaders in stable residential neighborhoods, while in neighborhoods with high residential mobility and non-stable migrant population community policing was either difficult or nearly impossible due to weak social control and non-compliance with local social norms and non-legitimacy of traditional authority of local leaders. Some of the latter neighborhoods suffered from violent opportunism during ethnic riots. Finally, initially successful policing was broken in the neighborhoods that experienced an influx of outsiders such as rioters from outside areas and newly arrived refugees from distressed zones. The presence or absence of outsiders in local neighborhood communities stands as a crucial factor that affects the efficiency of local in-group policing.

So, the conditions for successful in-group policing are the following: (1) The majority of neighborhood residents share and comply with local communal and social norms; (2) The presence of locally recognized and legitimate community leaders; (3) Social homogeneity of local constituency (absence of outsiders, low residential rotation/mobility; preferably small and homogenous communities); (4) Self-policing fails when there are many outsiders (internal migrants, militants from outside areas, displaced persons, refugees and so on), and; (5) physical self-isolation of the community during riots increases the efficiency of in-group policing (barricades on the secondary streets; restriction of freedom of movement, avoidance of direct contacts between crowds and subgroups of different ethnic communities, denying transit through and preventing human flow through the neighborhood's territory).

In-group policing is a key and necessary condition/element in pact-making. It enforces peaceful pact by mitigating the problem of credible commitment. Effective self-policing which includes within group sanctions against violators of pact is critical for the solution of the credible commitment problem. What is important is that in-group sanctions must be visible for out-group members (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 723). By holding back radicals and punishing violators, leaders of one group show to the other group that they are credibly committed to the conditions and rules of the pact. These strategic interactions between leaders of ethnic communities are well demonstrated by the Fearon and Laitin's (1996) "in-group policing equilibrium" in their model of ethnic cooperation. Although, this model does not explicitly address the question of intergroup non-aggression negotiations, it shows how competing ethnic groups reach an agreement in the form of an informal pact or mutual understanding ("equilibrium" according to Fearon and Laitin). A pacted agreement helps to prevent intergroup violence. It mitigates security dilemma by reducing the level of mutual distrust and fear. The model formulates its assumptions based on relations between segregated ethnic groups and it has great implications for the security dilemma model. I will

briefly present Fearon and Laitin's interethnic cooperation model and the conditions it requires to maintain stability of an interethnic pact in the next chapter.

*Non-aggression pacts*

Uncertainty between ethnic neighborhoods can be reduced by intercommunal non-aggression pacts negotiated by ethnic neighborhood leaders. Pacts under broken trust in interethnic relations indicate attempts to recover cooperation. Leaders provide security to their constituencies by building pacts with out-group leaders and reassuring them in peaceful intentions.

In the empirical chapters, I demonstrate that those ethnic communities that managed to utilize intercommunal non-aggression pacts and efficiently conduct in-group policing substantively increased their chances to keep their neighborhoods peaceful.

Pacts between ethnic neighborhoods create a set of rules that reduces uncertainty, fear, and distrust – essential components of security dilemma – in interethnic relations at micro-(spatial) level that were triggered by ethnic violence among ethnic communities at national level (macro-scale). According to the evidence drawn from my interviews with local leaders, intercommunal non-aggression pacts that were negotiated between the leaders of ethnic neighborhoods usually included the following terms: abstention from violence (and non-participation in violence), abstention from appealing to outsiders (non-alignment), holding back radicals, and in-group sanctions against violators. Basically, these terms constitute the core components of in-group policing. These core components are specified in the literature on ethnic conflicts (Fearon and Laitin 1996) and policing of mass protests and demonstrations (della Porta and Reiter 1998; della Porta, Peterson, and Reiter 2006; Waddington 1989, 2007). Therefore, the main element of the non-aggression pacts required by negotiating parties is in-group policing conducted by ethnic neighborhood-based community leaders and mediators. Effective in-group policing enforces the terms of a pact and signify credible commitment of ethnic leaders to the conditions of a pact.

Informal brokerage by local mediators – usually community leaders – allowed the rebuilding of trust between local ethnic communities under circumstances of growing fear and uncertainty in intercommunal relations. Mediators from both sides in several cases negotiated non-aggression pacts. Coupled with effective self-policing, intercommunal pacts became a successful strategy in peaceful negotiations

between the Uzbek ethnic leaders in the town of Uzgen and the Kyrgyz from surrounding villages as well as between Uzbek and Kyrgyz community leaders in some neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat.

In this research thesis, I argue that many urban neighborhoods and towns avoided violence to great extent due to strong self-policing conducted within ethnic neighborhoods and non-aggression pacts negotiated between ethnic community leaders. However, the patterns of the meso-level responses to the macro-level environmental changes were different in ethnically-segregated and mixed neighborhoods. This highlights the importance of structural factors. In highly ethnically-segregated neighborhoods and districts, Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities were exposed to fears against each other which, in some instances, erupted into preemptive violence. However, in other instances fears were managed by non-aggression pacts mediated by local leaders.

In ethnically-mixed neighborhoods (house-by-house interethnic mixture), Uzbeks and Kyrgyz cooperated on the grounds of neighborhood solidarity with or without involvement of traditional ethnic community leaders. They formed interethnic alliances against outsiders (see chapters on spatiality and Jalalabat). Local residents blocked entrances to neighborhoods by way of improvised barricades and road blocks. Where local traditional community leaders managed these interethnic alliances, they conducted strong community policing and restrictive measures such as prohibiting local residents from going outside their neighborhoods, closing access to outsiders, and denying the transit through the territory of the respective neighborhoods. The different patterns of strategic responses to fears of intercommunal violence in ethnically-mixed and segregated neighborhoods display the importance of intercommunal civic engagement as hypothesized by Varshney (2002) regarding the Hindu–Muslim intercommunal violence in India. Intense intercommunal civic ties increase cooperation and solidarity based on common interests rather than on ethnic affiliation.

There are three conditions should be present for successful intergroup pacts: 1) availability of legitimate brokers/mediators and ethnic neighborhood leaders; 2) a positive history of past interactions between leaders and local communities; and 3) favorable intragroup and intergroup balance of power (Collins 2006).

The first condition highlights the importance of leaders for the production and stability of non-aggression pacts. Why were the intergroup pacts negotiated only at the leaders' level? One of the main reasons was that intercommunal civic ties and contacts between ordinary residents were practically absent in segregated neighborhoods. The virtual absence of intercommunal quotidian and civic links was well

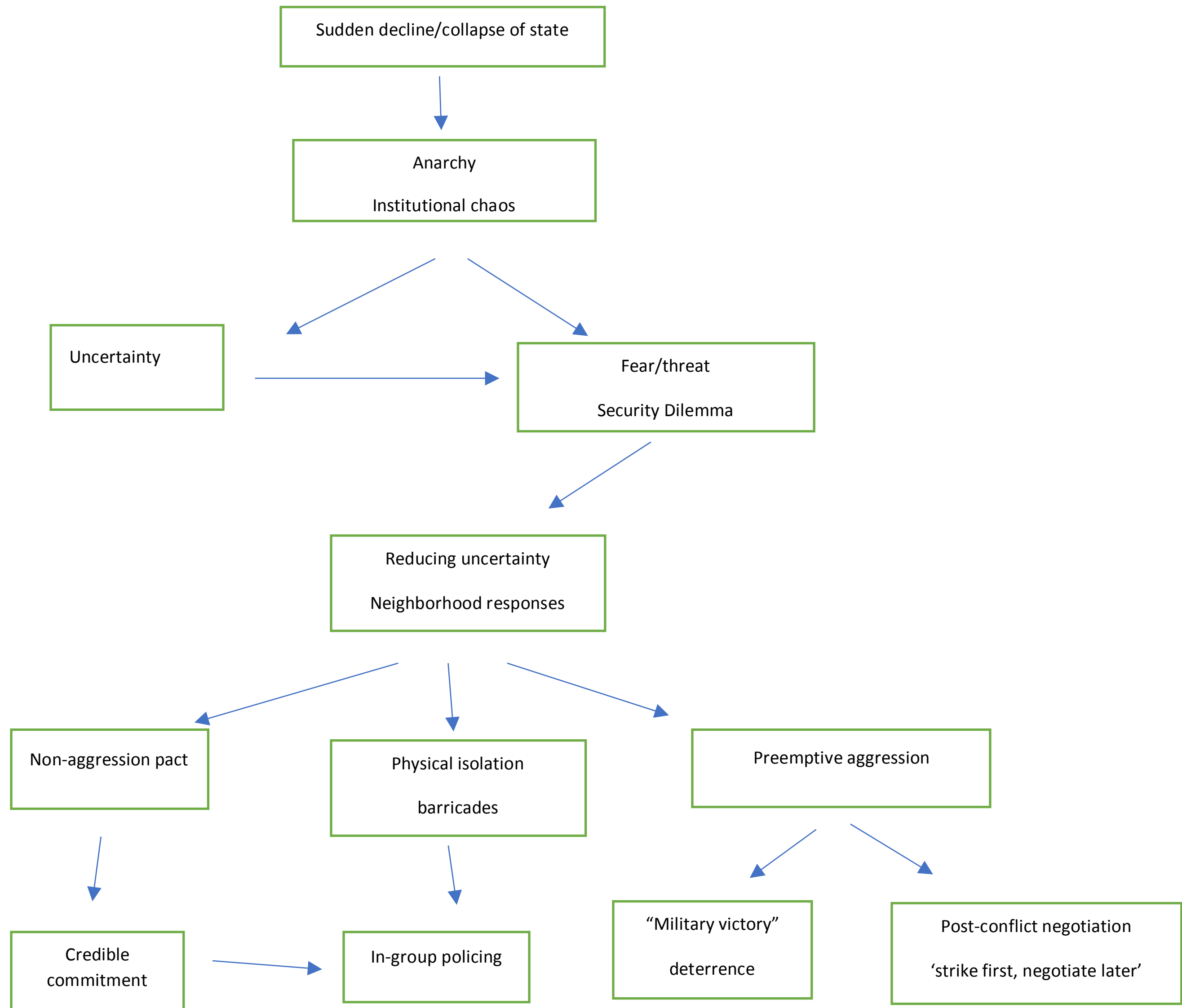
recorded and analyzed in anthropological studies on the relations between the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in Osh (Liu 2012; Megoran 2013). The model on interethnic cooperation proposed by Fearon and Laitin (1996) explains the importance of local-level ethnic leaders who in the absence of contacts between segregated ethnic groups represent and police their respective communities in intercommunal relations. Scholars of democratic transitions argue that legitimate leaders are a key factor for the production of intergroup pacts (Collins 2006; G. A. O'Donnell 1986; G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Higley and Burton 1989; Huntington 1993; Karl 1987, 1990; Jones Luong 2002; McFaul 2002). Christia underlines the importance of local elites in intergroup relations during civil wars who, in operating at the meso-level, connect the macro-level divisions with micro-level incentives (2012, 5). Low intercommunal social capital stemmed from residential, economic, and spatial segregation of two ethnic communities increases local elites' intragroup importance and their utility in intergroup relations. Under such circumstances, leaders act as brokers in intercommunal relations. Using their intragroup prominence and status they can mediate intercommunal agreements or on the contrary, abuse their power by subverting intercommunal relations.

The second condition highlights the importance of prior interactions between leaders and local communities. Maintenance of trustful relations between community leaders based on prior professional and current quotidian links facilitates contacts and brokerage. Positive relations in the past are thus very important. When leaders of two groups have shared experience and prior professional and other contacts with each other, it increases trust and also the reputational costs associated with cheating (i.e. breaking the pact conditions) between leaders. During interviews with me, many of them emphasized this aspect as helping them to initiate contacts to negotiate non-aggression pacts under broken macro-level interethnic trust during the onset of violence.

The third condition refers to the intragroup and intergroup balance of power. The intragroup balance was critical for the pact occurrence when local allied groups of radicals and moderates emerged in each locality under the emergent violence. If a local leader attempted to negotiate an agreement with the out-group, it was important that he (or sometimes she) had the support of in-group moderates. Leaders used the moderate constituency to control and police local communities and, if necessary, to counteract the radicals and to enforce sanctions against violators of intercommunal pacts and in-group security measures. The local intergroup balance of power was also important although to less extent. It induced local actors to negotiate pacts however, it was less relevant as the dynamics of violence brought about a high volatility of power shifts. The complicating factor was that local balance of power was often conflated by the general (town-level) balance of power. Macro-scale and micro-scale balances of power can be

different; the former can affect the latter (see on the interaction between local and general levels of balance of power Little 2007). So, on the ground, it was difficult to calculate the power distribution, and it was more perceived than real. I discuss the role of power distributions and shifts in more detail in the next chapter.

Figure 1.1. Neighborhoods' response strategies to uncertainty under the 'emerging anarchy'




Whether there was a violent or a non-violent outcome in such small-scale localities as neighborhoods and villages was often established in intra- and intercommunal interactions. These interactions derived from

(but also influenced) local power distributions and shifts. The balance of power (and intercommunal interactions) affected the probability of pact occurrence and its effect on a peaceful outcome in respective locations. Since terms (conditions) of a non-aggression pact negotiated between communal leaders should be enforced on the members of respective communities, the mechanisms of (pact) enforcement gain key importance. In-group policing is a such mechanism. In-group policing is effective when intragroup balance of power favors moderate leaders inclined to keep peaceful relations with their neighbors from the other ethnic community. However, this type of interaction and the possibility to negotiate an intercommunal pact and to conduct effective self-policing is conditioned by spatial and structural factors.

## Structure, spatiality, and contingency (agency)

Several factors affected the dynamics of riots in Osh city. These factors, for the sake of simplicity, can be conditionally divided into two types: structural, and contingent/agency based. So far, I have mainly discussed agency based factors. However, this does not imply that contingent factors are more important than structural, institutional, spatial, and environmental conditions. These non-contingent factors and conditions played an equally important role by shaping, constraining, and providing context for the interactions among actors. Here I do not discuss in detail theoretical implications of the interplay between structural and contingent variables. Structure versus agency and preconditions and contingency discussions are abundant in the literature. As suggested by Luong (2002), I move beyond structure versus agency framework and argue that both structural and agency based factors explain violent, low-violent, and non-violent outcomes in particular neighborhoods and villages.

The preconditions literature underemphasized collective decisions and strategic interactions but stressing only contingency (and agency) renders too much voluntarism to the nature of human interactions. The choice under uncertainty is always constrained and conditioned by historical, institutional, and structural (and spatial) constraints (Karl 1990, 6). For example, housing patterns, demography, ethno–social composition, and residential stability in neighborhoods influence the probability of pact occurrence and the level of the efficiency of communal policing. The level of local civil society, bonding (intragroup) and bridging (intergroup) social capital (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1994; Varshney 2002), and the strength of local social norms (Radnitz 2012; Petersen 2001) critically affected the success rate of local leaders in

building pacts and exerting social control in local communities. Social structures present constraints and opportunities on contingent choices (Karl 1990, 7). Without focusing on structural explanations, pact-making "would appear to be simply the result of skillful bargaining by astute political leaders" (Karl 1990, 7; see also Jones Luong 2002). Overly structural or contingency based arguments present too deterministic or too voluntaristic explanations. Choices and options available for leaders are conditioned by institutional, spatial, and structural constraints and opportunities established in the past (Jones Luong 2002).

In this ethnic conflict, the structural and spatial factors mainly relate but not limited to neighborhood characteristics. They include geographical location of neighborhoods (proximity to the border with Uzbekistan, to highway roads, to main streets), their ethnic composition, housing patterns, and the social homogeneity/integrity of the population (presence/absence of internal migrants, high rotation of residents) in the neighborhood, the extent of development and experience of interethnic ties between local community ethnic leaders, especially with the geographically adjacent neighborhoods. The latter factors have impact on intra- and intercommunal trust. Intercommunal trust was itself a phenomenon that influenced riot dynamics. Other structural and spatial factors include availability of broad communication roads and streets and the presence of commercial objects such as restaurants, cafes, shops, and others. If broad streets provided space for the movement of rioters and the military, the commercial objects attracted looters.

Other contingent factors such as rumors, the presence or absence of barricades or outsiders in particular locations and the decision by the military to remove some barricades but not the others, resonant assassinations, and opportunism significantly affected the dynamics of violence at local level. The outcome "violence or non-violence" often depends on the combination of particular structural and contingent factors.

It is difficult to measure the impact of some factors. Apparently, rumors are important in explaining dynamics of violence but the challenge here is to find conditions favorable for the spread of rumors and mechanisms that translate rumor into violence (Bhavnani, Findley, and Kuklinski 2009; Wilkinson 2009). What does make rumors to affect violence? This modular phenomenon focuses on trade-offs between the influence of example, structural facilitation, and institutional constraints (Beissinger 2002, 2007; Tarrow 2011). The studies of violence draw on diffusion/contagion theories using spatial distance indicators and assume that depending on transportation and organizational links and the degree of media segregation by language, the information about an initial riot quickly travels to respective towns and

villages (Wilkinson 2009, 340). However, the 2010 conflict shows that the assumptions of the riot contagion/diffusion theory work with some reservations. At its simplest, the model cannot explain the occurrence of violence as locations with similar conditions demonstrated the variation in violence. Nevertheless, rumor diffusion matters.

One should not underestimate the role of contingent factors such as rumors in establishing the spatial variation in violent and non-violent outcomes, and in analyzing the dynamics of escalation and de-escalation of violence during the ethnic riots. The most notable examples of contingent factors' impact on dynamics of violence in this ethnic conflict were the emergence and spread of rumors, resonant assassinations, and the role of emotions among main actors. For instance, rumors played very significant role in mobilization and de-mobilization of rioters and correspondingly, in escalation and de-escalation of violence. Some resonant assassinations and provocations, intended or unintended, escalated violence in certain neighborhoods and suburban villages, and directed raging mobs at certain places. Rumors – and also actual provocations – triggered mobilization and strong emotions such as desire for revenge, outrage, and fury not only among rioting crowds but also among ordinary residents, the witnesses of shocking and psychologically traumatic events. Although I do not systematically analyze this kind of contingent factor, I pay considerable attention to them in some relevant chapters.

Finally, spatiality (spatial factors) provides the context for strategic interactions. Contingent, interactional, and structural conditions all together affect the dynamics of violence however, the diffusion of violence can be constrained by spatial factors. The built environment and landscape of the cities can either facilitate or hinder the spread of violence.

When riots broke out in Osh, residents built barricades and road blocks to protect themselves from aggressive mobs. As Osh is a highly ethnically-segregated town, construction of barricades along ethnic spatial lines turned entire neighborhoods and residential districts into isolated ethnic enclaves (Memorial 2012, 82). Barricades created new temporal physical boundaries in the city, changed urban landscape, the built environment of the whole neighborhoods, and constrained human mobility, including the mobility of rioters, residents, refugees, and the police. All this had its impact on the dynamics of riots and spatial variation of violence across neighborhoods. While barricades and road blocks in many cases saved local communities from opportunistically-behaving riotous mobs, their construction in certain places was counterproductive as they triggered attacks by rioters. Physical isolation in some neighborhoods enabled local leaders to impose greater social control and informal power over the territory. Such neighborhoods

were now turned into isolated spaces with their own emergency rules and increased power of local informal leaders.

This research considers two different types of mobility: 1) residential mobility that in the long run influenced the quality and efficiency of community policing and production of informal power at local level that is at the level of community/neighborhood leaders; 2) spatial human mobility constrained by construction of barricades that in the immediate or short run influenced dynamics of riots and imposed constraints on freedom of movement for various actors and also created new opportunities for community leaders. Both types of mobility influence production of power (both long-term and short-term) and consequently spatial variation in violence. In the subsequent chapters, I will discuss both the impact of spatiality and residential mobility and how they relate to sustainability and production of traditional informal authority and social norms in town neighborhoods, and the role of spatiality and human spatial mobility as immediate factors for preventing and containing riots and violence within particular locations. I discuss the spatial factors in detail in chapter 6.

## Plan of the dissertation

Chapters will follow in order to explain various impacts on outcomes of spatial variations in ethnic violence. The next two chapters, in part II, deal with theoretical and methodological issues. Chapter 2 places this research within the interdisciplinary literature which engages in similar questions that this research considers. In chapter 3, I present the basic statistics on the June 2010 violence, the research design and some methodological issues. Part III explains intergroup relation at the macro-level as distinct from parts IV and V which account for interethnic relations at the meso-level (neighborhoods) and micro-level (leader interactions) (della Porta 2006). Chapter 4 discusses the structural–historical context of the relations between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities at the macro-level and provides background to the onset of violence in southern Kyrgyzstan. Chapter 5 provides descriptive analysis of the dynamics of ethnic violence in the city of Osh. It identifies the spatial distribution of violence and assesses the scale of violence in the city's districts. To adopt Jones Luong's (2002) terminology, these two chapters provide structural–historical and immediate–strategic contexts respectively for the dynamics of ethnic violence and actors' strategic interactions.

This dissertation aims to shed light on this gap by analyzing neighborhoods' responses to the emerging violence in the city of Osh. For this, in part IV, I will conduct paired comparisons of typical neighborhoods in Osh, one violent and the other non-violent in each pair. The pairs compare neighborhoods across different dimensions. These paired comparisons demonstrate/represent similar dynamics of riots in many other neighborhoods.

The first pair in the chapter 6, compares two neighborhoods with different spatial structures and built environments. The next pair in chapter 7 demonstrates the cases of in-group policing and intercommunal pacts that resulted in different outcomes. In part IV, the last two chapters analyze the dynamics of ethnic violence and responses to the emerging violence outside Osh by presenting cases of Jalalabat and Uzgen. These chapters aim at town level analysis, each of them presenting an implicit paired comparison of the respective town with Osh. The Jalalabat chapter shows the dynamics of violence in the town. It displays the variation in neighborhood responses to the diffusion of violence from Osh and explains this response-variation across three neighborhoods (through the security dilemma model). The chapter on Uzgen shows how this town with predominantly Uzbek population that was the main flashpoint of ethnic violence in 1990 managed to stay peaceful due to impressive centralized efforts of town communal leaders. Uzbek leaders of Uzgen negotiated a number of non-aggression pacts with the leaders from major Kyrgyz villages surrounding this town. These centralized diplomatic activities were complemented by local-level initiatives of neighborhood-scale Uzbek communal leaders who negotiated similar non-aggression pacts with the leaders of adjacent small Kyrgyz villages. These two-level negotiations became an important tool in reducing uncertainty and intercommunal tensions. However, the crucial element that allowed to prevent violence in Uzgen was strong self-policing among local Uzbek community in the town. In conclusion, I summarize the main findings of this dissertation research.

# Part II. Theoretical and methodological considerations

## Chapter 2. Intragroup policing, intergroup non-aggression pacts, and ethnic violence

In accord with McAdam et al (2001) and Tilly and Tarrow (2006), I accept the assumption that similar mechanisms can explain different forms of contention. In explaining the ethnic riots in southern Kyrgyzstan and its outcomes in localities, I employ theoretical insights drawn from disciplines and fields as different as urban sociology, international relations and security studies, democratization and regime transitions, studies on social disorder and policing of mass protests, ethnic politics, and civil wars. Some mechanisms, processes and conditions that explain the spatial variation in this research also figure in the works on pacted regime transitions in regions as diverse as Latin America and Central Asia.

### Intergroup pacts

*Definitions*

There are two main streams of academic literatures that engage with the questions of pacts and pact-making them the central concept in explaining contentious politics in relevant fields: 1) regime change and democratization literatures, and; 2) ethnic conflict studies. Despite the discussion about the role of pacts coming from different fields, they have many common features. In the literature on democratization, pacts appear to be a key variable that significantly increases the chances of successful democratic transitions by reducing uncertainty about the future prospects of elites in Latin America and southern Europe.  A pact is one of the key variables that explains the peaceful outcome in many locations/instances. A pact appears in the literature under terms as different as elite settlement, elitist arrangement, ethnic contract, informal negotiation, security agreement, power-sharing arrangement, and consociational agreement.

This variety of terms suggests that depending on the degree of formal institutionalization, conditions, and intended aims and duration, pacts can function differently in various contextual and institutional settings. In the democratization and transitional politics literature, they vary from quasi-formal agreements between competing parties as between incumbent regime and opposition in Spain and Latin America (see

Karl 1990; G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986) to informal agreements among clan factions as in Central Asia (see Collins, Luong) to power sharing agreements in sub-Saharan Africa and to institutional arrangements between ethnic political parties in Malaysia. Similarly, pacts in the literature on ethnic conflicts, civil wars, and security studies can be formal institutional arrangements or informal agreements and mutual understandings among elites. However, either of these forms "specify the relationship between the groups and normally channel politics in peaceful directions" (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 13).

Generally, there are two types of interests that drive actors to negotiate: politico–economic, and identity–personalistic: "A key difference between these two types of interests is that identity groups in the midst of conflict have very real concerns about their physical safety and survival; in contrast to economic interests, the continued existence of an ethnic group may be at risk in a conflict. … Although the stakes of politico-economic conflicts can be significant, they are seldom perceived in life-threatening terms" (Hartzell and Rothchild 1997, 152). Pacts in the democratization and ethnic conflict studies literatures have different connotations. In the first, there are usually politico-economic interests at stake, while in ethnic conflicts the whole group's physical safety and survival is a key issue. Therefore, the nature of pacts is different in the two situations. Pacts are negotiated under different environments/motivation concerns and pursue different goals/interests but the two conditions, of course, can be interrelated.

The following definitions of pact highlight its various forms, types, and characteristics. Karl defines its characteristics as "the set of negotiated compromises embodied by pacts [that] establish political 'rules of the game' for competition among elites, but [that] also institutionalize the economic boundaries between the public and private sectors, provide guarantees for private capital, and fix the parameters of future socioeconomic reform" (Karl 1987, 66). This definition, which Karl considered in the context of competition between political elites in Venezuela, underscores the desire (decision) of established political elites to secure their political and economic interests. This formal or/and informal settlement between elites leads to (partial) stability of democratic regime.

However, other scholars define broader implications of pacts, pointing at issues that go beyond simple protection of political and economic interests of elites. Pacts can prevent intrastate violence and resolve conflicts. According to O'Donnell and Schmitter: "A pact can be defined as an explicit, but not always publicly explicated or justified, agreement among a select set of actors which seeks to define (or, better, to redefine) rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of mutual guarantees for the 'vital interests' of those entering into it" (1986, 37). Moreover, the authors argue that pacts "are often initially regarded as temporary solutions intended to avoid certain worrisome outcomes and, perhaps, to pave

the way for more permanent arrangements for the resolution of conflicts" (G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 37). Although similar to the previous definition, this statement suggests conflict-resolving function of a pact. The important implication of this statement is that pact is always an elitist and exclusivist and usually short-term agreement(s) intended to prevent or resolve costly violent conflict between competing forces.

In ethnic politics, pacted democracy is a form of mutual security agreements among ethnic elites and pacts are fragile and temporary coalitions with minimal security reassurances to ethnic minorities (Rothchild and Lake 1998, 207–8). Scholars of ethnic conflict and civil war place great emphasis on security related functions and implications of a pact that provide mutual guarantees of physical security and sometimes protection of political and economic interests:

> A political pact is a set of institutional arrangements constructed by elites to deal with the immediate threat of intra-state violence. Not all agreements can be classified as political pacts. Pacts are "mutual security arrangements" in which representatives from all the major parties join together to design power-sharing institutions among themselves that will provide a basis for intra-elite reciprocity and political exchange (Hartzell and Rothchild 1997, 148).

The main aim of a pact is to protect political and economic interests of elites or identity groups. As Lake and Rothchild put it:

> Stable ethnic relations can be understood as based upon a 'contract' between groups. Ethnic contracts specify, among other things, the rights and responsibilities, political privileges, and access to resources of each group. These contracts may be formal constitutional agreements or simply informal understandings between elites. Whatever their form, ethnic contracts specify the relationship between the groups and normally channel politics in peaceful directions (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 13).

Whatever its form, a pact has several common characteristics that can be found in different settings. First, any pact normally is a transitional arrangement designed to solve conflicts and prevent intrastate violence. It is considered a temporary solution to the problems that exist between competing (contending) parties, however, an intended time-span of an effective pact can vary from several days to several years and even decades, as in the case of elite pacts in Venezuela and Colombia (G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 45; G. A. O'Donnell 1986, 5; Karl 1987). Second, a pact is either a set of formal institutional arrangements or a set of compromises endorsed by an informal agreement and mutual understandings between elites. Third, most pacts include mutual security arrangements that protect political and economic interests of elites and/or physical safety of elites and their constituencies, usually identity groups such as ethnic and religious groups. Fourth, pacts are negotiated between a limited and select set of actors (G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 37). Sometimes (rarely), once a pact is negotiated between narrow circle of leaders, it then should be endorsed by a wider public or elites' ethnic constituencies (G. A. O'Donnell 1986, 12). In

general, a pact is a fragile temporary coalition which can breakdown if conditions and factors that led to a negotiated settlement change or if one of the parties does not credibly commit to the conditions of the negotiation (Fearon 1998; Hartzell and Rothchild 1997; Lake and Rothchild 1998a).

Distinct types of pacts may consider particular conditions. As regime transitions may consist in a sequence of moments – military, political, and economic – "each of these may correspond [to] a different pact, or pacts, with a distinctive subset of actors negotiating about a distinctive cluster of rules" (G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 39). In other words, each type of transitional moment provides specific environmental (context-specific) rules and conditions and a distinct set of actors for producing and negotiating pacts. The terms of military pacts and the context in which they emerge are likely to be different from the elite settlements that are negotiated in the context of political and economic transitions. The former mainly concerns an elite settlement between "moderates and the military which usually stipulates gradual liberalization in exchange for security guarantees for military officers who committed 'excesses' under the military dictatorships. Elite settlements negotiated in 'political and economic moments' of regime transition are mostly based on a distribution of representative positions and economic assets" (G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 40; Collins 2006). Similarly, pacts involving various types of interests produce distinct types of incentives among actors negotiating a settlement. In identity-ethnic versus politico-economic interests in pacts, "elites representing conflicting economic interests may believe that there are less basic interests at stake than elites representing groups involved in identity conflicts (i.e., security)" (Hartzell and Rothchild 1997, 153). Actors with politico–economic interests find it easier to enter into a pact.

Each pact incorporates some necessary elements. According to O'Donnell and Schmitter, "At the core of a pact lies a negotiated compromise under which actors agree to forgo or underutilize their capacity to harm each other by extending guarantees not to threaten each other's corporate autonomies or vital interests. This typically involves clauses stipulating abstention from violence, a prohibition on appeals to outsiders (the military or the masses), and often a commitment to use pact-making again as the means for resolving future disputes" (G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 38).

However, we should not overestimate the salience of elite settlements and agreements in keeping intergroup peace. As Rothchild and Lake argue, "With ethnic balances of power constantly evolving and information limited, these arrangements are necessarily transitional ones. If poorly negotiated and implemented, the incomplete ethnic contracts may be rejected eventually by the groups they are designed to protect" (1998, 208). In general a pact is not a remedy to intergroup conflicts but only a

temporary solution which allows actors to build upon more robust and longer-term solutions to ethnic conflicts.

In ethnic politics, pacts are not full-fledged ethnic cooperation. They do not signify robust interethnic civic engagement (see Varshney 2002). In the context of ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan, a pact is the result of negotiations between small number of communal leaders. The main goal of these negotiations is to guarantee ethno–communal security. They are indicators of credible commitment by ethnic leaders to non-aggression and ethnic peace. By credibly committing to peace through pacts, communal leaders increase trust between local ethnic communities and reduce uncertainty which is the main problem in democratic transitions and ethnic conflict. Pact provides a window of opportunity for further interethnic engagement at the leaders' level.

*Importance, effects, and outcomes of pacts*

Political pact plays an important role in conflict resolution. Around one-fourth of civil wars (that took place since WWII) ended with negotiated settlements (Licklider 1995, 684). One of the most important aims of a pact is to reduce elites' or an identity group's uncertainty about their physical survival and political-economic security. As Hartzell and Rothchild:

> Political pacts reduce the stakes of inter-elite encounters. They do so by constructing institutions that operate to protect elite interests … In the process of negotiating these pacts, elites establish rules and institutions that will differ in terms of the structural characteristics [parity or asymmetry of power balance, ethnic or economic] of each local conflict. A key difference among these pacts is their relative stability" (1997, 154).

The literature in general considers pacts between national-level or ethnic group level elites. In this, the present study is different by analyzing low-level ethnic community leaders. It does not consider the issue of long-term stability of pacts. It only concerns very short-term (transitional) pacts and does not consider medium- and long-term effects of pacts.

According to the democratic transitions literature, pacts play an important role during regime transitions. Pacts keep outsiders away and marginalize radicals from decision-making and "limit the role of radicals and the masses in the negotiation process" (McFaul 2002, 218) and "reduce uncertainty about actors' ultimate intentions" and "lessens the fears" (McFaul 2002, 217).

One of the most important functions of pacts is to reduce elite insecurities (Higley and Burton 1989, 24). In Latin America, countries that did not conduct inter-elite pacts in the 1960s and the 1970s eventually retreated to authoritarianism in the 1980s while Colombia and Venezuela preserved at least limited democracy thanks to negotiated pacts between major political elites. Although later in the 1990s and 2000s, as the evidence shows, both Colombia and Venezuela experienced political turmoil, specialists insist that these retreats occurred due to erosion of inter-elite pacts (G. A. O'Donnell 1986; Karl 1987). In Central Asia in the 1990s, local political elites negotiated informal pacted agreements that smoothed the regime transitions in these countries after the Soviet Union suddenly collapsed in 1991. Only in Tajikistan did local political elites not reach common agreement. The absence of pacted agreement between local political clans resulted in violent civil war (Jones Luong 2002; Collins 2006; McFaul 2002).

Elite agreements also serve to consolidate divided elites against a common external threat. Collins considers pacts as a mechanism that coalesces/consolidates elite factions against external threat and provides stability and balance of governance (Collins 2006, 103). However, as the democratization literature shows (McFaul 2002; Karl 1990, 8; ; but not in Schmitter and O'Donnell 1986), an elitist pact is an inferior point compared to mass mobilization reform. Pacts do not produce full democratization. Similarly, in ethnic politics pacts do not substitute full-scale ethnic cooperation. This reflects peaceful outcomes observed in the mixed and segregated neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat, where residents in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods cooperated based on neighborhood solidarity. Pacts emerged where grass-root cooperation was absent (i.e. in areas of segregated neighborhoods without mass-level interethnic interactions), while in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods, people cooperated without negotiating pacts at the inter-leader level.

One important element/aim of pact is restriction on participation of outsiders in decision-making. According to O'Donnell and Schmitter, a political pact aims to: "(1) limit the agenda of policy choice, (2) share proportionately in the distribution of benefits, and (3) restrict the participation of outsiders in decision-making" (1986, 41). Among these three elements of political pacts only the third (the restriction of outsiders) is relevant for the analysis of (short-term) intercommunal non-aggression pacts and particularly those in Kyrgyzstan as the first two relate to the state level and mid- and long-term forms of intergroup agreements. They are not applicable to the neighborhood level intergroup relations while the component on the restriction of outsiders is pertinent (appropriate) to the both levels. A pact at all levels involves "a commitment for some period to resolve conflicts arising from the operation of the pact by renegotiating its terms, not by resorting to the mobilization of outsiders or the elimination of insiders" (G.

A. O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 41; McFaul 2002, 217). Similarly, Karl argues that “pacts serve to ensure survivability because, although they are inclusionary, they are simultaneously aimed at restricting the scope of representation in order to reassure traditional dominant classes that their vital interests will be respected” (Karl 1990. P.11). As evidence shows, when negotiating intercommunal pacts in Osh and other towns, leaders demanded that the other side not involve strangers and outsiders in local issues. According to conditions of non-aggression pacts, neighboring communities negotiated to protect each other from aggressive groups coming from outside areas.

However, pacts do not always have positive outcomes. Contrary to O'Donnell and Schmitter, some scholars of the transitions literature (Collins 2006; McFaul 2002; Hartzell and Rothchild 1997) assume that pacted agreements and political stalemates can lead to divergent outcomes: democratic, hybrid, and authoritarian regimes. McFaul’s critique of the ‘third wave’ democratization literature identifies some its problems because it does not study negative cases. According to him, some stalemates in the post-communist countries did not produce pacts or liberal democracies but led to partial dictatorship, unstable democracy, or civil war and violent confrontation. Similarly, Hartzell and Rothchild argue that “Although much of the work on political pacts has focused on these institutional arrangements as means of making a transition to democracy, it is clear that this literature recognizes that pacted arrangements fall short of polyarchical regime types” (1997, 150). Another problem of the transitions literature on pacts as it is mainly focused on formal institutional arrangements, while many ethnic conflicts do not include formal agreements. This work analyzes informal pacts between local communal leaders, but not between national level leaders.

Pacts do not causally determine peaceful outcomes. However, they are extremely useful and play important role in reducing uncertainty and tensions. What, then, is the utility of pacts in practical terms? Although pacts do not guarantee peace, they significantly increase the likelihood of peaceful outcome if actors involved in these pact negotiations are: 1) committed to the conditions of a pact; 2) have power and authority within their local ethnic communities, and; 3) their partners from the other side in the pact trust them (that they are credibly committed). O’Donnell and Schmitter “doubt that such pacts are necessary preconditions for transition to stable democracy [because Costa Rica transitioned without a pact], but they think pacts enhance its probability” (Higley and Burton 1989, 29). McFaul makes basically the same observation about the importance of pacts in the ‘third wave’ democratic regime transitions: “Though a pact is not a necessary condition for a successful democratic transition, it enhances the probability of success. … A democratic outcome is most likely when soft-liners and moderates enter into

pacts that navigate transition from dictatorship to democracy. … If transition is not pacted, it is likely to fail" (McFaul 2002, 216). Equivalently, pact in ethnic politics is not a necessary condition for peace but greatly enhances the probability for peaceful outcome. Pacts are usually conducted between moderate leaders and communal activists from both sides.

Intergroup arrangements keep outsiders away (marginalize radicals) from decision-making and "limit the role of radicals and the masses in the negotiation process" (McFaul 2002, 218). However, when masses play a primary role, this can result either in mass violence or grass-root level ethnic cooperation. This helps us to understand the utility of negotiated agreements in preventing large-scale violent conflicts.

**Figure 2.1.** Type of response to uncertainty

| | peaceful | violent |
|---|---|---|
| Leader initiative | pact | Instigation (no direct evidence) |
| Mass-level | Ethnic cooperation/neutrality | Violent confrontation |

*Requisite Conditions for pact-making (production of pacts)*

In order to analyze the efficiency of pacts in containing, preventing, and resolving intra-state violent conflicts, we need to distinguish two different phases in pact-making process. One concerns the process of the production of pacts (pact-making) and the other deals with the problem of stability and durability of pact (pact efficiency?). To analyze these phases, I distinguish the following related questions: Under what conditions are pacts likely to be negotiated? What accounts for the efficiency and stability of these pacts? In this section, I discuss various conditions that lead to the emergence and durability of pacts. I then analyze their theoretical implications for the non-aggression pacts conducted by ethnic neighborhood-community leaders in southern Kyrgyzstan.

*Pact-making*

The theoretical literature identifies three main conditions required for the production of political pacts: 1) existence of external threat for elites and their constituencies; 2) availability of legitimate brokers or third party intermediaries who have connections to the contending parties; and 3) the balance of power between contending groups. Threat acts as a trigger condition for initiating pacts, legitimate leaders and

brokers negotiate pact, and equal balance of power provide favorable condition for negotiation and durability of pact.

Collins (2002, 2006) contends that pacts in clan-based societies emerge in response to instability which usually comes with an exogenous shock such as sudden decline of the central state and the collapse of multinational empire. By negotiating informal pacts elites foster the regime durability and stabilize relations between groups. If exogenous shock or violence occurs, pacts maintain durable and peaceful but not necessarily friendly relations between groups. She argues that clan elites are likely to negotiate pacts when the following three conditions are met:

> (1) a shared external threat induces cooperation among clans who otherwise would have insular interests; (2) a balance of power exists among the major clan factions, such that none can dominate; (3) a legitimate broker, a leader trusted by all factions, assumes the role of maintaining the pact and the distribution of resources that it sets in place" (Collins 2006, 50).

Collins further highlights the significance of informal institutions and networks in politics and social organization in producing pacts. According to her, in Central Asia, these networks were the main factor in initiating transitional pacts and ensuring regime stability.

The second stage of pact politics concerns the problem of stability and durability of agreements. Stability of pacts depends on two main factors: 1) shifts in the balance of power between competing forces, and; 2) compliance with the conditions of pact. In the first scenario, shifts in the distribution of power produce incentives for the side that increasing its power to renegotiate the pact or to stop complying with its conditions. This brings us to the second scenario. When one side stops to enforce the pact conditions, the other side in the pact does not see the reason to continue with the agreement. As a result, the pact breaks down. To make a pact durable, both sides must show credible commitment to the rules established by mutual agreement.

Pacts occur between leaders in situations where there are weak or absent interethnic civic ties between two local communities. The leaders make a pact to prevent violent conflict and to marginalize radicals from the power and the process of decision-making. Below I will examine in detail the conditions that explain both pact-making and durability of pacts and then discuss their theoretical implications for the intercommunal pacts conducted by ethnic community leaders in southern Kyrgyzstan.

## Threat, uncertainty, and fear

Pact-making has strong relation to the notions of uncertainty, fear, and (external) threat. If not identical however they are closely related and sometimes overlapping concepts. Although these terms do not completely correspond in the meaning, they signify a practically similar condition defined differently in democratization, security studies, and ethnic conflict literatures. Scholars in these fields, especially those studying ethnic conflicts and civil wars from security dilemma perspectives, tend to use all these three concepts interchangeably when referring to the condition of vulnerability (see Walter, for example).

There are differences between these concepts, however. Uncertainty is a key concept in studies of democratic transitions (see G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986), whereas scholars of ethnic conflicts tend to use the term 'fear' (Lake and Rothchild 1998b, 1996; de Figueiredo and Weingast 1999; Posen 1993; Walter and Snyder 1999). Threat, however, is "an event that signals danger and, when detected, leads people to experience fear" (Thorisdottir 2007, 2). This difference in the usage of these concepts probably reflect the distinct type of structural conflict these two sets of literatures study. Whereas the democratization and regime transitions literature evaluates inter-elite conflicts over political and economic issues, scholars of the ethnic conflict analyze inter-state and inter-group conflicts with higher stakes such as physical survival of nation states and ethnic groups (see Hartzell and Rothchild 1997). Primordial sentiments such as fear are more embedded in ethnic politics than in inter-elite competition, which is based on ideological and class cleavages. Nevertheless, these two types of conflicts can be interrelated.

In security studies, uncertainty and fear are key mechanisms explaining security dilemma model. Booth and Wheeler (2008) distinguish between these terms defining uncertainty as an existential human condition and fear as a primordial emotion. These conditions/factors trigger (i.e. produce incentives for) leaders and groups to reduce vulnerability by either conducting preventive attacks against their adversaries and repressions against the opposition or by negotiating pacted agreements and settlements. Both options allow reductions in uncertainty and lessen fear.

Uncertainty includes analysis of the crisis and responses to them. It "concerns the beliefs of decision makers, and … arises when decision makers are not fully informed about parameters of the game and when information is asymmetrically distributed. Traditionally, game theory assumes that all players are fully informed about relevant parameters, including the strategies available to an opponent and the

opponent's preferences – or at least that they all share the same "imperfect" view" (Niou, Ordeshook, and Rose 1989, 58).

Fear is a primordial emotion and is often based on past interactions (Booth and Wheeler 2008). Past interactions may mitigate inter-group engagement or exacerbate past hostilities. In his influential article, Posen (1993) provides examples about how during disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union the history of past hostilities was manipulated by political elites in the former but not in the latter state. Ethnic fears based on past hostilities activated security dilemma in Yugoslavia. Today, however, the Kremlin exploits the Bandera label from past interactions in Ukraine to increase fears between its Western and Eastern regions.

The relationship between threat, fear, and uncertainty are complex but all three often result from 'emerging anarchy' (Posen 1993) produced by exogenous shocks which are contingent and unexpected events such as natural disasters, death of nationwide leaders, or sudden decline of the central state such as national disintegration or collapse of a multinational state (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Collins 2006). Exogenous shocks produce "sudden and unpredictable decisions, high level of uncertainty, and new combinations of threat and opportunity" (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 223). These contingent events trigger environmental changes and create conditions that can be perceived by actors both as threat or opportunity. The decline of the state practically means institutional chaos in the transitional literature and is equivalent to (or closely associated with) the concept of 'emerging anarchy' in international relations. 'Emerging anarchy' produces institutional chaos and the situation of uncertainty.

Typically, these three factors become relevant and arise under conditions of 'emerging anarchy'. According to Booth and Wheeler, anarchy is "the absence of political authority in international politics above that of the sovereign state" (Booth and Wheeler 2008, 2) and a key condition of security dilemma. In domestic politics, anarchy would mean absence of state or central. It is "a world of uncertainty, weapons, and fear" (Booth and Wheeler 2008, 2). The importance of anarchy as a key condition in international relations and ethnic politics makes application of IR approaches useful in the analysis of ethnic conflict. Survival is the main motivation here: "an anarchic system – a system in which no organization or constraints on action are imposed exogenously" (Niou, Ordeshook, and Rose 1989, 62).

*How uncertainty and fear affect intergroup relations*

So, what is the importance of uncertainty and fear for understanding the dynamics of violence and pact-making? The collapse of multinational empires produces enormous uncertainty in the successor states' regime transitions. In Yugoslavia, for example, uncertainty induced by the breakdown of this multinational state caused ethnic fears, a security dilemma, and eventually preemptive aggression in relations between ethnic groups (Fearon 1998; Posen 1993; Lake and Rothchild 1996). Additionally, institutional chaos and uncertainty associated with it during the transition in post-Soviet Central Asia was smoothed by pacts organized by regional elites and various clan factions (Jones Luong 2002; Collins 2006). Negotiated inter-elite settlements allowed peaceful transitions in the majority of Central Asian republics. Where pacts between competing elites and clan networks were not negotiated, there uncertainty triggered violence and civil war, as in an example of Tajikistan (Collins 2002, 2006; McFaul 2002).

Uncertainty resulting from equal distribution of power between competing forces can play a positive role in pact-making. Critically reviewing the findings of the 'third wave' democratization literature, McFaul highlights this literature's key argument that emphasizes the importance of uncertainty and fear in producing successful pacts and subsequent democratic transitions: "Uncertainty enhances the probability of compromise, and relatively equal distributions of power create uncertainty" (McFaul 2002, 219). In other words, this argument can be reformulated as equal distribution of power produces uncertainty and the latter enhances the probability of pacted compromise. New institutions emerge because of bargaining which can be considered as positive-sum game, where all sides benefit (McFaul 2002, 220).

Threat that derives from the situations of uncertainty and fear can act not only as a trigger for violent conflict but also as a trigger for negotiations. The literature on pacts underlines the importance of (external) threat to the political and economic interests and/or physical safety of elites and ethnic and identity groups as a main trigger and incentive that pushes political elites and ethnic leaders to negotiate a pact among themselves, often with an involvement of a third-party mediator or broker. Hartzell and Rothchild (1997, 153) refer to the notion of threat as a necessary condition for pact making: "one necessary condition must be in place for elites to construct such a pact: a perception on all sides of rising costs of conflict that pose a threat to their power bases and substantive interests."

*Double effect of uncertainty*

However, the conceptual meaning of uncertainty used in the transitional literature on Latin America and southern Europe is different from the analytical framework of democratic transitions developed by

McFaul himself and from the conceptual connotation/implications operated in security and ethnic conflict studies. Both in McFaul's analytical model and in security studies, uncertainty (and fear) can either produce negotiated settlement or trigger violent conflict and preemptive aggression: "uncertainty generated by relatively balanced forces facilitated the emergence of democratic institutions … [in eastern Europe] this same uncertainty produced the opposite effect – conflict" (2002, 224). When distribution of power is unequal there is a more certain pathway or what McFaul calls a 'non-cooperative strategic situation'. This is important observation because it shows how uncertainty produces different situations. This twofold effect of uncertainty can trigger both conflict or negotiations. It can lead to pacts or to confrontation. Uncertainty "provides opportunities for claim making but also threatens established groups, leading to competition among claimants for political space"(McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 66) and "the heightened sense of threat or opportunity associated with uncertainty prompt[s] all established parties to the conflict to monitor one another's actions closely and engage in reactive mobilization on an escalating basis" (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 97). The question of "how different settings on the ground might affect groups' decision to fight, to negotiate, or to remain at peace" (Walter 1999, 2) is a key here. These are responses to environmental conditions. In this study, I will show that responses can be different despite similar environmental changes/factors. One of my tasks in this research is to explain under which circumstances uncertainty produces different outcomes. I will analyze these situations in detail in the next chapters.

Uncertainty introduces unpredictability. The absence of predictable rules of the game makes strategic calculation difficult and increases the importance of contingent choice. "During regime transitions, all political calculations and interactions are highly uncertain. Actors find it difficult to know what their interests are, who their supporters will be, and which groups will be their allies or opponents" (Karl 1990, 6). Therefore, uncertainty triggers different responses. There are two ways to reduce uncertainty. The first is to strike with preemptive attack and the second is to transcend uncertainty by re-building trust and establishing cooperative relations. Radicals want to reduce uncertainty by preemptive attacks and violence and moderates by reassuring the other side of their peaceful intentions and to re-build trust. In this context, the value of strategic interactions and negotiations/bargaining between competing forces become highly significant for the final outcome. These interactions and provisional arrangements between "actors with uncertain power resources" aim "at defining who will legitimately be entitled to play in the political game, what criteria will determine the winners and losers, and what limits will be placed on the issues at stake" (Karl 1990, p.6).

Environmental changes induced by exogenous shocks play an important role in determining variation in outcomes. Walter and her colleagues identify five fear-inducing environments that can produce civil war. Out of these five, at least three of them are relevant for the analysis of the 2010 ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan. These are 1) collapse of the government; 2) a minority group becoming an enclave surrounded by a larger ethnic community, and; 3) intergroup balance of power shifts (Walter 1999, 4). I examine the effect of these factors in the current study. The remaining two – a rapid shift in economic resources ownership and demobilization of partisan armies – are less relevant for this research as they refer more to longer-term and conventional civil wars. The collapse of government is a key factor which alone triggers changes that produce other fear-inducing environments except the last one, demobilization of a partisan army. The collapse of the central state produces 'emerging anarchy' and the relevant effects and conditions: "When central authority declines, groups become fearful for their survival. They invest in and prepare for violence, and thereby make actual violence possible. … state weakness is a necessary precondition for violent ethnic conflict to erupt" (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 8). One consequence of multinational-state collapse is that many ethnic groups and communities become geographically isolated and feel vulnerable surrounded by the territories of a rival group.

Another consequence of state decline is an exogenous shock that often changes the balance of power and creates an external threat to the interests of identity groups and elites. Exogenous shock often causes anarchy conditioned by sudden decline of the state which creates uncertainty and fears in relations between groups. Therefore, the presence or absence of the central state is an important condition for understanding the role of fear and uncertainty in intergroup relations. As Walter states, "Groups have little to fear from each other when the central government can effectively enforce rules and arbitrate disputes" (Walter 1999, 5). External threat becomes a trigger that pushes elites to negotiate pacts or to make preemptive attacks against rival forces.

Having emerged under condition of anarchy and environmental changes, like decline of the state, uncertainty and fear in combination can produce civil wars. As Walter puts it: "civil wars can also erupt inadvertently from the uncertainty and fear that arise when the domestic environment suddenly changes, leaving groups nervous and insecure about their future" (Walter 1999, 2). Environmental changes and related to them uncertainty and fear cause

> [e]pisodes of contention [which] typically grow out of and depend on a perception of significant environmental uncertainty on the part of the state and non-state elites and challengers alike. This shared perception insures that both sides continue to see the situation as one posing

> significant threats to and/or opportunities for the realization of group interests (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 97).

The fear-producing environments activate security dilemma between ethnic groups and consequently, "the decision to go to war is based on a group's assessment of how malicious or benign a potential rival might be"(Walter 1999, 9). As de Figueiredo and Weingast observe, fear is a driving mechanism that forces people to forgo the benefits of social cooperation and economic interests when they feel external threat to their lives and families. Normally peaceful people's support for aggressive leaders will increase as perception of insecurity increases (de Figueiredo and Weingast 1999, 263).

## The role of leaders in production of pacts

The availability of legitimate leaders is another important factor in successful pact-making. Scholars emphasize the importance of leaders in negotiating and producing pacts in order to prevent violent conflicts (Hartzell and Rothchild 1997, 147). Leaders have direct influence on decisions to respond to uncertainty/crisis. The decision and response strategy to reduce uncertainty and conditions for such response vary from cooperation and pacted agreement to violent confrontation. The decisions made by leaders at key moments of uncertainty highly influence the outcomes of contingent events.

### *Pact brokers*

Influential individuals and leaders can act as brokers and mediators to produce pacts between competing political forces and ethnic communities. The important is that the brokers have in-group legitimacy and recognition by an out-group. Legitimate leaders broker pacts between competing forces. Scholars of contentious politics find that brokerage is one of key mechanisms that figures practically in all forms of contentious politics (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 308). Brokerage is mechanism that:

> links of two or more previously unconnected social sites by a unit that mediates their relations with one another and/or with yet other sites. Most analysts see brokerage as a mechanism relating groups and individuals to one another in stable sites, but it can also become a relational mechanism for mobilization during periods of contentious politics, as new groups are thrown together by increased interaction and uncertainty, thus discovering their common interests (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 26).

Although this refers to brokerage as mobilizational mechanism, the research on pacts assigns to brokerage distinct characteristics. Brokerage can also function as a demobilization mechanism. Brokers mediate within their own political and ethnic constituencies and, in cooperation with outgroup mediators (from other side), negotiate demobilization of their constituencies through pacts and self-policing.

Who are those brokers and mediators and who have legitimacy to negotiate pacts? As Hartzell and Rothchild (1997, 149) argue:

> Elites negotiating a pacted arrangement are normally those who possess enough power to do harm to each other's vital interests. This does not mean, however, that pacts are totally inclusive settlements. Those leaders whom dominant elites judge to lack significant bargaining power may be excluded from both the pact-making process and the institutions of governance.

Therefore, pacts are negotiated if leaders participating in negotiation have significant bargaining power. It means they should have sufficient level of authority and influence within their local ethnic community and ability to police their constituencies. Negotiating with leaders who lack these features is less efficient for the prospects of peace. Weak leaders without in-group legitimacy and external recognition by the outgroup will engender a problem of credible commitment. The other side will simply not believe in the ability of such leaders to credibly commit to the conditions of pact (the most important is to police their constituency and to hold them back from aggression). For this reason, O'Donnell and Schmitter emphasize the importance of well recognized leaders in mediation of pacts:

> Given the previous repression and disarticulation of intermediaries, 'notables' – respected, prominent individuals who are seen as representative of propertied classes, elite institutions, and/or territorial constituencies and, hence, capable of influencing their subsequent collective behavior – seem to offer the best available interlocutors with whom to negotiate mutual guarantees (G. A. O'Donnell 1986, 40).

In countries where formal institutions are weak, leaders and elites who possess a great deal of informal power determine and structure local politics. They act as legitimate political brokers between competing clans and factions. According to Collins (2006, 171)

> a stable pact managed by a legitimate leader is critical to transitional regime durability in clan-based societies. The presence of a negotiated pact, together with a leader who has the legitimacy and skill to manage its competing factions, is key to consolidating rather than fragmenting security forces and arms during the uncertainty of the transition.

A legitimate leader who manages his/her constituency is one key to holding a pact stable. She has the ability to consolidate her community/constituency. This is an important internal factor connected to self-

policing. A pact is only viable if leaders manage their constituencies. The level of political and social authority of group leaders has important implications for the in-group balance of power and self-policing. Then discuss external factors explaining durability/stability of pacts. Conditions/components of stable pact are based on intra- and intercommunal factors.

In many cases, a neutral broker is necessary to mediate and maintain a pact. Outside brokers are especially efficient under conditions of uncertainty and information failures (Lake and Rothchild 1996). Third party mediators "can present a solution which is agreeable to both sides but which the disputants may be unwilling to propose for fear of appearing 'weak.'" (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 730). In the 1990s, under transitional uncertainty in Central Asian countries, "a pact incorporating powerful clan factions was key to maintaining regime durability in the absence of consolidated regime institutions [and] a neutral broker who balanced power and resources was key to maintaining that pact, and that a shared external threat made it more likely that clan elites would support the pact and the regime" (Collins 2002, 269). Another example comes from medieval Genoa, where competing clans under threat of mutual elimination agreed to invite each year a neutral broker – the *Podesta* – who would govern the city and manage internal conflicts and maintain a peaceful pact (Greif 1998).

Strategic dilemmas can be mitigated and solved through mediation by neutral brokers. Information failure is a strategic dilemma which arises when individuals or groups try to misrepresent their real preferences in order to prevent violence but competing interests can trigger suspicions and violent conflict (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 11; see also Kuran 1998). The dilemma of information failure hinders negotiations between rival groups as private information and group preferences are usually known within group but unknown to the outsider group. When the state weakens, the problem of information failure becomes acute; suspicions arise about intentions of others. This dilemma can be transcended and solved through third-party brokerage. Neutral mediators reveal groups' real preferences and inform them to other parties, thus achieving a favorable ground for interethnic cooperation (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 13). Additionally, Fearon and Laitin discuss solutions to the information problem. Pacts "may be accomplished in many instances through professional mediators who know one or both groups well and who specialize in extracting precise information from disputing parties to design finely calibrated compensation packages that prevent spiraling violence" (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 729).

*Two-level negotiation game*

However, neutral mediators are not always available, especially during sudden outbreaks of violence. When neutral brokers are not available, intergroup cooperation can be sustained through in-group mediators. In this case, each group's mediator coordinates interactions at two levels: intra- and inter-group interactions. Mediators negotiate intergroup pact and manage intragroup interactions directly with their immediate constituencies. The history of past interactions and trust between leaders/mediators are important. If the leaders are not unified, they have difficulties in reaching pacted agreement as information problems follow from a lack of efficient communication between elites. Rare and sporadic interactions among leaders characterized by deep insecurity and fear result in the inability to negotiate peaceful pacts and the taking of extreme and destructive measures against rivals, including killings and instigation of violence in order to protect themselves (Higley and Burton 1989, 19). This argument can be extended to the interactions between deeply segregated ethnic groups which are alienated from each other by the absence of inter-group civic engagement.

Although the literature on pacts has paid sufficient attention to problem interelite interactions and intergroup balance of power, it still neglected the problem of in-group interactions and distribution of power. In a two-level negotiation game, the role of leaders is twofold. On the one hand, they must deal with leaders of other groups in intergroup relations. On the other hand, they should reflect on the situation in domestic politics and control local constituencies and value their interests and preferences. Both intra- and intergroup interactions can pose challenges for security and peace. According to (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 8). Situations of emerging anarchy and violence arise out of the strategic interactions between and within groups. Between groups, three different strategic dilemmas can cause violence to erupt: information failures, problems of credible commitment and incentives to use force preemptively (also known as the security dilemma). These dilemmas are fundamental causes of ethnic conflict.

Within-group strategic interactions include political and ethnic entrepreneurs' attempts to outbid moderate politicians, "thereby mobilizing members, polarizing society, and magnifying the intergroup dilemmas. 'Nonrational' factors such as emotions, historical memories, and myths can exacerbate the violent implications of these in-group interactions (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 8).

The logic of two-level games provides many parallels with international relations. One is the critical role of state leaders in connecting interstate and domestic policy preferences. Constraints on presidents from

shifting domestic forces changes leaders' behavior during negotiations (Kaplan 1998, 252). In his contribution to the issues of double-edged diplomacy in IR, Moravcsik asks the following questions, slightly paraphrased here:

> Under what conditions can leaders act independently of constituent pressures? How can leaders employ issue linkage and side-payments to alter domestic constraints? How do interest group configurations, representative institutions, and levels of uncertainty affect the strategies of leaders? (Moravcsik 1993, 24).

These questions reformulated can be applied also to the domain of ethnic politics and regime transitional politics. I will discuss and attempt to provide answers for these questions in the next sections. Two level negotiations lead discussion toward the questions of intra- and intergroup balance of power, which I discuss in the next section. The role of leaders will also be discussed below in the section on in-group policing.

## Balance of power

The balance of power is one of crucial conditions for pact-making. The distribution of power between competing forces directly affects the probability of pact occurrence and durability of pact. Studies on political settlements in democratic transitions emphasize one particular condition that is conducive for pact making – an equal balance of power between competing groups. As O'Donnell and Schmitter conclude, that equal distribution of power allows confronting elites to negotiate a pact:

> The general scenario for negotiating a pact is fairly clear: it is a situation in which conflicting or competing groups are interdependent, in that they can neither do without each other nor unilaterally impose their preferred solution on each other if they are to satisfy their respective divergent interests" (G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 38).

The intergroup balance of power clearly plays important role in setting peaceful agreements between competing forces. Equal distribution of power is conducive for pact-making, however, there are also other factors that should be considered. First, while the literature on ethnic pacts pays much attention to the intergroup balance of power, it insufficiently discusses the intragroup distribution of power and the dynamics of intragroup discussions and struggles between moderates and radicals. Second, while scholars analyze distributions of power between ethnic groups at national level, they tend to neglect power balances at local levels. The balances of power can be different and they can interplay at two levels. Third, power shifts occur both between and within groups. Scholars of ethnic conflicts tend to focus on

intergroup power shifts but not on intragroup power dynamics. Dynamics of power shifts and the linkage between intra and intergroup distribution of power make it difficult calculate distribution of power under uncertainty and fear, especially during fast changing situations, ongoing violence, and existence of many exogenous and contingent factors.

According to the 'Tentative Conclusions' by O'Donnell and Schmitter, the cause of pacts is uncertainty produced by the equal distribution of power between the regime and opposition. Distribution of power should be equal and uncertain: "Uncertainty enhances the probability of compromise, and relatively equal distributions of power create uncertainty" (McFaul 2002, 219). Stalemated pacts serve as causal force for driving democracy. Identified by McAdam et al (2001) as a 'radical flank effect', this mechanism marginalizes radicals and conservatives from intergroup negotiating process and allows moderates from both sides to negotiate a peaceful pact. Because neither side has capacity to impose its first-choice preferences, strategic interactions between competing forces become a causal variable for producing pacts (McFaul 2002, 219). However, the assumptions about the balance of power and pacts made by O'Donnell and Schmitter was challenged by scholars studying the post-communist transitions. McFaul (2002), for example, comes to the conclusion that an equal balance of power does not necessarily lead to democratic pacts. Stalemates can lead to violent conflicts.

Another factor not sufficiently discussed in the literature on democratic and transitional pacts is the distribution of power between radicals and moderates within one group, as this has an important role in explaining the success and failure of intercommunal pacts. There is linkage between intra- and inter-group strategic interactions and balances of power in ethnic politics which corresponds to international and domestic arenas in two-level game models (see Putnam 1988; Evans, Jacobson, and Putnam 1993). McFaul argues that successful peaceful transitions depend not only on the balance of power between the regime and opposition but also on the distribution of power within each group. He explains the difference (the absence of pacted transitions) in the mode of transitions in Eastern Europe from those in Latin America and southern Europe by variation in in-group distributions of power. In eastern Europe, successful transitions were produced by asymmetric inter-group distributions of power. If there are no moderates in either side, then pacts do not work. Similarly, if radicals dominate one of the sides then pacts are practically impossible to negotiate. In McFaul's model of democratic transitions, in-group mobilization and cooperation in society and mass-level ideological commitments play more important role than inter-elite negotiations (McFaul 2002, 222).

The central message of Huntington's study on the 'third wave' of democratization claims that democratization in authoritarian states is enhanced by pacted transitions which are, in turn, highly contingent on intergroup and within-group balance of power. In his analysis of 35 democratic transitions that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, Huntington concludes that distributions of power between various political groups were crucial in conditioning the success and type of transition: "The relative power of the groups shaped the nature of the democratization process. If standpatters [conservatives] dominated the government and extremists the opposition, democratization was impossible" (Huntington 1993, 123). Therefore, the success and failure of transitions depend both on relative balance of power between the incumbents and the opposition and within these groups. In other words, the outcome of pacted transition is determined in the three sets of strategic interactions: 1) between the government and opposition (intergroup); 2) between reformers and conservatives (soft-liners and hard-liners) in the government, and; 3) between moderates and radicals in the opposition (Huntington 1993, 123–24). These interactions were important for determining the overall outcome – the type of regime change and transition, which was contingent on the combination of distributions of power in each set of interactions. For example, in government-led pacted transitions "the interaction between reformers and standpatters within the governing coalition was of central importance; and the transformation [pacted transition] only occurred if reformers were stronger than standpatters, if the government was stronger than the opposition, and if the moderates were stronger than the extremists" (Huntington 1993, 124).

So, why is in-group balance of power important? There is one fundamental difference in the way radicals and moderates deal with uncertainty. Radicals want to reduce uncertainty by preemptive attacks and repressions while moderates do it by reassuring the other side in peaceful intentions and re-building trust. What accounts for the breakdown of pacts and self-policing when these have been already negotiated between contending forces? Or what factors can explain the instances when some successful pacts occur after initial outbreaks of violence? The micro-scale evidence from Osh suggests that shifts in power between moderate and radical factions within local ethnic communities can explain sudden breakdown of self-policing and intercommunal pacts.

*Power Asymmetry*

In general, scholars agree that equal distribution of power is conducive for pact-making. When the intergroup balance of power is asymmetrical, then pact-making is more difficult but still possible.

However, asymmetry in power may change conditions for pact-making. There are different views on how asymmetrical distribution of power affect the probability of pact occurrence, its stability, and under what conditions sides agree to enter a pact. The main dilemma is the problem of credible commitment that inhibits pacts (Fearon 1998; Hartzell and Rothchild 1997). In asymmetrical relations, larger and more powerful groups have more capacity to impose the terms of contract/pacts. However, it is the minority that in the end determines the vitality of pacts because they are fearful of future exploitation: "for the less powerful group to agree voluntarily to enter into and abide by the contract, its interests must also be addressed, including its concern that the more powerful group will try to exploit it and alter the terms of the contract at some future date" (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 14).

What, then, induces weak parties to enter into a pact? One factor is rising costs of the conflict. Weaker group is reluctant to negotiate a pact because it expects the stronger group's defection from the pact, nevertheless, it enters pact because "[f]or those cases of prolonged intra- state conflict that have not produced a military victor, elites are most likely to negotiate pacts when the balance of bargaining power is asymmetrical" (Hartzell and Rothchild 1997, 153). Fearon and Laitin instead claim that the weaker side is more interested in negotiating a pact. Larger groups may coax cooperation from small groups through the threat of spiral punishment. Since the cost of conflict is higher for a smaller group, the latter "will be more likely to evolve in-group policing strategies to try to avoid the costs of group punishment, while the threat of indiscriminate punishments will be more typical of how large groups give members of small groups an incentive to cooperate" (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 726). So, for Fearon and Laitin, minorities have less power to determine conditions of the pact and must be more careful in self-policing. However, most accounts, including Fearon and Laitin's, agree on the point that asymmetry in power makes pacts less stable because of the stronger side's incentives to defect.

Asymmetric bargaining power sets different preferences and interests for each group. In identity-based conflicts, for weaker groups, the key (short-term) interest is physical security and survival (Hartzell and Rothchild 1997, 152; Brass 2003; Wilkinson 2006) while the stronger group's preferences may vary from demands for politico-economic concessions to total exploitation and suppression of the weaker group.

*Intragroup power balance*

In his micro-comparative study of the Rwandan genocide, Straus explains the district-level variation in violence by specific configurations of power in each district. The balance of power between moderates and radicals and power shifts determined violent outcomes and timing of violence across Rwandan districts and "the violence spread as a cascade of tipping points, and each tipping point was the outcome of local, intra-ethnic contests for dominance" (Straus 2006, 92–93). Hutu hardliners took power both at national and local levels making violence easily spread across space, however, in those districts where moderates resisted longer the onset of genocidal violence was delayed until the moment when moderates were physically eliminated or forcibly coopted by radicals coming from outside. As Straus puts it, "intra-Hutu struggles for power were a central dynamic as a precursor to the violence against Tutsis" (Straus 2008, 317).

One reason why competing forces often have problems in evaluation of power distribution is uncertain balance. Transitions produce changes in antecedent conditions and uncertainty regarding current circumstances and future prospects and opportunities. According to Luong, under such circumstances, "assessments of relative power are particularly vulnerable to uncertainty because even the slightest possible change in the status quo threatens not only to disrupt a country's internal balance of power but also to call into question the very indicators on which balance is based. Moreover, as the transition continues to unfold it is not clear how these changes will affect power asymmetries" (Jones Luong 2002, 27). Power shifts under uncertainty trigger a threat for elites and ethnic groups exactly because of the problems of evaluation of relative strength, the degree of vulnerability and prediction of direction of power shifts.

*Shifts in power*

According to scholars of ethnic conflict, especially those who work from IR perspectives shifts in power balance cause ethnic violence. This happens because power shifts create problem of credible commitment. As Fearon argues, "Problems of credible commitment arise whenever the balance of ethnic

power shifts (Fearon 1998). Still Fearon refers to gradual or long-term shifts but shifts can also occur in the very short-run, as the evidence from this study shows. Such rapid shifts occur especially during more transient types of ethnic conflict, such as ethnic riots. This distinguishes flash and short-term deadly ethnic riots from protracted civil wars. If shifts in the long-term conflicts are normally conditioned by changes in economic and political power, technological advancements, and demographic changes over time, sudden and short-term shifts can be triggered by rumors (Bhavnani, Findley, and Kuklinski 2009); changes in electoral rules or constitutional legislation (Walter 1999); an influx of refugees or migrants (Fearon and Laitin 2011; Walter 1999; Wilkinson 2006); and; demonstration effects (Beissinger 2002). Victories of one side in some areas may produce demonstrational effect for actors in other places (Beissinger 2002, 2007; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). On the other hand, killings may produce contrary effect: emotions and desire for revenge.

The dynamics of power shifts matter for explaining violence as rapid shifts during ongoing violence increase the sense of uncertainty and confusion and make it difficult for competing sides to do well-calibrated calculations about the distribution of power. Under such conditions, parties are willing to secure short-term security pacts due to perceptions of rising costs of conflict or to strike first, if they perceive that their power will diminish in the future. Moreover, the interplay between general and local-level distribution of power is important. Particularly, dynamics of violence at macro-scale may affect power dynamics at micro-scale in particular locations.

However, as this study shows, intra-communal balance and power shifts are equally important for the type of response to uncertainty that groups choose. Focusing analysis only on either intergroup or in-group dynamics cannot explain groups' response strategy. Both inter-group and in-group power shifts affect the type of groups' responses to uncertainty. The two are interconnected. If intra-group struggle between moderates and radicals determines the willingness of the group to negotiate, intergroup shifts trigger the problem of credible commitment.

Intragroup power shifts can also occur as a result of intergroup dynamics of violence: 1) intergroup power shifts at the macro-level may produce similar shifts within ethnic communities in localities; 2) spillover effects and diffusion of intercommunal violence in particular locations change the balance of power in the neighboring areas. Examples of in-group power shifts in particular locations produced by both scenarios can be found in few works on ethnic conflicts (Christia 2012; Straus 2006, 2008; Caspersen 2008) and will be discussed in the next chapters based on the evidence from the ethnic riots in southern Kyrgyzstan. One example comes from the analysis of the Rwandan genocide. Straus (Straus 2006, 2008) shows that the

dynamics of civil war between Hutus and Tutsis at national and trans-border scales produced power shifts between radicals and moderates within Hutu communities in the districts and communes at local level. In the second scenario, the balance of power changes because of local dynamics of violence. Spillover effects and diffusion of intercommunal violence come from the neighboring areas in the form of thugs, aggressive crowds, armed groups, and vengeful refugees (Lake and Rothchild 1996). As these groups are outsiders to the local population, their arrival induces both intergroup and in-group power shifts.

*Outsiders*

Outsiders is an important factor that can change both, geographically local intergroup and intra-group balances of power. One crucial element in pact-making identified by O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986, 41) is restriction of the participation of outsiders in decision-making as being outside forces, they cause shifts in balance of power at both levels. In Rwanda, as an example, the balance of power in many districts tipped towards radicals after the latter were aided by militant hardliners and soldiers coming from outside districts. In some localities with an initial anti-violence position, the balance shifted towards a pro-violence stance over time due to intervention of outside forces. At the onset of violence, the prime minister and other top hardliners encouraged attacks against Tutsis and thus helped to shift power to radicals in neutral and anti-violence districts. These power shifts often occurred due to involvement of outsiders such as "a military or militia incursion, an invasion from a neighboring commune, or direct pressure from prefectural or national authorities" (Straus 2008, 319). Thus, the factor of outside forces is important for both intergroup and in-group power shifts.

*Balance of power at macro- and micro-scales*

Another complicating factor for assessing a balance of power is its geographical dimension. Scholars of international relations distinguish between the local and the general balance of power when it comes to the geographical distribution of power. Power is not evenly scattered across space and a general balance of power should be differentiated from local balances of power that emerge in particular locations (Little 2007, 137). At the local level, balance of power can be different depending on some factors (environmental, contingent etc). What counts is not only general distribution of power but also geographically local distributions. The question is how the dynamics of violence at general and local scales

affect and change the balance of power and create incentives for some leaders to produce pacts. Therefore, micro-scale analysis brings new factors and variables into consideration.

In divided societies, the distribution of power between two identity groups can be different at the national level and in particular locations. Wilkinson, for example, discusses the problem of town-level balance of power between ethnic groups based on examination of some earlier works, and his own studies on ethnic riots. His observation of several works on the Hindu–Muslim conflict in India suggests that ethnic violence is likely to break out in towns where there is approximately an equal size of ethnic groups. This argument is based on the demographic balance–security dilemma hypothesis (Wilkinson 2006, 32–33).It is difficult to calculate intergroup balance of power at a disaggregated level. One reason is that there are difficulties in defining and measuring what exact categories should be included in the calculation of balance. Scholars indicate the size of population, territory, available resources, and structures/institutions of ethnic mobilization as an indicator of strength (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Duffy Toft 2002; Toft 2006; Hardin 1997; Walter 1999). However, because urban neighborhoods are not nation-states or well defined political entities or groups, it is not clear how we should measure the boundaries of the ethnic neighborhoods and clusters. One large ethnic cluster can contain several neighborhoods with decentralized and dispersed decision making centers which can have shared networks and one shared key interest – common security.

Yet, this does not necessarily imply that various neighborhood communities in this ethnic cluster respond to external threat in a highly-coordinated fashion. Here the spatial factor is important. Ethnic enclaves and the territories located closer to the frontline or violent zone and can be more concerned with their security than communities located in the center or hinterland zones. Varying degrees of uncertainty, vulnerability and perceptions of threat as well as potential costs in case of attacks make various neighborhoods' security assessments and response strategies accordingly divergent. Distinct security assessments of threat between residents living in the frontline and in the hinterland areas of the ethnic cluster lead to divergent response strategies deriving from diverse and sometimes contrasting motivating concerns and related costs of/for prospective actions. Depending on the situation and the degree of severity and nature of the threat, the residents of the frontline areas will either invest more in building cooperative relations with the out-group on the other side of the border or conversely, will be more willing to make preemptive attacks against their neighbors in order to reduce uncertainty.

Correspondingly, residents living in the hinterland areas will have less interest in negotiations with the borderline population of the out-group if the risk of them being involved in war or retaliation attacks is small. With small chances of being reached by retaliation attacks, the center fraction can actually even

promote preemptive attacks in the border areas. Same logic applies to some diaspora groups who tend to radically support guerilla war in their home country against competing identity group. For example, the Kurdish activists in Europe and western Turkey tend to support more radical actors in promoting armed struggle against Turkish authorities (O'Connor 2015). Kalyvas' (2006) model of territorial control applies the same logic in explaining varying intensity of violence used by combatants against civilians in the frontline and hinterland zones.

One major problem is that the balance of power is often uncertain and difficult to measure. Unlike situations of regime transitions and macro-scale ethnic conflicts, in the case of the June 2010 riots in Osh, it is difficult to calculate the local balance of power between neighborhoods because the relations between two neighborhoods cannot be isolated from exogenous factors – namely, the violent dynamics unfolding in the scale of the whole city. The developments in other parts of the city influenced perceptions of power distribution in localities. Rumors, sporadic police interventions, refugee flows, and the attacks of rioters coming from outside of the city altered the balance of power between ethnic neighborhoods. This corresponds to civil wars in the international arena when the domestic distribution of power depends on exogenous factors such as the international context and the position of the external powers. Equivalently, the local balance of power between two ethnic neighborhoods should take into account the developments and contextual factors on the town, regional, and national levels. Local balance of power depends on what is going on at the national and town levels.

The analysis of violence in southern Kyrgyzstan suggests that factors affecting micro-scale balance of power are both structural and contingent: 1) structural and spatial factors such as the size of local neighborhood and its socio-economic characteristics and ethno-demographic composition; the built environment; and the location of a neighborhood (hinterland or enclave); 2) Contingent factors such as external factors; the dynamics of riots; and contingent events including rumors, intervention by outsiders, and resonant events alter the intergroup balance of power.

## The linkage between a non-aggression pact and self-policing

*In-group policing and nonaggression pacts*

In this research, I apply Fearon and Laitin's theoretical model of interethnic cooperation to the case of the ethnic violence in June 2010 to explain why some towns and urban neighborhoods in southern Kyrgyzstan remained peaceful while others suffered horrible violence. One of the central puzzles addressed by Fearon and Laitin in their model on interethnic cooperation is the following: "Why in some cases do interethnic relations often remain cooperative for a long time yet periodically break down in the form of spiraling violence, while in other cases peace is quickly restored after violence breaks out? (1996, 730). In accord with Fearon and Laitin, I argue that utility of communal policing norms in some neighborhoods helped local leaders and mediators to prevent violence at local level.

*Fearon and Laitin's model of interethnic cooperation*

Fearon and Laitin elaborated a theoretical model of ethnic violence and peace based on social norms of interethnic cooperation at local level. According to this model, in ethnically-polarized societies tense and hostile relations between ethnic communities are mitigated by social norms which help to contain violence. A weak state provides space for local and informal institutional mechanisms such as social norms for resolving problems of opportunism among individuals from polar ethnic communities. The model offers two institutional approaches or equilibria which generally solve the problem of opportunism in intercommunal communications. Although both institutional arrangements rely on similar type of expectations of interethnic cooperation, "the content of these expectations differs markedly, however" (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 730).

The first equilibrium – which Fearon and Laitin name a "*spiral regime*" – assumes that "each group may hold all members of the other group liable for the actions of its individual members" (1996, 719). This suggests that the members of ethnic group A punish indiscriminately all members of group B for the antisocial behavior of culprit B. In response, group B, following same logic of revenge, indiscriminately retaliates against the members of group A. The model defines this as a spiral regime, "in which individual defections trigger an escalation and complete breakdown of intergroup relations – noncooperation spreads immediately to all interactions between members of the group" (1996, 719).

The second equilibrium, or "*in-group policing regime"*, assumes that "the members of one group may simply ignore violations of trust by members of the other group, relying instead on the other group to identify and sanction the appropriate individual" (1996, 719). Under an in-group policing regime, individual opportunism does not cause the total collapse of interethnic cooperation. Instead, the members of ethnic group A ignore transgressions made by individual members of B; a culprit B is identified and punished by his own community. Despite some noise, the cooperation between two communities continues. In short, both institutional arrangements are indistinguishable in peaceful times as they sustain cooperation when on the equilibrium paths. However, when cooperation breaks down the two have different consequences. A spiral regime can lead to long-term feuding or intense retaliatory violence while in-group policing path is likely to restore cooperative relations.

An intergroup non-aggression pact is at the core of the intra-group policing cooperation model:

> "Under the in-group policing regime, the two groups in effect make a deal that benefits both sides. By adopting a policy of 'you identify and punish your miscreants and we will do the same,' they take advantage of the fact that each group has better information about the behavior of its own members than about the other group and so can target individuals rather than whole groups (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 722).

Fearon and Laitin's model applies to the situations when interethnic interactions are not too frequent. Therefore, the model satisfactorily explains interactions between segregated ethnic communities (with low-level of interethnic social capital/civic engagement). According to the model, "Just as in the spiral equilibrium, however, maintaining intraethnic cooperation under in-group policing requires that interethnic interactions not be too frequent" (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 723). In-group policing assumes two-level interactions when individuals have same incentives not to defect in both intra- and intercommunal interactions. The main argument is that "cooperation within the group has been linked to cooperation with out-group members. It does not matter whether one rarely interacts with members of the other group, since defecting in an out-group pairing will lead to sanctioning by in-group members with whom one interacts more frequently" (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 723).

Outsiders are tempted to behave opportunistically as they have a small chance to be identified and punished in future retaliation attacks by the out-group. In-group sanctions for opportunistic behavior are also not likely because since the opportunists are outsiders to local community sanctions against them can be too costly. Outsiders are not embedded in local social relations and sanctions imposed by local leaders on their immediate constituencies have few implications for them.

*Social norms*

Clearly, Fearon and Laitin's model rests upon an explanatory logic of social norms. The two types of equilibrium regimes are based on social norms which can be classified under general categories of retribution, reputation, reciprocity, and trust, but each is based on two distinct social norms. While the spiral regime rests on the norm of retribution, in-group policing depends on the norms of reciprocity, reputation, trust and so on. Both approaches employ norms of cooperation. The terms for social norms which I used here are rather general and relative, especially regarding norms related to in-group policing.

One should know the meaning of social norms to comprehend the logic of this theoretical model. (It is also important to see when and how mechanisms of social norms are enabled in this cooperative model work). Elster defines a norm as "propensity to feel shame and to anticipate sanctions by others at the thought of behaving in a certain, forbidden way" (1989, 105). Social norms must be distinguished from moral, legal, and private norms and also from conventions, habits, traditions, and cognitive phenomena (Elster 1989). Elster sets two necessary conditions for norms to be social; one is that the norms must be shared with other people and the other is that the norms must be partly supported by positive and negative sanctions. Precisely because social norms are sustained by sanctions, people have rational motives to comply with the former.

In similar terms, Bicchieri refers to social norms as informal, "as opposed to formal, codified norms such as legal rules" (2006, 8). Social norms exist if there is sufficient number of people following them. Social norms "need not be universally conditionally preferred or even universally known about in order to exist (2006, 23). A social norm can be strongly complied within one society whereas not be followed in another. What makes social norms sustainable is the compliance with these norms. People comply with norms due to 1) expectation of negative sanctions (out of fear); 2) "desire to please others" that is expectation of positive sanctions, and; 3) perceptions of norms as reasonable (2006, 23).

The norm of revenge which is essential for the spiral regime is founded on the notion of deterrence. The fear of the blood revenge discourages potential violators from doing bad things and, therefore, prompts deterrence of violence between ethnic communities. Having analyzed some ethnographic studies on norms of vengeance, Elster suggests that " revenge has an underlying rationality: swift retaliation serves as deterrence in the long run" (1989, 136). However, he warns that cooperation based on deterrence

might be fragile. The breakdown of cooperation may generate a huge spiral of violence. In many cases, like in Yanomano society to which Elster refers in his analysis, revenge is initiated over sexual violence and cheating, however, "many sexual affronts are directed towards those who have shown themselves to be cowardly in retaliation. The system may create as much sexual aggression as it prevents. Moreover, the extraordinarily high rate of death by violence (30% of the deaths among adult males) suggests that the deterrence is not effective" (1989, 136).

The above example also suggests that those groups (or individuals) that fail to retaliate against an offender risk to receive more aggression from outside groups in future interactions. A norm becomes a convention when the norm emerges as an implicit single choice of equilibrium in a coordination problem (Mackie 1996, 1007). The norm remains persistent if a critical number of people follow it. Strong and widespread compliance reinforces social norms. It makes the resistance to the norms costly even if they are viewed harmful by many individuals. First risers against the norms are likely to be fiercely sanctioned. Some norms managed to survive through centuries despite being condemned by their followers. For example, genital mutilation of girls and women in northern Africa persists till nowadays because this practice became conventional social norm among some African societies. Despite the norm being viewed by many mothers painful and dangerous to the health of their daughters, still they do not deviate from the norm. Unmutilated girls have no prospects for marriage. Conventional norm makes males to reject such women (see Mackie 1996).

Conventional social norms as revenge and as genital mutilation become a trap for all involved parties. This can explain why the norm of revenge under the spiral regime can lead to devastating results. Less is known about when in-group policing originates and how it works. Fearon and Laitin concede that the theoretical model does not specify under which conditions in-group policing is likely to emerge (the social and political consequences of in-group policing are also not considered). One hint has already been given by Fearon and Laitin: "our extension of the model in the case of uneven group size suggests that smaller groups are more likely to develop and more carefully monitor in-group policing schemes" (1996, 731). Here, I will try to specify some conditions favorable for effective in-group policing based on the example of ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. I will pay special attention to the activities of mediators during the ethnic riots. In my view, the success of mediators to much extent depends on the effectiveness of in-group policing. I will provide some empirical examples from the city of Osh which show that mediators were successful in reestablishing peaceful relations only between local communities with favorable conditions for in-group policing.

As in case with the spiral regime, in-group policing also rests on the strength of social norms including norms of reputation and reciprocity. In-group policing implies strong ties within local community which is usually ethnically homogenous. As Fearon and Laitin's model specifies, leaders and community should be able to sanction violators for anti-social behavior. Anti-social behavior here implies that people should not behave against social norms established in the community. Another condition is that negative sanctions should not be costly for those who impose them on violators as compliance with norms is essential for in-group policing to be effective.

*In-group policing, credible commitment, and intergroup pacts*

Effective in-group policing has dual importance. First, it keeps political or ethnic groups under control of their leaders and second, it demonstrates credible commitment to the terms of agreement.

Commitment problem is one of the most serious problems in the process of peace negotiations cited by the scholars of civil wars (Fearon 1998; Walter 1999, 2009; Lake and Rothchild 1998a). Bargaining problems which include the problem of credible commitments along with information problems, uncertainty, and indivisibility of stakes are key factors that prevent combatants to reach a negotiated settlement (Walter 2009). Reaching pacted agreements is difficult where competing parties have difficulties to demonstrate credible commitments. These are usually countries with weak political institutions, deep cleavages, and fast changing demographics (Walter 2009, 258). These characteristics also have strong implications for understanding micro-scale violence in southern Kyrgyzstan (i.e. at the local level). Leaders in ethnically segregated neighborhoods with weak local social institutions and fast changing demographic composition (high residential mobility) had major difficulties in conducting self-policing and therefore to provide credible commitments to hold terms of pacted agreements.

The problem of credible commitment arises from power shifts (Fearon 1998) and uncertainty over intentions of others aggravated by a lack of trust resulting from the breakdown of institutions that induce interethnic trust and cooperation (Weingast 1998). Changes in the balance of power and "[u]ncertainty over the intentions of others … can undermine ethnic contracts, create problems of credible commitment, and provoke intergroup conflict" (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 16). Moreover, according to Fearon (1998), conflict emerges from lack of credible commitment and large difference in policy preferences between groups and perceived low cost of fighting. The declining side prefers to fight sooner than to face exploitation later. As Lake and Rothchild summarize: "A focus on the ethnic balance of power

demonstrates that even when fully rational and informed, groups may nonetheless decide it is better to fight now than risk exploitation later" (1998a, 15).

Thus, power shifts are an important factor that may trigger problem of credible commitment yet as I already suggest in the previous sections, power shifts can also help to achieve peace or convince reluctant and radical forces to negotiate and to moderate their demands. This research demonstrates that the stronger side or radical fraction within the stronger side concedes its radical demands under a changing balance of power, if the recent power shift does not favor them. The events in southern Kyrgyzstan highlight the importance of rumors and expectations of intervention of third parties contribute to the perception of changing balance. This also helps to understand the role of contingent events and their effect on de-escalation and the change of the perceptions.

Fearon argues that the onset of most conflicts in the 1990s in the post-communist countries were triggered by a mechanism of credible commitment. The mechanism arises from the absence of third party guarantor provided by the collapse of the central state in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia that cannot anymore guarantee agreements between ethnic groups, while the ethnic majority cannot credibly commit itself to provide security for ethnic minorities (Fearon 1998, 108). In the anticipation that leaders of majority will not restrain themselves from exploitation of minority group, the latter may prefer to fight now to secede from a weak state (Fearon 1998, 109). Even if there are other factors triggering ethnic conflict, the problem of credible commitment interacts with those factors. Fearon specifies several conditions that produce or do not produce ethnic violence. These conditions may explain why conflict occurs in one place rather than other. This mechanism has implications for how conflict spreads across borders.

On the other hand, Weingast (1998) and de Figueiredo and Weingast (1999) show that "uncertainty by one group over the nature and intentions of another can also generate problems of credible commitment that are independent of changes in the ethnic balance of power"(Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 15). Not the actual change in the balance but uncertainty and beliefs play a role in the decisions. To prevent ethnic violence, states need to create institutions and veto mechanisms that will induce mutual toleration, trust, and cooperation between competing groups. A crucial task of the state is to create institutions that self-enforce toleration and build trust and thus make groups credibly commit to peace and cooperation. Trust "greatly reduce[s] the chances of explosive violence due to fears of victimhood" and "[i]n the absence of commitment, the relevant choice for a potential victim is not between cooperation and aggression but between aggression and victimhood" (Weingast 1998, 165; see also Horowitz 1985).

Hence, both Fearon and Weingast show the perils and the vulnerability of pacts and highlight the importance of credible commitments for ethnic peace. These two models – balance of political power (Fearon 1998) and trust (Weingast 1998; de Figueiredo and Weingast 1999) – show that changes in both can create problems in credible commitment and undermine pacts.

Some types of political settlements such as power-sharing agreements provide formal institutional mechanisms for conflict resolution. However, during the 2010 riots in southern Kyrgyzstan, such mechanisms were not available to the local-level ethnic community leaders. In the absence of such mechanisms, what other mechanisms did community leaders use to demonstrate their credible commitments to inter-neighborhood pacts? In localities, community leaders relied on their authority to police their communities and hold back them from participating in riots and violence. Furthermore, in-group policing became a mechanism signaling to the ethnic communities about the level of commitment to peace. Effective in-group policing revealed credible commitment.

The transitional and democratization literatures usually consider pacted negotiations in the framework of formal institutions and distribution of power and resources related to these institutions (Jones Luong 2002). In formal political and electoral arenas, the interests of competing forces are to some extent guaranteed and protected by formal institutions. This especially concerns negotiations between competing political forces and identity groups. The division between incumbent and opposition sometimes coincides with regional and ethnic divisions existing in one polity. However, as this study shows, when it concerns micro-scale conflicts between small groups such as ethnic communities at town- or neighborhood-level, institutional distribution of power is not an option of bargaining simply because these groups are too small to influence changes in national-level institutions. Under circumstances of intense ongoing violence, these small groups' main interest is physical safety which can be negotiated through the use of informal mechanisms. This involves different types of commitments. In the context of violence at town- and neighborhood-level ethnic communities (and in the absence of central state and external guarantors) negotiations (non-aggression pacts) must be backed by credible commitments. In such circumstances, when institutional and state guarantees are absent, in-group policing becomes the main mechanism that signals about credible commitments.

*In-group policing*

Policing is a topic that usually belongs to the studies on political and social order. The focus of the public and social order is on police–community relations, policing of protest and demonstrations, and riot and crowd control. The research on public disorder concentrates on antecedent conditions, predisposing factors, and trigger events (Waddington 1989, 12). The response by police to trigger events have great implications for whether violence escalates or de-escalates. The outcome is to great extent is determined in intergroup interactions between police and protesters.

Although the research on policing protests and public disorders focuses mainly on dynamic interactions between police and protesters including police strategies of policing protest and riot control and crowds' responses to police strategies, yet it has many parallels with in-group policing in ethnic politics. Both literatures make similar theoretical assumptions on: 1) pacts or negotiations between police and protest organizers and between ethnic leaders; 2) sanctions against violations and anti-social behavior, and; 3) control of rumors as key elements of policing strategies to keep public order. Mediation plays an important role in intergroup dynamics. If we agree that the police and protesters are two distinct groups, then the relations between these two groups can be considered as intergroup interactions. This gives us a ground to build some parallels and make comparisons with in-group policing and inter-communal pacts in intergroup conflicts.

The literature on protest policing is large. One element of policing strategy is negotiations between the police and protesters. Pacts as a specific strategy have largely been ignored in the literature on protest policing. Despite a pacted agreement is often a common component in modern protest policing, the linkage between pacts and protest policing has been relatively understudied (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 117). This gap has been partially addressed by several works on protest policing styles and riot-control measures (della Porta and Reiter 1998; della Porta, Peterson, and Reiter 2006; Waddington 1989, 2007).

Waddington et al's analysis of the various instances of disorder uses examples from three different types of protest: demonstrations, industrial conflicts (pickets), and riots. The authors identify several variables affecting public disorder that come from structural, political, cultural, contextual, situational, and interactional levels of analysis (1989, see also 2007). Among those variables, some have high relevance

for the analysis of in-group policing and ethnic riots in Kyrgyzstan. In practically all forms of protest rumors, presence of outsiders, pacts/negotiations between police and protest organizers, history of police-community relations, police-protesters dynamics of their interactions, police and picket composition, protest organizers' attitude to violence, and presence of norms of behavior affected variation in violence at different protest sites (Waddington 1989, 106–7, 148–49). Another important factor underlined by Waddington et al is the important role of ethnic-minority community leaders, acting as mediators in negotiating pacts: "The rather different outcomes to the negotiation process should not disguise the similarity in the mediating role performed by community leaders"(Waddington 1989, 141).

Further, Waddington et al emphasize the role of outsiders among the key characteristics that affect disorder in communities (Waddington 1989, 148–49). Not only outsiders among protesters but also outsiders among police forces matter for occurrence of disorder. In many cases, disorder resulted from the actions of the police who were deployed to the protest sites from outside areas. Several protests in the UK escalated into violent riots due to the lack of community commitment from external police contingents sent as reinforcements to local police. They implemented unjustifiably harsh attitudes towards protesters: "The involvement of outside forces, lacking any commitment to long-term community relations, would help to explain allegations of indiscriminate arrests and the excessive use of force" (Waddington 1989, 137).

Comparing strikes at two sites – Hadfields and Orgreave – Waddington et al explain different outcomes at these two locations, among other factors, by the composition of police and negotiations with protesters. At Hadfields, the police used local forces "with outside officers kept in reserve. It was essentially a local operation with an integrated chain of command maintaining a conciliatory tone" (Waddington 1989, 97). At Orgreave, it was different with proactive and uncontrolled protest policing implemented by an external police force. Concerning pacts, at Hadfields police and picket organizers had negotiated (fraternization) in advance about the rules and policing of the picket. At Orgreave they had not. Therefore, on each of the four indicators "the political context, police organization, the attitudes of the pickets, and the dynamics of police–picket interaction – Hadfields was conducive to order while Orgreave was not"(Waddington 1989, 99).

What della Porta and Reiter call 'cooperation model of policing' (della Porta and Reiter 1998; della Porta, Peterson, and Reiter 2006) envisages to a great extent negotiated agreements between police and protesters as well as self-policing by demonstrators. Negotiated pacts highly increase chances for non-violent outcomes in large-scale protest demonstrations even in an atmosphere of little trust between

police authorities and protest organizers and an alarmist campaign against protestors. Negotiation process often involve mediators and interlocutors who help to reduce mutual mistrust (della Porta and Reiter 2006).

Wahlstrom and Oskarsson (2006) provide insightful accounts for the importance of the linkage between intergroup negotiated agreements and intragroup monitoring for the protest policing. Drawing on Ostrom's (1990) analytical criteria for the solution of social dilemmas, they distinguish three key preconditions for pacted negotiations between the police and leaders of protesters that help to sustain public order during mass protests. For making pacts effective, the negotiating sides need: 1) an agreed set of rules accepted by all involved parties (ability to supply new institutions); 2) the credible commitment of each party to the negotiated set of rules that form part of the pacted agreement, and; 3) monitoring or the ability to conduct in-group control and to sanction violators of the agreement (Ostrom 1990, 42–45; Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 117–18). If the first precondition refers to the terms of negotiated agreement,

> [t]he notion of 'credible commitment' of the negotiating parties can be interpreted as the level of trust … based on experiences from past interactions, [and it] will strongly influence all stages of negotiation, but especially the parties' willingness to enter negotiations" (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 119).

The third precondition –monitoring – apparently corresponds to the concept of 'in-group policing'. As Ostrom and Wahlstrom and Oskarsson argue, these three preconditions are highly interrelated as the absence of one precondition deprives the validity of the other two preconditions, since without one precondition the other two cannot be realized. Without intragroup control and sanctions there is no credible commitment and without credible commitment there is no sense to enter negotiations (Ostrom 1990, 45; Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 119). Trust/credible commitment is important not only for entering negotiations but also for reaching pacted agreements (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 130), while effective in-group control and monitoring and sanctions against violators of an agreement signal about credible commitment.

In addition, there are some constraints that hinder initiation of pacts and undermine their efficiency. A comparative study of transnational protests in Copenhagen and Gothenburg conducted by Wahlstrom and Oskarsson identify two more factors constraining negotiation of pacts between police and protesters. One is asymmetric power relations between police and protesters with their respectively unequal legal powers and access to information that limit opportunities for successful pacted agreement (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 140). This factor closely relates to the problem of asymmetric distribution of power

that I discussed in the previous sections. One tool in the hand of protesters is sanctions by demonstrators for police not respecting the conditions of a pact. They may include media attention to the police's abuses, discrediting the police, and so on. Another limiting factor is the lack of authority of negotiators within each group. The decisions about agreement can be overridden by superior police officers, within the police hierarchical structure, or by marginal/peripheral groups (outsiders) within a protest network (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 140–41). In transnational protests, local activists have little power and authority over outsider groups coming from other countries. The lack of authority within each side creates suspicions between police and protesters as both sides know about this problem. This leads to mutual mistrust and the problem of credible commitment.

The last point highlights the importance of outsiders as a variable that can undermine intragroup policing activities, especially among protesters. Organizers of protest demonstrations self-police their members but they often cannot control demonstrators and events outside their organization (Wahlström and Oskarsson 2006, 131). The overall Wahlstrom and Oskarsson's argument is that pacts between police and protesters and in-group policing provide opportunities for de-escalation of violence. In Osh and Jalalabat, outsiders crucially influenced riot dynamics in those localities.

*O'Donnell's analysis of the transitional pacts in Latin America and their implications for ethnic politics*

Another good example of the importance of the linkage between pacts and self-policing comes from the literature on party politics and democratic transitions. Regime transitions in Latin America provide a good example that can illustrate the significance of in-group policing. The strong linkage between intergroup pacts and intragroup policing is evident in O'Donnell's (1986) analysis of transitional pacts in Latin America. He explains the infrequency of formal intergroup pacts in the Latin American transitions by the absence of requisite conditions for elite-negotiated agreements which is the lack of intragroup policing and weak socio-political control by the opposition party leaders over their constituencies.

Strong political networks and parties which can conduct effective self-policing and exert control over their political constituencies (and popular sector) are key to negotiating pacts in political transitions. The three factors – threat, legitimate actors, and balance of power– that I distinguished above as necessary for pact-making, can be complemented by one requisite condition/structural precondition– the level of civil society's development. O'Donnell (1986) explains the probability of the occurrence of formal and explicit pacts during regime transitions in Latin America by two conditions: 1) weakly organized and politically

inactive civil society, or 2) high social and political organization of the political representative party system/leadership. According to O'Donnell, "The first condition is conducive to narrow and exclusive elitist agreements, undisturbed by 'demagogic' eruptions. The second in principle allows more comprehensive compromises to be worked out and implemented by institutionalized actors"(G. A. O'Donnell 1986, 12). He further argues that if parties representing a socially and politically active popular sector are not able to control it, then it makes the implementation of elitist pacts difficult. This points at the importance of the nature of (inter-)connections between party leaders and a popular sector.

O'Donnell's assumptions about the linkage between pacts and party leadership's control over its political constituencies have direct theoretical implications for the importance of the linkage between intercommunal pacts and in-group policing in ethnic politics. This logic applies to interethnic pacts between neighborhood leaders (in southern Kyrgyzstan). These conditions in slightly modified form can explain the absence or presence of inter-communal pacts between some neighborhoods. First, weak, inactive, and unorganized civil society corresponding to the weak intercommunal (bridging) social and civic ties between two communities in the context of ethnic politics in southern Kyrgyzstan gives way to pacts between communal leaders. Second, strong intercommunal ties in a few mixed neighborhoods allow local residents to cooperate directly without negotiating pacts by community leaders.

The conditions from transitional politics discussed above have significant implications for understanding interethnic pact-making between communal and neighborhood leaders in southern Kyrgyzstan. They highlight social capital variable as crucial for conducting non-aggression pacts during the June 2010 ethnic violence. On the other hand, active interethnic civic engagement corresponds to the situation in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods, where pacts did not take place.

If O'Donnell highlights the significance of the level of civil society's development for the intergroup elite pacts and intragroup policing, in ethnically divided and residentially segregated societies it is the level of interethnic civic ties that plays important role (see Varshney 2002). As O'Donnell puts it:

> [T]he political and social presence (at various levels and modes of organization) of a quite active and organized popular sector, as well as of parties claiming to represent this sector (but often unable to control it), makes the realization of such pacts difficult (G. A. O'Donnell 1986, 12).

The implication is straightforward: those parties or leaders who speak on behalf of their constituencies but in reality are unable to control them cannot enforce the realization of pacts. Even if the leaders with limited authority can negotiate a pact they cannot guarantee its realization. This factor partly explains why some pacts fail.

**Table. 2.1.** Conditions linking in-group policing and pacts. Comparison of transitional pacts in Latin America and intercommunal pacts in southern Kyrgyzstan based on O'Donnell's (1986) assumptions

| **Conducive conditions for formal transitional pacts in Latin Americain the 1970–1980s** (G. A. O'Donnell 1986, 12–13)**.** | **Conducive conditions for intercommunal pacts in the towns of Southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010** |
|---|---|
| 1) Parties provide compliance of the popular sector with terms of a pact in exchange for the access to political positions and elections. | 1) Leaders provide compliance of community residents with the terms of a pact in exchange for communal security. |
| 2) The willingness to exert control over popular sector and ensure their compliance to an agreement derives from estimation of danger of authoritarian backlash. | 2) Leaders initiate pact-making out of fear of possible spiral escalation of violence and make an agreement to conduct intra-group policing in respective communities. **Note**: In-group policing equilibrium needs implicit or explicit informal pact/agreement. |
| 3) "Their ability to do so [to deliver compliance with a pact by conducting self-policing] depends on deep and multifold roots in their social bases, territorial as well as functional". | 3) To ensure compliance leaders should be deeply socially-embedded in and have "multifold roots in their social bases" in neighborhood-based constituencies. |
| 4) "This also requires a firm discipline in the decision – making patterns of the pacting parties". | 4) Commitment to a pact requires firm-discipline in decision-making patterns and sanctions: Leaders must be capable of punishing violators who do not comply with a pact. |
| 5) "populist or loosely organized … party is much less-likely to persuade its followers to comply with eventual pact". | 5) Leaders without real connections to local community (or weak social control) will likely have difficulty to control locals and persuade them to comply with a pact and to organize such pacts in general |
| 6) "As a consequence, both the leaders of those [populist and weakly organized] parties and then prospective counterparts in a pact tend to see formal and explicit agreements as too risky". | 6) If the leaders of one side sees that the other side does not have real power in a community or does not have ties with it then they will not trust the other side's compliance (credible commitment problem) to a pact or will not make pact at all. |
| 7) "A different possibility is that pacts may come after, rather than during, the transition. Once a political democracy has been installed, the perception of serious threats to the survival of the regime may provide a powerful motivation for party leaders and followers to reach such agreements, even if this does little to guarantee more than short-term compliance with the terms of the agreement". | 7) Perception of the future threats to the interethnic peace may explain the post-conflict pacts – peace declarations during dastorhon-feast meetings sponsored by local authorities. |

In-group policing is the necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the success of an intergroup agreement and political or social control of the constituency is key to the realization of in-group policing. In the context of ethnic politics, the first condition for realization of pacts is the presence of strong leaders able to control the constituency and the absence of outsiders who can challenge and hinder/break such pacts.

Second condition implies that there should be strong and organized activists and socially active local population with strong interethnic civic engagement that make grass-root based interethnic cooperation possible with or without involvement of local leaders. This was usually true in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat. In areas with weak social control, with many uncontrolled groups and weak leaders, pacts are difficult to negotiate and to implement and therefore they are deemed to failure.

O'Donnell's second condition is the following:

> The other condition conducive to pact-making during the transition seems to be the existence of a rather strong party system, and/ or the survival of strong partisan identities and organizational networks during the authoritarian "interlude." This must include a party or parties which effectively represent the popular sector and which can, as a result, exert significant control over this sector. In such conditions, pact-making remains an-elitist affair by its very nature, but, in contrast with the preceding scenario, agreements that include strong, popularly based political parties cannot fail to take into account some of the more actively voiced popular demands and, even more so, the need to obtain the acquiescence to the pact of the main organizations of the popular sector, especially unions (G. A. O'Donnell 1986, 12).

Therefore, the conducive conditions for pact-making are the existence of party or strong partisan identities with organizational networks representing the popular sector and able to exert control over it. The relations between party leaders and a popular sector in respect to intragroup policing in transitional politics correspond to the similar patterns in intra-communal relations in ethnic politics. Organizational networks are strong in Uzbek residential areas; mahallas or Kyrgyz individual unit house neighborhoods and their communal leaders are socially embedded in the local neighborhood constituency and exert strong social control over it. Traditional authority and strong connection with local population allows communal leaders in such neighborhoods to conduct effective in-group policing which in turn, increases chances for the occurrence of intercommunal pacts.

As stated earlier, there are many striking parallels between pacts in transitional politics in Latin America in the 1970s-and 1980s and intercommunal non-aggression pacts in southern Kyrgyzstan in 2010. The logic of relations between party leaders and their political constituencies remarkably resemble the ones between ethnic leaders and their respective ethnic constituencies. I distinguish six conducive factors for pact-making in O'Donnell's comparative analysis of the elitist transitional pacts in Latin America and southern Europe in the 1970s–1980s that have high relevance for the intercommunal pacts in Kyrgyzstan. The seventh condition relates to post-conflict declarative pacts. The requisite condition for pact-making is weak and inactive civil society.

The comparison of O'Donnell's (1986) analysis of the requisite conditions for the transitional pacts in Latin America with intercommunal pacts in southern Kyrgyzstan in table 2.1., parallels with and implications of the democratization and regime transition literature for ethnic conflict studies.

In parts IV and V, I will discuss how the above theoretical implications for intergroup pacts and in-group policing work on empirical ground in the context of ethnic politics.

# Chapter 3. Conflict statistics, research design, and case selection

## Research design

This is a comparative design research. I compare violent and non-violent locations at two levels: cross-town and cross-neighborhood. At town level I compare three largest towns in southern Kyrgyzstan: Osh the most violent case; Jalalabat, violent case; and Uzgen non-violent.[8] At neighborhood level, I compare violent and non-violent neighborhoods in Osh city across different dimensions in relation to ethnic violence: 1) the effect of spatial differentiation, the built environment, and spatial mobility of rioters, police, refugees, and residents; 2) the effect of self-policing and strength of informal authority in neighborhoods; and; 3) the effect of intercommunal pacts. I identified the above three dimensions based on observations during my ethnographic fieldwork.

The analysis in this research is based on around 100 semi-structured interviews mainly with community leaders, but also with police and military officers, journalists, human rights activists, and ordinary residents, and spatial observation data collected during nine months, in total, of my ethnographic fieldwork between 2010 and 2014. To reconstruct the conflict events and identify and describe spatial variations in violence, in addition to interviews, I used investigative reports produced by various governmental and international commissions and human rights organizations as well as media resources, census and geo-referenced data available in websites. In addition, I relied on many informal conversations with ordinary people. Spatial data include my observations of neighborhoods and their built environment, spatial structures and spatial differentiation, landscape, type and density of housing, identification of ethnically-segregated neighborhoods (in addition to census data and printed and online maps). To get familiarized with urban environment, I made repeated visits to almost all neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat city by walking in neighborhoods or passing through neighborhoods by car or on public transportation.

As mentioned, I use the number of deaths and property destruction as quantifiable indicators of ethnic violence. Their spatial distribution across towns, suburban areas, and neighborhoods is clearly indicated in the list of killed people produced by human rights organizations and satellite pictures and maps of

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[8] The selection of these cases is also justified in terms of temporal variation in violence. In 1990, Osh was low-violent, Jalalabat non-violent, and Uzgen the most violent

property destruction created by the UNOSAT/UNITAR research center. Additionally, I rely on incomplete lists of wounded people and information about instances of ethnic clashes found in investigative reports and interviews.

The design of my research project in many respects fits the recent trend of micro-comparative, single-country case study works on violence (Brass 2003; Auyero 2007; Christia 2012; Bunte and Vinson 2016; Straus 2008; Kalyvas 2006; Wilkinson 2006; Wood 2003). Single-country case study research is often criticized because the research findings cannot be generalized across countries (a problem of external validity). However, I agree with Kalyvas (2006) who justifies the advantages of single-country case studies. He argues that comparative analysis does not necessarily require comparisons between countries. According to him, micro-comparative research design has several advantages. By focusing on one region of one country, a researcher can collect detailed and contextualized ethnographic data. The narrow geographical focus allows for better empirical observations and a high level of control. Comparison of regions/towns within one country allows control of many factors/variables than would be the case when comparing regions of different countries. Such detailed study gives us more chances to uncover mechanisms and patterns of violence in each town and village (Kalyvas 2006, 247).

The research looks not only at instances of ethnic violence but also at instances of ethnic peace (nonviolence). As Varshney puts it, “until we study ethnic peace, we will not be able to have a good theory of ethnic conflict. Placing variance at the heart of new research is likely to provide by far the biggest advances in our understanding of ethnicity and ethnic conflict” (2002: 6). Therefore, I conducted my interviews and observations in ethnically mixed and segregated neighborhoods and villages with different outcomes in violence. In this research, I use different levels of aggregation. I study the problem at the level of towns, villages, and districts and neighborhoods within towns.

## Data collection

The main source of data collection is ethnographic fieldwork. My fieldwork consists of interviews, empirical observations, and analysis of investigative reports and official documents produced by international investigative missions, human rights organizations and governmental bodies. I explain below how the fieldwork research helped me to uncover causes and mechanisms of the spread of ethnic violence. It also helped me to generate new hypotheses and plausible explanations for my research. The main data sources during my fieldwork includes interviews with local elites/state officials, ordinary

people, community leaders, spatial observations. Academic literature on Kyrgyzstan and analytical reports produced by NGOs and international organizations complement my ethnographic research.

My main method of data collection is semi-structured interviews. I consider interviews as the main component of my ethnographic research[9]. Semi-structured interviews are especially useful for investigating short violent events that are weakly covered by mass media outlets. The main purpose of semi-structured interviews is to reconstruct events, mechanisms, and dynamics of violence during the ethnic conflict in 2010. Semi-structured interviews include key informant interviews, respondent interviews, and expert interviews (see Blee and Taylor 2002). There are some shortcomings related to this method. The main disadvantage of this method is that after violent events interview respondents tend to give unreliable information biased by rumors, political interests, ethnic affiliation, psychological shock and so on.

To address this challenge, I cross-checked and tried to corroborate the evidence by conducting interviews, empirical observations, and tracing events in reports produced by various investigative commissions and human rights organizations. By asking different people from both sides of the conflict about the same event I tried to verify the reliability of information given by informants during interviews. Additionally, I attempted to achieve higher level of reliability of information through repeated visits to the same respondent and to key informants. As suggested by Stefan Malthaner (in personal conversation) and Jones Luong (2002), to achieve better reliability results, it is advisable to interview the same person in different environmental settings. In this sense, interviewing the same person in both formal and informal environment allows us to check the consistency of information and strengthen the reliability of interview data given by a respondent. I followed this suggestion by conducting a second interview with some of my key respondents.

In my interview sampling, I used two approaches: the snowballing method and geographically/territorially-representative sampling. Snowballing is an effective way of finding contacts. The main advantage of snowballing was that I was introduced to respondents through trusted networks. In the initial stages, journalists, experts, human rights activists, and teachers were a good source for me for finding key informants. The disadvantage of this method is obvious: snowballing may involve contacts from the same network, location, social and professional group which makes the interview sample potentially non-representative of the broader population. However, for the study of a small town-district

[9] Some researchers treat interviews as complementary to participant observation – see Bray (2008)

or village, snowballing is not a problem because population in this type of location is small and my interviews targeted mainly local community leaders. They are well known among local population and interconnected in the same networks.

However, for the larger territorial units snowballing should be supplemented by additional sampling techniques. To eliminate the shortcomings of random selection of respondents, I tried to make contacts among groups which were underrepresented in snowballing sampling. To make my sample geographically representative, I used town-hall lists with neighborhood committee-leaders' names and contact information including a phone number. This practice proved to be a good strategy because heads of territorial districts and neighborhood committees, usually called *domkom* or *kvartkom*,[10] tend to be informal community leaders in their neighborhoods. While a head of territorial council/district is usually appointed by a local mayor, heads of neighborhood committees are usually informally elected by neighborhood residents during improvised meetings conducted in a district office or even in an open street. I interviewed local leaders in all twelve territorial councils (urban districts) in Osh city and in all four territorial councils in Jalalabat. In some territorial councils/districts in both cities, I interviewed leaders of different neighborhood committees within one district.

Additionally, in geographically sampling my respondents, I relied on the list of a network of local mediators affiliated with respective official project coordinated by the regional office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The project was created in 2011, after the ethnic violence, as a part of post-conflict reconstruction and conflict prevention activities, and it facilitates the work of mediators from local community leaders and brings them into one network. The network encompasses all *raions* (districts) in Jalalabat and Osh *oblasts* (provinces) which are primary sites of my fieldwork. In Uzgen, I relied both on snowballing and mediators' lists as in middle-range town this method brought me to many relevant actors. Overall in three towns, I conducted around 100 semi-structured interviews between 2010 and 2014 with approximately equal number of respondents from both sides of the conflict. This number includes only formal interviews excluding informal conversations. Formal interviews continued from 40 minutes to three hours with most of them lasting between one and two hours. All interviews were held in Kyrgyz, Uzbek, mixed Kyrgyz-Uzbek, and Russian languages. Before each interview, I followed a short formal procedure by introducing myself and the aims of my research and, with few exceptions, I promised not to

[10] *Domkom/kvartkom* is a position on volunteer basis because it is not paid. The amount of a symbolic honorarium a *domkom/kvartkom* receives is so small, so that it cannot be treated as public office salary. Even unemployed people would hardly bother to pursue this position as amount of work and activities is simply overwhelming. This ensures that only local neighborhood activists and informal leaders would pursue this position.

reveal their real names and identity. I asked my respondents to choose the language that they would prefer to speak. Each time I asked permission to use the digital recorder during interviews however, in many cases, to improve the reliability of respondents' answers, I deliberately did not use a recorder by writing notes instead.

Interviews in post-conflict settings is another important issue. The challenge is to get reliable information from respondents. Individuals are often reluctant to speak to researchers and provide honest answers for various reasons such as post-conflict traumas, fears of retaliation, unwillingness to reveal committed crimes and so on. Furthermore, my interviews were exacerbated by state repressions, mainly against Uzbek participants in violence. In addition, the reliability of information drawn from my interviews can be disputed by the fact that my ethnic background has affiliation with one of the conflicting sides. Being a Kyrgyz, I was easily recognized by my facial features and other ethnic characteristics.

As discussed above, I tried to minimize some potential drawbacks by using the snowballing techniques of sampling. This method was especially helpful for me in overcoming distrust with the Uzbek informants. I was introduced to new respondents through recommendations of their trusted persons and networks.

Two other factors helped me to establish more trustful relations with the Uzbek respondents. One was that I was originally from Bishkek (northern Kyrgyzstan) considered by local Uzbeks as more neutral and less nationalist in interethnic relations. Another was my affiliation with a European academic institution that gave me more credibility as a neutral person. Obviously, not all interviews went smoothly. Some respondents simply reproduced existing ethnic biases, popular myths, and template analyses of conspiratorial nature from the Russian TV channels and tabloids. Others did not want to fully share their experiences. Yet, in many interviews, I received invaluably informative and reliable accounts.

During first interviews, I quickly realized that straightforward questions related to the past conflict sometimes caused negative reaction and suspicions among some interviewees. They would then restrain themselves from giving me detailed accounts of the events and processes and details of their personal involvement in the events providing general and non-informative answers. I changed my strategy and presented my research to respondents in more general terms as a study on local communities and local (communal) self-governance. I instantly felt that the quality of the interviews improved after I changed my approach. During interviews, my respondents having discussed the issues of local self-governance and communal social organization would eventually turn to the issue of the June 2010 ethnic violence. This was the convenient moment for me to ask several important questions about local communities' reaction

to the ethnic violence and communal group behavior. Yet, to some local leaders – especially with those actively involved in the OSCE's "Yntymak Jarchylary" (literally 'Heralds of Peace') mediators' network activities or in other local peacebuilding and human rights initiatives – I could ask more straightforward questions. However, I tried to avoid pushing my respondents too far. For example, I never asked them if they were implicated in the violence. I would change the topic whenever I saw my respondents feeling uncomfortable with my questions.

In general, I did not have significant problems with getting access to Kyrgyz respondents. However, on few occasions they either refused or were suspicious of my research. In Uzgen, one Kyrgyz mediator designated me as an al-Qaeda member when he felt that I was interested in interethnic relations. He abruptly disrupted the interview by asking me about who was an al-Qaeda leader at that moment. Since bin Laden had already been dead, I did not know who was the next leader. He asked me, "Why don't you know? You must know because you work for the CIA". According to him, only the CIA was interested in studying interethnic relations and al-Qaeda was simply the CIA's project and its tool to instigate ethnic conflicts around the world. In Osh, another Kyrgyz leader refused to give me interview after I had introduced myself as a researcher from the European institution. He was a well-known former official. Together with his Uzbek counterparts, he established an interethnic team of mediators that tried to reconcile raging crowds amid ethnic violence in the streets. Many Western-based organizations and media outlets one-sidedly blamed aggression on the Kyrgyz side without going into accurate investigation of the conflict. This caused outrage among many Kyrgyz. Consequently, he did not trust westerners and did not want to play into hands of those who wanted to discredit Kyrgyz people. In my presence, he phoned to the Uzbek mediator – his long-standing colleague from the Soviet times – who recommended him (this Kyrgyz mediator) to me for the interview. He warned the Uzbek mediator to be wary of 'suspicious' researchers like me. After these failures, I became more cautious about how to introduce myself and my research to respondents. To my Uzbek respondents, I usually highlighted the European University Institute as my institutional affiliation and Bishkek as my regional origin. To the Kyrgyz respondents, I introduced myself as a researcher from Bishkek. This seemed to work in most cases besides few exceptions.

## Case selection: identification of irrelevant, negative, and positive cases

The case selection issue is one of the most debated topics in social science methodological literature. There are many hot debates about how researchers should proceed with case selection. This section does

not aim to provide detailed discussions on case selection approaches and methods. Rather, I will briefly outline some approaches which are relevant and have been useful for the research design of my dissertation.

Generally, case selection techniques in qualitative and quantitative studies are different. Recently some scholars offered some ways of combining the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative designs. King, Verba, and Keohane (1994) suggest researchers add as more cases to the sample as possible to approximate qualitative research design to the advantages of quantitative research models. Moreover, they recommend to select cases based on scores on independent variable. However, such "strategy tends to lead to a diminution of the core strengths of the SNA [small number analysis]. Increased degrees of freedom are provided by the LNA [large number analysis], and nested analysis should rely on the SNA component to provide more depth than breadth" (Lieberman 2005, 441).

However, an important question is "how to choose the cases for deeper investigation"? (Fearon and Laitin 2008, 758). Fearon and Laitin argue that many researchers select convenient cases which invariably prove their theoretical arguments. Therefore, the cases should be selected randomly. Random sampling will prevent 'cherry-picking' of cases that are convenient for researchers and at the same time should bring unexpected but interesting research results. Fearon and Laitin warn, however, that "[r]ather than choosing purely at random, it may be more efficient to stratify on particular variables" (2008, 765). For instance, it is advisable to stratify cases across geographical areas to evade overrepresentation of cases from one region while other regions are highly underrepresented. One more recommendation from Fearon and Laitin is that cases with different values on a particular variable of interest should be represented in a sample. On the contrary, Seawright and Gerring argue against random sampling. They maintain that although random sampling prevents selection bias, "randomized case selection procedures will often produce a sample that is substantially unrepresentative of the population" (Seawright and Gerring 2008, 295).

This research aims at most similar system design. I will compare several cases with similar socio-economic conditions and ethnic composition. Case selection involves two stages. First, I distinguish relevant cases from irrelevant ones. I also make a distinction between positive and negative cases. Second, I prepare the ground for constructing a sample which will comprise paired comparisons at different administrative-territorial level. Each paired comparison includes one violent and one peaceful case where they will be regarded respectively as positive and negative cases.

Mahoney and Goertz argues that "in the small-N research that interests us, the analyst seeks to explain the positive cases that possess the outcome of interest by contrasting them with negative cases that lack the outcome" and therefore "[t]o explain these kinds of outcomes, nearly all research designs require the examination of negative cases" (Mahoney and Goertz 2004, 654). As this research focuses on identification of patterns of variation in violence, I found it useful to operate the concepts of positive, negative, and irrelevant cases proposed by Mahoney and Goertz. The design and research question of this project requires an analysis of violent and peaceful cases, which correspond with Mahoney and Goertz's concepts of positive and negative cases respectively. What does violent and non-violent case exactly mean? Which cases should be included in a sample and which cases should be treated as irrelevant for the analysis of this project? The answers to these questions might seem obvious, however, it is always better to specify scope conditions for case selection to avoid errors which can distort the research results.

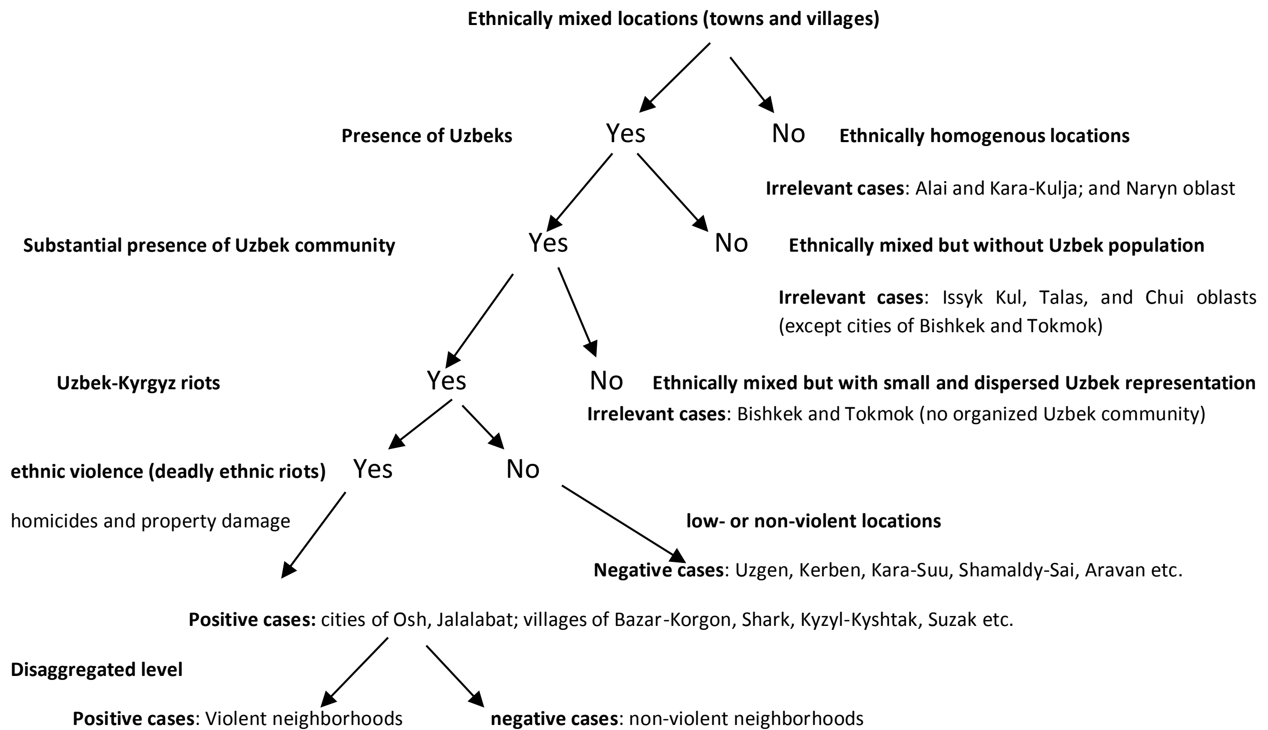
What constitutes an irrelevant case and what constitutes a negative case is well defined by Mahoney and Goertz. According to the 'Possibility Principle' elaborated by these scholars, "the negative cases should be those where the outcome has a real possibility of occurring—not just those where the outcome has a nonzero probability" (Mahoney and Goertz 2004, 654). In other words, the negative cases are those where the outcome of interest is possible to occur and where the outcome is not possible should be regarded as irrelevant case (Mahoney and Goertz 2004, 653). Irrelevant cases may bias the results of analysis and therefore have to be dismissed from the sample.

Selection of negative cases should follow certain rules. As it is sometimes difficult to draw a distinction between negative and positive cases, on the one hand, and negative and irrelevant cases, on the other, Mahoney and Goertz propose first to draw boundaries between different sets of cases. In the process of selection of negative cases it may be not obvious how to distinguish between negative and irrelevant cases. Mahoney and Goertz suggest that "negative/irrelevant boundary issues must be resolved before scholars can implement procedures for choosing a representative sample of cases" (2004: 654). The same problem concerns identification of boundaries between positive and non-positive (negative) cases. For example, some confusion and uncertainty may arise in distinguishing between violent and non-violent cases. The term "violent" may be interpreted in different ways by various scholars. Consequently, different interpretations of the concept will cause some muddle in the analysis. We need to conceptualize and measure the concept of 'violent case' as it will help us to avoid these confusions.

The goal is to operationalize the systematized concept of violent and peaceful (non-violent) cases. Among hundreds of towns and villages in Kyrgyzstan I choose cases which are analytically appropriate for the

analysis of ethnic violence. As the concept of violent and non-violent cases is vague, the systematization (operationalization and measurement) of the concept allows us to avoid incorrect and biased selection of relevant cases.

Figure 3.1. Disaggregation and operationalization of geographical locations (towns and villages) into positive, negative, and irrelevant cases




**Note:** Oblast is an administrative unit comparable to province. Here, for example, Naryn oblast means all towns and villages which belong to Naryn province.

Figure 3.1 demonstrates a tree diagram. It shows the main differences between irrelevant, negative, and positive cases. On the left side of the tree diagram, I put scope conditions distinguishing different sets of cases. On the right side of the tree diagram, I put various case categories derived from scope conditions for relevant cases and measurement and operationalization of systematized concept of violence.

I disaggregated all available cases which include all towns and villages of Kyrgyzstan based on several criteria: 1) whether a town or a village is ethnically mixed; 2) whether a town or a village has Uzbek residents; 3) whether, a town or a village has a substantial and concentrated presence of Uzbek

community, and; 4) whether a town or a village experienced Kyrgyz-Uzbek riots during the ethnic conflict in June, 2010. For the selection and identification of positive and negative cases I use a tree diagram in similar fashion employed in Howard and Roessler's (2006) classification of regime types. Howard and Roessler made a typology of various political regimes by constructing a diagram tree and measured and operationalized their systematized concept of interest based on the methodological standard proposed by Adcock and Collier. The main idea of this standard (measurement validity) is to produce a systematized concept moving from a background concept and to develop "on the basis of a systematized concept, one or more indicators for scoring/classifying cases" (Adcock and Collier 2001, 531). In this research, I constructed a diagram tree identical to Howard and Roessler's and make a classification of cases by distinguishing positive, negative, and irrelevant cases among the whole population of cases. A first step in building a sample set of cases is elimination of irrelevant cases. I thus so not include towns and cities which do not contain Kyrgyz and Uzbek ethnic groups. Because the focus of this research is not just on ethnic conflict/violence but mostly on violence during the Kyrgyz-Uzbeks riots, I did not include all ethnically mixed towns and villages in the potential sample but only those which have both Uzbek and Kyrgyz populations. I will also exclude ethnically homogenous locations from the potential sample.

One necessary condition for possible Uzbek-Kyrgyz ethnic riots is the presence of Uzbek communities in a particular town or village (and their neighborhoods) as the Kyrgyz, a major ethnic group (about 70%), live throughout the country. The Uzbeks are the biggest ethnic minority in Kyrgyzstan comprising about 14% of the overall population. They are mainly concentrated in three southern provinces (more detailed descriptive statistics on ethnic distribution will be provided in the next section). It is senseless to examine cases/locations where one of two ethnic groups of interest are completely absent. In other words, it is impossible to expect ethnic riots between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in towns where Uzbeks do not reside. With the absence of one or both of ethnic groups of interest in a particular town, it is easy to identify it as irrelevant for the analysis. However, it is more difficult to decide in the instances where Uzbek population is present but very small.

Another necessary condition is that there must be substantial and concentrated Uzbek communities living in certain cities and villages. A substantial and residentially-concentrated (segregated) community of Uzbeks rather than few dispersed Uzbeks with no or weak ties among each other makes an ethnic riot much more likely. Uzbeks in the northern provinces (oblasts) of Talas, Naryn, and Issyk-Kul comprise fewer than 1% of the respective populations in each province. In Chui province and the capital city of Bishkek there are practically no substantial Uzbek communities. Those few Uzbeks living in Chui oblast are mainly

concentrated in the capital city Bishkek and some smaller towns and do not comprise more than 2.5% of the local population. Most of them are highly dispersed among ethnically mixed urban dwellers of other ethnic origins. The exception is the city of Tokmok, with 8.6% of the population being Uzbeks. However, some conditions make Tokmok an unlikely candidate for a negative but relevant case in a sample. First, Tokmok is geographically isolated and far from the main concentration of the Uzbek community in the south of Kyrgyzstan, the area of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek riots in 1990 and 2010. Second, the Uzbeks in Tokmok are only the third-largest ethnic minority group after Russians (20%) and Dungans (16.5%). Kyrgyz–Uzbek relations in the city are not politicized and ethnicized, like in the southern regions. Ethnic tensions are rather visible along Kyrgyz–Dungan lines. On this basis, I will exclude from the analysis all northern regions of Kyrgyzstan because there is no substantial Uzbek ethnic groups living in this part of the country. All towns and villages including the southern ones where Uzbeks are absent or have small population highly dispersed among other ethnic groups become irrelevant cases and therefore, I exclude them from the analysis.

Finally, I consider those towns and villages which have substantial Uzbek communities but did not experience violent riots as negative cases and those locations where ethnic riots broke out as positive cases. Positive cases are measured by homicides and property damage.  This simple procedure of identifying positive and negative cases is important one. It gives me an opportunity to concentrate on relevant cases by eliminating cases which are analytically not appropriate for the purposes of my research.

## Case selection: construction of paired comparisons

I present table 3.1. with descriptive statistics. It shows information on ethnic distribution and scope of violence at raion and oblast levels. As seen from the tables, I included only positive and negative cases. Based on this figures, I will draw cases for my sample.

Table 3.1 shows the overall population and ethnic distribution of three southern provinces and Osh city. The data are shown on county (*raion*) level. The disaggregated data showing population and ethnic distribution by major towns (and administrative centers) in the raions are not available. The percentage of the Uzbek community in towns is much higher than the percentage at raion (district) level indicated in table 3.1. As this table shows, the majority of deaths occurred in Osh city – by rough estimations about 60–70% of all killings committed during the ethnic conflict in 2010. According to *Kylym Shamy,* the human

rights NGO which conducted a careful investigation of homicides in the morgues of the southern cities and examined destroyed houses and properties, the number of deaths in Osh oblast (including Osh city)

Table 3.1. Population and its ethnic distribution, number of deaths and property damage by raions (districts) in Osh city

| Raions (districts) | population | ethnic distribution | deaths (total **423**) | property damage (total **2000**) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jalalabat oblast** | | | **68** (with Jalalabat city) | 176(without Jalalabat city) |
| Jalalabat city (without suburbs) | 97 000 | Kyrgyz (49000) 55%<br>Uzbeks(34000) 38% | (included in Jalalabat oblast statistics) | 177 |
| Ala-Buka | 87 000 | Kyrgyz 56%<br>Uzbeks 33% | no | no |
| Bazar-Korgon | 143 000 | Kyrgyz 56%<br>Uzbeks 43% | Yes (included in Jalalabat statistics) | 137 |
| Nooken | 117 000 | Kyrgyz 69%<br>Uzbeks 28% | no | no |
| Suzak | 241 000 | Kyrgyz 61%<br>Uzbeks 35% | (included in Jalalabat statistics) | yes |
| **Osh oblast** | | | **355 with Osh city** | 592 |
| Osh city | 258 000 | Kyrgyz 48%<br>Uzbeks 44% | yes (high rate) (included in Osh oblast statistics) | 673 |
| Aravan | 106 000 | Kyrgyz 40%<br>Uzbeks 59% | no | no |
| Kara-Suu | 349 000 | Kyrgyz 54%<br>Uzbeks 39% | yes | yes |
| Nookat | 236 000 | Kyrgyz 74%<br>Uzbeks 26% | no | no |
| Uzgen | 228 000 | Kyrgyz 74%<br>Uzbeks 22% | no | no |
| **Batken oblast** | | | | |
| Kyzyl-Kiya | 44 000 | Kyrgyz 68%<br>Uzbeks 19% | no | no |
| Sulyuktu | 21 000 | Kyrgyz 73%<br>Uzbeks 20% | no | no |
| Kadamjai | 158 000 | Kyrgyz 74%<br>Uzbeks 12%<br>Tajik 12% | no | no |
| Leilek | 117 000 | Kyrgyzs 66%<br>Uzbeks 27%<br>Tajik 7% | no | no |

Source: Kylym Shamy and the census of Kyrgyzstan 2009. Osh city has special status – a republican level city along with the capital city Bishkek, Osh, Batken, and Jalalabat oblasts (for population and ethnic distribution the source is the census of Kyrgyzstan 2009. For number of deaths and property damage the source is Kylym Shamy human rights NGO.

was 355 and 68 in the Jalalabat oblast (including Jalalabat city). The disaggregated data on deaths for each town, city district, and village are not available.

Based on descriptive statistics presented in table 3.1., I proceed to the issue of case selection for building paired comparisons. Why do I proceed to paired comparisons? Paired comparisons allow us to avoid selecting cases on the dependent variable which can lead to overrepresentation of positive cases in a sample (Mahoney and Goertz 2004, 654). A paired comparison ensures equal representation of positive and negative cases in the sample. In addition to that, inclusion of negative cases that "closely resemble positive cases, including on key hypothesized causal factors, are seen as highly useful" (Mahoney and Goertz 2004, 654).

As Tarrow argues, "paired comparison is a distinct strategy of comparative analysis with advantages that both single-case and multicase comparisons lack" (2010, 230). It has the logic of experimental design and "can gain analytical leverage from a variety of methods that allow analysts to triangulate on the same research questions from different angles" (2010, 250). I do not use this methodological strategy exactly in a way prescribed by Tarrow and others. I did not select cases randomly as many methodological techniques would require. In the post-conflict context, that would be difficult to do (for example, see King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Fearon and Laitin 2008). My choice of neighborhoods was based more on the matter of availability of reliable respondents in particular neighborhoods than on the standard criteria established in social sciences. Nevertheless, the way I use paired comparisons analytically expose well the cases and comparative findings that I present in this study. I am still able to use advantages of this strategy.

I conduct paired comparisons of various locations at different aggregation levels – i.e. town, city district, and neighborhood/village levels. I include non-violent cases to avoid selection bias based on upon the value of the dependent variable. The selected pair in chapter 6 includes violent case/unit (with deaths and extensive property damage) and non-violent (with no deaths and no property damage). The territory and population in *Oshskii raion* and Kalinin – two cases in this chapter – have approximately equal size but different social configurations and spatial environments. Two selected pairs in chapter 7 present cases with diverse trajectories and outcomes of violence. In the first pair, I compare two very similar in terms of social-demographic conditions and geographically proximate Kyrgyz neighborhoods in Turan district. Despite having the same outcome (eventual peace), these two Kyrgyz neighborhoods varied in their trajectories to peace. In the second pair, I selected two Uzbek districts with divergent outcomes. Uzbek districts of Turan and Nariman were relatively far from the main flashpoints of violence being located respectively in the southern and the northern outskirts of Osh city. Yet, this pair demonstrates variation

both in trajectory and outcomes of violence. Chapters 8 and 9 present implicit paired comparisons between cities. Chapter 8 compares Uzgen with Osh and chapter 9 Jalalabat with Osh. Furthermore, in chapter 9, I compare three neighborhoods in Jalalabat city with divergent responses to the violent ethnic mobilization. I discuss the town-level comparisons later in this chapter.

All neighborhood-level cases selected for paired comparisons have some common characteristics that allow to control for certain variables such as town-level factors and population size. Except for the 8th quarter in Jalalabat, they are all either segregated ethnic groups or contain two or more segregated communities. Cases in each pair are approximately of the equal size and located in the same city. The neighborhoods of Uchar and Toloikon – in chapter 7 – are the most controlled paired comparison. Both are small long-standing Kyrgyz communities located in the same locality – the southern outskirts of Osh city adjacent to Turan district. Each paired comparison aims to identify and analyze factors and conditions that cause variance in outcomes and violent trajectories. The selected cases represent many similar neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat.

Scholars have been engaged in debates in the literature about which level should be the most appropriate for the analysis of spatial variation in ethnic violence. In particular, scholars of Hindu–Muslim riots generally proposed three levels of analysis: state (federal unit), city, and neighborhood. Wilkinson (2006) justified the state level of analysis as the most important for identifying causal variables that can explain spatial variation in violence. He argues that willingness to contain violence depend on the decisions by state-level authorities represented by a configuration of electoral party coalitions who control police forces. Varshney proposed town-level and Brass proposed neighborhood level (Varshney 2004; Brass 2003).

I conduct comparisons of various type locations such as a town, a city neighborhood, and a village. In Kyrgyzstan, the major violence during the conflict in 2010 was concentrated in the towns. However, it is not reasonable to drop villages from the analysis as while some villages suffered horrible violence, others remained peaceful. Some villages avoided violence and some experienced minor violence. There are also variations in village violence within one district. These variations should be carefully examined and controlled for. Moreover, many villagers, especially of Kyrgyz origin, participated in ethnic clashes in Osh city when news and rumors about ethnic riots reached their villages. For example, many Kyrgyz villagers came to Osh city from the mountainous and ethnically homogenous region Alai and the neighboring Batken oblast in the next days after violent riots had started. Although no violence occurred in Alai and Batken, these regions served as fighter suppliers.

One can find variation in violence within one city; namely, Osh. According to Seawright and Gerring's (2008) classification of case selection, this city weighs a status of extreme or influential case as it was a location the most exposed to violence. In this city, some districts underwent pogroms, some experienced severe clashes and riots, and the others remained completely untouched by rioters of both ethnic origins. Comparison at the city neighborhood level might raise important questions for understanding the dynamics of ethnic violence. In short, paired comparisons at the various territorial-unit levels of aggregation allow control for variation at regional, district, city and village levels.

I should mention some challenges in case selection and paired comparisons at town level. As I mentioned earlier, Osh city accounts for the majority of the deaths driving the conflict. Osh city is also the largest town in southern Kyrgyzstan. For a paired comparison with Osh, there is no other town of equal that can be comparable in size and structural importance with Osh city. The next largest city – Jalalabat, which is two and half times smaller in terms of size of population – also experienced considerable violence. The populations of the rest of the medium and small size towns vary from ten to fifty thousand.

Nevertheless, there are ways to make valid paired comparisons at town level, as seen in table 3.2. I will compare Osh with Uzgen, a town of fifty thousand people. A comparison of Osh with Uzgen is interesting because during the previous ethnic conflict in 1990, these towns were the most affected by ethnic violence. However, in 2010, the town of Uzgen managed to remain peaceful and to avoid rioters' attacks from neighboring villages. This is a puzzling circumstance considering that in 1990, Uzgen witnessed riots within and outside the town. It is also located only 70–80 km from Osh city or 30–40 minutes' drive by car. The violent diffusion forces could have easily reached this town in 2010. Another paired comparison is between Osh and Jalalabat cities. In 1990, Jalabat remained relatively peaceful while Osh experienced violence. Although both of these large southern cities experienced violence, the extent of violence in the two cities was different. Some questions can be relevant for this comparison.

Town district/neighborhood level comparison will be conducted within Osh city in chapter 5. Osh is the largest and the most violent town in southern Kyrgyzstan. As I noted before, Osh is an extreme and crucial case. Osh accounts for majority of total deaths during 2010 conflict. Therefore, much closer examination of the city at district level will allow us to understand more about causes of ethnic violence. I will compare neighborhoods which underwent ethnic violence with those that remained peaceful.

In case of Uzgen, I do not consider ethnic relations between neighborhoods due to virtual absence of Kyrgyz in Uzgen. This makes dynamics of inter-communal relations in Uzgen different from Osh and

Jalalabat). I consider inter-communal relations in Uzgen in the light of town-villages relations but also at the level of neighborhoods. This changes focus (and level?) of analysis. From the examination of the dynamics of ethnic conflict in particular neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat, I shift to the analysis of intercommunal relations at a higher level of aggregation. I look at Uzgen's Uzbek leaders' centralized multilateral communication and efforts to build intercommunal pacts with leaders of Kyrgyz villages in which some Kyrgyz leaders also played active role. In addition, I also look how individual Uzbek leaders of peripheral neighborhoods in Uzgen built their relations with leaders of adjacent Kyrgyz neighborhoods.

**Table 3.2**. Violent and non-violent towns in 1990 and 2010

| | OSH | JALALABAT | UZGEN |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1990** | violent | non-violent | violent |
| **2010** | violent | violent | non-violent |

There are some problems of paired comparison and town-level comparisons. Referring to Varshney's (2002) paired comparison research design and analysis, Brass (Brass 2003, 27–28) argues that paired comparisons fail to reveal local dynamics of riots. Without answering the 'how' question it is impossible to analyze 'why' or causal questions. Brass' critique is legitimate to some extent because Varshney's works was criticized also by Laitin for the lack of analysis of mechanisms/microfoundations (Laitin et al. 2001). According to Brass (2003, 28), paired comparisons (of towns and cities) misidentify and incorrectly specify the actual locations of violence: "The sites of riots are often referred to as the cities in which they occur rather than specific neighborhoods or street locations from which they originate or to which they are even sometimes confined." Cities are never entirely embraced/enveloped by riots. In the US and India there are only certain parts, like black ghettos, affected by violence. "Under such circumstances", paired comparisons are unnecessary and fashionable exercise which yields little information. It is more productive to concentrate on comparisons between neighborhoods and streets. "It is also rare that all parts of a city that share similar demographic features are affected equally or even at all" (Brass 2003, 28). However, in Osh, the violence was not confined to some particular part of the city. It was all over the city but still with variation in violence. This is another reason we should include neighborhood level analysis.

Therefore, I tried to avoid some pitfalls related to paired comparisons by conducting comparative analysis at both town and neighborhood scales. Analysis only at the town scale cannot reveal local dynamics at

neighborhood scale. On the other hand, focusing only at certain neighborhoods or neighborhood scale may hide causal processes at more aggregated level.

## Organization of the fieldwork and data collection

Investigative reports

My descriptive analysis of the conflict (in chapter 5) and its background are based on several reports produced by various international and local investigative missions. I reconstruct the onset of the conflict and its main events essentially by relying on the report jointly produced by the Memorial Human Rights Center (Russia), the Norwegian Helsinki Committee (Norway), and Freedom House (USA) (hereafter referred to as Memorial). Of other similar several reports, the Memorial report is the most detailed and reliable source for reconstruction of violent events in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. Its accounts are based on more than 300 interviews, 550 videotapes, 300 photographs[11], and hundreds of live chat messages from popular national websites (Memorial 2012, 4). Basically, the report cautiously and rigorously investigated and reconstructed the violent events in Osh. By doing this, it saved me from carrying out several additional months of intensive fieldwork. For this, I am grateful to the mission's team of researchers. In the analysis of violent events, I draw heavily on the report's documented evidence. This report was published later than the others. The members of the mission had opportunity to compare the information, factual events, and their interpretations cross-checked through different sources. It devoted a lot of attention to factual analysis of the events and the cross-checking. Unfortunately, Memorial did not produce a similar report on the violent events in Jalalabat.

Other reports, produced both by international and local mission teams, were mainly preoccupied with normative judgements and political, ethnic, and ideological biases and provided an insufficient amount of factual information despite having collected a huge amount of evidence. For example, the Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission mission (hereafter KIC) alone conducted 750 interviews and collected 700 documents and several thousand photographs and video extracts (KIC 2011) but was not able to produce a completely reliable and unbiased report. The factual information that appears in this report is not supported by credible references and in many instances, contains many errors, non-existent events, unchecked

[11] Unfortunately, I could not get access to these materials, as the mission did not respond to my email requests.

information, and normative but poorly-grounded judgements[12]. Yet, despite these shortcomings it contains some valuable information. In addition, some researchers from the KIC team later produced their own independent report "Tragedy in the South" (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012) which contains much more reliable and detailed factual information.

My interviews uncovered information which the investigative report overlooked due to various reasons. I cross-checked the information that I obtained from my respondents with the information from various reports, particularly with those produced by the Memorial and Matveeva et al.

The conflict was initially analyzed by international investigative missions (KIC), international organizations (International Crisis Group), human rights organizations (Human Rights Watch (hereafter HRW), Memorial, *Kylym Shamy*), state law enforcement institutions and commissions (parliamentary commission, police and some experts. Some of these investigations, especially those conducted by state institutions and by some international missions shed little light or produced partial information ((KIC, International Crisis Group) on the problem as these investigations have been afflicted by political or/and ethnic bias. They tend to put blame on one or another side in the conflict without seriously attempting to identify mechanisms, conditions, and drivers of the conflict. Their reports are full of political, partisan, and normative judgements weakly and manipulatively supported with superficial factual analyses[13]. Investigations produced by human rights organizations (HRW, *Kylym Shamy,* and especially by Memorial) are much more reliable in this sense. They give invaluably rich factual accounts of the events and insights on dynamics of the riots[14]. Despite the factual richness of these reports, they are still descriptive and do not engage in scholarly analysis of the events and, indeed, this was not the main aim of these reports. Therefore, my main aim in this dissertation is to fill gap in academic analysis of this significant episode of ethnic violence.

There is dearth of mass media reporting on the conflict. Most reports about the events are produced retrospectively and biased by post-conflict interpretations. Weak presence of international and national newspaper journalists on the ground in the Osh and Jalalabat areas during the ethnic violence makes it difficult to reconstruct conflict events in detail (through examination of publications in mass media outlets). The local media outlets were paralyzed during the conflict. In general, until recently we have had

[12] See the Memorial's critique of the KIC mission in the introductory part of its report.

[13] For the discussion of weaknesses of partisan, political, normative biases in the study of conflicts see Kalyvas, ch.2, (2006).

[14] In my view, the most detailed and objective accounts have been given by Memorial and by Matveeva et al. (2012).

little knowledge about what really happened in Osh in 11–15 June. The reports mentioned above significantly fill this informational gap.

In addition to interviews, I employed participant observation. The method of participant observation is most useful for observing current dynamics and unfolding actions, whereas my research focuses on causes of ethnic violence which cannot be observed directly by this method. A participant–observer's main focus is on "detailed accounts of people, places, interactions, and events that the researcher experiences as a participant–observer"(Lichterman 2002, 121). However, because the term "participant" sounds ambiguous in my research, as I study past events, I refer this as empirical or spatial observations. While I could not observe past events and interactions between main actors, nevertheless I was able to make spatial observations in towns, neighborhoods, and villages of my interest. Observations of places helped me to decipher the geographical, spatial, ethnical, and infrastructural environment in particular neighborhoods or locations and identify some crucial conditions and structural factors which could possibly drive key actors into the conflict and violence.

These kinds of observations are especially relevant for the analysis of causes of violence and nonviolence at the city neighborhood and the village level. I examined such factors as geographical terrain, and strategic roads and hills; territorial distribution of ethnic communities and the extent of territorial segregation within a town or a village; geographical dynamics of violent events; location specifics; strategic objects like the location of bazaars, private business objects, universities and whether they tend to concentrate in violent or peaceful locations; economic, social, and security systems in the locations, and; the presence or absence of police stations in the neighborhood or the village (adopted from ICAF methodology). Geographical observations are required for identifying territorial characteristics of violent and peaceful locations. I will closely investigate the cites with different outcomes in violence.

To measure violence, I use killings and property destruction data as indicators. Violence is a 'thick' concept which needs to be operationalized. "Unpacking a thick concept, exploring its dimensionality, and translating it into quantitative indicators can be seen as a process of discovering more of the observable implications of a theory and therefore of rendering it more testable" (Coppedge 1999, 469). In the case of ethnic riots, violence has several dimensions and observable implications such as killings, bullet, knife, and club wounds, property damages, looting, and sexual violence (i.e. rape). These dimensions can serve as quantifiable indicators of violence which can also measure the extent of violence. Among these dimensions, sexual violence is not a fully reliable indicator because for many reasons, including "rape victim blame" (see Murthi 2009), victims prefer not to report to police or even tell their close relatives

about what happened to them (Ataeva, Belomestnov, and Jusupjan 2011). Therefore, instances of sexual violence tend to be undercounted in official documents. 'Looting' is also a problematic indicator. Looting is often an integral part of riots; however, it is difficult to identify if looting is a part or a consequence of violence. In my research project, I mainly consider homicides and property damage as indicators of ethnic violence. Death is the most reliable and unambiguous indicator which is easy for measurement of violence (Kalyvas 2006, 20). Property damage is also easily countable. The data for both deaths and property damage are available and therefore, I use these two indicators to measure the spatial variation in violence and peace.

**Conflict statistics**

Below, I provide descriptive statistics on ethnic distribution of population by Kyrgyz and Uzbek groups and number of deaths during ethnic riots in June, 2010. Table 3.3 shows ethno-demographic data on the size of Kyrgyz and Uzbek groups and their distribution in three southern provinces and cities of Osh and Jalalabat. These three provinces (oblasts) include substantial Uzbek communities. The smallest Uzbek minority is in Batken province – only 11%. This probably partly explains the absence of violent Uzbek mobilization in this province. However, it does not imply the absence of intercommunal tensions in June 2010. Uzbek communities in Batken province are chiefly concentrated in several small towns and villages. Isfana is the only town in Batken province where they comprise the majority (76%) of the population. The Uzbek community in Isfana faced same challenges as many other Uzbek communities in Osh and Jalalabat provinces. One problem with the official statistics is that it does not show the real demographic picture in the cities of Osh and Jalalabat. Official figures showing the size of Uzbek and Kyrgyz groups do not count for non-registered residents of these cities. Furthermore, the statistics do not count the suburban population that had an important role in violent dynamics in these cities.

Tables 3.4-3.7 show the distribution of deaths by dates, nationality, gender, age, and mortal wounds. The majority of deaths occurred in Osh province. About 84% of all killings committed during the ethnic conflict in 2010 occurred in Osh city and its surroundings. According to *Kylym Shamy,* a human rights NGO that conducted a careful investigation of homicides in the morgues of the southern cities and examined destroyed houses and properties, the number of deaths in the Osh province including Osh city was 355, and 68 in the Jalalabat province (including Jalalabat city). The total number of deaths in both provinces

was 423[15]. There were also many missing individuals, in total 36, mostly Kyrgyz. Of them, 32 were in the Osh province. The exact numbers of deaths by town, city district, and village are not available. There are also two reports on the number of deaths produced by the Ministry of Health and the Prosecutor General's office. The estimate of deaths (418 deaths in total) made by the Ministry of Health relies on data from hospitals, morgues, and exhumations. The estimate (444 deaths in total) from the Prosecutor General's office is based on data from criminal cases. The three reports have some discrepancies in number of deaths, but the range of difference is not high. The low rate of discrepancies gives us the ground to suggest that estimates made by these three organizations are reliable.

Table 3.3. Ethnic distribution in urban and rural areas in southern regions of Kyrgyzstan (by Kyrgyz and Uzbek populations)[16]. Source. National census of Kyrgyz Republic, 2009

| | **urban** | | % | **rural** | | % | **Total** | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Osh city** | Kyrgyz | 100 000 | **47%** | Kyrgyz | 23 500 | **94%** | 123 000 | **52%** |
| | Uzbeks | 112 000 | **53%** | Uzbeks | 1 500 | **6%** | 114 000 | **48%** |
| **Osh province** | Kyrgyz | 15 000 | **18%** | Kyrgyz | 743 000 | **76%** | 758 000 | **71%** |
| **(without Osh city)** | Uzbeks | 70 000 | **82%** | Uzbeks | 239 000 | **24%** | 309 000 | **29%** |
| **Jalalabat city** | Kyrgyz | 49 000 | **59%** | Kyrgyz | N/A | | 49 000 | **59%** |
| | Uzbeks | 34 000 | **41%** | Uzbeks | N/A | | 34 000 | **41%** |
| **Jalalabat province** | Kyrgyz | 166 000 | **78%** | Kyrgyz | 560 000 | **73%** | 726 000 | **74%** |
| **(with Jalalabat city)** | Uzbeks | 47 000 | **22%** | Uzbeks | 204 000 | **27%** | 251 000 | **26%** |
| **Batken province** | Kyrgyz | 66 000 | **64%** | Kyrgyz | 262 000 | **80%** | 328 000 | **84%** |
| | Uzbeks | 27 000 | **26%** | Uzbeks | 36 000 | **11%** | 63 000 | **16%** |

Practically all deaths in Osh province took place in Osh city and its surrounding villages which technically belong to Karasuu district but in reality are integrated with Osh city. According to residential registrations (*propiska*), some victims were registered in villages and towns that are remote to Osh city. As a rule, those people were internal migrants who had arrived in the city seeking employment opportunities. Another category is individuals who probably came to the city to defend their ethnic fellows, save their children, friends, or relatives who lived in Osh city for various reasons, or to participate in the riots.

[15] This death toll does not account for killings that took place after 15 June 2010 when open armed clashes stopped. After 15 June, violence continued in the form of hostage-taking and clandestine attacks.
[16] The percentage figures in this table indicate shares of local Kyrgyz and Uzbek groups relatively to each other but not relatively to the overall population of the provinces and cities. See more disaggregated data on ethnic distribution by raions (districts) in table 3.1.

The data presented in tables 3.4-3.7 show that the most active phase of the violence in Osh province took place the first two days, on 11 and 12 June (109 and 130 deaths respectively). They account for 67% while the riots on 13 and 14 June (which saw 29 and 9 people killed, respectively) account for only about 11% of the total number of deaths. In terms of ethnic distribution of deaths by nationality, three quarters of the aggregate deaths in Osh province were ethnic Uzbeks. Lack of ethnic balance in the number of deaths is evident on 11 June, and especially on 12 June. Nearly a half of all Uzbeks killed during the June riots died on 12 June.

Table 3.5 shows that a majority of those killed were males. Males are direct participants in riots and interethnic clashes. Women have a much lower mortality rate however, they are the main targets for sexual violence. The data on sexual violence is barely available. The existing data is not reliable because victims of sexual violence in many cases do not report crimes committed against them for different reasons. The main reason, however, is desire to hide a fact of rape and humiliation from a conservative and traditional community environment. Disclosure of the rape may have very negative consequences for women exposed to sexual violence.

Table 3.6 indicates that the victims of the ethnic violence represent all age categories. Among victims, there were small children, teenagers, and old people over 70 years of age. However, the highest concentration of deaths lies in age category between 20 and 50. Table 3.7 demonstrates that the most frequent type of mortal wound is gunshot. People killed from gunshot account for 67%, or two thirds, of total deaths in Osh and Jalalabat provinces. Such a high rate of killings resulted from gunshots clearly validates my proposition of the 2010 ethnic violence's strong resemblance to civil war. It was an armed violent conflict of high intensity.

Table 3.4. Number of deaths by dates and nationality. Source: Kylym Shamy NGO

| Date | Kyrgyz | Uzbeks | others | **total in Osh province** | Kyrgyz | Uzbeks | others | **Total in Jalalabat province** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11.06.2010 | 22 | 85 | 2 | **109** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **109** |
| 12.06.2010 | 16 | 114 | 0 | **130** | 6 | 1 | 0 | **7** | **137** |
| 13.06.2010 | 13 | 16 | 0 | **29** | 9 | 29 | 1 | **39** | **68** |
| 14.06.2010 | 4 | 4 | 1 | **9** | 6 | 6 | 0 | **12** | **21** |
| 15.06.2010 and after or not determined | 27 | 51 | 0 | **78** | 4 | 6 | 0 | **10** | **88** |
| **Total** | 82 | 270 | **3** | **355** | 25 | 42 | 1 | **68** | **423** |

Table 3.5. Number of deaths by gender. Source: Kylym Shamy NGO

| Date | Male | female | **Total in Osh Province** | male | female | **Total in Jalalabat province** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. 06.2010 г | 103 | 6 | **109** | 0 | 0 | **0** | **109** |
| 12.06.2010 г | 117 | 13 | **130** | 5 | 2 | **7** | **137** |
| 13.06.2010 г | 27 | 2 | **29** | 38 | 1 | **39** | **68** |
| 14.06.2010 г | 9 | 0 | **9** | 11 | 1 | **12** | **21** |
| 15.06.2010 and after or not determined | 61 | 17 | **78** | 8 | 2 | **10** | **88** |
| **Total** | 317 | 38 | **355** | 62 | 6 | **68** | **423** |

Table 3.6. Number of deaths by age. Source: Kylym Shamy NGO

| # | age | Osh province | Jalalabat province | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0-7 | 3 | 0 | **3** |
| 2 | 8 -14 | 5 | 0 | **5** |
| 3 | 15 -20 | 38 | 4 | **42** |
| 4 | 21 - 30 | 86 | 24 | **110** |
| 5 | 31 -40 | 69 | 15 | **84** |
| 6 | 41 -50 | 77 | 16 | **93** |
| 7 | 51 -60 | 38 | 7 | **45** |
| 8 | 61 -70 | 10 | 1 | **11** |
| 9 | 71 and above | 12 | 1 | **13** |
| 10 | not determined | 17 | 0 | **17** |
|  | **Total** | **355** | **68** | **423** |

Table 3.7. Number of deaths by nationality and type of mortal wound. Source: Kylym Shamy NGO

| # | type of mortal wound | Kyrgyz | Uzbeks | others | **In Osh province** | Kyrgyz | Uzbeks | **others** | **In Jalalabat province** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gunshot | 39 | 195 | 2 | **236** | 16 | 31 | 1 | **48** | **284** |
| 2 | cerebral injury | 9 | 19 | 0 | **28** | 1 | 3 | 0 | **4** | **32** |
| 3 | stab wounds | 14 | 15 | 0 | **29** | 4 | 2 | 0 | **6** | **35** |
| 4 | thermal burns | 7 | 25 | 1 | **33** | 0 | 2 | 0 | **2** | **35** |
| 5 | Other | 13 | 16 | 0 | **29** | 4 | 4 | 0 | **8** | **37** |
|  | **Total** | 82 | 270 | 3 | **355** | 25 | 42 | 1 | **68** | **423** |

Additionally, hundreds of buildings were destroyed by arson. They include residential houses, commercial facilities, and public buildings. A great majority of destroyed buildings were houses belonging to ethnic Uzbeks. UNITAR/UNOSAT reports:

> Almost all affected buildings appear to have been residential or situated within residential neighborhoods, however there are a few cases of destroyed or severely damaged industrial warehouses or commercial / government facilities. No damages have been observed to the transportation network (e.g. roads, bridges) or other key infrastructure sites within the city (UNITAR/UNOSAT).

According to UNOSAT, the total number of destroyed and severely damaged buildings was 2843. Of the total number of buildings affected by arson, 2067 were identified within the city of Osh and its surroundings, 330 in the city of Jalalabat, and 446 in Bazar-Korgon village, Jalalabat province. However, Kylym Shamy gives other figures. According to Kylym Shamy, 1721 buildings in total were destroyed by arson. 1265 houses were destroyed in Osh province. Of them, 673 in Osh city itself and 592 in the surrounding villages. 177 houses were destroyed in the city of Jalalabat and 137 in Bazar-Korgon village. In addition, Kylym Shamy provides a quantity of hijacked and burned cars, which is 374. There is an apparent discrepancy between these two reports. Why would the discrepancy in the number of destroyed houses be so huge? One reason might be that satellite pictures of UNOSAT counted not only residential houses but also utility facilities. Uzbek households and Kyrgyz private houses usually have one residential building and one or more utility rooms and facilities such as a kitchen, a woodshed, hayloft and so on. Kylym Shamy visited the owners of destroyed houses and made a survey.

According to the Kyrgyz Government, more than 1000 hostages – both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz – were taken during the riots (Comments 2011, 11). In segregated Osh, ethnically-homogenous neighborhoods contain small populations distinct from the prevailing ethnic group. During the clashes those who were not able or did not want to leave their homes found themselves as hostages or were attacked, killed, or beaten.

During the conflict, 10 policemen and one military representative of the Ministry of Defense were killed. 172 policemen were wounded. Twelve wounds from firearms were received and over 50 soldiers were victims of bodily harm of various kinds. The Kyrgyz government claims that all these victims and all the wounds happened precisely because the police and the military were not merely observers. Law enforcement and military personnel aimed at preventing clashes between the parties and localizing the conflict (Comments 2011, 11).

In the next chapters, I start the analysis from national level discussion of macro-level variables (part III), and then moving to regional, town (part V), and neighborhood scales of analysis (parts IV and V).

# Part III. Interethnic interactions at macro-level: historical context and the dynamics of violence in Osh

## Chapter 4. Structural-historical context and the onset of violence: Conflict background

The events leading to the ethnic violence developed according to the scenario described by scholars of ethnic security dilemma (Fearon 1998; Posen 1993; Lake and Rothchild 1998a; de Figueiredo and Weingast 1999; Walter and Snyder 1999). The sudden breakdown of the state on 7 April 2010 because of a popular uprising against the dictatorial and corrupt rule of president Bakiev has important implications for the ethnic violence in June 2010 in southern Kyrgyzstan. One implication was that the regime breakdown caused a power vacuum, institutional chaos, and emerging anarchy. The events described below in more detail show that state institutions such as police were demoralized by the loss of legitimacy on 7 April 2010, after they shot dead 89 demonstrators in the central square in Bishkek and were consequently attacked and beaten by the same protestors. The interim government could not reassert state control in some regions, especially in the south, the stronghold of the overthrown president. The ethnic tensions both in the south and in the north of Kyrgyzstan that followed regime change and resulting power vacuum clearly demonstrated the weakness of the new central state and its inability to establish order. Ethnic entrepreneurs used the power vacuum to instigate ethnic violence. In the north, the state was initially unable to protect Meskhetian Turks against violent ethnic opportunists. However, as the interim government's control was stronger in the north, it soon managed to reassert control there. In the south, short violent clashes erupted: in Jalalabat in May 2010, first between pro- and anti-Bakiev forces and then between local Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. These clashes produced uncertainty and fear among the two ethnic communities and triggered ethnic mobilization and escalation of tensions at the national level nurtured by ethnic entrepreneurs.

### Short historical background

In order to better understand the current research and its context, I provide here some historical and geographical information about Kyrgyzstan. The background information will be helpful for assessment of

this project since Kyrgyzstan is not a widely-known country. In my historical overview, I will briefly outline the main historical stages of identity formation in southern Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan is the post-Soviet Central Asian republics with more than 90 per cent of its territory covered by mountains. The bulk of the population is concentrated in a few valleys. The mountains naturally divide the territory of Kyrgyzstan into its northern and the southern parts. This condition has, to some extent, determined regional divisions in the state, in terms of economic welfare, and regional politics and identities.

Figure 4.1. Map of Kyrgyzstan (source: Nations Online project)

Kyrgyzstan is an ethnically-diverse country of more than six million people, and the largest ethnic groups are Kyrgyz (comprising 60–65 per cent of the population), Uzbeks (14–20 per cent), and Russians (10–14 per cent), depending on the estimates. The Russians are concentrated in the northern part, mainly in the

capital Bishkek and the Chui valley, while the Uzbeks live in the southern region. Three of the seven oblasts (provinces) are in southern Kyrgyzstan: Osh, Jalalabat, and Batken.

Geographically, all the southern oblasts are a part of the Fergana valley. The Fergana valley contains substantial territorial parts of three Central Asian states: Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. It was one of the most densely-populated regions in the Soviet Union and the total population of the valley exceeds 20 million people, most of them the Uzbeks. When the Russians conquered Central Asia and colonized the region in the second half of the nineteenth century, the mountainous territories and some valleys of modern Kyrgyzstan were mostly populated by Kyrgyz nomadic tribes. These tribes did not constitute one state or a political union at that time. Instead, they were subordinated by the Kokand khanate, one of the three khanates of the Central Asian region in the nineteenth century (the modern city of Kokand is located in Uzbekistan's part of the Fergana valley).

All Kyrgyz tribes are connected by a common language and a shared genealogy. Historically, each Kyrgyz tribe was located in a genealogical structure that continued until relatively recently. A shared genealogy allowed Kyrgyz nomadic tribes to remain in close contact and to 'imagine' themselves as one ethnic group (on genealogical imagination, see Edgar 2004). *Kurultai* was another institution that enabled the Kyrgyz and other nomadic peoples of the Eurasian region (mainly of Turkic and Mongol origin) to maintain their ethnic boundaries as distinct. In essence, *kurultai* was an informal political council which facilitated interaction between tribes. Representative of tribes used *kurultai* to meet and to make collective decisions regarding diplomatic issues, resolution of problems at the intertribal level, distribution of pastures and roamed territories among tribes, elections of political leaders (*khans*), collective military actions against common enemies, and so on. The nomadic style of life prevented Kyrgyz from mixing with other ethnolinguistic groups. Cultural and linguistic influence of sedentary populations upon Kyrgyz was minimal because nomads and sedentary populations were mainly isolated from each other geographically. The former roamed in mountainous landscapes while the latter resided in the fertile oases of the Fergana valley. The two populations made contact only on rare occasions, mainly during trading transactions.

Unlike Kyrgyz nomads, the sedentary population of the Fergana valley did not identify itself with a particular ethnic group. It was a diverse and fragmented population with mixed and contested identities. These identities were rather based on territorial, religious, professional, tribal, or some other grounds and were not built along distinct ethnic boundaries. People spoke various dialects of Turkic or Iranian

languages. Later, exactly this population of the Fergana valley constituted the core of the newly-created Uzbek nationality (Fierman 1991).

Kyrgyz referred to the sedentary people of the Fergana valley as ‘sart’, a pejorative term used by nomads in respect of Iranic- and Turkic-speaking traders and farmers of the valley. In modern days, the term ‘sart’ is still used in a negative sense by the nationalist Kyrgyz regarding the Uzbeks (and to a lesser extent the Tajiks). This provides a rationale for some local historians to explain the recent ethnic conflict by tracing contemporary interethnic tensions to the history of the nomad–sedentary conflicts of the nineteenth and earlier centuries.

After the Russian colonization of Central Asia in the second half of nineteenth century, the Tsarist administration established Turkestan’s general governorship over the whole Central Asian region. The colonial administration developed different attitudes toward nomads and the sedentary people. The lands inhabited by nomads were regarded by the Russians as ‘empty spaces’ and nomads as ‘noisy’ tribes that could threaten stability of colonial rule. The Tsarist administration encouraged migration of landless Russian peasants to the Central Asian region and allocated them land plots mainly in the territories used as pastures by Kyrgyz and Kazakh nomads. This territorial-colonialist expansion resulted in a mass rebellion of the Kyrgyz in 1916 and the subsequent Russian genocide of Kyrgyz nomads. On the other hand, the Russian colonial administration did not interfere much in the affairs of the local sedentary population in the Fergana valley. It never sent Russian peasants to this region and granted local nobility a great deal of autonomy. The valley was the main source of cotton to the Russian empire and so long as taxation and the cotton supply were secure, the Russian governor-general did not try to alter existing socio-economic settings.

In 1924, the Soviets conducted territorial and administrative reforms in Central Asia. As a result of these reforms, the Turkestan Autonomious Soviet Socialist Republic was reorganized into several administrative units, such as the Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast, the Uzbekistan Soviet Socialist Republic, the Tajikistan Autonomous Socialist Republic and the Turkmenistan Soviet Socialist Republic. The delimitation process was accompanied by ethnic categorization of the Central Asian population.

Initially, Soviet nationality policy consistently promoted linguistic and ethnic categories at the institutional level. The 1920s and 1930s were a period of ethnic category creation through the census and the introduction of passports. Each ethnic category approved by Moscow was added in the census lists of nationalities and the nationality graph was introduced in all Soviet passports. Thus, those categories which

were not included in the official census lists ceased for all intents and purposes to exist, at least at the official level. For instance, *sarts*, one of the largest groups of that time, were not officially approved by Moscow as a nationality. Recognition at the official level had very important consequences because officially-recognized nationalities could benefit all advantages of the Soviet nationality policy.

When passports were first introduced, individuals could choose their nationality although the choice was limited based on their knowledge of languages, the region of residence and some other characteristics. Thus one could choose, for example, Ukrainian nationality if he or she spoke the Ukrainian language and/or was of European appearance and/or of Ukrainian descent, and/or was a resident of Ukraine (T. Martin 2001). Once passports had been introduced, the citizens of the Soviet Union were no longer able to change their nationalities.

As for nomadic groups, such as the Kazakhs, Turkmens, and Kyrgyz, it was easier for ethnographers to distinguish them as distinct ethnic groups as they had already had a relatively strong sense of ethnic identity based on common genealogies and shared myths of a collective lineage. The main problem emerged regarding sedentary populations. Because the population of Fergana valley represented a mixture of groups not necessarily based on ethnic identities, the Russians could barely identify them. Soviet policymakers employed ethnographers to distinguish these groups and create ethnic categories. Eventually, the Turkic-speaking population became, more or less the core of Uzbek nationality and Iranian-speaking groups constituted the core of Tajik nationality (Hirsch 2005). The introduction of literary and standardized language grammar in the secondary-school curriculum produced, over generations, homogenizing effects on development of the Uzbek national identity.

## The ethnic riots in June 1990

The first ethnic riots between the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz took place in 1990, on the eve of the Soviet Union's collapse. The late years of the USSR were marked by increasing ethnic mobilization and a growing number of nationalist movements that spread across the national republics. The nationalist movements put forward various political demands, which varied from demands of recognition of national languages to demands for full state independence. As a late riser in nationalist mobilization, Kyrgyzstan featured violent outbreaks of ethnic nationalism (Beissinger 2002).[17] The emergence of nationalist movements in

[17] In his analysis of nationalist mobilization in the late Soviet Union, Beissinger (2002) argues that late risers were distinguished by more violent repertoires.

Kyrgyzstan was denoted by the establishment of nationalist organizations including two clearly ethnic organizations – the Uzbek organization *Adolat* (Justice) and the Kyrgyz organization *Osh Aimagy* (the Osh region), both based in the southern regions. These two nationalist organizations played a crucial role in instigation of ethnic violence in June 1990. *Adolat* was created by the Jalalabat Uzbeks in 1989 but soon its influence extended to the Osh Uzbeks as well. Reportedly, a number of *Adolat's* members had reached 400 000 (Lubin et al. 1999, 47). In May 1990, the organization sent a petition to the Soviet government in Moscow, in which they demanded preservation of Uzbek traditions and culture and recognition of an Uzbek autonomous republic in Kyrgyzstan. This action was perceived by the Kyrgyz population as clear evidence of the separatist intentions of the Uzbek minority. The consequences of that move were profoundly serious. It generated outrage among the Kyrgyz population and also established over generations among the Kyrgyz long-lived suspicions regarding Uzbek separatist aspirations. The Kyrgyz implicitly and then explicitly perceived the Uzbek mobilization in 2010 as secessionist with the Kyrgyz nationalist politicians actively playing this card in their own electoral interests.

*Osh Aymagy* was created in May 1990 to assist unemployed and landless Kyrgyz. It set a task to provide landless Kyrgyz people with plots for the construction of houses. The organization quickly became popular as the Kyrgyz youth felt deprived. In Osh city, the Uzbeks dominated the trade sector and had better job opportunities. The Uzbeks, for example, constituted 79 per cent of taxi drivers[18] and 84 per cent of workers in the commercial sector of manufactured goods, 75 per cent in public food chains, and 71 per cent in trade and retailing (Gaziyev 2008, 298; Lubin et al. 1999, 47). The established economic infrastructure in many southern cities favored the economic interests of the Uzbek communities and made it difficult for many ethnic Kyrgyz, especially from rural areas, to find decently-paid jobs. Access to the trade sector, catering business, and agricultural market dominated by Uzbek business networks was extremely difficult for individuals from outside. Uzbeks enjoyed overwhelming access to agricultural lands around Osh. The residential patterns in southern regions reinforced social and economic segregation. Uzbek ethnic groups prevailed in urban areas of major cities and towns, especially in Osh province,[19] while the Kyrgyz lived in surrounding villages. Only 15 per cent of the Kyrgyz population in the southern regions lived in urban areas (Gaziyev 2008, 299–300).The mountainous districts such as Alai, Chon Alai, and Kara Kulja with difficult life conditions and less developed infrastructure were (and are) monoethnically Kyrgyz.

[18] At that time, the profession of taxi driver was considered relatively prestigious and well -paid among blue-collar workers. For instance, in Bishkek taxi drivers were, for the most part, ethnic Russians.

[19] Note that there is Osh city and Osh province with the former being an administrative center of the latter. The same refers to the city and the province of Jalalabat.

Even nowadays, this pattern is largely the same. A share of Uzbeks in towns of Uzgen, Karasuu, Nookat, and Aravan that are administrative centers of respective districts varies from 65 per cent to 90 per cent (Kyrgyzstan census 2009). During Soviet times migration of rural Kyrgyz to urban areas was strongly prevented by the system of *propiska*.[20]

Such residential and social divisions and institutional barriers to migration only contributed to Kyrgyz perceptions of an unjust distribution of public goods. The Uzbeks were seen as being at the top of the economic and residential pile, enjoying comfort and the many infrastructural advantages of urban life. On the other hand, local government and administrative positions were dominated by the Russians and Kyrgyz. The Uzbeks felt that they were highly underrepresented in power structures and therefore, discriminated against for political reasons. Being at least 29 per cent of the overall population in the region, Uzbeks constituted only 4 per cent of Communist party first and second secretaries and 11 per cent of the heads of the municipal and district (*raion*) executive committees in southern Kyrgyzstan (Lubin et al. 1999, 47). Many of the features described above, such as a lack of balance in political, social, and economic arenas and communal segregation have been effective till the very present. Paradoxically, the relative deprivation was instrumental for mobilization of both ethnic communities in 1990 and to some extent in 2010.

There is little documented evidence available on the 1990 riots. Besides criminal investigations conducted by security services, there is practically no research that sought detailed factual reconstruction of the events in June 1990. The ethnic riots started as a conflict over land distribution and by official estimates left in their wake 318 dead and 31 individuals claimed lost, among them 93 Kyrgyz, 220 Uzbeks, and 36 from other nationalities. More than 1000 people were wounded. Several hundred houses and buildings were burned and looted. 331 individuals were convicted, among them 225 Kyrgyz, 72 Uzbeks, 19 Russians, 5 Uyghur, 7 Tatars, 1 Ukrainian, 1 Kazakh, and 1 Kurdish (Joint Working Group 2012). The conflict affected predominantly the cities of Osh and Uzgen and also some villages surrounding these cities. The most active phase of the riots lasted from 4–6 June, with skirmishes and ethnic aggressions in subsequent days through to early August. The ethnic violence in the end was stopped by the intervention of Soviet troops. The government declared a state of emergency, including a curfew which was cancelled in November of the same year.

[20] Mandatory residential registration.

The dynamics of the conflagration in 1990 was in many respects repeated during ethnic violence in 2010. Therefore, it is critical to reconstruct the events of 1990 at least in general lines. Hereafter, my description of the ethnic riots in 1990 draws heavily on the chronicle of the events published on the popular website Fergana.ru (the official name is Fergana News). Curiously, the chronicle was published on the website on 8 June 2010, just two days before the onset of ethnic violence in June 2010.

The tensions between the Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities accelerated after *Adolat* sent a petition to the Kremlin in May 1990 demanding administrative autonomy for the Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan. The petition engendered huge outrage among the Kyrgyz. The spring of 1990 was characterized by repeated large demonstrations by Kyrgyz youth who lived in Bishkek and Osh. At the time, Bishkek was a predominantly Russian city where the Kyrgyz composed not more than one fifth of the city's population. Only in one out of sixty schools was the language of instruction Kyrgyz. A similar situation was observed in Osh. Many young Kyrgyz who came to Bishkek and Osh to work or study lived in rented apartments and student and worker's dormitories. The social problems with housing and unemployment of the rural youth were ignored by local authorities for years. Nor did they seek to solve the problems in rural areas to reduce internal migration. Basically, the same problems were apparent during the 2010 ethnic riots. The young Kyrgyz from rural areas constituted the core of land movements and organizations like *Osh Aymagy.*

In Osh city on 17 May, *Osh Aymagy* demanded from the local authorities distribution of land plots for the landless Kyrgyz who lived in Osh otherwise threatening to squat available land plots starting on 17 June. After the regional authorities ignored this demand, five thousand Kyrgyz youth gathered in Osh on the plots of arable land of the Lenin collective farm that belonged to Uzbek farmers. On 30 May, *Osh Aymagy* demanded problems with housing, unemployment, and *propiska* (permit of residence) be addressed for internal migrants in Osh city. The same day and at the same place, the Uzbek meeting took place. It was attended by a group of MPs and municipal officials of Uzbek origin. The Uzbek group decided to appeal to the Kyrgyzstan government about creation of Uzbek autonomy with a deadline set on 4 June. In response, *Osh Aymagy* set a deadline for the resolution of its demands also on 4 June (Fergana.ru 2010). The next day, Uzbek bakers "stopped selling bread to Kyrgyz in the city and Uzbek flat-owners expelled 1,500 Kyrgyz tenants from their rented flats. Local KGB sources reported that that action had only added more Kyrgyz supporters to the ranks of *Osh Aymagy*" (Gaziyev 2008, 281). Although, in the end, the republican commission agreed to allocate some amount of land lots for construction of private housing in other areas in Osh surroundings, the radical wing of *Osh Aymagy* refused to accept this deal.

As the deadline for the demands of both *Adolat* and *Osh Aymagy* approached it became clear that the supporters of both organizations were going to confront each other. In the evening of 4 June, two crowds, the Kyrgyz of about 1500 and the Uzbeks of about 10,000, gathered on the fields of the Lenin collective farm separated by a thin line of the police officers. Uzbek supporters from neighboring Kyrgyzstan districts of Namangan, Andijan, and Fergana of the Republic Uzbekistan joined local Uzbeks in Osh (Fergana.ru 2010; Gaziyev 2008, 282). Reportedly, the Uzbek crowd attempted to attack the Kyrgyz by breaking police lines. Clashes between the police and the Uzbek crowd broke out. The police fired live bullets. Instead of dispersing, the Uzbeks rushed towards the downtown, burning cars and municipal transportation and destroying Kyrgyz property on its way. The Kyrgyz crowd, following this example, began to target Uzbek houses (Fergana.ru 2010). In the following days, Uzbeks attacked several police stations. Violence erupted but diminished on 6 June:

> As the clashes between the two groups escalated, a state of emergency, including a curfew, was declared in Osh. The centre of Osh city eventually became quiet when troops blocked roads into the city to prevent opposing groups from entering. However, the violence spilled beyond Osh city into the surrounding countryside. The first day of violence in Osh city left 11 people dead and 210 injured. With the arrival of additional troops of the Army on 6 June, the situation improved and violence subsided. But the city was totally isolated. Rumors spread fast, and those reaching adjacent villages prompted many Kyrgyz villagers to travel en masse to support their people in the Osh city. Fortunately, most of them were prevented from entering the city by the military, which was crucial in cordoning off Osh city and warding off agitated young Kyrgyz and Uzbek people from adjacent areas to aggravate the situation further (Gaziyev 2008, 284).

However, after subsiding in Osh more intense violence spread to the city of Uzgen on 5 June. As Uzgen was predominantly an Uzbek city with more than 90 per cent the population being Uzbek, the riots took the form of clashes between the Uzbeks from the Uzgen community and the Kyrgyz from surrounding villages. The Kyrgyz participating in clashes were aided by their ethnic fellows from the mountainous districts of Alai and Kara Kulja. Many of them arrived in Uzgen riding horses armed with metallic bars, sticks, and knives. The riots in Uzgen resulted in pogroms and burning of Uzbek houses; however, the entrances to the rest of the city were barricaded. This prevented further violence. The city was besieged by the Kyrgyz from surrounding and remote territories. The local authorities tried to evacuate the Kyrgyz minority in Uzgen, however, those who left in the city were assaulted by the local Uzbeks. In some villages surrounding Uzgen – notably in Mirza Aki – local Kyrgyz residents attacked the small Uzbek minority with consequent sexual violence, killings, and looting. In Mirza Aki village, "19 people were assaulted on 5–7 June, 10 women were raped and 188 houses were destroyed and property looted" (Tishkov 1995, 136). The violence in Uzgen largely stopped on 8 June when the military troops entered the city. The riots in the district of Uzgen became the most violent and left approximately 200 deaths and several hundred houses

burnt (Gaziyev 2008, 286). In addition, violent incidents, killings, and riots also took place in several locations in the districts of Karasuu, Aravan, and Nookat. In Uzbekistan, 15,000 Uzbeks attempted to break through the Uzbek–Kyrgyz border to the city of Osh. Ethnic Kyrgyz in Uzbekistan were assaulted and beaten up by Uzbeks and as a result several thousand Kyrgyz fled to Kyrgyzstan as refugees. Tensions emerged in the areas where the refugees were concentrated.

## Kyrgyzstan's ethnic politics in 1991–2005

In the initial stage, the ethnic policy of the first president, Askar Akaev, was more or less balanced. While promoting the national identity of the Kyrgyz, the president reassured the ethnic minorities of continued state support and security. He proclaimed "Kyrgyzstan is our common home" as a slogan for his civic policy of accommodation of ethnic minorities into Kyrgyzstan's political community, "while at an institutional level the creation of the Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan provided a venue to discuss the concerns of minority communities—although in a carefully structured and limited fashion" (Melvin 2011, 9).

The Uzbek minority of Kyrgyzstan distanced itself from Kyrgyzstan's political arena by adopting a passive stance; however, in the electoral arena it supported political parties and forces affiliated with Akaev's personal rule. This loyalty to Akaev's regime was reinforced as some opposition leaders from the southern regions relied more on nationalist rhetoric in their electoral campaigns against Akaev's leadership. Akaev's main political opposition in the 1990s was in the south, where his principal opponent, Apsamat Masaliev, a former communist leader of Kyrgyzstan in *Perestroika* times, had great support among the local Kyrgyz population. Masaliev lost the first presidential elections to Akaev that were held a few months later following the ethnic riots in Osh in June 1990. One reason of the communists' defeat was that the latter failed to undertake any meaningful action to smooth over the negative consequences of the conflict (KIC 2011; HRW 2010). Being originally from the north, Akaev did not have good political connections with the Kyrgyz population in the south. The president's unpopularity in the south was confirmed in the 1995 presidential elections, when Akaev's main challenger Masaliev, himself from the south, received a majority of his votes from the southern constituencies. At the same time, the Uzbeks voted in favor of Akaev. To balance a lack of support in the south, the president increasingly relied on support of the Uzbek community and its ethnic leaders and manipulated it against southern opposition leaders. Neil Melvin correctly depicts the nature of these relations between Akaev's regime and the Uzbek leaders:

> In return, the Uzbek community was largely left alone, notably to promote business interests and the Uzbek language as the de facto working language in southern urban centers and areas with large Uzbek populations. Representatives of the Uzbek community were present in the national parliament and even on occasion in government. Akaev cultivated a loyal Uzbek leadership—while at the same time ensuring that there was no single figurehead or unified Uzbek movement that might be able to promote stronger claims. He advanced symbolic projects, such as the Uzbek-Kyrgyz University in Osh, which also supported key allies in the Uzbek community. In this way, interethnic relations in the south became interlinked with the struggle for power in Kyrgyzstan through an interaction of north-south, rural-urban, patronage (clan) and ethno-political elements. The informal balancing of Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities practiced under Akaev was not a static system and was affected by the country's broader politics. The longer that Akaev stayed in power the greater grew the political struggle around him, which was essentially confined to an inter-Kyrgyz struggle. At the elite level, the Akaev regime became reliant on the president's family, relatives, friends, and representatives of his home region in the north. The opposition looked to mobilize local connections and groups to challenge the Akaev regime, notably in the south. (Melvin 2011, 10)

Akaev's regime starting as truly democratic but gradually eroded into corrupted neopatrimonial rule where all important decisions were made on the level of the president's family members. By the end of his second term, Akaev had turned increasingly authoritarian. After jailing his main political opponent (a popular politician from Bishkek) in 1999, Akaev faced his main political challenge from southern politicians including Kurmanbek Bakiev, who would become the next president. As Akaev's rule became more and more patrimonial and corrupt, the opposition groups consolidated. In 2005, Akaev was overthrown by the opposition under the leadership of Bakiev. The latter became the new president but his rule, as it turned out later, had disastrous consequences for the country and interethnic relations in the south.

On 7 April 2010, the dictatorial regime of Kurmanbek Bakiev was overthrown by popular uprising in the capital city, Bishkek. That day, people gathered in the central square to peacefully protest the dictatorship and the government's sweeping corruption. By then the regime had become highly repressive and unpopular, quickly approaching the standards of brutal repression practiced by the neighboring Central Asian regimes in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Under Bakiev's rule, Kyrgyzstan for the first time in its history was ranked as "non-free" by Freedom House. The intimidation, jailing, blackmailing, and assassination of political opponents, journalists, and political activists became a common practice. Many oppositional figures were forced to leave the country fearing arrests on political grounds or an assassination by security services.[21]

Bakiev's clan aggressively monopolized political and economic arenas of the country. The president's brothers and his cronies composed a narrow circle of his neopatrimonial rule. The various spheres of

[21] The most notorious political assassination during Bakiev's rule was conducted by security services on the president's brother's direct order, and with his direct participation.

political power and the Kyrgyz economy were assigned among his brothers and sons. The president's youngest son, Maksim, took complete control of the state's economy and business. Maksim subordinated the functioning of the economy to his personal business interests in the manner of some sub-Saharan dictators. He concentrated the most profitable business in his hands by forcibly taking over highly lucrative companies and firms from successful businessmen intimidating or jailing those who resisted. The president's brother Janysh appointed himself as the president's chief bodyguard and subordinated to himself the state's security services and law enforcement bodies, which were reoriented to protect Bakiev's political power and economic interests by intimidating businessmen and spying on the regime's political opponents. Allegedly in collaboration with criminal groups, Janysh took full control of drug trafficking. The president's other brother, Akhmat, became an informal boss of the whole Jalalabat province, a native land of Bakievs' family. In Jalalabat, Akhmat had shaken economic interests of some Uzbek elite, including Kadyrjan Batyrov. This had far-reaching repercussions on ethnic relations in the south of Kyrgyzstan.

When people gathered in the central square to protest his dictatorial rule, Bakiev in contrast to Akaev, decided not to give up his power without fight. He ordered security services to open fire against demonstrators. Eighty-six peaceful demonstrators were killed and 1500 wounded by snipers and the police forces. This brutal attempt to frighten away people backfired on the regime. Contrary to Bakiev's expectations, fearless protesters in the central square did not retreat, the police was beaten up, and the protesters continued to siege the Government House until Bakiev fled to his native village in Jalalabat province. In Jalalabat, Bakiev's clan tried to raise the southerners against the new government playing the regionalist card. The cynical attempt failed when Bakiev and his escort were kicked out from Osh city by ordinary citizens after he had arrived to consolidate his power in the largest city of the south. Several days later, overthrown president Bakiev left Kyrgyzstan and found refuge in Belarus at the invitation of President Lukashenka.

The regime transition proved to be a difficult period for the interim government. It was accompanied by waves of social and political disturbances and chaos especially in the first weeks after the regime change. Like during the previous regime change in 2005, the police were demoralized and completely disappeared from the scene shortly after the regime change occurred on 7 April. The same night and the following days, when the widespread looting of supermarkets and shops started in the streets of Bishkek, no policeman arrived to prevent the looting and disorders. Upon returning to the streets some time later,

the police were reluctant to act decisively to face multiple challenges emerged as a result of vacuum of power.

The interim government that replaced Bakiev's administration acted ambiguously. It was comprised of twelve leading oppositional figures, fragmented however by internal rivalries and contradicting interests and political backgrounds. While the reformist members of the government pushed heavily on with political and constitutional reforms, they completely ignored sharply deteriorating interethnic relations in the south and in the northern province of Chuy. On 19 April, several hundred land squatters, mainly of Kyrgyz descent from rural areas and the outskirts of Bishkek and most probably mobilized by some ethnic entrepreneurs and provocateurs, attacked the village of Maevka in the vicinity of Bishkek. The village was inhabited by an ethnically-diverse population but the targets were mainly the Meskhetian Turks and a few Russians. The land squatters claiming the land plots and houses that belonged to the Turks set fire to several houses. Violent clashes ensued which left five people dead and several dozen wounded. Twenty-eight houses of Turks were targeted, some of them burned and looted (Trilling 2010). Among the 120 arrested on charges of murder, arson, and looting, only five were sentenced while the rest were released. A decision to release the majority of arrested rioters can be explained by the government's fear of generating discontent among nationalist groups in the Kyrgyz population. Besides arrested 'scapegoats', the authorities did not seek to find the real organizers of the attacks. Nor did they seek to understand the causes of the riots. These riots also signaled the government's weakness and its willingness to tolerate ethnic violence.

## Ethnic mobilization and growing tensions in 2010

After disorder in Bishkek following the regime change of 7 April, tensions between the Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities in southern Kyrgyzstan escalated. Tensions accumulated throughout April, and especially May and the beginning of June and then resulted in deadly ethnic riots on 11–15 June 2010. The growing tensions between the communities triggered mobilization along ethnic lines mainly in Osh and Jalalabat, the largest cities in the south, and their surrounding villages. The ethnic mobilization showed itself in creation and proliferation of vigilante and self-defense groups, mass ethnic rallies, and the political activities of ethnic entrepreneurs. The nationally-acknowledged Uzbek leaders attempted to politically mobilize the Uzbek communities across the southern regions. This mobilization was accompanied by many violent incidents like ethnic brawls, street fights, attacks on cars and the beating of car passengers or

passers-by. This section provides descriptive accounts of the events that preceded the deadly riots on 11–15 June.

*Events in Jalalabat in May.* On 13 May, Bakiev loyalists attempted to take power in the southern areas of Kyrgyzstan. Organized by some key figures of Bakiev's regime (some former top figures of Bakiev's regime were arrested in relation to an attempted coup. The phone conversations among conspirators were taped by security services and played on the national TV channels). Armed with sticks, they stormed and occupied the governor's provincial administrations in three provincial centers: Batken, Osh, and Jalalabat. The takeovers in the first two quickly failed but in Jalalabat, the native province of Bakiev, a violent confrontation between supporters of the Interim government and Bakiev loyalists followed. The interim government lacked political support in the south as the majority of its members were originally from the northern regions. After the April revolution, the control of the government in the southern regions was nominal.

In these circumstances, some members of the interim government negotiated with Kadyrjan Batyrov, one of the most influential Uzbek political figures in the south and the leader of Jalalabat Uzbeks, to suppress the revolt by expelling Bakiev loyalists from the provincial administration buildings. For Batyrov, who was also a leader of the ethnic Uzbek party 'Vatan' (motherland) and a deputy head of the Uzbek National Cultural Center in Jalalabat, it was a good opportunity to show the muscles of his party. Batyrov mobilized his local Uzbek constituency. The Uzbek activists armed with sticks and some firearms converged on the streets with supporters of Tekebaev, an ethnic Kyrgyz and a prominent figure of the interim government, also originally from Jalalabat province. Accounting for about 3000 activists, the joint Kyrgyz–Uzbek crowd drove out Bakiev's adherents from the city center and government buildings. The clash accompanied by gunfire left two people dead and fifty injured (ICG 2010, 8).

The same night, after expelling Bakiev loyalists from the city center, the supporters of the Interim government went to Bakiev's native village in Jalalabat suburbs. The mob attacked and torched several houses of the Bakiev family. Batyrov and his followers took an active part in the burning and looting of Bakiev's houses. Although the Kyrgyz activists also participated in the march to Bakiev's native village led by Batyrov (KIC 2011, 14), the arson generated a backlash among many Kyrgyz. They suspected Batyrov and the Uzbeks, in general, of attempting to assault the Kyrgyz and their ethnic symbols.[22] The incident convinced the Kyrgyz that "the Uzbeks had been planning their revenge since 1990, hiding weapons in

[22] Allegedly, during the attack the Uzbeks burned and trampled on the national flag and the traditional Kyrgyz *yurt* (a mobile nomadic tent-house), which is one of the most important Kyrgyz ethnic symbols.

their mosques, just waiting for the time to strike" (ICG 2010, 10). Batyrov's further political activities in the following days enforced these suspicions among the Kyrgyz.

On 15 May, Batyrov organized a political rally at his university in Jalalabat city attended by the Uzbek communities from various villages and towns of Jalalabat province but also by the Uzbek leaders from Osh city (Memorial 2012, 20). During the rally Batyrov and his associates made some political demands. He denigrated the role of the Kyrgyz activists and emphasized the importance of the Uzbek community in restoration of order. Batyrov accused the police and security services of incapability and called for creation of "people patrols" in order to save the order in the streets of Jalalabat city.

The demands and content of Batyrov's speeches at the rally were seemingly neither inflammatory nor radical. However, they sparked fears among the Kyrgyz population and convinced them about growing Uzbek mobilization. In the words of Bektur Asanov, a governor of Jalalabat province, "no radical demands were made by Batyrov, but that the tone of the speeches expressed intense frustration and inspired the Uzbeks to be bolder in their aspirations" (KIC 2011, 15). Another account by Kyrgyz journalist based in Osh was cited in the *Memorial* report:

> He talked about democracy, the Interim Government, corruption, the Bakiev regime… At no point did they openly talk about Uzbek autonomy or make any kind of illegal encouragements. But the words had a hidden meaning. The call to "gain conscience", what's that all about? When you read the transcription, that's one thing, but when you see it on TV it is something completely different. When Batyrov talked about establishing volunteer groups, he listed areas: People are coming to us from Osh, Uzgen, Aravan, and Nookat [towns in Osh province]. This was interpreted as mobilization of the Uzbek population. And another encouragement: We have been quiet for 20 years, now the time has come to take our rights. In the evening, when the TV program had just ended, everyone started calling each other, asking: "Did you see it? What's going to happen?" From that moment on, different rumors started spreading, and populist nationalism increased sharply (Memorial 2012, 22).

After this rally, the events of the next several days unfolded with greater violence. Some local Kyrgyz nationalist officials closely linked to Bakiev established a camp at the local hippodrome which became a focal point for Kyrgyz ethnic mobilization from rural areas. By 19 May, the crowd at the hippodrome had accumulated about 5000–6000 people who demanded "an immediate criminal prosecution of Batyrov and the management of Osh TV and Mezon TV for 'incitement of inter-ethnic hatred.' Rumors about the demands for autonomy by Uzbeks gained strength" (KIC 2011, 16). On 19 May, the crowd marched to the city center and attacked Batyrov's university. The security services failed to curb the violence which erupted with intensive gunfire. The clashes – in which both sides were armed – claimed four Kyrgyz and two Uzbeks deaths; 72 individuals were wounded. Batyrov along with five other Uzbek leaders fled the

country after they were charged by the general prosecutor as being instigators of ethnic clashes. A curfew and a state of emergency was introduced in the city of Jalalabat and Suzak district from 19 May to 1 June (KIC 2011, 16).

*Tensions in Osh*

The authors of Memorial report identify three waves of ethnic tensions in Osh city. Each new wave was associated with increasing frequency and intensified violence in interethnic incidents. The first tension in Osh city started in late April. The first documented evidence points out that on 29 April, there was a fight at the Osh-3 railway station between two members of a Kyrgyz criminal gang and Uzbek businessmen who imported used cars from South Korea. The fight had repercussions as ethnically-framed news about it quickly spread across the town. Subsequently, small fights and brawls in the streets took place on regular basis.

Although the first stage of the conflict in late April–early May was not characterized by open violent clashes, both ethnic communities developed mechanisms of quick mobilization. This was especially evident among the Uzbek communities. The Uzbeks did not trust local authorities or the police and their ability to provide communal safety in the environment of growing ethnic tensions and activation of criminal gangs (Memorial 2012, 20). The response of the Uzbek community was to create vigilant 'self-defense' groups and patrols in *mahallas*. At the same time, small-scale mobilization of Uzbeks was observed in various parts of the city and suburban villages. People gathered in crowds of 50–250, and sometimes 500–800 people. The larger crowds usually gathered during meetings with the Uzbek leaders Salakhutdinov, Batyrov, and Abdurasulov. On several occasions, such gatherings were monitored by police officers and attended by a chief of Osh police, Kursan Asanov. Once, in personal communication with Asanov, the Uzbeks discussed the rumors circulating in the city and complained about the cars without plates and with tinted windows emerging in great numbers around the city (Memorial 2012, 17).

The quotation from one of the local newspapers cited in the Memorial report (2012, 17) illustrates very well the state of panic spreading in one of the days among residents of Osh:

> The residents in the city were in a state of panic all weekend. They called each other, saying that wandering groups of young Uzbeks armed with sticks and pistols were gathering to attack ethnic Kyrgyz, and vice versa. Some spoke of shooting. People from the Uzbek population started organizing groups of young people to protect their areas, yelling "The Kyrgyz are coming". Others organized brigades to keep order.

The second wave of tensions in Osh, according to Memorial with the reference to the police reports, took place on 16-21 May (Memorial 2012, 19). This wave was touched off by events in Jalalabat city when on 13 May, supporters of the former president Bakiev attempted to seize power in the south, and political mobilization of the Jalalabat Uzbeks led by an influential Uzbek ethnic leader Kadyrjan Batyrov. Although the Uzbek communities in Osh did not participate directly in Jalalabat events, the disorders in Jalalabat fueled tensions between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in Osh and induced further ethnic mobilization and the spread of rumors.

One of my key informants Rahman (a pseudonym) is an ethnic Uzbek, a human rights activist, and a community leader from Turan – an Uzbek dominated district in Osh. His evidence and accounts of the events were highly reliable and later were corroborated by investigative reports of the international missions. In an interview that I conducted in July 2010 – in the immediate aftermath of the conflict – Rahman described how things were getting tense in Osh:

> A: For example, on 1 May, during the night, there was a car accident. One taxi minivan with an Uzbek driver and a BMW automobile with a Kyrgyz driver crashed. Of course, there were and are and will be such incidents which can never be shown in [police] data. But that day then I saw in an Uzbek neighbourhood, next to *domkom* [the head of a residential or apartment block], around 200–300 of young Uzbeks supporting the Uzbek taxi van driver; they all surrounded the Kyrgyz young driver and lynched [*samosud*] him. And a week before there had been an opposite case, again interethnic conflict when the Kyrgyz young men were trying to punish an Uzbek violator. Then I approached the *domkom* and asked him why he hadn't called the district police, the traffic police to solve the problem in a legal way. Then they were called and were investigating the case in *domkom*'s living place – a wagon – meanwhile outside the crowd was getting out of control. And I could see 3–4 young men in that crowd with the guns – automatic rifles. I came close enough to speak to them and asked whether they were police; they said no. They were Uzbeks. Later I made some informal inquiries and realized that they were bodyguards of Inom Abdurasulov.
>
> Q: Who is he?
>
> A: He is an ex-MP of *Jogorku Kenesh* [parliament]. Although he is an Uigur, he considers himself an Uzbek leader. … Then I said to them it is not good to walk around armed since they are not law-enforcement people. I asked whether they have license. They were strong and militant [*boevoi*] young men and asked me to leave them alone and forced me out of the crowd. Then I approached the policemen and said that there were civilians [*grajdanskiy baldar*] with the guns on the shoulder. The police replied that they cannot go to the crowd which is big and may destroy them [the police].

He observed similar incidents in other parts of the city with spontaneous street mobilization of people from both ethnic groups and involvement. Despite he signaled about these incidents to high-profile officials in Bishkek the latter failed to take meaningful preventive measures. The speech by Batyrov at the rally in Jalalabat was constantly played in the Uzbek language TV channels, Mezon TV and Osh TV. The continuous TV translations of the rally in Jalalabat affected interethnic relations in Osh by inciting fear

among the Kyrgyz population. Batryrov's speech obviously had negative effect on the Kyrgyz's perceptions on the Uzbek's "insurgent" political activities. The Memorial report states that:

> Almost all sources mentioned the extremely distressed reaction of the Kyrgyz population to the video recordings of the demonstration in Jalalabat on 15 May that were shown on Osh TV and Mezon TV, both based in Osh, and especially to the speech by Batyrov" (Memorial 2012, 21).

The number of incidents with brawls and street groups fights increased considerably at these days. Otherwise everyday routine quarrels turned to the focal points for quick ethnic mobilization. The regular traffic brawls unusually attracted ethnically divided large crowds of 100–200 people. In such cases, the rapid ethnic mobilization was going on through the phone calls to their friends and acquaintances by witnesses of the incidents. The police records show at least nine instances of interethnic group fights and beatings. "In all registered incidents, the victims were recognized as being Kyrgyz or persons who had been mistaken for Kyrgyz by the attackers" (Memorial 2012, 23).

The rise of vigilantism in Uzbek *mahallas* contributed to the further escalation of interethnic relations in the city. Some of the regular stop and searches of passing cars conducted by militant 'self-defense' groups ended with violent incidents. On several occasions, vigilante groups formed in the Uzbek *mahallas* attacked several cars that looked (from their perspectives) suspicious; the Kyrgyz passengers in these cars were taken out and beaten. Some evidence indicates that such vigilante groups escalated tensions between the ethnic communities in the city. One report suggests that:

> [o]n 21 May, the Head of UVD [police department] in the Osh city, Kursan Asanov, demanded an end to checks of cars carried out by volunteer groups established by Uzbek territorial councils in Osh (especially in the Turan and Sheyit-Dobo Microdistricts and on 8 March Street), and that such groups should patrol only in cooperation with local police inspectors. On this background, one may assume that some of the conflicts taking place were connected to the actions of officially formed "people's watch groups" (Memorial 2012, 24).

This case also suggests that before the riots broke out on 10 June, there had been the rise of Uzbek vigilante groups. In the second interview with Rahman in 2012 – who was monitoring the situation on the Uzbek side – he told me the following:

> One could feel that interethnic conflict was inevitable. Because here [in Osh] Kadyrjan Batyrov started to organize self-defense groups while from the other side the Kyrgyz youth had gatherings and some clashes. Then we knew that there could well be interethnic conflict but of course we could never know its scale and did not expect it would end up like this. … We felt that both sides were preparing for something. But one side lacked the arms. When I went to Jalaldin Salakhutdinov's [head of republican-level Uzbek UNCC] office I saw around 70 young sportsmen of different sports – sambo, wrestling, boxing etc. I asked why he was gathering them together and he replied that he was told by the mayor's office that they wanted each of the quarters – kvartal – to prepare its own district with a self-defense group [*otryad samooborony*] to be ready to protect

> themselves. He said that those sportsmen were his district's self-defense group. Similar self-defense groups were established in the Kyrgyz communities as well.

In the context of Osh, police-civilian relations have ethnic dimensions. It is considered that police officers tend to be predominantly ethnic Kyrgyz. According to the NGO, For Interethnic Tolerance, among 627 police officers in Osh city 86 were ethnic Uzbeks and of 550 police officers in Osh province (the locations outside Osh city), 30 were ethnic Uzbek (Memorial 2012, 19). In prevention of the violence, the Osh police placed a special emphasis on cooperation with influential representatives of the Uzbek community. In the course of preventive actions, the police met with

> the leaders of the Uzbek population and trainers at local sports clubs belonging to different ethnic groups, led similar meetings with representatives of such institutions as the city council, neighborhood committees, territorial councils, aksakal courts and so forth, who probably could provide a realistic evaluation of the situation. On the evening of 19 May 2010, sportsmen were asked by the authorities to carry out night-time patrolling of the streets alongside law enforcement officials. The authorities demanded that the leaders of the Uzbek population in Osh Province make public statements on television including criticism of Kadyrzhan Batyrov and calls for the Uzbek population not to give in to provocations. The chairman of the Republican Uzbek National Cultural Center, Zhalaldin Salakhutdinov was warned by the Head of UVD [the city police department] that he would be held personally responsible for any demonstration or attempt at organizing gatherings among the Uzbek population (Memorial 2012, 24–25).

The police carried out some measures to stabilize the situation and to prevent further ethnic group mobilization. In the beginning of May, at the joint meeting of representatives of the city council, local territorial councils, and the police, a decision was made to organize volunteer patrols and public order squads in urban neighborhoods and village districts (Memorial 2012, 17). Subsequently, such patrols and public order brigades proliferated in virtually every Uzbek neighborhood. As discussed earlier, the aggressive behavior of these volunteer squads contributed more to escalation rather than to de-escalation of ethnic tensions. At the city entrances, the police set up ten roadblocks and eight mobile teams of police special forces, each comprised of five policemen. Upon emergence of rumors about gathering of crowds of ethnic youth, police officers would drive to the alleged locations of ethnic mobilization to monitor the situation. In some cases, when in response to some rumors or street incidents small-scale mobilizations were observed in Uzbek mahallas, the police worked together with the leaders of local Uzbek communities who tried to persuade people to disperse (Memorial 2012, 16). The authors of the Memorial report also point out that little is known about similar cooperative activities in Kyrgyz neighborhoods.

There were also some problems in cooperation between the police and the leaders of the Uzbek community. Some of the rank-and-file police officers were strongly embedded in the everyday discourse of the tensions and routine nationalism between members of Kyrgyz and Uzbek ethnic communities. This

factor posed an obstacle to interethnic trust and cooperation between the Kyrgyz policemen and civilian Uzbeks. This distrust revealed itself during the ethnic riots. In many cases, the police and other law enforcement troops considered Uzbeks as enemies and *mahallas* as hostile territory. In the same way, the Uzbeks distrusted the police as for them the policemen were just the same Kyrgyz who support their ethnic fellows. Despite distrust and tensions between the Uzbek community and the police, police-civilian cooperation facilitated prevention of potential local conflicts.

The third wave of ethnic tensions took place on 9 and 10 June. The culmination of this wave, the Uzbek ethnic mobilization near Alai Hotel in Osh downtown on 10 June, became the onset and a trigger event for subsequent violent ethnic riots erupted. Virtually all investigative reports agree that the onset of the riots started with emerging rumors and increasing tensions in the streets of Osh reportedly characterized by brawls, stabbings, indiscriminate beatings and mass attacks against the Kyrgyz. Aggressive Uzbek mobs conducted stop and search of cars, and dragged Kyrgyz passengers out of their cars and beat them (HRW 2010; KIC 2011; Memorial 2012). On 10 June, these violent acts against Kyrgyz took place at the same time in several locations in Osh: in the city center, in Furkat village (the eastern entrance to Osh), and in Nurdar village (the road to the airport), where Uzbek mobs indiscriminately attacked, beaten and stabbed some random Kyrgyz.

Ethnic and community leaders

In general, two sets of ethnic leaders were identifiable during violent events in June 2010. First, national- or regional-level leaders and at lower level – community leaders. Local -level community leaders played a key role in influencing micro-outcomes. Their efforts to contain violence caused aggregate outcomes in certain neighborhoods, districts and even towns. In chapter 8, I will provide detailed accounts of community-level leaders's (kvartkoms and domkoms) community policing activities in everyday life and during the violent conflict based on the example of one such leader, Hamza. In self-policing local communities, traditional leaders strongly relied on the power of local social norms. However, not all leaders enjoyed power in among their constituencies. Kyrgyz community leaders in multi-story building complexes with high concentration of the residentially unstable migrant population were generally weak. Their authority was not recognized by the majority of local residents. To be influential, local leaders need long-life and stable residential communities that share common social norms. I will discuss this problem in chapter 6.

Kyrgyz national leaders' role was ambiguous. Ideologically being ethnic nationalists, some of them were seen actively mediating aggression among Kyrgyz groups and in some cases even preventing crowds from attacking Uzbek mahallas. One such politician was Tashiev – a loyal supporter of dictator Bakev. He was seen in Osh and in Jalalabat where his role remains unclear. Investigative reports mention his mediating activities and credit him with preventing Kyrgyz attack against Suzak (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 32)

Bakiev's regional clients were involved in stormings of local government building in Osh, Jalalabat, and Batken in May 2010. They put active efforts to sabotage the new regime. It is not clear whether regional leaders from Bakiev's southerner network tried to organize spontenous violent mobilization. Keldibekov, one of Bakiev's most active supporters was sent on the helicopter to pacify the Kyrgyz crowd in Furkat along with other two southern politicians from the anti-Bakiev Interim Government. Gayipkulov, a former minister from Bakiev's network was a key figure who prevented violence in Aravan and brokered a non-aggression pact between local Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities (Khamidov, Megoran, and Heathershaw 2017). A leader of Kyrgyz village of Uchar in interview positioned himself as an ethnic nationalist, however, he played a crucial role in negotiationg peace with Uzbeks in Turan. He actively assisted in providing humanitarian aid to Turan. However, it does not imply that some national-level leaders and even other lower-level networks probably turned a blind eye (to), silently encouraged, or even actively helped to organize violent mobilization. Since, I do not have any direct evidence, I suggest that more research should be taken to investigate leaders of mobilization.

The role of religious leaders in containing violence was rather marginal. I have not observed their active involvement on brokering peace between conflicting communities during the most violent phase of the conflict. Religious mediating was mostly visible in Uzgen district (see chapter 8). Their nvolvement increased at the later stages of the conflict and in post-conflict reconciliation activities.

*The Uzbek ethnic actors and entrepreneurs*

Evidence suggests that those days, Batyrov travelled extensively to Osh city and neighboring towns and villages trying to mobilize local Uzbek communities. In their turn, the Uzbek leaders of Osh participated in Jalalabat meetings organized by Batyrov.

In the days preceding to the June riots, the Uzbek leaders conducted remarkably high number of activities with the local Uzbek communities including political rallies and meetings in the Uzbek neighborhoods.

According to the police records, from April to 10 June, the leaders of Uzbek National Cultural Centers (UNCCs),[23] and particularly Batyrov, Salakhutdinov, Abdurasulov, Abdullaeva, and Davron Sabirov conducted more than 25 meetings and gatherings with the Uzbeks in Osh city and its surroundings. During these meetings, the Uzbek leaders and the participants discussed the issues of interethnic relations. At the same time, the Uzbek leaders established the headquarters and public order and 'self-defense' groups for the purported purpose of providing safety in the neighborhoods and urban districts with a predominantly ethnic Uzbek population (National Commission 2011). It is not clear here, what is meant by a term "headquarters", however. It can be inferred that such "headquarters" facilitated fast mobilization of the members of 'self-defense' groups in case of confrontations with outsiders. As noted earlier, such vigilante groups conducted stop and search of cars and passersby. The stop and search actions were from time to time accompanied by beatings of car passengers of ethnic Kyrgyz background and random interrogation of allegedly suspicious individuals who accidentally found themselves in the Uzbek *mahallas*.

It is worth noting that among the abovementioned top Uzbek leaders, Batyrov was the only representative of the Uzbek community from Jalalabat. The fact that he was actively involved in the organization of political meetings with local Uzbek communities in Osh region was very unusual given that the Uzbek leaders usually confined their political influence within the scope of their local constituencies. Since the ethnic riots in 1990, Uzbek leaders had restrained themselves from political activities that could be considered an open challenge to the dominant Kyrgyz political establishment. The meeting organized in May 2010 in Jalalabat was only the second Uzbek political event after 1990. The first political rally was organized in May 2006, also by Batyrov, in which the participants of the meeting demanded greater representation of Uzbeks in political and law enforcement bodies and to recognize the Uzbek language as a state language (Khamidov 2006; KIC 2011, 17). Batyrov's active involvement in political mobilization of the Uzbeks in Osh province, therefore, displayed his apparent aspirations to become a nationally-acknowledged leader of the Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan. He used his '*Vatan*' party to promote his influence and embrace and unify the otherwise fragmented prominent Uzbek leadership of Osh, in the framework of his party. Essentially, this was the first serious attempt to unite the Uzbek leaders of Osh and Jalalabat.

[23] The Uzbek National Cultural Centers (UNCCs) are organizations usually established by rich Uzbek businessmen operating at different levels. For example, Batyrov, Salakhutdinov, and Inomjon Abdurasulov were leading members of a national level UNCC. In contrast, the Osh UNCC operated at town level in Osh.

However, not all segments of the Uzbek elite supported the brand of political activism energetically promoted by Batyrov and his supporters from Osh. The leaders of the city-level Osh UNCC held a position traditional to the Uzbek minority, aimed at supporting the central government and restraining the Uzbek community from political activism at the national level. They cooperated in establishing an institution called a public council and created the board of *aksakals*[24] under the Osh UNCC. Such boards of *aksakals* were created in various territorial districts in Osh city. The task of the public council was to gather community leaders from various boards of *aksakals* to establish a common line in addressing diverse social issues, for example, fighting corruption.

The position proposed by the Osh UNCC and some community leaders closely linked to this center was not to put political demands on the agenda until the legal government was elected, not the interim one. In situation when there was no legitimate elected government and a project of the new constitution had not yet been adopted, they clearly opposed to the political activism, at the time being produced by national Uzbek leaders like Batyrov. To preclude from hazardous (according to them) ethnic mobilization, the activists of the Osh UNCC went to different districts, large *mahallas* and neighborhoods, schools and other places to convince local residents not to participate in mobilization promoted by Batyrov, Salakhitdinov, and Abdurasulov. The Osh UNCC had disagreements and political fights with the republican UNCC, which marked political and ideological divisions between the Uzbek leaders at the national (Batyrov from Jalalabat UNCC and leaders of the republican UNCC) and Osh city level (the Osh UNCC). Sheraly, one of the active members of the Osh UNCC and a former MP in the national parliament in the 1990s, who was also a chair of the public council and the board of *aksakals* under the Osh UNCC, describes the position of the Center before the June riots:

> Then in April and May the situation was so tense in Osh, full of various events. We were protesting opposing Kadyrjan Batyrov and his supporters [*Batyrovtar*] to participate in rallies, we said we didn't want to mix in politics, we were taking a neutral position, we had lots of fights [with the national-level UNCC]. Our Center [the Osh UNCC] had a position not to get involved, the board of *aksakals* determined this solution. We decided to leave them [politicians] to fight it out over the portfolios and then to work with those who were left [laughing]. We were in a neutral position, there were meetings in 2–3 places in Osh coming from Jalalabat that of Abdrasulov's. We didn't allow any of our active members to take part in any of them. We did our best to prevent any unrest. We held gatherings with the active members in different places in micro-districts telling them not to participate in protests, "don't allow your children to go out", not to get mixed up with them. At that young age they might be keen to be involved. Otherwise we had lots of pressure from different parts to take part in the protests in the square. They [various competing Kyrgyz political factions] wanted to see Uzbeks as well in this and that group. But we were standing against all this and didn't

[24] *Aksakal* literally means "white beard". The meaning of this term nowadays is twofold: 1) respectable elder and 2) influential, respectable, and authoritative person. In this context, the term often refers to community leaders.

> want to get mixed up in it. … So more than half of us were against the meetings, about 90 per cent were against such dirty protests. And now what? That has happened, the fact is done.

Another community leader, Rahman blames Batyrov for bringing militants to the city of Osh who were destructive for social cohesion of local Uzbek communities.

> Rahman: Eventually those in black shirts were those sportsmen of Inom Abdurasulov and Kadyrjan Batyrov, I think.
>
> (another Uzbek man sitting next to Rahman): Mainly they were exported from other regions [*bashka okrugdan tashylyp kelindi alar*]
>
> Rahman: The beginning of the conflict has started in Jalalabat. You know it. Kadyrjan Batyrov's property was being taken out by Bakiev's brothers. And Kadyrjan Batyrov was not able to stand against the Bakievs and began engaging ordinary Jalalabat people, the Uzbeks into the process. When the Uzbeks didn't support, he started political demands, …, then he said that the Constitutional Advisory Board did not accept our suggestions. So, the main figure who escalated the situation [*obstanovkany nagnetat kylgan*] between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz was Kadyrjan Batyrov (interview, Osh, August 2012).

Some phrases from Batyrov's speech indicate that the situation unfolding after the 7 April, characterized by the weak and fragmented interim government, the demoralized police, and open confrontation between various political groups and clans within Kyrgyzstan's political arena distinctive with its prevalence by ethnic Kyrgyz actors, was perceived by him as a 'window of opportunity' for making political claims on behalf of all Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks. The phrases like 'we have been expecting this moment for twenty years'; 'Uzbeks have been waiting this moment for long time'; 'the time has come for the active participation in the political life of the country'; 'if the Interim Government is not able to restore order and justify people's trust then …' and so on (see Joint Working Group 2012), point at his growing ambitions to speak in the name of the whole Uzbek community. The speech by Batyrov during the Uzbek political rally in Jalalabat on 15 May was interpreted differently by the Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities. For Uzbeks, the speech signified the opening of new political opportunities prompted by regime change and breakdown of the central authority. The Kyrgyz population perceived it with fears of new Uzbek resurgence. The Kyrgyz memories of the 1990 conflict suggested 'a separatist scenario' of Uzbek political mobilization and aggression against the Kyrgyz. The law enforcement bodies interpreted the very speech as instigation of the interethnic clashes which followed few days later after the meeting in Jalalabat organized by Batyrov, and issued a warrant for Batyrov's arrest.

Despite multiple interethnic violent incidents took place before the conflict, except for Jalalabat events in May till 11 June ethnic tensions and street fights did not escalate into deadly ethnic riots. It was in 11–15 June when riots claimed many human lives and pogroms set on fire hundreds of houses. Additionally, the

events preceding 11–15 June show high ethnic mobilization of the Uzbeks in Osh and Jalalabat. This dynamic of ethnic mobilization presented itself in multiple street fights, group beatings and vigilante violence (the latter mostly by Uzbek 'self-defense' groups), with its culmination on the night of 10 June when several thousand Uzbeks took over the streets in the downtown of Osh setting fire to the shops of the ethnic Kyrgyz, crashing windows, stopping cars, and beating the Kyrgyz – dynamics that were completely reversed in subsequent days, when the rural Kyrgyz mobilized against the Osh Uzbeks. Ethnic violence was probably exacerbated by the absence of top Uzbek leaders on 10 June 2010. Many republican level UNCC leaders went to Tajikistan to meet Batyrov and others were absent for other reasons. An Uzbek criminal leader 'Black' Aibek was killed two days before the onset of violence. Aibek was embedded in Bakiev's patronage network and was Batyrov's main rival among Uzbek leaders. There was practically no key Uzbek figures to mediate the onset of violence.

# Chapter 5. The dynamics of ethnic riots in June: Flashpoints of violence in Osh

*"Fearful of the future, weaker groups may resort to preemptive violence today to secure their position in times to come"* (Lake and Rothchild 1998a, 16).

Uncertainty induced by the temporary breakdown of the state created a sense of insecurity – a necessary condition for actors' innovative repertoires that characterize many great transformative events (Sewell 1996, 867). As Sewell and McAdam (2001, 110) argue, "By increasing th[e] sense of uncertainty, … [transformative] events also fuel a dramatic escalation in the mobilization of emotion by all parties to the conflict."

Defining the June 2010 events as anti-Uzbek pogroms – as many scholars and external observers did (ICG, KIC and others) – renders too simplistic accounts of this episode of ethnic violence. This violent conflict was a more complex event. Forms of violence varied across locations and time (events). As Beissinger's (2002, 2007) eventful approach shows, transformative power of unfolding events can change the dynamics of contention in one location while local structural conditions, demonstrational effects, and institutional constraints can alter actors' repertoires and convert one form of contention into another in other locations. As noted earlier, the first outbreak and diffusion of violence in southern Kyrgyzstan produced uneven effects across various locations. The scope, forms, and intensity of violence changed under the influence of critical events, local conditions, and actors' learning (interactions). Given the complexity and different forms of violence this episode employed, it is important to carefully define local-level forms of violence to provide more accurate analysis of the events in southern Kyrgyzstan. If the previous chapter has showed how street brawls and vigilante violence escalated into riot mobilization, this chapter demonstrates how street mobilization exploded into violent riots and how then riots transformed into communal violence, pogroms, and (quasi-)ethnic warfare.

This chapter employs process tracing to identify the main flashpoints of violence in Osh. It assesses the spatial distribution of violence and provides descriptive analysis of the dynamics of violence in the city. It outlines the patterns of escalation and diffusion of violence across neighborhoods. The observation of violent events by districts demonstrates the local dynamics and conditions that led to particular forms of violence.

The main pattern/scenario of ethnic riots in the city of Osh as well as Jalalabat and the village of Bazar-Korgon, the major sites of ethnic violence, was all the same. It had the following sequence. In the first

phase, there was evident increasing ethnic sensitivity in the city, growing mobilization of Uzbek communities, pre-riot beating and attacks against Kyrgyz and eruption of violent riots initiated and dominated by Uzbek militant groups and the first assassinations of Kyrgyz. The second phase was characterized by counter-mobilization of rural Kyrgyz from neighboring but also from remote villages and districts, rumors of extermination of urban Kyrgyz by Uzbeks, and large-scale communal violence and property destruction in Uzbek *mahallas*. The third phase was de-escalation of violence due to several factors: mass panic flight of Kyrgyz militants as well as residents of western neighborhoods of Osh after the spread of rumors about an invasion by Uzbekistan's army; exhaustion of combatants; and increasing role of the state in containing violence. The de-escalation phase was marked by a sharply decreased rate of mortality in the riots but an increasing rate of hostage taking.

Ethnic violence in June 2010 progressed from mobilizational to organizational and from marginal to mixed state-society forms of violence. It escalated by following one of the typical paths of nationalist violence specified by Beissinger (2002, 306). According to his typology of nationalist violence, the ethnic conflict in Kyrgyzstan contains mainly features of national rebellion (ethnic riots) and nationalist combat (communal violence and ethnic warfare) with elements of pogrom-like violence in several neighborhoods. Similar to nationalist violence in late years of the USSR, these four forms of violence were the most common in June 2010 (Beissinger 2002, 305–8). However, the variance in forms of violence was determined by local-level dynamics and temporal sequence of events in each location and neighborhood. In most cases, ethnic riots escalated into communal violence and intensive armed combats. In locations where local Uzbek groups were defeated, armed combats transformed into pogrom-like violence. As chapter 4 shows, the trigger to ethnic riots to a large extent resulted from the accumulation of the preceding marginal forms of violence such as multiple street brawls and vigilante violence exercised by local Uzbek 'self-defense' groups. The trigger event was preceded by growing Uzbek mobilization. At this stage, two events were important for the escalation of violence. One is an attempted assault on the female student dormitory by an Uzbek crowd and another the police's violent dispersion and shooting of the Uzbek protesters. The first event produced a very powerful rumor about rape of Kyrgyz female students. This rumor had a crucial mobilizational effect on Kyrgyz from rural areas. The second event produced an escalating effect because it was a game-changer that produced first killings. Violent ethnic riots erupted after these killings. This signified the shift to the new level of violence.

Similar transformative events occurred also at later stages such as a violent stand-off at the roundabout in Furkat and the rumor about Uzbekistani troops invasion (see detailed accounts of these events later in

this chapter). This kind of transformative events had escalating or de-escalating effects. However, these effects were uneven across locations being influenced by local conditions. As McAdam and Sewell (2001, 107) put it, "contingent sequences of actions and purely local causes help to produce surprising, significant, and enduring effect". One important implication of such transformative events was that they not only produced a cascade of other significant events but also influenced local intra- and inter-group balances of power at neighborhood level. At final stages of this conflict on 14 and 15 June, violence de-escalated into sporadic attacks and skirmishes. However, marginal forms of violence in the form of hostage-taking came to predominate even after the active phase of this ethnic conflict (after 15 June).

## Ethnic violence in Osh, June 2010

Matveeva and her collaborators (2012) detect five spots which can serve as flashpoint locations for the riots. The KIC (KIC 2011, 25–26) instead discern seven hotspots of violence. UNOSAT shows seven large clusters of property damage. In general, all investigative reports converge on identification of main hotspots of riots. The difference in the number of these hotspots can be attributed to the levels of violence, conceptual definition of violence and spatial/geographical scale of aggregation in the analysis. Inconsistencies in location names can be explained by the confusion of old and new and official/formal and popular/informal names of wards and neighborhoods. However, when one juxtaposes the main hotspots of violence which appears in various reports and witness accounts, the convergence is almost full except some minor discrepancies. In general, it is fully acceptable to say that the reports are reliable in this point. The five hotspots identified by Matveeva et al. include 1) the area of the Alai Hotel; 2) Oshskii Raion – an area where several Kyrgyz and Uzbek neighborhoods intersect; 3) the Frunze market in ethnically mixed neighborhood; 4) the borderline area between Uzbek and Kyrgyz blocks in Cheremushki neighborhood; and 5) Furkat area – the Osh city's eastern entrance (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 21).

The investigative team of the Memorial report identifies the three most dangerous zones on 11 June: the eastern neighborhoods in Furkat and Shark; the western neighborhood in Cheremushki; and north-eastern neighborhood "Oshskii Raion" in Alymbek Datka district.

*Trigger event*

The trigger event which entailed the main impetus to the escalation of violence and the subsequent riots took place in the city's downtown, near the Alai Hotel. It started as an ordinary scuffle between small groups of Kyrgyz and Uzbek youths in a small casino. The fight quickly mobilized the Uzbeks from neighboring communities in Sheit Tepe, Majrimtal, and Kyzyl Kyshtak, all located along Navoi street. The rumors about the Kyrgyz 'beating' Uzbeks quickly spread across Uzbek mahallas of the city. The Uzbek mob quickly grew to around 3000 people, "who were highly prepared to mobilize" (Memorial 2012, 36). The crowd consisted of people with diverse motivations and expectations but according to some witnesses "local people … did not play an active role in the events, rather unknown young men did" (2012, 37). To mediate the situation the local authorities sent officials of the Uzbek origin including a deputy mayor and a deputy head of UVD (the city police). However, mediating efforts were undermined by unrecognized outsiders in the mob who disrupted all attempts of negotiation with the police. Regarding the presence of provocateurs in the crowd, the Memorial report refers to the testimonies of some Uzbek leaders and officials, and particularly of Zulimov who was then a deputy head of the city police:

> [Zulimov] speaks of the presence of unknown men in black t-shirts who interrupted the attempts [of the Uzbeks] to enter into negotiations with the police and who provoked the crowd to action. An UVD officer also noted the presence of "Uzbeks not from Osh" who were carrying out violent attacks for the entire period up until the crowd was dispersed after two hours. Other sources also speak of the presence of somewhere from 10–15 to 50 (by different estimates) non-local Uzbek males near Hotel Alai. These men categorically refused to follow calls to go home and intended to move towards the city in order to "deal with the Kyrgyz". However, the role that this group (or groups) played remains unclear (Memorial 2012, 39).

As the crowd became more aggressive, it rejected the police's mediating attempts "by throwing stones and chanting anti-Kyrgyz slogans. …The roads to the City Police Office had been locked by the crowds. Police were injured. Police vehicles were burnt" (KIC 2011, 27). The crowd went out of control and used stones to attack the dormitory of the Osh State University where mainly Kyrgyz students including female students from rural areas were accommodated. The students in the dormitory barricaded its entrances while female students hid on the roof of the building (Memorial 2012, 40). Later they were evacuated by law enforcement troops. The Uzbek mob started destroying public buildings and burning shops that belonged to ethnic Kyrgyz. Cars driven by ethnic Kyrgyz were stopped and attacked. The Kyrgyz passengers were taken out and beaten. One Kyrgyz motorist who was confused as an Uzbek by Uzbek rioters was

advised by the latter to leave the place because there was going to be a big mess (interview with a Kyrgyz resident, Osh, 2012).

The assault on the female dormitory had very serious consequences for the development of violence. The news about the assault, in its distorted versions, quickly reached the Kyrgyz population. An informational vacuum engendered by the absence of credible media coverage and inability of the authorities to provide timely reports about unfolding events generated a horrible and very powerful rumor that Uzbeks attacked the dormitory, raped and killed Kyrgyz female students spread across the country. The rumor triggered huge outrage among the Kyrgyz. Vengeance became one of the strongest motives that moved hundreds of Kyrgyz from rural areas against Uzbek *mahallas* during violent events. It became a strong mobilizational factor for ethnic Kyrgyz who justified their attacks in terms of revenge.

The police used gunfire against the Uzbek crowd after the latter torched nearby shops and public buildings and wounded several police officers. An armored personnel carrier (APC) with riot police that initially stayed neutral between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks lost control and started indiscriminate machinegun fire at people standing along the street. The police's hysterical gunfire killed several and wounded dozens of Uzbeks. The crowd dispersed and retreated to *mahallas* to the north of the Alai Hotel. According to several reports, after this turning point the police started indiscriminate gunfire. An unjustifiably violent response by the police and the military introduced the new wave of escalation of the conflict. Thus, the first deaths were resulted not from the actions of riotous crowd but from the uncontrolled mortal shootings of the police. The police tried to hid its responsibility in killings which were revealed later by investigative teams and human rights groups. These killings deeply affected the dynamics and level of interethnic violence in the subsequent days by turning the disorder at the Alai Hotel into a flashpoint of deadly ethnic riots. The authors of the Memorial report similarly characterize the trigger event as a key moment which determined the highly violent course of the consequent riots:

> The unjustified use of assault weapons and the dispersion of civilians from the night-time streets, many of whom were in a state of shock, led to a further destabilization of the situation in the city. Some of the youth saw what had happened as a change in the "rules of the game", according to which the conflicting sides had formerly tried to avoid actions that could lead to deaths among the population. The public speech of the Mayor of Osh on local television at 4:40 AM calling for calm could not influence the situation in any way (Memorial 2012, 54).

First riots followed by both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz. However, the rioters of Uzbek origin dominated the streets of the city till the morning of 11 June. Ethnic mobilization occurred almost at the same moment near several Uzbek neighborhoods in the city. Several flashpoints emerged after the trigger event at the Hotel Alai. At the same night, the riots and property destruction embraced mainly the downtown: in Masalieva

street (the eastern downtown) and Frunze market in the western downtown. Rioters torched commercial and public buildings, shops, and cafes. In Masalieva street, several clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbek rioters took place. In the area of Frunze market, the Kyrgyz rioters killed two Uzbeks and looted and burned several supermarkets and restaurants.

Figure 5.1. Osh city and its surroundings (Source: Google earth)

Another large hotspot emerged in the borderline between several segregated Uzbek and Kyrgyz neighborhoods in the Alymbek datka (informally known as the Oshskii district) and Manas Ata (informally known as HBK) ward, in the north-eastern part of the city. Here, the Uzbek rioters from neighboring *mahallas* of Jim and Jiydalik stopped cars and beat the Kyrgyz passengers. They threw stones and burned

shops and cafes owned by Kyrgyz. One of the main tense sites of clashes was near a seven-stores building where Uzbeks used gunfire. Soon they clashed with a Kyrgyz crowd that came from the northern ward of Manas Ata. The weak and passive interference by the police and military could not stop the rioters from both sides. According to the KIC and the National Commission, the military was inexperienced and unprepared to deal with riots when compared with those of the police officers. On the other hand, the police were often ethnically biased. During the riots, police officers in some cases provided unbalanced treatment towards Uzbek residents and incorrect judgement of operative situation. Inadequate behavior of the military often led to the escalation rather than de-escalation of violence. One telling example is indiscriminate gunfire by the military at the area of the Hotel Alai which turned a disorder into a flashpoint for violent riots. In the Frunze market, indiscriminate gunfire by the military from an APC left two Uzbeks dead.

Outside the city, the first riots broke out in Furkat and Nurdar villages, the eastern and western suburbs of Osh city. In Furkat, an eastern entrance to Osh city, some Kyrgyz fled the village towards neighboring Kyrgyz villages after local Uzbeks started burning Kyrgyz houses. The police unsuccessfully tried to intervene between Kyrgyz and Uzbek rioters around 4 am. In Nurdar village, local Uzbeks blocked the road leading to the airport and stabbed several Kyrgyz who were returning from the airport. The Memorial report characterizes overall situation in first hours of riots as follows:

> In spite of the presence of extremist groups on both sides, the level of violence and mutual attempts at worsening the situation was far lower than what would be the case during the next days. Violent confrontations were often brief and many of those who were caught by the crowds and beaten up were released soon after. In terms of the standoffs of hundreds or thousands of people, the participants were merely trying to prevent violence being carried out by the other side. Both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in different parts of the city went out on the street in order to prevent pogroms [property destruction] and looting near their own houses or to secure the safety of their friends or relatives. The exaggerated rumors of violence in other parts of the city played a destabilizing role. The process of ethnic mobilization became large-scale, including armed criminal groups(Memorial 2012, 82).

According to the KIC:

> witnesses anticipated not simply violence, but war. An azan (call to prayer) called, irregularly, from at least 4 mosques at about 2am and warned people to take care. Uzbek men travelling in cars in the mahallas shouted that the war had begun. The same message was conveyed in innumerable telephone calls. Immediately following the trigger incident at the Hotel Alai, an expectation of Kyrgyz attack on the mahallas was shared by the Uzbeks, Kyrgyz and the Government" (KIC 2011, 28).

The outcome of night riots on 11 June was documented by local hospitals:

> By 6 AM on 11 June, Osh Provincial Hospital had registered two dead and eight wounded (all of them Uzbeks). Osh City Hospital had registered 18 wounded (11 Kyrgyz, seven Uzbek), the hospital in Nariman village had one dead and 28 wounded (all Uzbeks). In Tuleyken Hospital (Kyzyl-Kyshtak village) there were seven dead and 40 wounded at 6:15 AM (these are likely to be Uzbeks). The Southern Hospital of the border service in Osh received four wounded ethnic Kyrgyz between 1 AM and 6 AM, including an officer of the border service and a member of the SOBR [special police troops]. The hospital in Kyrgyz-Chek village, where only Kyrgyz patients were delivered, received its first wounded at 9:45 AM (Memorial 2012, 64).

The dynamics of riots sharply changed by the morning of 11 June. Many neighborhoods in Osh were physically isolated from each other by barricades and roadblocks, turning them into self-contained zones. As opposed to the night fights, the Uzbek crowds stopped roaming in the streets and concentrated their efforts on defense of their neighborhoods from angry Kyrgyz crowds from rural districts. In Uzbek neighborhoods, local residents drew large signs saying 'HELP' and 'SOS', making them visible for aviation and satellite pictures. The below excerpt from the Memorial report summarizes different phases of violence. It indicates that the violent disorders first transformed into an armed conflict and then de-escalated into sporadic violence.

> The peak of violence in Osh came between 11 and 12 June, in spite of a state of emergency having been introduced the night before. Looting and torching of private homes and businesses began already on the morning of 11 June, and was soon taking place on a massive scale. Hundreds of residents of the city were killed, thousands were wounded. Tens of thousands left their homes and fled to the border with Uzbekistan. The use of armoured vehicles and automatic weapons against the self-defense forces in the Uzbek mahallas also indicated that the conflict had entered a significantly new level. The relocation of forces from other regions in the country and the rumors spreading on 12 June that Russian and Uzbekistani forces may be brought to the region eventually helped curb the level of violence. Kyrgyz youth arriving from village districts to participate in "the war" started leaving the city. On 13 and 14 June, the pogroms continued, but the intensity of the conflict became markedly lower. Only separate torchings and local incidents were reported on 15 June (Memorial 2012, 83).

On 11 June, when thousands of furious Kyrgyz from rural districts forced through the road blocks into the city, the authorities lost control over the situation. Kyrgyz rioters enraged by rumors and real facts of violence stormed several large Uzbek neighborhoods. From 11 June onward, the main sites of intense attacks on Uzbek *mahallas* were the villages of Furkat and Shark along Pamirskaia-Monueva street and Amir Timur ward in the eastern part of the city; Cheremushki and Kyzyl-Kyshtak *mahallas* in the western part; and Sheit Tepe, Teshik-Tash, and Majrimtal *mahallas* along Alisher Navoi street adjacent to the Grand Bazaar in the downtown. In the central-northern part (Alymbek Datka, Manas Ata, Jiydalik), the clashes were still intense but their pattern was different from those of the above-mentioned neighborhoods. In the latter, riots and property destruction took place in both Uzbek and Kyrgyz neighborhoods with concentration of the gunfire in the territory of multi-storey apartment complexes inhabited mainly by ethnic Kyrgyz. The both sides made iterative inroads to the "enemy" zones. Finally, the southern districts experienced no riots or managed to quickly contain escalating violence.

The attacks on Uzbek *mahallas* usually followed the same pattern more or less depicted in the investigative reports. Kyrgyz crowds conducted repetitive attacks on fortified Uzbek *mahallas*. They usually retreated after receiving gunfire from the barricades. Being unable to overcome the defense, Kyrgyz would attack the barricades again under the cover of an APC or/and with arming themselves with automatic weapons. The APCs and automatic weapon became available for the Kyrgyz after they stormed several military depots and attacked some military convoys. The iterative attacks on mahallas were sustained through

> [b]oth random civilians and armed men, most likely from the criminal underworld, who acted as local leaders, participated in the attacks. These leaders inspired or put pressure on others to go forward when they were too scared or too tired to continue. The attacks subsided every so often, but then would recommence with fresh arrivals from the countryside. Late at night the attacks mostly stopped (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 24).

At the same time, the Uzbeks also used lethal weapon including Kalashnikovs and armored trucks. With the latter, they successfully counteracted the actions of APCs in number of cases. In many instances, the military deliberately removed the barricades erected by the defenders of *mahallas* fulfilling orders from the military commanders. According to the HRW: "Law enforcement officials also referred to information about the taking of hostages in Uzbek neighborhoods, among other acts, as grounds to remove barricades and disarm the Uzbeks" (HRW 2010, 28). However, by removing the barricades the military rarely ensured the security of local *mahalla* residents. After breaking through barricades, rioters killed those who had not managed to flee. Some women suffered sexual violence including gang rapes. Opportunistic behavior also comprised mass looting, sadistic torture of victims, and arson of residential houses. More than 2000 houses were totally destroyed by the mass arson. On the other hand, opportunism and retaliation were also pertinent to the defenders of *mahallas*. Some Kyrgyz residents who lived in Uzbek-dominated *mahallas* were attacked and killed. Some women were gang-raped and killed while others taken hostage. Those caught on looting site were severely beaten and killed. Next, I will describe the riots in each hotspot zone.

## Escalation of violence. The western part of the city

The western part of the city was tranquil when first flashpoints emerged first night in the central and northern parts of Osh city. However, two Uzbek neighborhoods, *Cheremushki* and Kyzyl Kyshtak, in the western part became the sites of particularly horrible violence and property destruction in the subsequent days. *Cheremushki* is the western-central *mahalla* that belongs to Ak-Tilek ward while Kyzyl Kyshtak is

officially beyond the city boundaries but is located along Alisher Navoi street and just 5–10 minutes' drive from the Alai Hotel. Some residents of Kyzyl Kyshtak probably took part in the events in front of the Alai Hotel. The wounded and the bodies of those killed after the police operation at the Alai Hotel were brought to the local hospital in Kyzyl Kyshtak due to its proximity to the flashpoint place. Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak are divided by Sulaiman (Solomon) Mountain, a large hill located right in the downtown with special religious and historical significance for the residents of Osh.

To have a full grasp of the riots that broke out in the western Uzbek mahallas we must take into account the Kyrgyz rural mobilization that took place in Zapadnyi[25] (literally, 'western'), a neighborhood of multi-storey apartment complexes inhabited mainly by Kyrgyz and Russians but also by some Uzbeks. Upon hearing news and rumors about what happened in Osh the previous night hundreds of Kyrgyz arrived from rural areas. Spatial proximity to the interregional road, made Zapadnyi one of main focal points for the Kyrgyz mobilization. Being located in the western outskirts of the city, it has a strategic location: the western entrance roads leading to the city from the rural districts of Nookat and Aravan, and also from the province of Batken all pass through this neighborhood. However, to enter the city's downtown from its western outskirts one must proceed through Uzbek populated *mahallas* in Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak located respectively on the southern and northern foots of Sulaiman Mountain.

Kyrgyz mobilization at the Zapadnyi district became crucial for the dynamics of violence. Being a focal point for rural mobilization, the main attacks by the Kyrgyz on Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak *mahallas* were conducted from Zapadnyi. The directions of attacks were shaped by the city's infrastructure and geographical landscape.

On 11 June, many Kyrgyz youths armed with knives and sticks arrived from neighboring villages and from Nookat, Aravan, and Batken. People who arrived at the western entrance cannot be referred to as homogenous crowd. As at the eastern entrance, in Furkat, among those at the Zapadnyi district there were many relatives of the students with whom communication had been lost. The first arrivals from villages gathered at the roundabout in the Zapadnyi neighborhood. Similar to other many places, the mobilization of rural youths at the Zapadnyi was motivated by horrible rumors that the Kyrgyz in Osh were being killed in the streets, thrown from their balconies, women raped and mutilated, and pregnant

[25] Zapadnyi is an informal name of Kulatov micro-district. Along with the micro-dicrodistricts of Anar and Tuleiken it forms the district of Kerme Too. Therefore, in official maps, Zapadnyi can figure under the name of either Kulatov or Kerme Too. However, Osh residents and investigative reports refer to this neighborhood as 'Zapadnyi'. In this research, I use this informal and popular name of this neighborhood.

women disemboweled by Uzbeks and that 'no Kyrgyz was left alive in Osh'. In the beginning, the crowd wanted to go to the city downtown to save their urban ethnic fellows and 'punish' perpetrators of the alleged mass rape of Kyrgyz female students. However, upon arrival at the Zapadnyi district their expectations about horrible violence were apparently not fully confirmed. The neighborhood was untouched by violence but they could hear the sound of gunfire and see the clouds of newly-lit fires burning from the city downtown.

Escalation of the situation in Zapadnyi neighborhood occurred after Kyrgyz refugees were evacuated in Zapadnyi and the newcomers failed to get access to the city center. The border guard garrison in Zapadnyi hosted Kyrgyz refugees from other areas of the city already affected by violence. The crowd was getting more aggressive. Some tried to look for the few Uzbeks who lived in apartments of Zapadnyi neighborhood. According to Memorial, Kyrgyz militants were banging the apartment doors asking the residents for Uzbeks and checking the nationality categories in their passports if the latter physically looked as if they might be Uzbek (Memorial 2012, 89). Several Uzbeks were found and taken hostage.

During the riots, the outsiders – whose number reached around 2000 people – dominated in the neighborhood and local residents remained as passive observers. The main entrance street to the neighborhood was barricaded and patrolled, mainly by outsiders and probably by a few local residents. Residents and elders did not intervene in the activities of newcomers even when some opportunists looted a local shop and café owned by a Kyrgyz. This non-interference was partly out of fear and broken community relations in the neighborhood and partly because residents viewed the utility of rural mobilization as a guarantee for the security of their neighborhood against retaliatory attacks of Uzbek rioters. Despite high costs of provision, residents nevertheless tolerated their 'guests' and maintained the food supply for them. Cooperation with outsiders from rural areas was to a great extent shaped by perceptions of a common 'enemy'. What made Zapadnyi a focal point for Kyrgyz rural mobilization was its strategic location at the intersection of roads connecting Osh with rural districts. The availability of a bazaar and small cafes, right there in the neighbourhood, made it possible to sustain the crowd of several hundred people. The Kyrgyz who arrived at Zapadnyi from other districts found the neighborhood a convenient place to stay as they could find relatively easy sources of board and sometimes lodging.

Free board was organized by the local population for patrols and self-defense groups now dominated by non-residents. There was a sense of solidarity among Kyrgyz, partly based on the fear of Uzbek retaliatory attacks. Local residents were afraid of invasion of Uzbek belligerents and therefore, tolerated the presence of Kyrgyz militants even if the latter bothered them sometimes.

*Dynamics of riots in Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak*

On the morning of 11 June, local Uzbek residents blocked the main road in Cheremushki (Aitieva) and conducted stop-and-checks of passing cars. Uzbek self-defense groups did not let Kyrgyz go through and beat Kyrgyz motorists. Barricades were constructed all over the neighborhood.

The first groups of Kyrgyz were initially able to pass through Cheremushki without serious incident. They told local Uzbeks at the barricades that they were going to the downtown. However, the later groups crossing through the neighborhood were attacked by Uzbek self-defense groups with the use of firearms. This incident when Uzbeks attacked a group of Kyrgyz who were moving toward the city center can be viewed as a cut-off point or a local trigger/flashpoint for the attacks on local *mahallas*. Similarly, a clash between an Uzbek mob from Kyzyl Kyshtak with Kyrgyz rioters contributed to further escalation. The attacks had serious consequences, as the Kyrgyz mobs in Zapadnyi now viewed the Uzbeks in Cheremushki as their direct enemies. Here, I do not imply that the Uzbek assaults on Kyrgyz groups in Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak were a primary reason for the later systematic attacks of rural Kyrgyz from Zapadnyi on Uzbek neighborhoods in the western part of the city. Nevertheless, these assaults certainly attracted the attention of Kyrgyz rioters and served as justification for retaliatory attacks against local Uzbeks. But the most important implication was that the defenders of Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak made certain that they would deny the Kyrgyz from Zapadnyi passage to the city downtown. Since that moment, all aggressive efforts of the Kyrgyz crowd in the Zapadnyi were directed at these two particular Uzbek *mahallas*.

Two roads from Zapadnyi were used for attacks on directions of Cheremushki and of Kyzyl Kyshtak along Navoi street. However, on the first day of riots (11 June) the main strike was on Cheremushki (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 22; see also Memorial 2012). At first, Kyrgyz rioters attacking Cheremushki used knives, axes, metal bars but no firearms. According to witness accounts, the typical rioter was in the age range of 17–30 years old. Some of them lived in the workers' dormitory in the outskirts of Cheremushki, probably internal migrants, while others came from Zapadnyi. The Kyrgyz living in four- and five-storey buildings close to the Uzbek *mahalla* did not participate in violence. They barricaded themselves, threatened by potential attacks from the Uzbek side. Armed residents of Uzbek *mahalla* (Cheremushki) tried to push out assailants by firing at them. After the Kyrgyz faced a gunfire response in

Uzbek *mahallas* they made several attempts to capture weapons from a border guard garrison located in the Zapadnyi neighborhood (Memorial 2012, 79).

However, the later waves of attacks became more ferocious. The crowd grew larger and used firearms to break through the barricades. A common pattern of riots in Cheremushki, as well as in many other places in Osh, was when captured APCs were used by rioters to demolish barricades and used as protection to storm *mahalla*. Once inside, rioters started killing local residents and torching houses. The killings and property destruction were accompanied by mass looting and sexual violence. Many Uzbek residents of Cheremushki fled to the neighboring Uzbek *mahallas*. At the same time, some cruel killings of Kyrgyz living in Cheremushki took place. The corpses of Kyrgyz were found later with evidence of physical torture.

The next day, on 12 June, attacks of Kyrgyz in *mahallas* renewed, however this time they were equally intense in Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak. Attacks on Kyzyl Kyshtak intensified after a group of Uzbeks mobilized by an elder tried to aid Uzbeks in Cheremushki. On the second day of riots, assaults on Uzbek neighborhoods became more systematic. According to the Memorial report, on 12 June rioters acted in a more purposeful and organized way. The military did not intervene. Some raised national flags as if they were fighting against some foreign enemies.

According to Memorial:

> In general, and as seen from the accounts of witnesses, the “success” of the attack on Cheremushki by groups of Kyrgyz youth on the day of 11 June was ensured by their domination in terms of weapons (those seized from the military and also those they had received from unknown sources). The estimated number of people armed with automatic weapons while carrying out pogroms varies from 30 to 60 persons. The fact that they were supported in the first period by armoured vehicles from the government forces, who were acting against the self-defense groups in Uzbek areas under the pretext of clearing barricades from the street and ending disturbances, also played an important role both in the military sense as well as the psychological. However, on the second day, the attackers were unable to expand the territory they controlled in any noticeable sense, there being pockets of resistance located inside this territory. After the losses they had suffered during previous shoot-outs, many of those arriving to carry out pogroms were scared of entering smaller streets inside the mahallas. Only very brief visits to these streets were made, often under the cover of armed support (Memorial 2012, 115).

Two main implications from this passage can be drawn. First, successful attacks of Kyrgyz militants in Cheremushki were secured by their predominance in firearms and irresponsible actions by government APCs. Firearms obtained by the Kyrgyz changed local intergroup balance of power. Second, rioters could not extend the territory of property destruction because of local resistance. Many militants were reluctant to enter small streets fearing gunshots or counterattacks. Some were killed or wounded during such inroads. These two patterns of riots were inherent to many other violent locations as I describe below.

First, as seen from the description above, at first Kyrgyz groups in Cheremushki as well as in other neighborhoods were weakly armed with sticks. Having faced armed defense at the barricades, they initially retreated. In the first day of riots, firearm response by Uzbek self-defense groups was unnecessary and even counterproductive and sometimes provocative (as in Furkat). The aggressive response radicalized Kyrgyz participants and made them think that without firearms it would be impossible to resist Uzbeks. As a result, later some groups acquired firearms including automatic weapons. Now having advantage in firearms, the Kyrgyz managed to overpower Uzbek defense groups. Firearms became available after Kyrgyz crowds stormed several military garrisons and seized their weapons. Two or three APCs were seized from the military and used during attacks against Uzbek *mahallas*. The actions of the military who demolished the barricades also contributed to the escalation of violence. This was a common pattern in the development of riots in virtually every major place affected by violence including Jalalabat city. The use of firearms spiraled violence to a much higher level transforming ethnic riots into a full-scale armed combat with a very high mortality rate. Another pattern highlighted by the Memorial investigation team is that rioters were unwilling to enter small streets and therefore, could not extend the area of destruction. Going deep into a *mahalla* and leaving armed Uzbeks in the rear was very dangerous for the rioters. Therefore, they preferred to attack those houses that were available from the principal streets.

The report prepared by the *Kylym Shamy* human rights organization reveals the real extent of weapon seizures from military depots. According to this report, several such seizures took place, mainly on 11 – 12 June. The first seizure, however, is not mentioned in the *Kylym Shamy* report. Memorial, with the reference to the prosecutor's office, informs that in the early morning of 11 June, police officers walked away from the hotspot of ethnic clashes at the roundabout in Furkat. They left 11 automatic rifles on the scene (Memorial 2012, 77–78). The abandoned weapons were most likely picked up by the Uzbek participants as the evidence suggests that the Kyrgyz group in Furkat remained unarmed until 17.00 of the same day. Until 16.00, a local hospital received Kyrgyz, all with gunshot wounds (Memorial 2012, 126). Only around 17.00 on 11 June, the Kyrgyz group in Furkat did manage to acquire firearms. The military column of thee APCs sent from the garrison in Mailuu-Suu to Osh was attacked by around 2000 Kyrgyz. Soldiers were beaten up by the crowd (Kylym Shamy 2011). One APC managed to escape and another was deactivated by a mechanic/driver (Memorial 2012, 131). Nevertheless, the crowd still seized one APC and approximately 25 automatic rifles (Kylym Shamy 2011). With these weapons, the Kyrgyz managed to break through the Uzbek barricades in Furkat (see more details on clashes in Furkat in the next section).

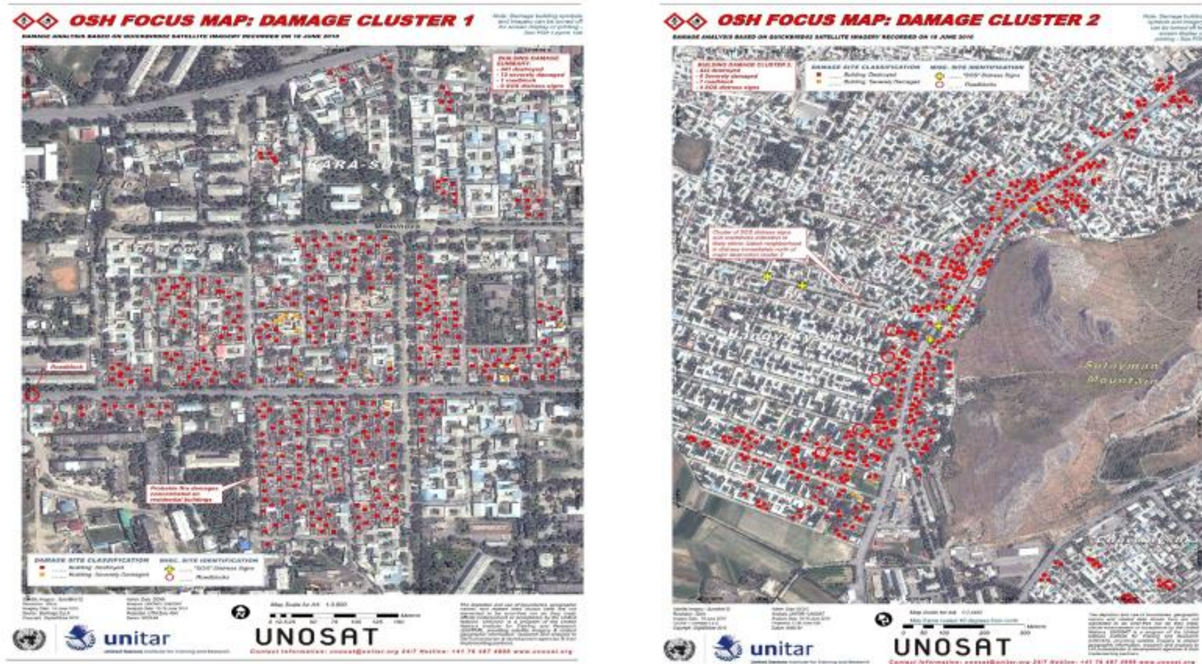
In the eastern part, the first attack on the military depot is registered at 13.30 on 11 June. A Kyrgyz crowd of 3000 attacked a military IFV (infantry fighting vehicle) that was patrolling in the streets. The crowd seized 14 automatic weapons wounding 4 soldiers, including gunshot wounds (Memorial 2012, 86). These weapons were used to attack Uzbek mahallas in Cheremushki. Other seizures occurred in Alai and Chon Alai – mountainous districts where primary rural mobilization took place. A size of mobs participating in attacks on ammunition depots usually was between 1000 and 3000. A few cases of distribution of weapons to civilians took place as well. For example, on 13 June, a chief of one military garrison in Osh ordered to distribute 15 automatic rifles to civilians who volunteered to participate in the defense against a probable attack of Uzbekistani troops on Osh. However, upon receiving weapons civilians disappeared. A total number of weapons seized during the conflict is 282 units and only 136 of them were returned (Kylym Shamy 2011).

The evidence shows that most early weapon seizures had non-premediated nature and were mostly a reaction of Kyrgyz participants to unfavorable balance in firearms vis-à-vis Uzbek groups. Soldiers were usually beaten up by a crowd. In Jalalabat, the military shot dead two and wounded five Kyrgyz participants of the attack on the military depot (Kylym Shamy 2011). On 11 June, most attacks on military depots occurred after Kyrgyz groups suffered losses in initial violent encounters with Uzbek groups that had dominance in terms of weapons. This convinced Kyrgyz to storm military depots to change balance of power. In Jalalabat province, weapons seizures took place on 13 June when violence diffused there from Osh (see chapter 9). However, the initial advantage of Uzbeks in firearms was not prevailing. Besides one seizure from police officers in Furkat, weapons were most probably stockpiled in small amounts in local Uzbek communities. But even a small number of automatic weapons and other types of firearms was enough to deter Kyrgyz in an initial stage of violence. General intergroup balance of power shifted towards Kyrgyz when they acquired weapons from military depots.

The actions of military were ambiguous. It is difficult to establish credibly the involvement of the military in attacks on Uzbek *mahallas*. Reports indicate active involvement of APCs and people in military camouflage among riotous crowds in attacks against *mahallas*. This gave to Uzbek witnesses a basis to claim the participation of the military in attacks on the side of Kyrgyz. However, this is very unlikely development. Open participation of the military in ethnic clashes would expose state authorities to international and even internal denunciation. Camouflage is easily accessible in local markets to any individual and some APCs were captured by Kyrgyz crowds during the riots. Interviews with the military by the HRW and other international reports show how the military destroyed barricades under pressure

from Kyrgyz rioting crowds and in the absence of orders to do so. At the same time, the HRW report highlights the right of the military to remove barricades that were hindering normal connection in the city. Yet, it emphasizes that by removing barricades the military should have provided full security for the local residents (HRW 2010). The latter was not done. Presumably military involvement was indirect and it certainly affected dynamics of violence, mass property destruction and looting. On the other hand, there is evidence that the military tried actively to cease violence and clashes by firing at rioters or in the air. Some Uzbek and Kyrgyz residents appreciated the role of the military in stopping violence. For example, on 12 June the military dispersed active rioters in Cheremushki before the beginning of the curfew. In general, the military were more effective in low-violence events than in tense situations. With arrival of military reinforcements from other regions, especially from Bishkek, their effectiveness increased.

Figure 5.2. Property damage clusters in Cheremushki (cluster 1) and Kyzyl Kyshtak (cluster 2). Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT)




The main destruction zone in Cheremushki was confined to several blocks along several streets. However, the riots in Cheremushki were among the most densely concentrated and violent. In comparison with

Cheremushki, clusters of violence and arson in other areas were less densely concentrated and stretched along principal roads (except Shavkat Rahman area in Shark). In those areas, rioters did not risk going deep inside *mahallas*. Why destruction in Cheremushki was so heavily concentrated in one area? The possible explanation is that Cheremushki, being a central *mahalla*, was crossed by several principal streets which made it easier for rioters to penetrate blocks from different directions. Memorial in its description of the zone of property damage in Cheremushki names several streets:

> On the map published by UNITAR/UNOSAT, it is evident that several blocks of residential houses across along Abdykadyrov Street were completely destroyed. The area of the most severe mass destruction stretching from the north to the south and from east to west comprises over 500 meters. … No less than 341 buildings were completely destroyed here, while another 12 were partially destroyed. These numbers do not include another 40 destroyed buildings along Aytiev Street and the eastern part of Muminov Street. On the eastern part of Abdykadyrov Street and the crossing Amir Temur Street, which were protected by barricades, 12 large written SOS were identified on the satellite images (Memorial 2012, 114–15).

In contrast to Cheremushki, property destruction in Kyzyl Kyshtak was made mainly along Alisher Navoi street. The destruction zone along the street stretched over a very long distance (1700 meters) making it the largest cluster of property damage in Osh city. Below is the description in the Memorial report:

> As seen on the satellite images published by UNITAR/UNOSAT, private homes on both sides of Navoi Street were totally destroyed over a distance of about 1700 meters. On the north-west part of Navoi Street, where the pogroms started on 11 June, the attackers went half a kilometer into the residential areas. The maps show that on the blocks neighboring Navoi Street no less than 422 buildings were completely destroyed, ... Residents in the Kyzyl-Kyshtak village built a string of barricades on the streets leading deeply into the residential areas, part of which were placed at a distance of 70 to 150 meters to the north of Navoi Street. On Navoi Street and inside residential areas in the Kyzyl-Kyshtak village, one can make ut seven large written "SOS" on the satellite images (Memorial 2012, 100–101).

In general, less is known about clashes in Kyzyl Kyshtak. Many of its residents, chiefly elders, women, and children fled to the border with Uzbekistan and the northern mahallas which were directly linked with Kyzyl Kyshtak.

*De-escalation of violence in western neighborhoods*

All reports on riots highlight the role of rumors about invasion by Uzbekistan's and sometimes of the Russian army in the de-escalation of violence. The rumors triggered de-mobilization of Kyrgyz rural youths, chiefly, in the western part of the city where this rumor was intensely circulated. However, the process of de-escalation began even before the rumors about the invasion actively spread in the city. There were attempts to negotiate between local Uzbeks and a Kyrgyz crowd on 12 June. Negotiations were initiated

by Uzbek elders. They contacted Kyrgyz moderates who were trying to mediate among rioters. The negotiations were held among 10 Uzbek and 6 Kyrgyz elders. The negotiations started at midday and continued for several hours. The Kyrgyz mediators did not manage to persuade the Kyrgyz youths to leave the neighborhood. The latter (young rioters) demanded that Uzbeks leave Kyrgyzstan peacefully but this was immediately rejected by Uzbek elders. Although the negotiations failed, they allowed postponement of new attacks on Cheremushki for several hours. By the time the negotiations had finished, the curfew time came into effect, and the military took up the initiative of negotiating with the rioters (Memorial 2012, 112–13).

The night rumors about invasion by Uzbek troops had strong effects on the de-escalation of violence. The rumors were taken seriously at the highest level of the administration as they came through intelligence service channels. The intelligence service detected 20 flights landing with the Uzbek troops allegedly led by notorious Uzbek commander Khudayberdyev in the neighboring city of Andizhan in Uzbekistan (Memorial 2012, 120). The military commandant of the southern region gave an order to the military units in Osh to prepare for defense against foreign invasion. There were top-level meetings held among officials and the military that discussed defense plans for the city. Some of my respondents who had some connections in security services and/or regional or city administration received confirmation about the invasion from very reliable sources. That is probably how many residents learned about this particular rumor.

However, the rumor spread unevenly across various neighborhoods. It affected mainly the western neighborhoods. In Zapadnyi neighborhood, local residents could hear a roaming car with a loudspeaker warning people about invasion of the Uzbek army. According to the rumor, an early morning azan – a call to ritual prayer – would be used as a signal for Uzbek troops. The high military commanders ordered mobilization of Kyrgyz military forces and distribution of automatic weapons first among the military forces and then among Kyrgyz civilians willing to participate in the defense. The mayor of Osh ordered the organization of self-defense groups and evacuation of women and children. The order forbade males to leave the city. Kyrgyz military troops were advanced closer to the border with Uzbekistan. A Kyrgyz resident in a multi-storey apartment block in Cheremushki, in a phone conversation received confirmation about the invasion from a security officer who advised him to climb on the roof of his house and prepare petrol bombs to use against Uzbek tanks (interview with a local resident, July 2010).

Upon hearing the rumor, rioters started retreating from the Cheremushki and Zapadnyi neighborhoods. Many of them fled to their native villages. By midnight, the rumor about the intervention had spread

widely across the city. Thousands of Kyrgyz residents from Zapadnyi left their homes in great panic. Some groups of Kyrgyz refugees arrived to the military garrison in Zapadnyi. Hundreds of cars headed towards Papan village and the district of Nookat. However, in Japalak village the cars with refugees were stopped by local Kyrgyz self-defense groups, which demanded that the males return to Osh to defend the city against the Uzbek invasion. By the morning of 13 June, it became clear that no Uzbekistani invasion had occurred. Many residents of Zapadnyi returned in the morning only to find their apartments robbed by unknowns. One interesting fact about the rumor was that other neighborhoods were less informed about invasion. The international reports did not observe an exodus of Kyrgyz in significant numbers in other parts of Osh city. If compared with the concentration of 2000 newly arrived in Zapadnyi during the escalation phase in the first two days of riots, the next morning, 13 June, after the mass escape triggered by rumors, the military observed only a small crowd of 100–150 people remaining in the streets (Memorial 2012).

Despite many rioters left the city in the night of 12–13 June, the disorders continued in Cheremushki on 13 and 14 June, although on much smaller scale. By this time the military and police had received reinforcements from Bishkek and had taken greater control over situation and intervened in clashes more decisively. The riots subsided into small separate skirmishes. Forms of violence changed from full-scale fights that recalled quasi-military combat with intense killings, use of firearms, and mass arson to hostage taking. Some looters who were caught looting on the spot were tortured and killed by Uzbek self-defense groups. Others were exchanged for Uzbek hostages. Mediators and sometimes local councils actively facilitated such exchanges. On the other hand, some police officers and criminal gangs were engaged in the hostage exchanges, making a profit out of this process. Criminals took hostages to exchange them for ransom. Allegedly they offered their 'services' to the victims' families. It is not clear to what extent police officers were involved in the hostage exchanges or in the ransom business. Probably some of them offered themselves as commercial intermediaries. Two police officers were killed in Cheremushki during such operations. They were beaten and stabbed by an Uzbek crowd from the damaged area. Another 'business' practice was when police officers offered safe evacuation to rich Uzbek families from the distressed areas. Such facts have been highlighted in several international and human rights investigative reports. The riots stopped in Cheremushki and Kyzyl Kyshtak on 15 June but sporadic instances of violence including hostage taking continued for several more days. Uzbek and some Kyrgyz neighborhoods remained barricaded till forced opening of barricades by government forces.

According to Memorial (2012, 124):

Concluding the summary of night-time events in the western part of Osh, we would also note that the dispersal of large crowds of people carrying out pogroms in the Zapadniy Microdistrict due to rumors of the arrival of Russian and Uzbekistani forces, indirectly confirms that the situation was characterized by impunity and a lack of willingness by the army and the law enforcement agencies of Kyrgyzstan to use force to stabilize the situation on 11 and 12 June, and that these were important factors in the escalation of violence in the parts of the city that were exposed to large-scale destruction.

## Escalation of violence. The eastern part of the city

When the disorders started in Osh city on 11 June, the Uzbek residents barricaded the eastern entrance and partly the western entrance (where the road passes through Uzbek neighborhoods). Residents of Nurdar village in Nariman district blocked the road from the airport. Furkat village, the eastern entrance to the city, was one of the first locations to undergo deadly ethnic clashes. By the morning of 11 June, it became "one of the three the most dangerous zones, where confrontations between large groups of Uzbek and Kyrgyz youth were reported near the roundabout" (Memorial 2012, 124). Blocking city entrances and highly violent behavior of Uzbek groups against unarmed Kyrgyz at road blocks proved to be counterproductive strategy as it led to sharp escalation of violence.

*Eastern entrance to the city: Furkat and Shark*

It is not clear what the motivation of the first Kyrgyz who arrived in Osh after hearing about the ethnic riots and rumors about killings of Kyrgyz and rapes of Kyrgyz female students was. Apparently, in the beginning the Kyrgyz crowd which gathered at the roundabout road at Furkat village was not behaving aggressively. The crowd was composed of people with different intentions and reasons to be there. Some were going to Osh to rescue their children and relatives who had been studying or working in Osh. According to HRW "Many had relatives who studied at one of Osh's universities, and the rumors about horrific acts of violence committed by Uzbeks compelled them to go to Osh to bring their relatives home to safety" (HRW 2010, 27). However, when they reached this ill-fated roundabout road at the village of Furkat, they found that the entrance to the city is blocked by makeshift barricades constructed by local Uzbeks. With accumulation of the Kyrgyz mainly from the *raions* of Alai, Chon-Alai, and Uzgen at the roundabout, tensions grew gradually that eventually resulted in clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. According to one witness: "When we got to Furkat, there were about 1,000 to 1,500 Uzbeks there. They did not let us through. We moved a bit closer to them and we started throwing rocks at each other. At

around 10 a.m., however, the Uzbeks opened fire on us. Three people fell right in front of me. I was hit as well, in my hand" (HRW 2010, 27).

As the tensions grew, the two crowds having begun with stoning each other, continued with more violent actions. When the Kyrgyz crowd tried to break through the barricades they were met with gunfire. In addition, the wounded and damaged cars arriving from the city convinced the Kyrgyz about the Uzbeks' aggressive intentions. A brutal and cruel assassination of two Kyrgyz men by Uzbeks, who killed and then burned them while the rest of the Kyrgyz group was watching induced retaliatory behaviour on the latter. This moment drastically changed behaviour. Previous clashes had never involved acts of killing and now the Kyrgyz considered this event no longer the kind of clash that had been in fact fairly common in the period just before the riots. For them, it was now an open declaration of war. Eight were killed and about hundred wounded, all of them Kyrgyz, in this face-off confrontation at the Furkat roundabout (HRW 2010, 24). Only after the Kyrgyz attacked a military convoy and took away their automatic weapons could the Kyrgyz break the barricades. What followed this violent stand-off was disastrous. Furious Kyrgyz attacked the Uzbeks in Furkat and other mahallas along the entry road to Osh.

The report by Human Rights Watch seems to confirm this dynamic:

> Rumors and evidence of brutal killings and hostage taking rapidly escalated the tense situation. The sight of the charred remains of two Kyrgyz men behind the Uzbek barricades in Furkat, for example, enraged the crowd. The younger Kyrgyz men, in particular, became "uncontrollable" and started to torch Uzbek houses as they moved into the city (HRW 2010, 28).

The efforts made by the Interim Government to calm down the Kyrgyz crowd failed. Three top-level politicians with the southern backgrounds were sent by helicopter from Bishkek to the roundabout at Furkat only to receive a hostile reception. People threw rocks at the politicians when they refused to comply with the angry crowd's demands to provide the Kyrgyz with firearms against Uzbek in barricades. They had to rush back into the helicopter. This incidence showed the complete absence of communication not only between Kyrgyz authorities and Kyrgyz people but also with the Uzbek community. Helicopter landed in a Kyrgyz crowd not an Uzbek one.

Other mediation efforts at the community level also failed. Uzbek mobilization on the morning 11 June involved attacks on Kyrgyz civilians and destruction of their property. Uzbeks started firing towards Kyrgyz. Elders from both communities tried to negotiate and unblock the road. The first cars which arrived from the city were again attacked by Uzbeks. Some Kyrgyz were killed from the gunshots (Memorial 2012, 125). Moreover, among the killed by gunshots was a city council deputy who was acting as a mediator trying to prevent violence and to calm the Kyrgyz youths down. According to KIC "At about 6.30am Askar Shakirov,

a member of the local assembly together with the deputy chairperson of the village council attempted unsuccessfully to negotiate peace between the Uzbek and Kyrgyz crowds. He was killed by a shot from the Uzbek crowd" (2011, 31–32). Another mediator, an ethnic Kyrgyz, was killed and set alight before his fellow villagers on the road "was soaked in gasoline and burned in front of other villagers on the road" (Memorial 2012, 127).

A witness story narrated by Memorial indicates that between midday and 1pm, when Uzbek rioters using sickles killed two more Kyrgyz men whom they had caught earlier in the village, no firearms were yet possessed by the Kyrgyz. The dead bodies were soaked with gasoline and torched. The killers placed Kyrgyz national headwear on the dead bodies to demonstratively humiliate the Kyrgyz, who were helplessly watching this act of cruel violence. The witness' recollections are telling: "Everything took place in the middle of the road, demonstratively, right in front of both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz. There were no weapons, so we could not do anything" (Memorial 2012, 129). This episode refutes the widespread claims of some international experts and journalists that first Kyrgyz coming to Osh were armed and organized.

The accounts of one of my respondents confirm the escalation dynamics of violence in the eastern entrance to the city of Osh indicated in the investigative reports. Farhad lives in a Kyrgyz village which is 11 kilometers away from the town of Uzgen. Early on the morning 11 June, as usual, he was going to Uzgen where he works in one of the banks in the town. At 7.30 am, he received a phone call from his supervisor who warned him not to come to Uzgen. Since Farhad was already on his way to the town in a shared taxi cab, he decided to continue his journey. In Uzgen, he observed how the police were closing the local bazaar. "The Uzbeks immediately increased the prices of food products", he said. In the meanwhile, Farhad received another phone call from his relative in Osh city. The relative informed him there was a 'war' going on in Osh. Despite it was early morning, through the phone call he could hear the sound of automatic rifle fire. That relative lived in the Alymbek Datka ward near Osh city's central bazaar. His younger brother also studied in one of universities in Osh but lived in the south-eastern part of the city. However, as he noted "it was quiet there". Together with his father he decided to go to Osh to rescue his brother and the relative. Already in Sheraly village, which is located next to Uzgen, a group of local Kyrgyz stopped them and inquired if they had firearms and then warned: "If you don't have, then go back. Otherwise you will get shot dead" meaning that Uzbeks were armed and were killing Kyrgyz. After that, Farhad and his father were stopped in virtually every village on their way to Osh.

When they finally arrived to Furkat at 10 am, they saw about 1000 Kyrgyz armed with sticks but without firearms. The gas station was burning. They noticed 20–30 Uzbeks with firearms. The next was a fire

fighting vehicle with two fire fighters lying nearby. The Kyrgyz told Farhad that the fire fighters had been beaten by the Uzbeks and warned him that the Uzbeks had firearms. (Memorial mentions three wounded fire fighters). He continued:

> Then the Uzbeks shouting 'Allahu Akbar' destroyed the fire fighting vehicles and started firing towards the Kyrgyz. The latter tried to run away and hide. The Uzbeks shot again in the air. When ten OMON troops [special troops] arrived, the Uzbeks ran away and the Kyrgyz advanced 300–400 meters but then OMON troops went to Uzgen and the Uzbeks immediately started shooting again. The Kyrgyz ran away. There were already 2–3000 Kyrgyz from Alai *raion* gathered at the Furkat roundabout when the helicopter with General Isakov [together with other two national level politicians] arrived. Later on, three APCs arrived. People were already highly worked up. They tried to seize arms from the soldiers but the colonel said to them "Tell us where to go and we will go there." The *aksakals* also tried to calm people down and convinced them not to take firearms from the soldiers. The APCs moved to the roundabout but then the colonel said "I don't have an order to shoot." After this, the crowd forcibly took arms from the soldiers and an APC. People loaded into a KAMAZ [lorry truck]. The old outdated weapons arrived from somewhere. The Uzbeks disappeared. The Kyrgyz began entering Osh city. As soon as an APC passed towards the city, the Uzbeks immediately closed the road again (Interview with a Kyrgyz resident of Uzgen *raion*, 25 August, 2012).

As I noted before, these events were confirmed in several investigative reports. The testimony that the colonel mentioned in this interview excerpt was provided to the members of the National Commission. He arrived at the roundabout at 1pm and held four hours of negotiations with the Kyrgyz crowd which did not let him into the city. He added:

> I led negotiations with these people for four hours, but without any results. Later, a black jeep without registration numbers arrived there, and the passengers of the jeep agitated the crowd and provoked them. At 5 PM I gave the order to the soldiers to leave the crowd, but people started beating up the soldiers and take their weapons, they beat me up too and tore off my shoulder-straps. (Memorial 2012, 131).

The riots in Furkat involved more and more people on both sides. The number of the Kyrgyz was quickly growing as people from Alai, Uzgen, and other *raions* arrived at the spot reaching a total number of about 3000. Later, the Kyrgyz youths from Alai, Chon Alai, and Kara Kulja districts became a decisive factor in interethnic riots, and particularly, in the eastern part of the city. According to many witness accounts from both sides, precisely this group of people was actively engaged in street fights and attacks against fortified *mahallas*.

> [S]everal thousand people from the Alay district went to Osh immediately upon hearing about the violence. ... [A respondent's] claims were supported by several other people interviewed by Human Rights Watch both in Gulcha and in Osh. People from Kara-Suu, Kara-Kulja and Chong-Alay districts in the Osh province also reportedly went to the city in response to the outbreak of violence. Several Kyrgyz villagers who descended upon Osh told Human Rights Watch that they initially went there to rescue their relatives or family members. Many had relatives who studied at one of Osh's universities, and the rumors about horrific acts of violence committed by Uzbeks compelled them to go to Osh to bring their relatives home to safety (HRW 2010, 27).

The special role of Alai, Kara-Kulja, and Chon Alai *raions* for Kyrgyz mobilization and the dynamics of riots in previous interethnic clashes in Osh and Uzgen in 1990 was already acknowledged both by the criminal investigators and the local population of the two towns. This time the men from Alai took the mission to rescue their fellow Kyrgyz in Osh.  At the same time, the Uzbek rioters in Furkat (about 1000–1500) were aided by 1000–1200 men strong group from the Amir Timur district adjacent to Furkat village (Memorial 2012, 132). Later, many Uzbek males from Furkat village fled to Nariman village where they, motivated by vengeance sentiments against Kyrgyz, undermined/broke local in-policing equilibrium, and initiated riots in the village. Allegedly, the militant men from Furkat village, displaced to Nariman village after their houses were attacked and destroyed by the Kyrgyz men from Alai, were responsible for the brutal assassination of a chief of Karasuu district police and his driver. Both arrived there to negotiate peace with local leaders.

The long and violent stand-off at the roundabout near the village of Furkat lasted several hours from early morning at about 5-6am and ended at about 5pm. During this stand-off, unarmed Kyrgyz underwent several gunfire attacks by Uzbeks and suffered fatal causalities and wounds. Among victims were civilians, a police officer, fire fighters (wounded), and an official-mediator (Memorial 2012, 125–27). In the meanwhile, the Uzbeks torched several houses in Furkat that belonged to ethnic Kyrgyz. Only after the Kyrgyz attacked the military convoy and took one APC and automatic rifles from the soldiers accompanying the convoy, could they break through the makeshift barriers and break down the armed lines of local Uzbeks rioters. Around 5 pm, the Kyrgyz crowd moved towards the city. The Memorial provides documented evidence from the local hospital in the neighboring village (Kyrgyz Chek) that from 4pm on the number of killed and wounded Kyrgyz sharply decreased. Having acquired an APC and automatic rifles, the balance of power between two groups turned towards the Kyrgyz.

The events described above have important consequences for the escalation of violence in the eastern part of Osh city and its suburbs. First, killings had serious implications for the dynamics of riots. The important feature of these killings was extreme brutality of the assassinations conducted by the Uzbek rioters at the road block in Furkat against still peaceful Kyrgyz. The very fact of the killings, and especially the cruelty involved in these killings, drastically changed the vision of the Kyrgyz towards the nature of the incipient riots. It also changed their perceptions of the state of Kyrgyz–Uzbek relations which had already been shattered in the context of the worsening interethnic relations at the national/regional level.

The brutality of killings undermined the stance of a moderate group of Kyrgyz including mediating *aksakals* and officials. Moreover, it advanced radical elements to the leading positions in the crowd, especially

those rural youths who mobilized from the mountainous *raions* of Alai and later Chon Alai and Kara-Kulja. Rumors about mass rapes and mutilations of Kyrgyz female students and deadly ethnic cleansing of the Kyrgyz residents in Osh significantly contributed to the radicalization of the Kyrgyz crowd. For the Kyrgyz people who gathered at the road in Furkat, damaged cars with wounded and beaten Kyrgyz passengers that were able to pass from Osh city through the Uzbek roadblock to the roundabout provided another evidence of the plausibility of the rumors. This all factors combined inflamed the Kyrgyz crowd which no longer wanted to listen to *aksakals*.

Without exaggeration, the consequences of the violent stand-off at the roundabout were catastrophic both for the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks but especially for those Uzbek communities living in the suburb districts of Furkat and Shark, and the Uzbek neighbourhoods in Ak-Buura and Amir Timur districts. After the roundabout stand-off violence, the Kyrgyz crowds moved to the city along the Pamirskaia- Monueva street (the street starts as Pamirskaia from Furkat and continues as Monueva within the boundaries of the city). The street is a principal road and a part of Bishkek-Osh highway which connects northern and southern regions of Kyrgyzstan and the towns of Jalalabat and Uzgen and mountainous regions of Alai, Chon Alai, and Kara-Kulja with the city of Osh. It also links villages of Furkat and Shark with Osh's downtown. Being the only highway that connects Osh city with the northern regions and most of raions and districts of the southern region, it is difficult to exaggerate the strategic importance of this road. Blocking this road would invariably bring tensions and facilitate the spark of violence. Spatially, this area presented itself as a conducive place for a flashpoint.

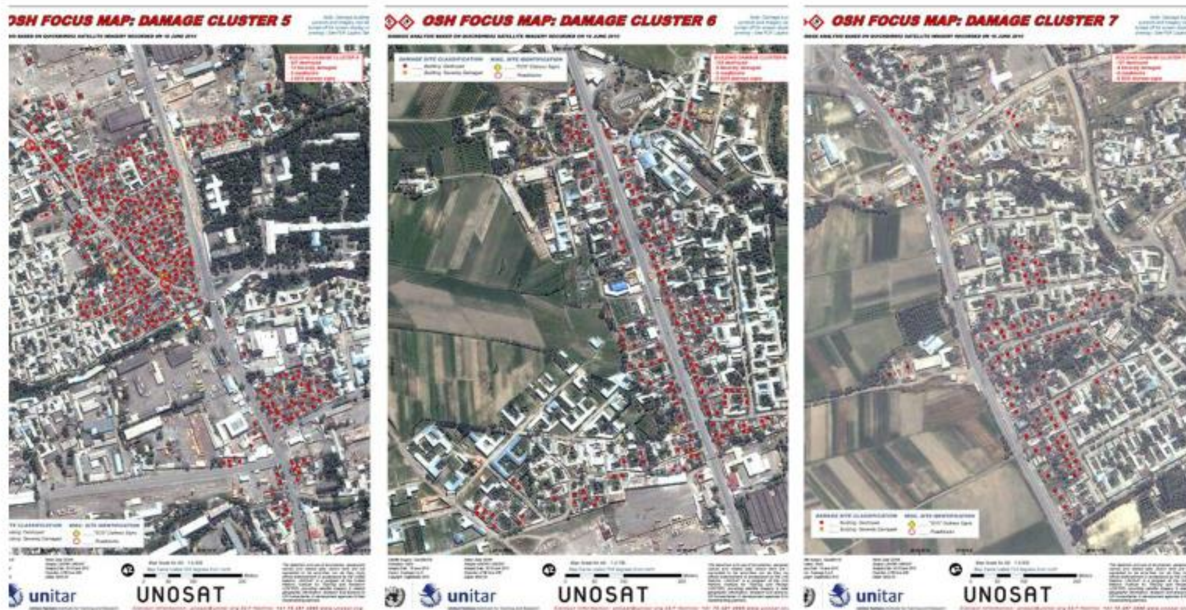
The UNOSAT satellite pictures (figure 5.4.) show that the main clusters of house destruction in the eastern part of the city lie along Pamirskaia-Monueva street. Three out of seven large clusters of property destruction identified by UNOSAT fall in this area. The three main sites of violence were the area of the Provincial Hospital, Furkat village, and the area of Shavkat Rahman street in Shark. According to the UNOSAT map, the houses were burned along a 3.5 km stretch of Pamirskaia-Monueva street. Rioters did not penetrate very deep into the *mahallas* to torch houses except the area of Shavkat Rahman street, in front of the Provincial Hospital. Memorial carefully summarizes the scope of destruction in the eastern part of the city shown by figure 5.4.:

> According to the satellite images, 107 residential houses were completely destroyed along a 1 kilometer stretch of Furkat village. … In residential blocks between Furkat and the area near the Provincial Hospital, the destruction went up to Pamirskaya Street …, 155 buildings were completely destroyed ... The greatest destruction was in the area near the Provincial Hospital, where 357 buildings were completely destroyed … [T]he total number of residential houses destroyed during

the mass unrest between 11 and 14 June in the eastern part of the conflict zone is 650 (Memorial 2012, 146–47).

Shark village is a part of Shark district which formally belongs to Karasuu *raion*. The Shark district is composed of four villages. The largest are predominantly Uzbek Shark village (93 per cent Uzbek) and Tashtak (70 per cent Uzbek). The population of Shark is large as 17000 residents, a very high number for a village. However, being formally a village, Shark in everyday life is well connected to the boundaries of Osh city. It is just 10 minutes of drive from Masaliev street, one of the principal streets of the city. It is divided from the city by Monueva street. The street serves as a formal boundary between the city (the Provincial Hospital) and Shark village. The urban transportation system covers Shark village and it is its one of the popular destinations. In everyday life, the residents of Shark are well integrated in the urban life of Osh city, like of many areas of the city which do not formally belong to the city.

Figure 5.3. Three property damage clusters in the eastern entrance to Osh city: Provinical Hospital, Shark and Furkat. Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT




The violence in Shark and area of the Provincial Hospital started around midday 11 June, that is, before the stand-off in Furkat ended. The Kyrgyz gathered at the Provincial Hospital around 1pm. The violence erupted. Kyrgyz armed with sticks beat to death several Uzbeks. However, violence increased towards the evening when the furious Kyrgyz mob broke through barricades in Furkat and moved towards the city

converging with the group at the Provincial Hospital. The Kyrgyz mob also set houses alight along Monueva street. On 11 June, the firearm clashes in this area were still sporadic. To prevent Kyrgyz crowds from penetration into *mahallas*, the residents of the Uzbek neighborhoods in the districts of Ak Buura and Shark erected barricades and dug ditches in the streets leading inside residential areas. Closing *mahallas* were endorsed by the Osh Emergency Commandant to avoid aggressive penetration (KIC 2011, 29).

Towards the night of 11 June, more Kyrgyz arrived in Furkat from rural regions. According to the Memorial report, several thousand Kyrgyz spent the night in the village discussing plans to attack Amir Timur district where many Uzbek militants and peaceful residents of Furkat had fled (2012, 137). The next day, early on the morning of 12 June, Kyrgyz rioters undertook fierce attacks on Shark, mainly along Shavkat Rahman street and on Amir Timur ward, a big monoethnic micro-district located on the hills of the eastern part of the city with an almost exclusively Uzbek population. To break through the barricades, the Kyrgyz used a captured APC. Uzbeks reportedly used lorries fully armored with steel shields in customary way. Both sides increasingly used automatic and other firearm weapons.

While the attacks by Kyrgyz on 11 June can be characterized as spontaneous and marked by strong emotions, on 12 June their attacks took a more organized and planned shape. The strategy of the Uzbek defense of *mahallas* also changed. Before, the crowds of Uzbek rioters roamed the streets of the city attacking Kyrgyz residents, on 12 June, the Uzbeks contained themselves in *mahallas* and fully concentrated on defense (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 24). This pattern was pertinent to the whole picture of riots in Osh that day.

On 12 June, the “Alai group” merged with another group of Kyrgyz which came from the areas of Alymbek Datka ward and Masalieva street, in an attack against Shark. The merged group of rioters undertook repeated attacks against the Shavkat Rahman *mahalla* in Shark and mass arsons of houses. Around 15 people were killed that day in this area, most of them Uzbeks. The escalation phase in this area (Furkat, Shark, and the Provincial Hospital) falls in 11–13 June. On 14 June, de-escalation of violence took place with isolated instances of arsons till 15 June. The rumor about Uzbek army invasion did not affect this area, so escalation and de-escalation dynamics was different from that in the western part of the city. No mass panic exodus of the local Kyrgyz as a result of the rumor about the Uzbekistan’s army invasion was observed in this area.

Another group of Kyrgyz based in Furkat attacked Amir Timur district. The population of Amir Timur is around 38000 but in those days it sheltered up to 15000 displaced Uzbeks from Shark, Furkat, and Ak

Buura district. The Kyrgyz considered Amir Timur as one of the big Uzbek enclaves. Probably that was the reason why the Kyrgyz were willing to attack this neighborhood. Another reason was that many of the 'offenders' at the roundabout in Furkat fled towards residential hills of Amir Timur. The rioting crowd from Amir Timur were seen in the Furkat roundabout and in the wards of Alymbek Datka and Ak Buura and Masalieva street, all in the eastern and central-eastern parts of the city. The fierce fight between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks from Amir Timur caused 42 deaths (mostly Uzbeks) on 12 June and 61 deaths in total (Memorial 2012, 147–49). As in some other parts of the city, the Kyrgyz took advantage of the captured APC to attack fortifications erected by the residents of Amir Timur, until it got stuck in a ditch. The fact that Amir Timur was located among hills facilitated the defense task of local residents and displaced Uzbeks from other neighborhoods. On 13 June, the Uzbeks regained control over the bridge leading to the district and re-erected the roadblock destroyed earlier by the APC. The de-escalation of the violence occurred as the Kyrgyz stopped attacks after they lost the APC in a ditch.

### Violence in the central and northern parts of Osh city

In this section, I describe riots that took place in the central and northern parts of the city. The neighborhoods in this wide area have one common feature: they all adjoin the grand bazaar and related territories. The grand bazaar occupies a considerable territory and is located in the center of the city. The main neighborhoods affected by the riots in these parts of the city were Majrimtal (central), Alymbek Datka (see detailed analysis in chapter 6), Manas Ata, Jim, Besh-Kuporok, and Jiydelik (north-eastern), and Sheit Tepe (Sheyit Dobo) and Teshik Tash (north-western). Violence in these neighborhoods escalated on 12 June, the second day of riots. The scale of destruction in these areas were smaller than in western and eastern parts of the city but still significant. Two out of seven large clusters of property destruction lie in the area around Osh's grand bazaar.

The neighborhoods exposed to attacks and violence were located close to the grand bazaar's adjacent areas. An Uzbek *mahalla* in Majrimtal street is located in the bazaar zone, right behind the old bus station. In everyday life, it is a very busy area full of street vendors and taxi cabs offering multiple out-of-town destinations. The Majrimtal *mahalla* did not experience any attacks on 11 June. The residents barricaded the entrance using a loaded lorry. The attacks on the *mahalla* started in the early morning of 12 June and were followed by arson of houses and killings. The scale of destruction was lower than in the other seven clusters identified by UNOSAT but still significant. Thirteen residents were killed and 41 houses burned in the Majrimtal *mahalla* (Memorial 2012, 164). The HRW gives a slightly different number - five killed (HRW

2010, 36). Some houses were looted. The reports do not mention any other significant clashes in Majrimtal street after 12 June.

Several hotspots of violence emerged in the northern part of the city. The northern neighborhoods are a large territory chiefly dominated by Uzbek communities. There is one Kyrgyz district – Manas-Ata (HBK) – in the north-eastern part, however it is encircled by Uzbek neighborhoods. All other northern neighborhoods are predominantly Uzbek. The northern Uzbek *mahallas* in the city continue as suburb and village *mahallas* up to the borders with Uzbekistan. This large and dense concentration of Uzbek communities in the northern urban area and their proximity to Uzbekistan had an effect on the scope and dynamics of ethnic violence in this part of the city. The Uzbek refugees, mainly women and children fled towards Uzbekistan while men stayed to defend their mahallas. The sense of security of Uzbeks in the northern urban communities was probably higher than in other Uzbek communities in the city. In a way, local Uzbeks feel themselves much more secure and confident being an ethnic majority group in these territories. A sense of dominance and self-confidence unleashed opportunist groups among local Uzbek communities to initiate violent mobilization and attacks against local Kyrgyz.

Northern Uzbek communities hosted many Uzbek male refugees from violence-affected *mahallas*. This led to the breakdown of the in-group policing equilibrium in several Uzbek communities. The refugee groups and the opportunists who used the refugee groups broke the balance of local traditional power and undermined self-policing efforts of local community leaders. They called for retaliation attacks against Kyrgyz. The outcome was attacks against local Kyrgyz residents and killings of the police officers including the revenge killing of a police chief of Karasuu district. Kyrgyz militants were unwilling to risk their lives going deep inside. However, they concentrated their attacks on *mahallas* that lay to the north of Navoi street. In the north of Osh, a mob of several thousand people from Uzbekistan's neighboring provinces of Andijan, Namangan, and Fergana tried to break through the checkpoint at the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border. Had they been successful, the local riots in Kyrgyzstan could have escalated to higher levels of violence turning into a full-scale interstate war.

The Uzbek rioters were very active in this area. On 11 June, an Uzbek crowd with stones and petrol bombs attacked the Department of Traffic police and the new bus station and on 12 June, and the base of municipal transportation, all three were located near the border with Uzbekistan. The rioters broke through the gates with two trucks in department of municipal transportation and hijacked 27 buses and the rest of buses were burned. With the reference to the Prosecutor-General's office the Memorial report

highlights the attention to the alleged event of firearm distribution to local Uzbek militants by a head of UNCC Salakhutdinov (2012, 166).

The same day, a large Uzbek mob attacked the main check point at the Kyrgyzstan–Uzbekistan border. An Uzbek crowd of about 1000 people demanded to let them into Uzbekistan through the central border check point in Osh. The group made an armed attempt to break through Uzbekistan's border. The border fences were rammed by two trucks without drivers. Exchange of gunfire broke out between border guards and Uzbek civilians. The incident occurred when a crowd of several thousand men came to the border's check point from Uzbekistan's neighboring provinces of Andizhan, Namangan, and Fergana to aid their ethnic fellows in Osh. This event raised serious concerns and panic among the government administration in Bishkek (Memorial 2012, 166).

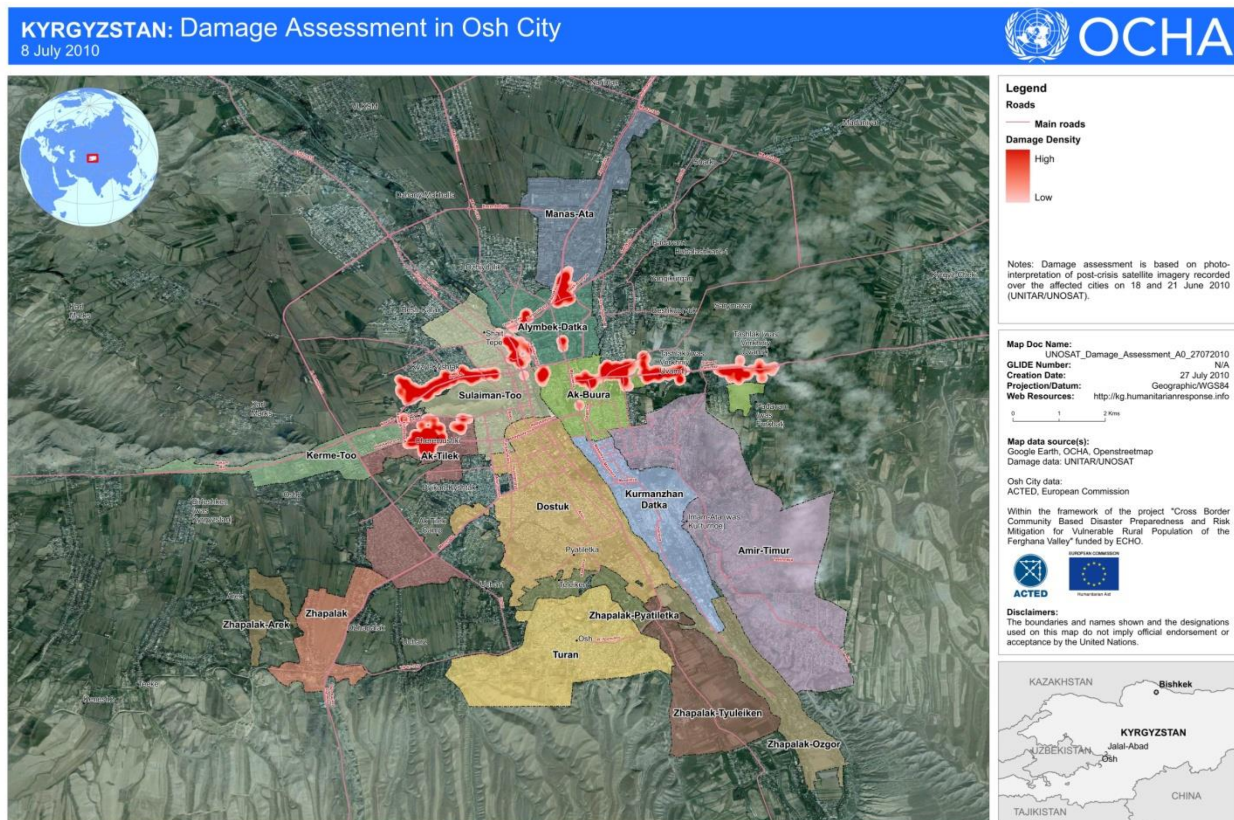
Figure 5.4. Property damage cluster in Teshik Tash. Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT

On 11 June, when mass evacuation of Uzbeks from Sheit Tepe (Sheyit Dobo) and Teshik Tash towards Uzbek borders started, local communities drew several huge 'SOS' signs. As the riots were viewed by many as a 'war' between two ethnic communities, local residents drew the signs large enough to make them visible for Uzbekistan's air forces (Memorial 2012, 167). Barricades were erected across strategic streets. Both the 'SOS' signs and large barricades were observed in the UNOSAT satellite photos.

The Memorial report describes the scale of destruction in Teshik Tash based on the UNOSAT satellite pictures (figure 5.5.):

> 122 residential homes on each side of Lenin Street (to the north of Navoi Street) were destroyed at a distance of about 400 meters. On the northern part of Kurmanjan Datka Street, six large written "SOS" can be seen on the satellite images. (Memorial 2012, 171).

Figure 5.5. The distribution of the damage clusters in Osh city. (Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT and OCHA)




Escalation in this started with Kyrgyz attacks on Sheyit dobo and Teshik Tash on 12 June. Uzbek witnesses in the KIC and Memorial reports saw some camouflaged rioters attacking their *mahallas*. They claimed that the military directly participated in riots. It is difficult to prove the involvement of the military in the attacks as camouflages are widely available in Kyrgyzstan's markets for any customer (now they can even purchase camouflages of the US army). Kyrgyz attackers were able several hundred meters in depth of Teshik Tash *mahalla*. For this, an APC demolished a barricade protecting frontal area of the *mahalla* on

the northern side of Navoi street. Kyrgyz militants penetrated the frontal area of the *mahalla* and killed 17 people from the Uzbek self-defense group and torched dozens of houses. On the other hand, Uzbek defenders resorted to fierce and sometime atrocious retaliatory actions. One police officer was killed and another five were wounded when police troops sent to the area came under fire from local residents. In an act of retaliation, Uzbeks in Sheit Tepe assaulted local Kyrgyz residents trapped in the *mahalla*. Some of them were taken hostage but the others, less fortunate, like one Kyrgyz family – a woman and her two minor children – were gang raped and then killed. Negotiations between a head of police and Sheit Tepe community leaders resulted in release of seven Kyrgyz hostages. Local Uzbek self-defense groups detained some people, probably Kyrgyz residents, under suspicion that the latter were trying to pass intelligence information to Kyrgyz attackers by phone. The neighborhood Sheit Tepe was barricaded and blocked for external access till 19 June (Memorial 2012, 170–71).

On 14 June, late reconciliation actions were held between Kyrgyz community leaders of the Alymbek Datka ('Oshskii raion') and Uzbek elders of Jiydalik (interview with a Kyrgyz community leader, August 2013) and between leaders of HBK (Manas Ata) and Jiydalik (Memorial 2012, 156; interview with a Kyrgyz community leader, August 2013). The latter pact has become known to a wider public through the Fergana news agency. Despite these later pacts, sporadic hostage taking continued for several days.

### Southern neighborhoods

Some further clashes took place in the southern neighborhoods. Rumors circulated among Uzbeks about Kyrgyz violence in that area. Near Nookat slope, in south-western neighborhood, an Uzbek crowd wounded one policeman. Several clashes between local Uzbeks and Kyrgyz living in a dormitory nearby Uzbek *mahalla* occurred. As a result, Kyrgyz residents of the dormitory were evacuated. There was also a clash between Kyrgyz from Uchar and Uzbeks from Turan neighborhoods. Between two and four people were killed. The violence was quickly contained by local community leaders. In general, in the southern neighborhoods, local community leaders relied on non-aggression pacts and in-group policing to avert violence. I will discuss peaceful pacts in more details in chapter 7.

As seen in figure 5.6., largest property damage clusters are mainly located in the eastern and western parts of the city, but also in the area around grand bazaar in Oshskii Raion and Teshik Tash neighborhoods. These large clusters of destruction in general correlate with pogrom-like violence.

Next chapters will explain why certain neighborhoods remained peaceful amidst raging ethniv violence. I In chapter 6, I will show that spatial factors account for violence in Oshskii Raion and for the peaceful outcome in Kalinin neighborhood located in the close vicinity to Cheremushki – one of the most violent neighborhoods. In chapter 7, I will explain how the southern neighborhoods of Turan managed to escape large-scale violence while the northern neighborhood of Nariman ended up in violent riots.

# Part IV. Neighborhood-level comparisons in Osh

## Chapter 6. Spatial security during ethnic riots in Osh: How spatial factors and the built environment affect the local dynamics of violence and neighborhood security[26]

The role of space and the built environment has rarely been applied to explain outcomes and the local dynamics of ethnic conflicts and has never been analyzed in the context of the June 2010 ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan[27]. As this study demonstrates, space significantly shaped the behavior of the main actors in this conflict. Given the general neglect of spatiality and its impact on the local dynamics of riots in the literature on political violence and ethnic conflict, this chapter aims to shed light on this gap by bringing attention to the role of spatiality and the built environment in the analysis of (management of) riots and ethnic conflicts.

This chapter analyzes the spatial dynamics of violence during the June 2010 ethnic conflict among the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the city of Osh. Spatial categories such as the built environment of neighborhoods provide favorable conditions for the riot occurrence or non-occurrence. These spatial conditions affect the local dynamics of violence and facilitate or hinder security measures conducted by ethnic community leaders and brokers. To measure the impact of spatial conditions on the local dynamics of ethnic violence and to identify the degree of availability of neighborhood security options for local ethnic community leaders, I compare two typical neighborhoods in Osh, one violent and the other non-violent. Different spatial structures and the built environments in these two neighborhoods facilitated violent mass mobilization and hindered conflict management initiatives in one neighborhood and provided relevant security options for the ethnic leaders to contain violence in the other neighborhood. The findings of this study are based on the ethnographic fieldwork carried out by the author between 2010 and 2014.

In evaluating spatial aspects of security, this chapter follows a call for disaggregation of empirical evidence (Weidmann, Rød, and Cederman 2010). I analyze the spatial categories that affected the level of security of local ethnic subgroup communities at a disaggregated level. The main analysis will focus on meso-level responses by local communities in ethnically-mixed and segregated neighborhoods. Studying violent ethnic conflict at neighborhood scale is an important methodological innovation which points at a potential area, where disciplines that are usually pertinent to a certain level of aggregation can mutually

[26] The content of this chapter has been published in Kutmanaliev (2015).
[27] For the few exceptions see Megoran (2013) and Kutmanaliev (2015)

benefit from each other. Examples include the theoretical insights urban sociology can gain from studies analyzing ethnic violence at higher levels of aggregation, and vice versa.

I argue that among other factors, a particular type of public space provides favorable conditions for riot occurrence or non-occurrence. For example, in Osh, such places as areas around the central bazaar and densely-populated multi-story building complexes were especially riot-prone. By contrast, residential areas with individual-unit houses and low residential mobility represented communally-private spaces with easier riot-control. In addition, some residential areas implemented actual strategies as physical self-isolation to avoid the violence. By restricting freedom of movement and erecting improvised barricades, the residents of such neighborhoods created a temporally new space with its own rules and interethnic cooperation. In some instances, spatial brokers played a key role in this temporal reconfiguration of the neighborhood's built environment. In this chapter, I do not imply spatial determinism but rather point out how different types of space/place in interaction with spatial agency can affect the efficiency of community policing and local social norms and create (un-) favorable conditions for violent mobilization.

## Space and ethnic conflict

The concept of space is becoming increasingly important in the social sciences to explain how it shapes and constrains human agency. In studies of contentious politics, however, the category of space has long been understudied (Sewell 2001) and only recently has some systematic research been carried out on the interaction between the two. In this chapter, I use some of Sewell's spatial concepts and categories to explain the spatial dimensions of the 2010 ethnic violence in Osh.

The spatial aspects of security during violent armed conflicts have been insufficiently addressed in the relevant literature on ethnic conflicts and civil wars. On the other hand, Auyero maintains that "the absence of attention to the geographic structuring of collective action remains a significant gap" (Auyero 2006, 568; see also D. G. Martin and Miller 2003).

In this chapter, I refer to geographical, territorial, and environmental dimensions of space. So, here I regard space as place, territory, and the physical (built) environment. Wong (2006, 535) argues that "features of a place can matter to political behavior because of ecological characteristics or social characteristics." In his famous article, Gieryn (2000) disaggregates the concept of place into three dimensions: 1) place as a geographical location; 2) place as a material form; and 3) place as a constructed space. I demonstrate that all three dimensions are relevant for the analysis of spatial security in Osh's

urban neighborhoods. These dimensions appear in different stages of the analysis as spatial contexts, causes and effects of the contingent events revealing the importance of spatial factors for the dynamics of violence.

Space can be considered as both independent and intermediary variable but also as a dependent variable. The dialogue (interplay) between place and action exemplifies the dialectics of structure and agency (Thernborn 2006, 512). Place can thus affect political action, provide the context for action, and can also be an outcome of such action. This chapter presents space mostly as an intermediary variable; that is, how spatial categories provide context for actions and contingent events. However, it shows as well that space also affects and becomes an outcome of actions. Space shapes, constrains, and provides opportunities for mobilization and behavior of actors. As Sewell argues, contentious events are "shaped and constrained by the spatial environments in which they take place, but are significant agents in the production of new spatial structures and relations" (Sewell 2001, 55; see also Auyero 2006, 569 for a similar argument).

This chapter seeks to make two important contributions to the literature: one theoretical, and the other methodological. First, it analyzes the impact of spatial categories on the dynamics of violence. This dimension has been largely ignored in the literature on ethnic conflicts. Second, this study explores the problem at the neighborhood scale. This level of (dis-)aggregation has rarely been implemented in the analysis of ethnic conflicts. This methodological contribution has great potential to enrich the literature by scaling down the comparative analysis on the communal ethnic conflicts to the cross-neighborhood level.

Scholars studying ethnic conflicts and civil wars made some arguments about the impact of geography, territory, and landscape on the causes and duration of violent conflicts. Fearon and Laitin (2003) observed that rough mountainous terrain provides opportunities for rebels to fight against the government. Similarly, Weidmann (2009) argues that geography produces motivation and opportunity for ethnic conflict.

One spatially related argument that was developed by Toft (2002; 2006) and Wiedmann (2009) can be particularly applicable to the context of the Kyrgyz–Uzbek violence. As this chapter analyzes Osh, a residentially-segregated city with strong ethnic concentrations in certain neighborhoods, the following discussion of the literature on civil wars and ethnic conflicts can shed some light on the dynamics of ethnic violence in Osh.

Settlement patterns matter and they are important for explaining conflict occurrence. According to Toft, group identity issues afford certain territories an indivisible stake in the territorial disputes between majority and minority ethnic groups within one state. She asserts that whether an ethnic group is spatially dispersed or concentrated affects its decision to fight for independence or negotiate greater autonomy. Geographically concentrated groups are more willing to fight for 'their' territory.

Weidmann (2009) suggests possible mechanisms to explain why geographically-concentrated groups face a higher risk of conflict. He argues that “concentrated groups face fewer difficulties in overcoming the collective action problem, and might therefore be more likely to successfully mobilize for conflict” (Weidmann 2009, 530). Basically, “geographic concentration facilitates conflict because people are located close to each other and can get together quickly” (Weidmann 2009, 532). On the other hand, concentrated territory gives a group a strategic advantage. Spatial proximity of population is important as strategic geographical concentration can bring certain advantages such as better group mobilization. It can also bring disadvantages such as being an easily identifiable target for attacks.

While many aspects of these mechanisms are relevant for the argument in this chapter, Toft’s and Wiedmann’s hypotheses do not fully account for the spatial opportunities that the territory provides for mobilization at micro-spatial scales of analysis. As both authors discuss an ethnic conflict at aggregated group level, they do not explain how territorial and population concentrations work among ethnic subgroups and at smaller spatial scales. Nor do they explain the cross-neighborhood variations in violence in Osh and Jalalabat. Indeed, evidence from the 11-14 June 2010 violence shows that mainly neighborhoods with a high concentration of one ethnic group were involved in violence. This observation supports the ‘territorial concentration’ hypothesis. However, not all ethnic subgroups concentrated in residentially-segregated neighborhoods participated in violence. That the violence disproportionately took place in ethnically-segregated neighborhoods is by itself unsurprising. Such neighborhoods constitute the majority in Osh and they provided favorable grounds for begetting violence or became easy targets for ethnic attacks in June 2010. What the ethnic concentration hypothesis does not explain is why only some of these ethnically-concentrated neighborhoods were involved in or became the targets of ethnic violence. In this chapter, I will provide accounts of the micro-spatial effects of the built environment and territory on the dynamics of violence in Osh.

The examination of the micro-spatial effects brings us to the discussion of the level of aggregation in the analysis of violent ethnic conflicts. As I noted before, here I propose to focus at the cross-neighborhood level of analysis of ethno-communal conflicts. Although neighborhood-level analysis lies within the

methodological traditions of urban sociology (Sampson and Wikstrom 2008), this chapter shows that this disaggregated scale of analysis can also be applicable to studies of civil wars and ethnic conflicts.

The focus on neighborhood allows us to identify mechanisms and conditions that usually remain invisible in the studies with larger-scale aggregation. The research that deals with the neighborhood scale can identify environmental effects at the respective level. For example, neighborhood effects on local level crime, collective efficacy, and social control and disorder have been discussed in many studies done by urban sociologists, particularly by Sampson and his collaborators (Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush 2001; Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley 2002; Sampson and Wikstrom 2008). These studies make important observations of neighborhood-based mechanisms and effects that affect the dynamics of violence, its level of intensity, and its spatial distributions that studies at higher level of aggregation were not able to identify and therefore, not able to take into account.

Although most of the literature on armed conflicts discusses inter-state and civil war type of large-scale violent conflicts, its theoretical implications can apply to lower-level forms of violence and to smaller and disaggregated spatial scales. Settlement patterns, urban landscape, and the built environment in urban neighborhoods also affect the spatial distribution of violence in smaller-scale conflicts such as ethnic riots. So far, this kind of analysis has been undertaken mainly by scholars of contentious politics who study urban riots and street protests. Yet, the lowest level of aggregation that studies on violent ethnic conflicts employed to explain spatial variations has been at the level of district and town. Important influential studies on violent ethnic riots have been undertaken by Varshney (2002) and Wilkinson (2006). While Varshney conducts cross-town level paired comparisons of Hindu–Muslim violence, Wilkinson makes comparisons of the same ethnic conflict at both town and state (provincial) levels. Similarly, Straus (2008, 2010) analyzes spatial variations in violence across districts during the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

The studies that analyze violence at neighborhood level usually deal with non-extreme riots that result in non-lethal street clashes and looting, but no deaths. An exception is the study done by Brass (2003) who explains the variation in violence between Hindus and Muslims in the city of Aligarch, however without engaging in systematic cross-neighborhood comparisons and explanations of variations (see also the volume edited Waddington, Jobard, and King 2009).

It is important to emphasize that in those days trust between members of the two ethnic groups was to great extent shattered by increasing/continuing ethnic violence. Even the residents who would normally have felt little prejudice and no hostility towards “the other” ethnic group felt insecure about possible

aggressive acts by the neighboring "confronting" ethnic residential communities and also by opportunistically behaving rioters and looters. This produced a so-called "security dilemma" (Posen 1993; Lake and Rothchild 1996) among the peaceful city dwellers, who undertook security measures by constructing barricades in their streets and neighborhoods, creating patrol and vigilante groups, and arming themselves with firearms, sticks and clubs, cold steel, and Molotov cocktails. According to a report produced by the Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission (KIC), after the trigger incident at the Alai Hotel, "witnesses anticipated not simply violence, but war". The *azan* (call to prayer) was heard at an unusual time (2am) in the mosques in at least four Uzbek neighborhoods. "Uzbek men travelling in cars in the mahallas shouted that the war had begun" (KIC 2011, 28).

The onset of violence rapidly (and unexpectedly) changed the built environment of many southern towns. In Osh, the city's spatial structures were transformed overnight. Communications infrastructures and the built environment in urban neighborhoods were reshaped according to the interests of the main actors involved in this conflict. These spatial changes were enabled by human agency – it was local residents who built barricades across streets and neighborhoods. They altered the whole landscape of the city converting it into multiple spatially isolated and self-regulated entities. These spatial entities/units often corresponded with the ethnic boundaries of residentially segregated neighborhoods. Just in one night, residents in many neighborhoods built barricades in the streets blocking access to their neighborhoods. Barricades and road blocks both constrained and shaped the actions and movements of residents, refugees, combatants, looters, and police.

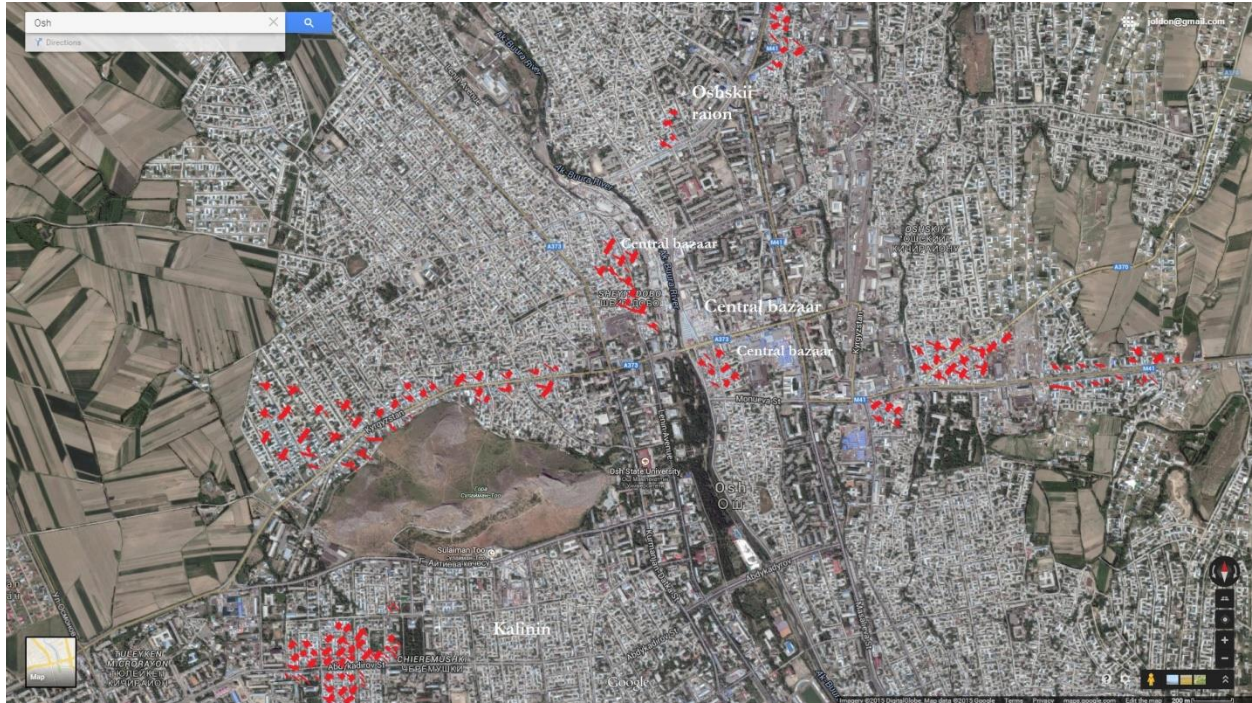
The spatial/geographical location of the neighborhoods also matters. Some neighborhoods suffered violence simply because they ended up in the wrong time and in the wrong place. Such unfortunate neighborhoods fell victims to spatially-contingent events and spillover effects but also because the transport and communications infrastructures channeled the flows of aggressive rioters, emotional mobs, or revengeful refugees to these particular neighborhoods. For instance, Cheremushki –a neighborhood in the western-central part of Osh that suffered one of the highest levels of ethnic violence during the conflict – underwent attacks from intruders who were advancing from the western part towards the central area of the city. In Nariman, a rural district in the northern outskirts of Osh, initially strong local social control and self-policing by local community leaders were undermined by the vengeful actions of refugees. Nariman village, which connects Osh with Uzbekistan's border was forced to accept hundreds of returning male refugees who had been denied passage to Uzbekistan. Embittered radicals among these refugees openly challenged local social order and overpowered the traditional authority of local

community leaders, forcing moderates to join them in a fight against their ethnic enemies (Lemarchand 1996, 2009; Straus 2006; Wilkinson 2006; Fearon and Laitin 2011). Their actions resulted in violent disorder and infamous assassinations of police mediators, one of whom was the chief of district police. Other neighborhoods experienced spillover effects from violence-prone areas. One such violence-prone area is around the grand bazaar in Osh. Weak social control in this territory was exacerbated by the grand bazaar's status as a focal transit point for local trade and transport communications. Local trade businesses attracted looters. Militants who arrived at the area of the grand bazaar from the town outskirts and rural areas were naturally directed there by communication roads. Looting and violence and accumulation of belligerents in the bazaar area resulted in attacks and disorders in the adjacent neighborhoods (Tajrimal, Teshik-Tash).

Nevertheless, the residents in segregated neighborhoods also developed their own security measures and community defense strategies. For instance, Kyrgyz and Uzbek ethnic communities in the southern district of Turan in Osh faced the same problems as in many other neighborhoods in violent areas. However, in Turan and its adjacent neighborhoods, they managed to turn local spatial structures and environmental conditions to their security advantage. Environmental conditions of Turan district in Osh enabled greater spatial control of the neighborhood and more effective in-group policing of local residents by communal leaders. According to Sewell, control over territory is synonymous with policing – the monitoring of local residents and the use of coercion and sanctions to maintain order (Sewell 2001, 68). The natural and built environments of Turan provided favorable conditions for this neighborhood's spatial security. Located on hilly terrain and separated by a water channel from the downhill Kyrgyz neighborhoods of Uchar, Toloikon, and the Abjalov, this large Uzbek neighborhood concentrated its defense on few bridges. Local Uzbek residents of Turan erected barricades on the bridges to prevent possible sudden incursions from the Kyrgyz side. The neighboring Kyrgyz communities chose the same strategy by setting up road blocks on their side. Being spatially isolated from other Uzbek neighborhoods and encircled by the Kyrgyz territories, the Turan residents felt themselves under higher-level threat. This induced local leaders to conduct more effective in-group policing facilitated by the spatial environmental characteristics of the neighborhood. The spatial isolation allowed community leaders greater social control over the territory and sanctions against violators.

In the next section, I present two cases of neighborhoods with different outcomes of violence: the first is - Oshskii raion in the Alymbek Datka district, which was highly violent; the second was *Kalinin* in the Sulaiman-Too district, which was relatively peaceful (see the location of these two cases on Figure 6.1.).

Figure 6.1. The location of Oshskii raion and Kalinin in Osh city. Source: Google Earth




Note: The red spots on the map indicate the damage clusters

## The *Oshskii raion* neighborhood (Alymbek Datka district)

The Alymbek Datka district (hereafter AD) is located in the eastern part of Osh city. The AD district was one of the first flashpoints in Osh where ethnic riots broke out. Virtually all the law enforcement and international investigative mission reports mention the main streets and *mahallas* of the AD district in connection with the riots and ethnic violence, including an infamous Café Nostalgie on Karasuiskaia Street, which was converted to a place where hostages were kept and sexually abused during the riots. However, most of the riots and violent actions took place in and around *Oshskii raion*, an informal neighborhood within the AD district. In this section I will, first provide a detailed description of the riots that took place in *Oshskii raion*. Then, to understand why this neighborhood was especially riot-prone, I will show how *Oshskii raion*'s *spatial configuration of built environment* (term from Zhao 2013) set up conditions that were favorable for riots. That is to say, this spatial configuration enables the local conditions that facilitated the spread of riots in this district to be described. It also enables us to draw parallels with other riot-prone districts such as Manas Ata (HBK) and Ak-Buura which share many similar spatial,

environmental, demographic, and social characteristics with *Oshskii raion*, including their proximity to a grand bazaar. In this section on the AD district, I first reconstruct the riot dynamics that took place in there. Following, I will discuss public space in the AD district and particularly in *Oshskii raion* and will indicate how it contributed to the riot proneness of the neighborhood.

Figure 6.2. Oshskii raion and the neighboring Uzbek mahallas in the Alymbek Datka (AD) district. Source Google Earth

Note: The blue circle indicates the location of *Oshskii raion*'s central square. The large damage cluster is the *mahalla* in Besh Kuporok. In the map presented here, it is easy to distinguish the Kyrgyz multi-story neighborhoods from the Uzbek *mahallas*. The multi-story buildings have long linear shape as opposed to smaller private individual-unit houses in the Uzbek *mahallas*.

The area surrounding the central square, informally called the "*Oshskii raion*" ('Osh district') in Alymbek Datka territorial council, was one of the most violent clusters in Osh city. The territory belonging to the *Oshskii raion* became one of the earliest flashpoints of clashes between the Uzbek and Kyrgyz in the north-western part of the city. The clashes involved some of the residents of the Uzbek *mahallas* located in Jim, Jiydalik, and Besh-Kuporok and the Kyrgyz multi-storey apartment complexes in Alymbek Datka and HBK (Manas-Ata). The local youths from these apartment complexes and Uzbek *mahallas* were especially actively involved in the riots and violence. This area emerged as one of the first flashpoints and continued

to be so on 11 June. Kyrgyz and Uzbek groups armed with metal bars, sticks, and hunting rifles clashed both with each other and with the military that occasionally intervened between the two crowds.

The main fights between the rioting crowds took place in the central square in the *Oshskii raion* in front of the seven-story building (Memorial 2012). This site emerged as a hotspot because it was located at the main Masaliev-Razzakov road, which stood between the Uzbek *mahallas* and the Kyrgyz multi-story buildings (see Figure 3). Internal migrants living in the dormitory-type of apartments around the bazaar probably played an active role in the Kyrgyz mobilization, while the Uzbek mobilization took the form of young residents from the neighboring *mahallas*. It was also noted that some women from both of the ethnic communities tried to instigate violence under an ethnic-patriotic rhetoric to "go and protect our houses" (Memorial 2012, 151).

On 12 June the violence escalated. Two APCs captured by rioting individuals were used to destroy barricades and kill at least five people in Jiydalik (HRW 2010, 36; Memorial 2012, 154). According to the Fergana news agency, a group of Kyrgyz from Chon Alai and other mountainous districts attacked various *mahallas* in several different parts of the city (Fergana News 2010). Another crowd supported by an APC attacked an Uzbek *mahalla* in Besh Kuporok. This was the most violent attack in this area, in which dozens of houses were burned and the number of killed is still unknown. UNOSAT identified the destruction zone in Besh Kopurok mahalla as one of seven large clusters of destroyed property in Osh city. The Memorial that now stands there describes the level of destruction in the Besh Kuporok *mahalla* and, according to the map published by UNITAR/UNOSAT, residential areas to the east of *Oshskii raion* and Razzakov Street were completely razed to the ground with 160 residential buildings destroyed by mass arson. The streets leading from *Oshskii raion* to *mahallas* in Shark and Jiydalik were barricaded (2012, 156).

The situation became very tense. Shops and cafes were completely looted. The clothes market in the grand bazaar was also looted. An unknown APC, probably one of those mentioned above, was used to attack the State Border Guard headquarters on Masaliev Street, not far from the main site of the riots in the area of *Oshskii raion*. Many Kyrgyz residents started leaving their houses fleeing to more secure places in Osh city but preferably to remote towns and villages outside. Some camps for Kyrgyz refugees were set up in Osh city suburbs.

On 13 June, the violence suddenly de-escalated. In Osh, the number of rural rioters sharply decreased. Many left the city as a result of the rumors about the intervention of the Uzbekistani army that had been circulating the previous night. Heavy assaults with the support of APCs stopped and it is likely that by that

time the military had already regained control over the lost APCs. However, the streets were still unsafe. As in many other parts of the city hostage-taking in the AD and Manas Ata districts became widespread from 13 June. Roaming groups of criminals targeted single individuals passing in the streets. Some were beaten and others taken hostage. Looters and criminals broke into apartments, robbing, beating, and kidnapping people. In the Manas Ata district, several Kyrgyz were killed and taken hostage by Uzbeks from Jiydalik, who made sudden incursions in this Kyrgyz dominated neighborhood[28].

In *Oshskii raion*, a Kyrgyz criminal gang used one of the local cafes - the *Café Nostalgie* – to keep at least 26 Uzbek hostages. According to the Memorial, most of these, urban non-*mahalla* Uzbek women were kidnapped from the neighboring multistory apartment houses. The *Café Nostalgie* when it became known that these Uzbek women were subject to sexual violence and torture. Later, they were exchanged for Kyrgyz hostages from other areas. The Memorial report claims that some of the Kyrgyz exchanged agreed voluntarily to play the role of "hostages" (2012, 157–59).

Despite these clear signs of de-escalation, some rioters continued to maintain their domination of certain areas by impregnating the atmosphere with ethnic fears and hatred. A few of the local community leaders made some brave attempts to stop the violence. The Kyrgyz and Uzbek leaders from the AD had met for the first time on the same central square to negotiate a non-aggression pact according to which they agreed to clamp down on these aggressive youngsters and to protect each other. On 13 and 14 June, and in fact even later, reconciliation actions were held between Kyrgyz community leaders of the Alymbek Datka and Uzbek elders of Jiydalik (interview with a Kyrgyz community leader, August 2013) and between leaders of HBK (Manas Ata) and Jiydalik (Memorial 2012, 156). Despite these pacts, sporadic hostage-taking continued for several days.

*Space and the built environment of Oshskii raion*

One of the most densely populated residential areas in Osh, the AD district has, according to official accounts, around 26 thousand but, according to the local territorial council, in reality, there are around 35 thousand people living in this area. The difference between the official census and the data provided

[28] This information was corroborated in conversations with an employee of international organization, a Kyrgyz resident of this neighborhood (August 2012 and September 2013). Another my respondent, a former high-level Uzbek politician well known in Osh, was kidnapped by a Kyrgyz group in the same area but later managed to escape (interview August 2012)

by the territorial council is represented by the number of unregistered or undocumented residents. Most of the unregistered residents are economic migrants who came to Osh city from the devastated rural and mountainous districts of Batken and Osh provinces[29] to find job opportunities in the local grand bazaar. After the collapse of the Kyrgyz economy in the 1990s, the proximity of the AD to the bazaar and the availability of relatively cheap housing in bunk houses and dormitory-type apartments attracted thousands of distressed economic migrants to this district and its neighboring districts of Manas-Ata (*HBK*) and Ak-Buura (*Dom byta*).

Although both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz live in the AD district, urban planning and ethnic cultural housing preferences also contributed to create ethnic segregation here. There are more than 90 multi-storey apartment buildings and 1,600 individual unit houses in this district. As in other districts of the city, ethnic communities are residentially distributed according to the type of housing that has been built in particular neighborhoods. The Uzbeks, for example, who constitute 55% of the AD district's population live in individual-unit houses in *mahallas*, while the Kyrgyz and a few Russians, 45% of the AD district's population, live in 4- and 5-storey apartment buildings and in 32 dormitories and bunk houses (interview with the AD district's senior secretary). According to the local neighborhood committee, only one out of seven official neighborhoods in the AD district is mixed, while the other six are ethnically homogenous. The AD district is also one of the three districts adjacent to the Osh grand bazaar. Clearly, its proximity to the bazaar greatly adds to the flow of transport and humans through this area.

The spatial location of the AD district in the city makes it a transit zone. Masaliev Street, which passes through the territory of *Oshskii raion* neighborhood of the district, is one of the largest streets with very busy traffic. The street runs through the city's eastern half connecting its five eastern districts (Manas Ata (HBK), AD, Ak-Buura, Kurmanjan Datka, and Amir Timur) and also the Shark district with the bazaar. It is full of cafes, teahouses, and private offices on both sides of the road. Local residents claim that Masaliev Street is in the Guinness Book of World Records for the highest number of cafes to be located in one street. In addition, Razzakov Street (onto which Masaliev Street converges) connects Osh city with the highly populated suburb villages of the Nariman district on the outskirts of the city.

The built environment of public space in *Oshskii raion*, which is the main informal neighborhood of the AD district used to be rather different to what it is now. Since 2010, the city authorities and local territorial council with some assistance from international NGOs and foundations have considerably improved local

[29] Osh is the name for both the city and the province. In this paper, unless I specify the province, by "Osh", I normally refer to the city.

conditions and eliminated some of the factors that contributed to the spread of the riots to this particular area. However, before 2010 the spillover effects of the bazaar were already heavily contaminating the local social life and badly affecting the local criminal environment. As Gieryn argues:

> Place also plays a role in shaping rates of behavior generally considered deviant or criminal no matter where they occur. Environmental criminologists suggest that the geographic location of various social activities and the architectural arrangements of spaces and building can promote or retard crime rates – mainly crimes against property (Gieryn 2000, 480).

Some of the AD district's neighborhoods and streets were prestigious and exemplary during the late Soviet period, but gradually degraded over the 1990s and 2000s under the negative spillover effects of the continuously expanding bazaar. By 2010, some parts of the bazaar had expanded to the residential areas and, most notably, to *Oshskii raion*'s main public square. The rapid transition from welfare socialism to aggressive neoliberalism, corruption, and inefficient governance destroyed the local relatively vibrant civic life. Many longstanding residents left the area and the vacated residential space was quickly filled by the migrants from rural areas. Many of these new arrivals lived there in very poor conditions hardly making ends meet. The local city authorities did little to decently accommodate and improve the life conditions of economic migrants, and this meant that the problems related to the uncontrollable expansion of the bazaar with regard to residential space and the infrastructural collapse were dumped on local residents. Gieryn's remarks clearly identify such places as *Oshskii raion*:

> Places reflect and reinforce hierarchy by extending or denying life-chances to groups located in salutary or detrimental spots. Most of the literature on ethnic enclaves has focused on segregated urban neighborhoods whose physical, social, and cultural deterioration (whether due to exodus of middle-class minorities or to racist real-estate practices) has made it difficult for residents to better their conditions (Gieryn 2000, 474–75).

After the 2010 ethnic violence, the city authorities renovated neglected *Oshskii raion*'s central square, which had been the main arena of the clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbek youngsters during the June riots. The renovation of this public space radically improved the neighborhood, reducing the levels of criminality.

The conditions listed above can be characterized as "advanced marginality", a term utilized to explain the territorial stigmatization of residents in marginalized spaces such as ghettos, shantytowns, *banlieues*, and *favelas*. For some scholars, this kind of neighborhoods demonstrates clear patterns of physical and social disorder that are "a manifestation of crime-relevant mechanisms" (Sampson and Raudenbush 1999, 614). The reason for the emergence of such "advanced marginality" can be explained by a declining welfare state under pressure from increasing neoliberal capitalism (Roy 2012, 692). Although in the pre-riots

period *Oshskii raion* could not be defined as a ghetto, it could still be considered as a "marginalized space" according to which the main cause of spatial and human marginalization is a state's total negligence of helping to resolve difficulties experienced by poor economic migrants. In addition, many places in the AD district and others, especially neighborhoods with multi-storey apartment complexes in the period before 2010, could be defined as "unassigned public spaces" with high crime rates and anti-social behavior and "with nobody interested enough to watch over them" (Gieryn 2000, 480). Such territories suffered from overwhelming violence. Altogether it represented the social configuration of the built environment in *Oshskii raion*'s multi-storey apartment complexes and in other similar wards.

Some of the conditions listed below contributed to making *Oshskii raion* conducive to riot mobilization. That is, they made the neighborhood - and especially its large open spaces - the main arena of the interethnic clashes discussed above and they facilitated violent mobilization when the riots broke out. However, even before the riots, *Oshskii raion* had deteriorated into a site that attracted anti-social and opportunist behavior.

As mentioned above, *Oshskii raion*'s built environment engendered several of the conditions that were favorable for the riot occurrence. Particularly, five spatial factors, mostly related to the neighborhood's built environment, location, and road communication structures, affected the riot occurrence and violent mobilization in this specific area: 1) its spatial practices and routines; 2) spatial proximity and high density of population; 3) population concentration and ethnic segregation; 4) the presence of a large open area in the intersection between segregated neighborhoods; and 5) road communications structure and transit location within the city.

First, this large district's spatial practices and spatial routines were not conducive for community policing. As also discussed above, the close vicinity of the central bazaar with its spillover effects impeded the development of local social control and the production of traditional power in multi-story building neighborhoods. The combination of weak policing, low trust among the residents and almost powerless community leaders produced favorable incentives for opportunistic behavior during riots. The territory of *Oshskii raion* and particularly its large central square was used by rioters of both ethnic communities as an arena for clashes and after the violence escalated, as a focal point first for the Uzbek mobilization against Kyrgyz and then, when ethnic balance of power shifted, for the Kyrgyz mobilization. Second, the high density of population ensured by the high concentration of dormitories, multistory buildings, and *mahallas* around *Oshskii raion* facilitated a violent mobilization of both ethnic groups by making available a large number of people in a particular place - in this case, the main square in *Oshskii raion*.

Third, the spatial residential segregation that was very evident and visible in *Oshskii raion* made it more difficult to establish cooperation and communication between the two ethnic groups when the riots broke out. The clear spatial division between the ethnic neighborhoods and the absence of any bridging communication and contacts between the residents of the Kyrgyz and Uzbek neighborhoods increased their perceptions and feelings of hostility, uncertainty, mistrust and classification of the space as 'ours' and 'theirs' (Agnew and Oslender 2013, 124).

Fourth, the spatial characteristics of the public square in *Oshskii raion* made it a convenient place for violent mobilization and clashes. As Figure 3 shows, the square is a large open space located in the intersection between several streets including the main Masaliev and Razzakov avenues. While large transit roads provide a natural connection with other parts of the city, medium and small streets all converge onto the large open area in *Oshskii raion* leading to the central bazaar, Kyrgyz dominated multi-storey building complexes, and to the Uzbek *mahallas* of Jim, Jiydalik, Shark, and Besh-Kopurok. It is therefore not surprising that *Oshskii raion* emerged as one of the first flashpoints of ethnic violence in the city. Young Kyrgyz and Uzbek dwellers went to the large open area from local adjacent neighborhoods with "the crowds arriving from different directions" (Memorial 2012, 74) and started throwing rocks at each other. At a later stage of the riots, when the violence escalated and Kyrgyz groups dominated the city, this open space was used as a springboard for attacks on the Uzbek *mahalla* in Besh-Kopurok described above as being the most damaged neighborhood in the AD district. This *mahalla* was located along Razzakov avenue in the immediate vicinity of the open space and was therefore a convenient target for attacks.

Finally, the location of *Oshskii raion* within Osh city as a high transit zone with its broad and heavily trafficked main Masaliev Street made it easy and fast for the rioting mobs to travel from other parts of the city to reach this neighborhood. Masaliev street connects the districts and neighborhoods that are directly located in the eastern part of the city and, in fact, rioting groups from both sides used this road to travel to and clash in the central square in *Oshskii raion*. In addition, Kyrgyz youths from the remote rural mountainous districts of Alai, Chon Alai, and Kara-Kulja who mobilized in response to the Uzbek-initiated violence, entered the city thorugh its eastern entrance that eventually leads to Masaliev Street and then on to *Oshskii raion*.

## The Kalinin neighborhood (Sulaiman-Too district)

During the June 2010 riots in Osh, the Kalinin neighborhood remained peaceful. This case represents the self-isolation strategy. Local residents made a decision to isolate the neighborhood from the rest of the city. As a result, the neighborhood avoided riots, mass killings, looting, and mass property destruction. This outcome seems striking if one takes into account that the Cheremushki neighborhood, one of the most intensive flashpoints of ethnic violence in Osh city, was located just several hundred meters away to the west from the Kalinin neighborhood (see Figure 6.3.). Below, based on the example of the Kalinin, I will explain how the interaction between human agency and spatial structures changed the built environment of public space within a particular neighborhood. Through strategic use of the new environment, local community leaders enabled and empowered their own agency and, at the same time,

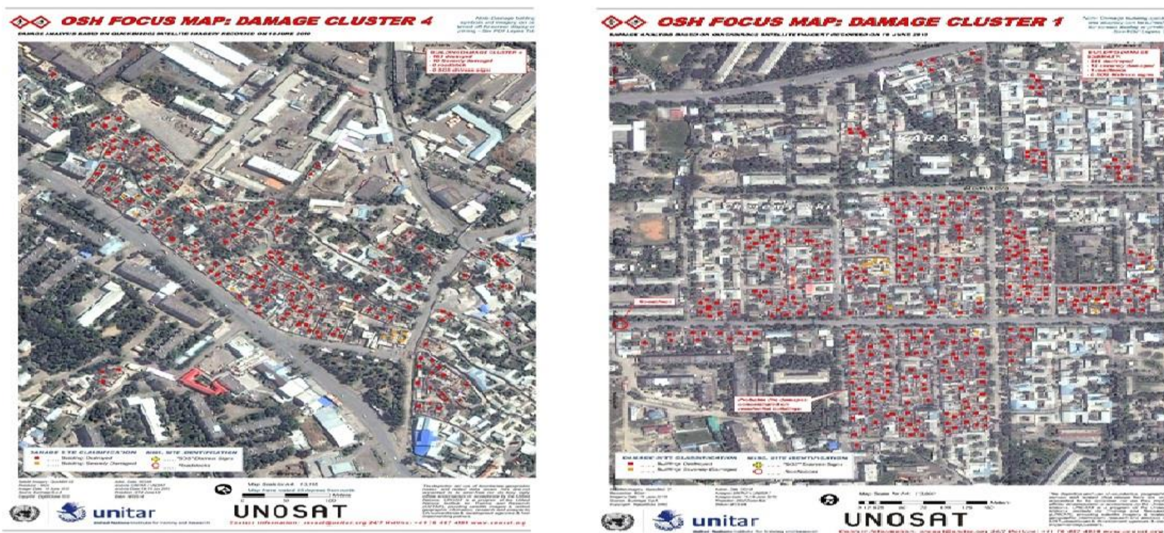
Figure 6.3. The Cheremushki and Kalinin neighborhoods (Source: Google Earth)

Note: The long red arrows show the main directions of attacks on the Cheremushki neighborhood. The small red circles indicate the approximate location of some of the roadblocks in the Kalinin neighborhood.

constrained the agency of other actors. The case of Kalinin neighborhood is interesting as many neighborhoods in the cities of Osh and Jalalabat utilized the same strategy to avoid riots and mass property destruction. The spatial scale of such strategy is not limited to neighborhood level as the entire town of Uzgen, located between Osh and Jalalabat, isolated itself and implemented a special emergency regime in its territory (interviews with local residents in Uzgen).

The Kalinin neighborhood is located in the center of Osh. It is the residential area of individual unit houses mostly inhabited by Uzbeks but also by Kyrgyz who mainly live in several 2-, 3-, and 4-story apartment buildings. Car repair and service-related businesses including a large open market/bazaar of car parts and automobile accessories is the main distinction of this neighborhood. The Kalinin neighborhood is where many of the city's motorists come to repair their vehicles for a reasonable price in small repair shops located along Amir Timur Street (formerly Kalinin Street). Many Uzbek repairmen have converted parts of their houses into car repair shops. On the northern side of the neighborhood, there is a large market of car spares offered to customers for affordable prices. The eastern side of the neighborhood adjoins the city's downtown area: Kurmanjan Datka Street and governmental and public buildings, the most notable of which are the Provincial Court House, City (or provincial) Police Department, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, and the central marriage registry office.

Figure 6.4. The patterns of property damage in Oshskii raion (cluster 4) and Cheremushki (cluster 1).
Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT




On the morning of 11 June, Uzbek residents in the Cheremushki neighborhood blocked the main roads in Cheremushki and conducted stop-and-checks of passing cars. Uzbek self-defense groups did not let any Kyrgyz go through and beat the Kyrgyz motorists up (interview with a Kyrgyz resident in Cheremushki). The Uzbek residents of Cheremushki constructed barricades in the main and secondary streets all over the neighborhood. When Kyrgyz riotous crowds attacked the Cheremushki, they burned and looted hundreds of houses, killing and beating up the local Uzbeks who they found inside the houses. An intensive phase of violent riots lasted for two days: on 11-12 June and from 13 June the violence de-escalated for the same reasons as in *Oshskii raion*. The scale of destruction in Cheremushki was considerable. Several

blocks with around 350 residential houses over 500 meters mainly along Abdykadyrov Street were completely destroyed. Around 40 houses were destroyed along the eastern part of Mominov Street. The two streets connect Cheremushki with Kalinin. “On the eastern part of Abdykadyrov Street and the crossing of Amir Temur Street, which were protected by barricades, 12 large written SOS were identified on the satellite images” (Memorial 2012, 114–15; UNITAR/UNOSAT 2010).

“Crucial to states' control over territory is policing — the surveillance or the activities of citizens and the use of coercion to enforce laws and maintain order” (Sewell 2001, 68). This quotation refers to state control and policing but in the absence of the state during the riots, some leaders temporally redesigned the built environment of their neighborhoods in order to enforce their rules and maintain order. They did it by building barricades that enabled them to hold control over the territory and strengthen community policing.

When first ethnic riots and violence took place in Cheremushki and other neighborhoods in Osh city, the residents of the Kalinin neighborhood followed the example of many other city neighborhoods to construct barricades. One aspect which distinguished Kalinin from other neighborhoods was that the barricades here were erected all around the neighborhood and not only in the direction of supposed attacks by rioters. In addition, as the Memorial’s last citation suggests, the residents of the Kalinin neighborhood wrote twelve large “SOS” distress signs[30] on the ground to make them visible for aviation. Local Uzbek elders suggested that a local Kyrgyz woman, Datka, take leadership and coordinate defensive measures in the neighborhood. It was unusual for local informal authority to be granted to a woman in such critical moment in the local context; however, the Uzbek residents knew Datka as a person who had informal links with the local police and as an organizer of various festivity events in the neighborhood. She established a team of community leaders, mainly Uzbek elders, and activist women. They blocked the streets with truck cargo containers from the car spares bazaar, thus encircling the whole neighborhood with a chain of barricades.

Physical self-isolation of the neighborhood allowed to Datka and other community leaders to impose greater social control and informal power over the territory. The neighborhood was now turned into an isolated space with its own emergency rules and increased authority and power of local informal leaders. The first thing that Datka and her supporters did was to restrict freedom of movement within this isolated

[30] In the citation, the Kalinin neighborhood is indicated as Amir Timur street which is now an official name of the street but I use instead its previous Soviet time related and now its informal name - Kalinin. I do it to avoid some confusion because there is also a large district in the eastern part of Osh city also called “Amir Timur”

space. The leaders prohibited local residents from leaving the territory and they barred entry to and passage through the physically isolated neighborhood to all outsiders. They even forced those local residents who wanted to flee to other areas within or outside the city to stay. A confined space made self-policing easier, as strangers and external instigators were denied access to the territory.

The next thing was that Datka stopped all activities in the local mosque and the mosque itself was temporally closed down. This happened after three people were killed at the entrance to the mosque by an unidentified sniper or snipers from the hill of Sulaiman-Too, adjacent to the Kalinin from the northern side of the neighborhood and the car spares market[31]. The closure of such a traditionally and religiously important public place as a mosque seems unbelievable, especially in an Uzbek-dominated community[32]. During the intense interethnic violence in June 2010, the mosques were still open for believers even in the distressed and riot-affected neighborhoods in Uzbek and also in the Kyrgyz neighborhoods in Osh, Jalalabat, and other towns. However, in the wake of the sniper shooting from the Sulaiman-Too and also because self-isolation in the Kalinin increased the informal leaders' authority and power, local believers in general accepted the closure of the mosque.

The security regime in the confined territory also included regular monitoring of the neighborhood's borders by community leaders and activist self-defense groups. In addition, the leaders took upon themselves responsibilities such as dispelling rumors, the distribution of humanitarian aid, and contacts with the police. One of the main aims of this special regime imposed on the residents by their leaders was to prevent any penetration of instigators, looters, and rumor-mongers who could considerably undermine policing efforts in the local community. Despite the vigilant activists' watchful monitoring of the borders and protection of the neighborhood from penetration of outsiders, a few instigators and looters did sneak into the guarded territory but they failed to instigate violence in this well-policed area. After several unsuccessful attempts to spread instigating rumors, they disappeared from the Kalinin. Some attempts at looting were also made but the residents caught these looters. In the interview with Datka, she did not want to reveal me what happened to the looters in the end. They were probably beaten and/or detained. However, the following short excerpt clearly demonstrates that the community leaders in the Kalinin had

[31] The Sulaiman-Too is a single mountain/hill located right in the city center and considered a holy place at regional level.

[32] Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan are considered to be more religious than the Kyrgyz. The mosque was located in an Uzbek dominated area.

a sufficiently high level of control over the territory and that they enforced a strong self-policing of the community:

Did looters come to your ward?

Looters came to my territory, they came. They got their punishment [giggling and looking at me ambiguously].

Really? What kind of punishment they got?

Well, they were caught … [then she stopped not willing to elaborate more on the fate of these looters]

They were caught, calmed down, and that's it?

Such things happen … [still avoiding to clearly indicate the type of punishment they got] (interview with Datka, Osh August 2013).

Later on, during the same interview, she told me that now, she sometimes resorts to the assistance of "black guys" when dealing with especially non-compliant trouble-makers in community policing. In the local context, this implies that when other sanctions do not have an effect, Datka asks local gangs or individuals with connections to the criminal underworld to threaten and calm down the violators of communal social order. In addition, for better community policing, she registers and conducts an interview with each newly arriving resident in her neighborhood.

The Kalinin leaders also managed to counteract and dispel rumors. On the night between 12 and 13 June, a rumor about a military intervention by the army from neighboring Uzbekistan spread through the city of Osh. Kyrgyz dwellers left the city in a great panic. However, no resident left the Kalinin neighborhood. Today Datka has become the most influential informal leader in the neighborhood. Since the 2010 riots, social control over the territory by community leaders has increased as compared to the pre-riots period. This is also because Datka and her supporters managed to change the environment in the neighborhood relying on the authority they gained during the riots.

The above description of the Kalinin neighborhood shows that it managed to curb any potential violence and to keep peace within its territory points on several conditions. Most importantly, it indicates the significance of the neighborhood's built environment in containing violence. In terms of spatial characteristics conducive to community defense, the social configuration of the built environment of the Kalinin neighborhood enjoyed a number of advantages compared to *Oshskii raion*. There is no large open space, similar to that in *Oshskii raion*, to serve as a natural place for spatial co-presence and the violent mobilization of a large number of people. A lower density of housing, more homogenous population of the neighborhood, and the absence of spillover effects from the grand bazaar made social control and community policing easier for local community leaders. Their power was reinforced by the physical self-

isolation of the neighborhood, which prevented the spatial mobility of local residents and any other actors who could threaten community policing and social order in the neighborhood. The small and medium-sized streets of Kalinin were convenient for constructing barricades to protect the neighborhood from the potential attacks of rioting groups in neighboring Cheremushki and other parts of the city. Thanks to the auto spares market, local residents were able to erect solid and dense roadblocks using cargo containers taken from the market. The absence of commercial objects made this neighborhood less attractive for rioters and looters.

Finally, the role of brokers like Datka cannot be underestimated. Datka's mediating activities can be characterized as follows: "Brokers are people … who can break down a variety of everyday spatial barriers and build new connections across space. They are able to do so because of their ability to physically and communicatively link unconnected social sites and connect them in a variety of ways" (D. G. Martin and Miller 2003, 152). With her connections to both ethnic communities and their leaders in the neighborhood and other actors as police and criminal gang members, she managed to link the otherwise disconnected local residents of two ethnic communities for the collective and cooperative defense of temporally self-contained territory. That is, Datka and other leaders connected previously not communicating two segregated groups of residents in their neighborhood: the numerically dominant Uzbeks with minority Kyrgyz. This kind of brokerage was virtually invisible in *Oshskii raion*. This is also in a striking contrast to the Uzbek and Kyrgyz leaders in Cheremushki, who did not manage to communicate and cooperate effectively between each other to protect their neighborhood from the rioting crowds. Dwellers in the Kyrgyz quarters and Uzbek *mahallas* in Cheremushki were mutually suspicious and fearful of each other. Some barricades were even built between Kyrgyz and Uzbek blocks within the neighborhood[33] (interview with a Kyrgyz resident in Cheremushki). Given that the social and built environment in two neighborhoods are somewhat similar, the brokerage and community policing conducted by the Kalinin leaders underlines the great importance of spatial agency in community defense.

## Conclusion

This paper suggests new insights in the analysis of riots by connecting theoretical categories and concepts of space provided by scholars of political violence and applying them to the case of the 2010 ethnic riots in Osh city. As Leitner et al. (2008) suggest, spatial categories are interdependent and co-implicated and

[33] To be fair, if compared to Kalinin, Cheremushki neighborhood was more disadvantaged in terms of its location as it received first strikes from rural mobs coming to the city through its western entrance.

should be considered in interaction rather than separately. My analysis of the ethnic riots in the city of Osh demonstrate how various spatial categories such as the built environment, spatial structures, mobility, and spatiality of power/socio-spatial positionality and brokerage are capable of explaining local dynamics and variation in violence across different neighborhoods in one town. By analyzing riot dynamics on the neighborhood level, this research contributes to our understanding of the spatial dynamics of ethnic riots.

The comparison of two neighborhood cases highlights several important points specified by the theoretical literature on space and contentious politics. First, this paper shows that the built environment of public space, spatial differentiation and location of neighborhoods, and spatial structures (especially road and communications infrastructures) play important role in riot dynamics. It demonstrates that a large and transit "unassigned" open public space in densely concentrated housing is especially vulnerable to violence and mobilization (see also Gieryn 2000). *Oshskii raion*, as a large and transit space with many streets converging onto its central square, was exposed to the incursion of rioting and looting groups of individuals from both ethnic groups. Thus, it enabled the spatial co-presence of hostile groups in one place. Violent confrontations between the members of these two ethnic communities took place in the neglected central square of *Oshskii raion*. The significance of the physical co-presence of large numbers of individuals in a limited space for all forms of contentious politics was also emphasized by Sewell's theoretical accounts (2001, 58). In addition, this paper shows that, by isolating itself, the community of residents in the Kalinin neighborhood managed to eliminate external spatial factors that contributed to the emergence of riots in *Oshskii raion*.

Second, spatiality is not causally deterministic and its impact should be accounted in interaction with human agency. The self-isolation enabled and empowered the local community leaders and constrained actors that might have undermined peace in the neighborhood. Just as the physical isolation of the Beijing campuses increased the Chinese students' capacity to mobilize for protests (Zhao 1998, 1518), in some

Osh neighborhoods it allowed community leaders to enhance their capacity for community policing. The initially disconnected leaders of the two residentially segregated ethnic communities in the *Oshskii raion* and the Kalinin cases, remained passive in the former, while in the latter, they managed to strengthen their position by building connections between the two segregated ethnic groups. By restricting and isolating the neighborhood, they gained greater social and mobility control over its residents. The change of public space strengthened the local leaders, who started playing an increasingly important role in riot-

control. Local leaders had never enjoyed this level of power over the neighborhood in the pre-riots times but gained it during the riots thanks to the emergency regime imposed by them on the self-isolated space.

This observation goes along with Zhao's (2013) findings that emphasize the importance of the built environment for mobilization, which increases with a lower organizational capacity. However, while in the case of student protests in the Beijing universities, the built environment of university campuses was fixed and played a static role, the local activists in some Osh neighborhoods transformed the built environment to protect them from rioting mobs and to successfully police local communities. They did this by building artificial barriers and constraining the spatial mobility of the residents. These community leaders were able to create environmental conditions that would play in their favor. Thus, they became active agents interacting with spatial structures.

What Sewell calls the "spatiality of power" (2001) and Leitner et al. (2008) "socio-spatial positionality" play an important role in reconfiguring the built environment and making it effective for community defense. This is what happened in the Kalinin case. The spatiality of power or socio-spatial positionality is "one way to keep analysis open to the resilience of unequal power relations within networks, as well as the possible emergence of new power relations" (Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008, 163).

Third, the concept of "spatial brokerage" (D. G. Martin and Miller 2003; see also McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Auyero 2007) is crucial for understanding the relative fortune of the Kalinin and some other barricaded neighborhoods. The Cheremushki experience showed that relatively similar spatial structures/the built environment with the Kalinin did not help the local Uzbek leaders in Cheremushki to protect their neighborhoods from riotous mobs. They failed to build effective cooperation and communication with the local Kyrgyz residents and leaders because they lacked such spatial brokers as Datka. The absence of intercommunal brokerage in Cheremushki clearly led to the problem of intercommunal civic engagement and a lack of bridging social capital between the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in one neighborhood. Further research to investigate the local dynamics of the Osh riots should take the role of mediators and social capital into serious account.

Finally, I should mention some caveats. This paper does not discuss the role of contingent factors in local dynamics of riots. Not everything was under the control of the communal leaders, brokers, and mediators. I do not want to overstate the salience of spatial factors either. Some contingent events and factors such as resonant assassinations, rumors, and provocations as well as the (in-)efficiency of the police forces in riot-control have a strong impact on the local dynamics of riots and spatial distribution of violence.

However, other factors being equal, the effects of spatial factors on riot dynamics are considerable. Spatial factors should be taken into scholarly accounts seriously.

The role of space and the built environment have rarely been applied to explain outcomes or the local dynamics of riots and ethnic conflicts and have never been discussed in the analysis of the 2010 Osh conflict. This is unfortunate. As this paper demonstrates, space considerably shaped the behavior of the main actors in this conflict. In general, spatiality and its impact on the local dynamics of riots have been neglected in the literature on political violence and ethnic conflict. This paper aims to bring attention to the role of spatiality and the built environment in the analysis of riots and ethnic conflicts.

Although this research has concentrated on the explanation of the relationship between ethnic riots and the social configuration of the built environment in one town, this case is far from being an idiosyncratic study. It has great relevance for many places beyond Kyrgyzstan. The built environment similar to the public space in Osh (the mix of modern multi-storey building complexes and historical neighborhoods with small curvy streets) can be found in cities and towns of neighboring Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as well as in many other riot-prone parts of the world; *mahallas* in Northern Africa, the Middle East, and India, university campuses in Beijing, *favelas* in Brazil, ghettos in Belfast and Derry in Northern Ireland[34] and Johannesburg in South Africa, and also in France. The spatial analysis presented in this paper may shed light on similar processes in many other cities and towns in the world.

Intense ethnic violence in *Oshskii raion* and other similar wards has revealed the real extent of crisis in urban public space. City authorities and international NGOs have made some efforts to change public space in neighborhoods like *Oshskii raion*. Since 2010, public spaces in Osh have been renovated, streets lightened, and the bazaar de-concentrated. The changing of the built environment does not eliminate the underlying causes of ethnic riots. However, some of the conditions favorable for riot mobilization and mitigate intensity of riots can be improved. This paper will hopefully help to address relevant issues not only in the field of ethnic violence but also in various fields of policy making: in urban planning and conflict resolution, for example.

[34] I would like to thank Lorenzo Bosi for indicating me this point.

# Chapter 7. Intercommunal non-aggression pacts and self-policing in Osh neighborhoods

In this chapter, I present cases of inter-group pacts and in-group policing in Osh neighborhoods. The cases presented here demonstrate the variation in outcomes resulted from the success or failure of local ethnic community leaders to conduct effective self-policing within respective neighborhood-based ethnic constituencies as well as from ability to reach effective intercommunal non-aggression agreements with community leaders from the other side. All neighborhoods represented in this chapter are cases of intercommunal pacts and in-group policing in ethnically-segregated communities.

This chapter discusses some questions raised by scholars of international relations regarding the logic of the two-level game model. Under what conditions can leaders act independently of constituent pressures? How do group configurations, institutions, and levels of uncertainty affect the strategies of leaders (Moravcsik 1993, 24; see also Putnam 1988)?

As the southern area was not the main flashpoint of ethnic violence, the level of information about what happened in the southern neighborhoods of Osh is insufficient, both in official and international investigative reports and the academic literature. Only brief information about clashes between Uchar and Turan is provided and only in certain reports. I reconstruct the events and processes in the southern part of Osh from the scarce information that appears in the Memorial report but mainly from my interviews with local community leaders and residents.

Below, I make paired comparisons of successful and failed pacts and self-policing in Osh's southern district of Turan and the northern district of Nariman – both Uzbek-dominated areas – with complementary evidence from some other neighborhoods. First, I show how Kyrgyz leaders of Uchar and Toloikon conducted effective self-policing of respective local Kyrgyz communities and made non-aggression pacts with Uzbek leaders of Turan. Effective in-group policing and pacts allowed local ethnic community leaders to contain initial violence and preserve peace. These two cases provide comparative evidence for in-group policing and non-aggression pacts of two Kyrgyz neighborhoods under different local environmental conditions but with the similar outcomes. In the next section, the case of failed self-policing in the northern Uzbek neighborhood of Nariman is juxtaposed with the cases of successful self-policing and non-aggression pacts in Turan district. In Nariman, initially successful self-policing failed due to an influx of refugees. Failed self-policing caused the loss of control by Uzbek *aksakals* over their local constituency which resulted in the subsequent violence in this neighborhood and led to the breakdown of a pact

between local Uzbek leaders and state authorities. In the final section, I discuss factors which explain the difference in outcomes across these cases.

I explain the difference in outcomes in violence between Turan and Nariman by intragroup and intergroup power dynamics. Structural conditions, such as strength of social norms, homogenous composition of residents, social cohesion, and strong leaders, were favorable for effective in-group policing in both districts. This allows us to hold structural conditions constant and to focus on the effects of interactional factors. What made difference in these two districts is how local leaders negotiated at the in-group and intergroup levels. The important was how leaders dealt with in-group challenges such as the influx of outsiders into their respective ethnic communities. Local ethnic community leaders proceeded through two-step negotiation process. First, at the domestic/in-group level, the key was to control the in-group constituency and neutralize and convince militant outsiders and local radicals not to fight against the other side. Second, if moderates dominated and radicals were marginalized at the in-group level, leaders managed to conduct effective self-policing which allowed them to negotiate non-aggression pacts with their counterparts from the other side. Effective self-policing also signaled credible commitments of community leaders to the conditions of negotiated non-aggression pacts.

Here I distinguish "outsiders" as a key variable that affects intragroup balances of power in ethnic community neighborhoods. Outsiders emerged in some neighborhoods as mobilized radical groups of rural youths and vindictive male refugees. Where they emerged in sufficient numbers they altered local within-group balances by shifting power to radical forces in neighborhood - based ethnic communities. This, in turn, affected inter-communal negotiation environments. Outsiders in alliance with local radical forces put serious pressure on community leaders against plans to negotiate non-aggression pacts with opponent groups.

In the southern neighborhoods of Turan, Uchar, and Toloikon, leaders managed to contain initial violence, to neutralize radicals and outsiders, and to negotiate successful non-aggression pacts among themselves. In the northern neighborhood of Nariman, local leaders initially conducted successful self-policing. However, after hundreds of mostly male refugees arrived in Nariman, they lost control of local constituency and in-group policing failed. Power shifted to vengeful radicals who broke a peaceful pact with local state authorities. The result was brutal assassination of the chief of the district police and his driver, who was beheaded.

When analyzing these cases, one thing should be considered. As Kaplan argues (1998, 252), "[a] focus on either international systemic or domestic determinants alone cannot account for the differences" in outcomes. Adopting this IR perspective and juxtaposing international and domestic arenas with in-group and intergroup levels, I argue that neither intragroup nor intergroup factors alone can explain the variation in outcomes. An approach that approximates "the two-level negotiations game, allows for international and domestic factors to be taken into account simultaneously" (Kaplan 1998, 252; see also Putnam 1988) two-level game model underlines the critical role of leaders in connecting interstate and domestic policy preferences. Some assumptions of this model – namely the importance of constellation of domestic forces for external negotiations and the linkage between domestic and international levels in mediation/negotiation processes – can be applied to the analysis of intercommunal pacts and "the two-level model should be tested in the context of ethnicity" (Kaplan 1998, 252). The constellation of domestic/in-group forces generally consisted of locals versus outsiders or moderates versus radicals. This situation was applicable both for Uzbek and Kyrgyz neighborhoods. As this chapter shows, power dynamics at the two levels interacted and affected each other. Intragroup power shifts influenced the dynamics of intercommunal negotiations and perceptions of credible commitment to a non-aggression pact.

## Turan and Kyrgyz villages: non-aggression pacts

During the 2010 ethnic violence, intercommunal relations in Osh's southern neighborhoods were characterized mainly by interactions between large and predominantly Uzbek district of Turan and its Kyrgyz neighbors Uchar, Toloikon, and the Abjalov neighborhood. The southern neighborhoods avoided large-scale destruction and mass ethnic violence. Although some violence took place on the border between Turan and Uchar, the violence was quickly contained.

All domestic and international investigative missions ignore this area in their reports. Memorial devotes no more than one and a half pages out of its overall 222-page document to the violent events that occurred between Turan and Uchar. Toloikon and the Abjalov neighborhood are hardly mentioned at all. This lack of attention to this area is understandable since the southern neighborhoods remained largely peaceful and so investigative reports and journalists therefore concentrated on covering violent events in other districts. I reconstruct and analyze events in this district drawing on the interviews with local residents and leaders. I selected leaders for interviews based on the evidence given to me by ordinary

residents who indicated me the key figures who played important role in intergroup negotiations and intragroup community policing.

Turan is a large Uzbek neighborhood – one of the ten official districts of Osh. Its population of around 25-28 thousand is mainly Uzbek with a small Kyrgyz minority occupying a few of this district's multistory buildings. Many residents of Osh call it *Yuzhnyi* – literally "the southern" – referring to its southern location in the city or sometimes Bir *Adyr* (One Hill) referring to its hilly landscape. This large district emerged in 1960–70s when the Soviet urban planners demolished old Uzbek *mahallas* in the center of Osh and built on their place new four- and five-story apartment buildings. The residents of the demolished *mahallas* were offered flats in these new apartment complexes but instead of moving into new flats, many of them preferred to build their new houses in the hills of southern suburbs which later became known as Turan district (Liu 2012). Over time, Turan transformed into a prestigious district. It is encircled by three Kyrgyz neighborhoods from the northern, western, and eastern directions. In the southern direction, there are mainly uninhabited hills. The district is spatially separated from the Kyrgyz neighborhoods by a water channel. Three bridges connect Turan with its Kyrgyz neighbors. When ethnic clashes flared up in the city, the residents of Turan strategically used these bridges by building barricades on them to protect the neighborhood from possible sudden attacks. The Kyrgyz did the same on their ends of the bridges. In addition, the Uzbeks in Turan set up barricades blocking the entrances inside *mahallas* on the whole perimeter of Turan (see figire 7.2). Rumors and news about the ethnic violence in the city contributed to ethnic tensions, distrust, and uncertainty between local ethnic communities.

The relatively remote location of Osh's southern neighborhoods from the city's major entrance roads in Osh partly explains the relative peace there. The main flow of groups from Kyrgyz rural areas entered the city from its eastern and western entrances in Furkat and Zapadnyi respectively where, at first, they clashed with Uzbek self-defense groups and militants. The neighborhoods that were located along the entrance avenues/roads and in the streets in close proximity experienced spillover effects from these armed fights. As the violence spilled over to Uzbek *mahallas* located along these roads in the central and northern parts of the city, the relatively remote distance between the main flashpoints and the southern neighborhoods of Turan, Uchar, and Toloikon facilitated security measures taken by the community leaders in these neighborhoods. Nevertheless, the geographical distance does not fully explain why the southern neighborhoods remained peaceful. The southern interregional road connecting Osh with Nookat *raion* is situated in very close proximity to Turan and practically crosses Uchar. In fact, many participants who gathered in the Zapadnyi neighborhood and then participated in violence in Osh's western

neighborhoods of Cheremushki and Kyzyl-Kyshtak came to the city using exactly this road. Note that in the north-western direction from Turan (the upper left corner of figure 7.1.), there is a roundabout that connects the regional road from Nookat raion with various parts of Osh city. From this roundabout, one can go to Zapadnyi, Dostuk, or Uchar village. Some rural Kyrgyz, mainly those who came from Nookat *raion* including Papan village, did reach Uchar through the same southern regional road. The newcomers became an important force which affected the dynamics of the intracommunal balance of power in Uchar and intercommunal relations between Uchar and Turan.

Figure 7.1. The location of Turan, Uchar, and Toloikon**.** Map data source: Google Earth

Note: Red circles indicate the main concentration of roadblocks and channel bridges connecting Turan with its Kyrgyz neighbors.

Pacts in the southern neighborhoods proceeded through the two-step negotiation process: first, within group agreement followed by covenants between groups. This two-level negotiation process highlights the importance of the intragroup balance of power and credible commitments. As Rothschild and Lake (Rothchild and Lake 1998, 224) argue

> Because deep distrust of an opponent remains in place at the time an agreement is set in motion, commitments at the bargaining table may not be credible. Within-group rivalry may come full view after the agreement, the provisions of the agreement may be vague cause new tensions".

The balance of power in each neighborhood explains why some communities managed or failed to reach an agreement with the other side. However, in each case, the distribution of power was not given and fixed. It shifted depending on various contingent factors including the dynamics of intercommunal relations. Therefore, in Uchar and in Toloikon and also in other places like Uzgen, before going to meet with out-group members to negotiate a pact, moderate leaders faced internal opposition, usually from young radicals. Before making a pact, leaders had to win peaceful platform within their group. In some neighborhoods and villages, this discussion was not held or leaders could not suppress radicals, so during negotiations radicals tried to disrupt negotiations by pressure or threats.

The constellation of local forces and domestic constraints on leaders in the selected cases were different. Domestic intracommunal constituencies in the city's southern districts, as in many other neighborhoods, were generally represented by two sets of forces: moderates and radicals. In Uchar, the division between moderates and radicals was delineated by such categories as locals versus newcomers/outsiders, respectively. Rural men who came to Uchar from outside areas coalesced with local radicals from the area called *dachas* – the former summer houses – a part of this neighborhood. In Toloikon, virtually all local inhabitants were long-term residents, most of them moderates, but some were radicals. In Turan, the majority were local moderates. However, some radical outsiders infiltrated local youth during the onset of violence in Osh, though, the infiltration stopped when the southern neighborhoods' entrances were choked by roadblocks. The division between moderates and radicals was more evident in Uchar and less evident in Turan. In Toloikon, there were practically no outsiders except for the few people who got accidentally trapped there when the violence broke out.

The information obtained from interviews with leaders allows us to follow internal debates and power struggles in Uchar regarding strategic move towards Turan, however, due to lack of evidence, I cannot provide the same-level observations about what was happening in Turan and their internal debates about security strategies towards Kyrgyz neighbors. In general, intercommunal communication between the leaders in the southern neighborhoods can be characterized as follows. Toloikon chose the strategy of preventive diplomacy and pact-making. In Uchar, local leaders were initially unprepared for the influx of radical outsiders. Their first task was to regain control over the internal constituency and to contain violence that broke out between radicals from Uchar and Turan and then to negotiate a pact. In Turan, the general policy was a peaceful defensive strategy that was followed by non-aggression pacts with

Kyrgyz neighbors. In each neighborhood, local leaders managed to conduct effective policing of the respective communities.[35]

The Uchar and the Toloikon pacts were with the same opponent but with different domestic conditions, constraints, and intercommunal negotiation environments. In Uchar, local leaders encountered strong pressures from radical outsiders who demanded to fight against Uzbeks in Turan. The negotiation environment, both in-group and intergroup, was exacerbated by violence between Uchar and Turan in the first days of riots, in which one or two people from each side were killed. In Toloikon, there was a more homogenous domestic constituency and less pressure on leaders from radicals which allowed the former to carry out more active preventive diplomacy without frequently coordinating their positions with intragroup competing forces. In terms of spatial characteristics and the built environment, the two neighborhoods were similar except for one important condition: Uchar was a more transitional location as it was linked to the southern regional road which connected Osh with Nookat *raion* while Toloikon was not. This condition had important implications for riot-control and self-policing activities in these two neighborhoods. The variation on this factor caused the difference in intragroup balance of power in Toloikon and Uchar. While Toloikon was not linked to the (inter-)regional roads and, therefore, did not experience an influx of outsiders from rural areas, Uchar and its local traditional leaders faced serious challenge from radical outsiders who came to this neighborhood from the neighboring Nookat *raion*.

As for Turan, its spatial characteristics were ambiguous for effective self-policing and for defensive measures. On the one hand, this large Uzbek district was fully surrounded by Kyrgyz neighborhoods. Turan's residents could neither flee to safe areas nor seek humanitarian and "military" help from other local Uzbek communities. On the other hand, the spatially-strategic advantage of Turan was that it was located on a hill and encircled by a water channel on the whole perimeter from the western (Uchar), eastern (Toloikon), and northern (the Abjalov neighborhood) sides of this district connected by three bridges to the adjacent Kyrgyz neighborhoods. From the southern side, Turan was protected by uninhabited hills. This spatial advantage allowed the Turan leaders to concentrate their defensive efforts around three bridges where local Uzbek groups built barricades to prevent possible sudden incursions inside their territory. The spatial isolation of Turan as "an ethnic island" ensured its leaders' greater influence and control over the local constituency. After Turan blocked the bridges, no outsiders such as

[35] My evaluation of the security strategies in each neighborhood is based on interviews with local leaders and *aksakals* and residents. I contacted key participants in pacted negotiations after my local respondents mentioned their names in interviews and conversations highlighting their contribution to peaceful mediation.

radicals or vengeful refugees from other Uzbek neighborhoods could arrive in Turan to pose an open challenge to local community leaders. Even more difficult for outsiders was to get through Kyrgyz neighborhoods that were geographically encircling Turan.

Figure 7.2. Roadblocks in Turan**.** Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT

Note: Red circles indicate barricades. Crosses indicate 'SOS' signs painted by local residents on interior roads. This satellite photo was published on 18 June 2010.

The most notable confrontation between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in this area occurred on 12 June on the border between Turan and the Kyrgyz suburban village of Uchar. The Kyrgyz, a group of 300–500, who arrived in Uchar from the direction of Nookat region, many of them from Papan village, attempted to enter Turan but were met by the 500–1000 strong Uzbek group which stood behind barricades armed by two training APCs, one automatic weapon, several guns, around ten hunting rifles and numerous bottles of flammable oil (Memorial 2012, 177–78). In the gunfire that followed this encounter, several people were killed on both sides.[36] The full-scale clashes were prevented by riot police troops that arrived on the hotspot on an APC. This time they were more efficient compared to how they dealt with similar situations

[36] According to Memorial (2012, 178), four Uzbeks were killed, but Rahman, one of local Uzbek community leaders, told me that two persons were killed from each side.

in other hotspots (interview with an Uchar resident; Memorial 2012, 175–79). After the police left the area, the two groups stood against each other separated by barricades. Local Kyrgyz leaders and mediators in Uchar and also in the Abjalov neighborhood, at Turan's northern end, intervened and held back groups of Kyrgyz youngsters in Uchar who wanted to enter Turan anyway.[37] After these interventions, the tensions calmed but the attempts by radical youngsters from rural areas to enter Turan did not stop. In the next sections below, I will discuss how the Kyrgyz and Uzbek leaders conducted in-group policing of respective communities and negotiated non-aggression pacts to prevent ethnic violence. Similar non-aggression pacts were negotiated between Kyrgyz and Uzbek neighborhoods in some other southern parts of Osh as well. In some neighborhoods, with more ethnically mixed population,[38] local Kyrgyz and Uzbeks together conducted coordinated defense against rioting groups from both ethnic groups and established ethnically mixed patrols and self-defense groups (Memorial 2012, 176–78) and interviews with a military officer and an Uzbek community leader).

There was also the exchange of hostages between Kyrgyz and Uzbek neighborhoods. Some of local Kyrgyz who did not manage to leave Turan stayed in this neighborhood, practically as hostages. There is at least one confirmed incident involving the exchange of hostages in Turan (interview with an Uzbek community leader in Turan, August 2012). Another incident was mentioned in the Memorial report when a Kyrgyz woman with her three children were caught in Turan. From her family, the kidnappers demanded an automatic weapon in exchange for their release. In the end, she was exchanged for three or four Uzbek women, residents of Turan (Memorial 2012, 179).

## The dynamics of negotiations between Turan and Uchar

Here I provide original perspectives from the key figures who participated in intercommunal negotiations from both sides. Each side claims that it first initiated a non-aggression pact. There is also some confusion

[37] The Memorial report (2012, 177–78) mentions the names of these Kyrgyz mediators and leaders which was also corroborated in interviews with the Uzbek *aksakals* in Turan.

[38] For example, in Dostuk, the area of the Bricks Factory, the south-western part. Memorial also reports about other successful cases of intercommunal non-aggression pacts. Negotiations in Dostuk district along the southern regional road, where the then vice-mayor of Osh negotiated to avoid clashes in Turan and Mamyrova Street. In the night 12-13 June, rumors spread about a Kyrgyz crowd from Ak-Tilek going to Dostuk. On the morning of 13 June, peaceful negotiations took place between Dostuk and Ak-Tilek with agreement on mutual aid in case of attacks from outsider rioters. On 14 June, negotiations took place between Kyrgyz and Uzbek community leaders near Kirpichnyi brick factory to form interethnic patrols to keep order (Memorial 2012, 178).

about the dates and sequence of events. Although this kind of details in the interviews of Kyrgyz and Uzbek leaders does not coincide, in general, they confirm the dynamics and the content of negotiations.

*Turan's non-aggression pact with Uchar*

One of my key informants, Rahman, is one of the Uzbek leaders in Turan and also a well-known human rights activist in the city. The morning after riots and pogroms broke out in the city, he was among those initiators who advanced the decision to start negotiations with the leaders of the adjacent Kyrgyz villages. I had a chance to interview him twice in July 2010 and in August 2012. His accounts over the two-year period between these two interviews remained consistent which gave me an additional reason to rely on his evidence. Below I provide extensive excerpts from two interviews with Rahman as they well illustrate the environment of intercommunal negotiations. Here the first excerpt from the interview in 2010:

> A: On the 10th there was this clash [in front of Alai hotel, in the city center], on the 11th early in the morning I gathered about 20 Uzbek elders, *aksakals* [community leaders]. Then I came here [to the Kyrgyz-dominated village of Uchar] to the *aksakals*, then went to Jindi Mahalla [literally *Crazy Mahalla* – an informal name for the Abjalov neighborhood]. We went there and mentioned that someone had started the conflict in the city, and addressed Kyrgyz and Uzbeks on the territory saying that we should protect each other. … Kyrgyz should protect us from the attacking Kyrgyz and we will protect them if there are attacks from the Uzbek side. In the end, we all agreed and the *aksakals* blessed and prayed. Then we barricaded and closed the streets. We closed [the entrance to] Uchar, from that place to this it was barricaded. It was totally barricaded here.
>
> Q: Uchar was also barricaded?
>
> A: Yes. It was a circular defense [*krugovaya oborona,* referring to the barricades across the water canal]. So, all the *aksakals* supported this idea. The other side of the circle was also barricaded separately. When the Nookat [rural Kyrgyz from surrounding villages of Nookat *raion*] guys came, they came along that canal bank and entered the territory. Because it remained unclosed. On the way, they burnt a shop and shot a couple of people. Then they were confronted by other armed guys [Uzbeks] there, later after gunfire exchange and after a noisy grenade [*shumovaya granata*], they fled.
>
> Q: Who were the shooters?
>
> A: First they were Kyrgyz who started the fire and shot dead a couple of people. Then when they entered deep inside the territory they confronted with Uzbeks, driving the car and using their guns from the car windows [*eki jaktan bashyn chygaryp*]. These Uzbeks also managed to kill one or two men. After this, the Kyrgyz fled and never came back again. That's why Yujnyi [Turan] was in peace (interview with Rahman (A-05), Osh, July 2010).

In the 2012 interview, Rahman basically repeated what he said in 2010 but also added new important details on what kind of arguments he used during the negotiations to "persuade" the Kyrgyz side:

> On the 10th of June, I knew that was a high time [to act]. Then at around 3 a.m. I visited about ten old men [*aksakals*] in their houses, and gathered them. I explained to them the situation that there was unrest. I suggested to go to the Kyrgyz neighborhoods and gather *aksakals* from there and decide on plans. We decided to defend each other from the opposite groups. If Uzbeks attacked the Uzbek *aksakals* would protect [the Kyrgyz], if Kyrgyz attacked then the Kyrgyz *aksakals* would protect [the Uzbeks]. When we went to Uchar, there were some *aksakals* already saying that "we are one people that we should protect each other." We promised this to each other. Then we went to Abjal, the Kyrgyz-dominated village [on the northern side of Turan], where we also met Kyrgyz *aksakals* and we all gathered and continued strengthening our people's diplomacy [*eldik diplomatiya*]. On the 11-12th we didn't encounter anybody from outside, and on the 13th there was an armed group in Yujnyi [Turan] district which started shooting and burning. Then Uchar people went to defend. The strength of people's diplomacy helped to save Yujnyi as well.
>
> Q: When you went to conduct reconciliation negotiations, what difficulties … did you have to overcome? Weren't you afraid of being attacked?
>
> A: First, no we weren't afraid because knowing we were acquainted with the people there for a long time – we used to greet, hug, have a tea together, used to meet in the weddings, funerals – so how could it be possible that they kill us if we go there? But yes, some young men behind the *aksakals* greeted us aggressively, then we said "Hey, you guys, please calm yourselves down, what will happen in the future only God knows, maybe tomorrow this will turn into interstate conflict between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. This may turn into interstate war. Even in this case if the Uzbek (or Uzbekistani?) people will come and attack the Kyrgyz, we will stand against them telling them not to attack our people, we will say this is our nation, this is our people [*elim, jurtum*]. If necessary, we will confront them [*osholorgo karshy chygabyz*]. And you should do this too, you should protect us if Kyrgyz attack; we will do so if the Uzbeks attack. No one knows what will happen in the future." We said all this without hiding anything.

The last excerpt reveals one changing condition in the dynamics of the intercommunal conflict. In the negotiation process, Rahman referred to the possibility of interstate war between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. As was discussed in the overview of riots in chapter 5, in the night 12–13 June, the rumor about the military intervention of Uzbekistan's 5000 special forces troops spread in Osh and especially in its western neighborhoods. This caused great panic in the city and many Kyrgyz residents in the western neighborhoods left the city, abandoning their houses. This tide of panic caused many Kyrgyz who came to Osh to fight against Uzbeks to flee. The rumor about Uzbekistan's military intervention induced an important power shift in the city-level dynamics of the intercommunal violence. First, because after this rumor many Kyrgyz participants in riots fled the city. As the death-toll statistics show, the number of killings in Osh dropped significantly the next day after this rumor appeared. Second, because those who remained in the city now considered the external factor of Uzbekistan. So, when during the negotiations, the Uzbek leaders faced pressure from Kyrgyz side, Rahman implicitly indicated to the Kyrgyz radicals

about the shifting intergroup power balance related to the possibility of Uzbekistan's invasion. As we can see below, the changing intercommunal negotiation environment altered the power balance within the Kyrgyz community in Uchar and convinced the radicals to accept the non-aggression pact.

In the next interview excerpt, Rahman highlights some conditions that facilitated the pact. One is connections among communal leaders. The fact that communal leaders from both sides had some knowledge about each other and that some had a history of past interaction helped them to build the trust necessary to initiate a non-aggression pact. This prior knowledge facilitated contacts between leaders under uncertainty, which proved to be an important factor in initiating intergroup pacts and reducing the level of uncertainty caused by the absence of the state and the security dilemma triggered by the onset of intercommunal violence in Osh. The main content of negotiations illustrated in quotations below was about self-policing by local respective communities and mutual guarantees of security and protection from outside forces.

> Q: What did you talk about with *aksakals*, sitting together in one place?
>
> A: When we went to them they all had gathered, we approached and greeted each other. We started like "well, the politicians made two peoples [communities] confront each other. We and you are almost siblings, now let's protect each other, if the Kyrgyz come you will protect us, if the Uzbeks come we will protect you". Because on the 10$^{th}$ it was not clear and everyone supposed that the Uzbeks sportsmen are armed as well as the Kyrgyz sportsmen. So, that was the time to lend the hand to each other.
>
> Q: You said that you knew those *aksakals* and had tea together. How were your relations before the events, did you have mutual plans?
>
> A: Local people used to work there together, attending each other's weddings, funerals. There are three to four other people with whom I have close relations. When we worked at an NGO, we used to have intern students from the journalist department who were from Uchar. They came to us asking to get them an internship. We took some of them. Therefore, when we went there those guys accepted us well. And if, to my point, the Kyrgyz from Alay, Papan, Kara-Kulja, Nookat, those marginal guys, wouldn't come, the Osh Kyrgyz–Uzbek people would never fight because our ancestors were friends and had tea together (interview, Osh, August 2012).

The evidence about the peace negotiations between Turan and Uchar given by Rahman was confirmed by Umar, a head of the Osh UNCC (Uzbek National Cultural Center).[39] Umar also mentions pacts between the Uzbek district of Amir Timur and a Kyrgyz village of Ozgur:

[39] UNCC is an ethnic cultural organization which play an important role in organizing the life of ethnic Uzbeks. As noted in the previous chapter, the radical leaders of Uzbek communities in Osh and Jalalabat used UNCCs for ethnic mobilization for political reasons. A Kyrgyz journalist based in Osh suggested that each Uzbek who gets rich and influential tries to establish his own UNCC.

> The same day, the events were on the 11th, the same day they [leaders in Turan district] had talks. On the 11th of June representatives of the Uzbek *aksakals* met with the reps of the Kyrgyz *aksakals* in the Uchar area. They made an agreement. The same took place in On Adyr [literally “ten hills”, a large Uzbek neighborhood. The official name is Amir Timur] and Ozgur [a Kyrgyz village]. That’s why the Hills [*adyrlar*, Amir Timur neighborhood] did not suffer. They made a peace agreement.

Umar went on explaining how these talks were organized:

> Q: So, what mechanisms did *aksakals* use, phone calls, visited each other, talked, weren’t they afraid to be attacked in Uchar or Dostuk, for instance? How was it organized to stop the violence?
>
> A: From 11 to 15 they went just by car, small cars. Our Uzbek people went to Uchar, although, at that time, they did not have time for pilaf lunch, they just shared some bread. They made a peace agreement on not to attack each other, not to make pressure [*ne naezjat*] and stop a possible threat if from the Uzbek side [comes], so the Uzbeks would stop it, if from the Kyrgyz side [some rioters come] - then the Kyrgyz [would stop them].
>
> Q: There were some rumors about possible attacks from Uzbekistan. Do you think the Kyrgyz were scared?
>
> A: Everyone was scared about it, both the Uzbeks and the Kyrgyz. That was the case, yes.
>
> Q: So when they drove cars to Uchar, they weren’t afraid of being attacked and shot?
>
> A: No, they weren’t. Because they negotiated in advance saying “we are four to five of us and we are coming”, then they were met by another four to five people. There they entered the houses, breaking bread, supportive of peace, negotiating, talking, finally agreeing that: “You don’t touch us, we don’t touch you. If someone from our side comes we will protect, and if from your part, you will” was the point of the agreement. *Aksakals* knew each other before (interview, Osh, August 2012).

These interview excerpts display the negotiation environment in Turan that was generally favorable for negotiations. Uzbek moderate leaders dominated the process of decision-making and were open for negotiations. In contrast to Turan, in Uchar, the negotiation environment was very difficult as local leaders faced a strong challenge from radical opposition.

*Peaceful mediation under the domination of radicals in Uchar*

Uchar is a Kyrgyz village with around 5000 residents, located on the western side of Turan. The southern inter-regional road that connects Osh and Nookat *raion* is situated in the western side of Uchar. The settlement is positioned outside official borders of Osh and has the status of village, however on closer inspection there are very few differences between Uchar and Turan, except for their size. Both neighborhoods have many similar characteristics including the built environment – mostly individual housing units – and lifestyles/socio-economic conditions. Uchar is integrated in Osh almost to the same

level as Turan. On the southern side of Uchar, closer to the hills, there is another settlement called *dachas*. Formerly summer houses now occupied by rural migrants, dachas became an integral part of Uchar, although local residents until recently kept some degree of autonomy from the rest of the village. Many *dacha* residents preserved strong ties with their kinship villages, mainly in Nookat *raion*. During ethnic riots, they hosted people who came to Osh from Nookat's rural areas.

On 11 June, people from the area in Uchar called *dachas* started flocking around the southern road from Nookat *raion* which was next to Uchar village. Another group gathered on the bridge which connected Uchar and Turan. There were no police or soldiers seen at the time. The Kyrgyz crowd of 2000 people who came to the bridge from *dachas*, Papan village, Nookat and other regions had the intention of passing through Turan, which would trigger a fight with an Uzbek self-defense group. By that moment, Kanybek – Uchar's most powerful leader – had already obstructed the movement of the crowd on the bridge towards Turan, literally telling them that they would proceed further only over his dead body. The crowd stopped also because some local Kyrgyz supported Kanybek. He and other leaders managed to hold back the crowd for the next two days. The crowd was angry with his peaceful attitude towards the Uzbek community in Turan. As an angry response, people in the crowd threatened to burn his house. They could not understand the reason why he was defending the local Uzbek community while, according to them, Uzbeks in the city were killing their Kyrgyz ethnic fellows. To retain control over the crowd, community leaders appealed to the residents from *dachas* and Uchar, who, according to Kanybek, composed about 200 individuals or 10 per cent of this crowd. Through his fellow-villagers, he tried to put pressure on the group. The appeal was effective because most of the outsiders coming to Uchar from nearby and remote villages and districts/*raion*s found shelter among Uchar residents, and therefore, were dependent on them in terms of food and accommodation. This disposed them to listen to the arguments of their hosts. Some of the outsiders were acquaintances or relatives of *dacha* and Uchar residents. Kanybek had uncontestable authority among his immediate constituency including among those 200 people in the crowd, and according to him, his words had "a command-like effect" on the residents of Uchar. Consequently, he decided to act directly through his local constituency which, in turn, was putting pressure on outsiders.

In Turan, local Uzbeks erected barricades closing entrances to their mahalla. The Kyrgyz in Uchar organized a roadblock on the bridge connecting Uchar and Turan. By that moment, Kanybek and his followers had managed to stop the Kyrgyz outsider group. Appealing to the crowd, he also used religious rhetoric about irreversibility of punishment in the other world and the common religious identity with Uzbeks. The Kyrgyz

patrol at the bridge roadblock told him that young Uzbeks from Turan were constantly provoking them driving around in a car, showering abuse on the Kyrgyz at the bridge roadblock, and showing them fists and their middle fingers.

On 12 June, Kanybek went to Turan alone without any escort through barricades set up by Uzbek residents. In the initial days after the onset of the riots, he was in regular phone contact with Uzbek *aksakals* in Turan to inquire about the ongoing situation and to make sure that everything was fine. According to Kanybek, the situation was so tense that one provocative spark could make it impossible to stop the Kyrgyz crowd from attacking the Turan neighborhood. It was very risky to enter an Uzbek mahalla alone but he believed that local Uzbeks would recognize him. To his good fortune, after passing the first 300 meters he met someone who knew him and called Uzbek *aksakals*. Around ten *aksakals* approached and greeted him. Together, they held a short council where they assured one another in good intentions and prepared good ground for negotiating a peaceful pact. He asked to restrain those youngsters from provoking the Kyrgyz on the bridge roadblock. Otherwise, as he explained to them, he could not guarantee that he would manage to hold back the crowd from attacking the Uzbek mahalla. The Uzbeks accepted the fact that there were some violators and provocateurs and promised to punish them. In turn, Kanybek guaranteed to curb the aggression of the youngsters. "This was a first step to the peace", he said to me in an interview.

After that meeting, the provocations stopped. The next day (13 June), Kanybek created a commission which comprised local strongmen and community leaders. He brought them together, *aksakals* and imams both from Turan and Uchar, about fifteen people in total: ten Kyrgyz and five Uzbeks. At the meeting, they decided to make a peaceful appeal to the youth of the both ethnic communities and to pray together. They gathered and prayed together first among Uzbeks in Turan and then in Uchar near the bridge roadblock. They made speeches about interethnic friendship and the necessity of stopping bloodshed. However, at the end of the ceremony, the Kyrgyz youngsters who had come from outside of Uchar refused to finish the prayer with the utterance "Amen!" They tried to wreck the peaceful process by heaping abuse upon Uzbek *aksakals*. Radicals presented an ultimatum – the purpose of which was probably more to demonstrate their dominance over the peaceful process than to actually disrupt peaceful talks – which included the following conditions: Uzbek children must study in Kyrgyz schools, to make translations of programs in Osh TV[40] only in Kyrgyz, demands like "you [Uzbeks] have to speak [only] in Kyrgyz", and so on. When Kanybek tried to calm the radicals down, the latter again threatened to burn

[40] A TV channel broadcasting in the Uzbek language and at that time owned by an Uzbek entrepreneur.

his house. They were angry with his attempts to protect the Uzbeks. He was finally able to reach agreement with the non-Uchar fellows at the roadblock by slaughtering some cattle for them.

Another piece of evidence of Uchar's commitment to a pact was given by an Uzbek leader. According to him (a head of UNCC), residents of Uchar stopped a crowd that was coming from Nookat and trying to enter Turan:

> Q: So, there is the road to Nookat and were there cases of attacks [on Turan] by young men coming from that road?
>
> A: Yes, they did. They were coming from that road. For example, if you are coming from the left side, on the right there is Uchar where Kyrgyz live, then through Uchar you can go to Birinchi Adyr [Turan]. So, the [local] Kyrgyz managed stop those invading Kyrgyz. That's why they couldn't enter our street.
>
> Q: So Uchar people came to the round about?
>
> A: Uchar people didn't allow them go there.

Later Kanybek helped Uzbeks in Turan by sending a humanitarian aid. When violence broke in the city, Uzbek leaders in Turan evacuated people, mostly women and children to a local school building. In 3-4 days Uzbek activists contacted him. They asked him to supply the mahalla with food and vegetables as the roads were blocked and people started experiencing food shortage. Kanybek asked his friends, local leaders (*avtoritetter*) in Aravan rural district to send two trucks loaded with 20 tons of potato, cabbage, onion and so on. The trucks got stuck in one of the Kyrgyz urban districts of Osh because the roads had still been blocked. They could not make their way through barricades to Turan. Later, he managed to supply food with small *Porters* (tiny trucks) to Turan, Dyikan Kyshtak, and to the area of Kalinin street.

In the end of the interview, surprisingly for me, he asked a question: "One question comes to my mind. Why did some areas in Osh city suffer violence while other districts in the same city remained peaceful?" That was a question of my research that drove me to investigate the spatial variations in violence during the June 2010 ethnic riots in Osh and other places. He immediately answered it himself. According to him, it was the factor of local strong leaders that allowed them, including himself, to conduct effective in-group policing. The key was strong ties between leaders and their constituencies which were possible only in Uchar, Turan, and other rural types of neighborhoods in Osh. He argued further, "If I lived in Zapadnyi neighborhood, a modern Soviet-type neighborhood with exclusively multi-story apartment buildings like Alymbek Datka (AD) and Manas-Ata (HBK), I would barely be able to control the situation there. At a

maximum, I could probably control the residents of the building where I would live but this is the maximum I could do."

The dynamics of negotiations between the Turan and Uchar leaders show that the environmental conditions for pact-making were different in these neighborhoods. The intragroup balance of power was favorable for the moderate leaders of Turan while in Uchar, it shifted towards radicals. However, the final outcome was a successful non-aggression pact. In Uchar, Kyrgyz leaders had strong internal pressures from the radicals when they negotiated a pact with Uzbek leaders. The local radicals coalesced with outsiders. The majority of locals did not support aggression but on the other hand, they did not have trust towards Uzbeks and were uncertain about Turan's intentions. They feared that the city of Osh would be taken over by Uzbeks and Uchar could be attacked by Turan. Therefore, most locals stayed at home or were passive observers of the events except for the direct constituency of the Uchar leader. In such circumstances, the arrival of outsiders from Nookat region made a difference by shifting power balance towards radicals. Radicals were a minority in Uchar as well as in many other neighborhoods and without external support they could not press sufficiently their agenda. With the arrival of outsiders, local in-group power balance shifted towards radicals, who initiated attacks against Turan.

Uchar presents a question about how local leaders managed to hold radicals back under domination of the latter in this locality. Local leaders managed to hold the distribution of power in their favor strategically using their local constituency against outsiders. They and their counterparts from the adjacent Abjalov neighborhood employed mixed strategy of putting pressure on outsiders through their constituency networks and on the other hand, using "carrots" (slaughtering cattle) to calm down radical outsiders.

## Toloikon and Turan: successful self-policing and non-aggression pact

Toloikon is a small Kyrgyz village in the southern border of Osh city, squeezed between uninhabited hills in the south and Turan district in the north and the west. In the eastern side, Ak Buura river separates Toloikon from Osh's Kurmanjan Datka (Yugo-Vostok) district. Most of its residents are either farmers or have employment in the city. When ethnic violence erupted in the city, Toloikon hosted some Kyrgyz refugees from the city, mostly children and women from the families which had kinship or friendship connections with the residents of this village. The refugees were accommodated in the children's summer camp located in the very remote part of the village at the foot of the hills. Toloikon and Turan are

separated by a water canal and the connection between the two goes across a bridge. Local residents have practically no connections with Uzbek residents of Turan except occasional and small-trade transactions, although some local community leaders have some connections among each other, but their encounters and interactions are random. If they happen to be in the same café or tea house they would greet each other.

One of the leaders of Toloikon is Avasbek who formerly held high-ranking positions in the police. In Toloikon it is generally known that some former police officers were assigned land plots in this village. Avasbek was one of them and he played the key role in in-group policing within Kyrgyz community in Toloikon and in successful peaceful negotiations with Uzbek *aksakals* from Turan. One week before the onset of riots, he noticed ethnic mobilization: locals started to gather in large numbers. There were multiple rumors about possible interethnic clashes. At that moment, Avazbek started his communication with Uzbek community leaders in Turan.

Approximately at that time, Uzbek youngsters beat two Kyrgyz cattlemen from Toloikon, an incident that had the potential to spark off violence between two local communities given that intercommunal tensions in the city had already been growing. After Avasbek and his associates complained to Uzbek *aksakals* about the incident, the latter quickly identified the culprits and brought them to Toloikon to be presented to him and the victims. In the presence of all involved parties, Avasbek urged both communities to refrain from anti-social behavior that could lead to escalation of violence. The conflict was settled peacefully.

This incident demonstrates an example of good self-policing by Uzbek *aksakals* in Turan who identified the culprits and brought them for the punishment to the Kyrgyz side. By delivering the culprits to the victims' side, they clearly show their credible commitment to (self-policing and) interethnic cooperation. The decision to hand them to the Kyrgyz side for punishment highlights the readiness of Uzbek *aksakals* to build trust and cooperate to avoid potential indiscriminate retaliation from the Kyrgyz side in Toloikon. The important thing here was that Uzbek *aksakals* identified the perpetrators and left the right of punishment to the victims' side, thus making sanctions against perpetrators visible and showing their capacity for effective self-policing of the local Uzbek community. According to Laitin and Fearon's in-group policing model, the visibility of punishment is important for in-group policing equilibrium because it demonstrates that the sanctions for anti-social behavior actually work. As a result, neither side had claims against each other in the end. On the other hand, the visibility of sanctions signaled the group leaders' credible commitments to a peaceful pact.

The Kyrgyz side was very active in contacts with the Uzbek leaders of Turan. Avasbek says that the fact that it was the Kyrgyz side that first initiated a non-aggression pact refutes the general belief about the Kyrgyz being largely aggressors in this ethnic conflict. In the process of communication between the leaders of Toloikon and Turan, the peaceful initiative actually came from Toloikon (interview, September 2013). On the other hand, in interviews with the Uzbek leaders of Turan they stress the difficulties in their negotiations with Uchar village, while Toloikon and the Jindi Mahalla/Abjalov neighborhood figure in their narratives as unproblematic cases. This is probably because the Turan leaders correctly evaluated Uchar as the most dangerous direction in which they experienced violent encounters with the Kyrgyz side and serious problems in the negotiation process. Already one week before the ethnic riots broke out in Osh, the Kyrgyz leader of Toloikon had started actively meeting Uzbek *aksakals* and other leaders of Turan to prevent ethnic violence. During the meetings, they negotiated to implement strong in-group policing in respective communities.

In the night of 10–11 June, people gathered in groups immediately when they heard news about the riots in central Osh. Avasbek urged local Kyrgyz not to join the riots. At the same time, Uzbeks also gathered in large groups in Turan. A large Uzbek group mobilized not far from the bridge that divided Turan and Toloikon. The Kyrgyz patrol took the position on their end of the bridge. The two groups looked at each other with distrust. Both sides barricaded the entrances to their neighborhoods. Among the Turan Uzbeks some outsiders emerged who began to incite local Uzbeks. The rumors about ethnic slaughter spread in both ethnic communities. As instigators emerged in both communities, Avasbek policed his own community and suppressed local radicals' attempts to foment violence against Uzbeks. His high social status, connections with the police, and reputation within his community helped him to gain support from local moderate Kyrgyz. In Turan, the young Uzbeks also were disgruntled by the "passive" stance of local *aksakals*. They strove to go to the downtown, where main clashes between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz had been taking place, to help their ethnic fellows. In order to prevent violence with Turan, Avasbek decided to speak directly to the local Uzbek population.

The Kyrgyz patrols, each consisting of approximately 20 men, protected and monitored the village. Sixty men in total were mobilized to protect the security of the village. These patrols and self-defense groups were the main tool used by Toloikon's moderate leaders to enforce self-policing within local Kyrgyz community.

On 11 June, the first day of riots, Avasbek – with the support of, and accompanied by, the Uzbek leaders – decided to speak in front of residents of Turan, who gathered in large numbers in six or seven locations

of this district upon hearing news about the ethnic riots in the downtown. Always escorted by at least two local Uzbeks, he attended mass gatherings where he called for interethnic peace and urged local residents not to succumb to instigation. However, during one of these meetings, Uzbek leaders suddenly asked Avasbek to leave Turan immediately as they noticed the increasing presence of unfamiliar faces among the locals in the crowd. The outsiders were mostly young Uzbek lads. *Aksakals* forced him to leave the meeting, warning that they could no longer guarantee his security and assuring him that they would continue community policing and calls for peace in the same vein.

This incident demonstrates some important points. One is that the presence of a sufficient number of outsiders seriously threatens the community policing capacity of local leaders. Uzbek leaders interrupted the speech of the Kyrgyz leader after they realized the hazard of potential attacks against their Kyrgyz guest. The fact that they could not identify many youngsters in the crowd made them wary and fearful. They could not control or deter aggressive behavior of individuals who did not belong to their constituency and who would not recognize their traditional authority. Uzbek *aksakals* lost confidence because they realized that they could not conduct effective policing over the outsiders, especially amid the intercommunal tensions and emerging violence. Neither could they guarantee the security of the Kyrgyz mediator. This highlights the limits of traditional authority which the Uzbek *aksakals* realized themselves. Another implication of this incident demonstrates Uzbek leaders' alertness of the possible attack against the Kyrgyz leader from unknown young radicals. Even worse, his assassination would bring undesired consequences for intergroup relations. The trust between communities would be completely eliminated and violent intercommunal confrontations would be inevitable. Any assassination would change the intragroup balance and shift power towards radicals not only in Toloikon but also in other neighboring Kyrgyz communities – in Uchar and in the Abjalov neighborhood. With this favorable advantage, local radicals in each Kyrgyz neighborhood would instigate vindictive and non-discriminative violence against Uzbeks in Turan. By asking the Toloikon leader to leave the scene, the Turan *aksakals* recognized both the limits of their authority and responsibility for the intercommunal peace.

The leaders of Turan and Toloikon agreed on some conditions of the non-aggression pact. In the atmosphere of growing tensions and escalation of violence in the city, the leaders in both neighborhoods put a lot of effort into counteracting instigators. They also agreed that the violence is not in interests of both communities and in case the riots would break out on their territory they would not yield to the general tide of violence.

Several facts that observed Turan and Toloikon exhibit examples of effective self-policing and local leaders' credible commitments to the conditions of non-aggression pact. In Turan, there are several multistory apartment buildings, mainly occupied by Kyrgyz who became trapped in this neighborhood during the riots. Local Uzbek radicals threatened them with vengeful violence. Some of the Kyrgyz called their relatives in Toloikon informing them about these threats. The Kyrgyz leaders in Toloikon identified the exact addresses of the trapped Kyrgyz in Turan and handed the list with the addresses to the Uzbek community leaders. The latter managed to evacuate 23 Kyrgyz households from Turan. On the other hand, Uzbek *aksakals* guaranteed the safety of their property and arranged guards to keep Kyrgyz houses and flats safe from looters. In turn, the Kyrgyz in Toloikon handed in several migrant workers and artisans from Uzbekistan (all ethnic Uzbeks) who worked in Toloikon and then got trapped there when the violence broke out in the city and Turan blocked the bridges. The Kyrgyz let several Uzbek women pass through the village to get to the maternity hospital in Toloikon and provided security for the hospital and its patients. Six or seven Uzbek women delivered babies in those days.

Here is another example of self-policing. When the interethnic tensions grew on the eve of the riots, one Uzbek crowd attacked passing by cars with Kyrgyz passengers in Turan. They beat some Kyrgyz civilians and a couple Kyrgyz policemen and broke the windshield of one of the cars. Fortunately, the local elders became aware of this incident and rushed to rescue the victims. They apologized and even paid compensation for the broken windshield.

In Avasbek's view, effective communication and eventually successful self-policing was facilitated by the fact that both ethnic communities, although living in ethnic and resident segregation, still had experience of co-habitation and knew about each other. Avasbek said that although he got acquainted with the majority of the Uzbek leaders for the first time during those days (he had known only two of them before), they somehow knew about each other indirectly from a distance. Even though he had not met the leaders of Turan before, he had heard about them from other people. According to Avasbek, that he was famous in his community helped him to build trust with the Uzbek leaders. This confirms the main assumptions of the literature on pacts, which claims that a legitimate leader is a necessary condition for effective pact-making (Collins 2006; G. A. O'Donnell 1986; G. A. O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986).

Avasbek was satisfied with the level of cooperation and how the Uzbek leaders in Turan. According to him, they complied with all his requests during mediating activities. They made sure to bring all those groups of authoritative figures to meetings with Avasbek at his request. He kept contact with the Uzbek *aksakals* on daily basis. The main contingent of *aksakals* who held communication with the Kyrgyz leaders

consisted of authoritative figures such as the chair of the territorial council of Turan, *kvartkoms*, a deputy of the city council, and a well-known Uzbek human rights activist. He asked them to organize appointments also with other types of leaders in Turan including sportsmen, imams, and other influential people. He conducted peaceful talks with each of these segments. In addition, he was in touch with the Kyrgyz leaders in Uchar. They updated each other about the situation and inquired about the developments. He also kept contacts with the head of Osh police.

Another important factor that helped to build trust was the history of past interactions between these two communities. For Kyrgyz neighborhoods near Turan, the important precedent was that in 1990, residents of Turan had not participated in ethnic violence against Kyrgyz. This memory helped to rebuild trustful relations between these neighborhoods. Furthermore, the fact that Turan does not have common borders with Uzbekistan or at least with other Uzbek *mahallas* in the city, was also critical. The absence of exit options for the Uzbeks in Turan pushed its communal leaders to carry out more effective and more careful in-group policing and incentives to more effectively communicate with the Kyrgyz neighboring communities. Minor number of residents in the Kyrgyz neighborhoods surrounding Turan may have created similar incentives for the Kyrgyz side, particularly among Kyrgyz community leaders.

Avasbek shared how his concerns – along with humanitarian beliefs – drove him to actively promote peace and hold back those who wanted to fight with Uzbeks. Uncertainty and fear created the security dilemma situation among the Kyrgyz and pushed some of them to think that aggressive attacks against Uzbeks would provide security and deterrence. However, Avasbek thinks that the aggression would have created grave consequences for the Kyrgyz community in Toloikon. He feels a situation of tense, fearful, and distrustful relations between two communities would have morphed into one in which immediate or deferred retaliation against the Kyrgyz in Toloikon was likely. He argued, "If Kyrgyz attacked Turan, the consequences for the Kyrgyz in Toloikon would be grave. There are thirty thousand residents in Turan and in Toloikon there are only ten [interview with Avasbek, September 2013]." According to Avasbek, as a hunted and cornered animal, the Uzbeks from Turan would assault Toloikon in a retaliatory attack or would attack Toloikon out of fear and panic. If Kyrgyz attacked Turan from Uchar or from the northern direction to the city (e.g. the Abjalov neighborhood), most probably Uzbeks would flee towards Toloikon and no one could predict what would happen further. During the meetings with Uzbeks in Turan, he also called for peace saying that an open conflict would bring grave outcomes for Uzbeks also.

The main in-group policing in Toloikon was conducted by three or four authoritative figures under Avasbek's leadership. To enforce self-policing decisions, the leaders relied on a group of about fifteen

men, all approximately 40–60 years old and known to the residents of the village as respected and constructively-minded persons. This group would pressure individuals who openly challenged the decisions of the leaders and threaten instigators with harsh sanctions. During his mediating and explanatory activities, Avasbek paid special attention to newcomers and outsiders. He explained the difference in attitudes between locals and outsiders towards Uzbeks:

> Those who come from the regions have a particular mood. They are more aggressive [towards Uzbeks]. But in Toloikon, [we] local residents live here. They have their houses here and therefore, they are more cautious and prudent. The most important is to explain things to people competently and then they will listen [interview with Avasbek, September 2013].

Table 7.1. Variation in structural, spatial, and contingent factors and their impact on peaceful/violent trajectories in Toloikon and Uchar

| Factors | Toloikon | Uchar |
|---|---|---|
| **Structural** | | |
| Ethno-demographic | segregated, stable community | segregated, mostly stable community |
| Initial structural balance of power (constellation of local forces) | moderates | moderates |
| **Spatial** | | |
| Spatial proximity to interregional roads | no | yes |
| **Contingent (interactional)** | | |
| Arrival of outsiders | no | yes (coalition with local radicals) |
| Intragroup power shifts | no | yes (towards radicals) |
| Negotiation environment | favorable | tense (after violent clashes) |
| Domestic constraints | small pressure from local radicals | pressure on moderate leaders from radicals+outsiders alliance |
| In-group policing | successful | partially successful |
| Non-aggression pact | successful (preventive diplomacy) | successful |
| **Outcome** | **peace** | **initial violence and then peace** |

Initially, his peaceful attitudes towards the neighboring Uzbek community in Turan faced some opposition. When residents first gathered after hearing news from the city, Avasbek and his moderate counterparts made speech about the necessity to keep peace with Turan but some radicals opposed calling him a coward and an accomplice of Uzbeks. However, he quickly suppressed few challengers by threatening them with force. In the end, clear-headed moderates dominated the meeting and the peaceful platform

won. To prevent further possible escalation, he prohibited the sale of alcohol in the village. Avasbek said, "In every conflict, there are their own leaders emerge among outcasts. They should be immediately suppressed by stronger and sensible leaders [interview with Avasbek]." Young men in Toloikon were willing to join "the fight" against Uzbeks out of ethno-nationalist sentiments but Avasbek and his colleagues held them back relying on their traditional authority in the village. In addition to his high social authority, what helps him to maintain authority in the village is some welfare activities in everyday life. He participates in aiding poor families.

Despite sharing many similar structural characteristics (same location, ethnicity, population size, social-economic conditions, and initial structural balance of power), Uchar and Toloikon underwent divergent trajectories to peace. Uchar initially experienced violence but then managed to contain violence while Toloikon's trajectory was non-violent without serious challenges to the peace. The divergent trajectories were produced by several factors.

Table 7.1. presents the list of structural, spatial, and contingent factors that affected the efficiency of local in-group policing and intergroup non-aggression pacts. These factors are not independent variables but rather a combination of sequential contingent events and independent spatial and structural conditions. If the structural conditions were equal for both Kyrgyz communities, the spatial conditions diverged. More precisely, one but very important spatial condition was different in these two communities – the proximity to interregional roads. As discussed earlier, this factor is crucial for explaining the divergent trajectories in Uchar and Toloikon. The proximity to interregional roads in Uchar brought into effect another important factor – outsiders. Arrival of outsiders produced several important subsequent changes in the community. It changed the intragroup balance of power and the intergroup negotiation environment by increasing domestic constraints on moderate leaders in Uchar. The leaders were challenged by radical outsiders. This threatened in-group policing and the negotiation process with Turan leaders.

## Nariman village (the northern suburb of Osh): the case of failed self-policing and broken pact

Nariman presents a case of initially well-conducted in-group policing that later broke down. The interference of external actors, mainly refugees from other locations such as Furkat and additional instigators, undermined local policing efforts by Nariman's community leaders.

More than ten villages – practically all located in the northern suburbs of Osh and along the Kyrgyzstan–Uzbekistan border – constitute the Nariman rural district. Two of this district's villages – Jim and Jiydalik – are technically considered villages but in fact are two distinct urban *mahallas* or neighborhoods inside the city of Osh. A part of Karasuu *raion*, the rural district of Nariman with its population around 45 000 people is predominantly Uzbek. Four of this rural district's villages – Nurdar, Nariman, Jim, and Jiydalik – figure in investigative reports in relation to the ethnic riots. However, in this section, I will discuss events that took place in one village – Nariman – the administrative center of the respective rural district.

Figure 7.3. Nariman and Nurdar. Map data source: Google Earth

Nariman is a suburban village in the northern outskirts of Osh city, of around 10 000 people, most of them (82 per cent) being Uzbeks (the Kyrgyz comprise six per cent). Like the southern villages of Uchar and Toloikon, Nariman and another Uzbek village, Nurdar, are extensions of Osh city in the northern direction. Nariman is also an administrative center of the respectively named rural district. Its geographical position makes it an important and strategic location. The village connects Osh with the Osh airport and Karasuu *raion* which is the largest *raion* in Kyrgyzstan, with about 400 000 residents. In the town of Karasuu, there is the famous Karasuu bazaar, the largest commodity bazaar in southern Kyrgyzstan. It emerged in the

late 1990s as the main market selling products to entrepreneurs from Uzbekistan. The village also hosts a petroleum storage depot – the largest in southern Kyrgyzstan, with a capacity of 7000 tons.

In international and domestic reports on the ethnic riots in Osh, Nariman is usually mentioned in relation to the assassination of the head of Karasuu *raion* police and his driver by a rioting crowd in Nariman village and a subsequent ambiguous sweep operation conducted by Kyrgyz law-enforcement. However, the reports do not discuss the local riot dynamics in Nariman village that led to these assassinations in the first place, and the retaliatory operation by the Kyrgyz police. I argue that the assassinations emerged as a result of failed self-policing in the village.

When riots broke out in the city of Osh, scared local police immediately left Nariman. On 11 June, the first day of the riots in Osh, local residents gathered in the village and started blocking the main highway connecting Nariman with Osh and the airport. In the initial stages, local community leaders following instructions from the Osh city administration managed to convince people to unblock the road. According to Memorial, the same day an Uzbek group captured a petroleum storage depot in the outskirts of Nariman village wounding one guard and taking another hostage. However, shortly after the depot was taken into protection by a local self-defense group (Memorial 2012, 179).

According to international investigative reports, the depot was instrumental in preventing possible attacks on the village by Kyrgyz rioting groups (Memorial 2012, 179; Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 23; KIC 2011, 35). According to local residents, there were several attempts to enter the village by some Kyrgyz groups. A self-defense group that took control over the petroleum storage depot used it as deterrence tool to avert potential attackers from central parts of the city, by the threat of explosion of fuel tanks to prevent possible attacks on Nariman (Memorial 2012, 179, 181; Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 23; KIC 2011, 33, 35). Local authorities that needed fuel for humanitarian and police operations negotiated a pact with Nariman residents about access to the fuel tanks. Apparently, the self-defense group in the depot operated independently of the events unfolding in Nariman village. When rioting Uzbek refugees tried to take over the depot, a local guard from the self-defense group forestalled their entry by threatening to explode one of the fuel tanks with his rifle (interview in Nariman, September 2013). While the petroleum tanks helped local residents to prevent possible attacks on the village from outside, they did not help them to prevent disorders inside the village.

After some groups of Kyrgyz militants attacked various Uzbek *mahallas* in Osh city, thousands of Uzbeks fled to the borders with Uzbekistan and Nariman became one of the corridors for refugee flows in that

direction. However, as Uzbekistan admitted only women and children to the refugee camps set up in its territory – rejecting all adult men – many of male refugees came back to Nariman village which was only a few kilometers away from the border. With the arrival of many Uzbek refugees in Nariman the situation in the village changed. Local leaders lost control over their constituency. As many of refugees who arrived in the village were from the damaged areas exposed to ethnic violence, they began to put pressure on local male residents to "fight" against Kyrgyz. The situation in the village became tense and aggressive. Late in the evening of 11 June, a 200-strong Uzbek crowd attacked and burned the local police station. According to the head of the local rural district, the attackers were mostly refugees from other districts (Memorial 2012, 180). The refugees from Furkat, Shark, and other damaged areas played prominent role in calling for retaliating actions. Some Uzbeks in several cars running through the streets of the village called for "jihad" against Kyrgyz through loud speakers (Memorial 2012, 180–81).

The excerpt below from an interview demonstrates local leaders' initial attempts to conduct in-group policing by efforts to isolate the local constituency from external influences. Under conditions of uncertainty and rumors, when thousands of refugees were passing through their village, local *aksakals*' primary goal was to impede a merging of the local population with radical outsiders who could pose a challenge to the traditional authority of Nariman's leaders. The main signal to the local constituency was not to host outsiders in their houses. By attempting to isolate the local constituency from outsiders, local leaders tried to keep the distribution of power in their favor.

> When rumors about Kyrgyz wrongdoing emerged on the first day, our *aksakals* and the imam of the mosque deterred people [from joining to riots] by saying: "Stop listening to instigations. There is the state. It has the army. The state has power. There is the police. Don't believe such rumors. Those are the [false] words of instigators". I also spoke in front of people on the first day and people dispersed to their *mahallas*. At that moment, the city [of Osh] was burning. Above the city there was smoke. It was a horrible picture. We told people that the city would be responsible for itself and we would be for ourselves: "We won't accept anyone [in our village], we won't let anyone [from our village] go out and we won't let anyone enter our village. Don't host refugees in your houses. Let them go and pass elsewhere, wherever they want to go. And don't join and don't let your kids join these people. These disorders will stop in a day or two and then you will get what you deserve [according to your actions]. Don't join these people". So, with the *aksakals* we shouted and told them these words.

The next quotation shows how the situation changed in Nariman after the onset of ethnic violence in Osh.

> When riots (disorder) broke out on 10 June, we managed to effectively police our community for the first and second days of disorders [in Osh]. We didn't let people go beyond village. Some people had already started blocking the main highway. Due to strategic importance of this road, we received the following order [from state authorities]: "You don't have any right to block the road. Everyone should block only [secondary] entrance roads to *mahallas*. Don't let any [outsider] cars or individuals in and stay inside [*mahallas*] and hold back your kids [young people]. Only in this case, will we remain in peace".

> And then, starting from the second day, those refugees who had tried to flee to Uzbekistan began to arrive. Our village became a corridor to the border with Uzbekistan for those wounded and burned in the disorder. They crossed the village towards the border [with Uzbekistan] on Porters [small trucks]. After they [Uzbekistani border guards] had allowed crying women and children to cross the border and rejected males, those young guys moved again towards our village. But even then, we still managed to keep order. Later, when new arrivals from other towns [from Osh and surroundings] arrived they ignored and stopped listening either to us or to the village council [local authorities]. There, a crowd emerged in the main road and newcomers infiltrated local residents. So, you don't know what their goal is. They don't have any plan and no leaders. It was just a crowd that was not willing to listen to anyone. (interview with local community leader).

The growing number of refugees turned the situation in the village increasingly tense and confrontational. A few Kyrgyz residents living in the village had to hide in their houses on the advice of local Uzbek *aksakals*. In their turn, Uzbek *aksakals* tried their best to provide maximum security to local Kyrgyz residents by organizing a duty roster for guards for, at least, some Kyrgyz houses (interview with local resident September, 2013). The following excerpt from my interview with a leader of the Kyrgyz minority in Nariman shows how security deteriorated and self-policing in the village failed.

> I was a Kyrgyz living in an Uzbek *mahalla*. And on the second day, there were a growing number of outsiders in our village. In order to avoid their aggression towards me, the *aksakals* convinced me to go and hide at home. They instructed me not to go out from my house. They told me "Please go home, we will control and protect your house, taking turns (one after another). We will call you back only if there will be a necessity for this and when we have managed people. Otherwise, we won't be able to protect you". So, they made me hide at my house when the number of strangers and outsiders increased in the streets. Then disorder broke out in that place [Nariman]. Unknown people came and burned the police station. They killed the police head of the Karasuu district and his driver. However, I didn't see it because I was at home and couldn't go out. For five days, I remained in my house because every day we had unknown outsiders in our streets. Every day there was disorder, every day there were crowds. Youngsters with their calls to disorder and petrol bombs in their hands didn't want to listen to anybody. They all were outsiders, those who came from areas below [Osh]. They were not our local fellows. They mixed with [infiltrated] our people. They had sticks and metal bars in their hands. Those armed guys increased in numbers in our village and infiltrated local people.

The entrance to Nariman was blocked again. On 12 June, a military officer convoying a humanitarian shipment was killed in Nariman by a shot in the head (Memorial 2012, 181). This was a first incident signifying the breakdown of the pact between state authorities and local residents.

Similar events were unfolding in Nurdar, the neighboring Uzbek village. On 12 June, around 1500–2000 young Uzbeks armed with sticks and some with hunting rifles gathered in the central highway of Nurdar that connected Osh with the Osh airport. The youngsters asked elders not to interfere in the situation. They set up barricades and prepared petrol bombs. The firefight with the military who arrived at the barricades resulted in three deaths among local self-defense groups. Later, officials negotiated with Nurdar to unblock the road connecting the city with the Osh airport for the transit of humanitarian aid (Memorial 2012, 181).

On 13 June, while the ethnic violence de-escalated in Osh, it escalated in Nariman. By that time, the outsider militant groups of male refugees from damaged areas enjoyed total domination in the village. The involvement of outsiders was a key factor that explains the broken self-policing in this neighborhood. The radicals who came to Nariman from other locations put pressure on and forced local young males. These groups that witnessed ethnic violence in their own *mahallas* in Osh, now desired retaliation against Kyrgyz. They forced local youth to join them and together they stopped passing cars with Uzbek refugees and disembarked Uzbek males demanding that they stay for the defense of the village.

> Q: However, the outsiders came in anyway?
>
> A: It's a crowd anyway. At that moment, I understood that there were such guys. Then I felt the presence of third and fourth parties. They shouted: "Are you a man? Are you an Uzbek? Why are you not together with people? The Kyrgyz kill all [Uzbeks] one by one. Look, the state now sent the army, airplanes, and tanks [against Uzbeks]. Why should we just sit and wait? Uzbekistan will help us, that's what you will see". There were such calls among people. Then I could see instigation attempts. There was a guy with a covered head – a ninja style, who spoke these words. Then the head of the rural district came and with the words "what kind of things are you talking about?", and he tore masks off from two of them. There were four guys in masks. All four had knives in their hands.

When the police chief of Karasuu district together with his driver, both unarmed, and the deputy head of Karasuu *raion* arrived in Nariman to negotiate peace, the agitated and uncontrolled crowd of 300 Uzbeks attacked the car and brutally killed the two policemen. The police chief came to Nariman together with a deputy head of Karasuu *raion*, an ethnic Uzbek, presumably to mediate the situation and to have talks with local residents. When their car entered Nariman, a group of rioting Uzbeks – mostly refugees – immediately attacked the car. They pulled the policemen out of the car, beat them with sticks and stones and then killed them. The police chief was burned inside his car and his driver was beheaded and pulled down to a river (Memorial 2012, 183–84; Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 25; KIC 2011, 38). According to local residents, many of attackers were Uzbeks from Furkat, which was one of the most damaged neighborhoods in Osh city (Memorial 2012, 184). The KIC's version describes the situation as follows: "There was an Uzbek crowd of about 150. Three masked men emerged from the crowd and murdered the police chief and his driver" (Memorial 2012, 38). The fact that deputy head of Karasuu *raion* did not suffer in this attack highlights the ethnically-framed retaliatory character of these killings.

This infamous incident clearly shows that at that moment, local *aksakals* had completely lost control over the situation in the village and the disorder had been initiated and led by newly-arrived young Uzbek refugees from other districts and neighborhoods in Osh. The fact that the district police chief arrived without reinforcements and without any arms implies that there was a tentative agreement between him and local residents (probably *aksakals*) about the possibility to negotiate peace and to unblock the road.

However, local elders had already lost control and were not in a position to police their local constituency. As a result, they did not manage to protect the police mediator. The situation remained tense till 19 June (Memorial 2012, 183) when local authorities convinced local residents to unblock the entrance and the main road.

During the riots the village of Nariman did not conduct inter-communal non-aggression pacts with neighboring Kyrgyz blocks or villages as some other Uzbek neighborhoods in the outskirts of Osh had. One of the main reasons was the above-detailed failed self-policing after local elders lost control over the situation with arrival of hundreds of vindictive and aggressively inclined young male refugees in the village, who undermined the traditional power of local *aksakals* and took over domination of local residents. When a delegation of activists from the Kyrgyz Manas Ata (HBK) neighborhood attempted to negotiate reconciliation pact with Nariman they were not able to approach the village due to gunfire from Nariman's barricades. Nevertheless, Nariman negotiated an agreement with state authorities that allowed the latter to access the petroleum depot and to use the highway that connected Osh with Nariman (a similar pact was conducted between state authorities and Uzbek neighborhood of Nurdar). The assassination of the police mediators also shows that local community leaders could not demonstrate a credible commitment to community self-policing and to the conditions of non-aggression pacts.

The disorder in Nariman did not take the shape of open clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbek rioters and with neighboring blocks as happened in some other neighborhoods in Osh. Generally, Nariman is surrounded by Uzbek villages and the only Kyrgyz neighbor – Manas-Ata (HBK) – is one kilometer away from Nariman. The disorder in Nariman and the assassination of policemen signified the breakdown of both self-policing and the non-aggression pact.

## Conclusion

The initial outbreak of violence in Osh triggered fears, distrust, and uncertainty about intentions between ethnic neighborhoods. For many neighborhoods striving for survival, the response strategy was to ensure credible peace through negotiating a non-aggression pact with their neighbors.

All cases selected for the comparisons in this chapter were ethnically-segregated neighborhoods. Therefore, they represent the comparable dynamics of violence and disorder that took place in many other similarly segregated neighborhoods of Osh and other towns of southern Kyrgyzstan. In each selected neighborhood, there were strong and legitimate local leaders who, under conditions of

uncertainty, attempted to conduct in-group policing and negotiate non-aggression pacts to secure their communities. Yet, variation in outcomes across compared neighborhoods is evident. While in the southern neighborhoods local ethnic communities managed to stop disorder by conducting effective in-group policing and negotiating intercommunal non-aggression pacts, in Nariman local leaders failed to conduct both in-group policing and a non-aggression pact. The difference in outcomes between southern and northern neighborhoods highlights the importance of the dynamics of intra- and intergroup relations. More specifically, intergroup and, to higher extent, in-group power shifts affected the capacity of leaders to control local communities and to negotiate non-aggression pacts with their counterparts. The local intragroup balance of power within neighborhoods was especially important for shaping violent or peaceful outcomes in localities.

As the paired comparisons selected for this chapter were segregated neighborhoods, structural conditions were similar in many but not all respects. In particular, spatial factors played an important role in setting local intra- and inter-group power balances. The location of these neighborhoods within the city as well as the built and natural environments and characteristic of local road infrastructure had effect on local power distributions and alliance configurations.

One line of comparison in this chapter has been between two Kyrgyz neighborhoods, Uchar and Toloikon, that managed to conduct in-group policing. They negotiated pacts with the same Uzbek partner – Turan. However, each had different domestic constituency configurations and intercommunal negotiation environments. The constellation of domestic forces was different in each neighborhood and this affected the dynamics of negotiations. The environment of negotiations between Turan and Uchar was difficult due to the strong internal challenge from radical forces that the Uchar leaders faced in their neighborhood. This variation in domestic constituency configurations resulted from the influx of outsiders in Uchar but not in Toloikon. The proximity of Uchar to Osh's southern regional road made it a destination for outsiders coming from Nookat region. Community leaders experienced strong pressure from outsiders and managed to negotiate with Turan even after violent clashes erupted between these two neighborhoods. The outcome was contained violence and a non-aggression pact with Turan. On the other hand, Toloikon's remote location from inter-regional roads prevented arrival of outsiders and ensured more homogenous domestic constituency, smaller internal pressure from radicals, and successful preventive diplomacy. In Toloikon, the Kyrgyz initiated the pact with Turan although at the aggregate picture they were a part of the winning group in Osh. So, both sides were equal in determining the pact despite Toloikon being much smaller than Turan. Nevertheless, the Kyrgyz leader was interested in

negotiating peace as radicals from his village could have instigated violence between these two neighborhoods and then the outcome of possible intercommunal violence could have been grave for Toloikon (Interview with Avasbek, September 2013).

The above discussion of negotiation environments in Toloikon and Uchar demonstrates that Uzbek moderate leaders practically remained unchallenged in Turan regarding the question of negotiations with Uchar and other Kyrgyz neighborhoods. They managed to establish control over the local constituency, forcing out the few radicals who were present from the decision-making process. They kept communication with Kyrgyz leaders and were open to negotiation. Effective in-group policing and sanctions against violators demonstrated that they were credibly committed to the peaceful settlement of intercommunal tensions.

Another condition that helped to reach a local agreement was a perception of rising costs of conflict for both parties. In Osh, rumors of Uzbekistani intervention contributed to such perceptions, especially among Kyrgyz. The threat of intervention by Uzbekistan and rumors altered the balance of power in Osh and according to developments increased the bargaining leverage of Uzbek leaders while decreasing the leverage of Kyrgyz radicals. The dynamics of intergroup power shifts helped to moderate radicals. In Uchar, the radical coalition was aware of the developments on the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan's border and this contributed to the moderation of their demands. On the other hand, the arrival of many Kyrgyz in Osh and attacks on Uzbek *mahallas* created incentives for many Uzbek leaders to initiate pacts with Kyrgyz.

Another line of comparison is between the northern district of Nariman and the southern district of Turan with its Kyrgyz neighbors. Turan/Uchar and Nariman are two cases with contrasting dynamics of disorders. The situation between Turan and Uchar started with an armed clash but then they managed to contain violence and conduct self-policing while in Nariman, local leaders starting with effective self-policing, then lost control over situation after the arrival of refugees from affected districts in Furkat, Mady, and Shark. Violence broke out in Nariman that resulted in the assassination of the head of district/*raion* police and his driver.

Turan and Nariman are two large Uzbek districts. This chapter demonstrated how different types of intragroup and intergroup interactions in these districts caused the variation in outcomes. Table 7.2. presents the variation in structural, spatial-environmental, and contingent (interactional) factors and their causal impact on the dynamics of violence in Turan and Nariman. It shows that structurally these two

districts were similar. Prior to the onset of violence, both districts were segregated with strong social norms and community leadership. These similarities allowed us to control for structural conditions. However, spatial-environmental and contingent-interactional factors were different. Spatial differentiation had important effect on the security dynamics in these two neighborhoods.

Table 7.2. Variation in structural, spatial, and contingent factors and their impact on peaceful/violent trajectories in Turan and Nariman

| **Factors** | **Turan** | **Nariman** |
|---|---|---|
| **Structural** | | |
| Ethno-demographic conditions | Segregated, Uzbek | Segregated, Uzbek |
| Social norms and community control | Strong | Strong |
| Initial structural balance of power (constellation of local forces) | Moderates | Moderates |
| **Spatial-environmental** | | |
| Location within the city and surrounding neighborhoods | Insecure, encircled by Kyrgyz neighborhoods ("ethnic island") | Secure, mostly surrounded by Uzbek villages |
| Spatial proximity to interregional roads | Yes | Yes |
| Spatial proximity to Uzbekistan | No | Yes |
| Environmental conditions for defense (built and natural) | Favorable | Favorable |
| **Contingent (interactional)** | | |
| Intragroup power shifts | No | Yes (towards radicals) |
| Arrival of outsiders | No | Yes (embittered Uzbek refugees) |
| Negotiation environment | Tense (after violent clashes) | Initial negotiations terminated |
| Domestic constraints | Small pressure from local radicals (infiltrated outsiders) | Failed authority of moderate leaders under domination of radical outsiders |
| In-group policing | Successful | Initially successful but then failed |
| Non-aggression pact | Successful (pacts with surrounding Kyrgyz neighborhoods) | Broken agreement with state authorities |
| **Trajectory** | **Initial violence and then peace** | **Initial peace and then violence** |

In this light, the comparison between Nariman and Uchar is instructive. Both experienced intervention by outsiders but the outcomes diverged. In Nariman, initial good policing broke down and violence ensued and in Uchar, initial violence was contained and an intergroup pact was negotiated. Environmental conditions including spatial factors were important as Nariman and Uchar were spatially more disadvantaged in terms of its location. Being located on the main highway leading to Uzbekistan's border exposed Nariman to many aggravated and vindictive male refugees. The arrival of outsiders changed the local balance of power. This led to the breakdown of both self-policing and external pact with state authorities. Kyrgyz leadership in Uchar was also challenged by outsiders from rural areas. The difference in outcomes can be explained by how local leaders dealt with outsiders and how they used the local constituency to keep the in-group balance of power in their favor. Different types of constituency networks and styles of policing affected the final outcomes. Chapters 8 and 9, in part V, will present town-level comparisons.

# Part V. Town level comparisons

## Chapter 8. Uzgen: centralized self-policing and two-level non-aggression pacts

This chapter shows how the entire town of Uzgen avoided violence in June 2010. Since this locality remained peaceful, it does not display variation in violence within one town and across space. Therefore, the analysis in this chapter will be focused on peaceful activities of local ethnic brokers and conditions that facilitated the violence prevention. The second distinction of this chapter is that it spotlights peaceful brokerage at town level and highlights the Uzgen leaders' multilateral intergroup diplomacy based on the town-rural ethnic division.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, it briefly delineates the ethno-demographic and socio-economic context of the town and the Uzgen *raion*. Then, it analyzes how Uzgen's leaders conducted in-group policing at town level and negotiated non-aggression pacts with leaders of surrounding Kyrgyz villages. Self-policing activities were characterized by high coordination among informal ethnic and religious leaders of the town and local official authorities. Effective in-group policing actions at town level were crucially complemented by strategic non-aggression pacts with leaders of major Kyrgyz villages. Further, this chapter discusses non-aggression pacts at lower geographical scale illustrated by negotiations between ethnic leaders of the Uzbek neighborhood of Kairagach in Uzgen and a small adjacent Kyrgyz village. In the final section, examination of everyday in-group policing in Uzgen, and particularly in the neighborhood of Kairagach, highlights the virtual absence of interethnic associational life and civic engagement between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz. It demonstrates that in the absence of intercommunal civic links, the contacts between two ethnic communities are maintained at the level of local leaders. This highlights their critical importance as ethnic brokers for the dynamics of intragroup and intergroup relations. In the final section, this chapter provides examples from everyday mediation and self-policing in the Uzgen context.

### Ethno-demographic and social context

During ethnic clashes in June 2010, all the attention of international and national mass media, human rights organizations, and investigators was mainly concentrated on the city of Osh. No reports have been produced explaining why mid-range towns such as Uzgen, Karasuu, and Nookat remained peaceful during

the 2010 riots. Nor have there been accounts of intercommunal relations in those towns and respective *raions*. Below, I attempt to reconstruct events in Uzgen during those riotous days and explain why and how the Uzbek community in Uzgen and Kyrgyz rural communities from surrounding villages avoided clashes and remained peaceful. My reconstruction of events is based on interviews with community leaders in Uzgen and my personal observations in the town. I also conducted several interviews with ordinary residents of Uzgen and surrounding Kyrgyz villages.

In many respects, Uzgen is a strategic town of about 50 000 with a predominantly Uzbek population. It is located along the Bishkek-Osh road exactly mid-way between the cities of Jalalabat and Osh. This highway is the only ground route connecting the southern and northern regions. All transport stream from the north to Osh and back from Osh to Bishkek passes through Uzgen. Clearly, the same highway also connects southern regions. There is also a road Uzgen–Kara Kulja passing through the town that connects mountainous villages with Uzgen and the Bishkek–Osh highway. It is an administrative and economic center of the Uzgen *raion*. The town is located on two terraces – upper and lower. The upper terrace is on the top of a hill. The infrastructure on the upper terrace is well developed compared with the lower terrace. All business and public life take place on the upper terrace. The bazaar, public offices, the town and district administrations, banks, the Bishkek-Osh highway, cafes and canteens, university facilities, a historical complex, and a few multi-story apartment buildings are all located in the upper terrace. The lower terrace is a purely Uzbek residential area. The infrastructure is poorly developed. In a sense, it is an old town which has preserved its historical design and architecture. *Mahalla* streets are narrow and have curvilinear shape.

Uzgen is an administrative center of a district/*raion* that has the same name as the town[41]. There are 19 rural districts with more than 100 villages in the Uzgen *raion*. The population of the Uzgen *raion* is around 180 000 if we exclude the town of Uzgen itself. Practically all villages are inhabited by Kyrgyz communities, very few have tiny Uzbek minorities, and only in one small village do Uzbeks constitute a majority. When discussing ethnic politics in Uzgen one should always consider that Uzgen is an Uzbek-dominated town but the surrounding rural area is Kyrgyz.

Therefore, intercommunal relations and economic life in Uzgen should be considered through relations between Uzgen and its rural neighbors. The Uzbek community in Uzgen deals with Kyrgyz rural villages on a daily basis. The most prominent neighboring settlements to Uzgen are the large Kyrgyz villages of

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[41] The districts in Kyrgyzstan are usually named after their central towns or dominant geographical landscape such as names of large mountains, lakes, rivers and so on.

Kurshab, Myrza-Ake (each has around 15-16 thousand residents) and the villages of Karool, Sheraly, and Myrza-Aryk in the rural district of Karool. In general, the villages in all the rural districts of Uzgen *raion* are involved in intercommunal relations, ethnic politics, and economic activities with the Uzbek community in the town of Uzgen. In addition, the mountainous *raion* of Kara Kulja is naturally connected with Uzgen. Surrounded by high mountains, for the 87 000 Kyrgyz residents of Kara Kulja *raion*, the road through Uzgen is the only way to connect with the outside world. Infrastructural and transportation dependency on Uzgen makes the villages of Kara Kulja anxious about intercommunal developments in Uzgen. During the 1990 riots, horse riders from Kara Kulja attacked Uzgen when intercommunal violence broke out in that town. Kara Kulja men constituted the main force of Kyrgyz participants in interethnic riots in Uzgen. Today, they are still considered "hotheads" by the local population. Since then, the Uzbek community in Uzgen, taught by the negative experience of the 1990 riots, pays special attention to the relations with Kara Kulja region.

Figure 8.1. Town and district of Uzgen. Map data source: Google Maps

As noted earlier, Uzgen, the only town in the *raion*, is inhabited mainly by Uzbeks. According to the 2009 census, more than 90 per cent or about 45 000 residents in Uzgen are Uzbeks making it the most Uzbek town in Kyrgyzstan. The Kyrgyz are only 8 per cent or about 4000 residents. The few Uzbeks who lived in Kyrgyz villages in Uzgen's surrounding areas abandoned them after the ethnic riots in 1990 when several Uzbek residents in those villages were killed or underwent some other forms of violence. Like Osh, Uzgen is a segregated town in which the Uzbeks live in *mahallas* with individual unit houses and the Kyrgyz minority lives in few 3-5-story buildings in two neighborhoods: one is in the central downtown along the Bishkek-Osh highway which passes through Uzgen and another in the outskirts of the town. In addition, Kyrgyz students who study in the Uzgen branch of Osh Technical University and in Medical College live in dormitories or rent flats in central part of Uzgen. The rest of the town consists of Uzbek *mahallas* solely. No Uzbek lives in multi-story buildings. Local Kyrgyz residents find employment in public and administrative sector while local Uzbeks dominate in farming and trading. Service sector and cafes and restaurants are mainly owned by Uzbeks.

The town of Uzgen functions as an economic center for the 113 villages of the Uzgen *raion*. The large bazaar and also several banks and state administrative offices serve thousands of Kyrgyz villagers from Uzgen *raion* and the neighboring mountainous Kara Kulja *raion*. Everyday about 15 thousand Kyrgyz from the villages of Uzgen and Kara Kulja *raion*s come to the town to trade in the local bazaar. The number of everyday rural visitors is large considering that it equates to one third of the town's population. Most of them buy food products, household goods or sell farm products and cattle. Few come to receive remittance money transfers or get small agricultural credits in local banks or visit local *raion* administration. Taxi shuttles with almost exclusively Kyrgyz drivers, offer trips to practically all popular destinations within the Uzgen *raion* and also to Kara Kulja, Osh, Jalalabat, and Bishkek. Quite a few tourists come to the town to see the famous tower and mausoleum of the Muslim Karahani dynasty from 10–12th century. This historical complex and locally produced red rice are the signature brands of Uzgen.

Recently, the bazaar in the Kyrgyz village of Kurshab has emerged as a local competitor to the bazaar in Uzgen. In the last few years Kurshab has managed to quickly develop as local trade center which offers wide range of agricultural, constructional, and household products. Customers can purchase virtually anything what can be found in Uzgen bazaar. Despite all that potential the bazaar in Kurshab is still much smaller than its rival in Uzgen. It attracts mainly farmers and peasants from local villages in Kurshab rural district for whom it is easier to attend Kurshab than Uzgen.

In the daytime, the center of Uzgen, especially the area around the bazaar is full of people both Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. The central street, a part of Bishkek–Osh highway, passes along the bazaar. The traffic is intense and it is difficult to find available parking slots. Traffic incidents are common and often create brawls between drivers. These fights gain ethnic framing if the drivers involved in the incident are of different ethnic origins. Multiple cafes can accommodate a considerable number of people, most of them Kyrgyz rural visitors, who would like to have lunch after spending considerable time making transactions in the bazaar. Looking at the ethnic composition of people in the bazaar, one gets no sense that Uzgen is an Uzbek town. As many Kyrgyz as Uzbeks can usually be spotted in the bazaar area and the town center. Towards the end of the business day the central street empties, as the Kyrgyz begin to return to their villages. In the evening (till the next bazaar day) it becomes an 'Uzbek town' again.

## June 2010: In-group policing and non-aggression pacts at town level

In 1990, Uzgen – along with Osh – was the main site of interethnic violence but the former suffered the most. When first ethnic riots broke out in Osh on 4 June 1990, the epicenter of interethnic violence shifted to Uzgen the next morning. Local Kyrgyz were attacked by the Uzbeks in Uzgen. The Kyrgyz were forced to flee to neighboring Kyrgyz villages. Some Kyrgyz were killed in the streets of Uzgen. Retaliatory attacks by the Kyrgyz from Kara-Kulja *raion* and neighboring large villages such as Myrza-Ake and Kurshab soon followed. Kyrgyz horse riders from the mountainous villages of Kara Kulja and Alai attacked Uzbeks in Uzgen. Hundreds of houses were burned. The city was besieged by the Kyrgyz from surrounding and remote territories. The local authorities tried to evacuate the Kyrgyz minority in Uzgen and those who remained in the city were assaulted by the local Uzbeks. Some Uzbeks living in Myrza-Ake were killed by local Kyrgyz, the rest fled to Uzgen. The violence in Uzgen largely stopped on 8 June when the military troops entered the city. The riots in the district of Uzgen became the most violent and left approximately 200 deaths and several hundred houses burnt (Gaziyev 2008, 286). In addition, violent incidents, killings, and riots also took place in several locations in the districts of Karasuu, Aravan, and Nookat.

In 2010, however, self-policing of local community was remarkable in the light of the deadly riots that broke out in the towns of Osh and Jalalabat. The centralized mediation and self-policing of local communities were conducted both on town and local levels. Good cooperation between a local police chief and community and religious leaders made it possible to conduct appropriate policing of the local population and good communication with Kyrgyz community leaders from neighboring and even some

remote mountainous villages. One important distinction from other towns is that in Uzgen there was already an existing network of mediators. The OSCE project organized teams of mediators, named *Yntymak Jarchylary* (literally - friendship mediators), composed of community leaders in the town of Uzgen and surrounding Kyrgyz villages. The creation of this network was a pilot program initiated by the OSCE, based on the analysis of lessons of the ethnic riots in 1990. In the context of full residential segregation between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz, this network facilitated communication among community leaders and subsequently, self-policing and coordination activities during the ethnic conflict. Uzgen *raion* was divided into four zones of mediator teams: Uzgen, Jazy, Kurshab, and Myrza-Ake.

At 3am when news about riots in Osh reached Uzgen local, local authorities, and a police chief held a meeting. They set up 24 hour posts in Kyrgyz neighborhoods in Uzgen as the most vulnerable spots. Local community leaders were concerned about possible retaliatory attacks against Kyrgyz minority in Uzgen. By that time about 500 Uzbek youths had gathered and were demanding explanations of what was going on in Osh. It was clear that interethnic peace was seriously broken and in such circumstances the policing of the crowd was extremely difficult. Many Kyrgyz residents of Uzgen left the town in fear of retaliatory attacks from Uzbeks. A town police chief (a Kyrgyz), local authorities (both Kyrgyz and Uzbeks), and community leaders (mainly Uzbeks) managed to establish good cooperative relations among themselves which considerably facilitated coordination of preventive actions. The police chief gave clear instructions and information to the local population. Headquarters were established to coordinate actions among mediators and local authorities.

Nevertheless, local Uzbek youths were in an aggressively retaliatory and riotous mood. They called for retaliatory attacks against Kyrgyz and demanded to block the Bishkek–Osh highway passing through Uzgen. Yet others called on crowds to go to Osh city to aid local Uzbeks. Those hours and days many cars passed along the Bishkek–Osh highway through Uzgen. Kyrgyz people whose relatives were killed or wounded during first riots or those who were concerned about their family members in Osh were travelling to that city. Young Uzbeks in Uzgen considered the cars passing through Uzgen as ‘military aid’ for Kyrgyz in Osh and therefore sought to stop and burn them. They wanted to fight Kyrgyz people. Fortunately, mediators managed to prevent these aggressive actions and calm the crowd down. The community leaders did not let to block the highway but allowed to erect barricades in secondary streets and entrances leading to mahallas. In total, 72 secondary streets in Uzgen were barricaded. This decision had a twofold positive effect. First, it channeled the energy of the crowd to building the barricades and on the other hand, it allowed to keep aggressively inclined local residents behind the barricades.

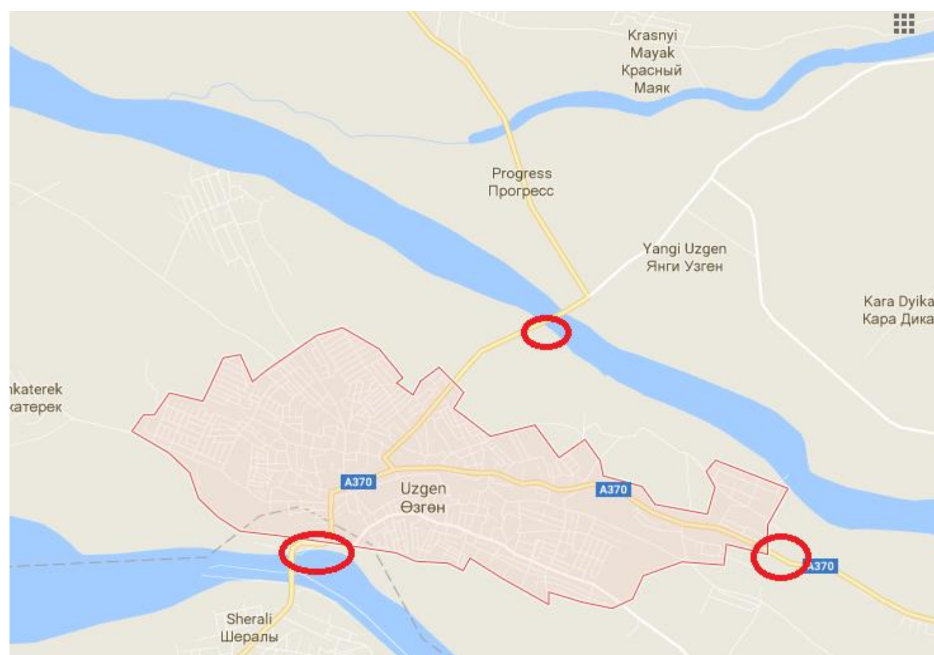
According to local mediators, this measure led to localization of youth groups within residential blocks - mahallas.  Second, it increased real and perceived security of Uzgen mahallas. Now young “defenders” switched to protecting their native residential areas (various interviews with local leaders).

The situation was very tense on those days. Uzgen leaders made sure to isolate the local population within narrow residential areas to prevent direct contact with Kyrgyz travelers passing through Uzgen. They prohibited access closer than 50 meters to the Bishkek–Osh road. This measure was enforced to avoid provocations along the road. As one of mediators admitted that a single stone thrown at passing cars could spark violence with far-reaching consequences (interview with an Uzgen mediator, September 2013). Another measure was the closure of the bazaar in Uzgen. Again, the logic behind this measure was to minimize direct contact between Uzbek residents in Uzgen and Kyrgyz from outside areas. In addition, local police and authorities and mediators in Uzgen arranged police convoys for the cars coming from Kara Kulja and passing through Uzgen. The important thing was that the head of the Kara Kulja district cooperated with Uzgen mediators in these activities. For the first three or four days, all cars from Kara-Kulja were accompanied by both *akims* (governors) of Kara Kulja and a group of Uzgen mediators ensuring that the cars could proceed through Uzgen unhindered. The next potential challenge for stability of the self-policing order in Uzgen emerged on 13 June, when young Uzbeks in Uzgen wanted to block the main highway again. They assumed that the cars passing through Uzgen to Osh were organized by Keldibekov, a southern Kyrgyz nationalist politician close to the inner circle of the former president Bakiev, as ‘military aid’ to fight against Uzbeks in Osh. The risk of violence was contained; those who wanted to go to Osh to fight for their ethnic fellows were not encouraged but were left unaided to make arrangements and to bear individual responsibility for their actions. This obviously had a cooling effect as no one dared to go to Osh alone to fight against Kyrgyz.

As soon as news and rumors about riots in Osh spread in the town, Uzgen mediators called local territorial councils, deputies, and other individuals who had considerable influence and authority among local communities. Next morning mediators and community and religious leaders from Karool, Myrza-Ake, Kurshab, and Jazy, the major villages in the *raion*, arrived in Uzgen. They formed eight mobile groups of mediators which were disposed in identified as vulnerable and dangerous zones. Each mobile group was ethnically mixed and consisted of two cars. In each car sent to a dangerous zone, there were two Kyrgyz and two or three Uzbek mediators. Their primary task was to calm down aggressively intended people and counteract spread of rumors by giving people clear facts and information. The mediators were instructed to work with their respective ethnic constituencies.

Three main directions were identified as the most strategic for violence prevention. The first was the bridge between Uzgen and the Kyrgyz village Sheraly (in the Osh direction including Kurshab and Karool villages). The second was the road to Jazy rural district. The third was in the direction of Myrzaki village and the Kara Kulja *raion*. These directions were basically the main three exit roads from Uzgen. These three directions were identified based on past experience. In 1990, Kyrgyz participants in riots gathered exactly at those roads and bridges now identified by Uzgen mediators as potentially dangerous. However, in 2010, crowds did not pool at the noted entrances to Uzgen thanks to self-policing and the preventive mediation actions of mobile groups. Besides these three directions, round-the-clock posts were established in the bazaar and water reservoir after rumors spread that the latter had been poisoned. The bazaar was closed but then re-opened two days later due to a food crisis that emerged among local population.

Figure 8.2. External roadblocks in Uzgen. Map data source: Google Maps




The mediators organized trips of the mobile groups to Kyrgyz villages. There, in the Kyrgyz villages, they conducted meetings with local authorities, *aksakals*, and residents. In each village, informal non-aggression pacts between Uzgen mediators and local leaders were negotiated. They called on the local population to resist instigators. Despite the overall mission being successful, in a number of cases, during

meetings mediators faced strong aggressive pressure from Kyrgyz youngsters whom local *aksakals* were not able to fully restrain. *Aksakals* utilized the concepts of religious and pan-Turkic unity as both ethnic communities belong to the same linguistic and religious groups.

During the June 2010 meetings of Uzgen leaders with *aksakals* from Kyrgyz villages community leaders reassured peaceful relations among each other. The *aksakals* asked if the other side had any complaints. They mutually inquired about each other's intentions. The meetings were generally concluded by making intercommunal pacts. The leaders negotiated to refrain from mutual accusations and conduct strong self-policing and sanctions only within their respective communities. Each side had to suppress and sanction in-group instigators. The leaders of Uzgen made certain to meet not only with communities from neighboring villages and rural districts but also paid special attention to negotiations with Kara Kulja leaders. Negotiating pacts with Kara Kulja as well was essential to secure peace in Uzgen considering tense relations and the history of violence between these two communities.

One of the problems in maintaining order and policing was the great lack of police officers. Most police officers were sent to Osh, a hotbed of interethnic violence. To compensate for the lack of enforcement forces, local '*Afghans*', veterans of the Soviet war in Afghanistan in the 1980s, were involved in patrolling the streets, the bazaar, and the water reservoir. In Uzgen, *Afghans* played a strong role in maintaining order. This network of veterans, many of whom had experience of military combat and knew how to use firearms, existed before the riots in a form of an association of veterans. Besides patrolling streets, they accomplished several convoy missions. Particularly, veterans assisted in evacuating Uzgen students studying in Osh universities back to Uzgen. They also convoyed humanitarian aid to Osh and evacuated 200 seasonal workers from Uzgen to their home villages in Kara Kulja, Nookat, and Uzbekistan. During the riots, 16 out of about 50 of the Afghanistan veterans in Uzgen were used as police officers. To distinguish them from other actors, the local community bought them camouflage uniforms.

## Mediation and in-group policing at local level: a story of Hamza

In this section, I show how Uzbek leaders in Uzgen conducted in-group policing at local level and in everyday life. To illustrate examples of mediation and self-policing at local level during riots and in everyday life, here I provide extensive direct citations chiefly from one respondent, a *kvartkom* (head of the neighborhood committee) in one of Uzgen's *mahallas*. However, I also substantiate my arguments based on the evidence from my other respondents in the form of indirect and paraphrased citations.

Mediation activities and non-aggressions pacts of Uzgen community, that mainly included local police, local administration, and mediators, with leaders of Kyrgyz villages were conducted at highly centralized level and were well coordinated. However, intercommunal pact-making initiatives were held also at local level. Some of the *kvartkoms* initiated pacts with Kyrgyz leaders of small villages which were adjacent to their neighborhoods. Hamza is a kvartkom in one of *mahallas* called Kairagach in the northern part of Uzgen since 1995. His *mahalla* is just eight kilometers away from the closest Kyrgyz villages of Kenesh and Kyzyl-Kyrman, both from Bash-Dobo rural district. When riots broke out in Osh he took an initiative to re-establish trustful and peaceful relations between his *mahalla* and the neighboring Kyrgyz villages. He used his personal networks with Kyrgyz *aksakals* from those villages as a ground for restoring shattered trust between Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities which in Fearon and Laitin's terms would be called interethnic cooperation.

The following extensive citation provides useful information about the local dynamics of intercommunal relations between Uzbek quarter in Uzgen and its adjacent Kyrgyz village.

> Q: in such a conflict situation, were not you afraid of going there [to the Kyrgyz village]?
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> A: I went there with my two friends by car, and there on the border (of the *mahalla*) Uzbeks had already blocked the road in order that Kyrgyz would not be able to enter. They blocked it with farming carts, beams … they made a solid road block. But they [local Uzbeks] know me and I know them, so they let me pass through. Then we arrived in the village of Bash Tobo and there was the same picture. They [local Kyrgyz] also blocked the road with carts and a tractor. They were manning the post. But we all [Hamza and Kyrgyz people on the road block] know each other. But the only thing was that we were all upset by this panic. We were upset and they were upset. They asked me [about the purpose of my visit] and I know the *aksakals* of the two villages. I explained to them that we were going to see Ahmad (an *aksakal*) and that "we had an activity [*dastorkon*] planned for tomorrow". Then they let us pass through to the village. *Aksakals* and young people also gathered there, in the center of village. Of course, they were anxious and uneasy. But we hugged each other right there. They asked me "What happened, Hamza?" I explained "Ahmad-aka, tomorrow we are going to slaughter a sheep. We will prey during the feast in order that God will help us. Please come". They said "OK" and approved [our initiative]. Right at that moment, the *akim* [the head of rural district/village municipality] was coming back to his house and we invited him as well. I went to his house and he also approved my initiative. We thought 25 people would come but the next day around 50–60 people from their side came to us, both *aksakals* and young people. The *akim* also came. We organized a *dastorkon* in the garden of my office. We also invited heads of the town administration. Our Uzbeks are excellent cooks. We laid carpets on the ground. We had very good conversations. We forgot everything. We even tried not to recall what was going in Osh, to act as if nothing was happening. The atmosphere was good. After this everyone felt trusting [towards one other]. Then after our feast, everything seemed to snowball. One *mahalla* organized a feast, then another, the third, the fourth … and so on. You have probably heard about this? Other *mahallas* also started organizing such feasts [with Kyrgyz from neighboring villages]. They sat, joked, and socialized together for ten days in a row. Elsewhere feasts and *plov* [the national dish] were organized, sheep were slaughtered … And then they [Kyrgyz] started inviting us. (interview in Uzgen, September 2013).

Non-aggression pacts were often negotiated during communal leaders' gatherings. Feasts, which in local languages are called *dastorkon*, are often mentioned in witness accounts about reconciliation activities. Mediators and community leaders use *dastorkons* as a mediation tool between ethnic communities. In

order to hold *dastorkons*, they create special community funds into which well-off people contribute some amount of money or cattle. A sheep or sometimes a horse or a cow is slaughtered. The leaders of Uzgen invite Kyrgyz *aksakals* from neighboring villages or even from Kara Kulja *raion*. *Dastorkons* allow the maintenance of intercommunal links and trust among community leaders. The important thing is that the regular feasts provide a common space where community leaders discuss issues and solve misunderstandings. Intercommunal links at the leader level are strengthened by mutual peace assurances. The *dastorkons* were used widely during riots and their aftermath to reconcile the two ethnic communities or to reassure peaceful relations between them.

During *dastorkons*, community leaders recalled their mutual relations in the past by utilizing idealistic narratives of friendship. These idealistic narratives of interethnic cooperation did not necessarily truly reflect past reality and they could be rather exaggerated expressions of intercommunal engagement. Tensions between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz have always existed. However, these narratives did represent the existence of cooperative links at the local leader level in the past. Such narratives were aimed at emphasizing peaceful intentions and reviving trustful relations between leaders of both communities based on the peaceful relations that existed in the past.

> Q: What did you talk about during that *dastarhan* (feast)?
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> A: In general, *aksakals* speak. They told the youths about how they lived and were friends before and how they made marriage petitions when Kyrgyz man wanted to marry Uzbek woman and Uzbek men wanted to marry Kyrgyz women and that at that time there were no divisions. They talked in such a spirit. They cited their grandfathers as examples of friendship and as decent men. Our and their *aksakals* asserted that there is no reason for divisions. We all know each other and our ancestors, grandfathers, and fathers worked in the same *sovkhoz* and *kolkhoz* [the Soviet agricultural institutions]. They lived in peace in difficult times. "Why shouldn't we live in this way now?", they said.

Hamza emphasizes the importance of quotidian intercommunal and associational relations for peaceful co-existence of ethnic communities. But those relations are maintained mainly at the community leaders' level. The intercommunal links among people of older generations derive from their joint collateral work in *kolkhozs* and other organizations from the communist times. These networks among people who used to work together in the Soviet institutions and organizations remained sufficient to maintain more or less trustful relations between community leaders. The links between *aksakals* are maintained through shared feasts, banquets, and family and public ceremonies when *aksakals* from both sides invite each other to weddings, funerals, and events and activities of local importance.

> In 2010, we were hearing news everyday about events in Osh through mass media. We watched news about events in Osh, Jalalabat, Bishkek on TV but we worked in our *mahalla*. One of my friends gave me a fat sheep and I went to neighboring villages of Kenesh and Kyzyl Kyrman. There are around 5–10 thousand residents. I went there and we invited *aksakals* and young people to the town [Uzgen] probably on the second day [of

riots] on 11th [June]. This was confirmed with the *akim* [governor of the Uzgen *raion*]. We organized *dastorkon–shorpo* (national dish). When you sit face-to-face – we were all created by God after all – we understand each other. When you sit next to each other you understand that we live next to each other and our ancestors lived like that. We, like our ancestors, invite each other. I write invitations and send them. They come immediately because their village is close, just eight kilometers. If there are some activities – for example, the opening ceremony of a mosque or kindergarten – the [Kyrgyz] *aksakals* invite us. They send invitations saying "Please come to such-and-such activity with four or ten *aksakals*". If they have weddings and especially funerals their *aksakals* also always invite us because they worked together in *kolkhoz* and *sovkhoz*. They used to drink water from the same irrigation ditch/channel and cultivate gardens in the same field.

Q: Do you mean small villages that are neighboring with your *mahalla*?

A: Yes, yes. There is some distance between villages [and Kairagach *mahalla*]. They come to the center [of Uzgen] or the hospital by the main road –Kushieva [street which passes through Kairagach *mahalla*]. They are chiefly aged, senior people. We all know each other but the only thing is that we should engage young people, so that they go to each other's events and they have respect among themselves and then, there will be mutual understanding.

These networks were used to re-establish and re-affirm peaceful relations through conducting non-aggression pacts. In circumstances when intercommunal trust was shattered (and broken at the national level) and attitudes of communities towards their ethnically 'other' neighbors were characterized by distrust, such networks played a very important role in re-affirming cooperative and trustful relations between communities. Unlike non-aggression pacts that were negotiated among Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities in Osh, intercommunal pacts in Uzgen were also implicitly negotiated in mutual non-aggression terms but were more aimed at re-establishing trust and were built upon already existing cooperative relations. Hamza also underlines the importance of social capital for maintaining peaceful intercommunal relations. However, according to Hamza and other mediators, intercommunal social capital had been in sharp decline since Soviet times. The younger generation lacks the quotidian or associational links among themselves except those few who attend sport clubs and other associational groups.

But the problem is that such associations and clubs are too few in Uzgen to create normal intercommunal civic life, contrary to what Hamza would optimistically like to believe. Except Afghan veterans' organizations and the two or three clubs, there is nothing that links the two communities at the associational level. In general, intercommunal social capital is weak or rather absent.

The association of Afghan veterans exemplifies a type of organization that creates intercommunal civic engagement among its members. The veteran organization is widespread across the states of the former Soviet Union. The members of this association are veterans of the war in Afghanistan imbued with ideas of so-called "internationalism", a concept that was promoted by Soviet ideologists in the 1980s for the justification of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Even though this concept initially was invented to

serve the geopolitical interests of the Soviet Union, the ideological rhetoric of "internationalism" had positive effects on the Afghan war veterans in terms of perceptions of interethnic cooperation. The veterans of this war have established a fraternity-like association that unites people of different nationalities. The association helps veterans to cope with social, financial, and health problems through mutual aid. Veterans keep contact among themselves through the association. They periodically gather and celebrate some war-related anniversaries. There is such a network of veterans in the Uzgen *raion* accounting for about 250 *Afghans*, 50 of whom, mainly Uzbeks, live in the town itself. In addition, Uzgen veterans try to keep contact with their fellows in Osh, Jalalabat, and Bishkek. Zafar, a head of the veteran organization in Uzgen works hard to keep the links between veterans alive. Every week he gathers veterans to have a traditional lunch in one of the teahouses with at least 15 veterans present at such events. At bigger events, such as an annual celebration of military withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan on 15 February 1989, *Afghans* from the villages of Uzgen *raion* arrive in Uzgen town to attend a festive concert in the local town club followed by a banquet. At the ceremonial reception, they receive monthly financial compensation and governmental awards from Bishkek. In administrative centers of rural districts, local municipalities also organize solemn feasts for which a sheep is slaughtered. Some *Afghans* go to the capital Bishkek as delegates from Uzgen to attend the main veteran event at the national level. In 2003, Zafar went to Moscow to receive an award from the Russian president at the Kremlin. Through such events, veterans of the Afghan war strengthen their non-ethnic based associational links. Zafar jokes that "There are no nationalities, there are only *Afghans"*.

During the riots, *Afghans* used their trust-network to coordinate actions which required intercommunal cooperation. The contacts in this veteran network facilitated coordination of self-policing and humanitarian operations in the region. For example, *Afghan* veterans helped to evacuate seasonal workers from Uzgen to their home villages and brought children of Uzgen residents studying in Osh university back to the town of Uzgen. They also brought humanitarian aid from Uzgen to Osh. This kind of action required intercommunal cooperation as convoys with refugees or humanitarian aid from Uzgen had to pass through multiple road blocks in Kyrgyz villages to Osh and other towns. Uzbek veterans from Uzgen cooperated with their Kyrgyz counterparts from rural areas of the Uzgen *raion*. In the town of Uzgen, they formed security forces and patrolled streets and road blocks. According to a head of an Uzgen organization, senior *Afghans* arrived from surrounding villages to the town while rank-and-file stayed in villages to conduct local self-policing. They provided security in the local bazaar when it re-opened on 13 June because of the food shortage. People from rural areas also started arriving at the bazaar to buy food.

Patrols at road blocks inquired about the purpose of each visitor. The *Afghans* coordinated all their actions with the Uzgen commandant – the chief of the district police.

However, normally associational life, if there is any, is intracommunal. If there are intercommunal links they are mainly of a quotidian type. The quotidian contacts take place in the bazaar and multiple teahouses. Such places provide space for the quotidian contacts between people of the two ethnic communities. As noted before, many ethnic brawls occur in the process of these contacts. There are also two universities in which both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz are enrolled. There are eight schools in Uzgen. One with Russian language of instruction, another is in Kyrgyz, while the rest six are in Uzbek language. Life in Uzgen goes along ethnic lines. It is too segregated where ethnic communities live parallel but separate lives.

One indicator of such segregation is how people hold *joras*. A *jora* is a company of peers, usually males of the same age, who gather at least once a week to have shared lunch or dinner. One almost never sees a *jora* with peers of different nationalities (see also Morgan Liu, 2012). Except for community leaders, most residents in Uzgen have no practical horizontal links and networks with people of different ethnic origins. The pattern of housing and residence has a clearly segregated character. The few quotidian links that do exist are simply not enough to mediate interethnic tensions in the manner Varshney outlines in his work: "Compared to everyday forms of engagement … associations are undoubtedly a much more robust form of sustained and effective civic interaction between individuals" (2002, 45). In such situations, the community leaders both in the town of Uzgen and Kyrgyz villages from around the town (and even in Kara Kulja) understandably chose interethnic cooperation at the elite level. The main features of this cooperation is the maintenance of contacts between leaders of the two ethnic communities and in-group policing. The contacts between leaders were crucial in negotiating non-aggression pacts between the two ethnic communities during riots in Osh city. However, such pacts can be meaningless without effective self-policing. Both parties must guarantee non-aggression and punishment of culprits. The next section will discuss everyday self-policing and sanctions.

## Everyday mediation and self-policing in Uzgen context

The economic life of Uzgen depends to great extent on its bazaar. Arable land in Uzgen's surroundings is insufficent for everyone. In fact, not more than 20 per cent of its residents possess land. The rest make their living in the bazaar. Interethnic quotidian interactions take place there. It is the center of trading transactions and business activity. Local Uzbek traders are interested in meat and farming supplies from

Kyrgyz villages. Kyrgyz rural visitors – being the main customers in dining places – provide most of the revenue to cafes and canteens in the bazaar (the lion's share of cafes is understandably concentrated in the bazaar area). For Kyrgyz rural residents, the Uzgen bazaar is also of crucial importance. On the other hand, the bazaar is also a place where brawls between Kyrgyz customers and Uzbek traders or drivers in traffic incidents increase intercommunal tensions since most of these fights acquire ethnic framing. Nevertheless, despite tensions brawls have never turned into intercommunal riots and rarely grow into larger fights with on-the-spot communal mobilization. Sometimes Kyrgyz rural visitors communicate aggressively with Uzbek traders. In other instances, Kyrgyz customers – especially young males – refuse to pay for their lunch in a café owned by Uzbeks arguing that the latter already enjoy their life on 'Kyrgyz soil'. Past interactions have taught Uzbek traders to communicate carefully with aggressive customers. As a rule, such tense situations are mediated by *aksakals* or middle-aged people on the spot. At the same manner, the Kyrgyz who are dependent on the bazaar in Uzgen are interested in good or at least normal and neutral relations with local Uzbeks.[42]

Another source of tension are the fights between local young Uzbeks and Kyrgyz students studying in the Uzgen branch of the Osh State Technical University (OSTU) and the Medical College. Both Uzbek and Kyrgyz students are enrolled in these higher educational institutions. Whereas practically all Uzbek students are local urban residents, the Kyrgyz come from villages of the Uzgen *raion* and sometimes even from more remote places. The tensions arise from issues such as financial extortion among students. Some Kyrgyz students would like to force their Uzbek fellows to speak Kyrgyz. Spiral retaliation dynamics that involve groups of youngsters divided along ethnic lines are also common. It is worth to noting that not all fights among students are between ethnic groups. Kyrgyz students fight also among themselves, especially if they do not know each other. Resonant fights among Uzbeks are less frequent as they can entail intervention by neighborhood leaders and subsequent sanctions for anti-social behavior.

While Kyrgyz students from remote places live in university dormitories, those from neighboring villages come to the town everyday by bus or shared taxi. Many of them establish good or neutral relations with their Uzbek classmates. Bakai, a former Kyrgyz student at the Uzgen branch of the Osh State Technical

[42] There is asymmetric knowledge about each other between the two communities. In the bazaar, Kyrgyz are visitors and it is not even clear from which village they come, whereas Uzbeks are locals, and they are dependent on Kyrgyz customers. Therefore, the costs of violent behavior are greater for Uzbeks, as they can be easily identified for retaliation as they have always the same trading slots in the bazaar. Therefore, Uzbek leaders place great emphasis on developing ties with Kyrgyz *aksakals* who can conduct in-group policing although it is not easy since violators must be identified in order to be punished.

University (OSTU), noted that fights between Kyrgyz students and Uzbeks were not so frequent. More frequently, fights happened between Uzbeks and rural Kyrgyz youths who were rare visitors in the town:

> We didn't fight with Uzbeks much because we visited it [Uzgen] quite often. But the youths from villages who visited [Uzgen] infrequently fought with Uzbeks. … Kyrgyz also fought among themselves [in Uzgen], mainly those, who didn't know each other.

It is clear from this excerpt that quotidian links sometimes mitigate conflicts among young people. According to Bakai, before coming to Uzgen for his university study he could not distinguish among local Uzbeks. They all seemed to him to be both the same and very alien. Later, when he started communicating with young Uzbeks he managed to identify "those who were good from those who were bad". Bakai even had couple of friends among his Uzbek classmates whom he visited at their houses, whereas rural youngsters who did not have acquaintances and quotidian knowledge about local people felt alienation. In general, those young Uzbeks and Kyrgyz who mutually interact on daily basis within university and other frameworks have developed neutral relations and even some patterns of self-policing. The relations between them may be not warm but are, at least, not openly hostile.

On the other hand, non-enrolled young Uzbeks and rural youths from remote places constitute another spectrum of relations. These two groups have little or no experience of intercommunal engagement. For young Uzbeks who do not study at university and do not work at the bazaar, there is no common space in the form of sport clubs, youth associations, and recreational centers where they could establish links with their Kyrgyz counterparts in this Uzbek dominated town. Similarly, young people who come to the town on rare occasions from homogenous Kyrgyz rural environment do not have skills of intercultural communication. They are not constrained by local norms and rules either. They do not have any ties with local people. The conflicts occur on group level. Uzbeks rob and beat rural Kyrgyz who stay late in the town having missed their bus. Then, the Kyrgyz returns to the town with reinforcements, basically his peers. They are trying to take revenge but being not able to identify their direct offenders they start bothering and harassing other young Uzbeks. The same occurs when rural Kyrgyz come to the town to celebrate during festive days. As the town park is the only place with any space for entertainment, there is high chance that two groups of young people will brawl. However, serious group fights are rare as older people of both nationalities try to stop youngsters of their respective ethnic groups. In this case, the self-policing is effective if older men are able to identify youngsters being, for example, from the same village or *mahalla*. If mediation is not successful, the police intervene (interview with Bakai, August 2012, Bishkek).

Ethnic separation is visible even at secondary school. There are eight secondary schools in the town. Of them, the language of instruction in one is Russian, another is Kyrgyz, and the rest in the Uzbek language. Probably except for the Kyrgyz school, the Uzbek language otherwise dominates in the rest of the schools. Schooling decisions of parents are usually made along ethno-linguistic lines. Those few Uzbeks who still live in some neighboring villages go to the town every day to study in Uzbek schools. In the past, they would not mind studying at Kyrgyz schools in their villages. The only school activities that facilitate intercommunal integration occur in a few scattered classes and among singing and dancing groups.

Lack of intercommunal and civic links in the town also contribute to economic inefficiency/difficulties. As mentioned, the arable land around Uzgen is sufficient only for small part of the town's population. Only about 20 per cent of the Uzgen residents have farming plots (according to an NGO report, 23000 out of 50000 Uzgen people have plots. The others have to rent land in Kyrgyz villages). The rest of the population is totally dependent on trade in the bazaar. However, some amount of arable land is available in Kyrgyz villages. Because of tensions and weak interethnic ties, Uzbeks cannot go (or afraid of going) to Kyrgyz villages to rent available land for farming. Some Uzbeks who tried to farm lands in Kyrgyz villages were eventually beaten or harassed by local youths.

However, this does not mean that economic cooperation is not possible. The main problem is absence of trust and quotidian and civic (associational) links between people of two communities. Those Uzbeks who succeeded in establishing such links with their rural Kyrgyz fellows have had no problems with renting land and farming in Kyrgyz environment. Ahmat is a mediator and community leader but also a successful farmer. Speaking excellently three languages – Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Russian – helped him to develop personal intercommunal contacts in various settings. He has good links with the Kyrgyz from neighboring villages as well as good connections with Kyrgyz leaders in Osh and Jalalabat. He developed and maintained these networks while working in the Uzgen town administration. He is also a member of the association of Afghan veterans. Through these networks, Ahmat communicated with Osh and Jalalabat during the tense days of ethnic riots and managed to initiate the evacuation of students from Uzgen who studied in Osh universities. In the same way, he negotiates with Kyrgyz villages to rent available farming plots. His ties with influential people in Kyrgyz villages provide him personal protection and warranty that his harvest will be safe. His rich personal social capital makes him mobile and provides him access to resources including those in the hands of Kyrgyz communities. In a segregated society, to have interethnic social capital highly increases opportunities for economic prosperity and personal safety. Like Ahmat,

Hamza also managed to build trustful relations with Kyrgyz communities in villages adjacent to his *mahalla*:

> Q: When you went to the Kyrgyz village did the [Kyrgyz] youth have aggressive attitudes towards you?
>
> A: No, no! Do you know why? Because I have been working at this position [*kvartkom*] for 19 years already. They all know me because I am present at any ceremony and activity. They know me as a head of neighborhoods committee. Everyone knows me. There were no aggression and threats against me.
>
> Q: Even in neighboring villages all youngsters know you, right?
>
> A: Yes, everyone knows me and I know them for long time. Everything depends on a personality. You know, we cultivate rice in that village and we rent land from the Kyrgyz. Because relatively to us urban people, they have plenty of land in their villages. I rented their surplus of land, about one hectare, for three years. Sometimes my youngest son would go in the summer time at 11 or 12 to their villages and stay there even in the deep night. He passes through these two villages on bike or on foot. Indeed, even though 100% Kyrgyz live no one has touched my son; no one! Everyone [in the two Kyrgyz villages] knows and helps him. They always call him by his name "Daniyar, Daniyar!" And when the rice ripened they even helped him to reap the harvest. So, I think to create friendship, an individual has to behave kindly and then he will receive kindness reciprocally.

Thanks to his links with the Kyrgyz community from the neighboring village that he has built through professional activities and mostly through his intercommunal diplomacy, Hamza was able, without any difficulties, to rent land and cultivate rice in arable territories owned by the Kyrgyz village community. His son has had no problems with accessing Kyrgyz villages. More than that, he has personal protection and guarantees of his harvest's safety from local Kyrgyz the community. He has never been attacked or threatened by local Kyrgyz youngsters. From time to time, the Kyrgyz community helps him to manage with reaping his crop harvest. Unfortunately, the majority of ordinary Uzbeks in Uzgen cannot rent and grow crops in Kyrgyz villages because they do not have personal links with Kyrgyz community and people. In this situation, when only 20 percent of Uzgen residents have land plots, this creates economic difficulties and interethnic tensions. It also shows very weak interethnic civic engagement in Uzgen. Strong interethnic quotidian links, which Ahmat and Hamza enjoy, are rather an exception. Ahmat and Hamza managed to develop good relations with the Kyrgyz community through personal engagement. Their professional experiences have facilitated such contacts. For instance, Ahmat has many Kyrgyz friends and useful contacts through his associational links in the veteran's organization and his previous professional networks.

However, not all *kvartkoms* in Uzgen managed to establish trustful intercommunal relations and cooperation with Kyrgyz village communities. Some *mahallas* that are adjacent to Kyrgyz villages seek to build and maintain trustful and cooperative relations with Kyrgyz village leaders. The *kvartkoms* of *mahallas* that are in internal parts of the town, especially around the bazaar area, do not have boundaries

with Kyrgyz villages. Their main efforts are aimed at policing their own communities and mediation of spillover effects deriving from the bazaar. In the daytime, there are many conflicts between Uzbeks working in the bazaar and Kyrgyz visitors coming from rural areas. In the nighttime, they concentrate on mediating drunk fights between local Uzbeks and Kyrgyz youths coming or passing through Uzgen.

> Q: Do other *kvartkoms* act like you?
>
> A: No, not all of them. Uch-Dobo, for example, also builds relations but there are some non-neighboring [with Kyrgyz villages] *mahallas*. They don't have such relations with the Kyrgyz. But sometimes these [relations] happens in a tough way when there is a brawl at night. Sometimes youngsters of Kyrgyz nationality from Osh come by taxi. Sometimes they come on foot and then fights happen. Then, we – *aksakals* – decide who is to blame on the spot. In order to avoid such tensions in the future we work and resolve such disorderly incidents. There are both from our side and from their side, although they are few but there are some disorderly villains.
>
> Q: Does it take place in the center of the town?
>
> A: No, not only. They [trouble makers] strive to arrange fights outside the town. But I did tell you Joldon that no one has ever touched my son. In general, when our land plots are in their lands and someone decides to overnight in the field, their ill-mannered youths beat our Uzbeks. There are such incidents.
>
> Q: Do they beat renter-farmers?
>
> A: Yes, those who have their land share there [in Kyrgyz villages?]. We suffer because of such … [ill-mannered youths].

The below interview quotation show the methods and negative sanctions which Hamza utilizes in in-group policing. The quotation gives illustrations of self-policing during the riots in 2010 and also in everyday life.

> Q: Some have relatives in Osh and some hothead youths want to go to Osh [in those riotous days]. Did you have such cases?
>
> A: Of course, there were. There were such cases in this neighboring teahouse, for example. Young people wanted to go to Osh. They said, "There is a massacre in Osh. They are killing all Uzbeks. We have to help them [Uzbeks]". And I said, "Where does it come from? Where do you know it from? If you want, you go and help yourself. Don't organize others. Don't panic yourself, [your claims] are not well-grounded". This was at that time [during riots] … it was difficult. Now I will tell you honestly. When we organized a feast, and slaughtered a sheep some ill-mannered youths asked me: "Are you going to invite that Kyrgyz here?" [with a negative tone]. I said, "Is it prohibited? Are you going to make weather here? [meaning: are you going to give me orders?]. There is state and there are laws". To such [pricks] you should give immediate tough response on the spot. They want to grandstand in public. They want to present themselves as if they were [patriotic] supporters of the nation [ethnic Uzbek community].
>
> Q: When you intervene do they listen to you?
>
> A: Yes, but sometimes they behave aggressively. But in general, they listen because I have my own team that understands and supports me. Anyway, they [people in the team] are not many but anyway superiority and advantage will be on my side. At worst, I have the higher-ups. … In 1990, there were events [riots]. All houses in Uzgen were burned. There were killings in Uzgen. Both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz died. There was no single Kyrgyz left in Uzgen. Everyone abandoned their houses and fled to their native villages. And then, the head of provincial council and Zafar [head of department in Osh provincial administration], who later was a minister of Labor and Social Development under Akaev [first president of Kyrgyzstan] arrived, both Uzbeks by nationality. They arrived and asked "what to do now, Hamza?". The head [of district] personally came and all the people gathered. Then they [people] say, "We don't have to let the Kyrgyz come back here! The Kyrgyz should be killed! They don't have to live here!". But higher-ups said "We have to reconcile. With this [violence]

> we don't solve anything, Hamza. We have to bring the youngsters up. We have to convince them". This is really the right way.
>
> Q: You work with the population. There are different people – mainly good people but also violators who don't behave according to [social] rules. How do you sort them out?
>
> A: Recently, many have started praying. The main policing we conduct through mosques. We live compactly after all. Almost everyone goes to the mosque, 90 per cent of the male population. If he made a violation today, we immediately gather the next morning right after the morning prayer and we discuss that issue. We warn the violator "if you repeat the violation, then we won't attend any of your family events. Live as you wish. If you want to adjust everything for yourself and violate rules and don't obey, then live on your own account (ostracism)." This gives immediate effect.
>
> Q: And how do you deal with young violators?
>
> A: I warn them. I have four district police inspectors. In my quarters, I conduct preventive measures in the presence of district police officers. We require [a young violator] to write a letter of explanation. Why? Because they [police officers] are a state organ. When they are present in their uniforms, they [violators] become more sensible and then behave well afterwards.

From these interview excerpts, it is clear that in policing their communities, leader-mediators rely heavily on negative and positive communal sanctions. Resting upon their traditional and administrative authority, mediators in Uzgen have been able to impose strong sanctions on violators of social norms in everyday community policing. During ethnic riots, they could threaten with sanctions any challengers who were instigating potential anti-social behavior. They use the mosque as a convenient public place to discuss internal communal issues. It is a convenient place because in highly religious Uzgen, prayers gather practically the entire community of male residents. When violators are faced with the threat of communal sanctions in front of the whole community, this gives a considerable effect in a traditional society with strong social norms. In a way, standing in front of the public and listening to reprimands is already a strong sanction. They are ashamed in front of their neighbors, relatives, and friends. Ostracism from the community, even temporarily, is even stricter punishment. Social life in an Uzbek *mahalla* implies close social communication and strong reciprocity within the neighborhood community. A violator loses his/her reputation and is deprived of social communication, reciprocity, and partly social status. In extreme cases, violators can be residentially expelled from the community.

However, *aksakals* do not always have this comfortable support of their community after the prayer. Sometimes they must confront violators in other environments. Therefore, they enforce their sanctions or orders through middle-aged men who in turn can enforce physical strength or threat of physical punishment on violators. In other circumstances, *kvartkoms* can involve a court of elders, higher-ups or district police officers to threaten or actually impose administrative sanctions on violators. Administrative sanctions are the last means in in-group policing and, usually, social norms based sanctions or a threat of sanctions are enough to discipline culprits.

Uzgen was the place where the religious mediating influence for policing communities during riots was the strongest when compared with other locations. Imams of Uzgen, Myrza-Ake, and Kurshab closely cooperated with the mediators' team. Practically all my respondents from mediator groups emphasized the important role of imams from Myrza-Ake, Kurshab, and even Kara Kulja in policing Kyrgyz communities from their respective villages. Obviously, the Uzgen imams have longstanding strong influence on their religious constituencies. Both Kyrgyz and Uzbek imams used religious rhetoric about the Muslimness of both communities. In their sermons and mediation, they provided several hadith inducing peaceful relations among Muslims. In those days, imams kept many young believers in mosques reading the Koran and praying. This allowed some youngsters to be kept away from going to fight their peers from the other community and to attract their attention to religious matters.

The success of religious mediation can be partly explained by the strong and sometimes extreme religiosity (by Kyrgyzstan's standards) of the Uzgen population. In general, the level of religiosity has sharply risen among Uzbeks since the collapse of the Soviet state. However, in Uzgen the pace was much faster than in other towns. When I first visited the southern region in the beginning of the 2000s, the wearing by some women of the niqab, a Muslim religious veil which fully covers a woman's body except for a hole for the eyes in Uzgen made an impression on me. In those days, even more moderate hijab was not very often seen in the streets of other towns. According to one of the local mediators, a part of problem of sharply rising religiosity is a great lack of civic associations and civic life. The youth in Uzgen (as in many other locations in Kyrgyzstan) have nowhere to go for entertainment and self-realization. There are practically no clubs, modern trade centers, educational resources, and resort places which their fellows in Bishkek enjoy. Many youngsters go to mosques and imams to find answers to their questions.

The town is divided along *jamaats* – religious communities. Usually *jamaats* overlap with the boundaries of neighborhoods. The center of each *jamaat* is a local mosque led by an imam. There are 33 mosques (or more than hundred mosques according to another respondent) in Uzgen. Each *jamaat* follows instructions and a religious doctrine of local imams. Recently, *jamaats* have started competing among each other. The competition between *jamaats* derives from personal rivalries of imams who compete and argue about their religious rightness and their level of theological knowledge. As a result, their religious constituencies unwittingly get involved in these disputes and rivalries. Some imams adhere to very strict and conservative interpretation of Muslim religion. They prescribe their constituencies some religious rules of ethical conduct. All weddings and other festivities in Uzgen are conducted without alcoholic beverages. In recent years, this has become common phenomenon across virtually all Uzbek communities in southern

Kyrgyzstan. However, religious piety among some communities in Uzgen gets as far as not attending weddings if marriage ceremonies and banquets are going to be videotaped. *Jamaats* impose many restrictions on the freedom of individuals. Those who violate norms of *jamaats* risk community sanctions with all the related consequences.

After the 2010 events, the authority of imams has risen even higher. Religious mediation proved to be an effective tool in self-policing. Consequently, religious leaders were able to impose new constraints. Vodka was prohibited for sale in any place in Uzgen except the central bazaar area and along the Bishkek–Osh highway. In the evenings and nighttime, the sale of vodka and other strong alcoholic drinks is prohibited at all. This is in strong contrast to other towns and villages in Kyrgyzstan. A small pavilion in central Uzgen which in the past used to offer vodka at night to customers was forced to close. Religious activists pressured the owner through community leaders.

## Conclusion

This chapter has explained how, in the atmosphere of broken ethnic relations, pacts between Uzbek leaders of Uzgen and Kyrgyz leaders from Kyrgyz villages were possible to negotiate in the first place. It has demonstrated that the community leaders built pacts on their existing trustful relations. Trust between Kyrgyz and Uzbek community leaders originates from previous professional and quotidian links. The quotidian links at the community leaders' level are maintained through shared feasts – *dastorkons* – and celebrations, random encounters in teahouses, professional contacts, and quotidian knowledge about each other. In some instances, the links between leaders are maintained deliberately. Community leaders from both sides invite their counterparts as honored guests to official events, funerals, and sometimes to community and/or family celebrations. In other cases, contacts and knowledge about each other are sustained through random and even accidental encounters in teahouses, the bazaar, and other public places. To be sure, not all leaders in Uzgen are engaged in intercommunal communication but the most prominent and influential of them certainly do.

It has also demonstrated that contacts between ordinary Uzbek residents of Uzgen and Kyrgyz villagers from neighboring and especially from mountainous villages of Kara-Kulja are spontaneous and limited to quotidian interactions in the Uzgen bazaar. Associational intercommunal links are virtually absent due to weak development of civic life in Uzgen. Community service types of activities are mainly intended for intracommunal consumption. Residential and spatial segregation between the two ethnic communities

also does not contribute to the development of strong intercommunal civic life. This segregated environment implies that interethnic peace is mostly sustained through active contacts between community leaders and their policing of respective ethnic and neighborhood communities. In such circumstances, in-group policing becomes essential for keeping peaceful relations between local Uzbeks and Kyrgyz.

The aim of the chapter was to explain how social norms and intra-ethnic policing accounts for the success and failure of informal brokerage/mediation and interethnic cooperation in Uzgen. It underlines conditions for peaceful intercommunal cooperation in ethnically-segregated traditional societies, even under broken interethnic relations. In the absence of strong civil society and associational type of interethnic civic engagement which can mediate conflicts between people of different ethnic groups, intra-ethnic self-policing and intercommunal non-aggression pacts between community leaders were important to preserve peace in Uzgen.

These findings from Uzgen can be juxtaposed with the situation in Osh. Leaders in several segregated neighborhoods in Osh, as presented by examples in the chapters 6 and 7, employed the same strategies as used by ethnic mediators in the locality of Uzgen. It is also evident that not all neighborhoods in Osh managed to implement those strategies or even when implemented, in several cases, in-group policing and negotiations with out-group leaders did not result in peaceful outcomes. Some reasons have already been identified in the previous chapters. However, one important distinction between Osh and Uzgen is that in the latter local leaders conducted self-policing and negotiated pacts at centralized level and in a highly-coordinated fashion. Structural conditions such as the smaller size of the town, ethnically and socially more homogenous population, and strategically-advantageous spatial location between two rivers helped the Uzgen leaders to implement more efficient control over the town and coordinate in-group policing activities and negotiations with out-group leaders. Being surrounded by Kyrgyz villages and learning lessons from the horrible experience of intercommunal violence in 1990, Uzbek leaders of Uzgen over time developed a careful strategy of everyday in-group policing and maintained good relations with leaders of Kyrgyz villages. When an outbreak of violence in Osh triggered the intercommunal violence between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz, Uzgen leaders re-activated their contacts and negotiated non-aggression pacts with the Kyrgyz village elites.  Simultaneously, they took advantage of the local landscape by establishing roadblocks on the river bridges to prevent unexpected incursions. This strategy suggests a striking resemblance with the situation in Turan district in Osh discussed in the previous chapter, where ethnic leaders used diverse strategy combining in-group policing, negotiations, and strategic adaptation

of the built and natural environment for defense purposes. However, the centralized approach at the town-level evident in Uzgen was absent in Osh and Jalalabat. This can explain why the entire town of Uzgen escaped the raging intercommunal violence.

# Chapter 9. Jalalabat: the variation in neighborhoods' responses to security dilemma. Interethnic alliances and preemptive aggression

This chapter analyzes the dynamics of ethnic violence in the city of Jalalabat, an administrative center of the Jalalabat oblast. In 2010, it was the second most violent locality after Osh. The town's population is more than 100 thousand but this does not include 20–30 thousand internal economic migrants living in the city unregistered. Additionally, 30–50 thousand people who, according to an official in the provincial administration, come and go from the rural districts to Jalalabat on an everyday basis for business, shopping, employment, and administration and bureaucracy-related issues. They come mainly from the villages of the Suzak rural district but also from the Bazar-Korgon and Nooken *raions*.

Administratively the city is divided into four administrative units, or districts – Sputnik, Aitmatov, Kurmanbek, and Dostuk – each comprising around 25–35 thousand residents. The urban landscape visibly divides the city into three distinct parts: 1) the center dominated by individual unit house-type of neighborhoods with few apartment buildings of between two and five stories dispersed across those neighborhoods; 2) the Sputnik district with its high concentration of apartment buildings of between four and six stories, and; 3) suburban villages and residential areas officially not part of the city but socially and economically integrated in the city's urban life. Few villages in the suburban rural districts are ethnically mixed; most are thus either predominantly Uzbek or Kyrgyz by ethnic composition. Jalalabat is surrounded by the Kyrgyz and Uzbek villages of Suzak *raion*. The Kyrgyz villages are chiefly located in the mountainous and hilly landscape, with a few in the valley. The Uzbek villages are in the valley, mainly along the Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan borders.

The violence diffused to Jalalabat on the second day of violence in Osh. The scenario of riots was like that seen in Osh and which proceeded in two stages, as follows. The first stage was violent mobilization of Uzbeks in Jalalabat and Suzak and attacks on Kyrgyz. This was followed by a second stage characterized by countermobilization of rural Kyrgyz from the mountainous villages and Jalalabat surroundings followed by clustered mass arson of Uzbek houses in the town.

The following section presents the chronology of violence in Jalalabat. It shows that news and rumors about the violence in Osh provoked ethnic fears, intercommunal distrust, and uncertainty. However, as in Osh, neighborhoods in Jalalabat produced divergent responses to the similar threat. Growing mobilization of ethnic communities produced a security dilemma and triggered preemptive attacks in some neighborhoods, while in the others the response to uncertainty was intercommunal non-aggression pacts

in segregated areas and interethnic alliances based on territorial solidarity in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods. The second section outlines this notable variation in neighborhood response by presenting the cases of four neighborhoods. Furthermore, it discusses the impact of spatial factors on the dynamics and distribution of violence in Jalalabat. The concluding section summarizes the findings of this chapter and compares outcomes in four neighborhoods.

## Chronology of violence in Jalalabat

One of the main problems in reconstructing violent events in Jalalabat is that riots in this town did not receive close attention from investigative commissions which were mainly focused on investigating violence in Osh. Therefore, short reconstruction of events is based on witness interviews (two police officers, a local journalist, an NGO leader, an official in provincial administration), short mentions in investigative reports and mass media and informal conversations with local residents.

*11 June*

On the morning of 11 June it was calm but in the afternoon the streets suddenly became deserted upon arrival of news and rumors about the violence in Osh. Some Uzbeks began to leave their houses and to flee Jalalabat and refugees from Osh started arriving in the town. Various rumors spread among both ethnic communities. A group of 100–300 Kyrgyz gathered at the roundabout between Jalalabat and Suzak village while Uzbeks gathered at another roundabout located on the Bishkek–Osh road. Around 500 Uzbeks gathered in Suzak to discuss the situation in Osh. They decided to organize the barricading of streets at the entrances to Suzak village and to organize self-defense groups. Some wanted to go to Osh to help their ethnic fellows. Uzbek communities in Jalalabat initiated evacuation of women and children to Uzbekistan's border (Joint Working Group 2012). An atmosphere of fear and panic emerged in Jalalabat fueled by rumors and horrible news from Osh. The streets of Jalalabat became deserted.

At 2pm, a Kyrgyz journalist tried to evacuate his family from Suzak village, which was ethnically dominated by Uzbeks. He could not get into the village as shuttles, taxi, and regular cars had already stopped their trips to Suzak fearing attacks or possible provocations. His family managed to escape the village, when local Uzbeks started constructing barricades at the entrance streets, and to go to Sputnik, a Kyrgyz neighborhood in Jalalabat. The journalist also managed to hail a passing car at the Suzak roundabout.

When the car was passing near the University of Peoples' Friendship (hereafter UDN)[43] towards the town at very high speed, there was already a large, aggressive Uzbek crowd armed with metal bars and sticks. The crowd had already crashed down several cars. At the same time, some Kyrgyz from mountainous villages came down to the town's hippodrome. According to a police officer, around 500 Kyrgyz gathered on the central square after hearing news that Uzbeks were shooting and killing Kyrgyz motorists and passengers on the Bishkek–Osh highway near the Sanpa cotton factory located close to Suzak village and to the west of Jalalabat. However, the mobilization was still weak and by the evening the Kyrgyz crowd in the square dispersed (interview with a police officer, October 2013).

*12 June*

The next morning, 12 June, a group of about 500–600 Kyrgyz moved from central Jalalabat towards Suzak village. On their way to Suzak, the Kyrgyz came upon a large Uzbek crowd of 3000–5000, who had gathered around UDN which is located along the road connecting Jalalabat and Suzak. On the same day, near the Sanpa cotton factory a group of Uzbeks from Suzak set a trap for passing cars along the Bishkek–Osh highway. They poured oil on the hill slope, so that cars going uphill would slow down. Uzbeks at the Sanpa factory then shot and killed Kyrgyz drivers and passengers. Dozens were severely beaten and some taken hostage. Attackers released non-Kyrgyz passengers. "An uncontrolled crowd of 2000 Uzbeks" from Suzak participated in these mass violent disorders at Sanpa (interview with an Uzbek community leader, Suzak, October 2013). Later, a dozen of them were sentenced for the organization of the trap, hostage-taking, and shooting. Major international and domestic investigative missions do not report about this incident. The KIC mission reports about the Sanpa incident in a passive voice and without specification of details: "On 12 June, Uzbek men at a barricade in Suzak shot at, stopped and burnt passing cars. Kyrgyz in those cars were killed" (KIC 2011, 36). According to a report of the Joint Working Group of security and law enforcement offices, the number of victims at Sanpa were 10 killed, 2 missing, and more than 30 wounded (Joint Working Group 2012). According to the local police and a Kyrgyz journalist, there were 19 killed and 78 wounded. Among the victims, there were 2 dead and 19 wounded police officers (interviews with a police officer and a journalist, Jalalabat, October 2013). Due to lack of forces and the violent events taking place in Jalalabat, the police were unable to reach Sanpa on 12 and 13 June. On 14 June, they finally reached the place, unblocked and cleaned the road (interview with high-rank police officer, Jalalabat, October 2013). The killings at Sanpa had a negative escalating effect on dynamics on riots in Jalalabat.

[43] UDN was a mainly Uzbek university founded by Kadyrjan Batyrov, an informal leader of the Jalalabat Uzbek community. He used the territory of the university as a focal point for ethnic mobilization.

They fueled aggressive attitudes and mobilization among the Kyrgyz rural population, especially those who gathered at the hippodrome.

At approximately the same time, a large group of armed Uzbeks attacked the provincial police headquarters from the side of the VLKSM park in the central part of the city. A deputy head of the provincial police was sitting in his office on the ground floor when he observed several armed Uzbek men through his window running next to his office. He jumped out of his chair and rushed to his lock box where he kept his automatic weapon. He called the police officers to arms. The police left the building and moved towards the park to face attackers but fell into a trap. Surrounded by Uzbeks who were hiding in the park and on the roofs of some houses in the adjacent Uzbek *mahalla*, the police officers came under heavy fire. In this gunfire exchange, the police lost two officers and a further sixteen were wounded. After this, the police ran back into the building of the police headquarters. At that moment, special police troops (SOBR) arrived to aid the trapped police. Some of the Uzbek attackers fled towards Uzbek Kojo *mahalla* in Tash Bulak, the north-eastern part of the town, and the other part of attackers continued to keep their positions in the Uzbek *mahalla* adjacent to the park and the central mosque firing at the police from rifles and small-bore guns. According to the same police officer, the police managed to detain two of the attackers in possession of firearms, which had allegedly been distributed at the UDN.

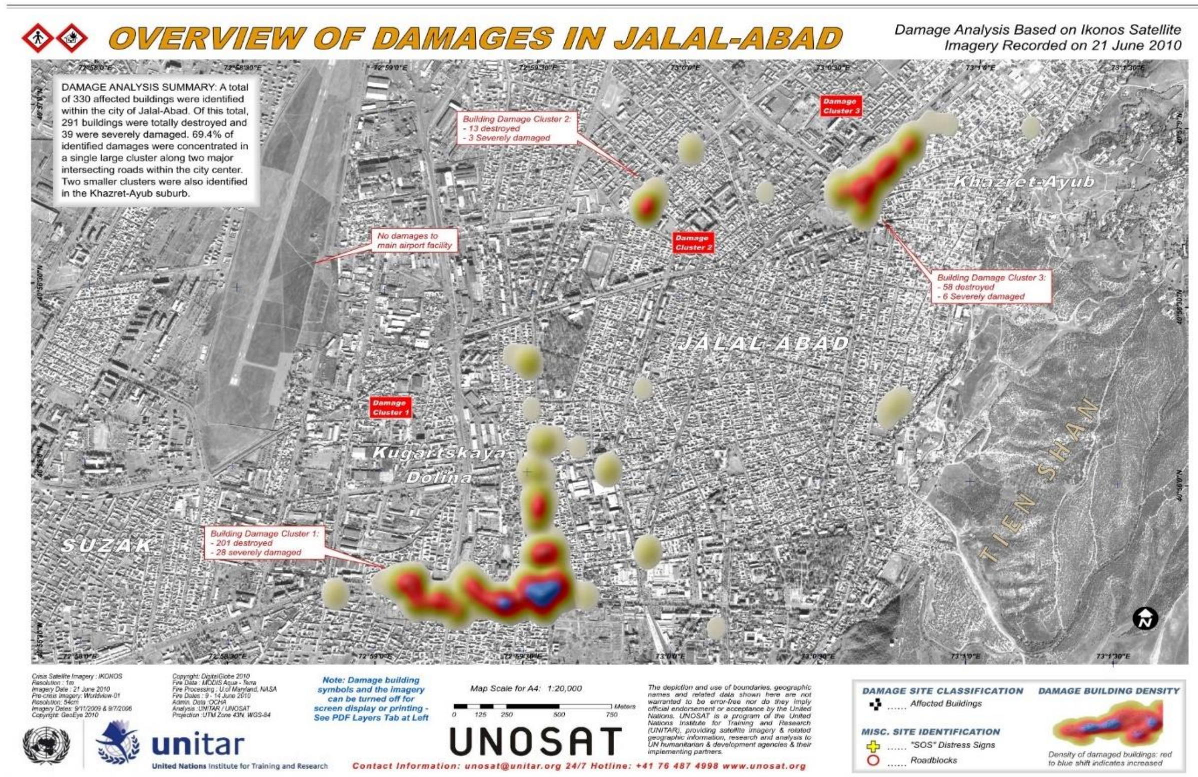
During the next days, the Central Provincial Police Headquarters underwent further attacks, but this time by Kyrgyz participants in riots. The first Kyrgyz crowd captured Tashiev, a prominent politician from ousted President Bakiev's inner circle, demanding firearms. Being a local strongman in Jalalabat he was unsuccessfully trying to mediate the crowd. Later the same group brought him on an APC towards Suzak village where he managed to convince the Kyrgyz not to attack the village. Of other Kyrgyz groups, which attacked the Central Provincial Police Headquarters, one was headed by Bakiev's brother Ahmat and another was led by a criminal gang. Both groups demanded weapons but were refused (interview with a high-rank police officer, Jalalabat, October 2013). According to another police officer, he heard the trapped police officers' calls for help through police radio transmitter but was unable to help because his squad was also in difficult situation in Lenin Street.

> On 12 June Kyrgyz men assembled at the hippodrome and waited until afternoon. They did not see any representatives of the authorities or police. Then Kamchybek Tashiev, an opposition politician at the time, addressed those gathered, stating that he had negotiated peace with the Uzbeks and the men should go home. The crowd did not want to listen, as bodies of dead Kyrgyz killed by the Uzbeks were carried past them for burials. Women shouted at them to 'go and save Jalalabad.' The men grew agitated, and finally attacked Uzbek *mahallas* along Pushkin Street in the afternoon. (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 32).

A group of Kyrgyz from the villages of upper Suzak gathered at the town's hippodrome. A governor of Jalalabat province attempted to address the crowd but was beaten by people in the crowd. Tashiev, mentioned in the previous episode, tried to disperse the mob but news about killings of Kyrgyz at Sanpa and attacks on Kyrgyz near the UDN aggravated people in the crowd. They stopped listening to the politician and moved towards the city. The report prepared by some former members of the KIC mission describes the movement of Kyrgyz crowd from the hippodrome towards the city center:

> As they advanced, they were shot at from locations at the mosque, lyceum and the city hospital. Uzbeks fired hunting rifles, hiding behind KAMAZ lorries used to block the roads. Some Kyrgyz were wounded and taken to the hospital in Oktyabrskoe [village]. The Kyrgyz armed with sticks, retreated, but returned with firearms and shot back at the Uzbeks. The Kyrgyz crowd grew, although it lost several wounded and dead, and the Uzbeks started to retreat. Uzbek-owned shops were burned because of anger that the Uzbeks shot and the Kyrgyz could not respond, but now they at least could destroy their properties. Kyrgyz explained that if the Uzbeks did not shoot at them first, violence would not happen in Jalalabad (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 32–33).

Figure 9.1. Overview of property damage in Jalalabat. Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT




As this report shows the Kyrgyz crowd was attacked from Kojo *mahalla* in Tash Bulak district where the city hospital and Khazret–Ayub mosque are in close proximity. As some of my Kyrgyz respondents

indicated, the Kyrgyz crowd was making its way along Pushkin Street towards the UDN when they were attacked by Uzbeks from Tash Bulak. This gunfire attack made Tash Bulak a flashpoint of violence. Being unarmed, the Kyrgyz retreated, coming to conclusion that they could not resist the Uzbeks without first acquiring firearms. The Kyrgyz attacked a military garrison in Kokart, in the western outskirts of the city, and later the abovementioned provincial police building. They apprehended an APC and three Kalashnikov automatic rifles (Joint Working Group 2012). With this weapon, they returned to Tash Bulak and attacked the *mahalla*. The Kyrgyz burnt several dozen already deserted empty houses in the peripheral area of the *mahalla* but could not penetrate deep inside because of intensive gunfire exchange.

Another Kyrgyz group of 500–600 people, started moving towards Suzak village. Near the UDN, they came across a large Uzbek crowd of several thousand people. Uzbek rioters – all men – burned several buildings including Jalalabat TV, a customs outpost, and traffic police building, along with six Kyrgyz-owned cafes located along Suzak–Jalalabat road. The two crowds started stoning each other. A direct clash was prevented by 40 police troops who formed a thin line between two groups. Some time later, 20 special police troops were re-routed to the Sanpa factory. After some of the police left, a group of Uzbeks went out from the UDN building and adjacent *mahallas* and shot at the Kyrgyz, killing one or two of them. The Kyrgyz were forced out. The police also were attempting to persuade the Kyrgyz, in their own interests, to retreat. The remaining 20 police officers were forced out as well to Krasin Street. Youngsters of Uzbek nationality were aggressively springing from the narrow *mahalla* streets behind the police line. The police slowly retreated. The crowd was aiming to go to the city center but at that time an APC arrived and Uzbeks dispersed. It was already late evening (around 8–10pm). The police also sought refuge in the building of the town police as there were many aggressive groups roaming the city streets. On a radio transmitter, the heard calls for aid from the provincial police department, which was taking gunfire from Uzbek attackers, but were unable not help. Throughout the night, there were intensive gunfire exchanges between unidentified groups (interview with a police officer, Jalalabat, 2013).

*13 June*

The next day the Kyrgyz continued their attacks against *mahallas* in Tash Bulak and near the UDN. The advantage was now on the Kyrgyz side. The day before, Kyrgyz had captured some weapons by storming military garrisons in Chatkal, Toktogul, and Mailuu-Suu *raions*, all located in Jalalabat province. However, Uzbeks took active actions in different parts of the city. A Kyrgyz crowd tried to enter some ethnically-mixed blocks in Dostuk and Kurmanbek districts in the central part of the city but were rebuffed at barricades by local residents. The crowd then turned towards Tash Bulak. Other group of more than 1000-

2000 people attacked the UDN and adjacent *mahalla*s burning empty Uzbek houses along Krasin and Lenin Streets with the highest concentration at the intersection of Krasin and Lenin Streets where the UDN is located. This area became the largest cluster of property destruction in Jalalabat. This was a final blow to the Uzbek militant groups as the territory within and around UDN served as the basis for Uzbek mobilization. The destruction of UDN and the surrounding area signified the defeat of Uzbek mobilization. Although some combatant Uzbek groups still operated in the city, the general intergroup balance of power conclusively shifted towards Kyrgyz groups. The report by Matveeva and her collaborators describes the dynamics of violence on 13 June:

> On 13 June, the Uzbeks could no longer contain the Kyrgyz advance. Crowds moved in from two directions. The one equipped with an APC, moving along Pushkin Street, attacked Uzbek neighbourhood of Tash Bulak/Hodja [Kojo] mahalla. Uzbek armed groups operated throughout the city, clashing with the Kyrgyz. A crowd of rural Kyrgyz men besieged the police headquarters and the administration, demanding weapons and threatening to overpower the authorities. A tense standoff ensued, but the shots fired by the troops over the rioters' heads created a sobering impact. This opened the way for negotiations between informal leaders and the authorities, after which the Kyrgyz men agreed to disperse. Some did indeed go away, while others engaged in wanton destruction and looting. Sporadic fighting between Kyrgyz and Uzbek groups continued at several city locations on 14 June (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 33).

The same day police reinforcements arrived from Bishkek and the police took greater control over the city. The police managed to establish roadblocks at some streets and to send police troops to Sanpa on 14 June. Young Kyrgyz looted Uzbek houses but when police fired in the air they fled. Furthermore, on 14 June, a large Kyrgyz crowd of 7000–8000 mostly young people moved to attack Suzak village where they thought many radical Uzbek leaders were hiding. At the entrance to Suzak, Tashiev and other mediating community leaders convinced Kyrgyz not to attack the village.

From 12–15 June, the city streets were closed by barricades. One police officer that I spoke with wanted to go to the district of Sputnik but could not reach it till 14 June due to heavy fire fights in the city and road blocks built in many neighborhoods that substantially impaired transport communication and movement in the city. The troops came under fire in Uzbek *mahalla*s. The officer's family lived in an Uzbek *mahalla* near Sputnik. When riots started, they hid in a house of an Uzbek traffic police officer. When he and his troops managed to reach Sputnik in early morning of 14 June, his squad came under fire from a Kyrgyz group led by an APC and black BMW car that sought to attack the Uzbek *mahalla*.

How was it possible that a large crowd of several thousand stopped and agreed to disperse just in front of the entrance to Suzak? First, among many there were perceptions that the Uzbeks were heavily armed and well prepared to rebuff Kyrgyz attacks with firearms. These perceptions were founded on rumors, stereotypes, and also some concrete evidence. Rumors about Uzbeks arming themselves had been

circulating among Kyrgyz in Osh, Jalalabat, Uzgen, and other locations long before the 2010 riots. As various investigative reports indicate, many Kyrgyz believed that Uzbeks had started arming themselves after the 1990 interethnic riots. In May and in the beginning of June 2010, circulation of these rumors sharply increased along with increasing intercommunal tensions. Stereotypes about strong Uzbek communalism made the Kyrgyz believe that the arms distribution was taking place at communal level. When riots broke out in Jalalabat, the advantage was on the side of the Uzbeks as they used some firearms against unarmed Kyrgyz during first interethnic clashes in the city. This fact convinced Kyrgyz even more that Uzbeks had been preparing for riots (insurgency). According to a police officer, during interethnic clashes near the UDN on 12 June, the police was persuading Kyrgyz crowd not to attack Uzbek *mahalla* behind the UDN university by claiming that Uzbeks were heavily armed. The Kyrgyz participants in riots did not burn houses inside densely-populated Uzbek *mahallas*. They did not risk to advance in internal parts of *mahallas* out of fears being caught and exterminated by armed Uzbek self-defense groups.

Figure 9.2. The largest cluster of property damage in Jalalabat near UDN. Source: UNITAR/UNOSAT

Second, the Kyrgyz were aware that some Kyrgyz families remained in Uzbek *mahalla*s and particularly, in Suzak. Kyrgyz mediators emphasized this reason to stop youngsters from attacking Suzak village. The two excerpts below were taken from interviews with a Kyrgyz nationalist journalist and reveal perceptions and concerns among the Kyrgyz in the crowd.

> A: On 14 June, I observed movements of the [Kyrgyz] crowd. They wanted to go to Suzak and attempted to enter the village. But thanks to Tashiev – and I also participated – we managed to stop the crowd telling them that there was no need to enter Suzak. Why? Because, according to our information in Suzak they [local Uzbeks] were heavily armed and prepared. Then they would massacre our unarmed crowd. And after that, in turn, Kyrgyz [from villages] would rise with vengeful intentions and then the real massacre [of Uzbeks] would start. Thanks to Tashiev, we managed to stop it. At that point, riots in Jalalabat had stopped. It is not the authorities who stopped [violence] but wise Kyrgyz citizens. They stopped this slaughterhouse. I am a witness, I was among these people. But, of course, I did not participate in those riots. On 12 June, I didn't go to the streets. On 13 June, I went to the streets but I was fearful with my other fellows to join the crowds. We were on our own.
>
> This was a very dangerous moment. It was not so tough here as in Osh thanks to prudent Kyrgyz. Because Kyrgyz stopped each other. We told youngsters: "There is no need [to continue]. Uzbeks got what they deserved. Let's stop this. What's done is done". I myself was among numerous youths. I admonished them: "My family is taken hostage there [in Suzak]. If you go there, they [Uzbeks] will kill them". I repeated this in different ways and we managed to stop them.
>
> Q: Did not your family manage to get out from there?
>
> A: They did. Nevertheless, there were other families remaining as hostages. They gathered in one large house. If something happened they [Uzbeks] would finish them. They stayed there as hostages. First, we stopped [the Kyrgyz crowd] in order to save them [Kyrgyz hostages]. Second, we spared the lives of these young boys [in the Kyrgyz crowd]. We had the following information, real or false: They [Uzbeks in Suzak] were armed. They received weapons from Uzbekistan. They had made accurately all reconnaissance in advance. They were waiting for us correctly selecting all firing standpoints. If our boys approached, they [Uzbeks] would massacre them. And when we received such information, we tried to stop them to avoid big, big bloodshed. That day our boys would get massacred and this would not stop like this. All Kyrgyz would mobilize, gather, and enter Suzak and then severe massacre would start. That would bring serious consequences. Our state would disappear. Therefore, at this point we had to think with cold blood.

As soon as riots broke in the town, many neighborhoods erected barricades in fears of attacks from the other side. This was especially characteristic of the neighborhoods with densely-clustered individual housing units. Almost the whole central zone of the town was barricaded, making free movement across the neighborhoods extremely difficult. Barricades and road blocks not only paralyzed mobility of the police, fire fighters, and ambulances but they also constrained movement of rioting crowds. In such situation, barricading the main streets became counterproductive for those local self-defense groups who wanted to secure themselves by blocking central streets and avenues. Those barricades triggered outrage of Kyrgyz mobs as they considered them as an act of Uzbek hostility towards Kyrgyz. After demolishing barricades, furious crowds would attack neighboring houses. This particularly happened on Krasin (Kyrgyz Respublikasy) Street, which became a part of the largest cluster of mass arson in the town.

Beyond the city itself, several riots of smaller scale took place in various locations in Jalalabat province. The most violent riots broke out in Bazar-Korgon, a large village of more than 33 000 residents, most of them Uzbeks (85 per cent). On 12 June, "about three quarters of the women and children were evacuated and Uzbeks refused access to police. Indeed, Uzbeks set up roadblocks and conducted car checks" (KIC 2011, 36). On 13 June, several hundred Uzbeks blocked the Bishkek–Osh highway in order to hinder a

passage towards Osh for Kyrgyz coming from other areas. They threatened to explode a strategic highway bridge. When the police arrived on the spot to clear the road, the Uzbek crowd attacked police officers killing one and beating another seven. The assassination triggered Kyrgyz mobilization in surrounding mountainous villages. Around 3000 Kyrgyz gathered. After failed negotiations about opening of the road with Uzbek participants in riots, the crowd moved to Bazar–Korgon. On their way they burned 300 structures, of which 209 were houses. During these clashes 20 people were killed and approximately 100 wounded (Joint Working Group 2012). The report does not specify ethnic division among victims but probably most of them were Uzbeks. According to the UNOSAT report, there were 433 affected buildings, of them 401 totally destroyed (UNITAR/UNOSAT 2010).

In Suzak, local residents blocked the entrances to the village. Militant groups of Uzbeks dug trenches around a local police station (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 34). They besieged and attacked the police station which had before sent half of its contingent to Jalalabat. Attackers demanded firearms and release of Uzbek prisoners from jail. Local Kyrgyz families living in the village were in difficult and ambiguous situation. They could not leave the village and found themselves practically being hostages.

Minor riots occurred in Kerben, another town, an administrative center of the Aksy *raion*. On 12 June, "a Kyrgyz crowd demanded transport to Osh from the District administration and, when it was refused, attacked local Uzbek business" (KIC 2011, 36). Kyrgyz crowds attacked military garrisons in Chatkal, Toktogul, and Mailuu–Suu *raion*s. In Nooken *raion*, mixed Kyrgyz–Uzbek patrols secured order. In Shamaldy–Sai village, near Tash–Komur town, local Kyrgyz community prevented anti-Uzbek riots (interview with a local official).

## Divergent responses of the Jalalabat neighborhoods to the "emerging" anarchy

The sections below assess the divergent responses of four neighborhoods selected from each of Jalalabat's four districts. Each neighborhood displays a distinct response and conditions that shaped its response to the emerging ethnic violence and uncertainty.

### *The 1st quarter (the Aitmatov district, the south-eastern neighborhoods): a non-aggression pact with Kyrgyz villages*

Unlike in Uzgen, only few neighborhoods in Jalalabat relied on informal pacts with adjacent Kyrgyz or Uzbek villages. Among those few were Uzbek-dominated neighborhoods in the south-eastern part of the

town, in the Aitmatov district. They negotiated intercommunal cooperation with Kyrgyz villages of the Barpy rural district. Below is an example of one interethnic cooperation pact initiated by Kyrgyz leaders from Barpy which had positive implications for preserving peace and order in the mostly Uzbek neighborhood despite being negotiated among a very small number of community leaders. This pact shows that in some instances negotiations among few leaders could produce peaceful outcomes on the condition that the leaders were more or less in full control of their constituency and able to successfully police their neighborhood communities. This and some other non-aggression pacts in Osh city brokered by the Kyrgyz side also show that despite being in a less vulnerable position during this ethnic conflict (compared to many Uzbek neighborhoods that were under great threat), some Kyrgyz leaders took the initiative to preserve peace and rebuild trust between two ethnic communities. This goes against widely-portrayed image of Kyrgyz as aggressors in this conflict.

On 12 June, when violent mass disorders broke out in the streets of Jalalabat, neighborhoods in the south-eastern part of the city, in Aitmatov district, experienced different outcomes in terms of violence. A railway divides this district into two. Those neighborhoods located along Lenin Street near the UDN university were attacked by Kyrgyz rural groups. They were mostly Uzbek neighborhoods. Some youngsters from these neighborhoods participated in anti-Kyrgyz mobilization and riots. They chose a confrontational attitude, joining a crowd of several thousand Uzbeks that belonged to the clientelistic networks of Jalalabat Uzbek leader Batyrov (a zone of Batyrov's stronghold). They attacked and beat Kyrgyz passers-by. Armed groups from these networks attacked the central police headquarters killing two and wounding 19 police officers. Later they clashed with Kyrgyz group near the UDN killing 1 or 2 Kyrgyz. When a large Kyrgyz crowd came to take a revenge, the Kyrgyz retaliated against neighborhoods located near the UDN including those in the western part of Aitmatov district. According to a senior secretary of this district, in the territory of Aitmatov district, 43 houses were burned along Lenin Street and 10 houses along Nizami Street. Two residents got killed during riots (interview with a local official, Jalalabat, October 2013).

The eastern part of the district, composed of both ethnically-mixed and homogenous Uzbek neighborhoods, remained silent and peaceful. In the first day of riots, local community leaders set up a headquarters to monitor the situation. Two Kyrgyz men came to the headquarters from neighboring Kyrgyz villages of the Barpy rural district. They inquired about who was the head of the headquarters.

Makam, a local Uzbek community leader responded identifying himself as the head[44]. When he introduced himself the two Kyrgyz men recognized him by his name. They asked Makam not to block the old Jalalabat-Osh road which connected Kyrgyz villages in Barpy with Jalalabat. They gave Makam assurances of the security of his community. They explained that Barpy needed access to the town. The Kyrgyz warned that if the road was blocked they could not guarantee the security of the 1st quarter and the Aitmatov district in general. Blocking the road would trigger an accumulation of young people in front of barricades and in that case the Kyrgyz from Barpy could not guarantee that they would be able to deter youngsters from attacking Makam's neighborhood. Makam and his Kyrgyz guests exchanged their phone numbers. It turned out that the Kyrgyz men were heads of similar headquarters in Barpy. At the end, they suggested Makam to call them if youngsters from Barpy created problems in his neighborhood.

Problems emerged very soon. One young Uzbek resident of the 1st quarter was beaten by some unknown Kyrgyz. They hijacked his small Daewoo Porter truck. Makam called to the headquarters in Barpy informing them about the fact of this opportunistic behavior (from the Kyrgyz side). In two hours, the Kyrgyz headquarters in Barpy called him back notifying that the hijacked truck was found. The Kyrgyz returned the truck with apologies. On the next occasion, also during riots, the Kyrgyz from Barpy made a phone call to Makam seeking his assistance. Among the Kyrgyz in Barpy some rumors emerged about young Kyrgyz women being taken hostage by Uzbeks and held captive (and possibly sexually abused) in the basement of the Medical College in Kurmanbek district. The leaders of Barpy suggested Makam accompany them to the Medical College to check the plausibility of the rumors. In case they were stopped by Uzbeks, Makam had to talk to Uzbek self-defense groups and negotiate their passage through Uzbek dominated areas. Makam agreed to accompany the Kyrgyz but under one condition: the Kyrgyz had to guarantee his personal safety. Both parties agreed on terms of warranty and went towards the Medical College. When they were approaching the areas affected by riots near the Medical College, Makam and his Kyrgyz counterparts heard an intense gunfire exchange. The Kyrgyz decided that they could not guarantee Makam's safety and brought him back home. The above example clearly shows that Kyrgyz leaders from Barpy committed to their responsibility to keep Makam safe also because it was essential for keeping trust between two communities

[44] Makam is the head of the 1st quarter's neighborhood committee with around 1500 residents under his responsibility. All live in individual housing units. He became the head of the neighborhood committee on account of his fair and honest attitudes towards people in his neighborhood. They elected him to be a *kvartkom* in an open meeting. He is also a member of the court of elders in Aitmatov district.

One important aspect in keeping peace between Uzbek dominated quarters in the city and Kyrgyz villages in Barpy was that residential community in the 1st quarter decided – as they were advised – not to block the main street that connected Barpy with the city of Jalalabat. In the beginning, a natural reaction to the emerging riots among Uzbek residents in Aitmatov district and in 1st quarter particularly, was to block the road with their Kyrgyz neighbors. This initiative was raised by younger Uzbek residents of this mixed neighborhood shortly after the riots broke out in the city. The blocking of the road was prevented by local community leaders, especially after the representatives of the Kyrgyz community in Barpy requested them not to do so. In their dispute about the construction a barricade along the old Jalalabat–Osh road, Makam argued that any barricade could be demolished by machinery, yet this would trigger gathering of Kyrgyz people in front of barricades and eventual attacks on the neighborhood and mass arson of houses. The elder managed to convince against blocking the road and his platform won the dispute.

In general, the local community decided to refrain from building barricades as it felt itself at a sufficiently secure distance from major flashpoints of violence in the city. Only in some neighborhoods did they establish ethnically-mixed patrols that inquired from strangers entering the neighborhood about the purpose of their visits. This strategy proved effective as Kyrgyz youths from Barpy who wanted to participate in clashes against Uzbeks in flashpoint areas in Jalalabat peacefully passed through Makam's and other neighborhoods of the eastern part of Aitmatov district. No one attacked local Uzbeks there throughout the period of riots.

*The 8th quarter (Dostuk district): self-policing and interethnic cooperation*

Dostuk is located in the city center. Officially it has a population of around 27 000 residents with approximately equal numbers of Kyrgyz and Uzbeks –9500 and 7600 registered voters respectively (Interview with a local official, October 2013, Jalalabat). Dwellers live in 76 multistory apartment buildings (many of them between two and four stories) and 3800 individual housing units. Uzbeks mainly dominate in older historical quarters while Kyrgyz live in multistory apartment buildings. However, Dostuk is the most ethnically-mixed urban district in Jalalabat where in many of its neighborhoods Uzbeks and Kyrgyz live side by side. The VLKSM park, the Central Provincial Police Headquarters, the Imam–Bukhari central mosque, and Krasin Street – locations that figured earlier in the relation to ethnic riots – are all in this district. In contrast to Osh, the bazaar in Jalalabat is decentralized into several specialized markets: food,

furniture, construction materials, and household goods. The majority of them, except the food market, are located in Dostuk.

The zone with the most property damage during ethnic riots was along Krasin Street, especially in the location where it intersects with Lenin Street, near the UDN. Houses on Krasin Street were burned by Kyrgyz crowds which moved from the hippodrome towards UDN. According to local witnesses, those houses were torched after their movement was hindered by massive roadblocks. It is unclear if the Kyrgyz moving towards UDN by Krasin Street were provoked by gunfire from local Uzbek armed groups like happened on Pushkin Street, in the area of the Khazret–Ayub mosque and the Town Hospital, near the Kojo *mahalla*/Tash Bulak *mahalla*. However, the roadblocks enraged the crowd which after demolishing them started torching nearby houses. Fortunately, the large destruction of property in this area did not cause a high death rate among civilians as many local Uzbek residents had abandoned their houses beforehand and evacuated their valuable property. However, the highest concentration of property damage and probably of highest mortality was at the intersection of Krasin and Lenin Streets, in the close vicinity of UDN where the most militant participants in mass disorders from both sides clashed.

As we have seen in the cases of Uzgen town and Aitmatov district, the decision about building barricades on principal streets is a controversial issue which triggers hot and sometimes intense debates among supporters and opponents of this idea. Before violence escalated, local neighborhood communities in Dostuk had held some meetings where neighborhood leaders discussed their strategic responses to escalating riots. Despite some local Kyrgyz leaders warnings to Uzbeks against building barricades on principal roads such as Krasin Street and urgings to demobilize and to stay in their homes, the latter decided to erect the road block expecting attacks by Kyrgyz horse riders from mountainous villages. (interview with a local official, October 2013).

Nevertheless, most neighborhoods in Dostuk district did not undergo attacks from rioting groups despite the fact that local dwellers constructed barricades. These were typical neighborhoods of individual unit houses, located in small streets. Those neighborhoods selected a self-isolation strategy by encircling themselves by a set of barricades. Residents set up ethnically-mixed patrols that did not let strangers enter their neighborhoods. When rioters approached roadblocks, local residents of the same ethnicity would politely deny the passage through a neighborhood and protect their neighbors of the other ethnicity. For instance, when groups of rural Kyrgyz from the hippodrome came to Dostuk neighborhoods they were calmly but decisively rebuffed and re-directed by local Kyrgyz residents.

One example of such a self-isolation strategy is a neighborhood called *8th quarter* in Dostuk district. Being one of the typical neighborhoods which one can find in the central part of the town, the 8th quarter is comprised of 24 small streets and 530 individual housing units. The quarter's 2750 residents are distributed equally along ethnic lines: 1390 Uzbeks and 1300 Kyrgyz living together, house by house. This makes the 8th quarter one of the most mixed neighborhoods in Jalalabat.

When ethnic violence erupted in the town, residents of the 8th quarter closed the streets with roadblocks. On 12 June, a local *domkom*, a Kyrgyz *aksakal* named Konokbek, collected 100 soms (2 USD dollars) from each household to slaughter a cow. The neighborhood's residents prayed together to consolidate their communal unity. Both Kyrgyz and Uzbek residents came forward together in defense of their neighborhood. According to Konokbek, those neighborhoods in Dostuk with strong Kyrgyz–Uzbek cooperation did not let in fighters of any ethnicity and managed to re-direct them to other places. His neighborhood dealt mainly with a Kyrgyz group that came from the hippodrome. Consequently, the Kyrgyz men from the hippodrome turned their route towards Kojo *mahalla* without attempting to assail Uzbek houses in the 8th quarter. Later, another Kyrgyz group that came from the direction of Krasin Street was also rebuffed by local dwellers.  In the end, there were no killings and no active riots in this neighborhood despite being closely located (approximately one kilometer) to a hotspot of violence near the Provincial Hospital. The 8th quarter did not suffer property damage either except one burnt house located in the periphery of the neighborhood along the principal street that leads to Tash Bulak. This is in sharp contrast with a neighboring community located on the other side of the road on the border with the 8th quarter. That neighborhood lost thirteen houses destroyed and three damaged as result of rioters' attacks that spilled over from fierce fights between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks on Pushkin Street, near Kojo *mahalla*/Tash Bulak.

Why there was no violence in the 8th quarter? The fortunes of the 8th quarter in avoiding violence can be explained by combination of strong self-policing and interethnic cooperation based on relatively strong quotidian civic engagement among residents of the neighborhood. Trust and lack of fear among Uzbeks and Kyrgyz facilitated interethnic cooperation. As the events in Dostuk show, the residents of the 8th quarter demonstrated strong cooperation that helped them to prevent violence in their neighborhood. Quotidian links among residents of the 8th quarter are strong. They also include regular contacts between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in the area. Community-based activities such as festivities, feast, funerals, celebrations, and weddings take place with participation of both ethnic groups. Each resident, irrespective of ethnicity, contributes a small amount of money every month for community needs. Konokbek collects this money

and use it according to the situation. These common funds are usually used for community works aimed at improving local infrastructure or to help to needy families to organize funerals. When the Uzbek families organize festivities, the Kyrgyz come to help to slaughter cattle and when the Kyrgyz organize weddings the Uzbeks come to serve guests. Each event of this kind is discussed with Konokbek and three elected neighborhood *aksakals* where they decide about reasonable expenses. He insists that each event should be alcohol-free. Then he assigns young men to meet guests and to monitor and control the situation during festivities and prevent possible violations and brawls.

There is a relatively low number of internal migrants (only around 100) and all of them are registered by Konokbek in his journal and who closely monitors them. The low number of internal migrants in his neighborhood makes this neighborhood socially homogenous and cohesive and relatively easy for him and other leaders to monitor and manage his domain. He conducts interviews with each new arrival and interrogates them about the purpose of their stay in the neighborhood and from where exactly they arrived. He follows them to make sure that they pay utility costs in time and do not violate local social norms and social order. In his personal journal, he registers each migrant (*kvartirant*) and their passport data. This, he does to control them within his neighborhood.

He has three official *aksakals* of his neighborhood appointed and endorsed by local residents and by him. These *aksakals* help him in managing the neighborhood and they are engaged in organizational activities. Each of them control certain streets and households assigned to him. They inform Konokbek about any news and problems in the neighborhood. If there are some strangers at night in his neighborhood, residents or *aksakals* also inform him (strong social control). Konokbek took over this position of *kvartkom* in 2001 when the previous *kvartkom* was dismissed by local residents who were unhappy with his work. The residents unanimously elected Konokbek, a former policeman who had organizational skills and good communication with local neighborhood community.

The example of the 8$^{th}$ quarter shows the mechanisms of self-policing and represents the situation that has been usually common for Uzbek neighborhoods in Uzgen. But this case is interesting because this kind of policing was conducted in ethnically-mixed neighborhood (and possibly may shed light on the situation in several similar neighborhoods in Jalalabat).

*Kojo-mahalla/Tash Bulak (Kurmanbek district): preemptive aggression*

Kurmanbek district is located in the eastern part of the town. It officially has around 25 000 inhabitants, both Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. There are 30 small multistory apartment buildings (mostly between two and four stories) in this district. The majority of the district's residents live in more than four thousand individual housing units. Newer neighborhoods in the district are ethnically-mixed while *mahalla*s in the older historical blocks are inhabited mainly by Uzbeks. The most segregated neighborhood with the largest Uzbek cluster in this area is called Kojo (Hoja) *mahalla*. The district once was a historical core of the town. Kojo *mahalla* is squeezed between Pushkin Street and a range of hills that are a natural boundary of the town from its eastern part. Kojo *mahalla* became one of major flashpoints (the zone with the second highest level of property damage after the UDN area) of violence and interethnic clashes in the city. This large neighborhood includes three official urban quarters and in addition, Tash Bulak village which is also an integral part of this informal neighborhood but formally located outside the town's boundaries. Together, they have population of around 12–15000 which makes it one of the largest and densely concentrated Uzbek ethnic clusters in the Jalalabat city area. Local residents are believed to be descendants of the prophet Muhammad (kojo/hoja literally means "a descendant of the prophet"). Residents of this neighborhood have a strong common identity and are proud of their status.

According to my respondents, Kojo *mahalla* was an active supporter of Batyrov, once the most influential Uzbek leader in Jalalabat, and many residents of this neighborhood allegedly participated in rallies organized by him (this raises the question of revengeful nature of Kyrgyz attacks on this neighborhood). Residents of Kojo *mahalla* constituted one of the main mobilizational forces during Batyrov's demonstrations in May 2014. According to some local officials and residents, they created 'jamaat' a collective-action community that supported Batyrov politically and contributed financially to organized events.

This neighborhood includes several blocks both from the town and Tash-Bulak village densely located between Pushkin Street and the hills on which Jalalabat's resort place famous for its curative mineral water. Local residents and external observers do not divide themselves in the categories of urban and Tash Bulak residents as in fact, the blocks constituting Kojo *mahalla* neighborhood are integral and the administrative borders that separate the town from Tash Bulak are invisible. So, residents would not visually distinguish between blocks of Kojo *mahalla* located in the town and outside. Local residents have local strong identity and pride for being belonged to this neighborhood. Inside Kojo *mahalla*, there are also blocks named "Tajik *mahalla*" and "Kurt *mahalla*". The names of these internal blocks within Kojo *mahalla* presumably refer to the ethnic affiliation of its residents. The traditional authority of their leaders

is high. For instance, when the head of Kurt-*mahalla* is sick local residents never celebrate any events. “The words of the head of Kurt *mahalla* have law-like effect for its residents”, said a local low-ranking official in Kurmanbek district. Nevertheless, as was indicated above the residents of this neighborhood are ethnic Uzbeks. Kojo *mahalla* represents itself as a strong community with strong inward-looking social capital[45]. To enforce strong policing over the community, *aksakals* also use “tough guys” to force someone to comply with local rules or to punish anti-social behavior but this is done on very rare occasions. As one respondent noted, “if the mosque-imam is strong then the social organization of the *mahalla* is also”. Existence of strong social norms favorable for effective in-group policing is apparent in many Uzbek *mahalla*s.

However, this neighborhood was one of the flashpoints of riots as described in earlier sections. If self-policing was strong in Kojo *mahalla* then why did local leaders not manage to hold back some residents from fighting with groups of rural Kyrgyz who were passing by this neighborhood towards the city center? One explanation is that the lack of intercommunal trust, ethnic fears, and uncertainty about group survival caused panic and confrontational attitudes among Uzbek leaders in Kojo *mahalla* who conceded to the arguments of radical groups to strike Kyrgyz preemptively in order to retain the upper hand.

The preventive aggression of the residents of Kojo *mahalla* illustrates the mechanism of the security dilemma at work. When local residents heard news from Osh about escalating interethnic violence and especially when they heard that rural Kyrgyz gathered in the town hippodrome, they blocked streets leading to the *mahalla*. Fearful of Kyrgyz attacks, they formed self-defense groups. It is not clear, how a dispute between radicals and moderates decided upon the defensive strategy. However, what is clear is that the dynamics of violence in the town affected the local intra-group balance of power. One trigger for the intragroup power shift towards radicals was Kyrgyz mobilization in the town’s hippodrome and especially, its movement towards the city center. When ethnic violence broke out in the town, the balance of power in this neighborhood was favorable to radicals, as many radical leaders – supporters of Batyrov – were based in Kojo *mahalla*. The radical party in this neighborhood might have taken initiative to make defensive decisions.

When the Kyrgyz group from the hippodrome started moving aside Kojo *mahalla* along Pushkin Street towards the city center, some members of Uzbek self-defense groups started shooting towards the moving group of rural Kyrgyz. As the report by Matveeva et al. (2012, 22–23) suggests, the Kyrgyz were

[45] See the introductory chapter in Halpern (2005) for the discussion of the conceptualization and sub-types of the social capital concept.

unarmed and retreated under the gunfire coming from Kojo *mahalla*. It is not clear what exactly caused the aggressive response towards the Kyrgyz group. One interpretation is that it was probably a misinterpretation of Kyrgyz mobilization as a direct aggression and threat towards Kojo *mahalla*. This miscalculated strategy/response backfired. The Kyrgyz retreated first, as expected by the plans of some Uzbek radicals, however later the Kyrgyz returned with firearms that they had obtained after attacking military depots and garrisons around Jalalabat. The firearms obtained by the Kyrgyz changed the intergroup balance of power. Local Uzbek self-defense groups were no longer able to deter rural Kyrgyz. As shown in the short description of the riot events in Jalalabat, the Kyrgyz attacked Kojo *mahalla*, burning deserted Uzbek houses at the forefront of this neighborhood that were adjacent to Pushkin Street as local residents and self-defense groups had already evacuated from this area. Another possible reason of the preemptive violence was the desire to protect their ethnic fellows near the UDN, as self-defense groups in Kojo *mahalla* realized that the Kyrgyz group moving towards city center would sooner or later encounter Uzbeks near the UDN.

This security dilemma mechanism evident in Kojo *mahalla*/Tash Bulak at the level of interpretation of and response to the real or perceived threat is well-explained in the relevant literature regarding interstate relations: "[b]ecause of unavoidable uncertainty about intentions … powerful states, feeling insecure, will act offensively in order to ensure their survival [and] the way to cope with existential uncertainty at the level of interpretation is to impose operational certainty at the level of response" (Booth and Wheeler 2008, 37). So, if we extend this logic of macro-level interstate uncertainty to the meso-level behavior between two groups, then it becomes clear that the Uzbek self-defense group in Kojo *mahalla* attacked the Kyrgyz moving along the Pushkin Street based on worst-case scenario thinking. The latter resulted from two main factors: "the difficulty of distinguishing from between offensive and defensive forces, and the history of past interactions" (Booth and Wheeler 2008, 74; also Posen 1993). As Booth and Wheeler argue, "In the situation of emerging anarchy … even if particular ethnic groups were arming for defensive reasons, they nonetheless had capabilities to conduct offensive operations, and this generated fear about future intentions on the part of those groups that might consider themselves as potential targets – especially those constituting … ethnic islands" (Booth and Wheeler 2008, 74; also Posen 1993, 32–33). The Kyrgyz walking along Pushkin Street were unarmed, but the large size of the Kyrgyz crowd and their marching near Kojo *mahalla* was interpreted by the Uzbek residents as an intention to attack their neighborhood. The residents of Kojo *mahalla*, which became squeezed between hills and the Pushkin Street, felt even more vulnerable because this neighborhood became "an ethnic island" being cut off from other large Uzbek *mahalla*s and the Uzbekistan border.

On the other hand, for residents of Kojo *mahalla* an experience of past interactions with the Kyrgyz from the villages was absent or limited to random contacts. However, among Uzbeks, there was a widespread perception of rural Kyrgyz as being unruly, aggressive, and savage[46]. Furthermore, although Jalalabat was not a flashpoint of violence during the Kyrgyz–Uzbek riots in 1990, the Jalalabat Uzbeks were very well aware of Kyrgyz rural mobilization in Osh and Uzgen at that time. The recent experience of Kyrgyz rural mobilization during political upheavals in Jalalabat in May 2010 certainly did not contribute to mutually trustful intercommunal relations either. The relations between two groups can be better characterized as mutual ignorance. However, the most important shortcoming was the absence of contacts between leaders of Kojo *mahalla* and rural Kyrgyz *aksakals*. Communication and negotiations between them could have reduced uncertainty and lessened fears.

Therefore, inability to distinguish between real and perceived intentions as well as, to a lesser extent, the negative past interactions with rural Kyrgyz generated fears and worst-case thinking among Uzbeks in Kojo *mahalla*, who decided to strike first against the Kyrgyz. To use Booth and Wheeler's vocabulary, the preemptive aggression was committed in order to reduce existential uncertainty at the level of interpretation and to impose operational certainty at the level of response. As described above, Uzbeks attacked Kyrgyz from locations at Hazret–Ayub Mosque, the Provinicial Hospital, and the Lyceum (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 32–33).

*Sputnik district: No pact and neutrality*

In Sputnik, there were no riots. It is a district inhabited mainly by Kyrgyz residents living in densely-concentrated block apartments buildings, usually of four to five stories. Out of 178 multistory house buildings in Jalalabat, 84 are located in Sputnik (interview with local *kvartkom*, October 2013). On the margins of this district there are few quarters with individual housing units. Generally, these individual house neighborhoods have an Uzbek majority. Most internal migrants, normally Kyrgyz from rural areas, tend to settle in the flats in Sputnik. It has a large share of the town's economic migrants. Officially the number of residents is around 28 500 but in reality there around 35 000 residents living in this district. The difference between the official and the de facto number is unregistered tenants. The same *kvartkom* gives one example: one of the multistory housing buildings in Azimova Street has 56 flats. Of them, only

[46] On ethnic stereotypes see Horowitz (1985).

18–20 flats are occupied by long-term (lifelong) residents. In the rest, short-term tenants from rural areas (*kvartiranty*) live. According to the *kvartkom*, the main problems in the organization of local social life come from short-term tenants. It is difficult for local community leaders to monitor, register and count, and conduct community policing as *kvartiranty* change their place of accommodation often. The high rotation of residents, who occupy the majority of flats (at least two-thirds of the total number) in Sputnik district impedes the building of interpersonal relations and communication among residents and between tenants and local community leaders (interview with a local *kvartkom*, October 2013).

In Sputnik, communal self-policing was practically absent but there were attempts to control the neighborhood territorially in order not to let outsiders enter the neighborhood. In general, the Kyrgyz that gathered in the hippodrome made very few attempts go to this district and therefore did not create any trouble for local residents. Some local influential individuals, who held some middle and high-rank positions in governmental institutions in Bishkek, Jalalabat, and other places, also made sure that rioters did not come to the few Uzbek neighborhoods in this district. These local strongmen – including several Uzbeks – tried to influence and control the situation in Sputnik. When there were attempts to enter the district they re-directed rural Kyrgyz towards the downtown. However, the group of leaders lost sight of two Uzbek houses torched by the unknown people despite this policing of the territory. The owners of these two houses were prominent supporters of Batyrov (one was his lawyer and another was a businessman) (interview with a local *kvartkom*). The houses had been empty however, like many other Uzbek houses in this district. As mentioned, many Uzbeks had left this neighborhood even before the riots broke out.

Despite the Kyrgyz neighborhoods in Sputnik have common border with large Uzbek *mahalla*s, there were no pacts negotiated between them. These conditions, in general, are applicable to all neighborhoods with densely concentrated multi-story apartment building complexes. The main reasons for the absence of pacts were: 1) absence of communication between Kyrgyz Sputnik and Uzbek neighborhoods even at community leaders level, and; 2) lack of credible commitment – the Kyrgyz leaders had limited power to control and police local residents in neighborhoods with due to weak authority of local leaders and lack of social norms conducive for social control. The majority of residents did not know local *kvartkoms* or recognize their authority. In individual unit house neighborhoods, *kvartkoms* have more authority. Many Uzbeks had fled to Suzak and other Uzbek-dominated areas. Sputnik was mainly left aside from the main events unfolding in the central parts of the town, chiefly, due to its location and spatial separation from the city.

## Spatial factors

Spatial factors were important to explain the geographical distribution of violence in the town. Sputnik is separated from the rest of the town by an airport and the hippodrome that divide the city into two parts: the western and the eastern. All riots took place in the eastern side. The hippodrome – a focal point for the Kyrgyz mobilization – is located in the northern outskirts of the town not far from districts of Sputnik, Dostuk, and Kurmanbek. The hippodrome is a large open space and a convenient point for gathering and meetings, especially because the road leading to Jalalabat from mountainous areas and Kyrgyz villages of Kokart valley eventually crosses a roundabout near the hippodrome at the northern entrance to the town with roads leading further from this roundabout to the eastern part of the town. The hippodrome had once been a meeting point for Kyrgyz rural mobilization against the interim government and later against Batyrov during the disorder in May 2010 when Kyrgyz clashed with Uzbeks in front of the UDN. In June, the hippodrome once again became a focal point for hundreds of Kyrgyz mobilizing from rural areas. When first news and rumors about Uzbek attacks against Kyrgyz in Jalalabat spread to the rural areas of Kokart valley and mountainous areas hundreds of rural Kyrgyz rushed to Jalalabat and gathered in the hippodrome. From the roundabout near the hippodrome, the roads go to two directions. One direction leads along Pushkin Street to the administrative and business center passing between Dostuk and Kurmanbek districts, the Provincial Hospital, and Kojo *mahalla* (with Tash Bulak). The second direction leads towards the airport, the VLKSM Park, and along several streets including Krasin Street to the UDN.

When Kyrgyz gathered at the hippodrome in large numbers several high-profile leaders unsuccessfully tried to pacify and hold back the crowd. The provincial governor was beaten as Kyrgyz people considered him a traitor for allowing and being present at Batyrov's Uzbek rallies in front of the UDN. Another figure, Tashiev – a prominent politician from Bakiev's close circle – was respected by the Kyrgyz crowd for his nationalist stance. However, people did not listen to him either. When news about killings of Kyrgyz at Sanpa and near the UDN arrived people in the crowd got furious. The mob flooded into these two directions. These road communication structures as well as the location of barricades explain how Kyrgyz groups proceeded through the town and how they moved to certain streets rather than others. As discussed in chapter 5, barricades considerably constrained movement of militant groups, police, and residents. The substantial part of the town, especially neighborhoods in its central zone including almost entire districts of Kurmanbek and Dostuk from a foot of eastern hills (Kojo-*mahalla* neighborhood) to the airport area were fully barricaded. As one high-ranking police officer confessed me during interview, his

troops could not freely move throughout the city to react on emerging flashpoints of violence as many streets were blocked. The police troops operated under high risk of getting under heavy gunfire in certain neighborhoods. Basically, his troops operated in a small zone still free of barricades around the Central Police Headquarters. Furthermore, those days, because of a high concentration of barricades or of militant groups on the roads he could not reach his house to help his own family to evacuate from a dangerous area to a safer one. Only on 14 June, when reinforcements from the capital city of Bishkek arrived in Jalalabat unblocking some streets, did he manage to reach his family that was hiding in the basement of his Uzbek traffic policeman colleague's house (interview with a high-ranking police officer, Jalalabat, October 2013).

In such circumstances, large groups chose to move on broad principal streets which were more difficult to block. However, one of them, Krasin Street, got blocked by Uzbek groups in the area closer to the UDN. A Kyrgyz group that was moving towards the UDN by Krasin Street encountered this barricade. What exactly happened between two groups on different sides of the barricade is not very well known. The standoff ensued in a violent clash in which the Kyrgyz group overpowered Uzbeks at the barricade. As the Kyrgyz group broke through the barricade, it moved towards the UDN burning houses alongside the Krasin Street already deserted by local residents and evacuated to Suzak and to the Uzbekistan's border. At the intersection with Lenin Street, this Kyrgyz group merged with the group coming from Pushkin Street. Together they attacked and torched the UDN executing a final blow to Uzbek armed groups in Jalalabat. The Kyrgyz moved further to attack large Suzak village where they were stopped by Kyrgyz elders as described in previous sections.

The clash at the barricade on Krasin Street shows that the location of barricades was important for determining the spatial distribution of violence. Like in Osh and other towns, setting up barricades in the secondary streets and entrances to neighborhoods generally increased security of local communities. They did not allow potential sudden incursions inside neighborhoods. Wandering militant groups often ignored them preferring to move along principal streets. However, erecting barricades on main principal streets was counterproductive measure because it would block the street and thus, communication in the city. It would eventually lead to accumulation of people and combatants at the barricade and then to a violent standoff.

A final observation on the importance of spatiality relates to the built environment of the town. Among factors that account for the relatively lighter intensity of violence in Jalalabat is variation in levels of concentration of multistory buildings and bazaar areas in Osh and Jalalabat. In the latter, multistory

buildings as well as bazaars are deconcentrated. In Osh, the grand bazaar occupies very large territory in the central part of the city adjoining neighborhoods with densely concentrated multistory buildings. As already discussed in chapter 5, communal policing is especially difficult in such areas due to chaotic residential mobility and spillover effects coming from bazaar. In Jalalabat, there are only two neighborhoods with high concentration of multistory buildings – Sputnik and Kokart – and they are far from the town bazaar which, in fact, is deconcentrated into several smaller bazaars. The outskirts location of Sputnik does not contribute to overcrowding of the bazaar areas (as in Oshskii *raion*). This is in contrast to Osh where several specialized bazaars and several multistory building micro-districts are concentrated in one area making it one huge bazaar very difficult to control. These relative advantages make communal policing easier in Jalalabat and partially explain why the area around the town's bazaar remained undamaged.

## Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that the neighborhoods in Jalalabat chose different strategies to deal with uncertainty and fear depending on such structural conditions as their location in the city, ethnic composition and the degree of residential segregation in the neighborhoods, the level of quotidian intercommunal contacts among leaders and ordinary residents of Uzbek and Kyrgyz local communities, and the strength of local self-policing. These structural conditions provided the context, constrained, and affected contingency in in-group and intergroup interactions within and between Uzbek and Kyrgyz groups. The choice of the type of response and defensive strategy in each neighborhood was an outcome of the interplay between the contingent interactions and structural conditions.

Neighborhoods adopted strategies/responses that were of confrontational, cooperative, and self-isolationist character (see table 9.1) and the type of strategy/response to uncertainty that they chose affected the spatial dynamics of riots and (non-)violent outcomes in neighborhoods. The action–reaction dynamic was important for determining peaceful and violent outcomes. How neighborhood communities reacted to uncertainty and the decisions taken by leaders influenced the dynamics of violence. Rumors played less important role in riot dynamics and mobilization if compared with Osh but still they should not be ignored when analyzing the riot dynamics. Shaming and forced mobilization was evident in many Kyrgyz villages (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012).

Several communities chose preemptive aggression. Some because of failed self-policing and weak leaders, others with strong leaders but under strong influence of ethnic entrepreneurs who used their traditional authority to play an ethnic card to gain political benefits. For example, the Uzbek neighborhoods in Krasin Street, in the area of the UDN, and Kojo *mahalla*/Tash-Bulak were to great extent exposed to fears which triggered preventive attacks against rural Kyrgyz by Uzbek self-defense groups. The comparison between the following Uzbek neighborhoods is illustrative.

The 1st quarter is a contrasting case to those *mahalla*s that resorted to preemptive violence. In the latter cases, local residents were fearful of rural Kyrgyz coming to the city. They built barricades (Krasin Street) but also attacked rural Kyrgyz (Kojo *mahalla*, Sanpa, and the UDN area) provoking them to acts of vengeance. The implication is the following: the 1st quarter and other Uzbek neighborhoods of the Aitmatov district established more or less trustful relations with Barpy rural district. These communities had common experience of coexistence and intercommunal relations were maintained through their leaders' participation in each other's communal events such as feasts, celebrations, and funerals. On the other hand, residents of Kojo *mahalla* and their leaders never knew Kyrgyz people coming from mountainous villages of Kokart and mountainous areas. The absence of communication between these two groups and their leaders prevented negotiations and facilitated the emergence of security dilemma. Out of fear, local Uzbek residents armed themselves and made preemptive strikes on the Kyrgyz who otherwise would not have attacked their *mahalla*. Leaders on both sides did not know each other and there were no points of communication and little space for peaceful brokerage. In Krasin Street, which was one of principal streets connecting northern outskirts of the town with its central areas, local Uzbek residents constructed barricades on the road. As discussed in this and previous chapters, erecting barricades on the principal streets was another counterproductive defense measure. The barricades triggered outrage and perception of threat among rural Kyrgyz who considered access to the town as their natural right to "Kyrgyz town". The fact that Uzbeks were obstructing them the access to the city drive them furious as for Kyrgyz, it was a clear sign that Uzbeks "had been preparing for war in advance" (interview with local official). The combination of violent provocations, instigation, rumors, and false and real information about attacks against Kyrgyz allowed Kyrgyz groups to justify their aggression against some Uzbek *mahalla*s.

Table 9.1. Divergent defense strategies and responses to emerging anarchy

| Neighborhood | Ethnic composition | Defensive strategy | Response to riots |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1st quarter** | Homogenous Uzbek | Inter-communal pact and self-policing | Interethnic cooperation at leaders level (btw segregated neighborhoods) |
| **8th quarter** | mixed | No pact and self-isolation | Interethnic cooperation within neighborhood |
| **Kojo *mahalla*** | Homogenous Uzbek | No pact and self-isolation | Confrontation and failed self-policing |
| **Sputnik** | Homogenous Kyrgyz | No pact | Neutral (no centralized response) |

Pacts played a less important role in Jalalabat if compared with Osh and Uzgen. To the best of my knowledge, the only neighborhoods in Jalalabat that conducted non-aggression pacts were in the south-east part of Aitmatov district. The lack of pacts can be explained by the smaller degree of ethnic segregation in Jalalabat. Nevertheless, in those segregated neighborhoods, where pacts were implemented with strong in-group policing, there were higher chances for peaceful outcomes. In general, pacts between separate segregated neighborhoods or territorial units were normally negotiated between suburban villages and adjacent peripheral neighborhoods, as in case of the 1st quarter and some other neighborhoods in Osh. In the city center, there were no pacts but mainly interethnic cooperation within ethnically-mixed neighborhoods as it was in case of the 8th quarter. Segregated neighborhoods in the city center generally did not produce pacts, probably because there were no credible partners from the other side, especially in chaotic Kyrgyz multistory building neighborhoods in Osh and to a certain extent in Jalalabat, who could credibly conduct self-policing of local constituencies, and therefore, to credibly commit to the conditions of pacts. In the busy city center's multistory building neighborhoods, people do not know each other and informal authority of local leaders eroded. Therefore, successful pacts were usually negotiated between Uzbek *mahalla*s and adjacent Kyrgyz villages as the conditions for self-policing in Kyrgyz villages are more or less similar to those in Uzbek *mahalla*s.

In fact, neighborhoods in the city center tried to secure themselves by physical self-isolation whereas neighborhoods in the city periphery additionally resort to diplomacy with neighboring suburban communities. This was clearly showed in description of the 1st quarter and the 8th quarter cases. However, Jalalabat is less ethnically segregated then Osh and Uzgen. In Jalalabat, many central neighborhoods are ethnically-mixed while many peripheral Uzbek *mahalla*s do not have common borders with Kyrgyz villages and Kyrgyz urban neighborhoods with Uzbek villages. This spatial feature can partly explain the relative lack of intercommunal pacts in Jalalabat. In such mixed neighborhoods, residents established interethnic

alliances on the ground of neighborhood solidarity. For example, Kyrgyz protected "Uzbek co-villagers from outsider Kyrgyz, because they were members of the same community" (Matveeva, Savin, and Faizullaev 2012, 35).

Finally, the passive and neutral response of the Sputnik neighborhood can be partly explained by its remote and isolated location in the city. As discussed in the section on the spatial factors, this neighborhood was isolated from the main flashpoint locations in the town. Few attempts by outsiders to enter this Kyrgyz neighborhood were repulsed by local strongmen who policed the territory but not the local population. Those who wanted to participate in ethnic clashes could easily do it by joining the Kyrgyz group in the hippodrome and other flashpoints in the city. The neighborhood leaders did not negotiate pacts with Uzbek leaders from adjacent neighborhoods.

The divergent strategic responses by the Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and ethnically-mixed communities to the emerging anarchy at local level show that the security dilemma concept can be utilized for the analysis of ethnic conflict at different spatial scales and levels of aggregation.

# Conclusions

This dissertation's main goal has been to explain spatial variations in the June 2010 ethnic violence between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. It aimed to contribute to the analysis of ethnic conflict from an interdisciplinary perspective by linking theoretical concepts and approaches from different fields and disciplines that otherwise barely intersect. I studied the ethnic violence between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010 that resulted in around 500 deaths, several thousand injured people, the destruction of 2500 properties, and more than 400 000 refugees and internally displaced individuals (KIC 2011, ii). This was one of the most intense and violent episodes in the global history of ethnic riots.

This research employed a unique approach in the analysis of ethnic riots. A key contribution of this prospective research is the analysis of ethnic riots from the neorealist perspectives, including strategic dilemma models drawn from the International Relations (IR) literature. What makes this contribution essential in the literature of IR, civil wars, and ethnic violence is the application of the neorealist IR approaches at micro-spatial scale. This innovative study is the first to replicate the theoretical assumptions of the IR literature at the analysis of urban neighborhood-level ethnic violence.

The outbreak of the June 2010 conflict produced a unique environmental change: a temporal breakdown of state institutions that triggered urban neighborhoods' divergent responses to the emerging violence, such as the "decision to fight, to negotiate, or to remain at peace" (Walter 1999, 2). I argued that the divergent responses to the similar threat and ethnic fears were contingent on the intergroup and intragroup interactions among neighborhood-level ethnic subgroups. This demonstrates that the 'emerging anarchy', a necessary condition of neorealist IR literature, can be scaled down to the neighborhood level. The June 2010 ethnic violence falls short of being categorized as a civil war (1000 combat deaths). However, due to the large number of deaths and the fact that the majority of deaths resulted from gunshots, the ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan had features of both civil war and ethnic riots. It allowed me to analyze this conflict by connecting diverse theoretical approaches.

The first outbreaks of violence in the city of Osh, in June, 2010, produced uncertainty and fears in relations between Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities, especially in ethnically-segregated neighborhoods, in many towns and villages in southern Kyrgyzstan. This became especially evident as soon as local-level ethnic communities realized that the state was incapable of intervening to stop the emergent violence in a credible manner. Basically, the central state withdrew itself from solving interethnic tensions and this

created a sense of 'the emerging anarchy' and a power vacuum. Uncertainty and fears caused by this power vacuum triggered different responses across towns, villages, and neighborhoods. Local ethnic communities responded to escalating violence, emerging anarchy, and uncertainty mainly in three essential ways; namely by: (1) initiating preemptive attacks against the opponent ethnic group members; (2) barricading and closing streets across borders of their neighborhoods (self-isolation with strong self-policing) and without diplomatic contacts with other neighborhoods, and (3) negotiating non-aggression pacts with the neighboring "opponent" communities.

The importance of this research is highlighted by the fact that it seeks to explain the causes of violence and peace at micro-scale by identifying the local-level factors and conditions that affected the security dynamics in each locality. The aggregate picture and the level of violence in towns resulted from the micro-dynamics of violence and peace in urban neighborhoods. The outcome in each locality was determined by the combination of structural and contingent factors. In this research, my approach is beyond the agency-versus-structure framework (Jones Luong 2002). I have argued that contingent factors, namely intra- and intergroup interactions directly affected the dynamics of violence and security outcomes at local level. However, structural conditions provided the context, shaped, and constrained contingent interactions.

Another contribution of this dissertation to the literature is linking the arguments of structure- and contingency-oriented studies on ethnic conflict. Macro-oriented research highlights the importance of socio-economic structural conditions for explaining generalizable patterns of determination and, frequently, at the expense of underestimating the short-term dynamics and actors' behavior. Micro-oriented studies accentuate the importance of the strategic behavior and the dynamics of interactions (Przeworski 1991, 47). However, excessive attention on strategic interactions underemphasizes the influence of long-term factors and structural conditions. In this dissertation, I showed that both short-term strategic interactions and long-term structural conditions interacted and influenced violent and non-violent outcomes. This contrasts with studies that usually focus just on either of these dimensions. Yet, another distinction of this research is that in explaining the dynamics of violence and its cross-spatial outcomes, it adopted a micro-comparative research design. This considered town- and neighborhood-level structural conditions and local-level interactions as opposed to studies on ethnic conflict that generally aim attention at the national and regional level socio-economic conditions and intergroup relations. Importantly, I gave special attention to spatial factors such as urban neighborhoods' built

environment, the natural landscape, and strategic location. These variables rarely figure in the political science literature on civil wars and ethnic conflicts, mainly remaining in the domain of political geography.

Two different mechanisms explain peace in mixed and segregated neighborhoods. In mixed neighborhoods, interethnic cooperation was fostered by relatively strong civic links between ordinary residents. This type of cooperation was demonstrated by the case of the 8th quarter in Jalalabat where Uzbek and Kyrgyz residents of that quarter cooperated on the grounds of neighborhood solidarity. This mechanism was emphasized by Varshney (2002), who argues that everyday intercommunal engagement between members of different communities increases the likelihood of peace. The 8th quarter illustrates the security dynamic that was prevalent in other ethnically-mixed neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabat. Communicating on a daily basis, Kyrgyz and Uzbek residents in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods did not generally fear one another. When violence broke out, many mixed neighborhoods barricaded the entry streets and organized mixed patrols and self-defense groups. They did not take sides in the conflict and did not let outsiders enter or pass through their neighborhoods. Territorial policing was strong but it was not along ethnic lines.

Ethnically-segregated neighborhoods constitute the majority in Osh, Uzgen, and Jalalabat but they exhibited striking variations in violence. Violence spread mainly across segregated neighborhoods. Yet, many segregated neighborhoods escaped trouble. Non-aggression pacts and in-group policing were the mechanisms that helped them to avoid violence. On the scale of ethnic segregation, they had varying degrees of segregation with Uzgen being a completely segregated town, Osh being a highly segregated, and Jalalabat being largely segregated but to a lesser degree compared to Osh. However, as the evidence shows, the degree of segregation does not directly correspond with the level of violence each town experienced.

This is especially evident when comparing Osh and Uzgen. The latter was an entirely Uzbek town with only two Kyrgyz neighborhoods and was completely surrounded by Kyrgyz rural districts. Having such a disadvantageous strategic location, Uzgen could be an obvious target for retaliatory attacks from surrounding Kyrgyz villages as it already happened in 1990. However, despite being the most segregated town and an ethnic "island", Uzgen's communal leaders managed to protect both the Kyrgyz minority within the town and the Uzbek communities from the external threat. Geographically located between Osh and Jalalabat, both raged by violence, Uzgen leaders maintained order through effective in-group policing and security negotiations with Kyrgyz leaders. The result was remarkable: the town remained

peaceful. Local Uzbek radicals were neutralized and Kyrgyz radicals from surrounding areas preferred to go to Osh.

This evidence contradicts the widespread perceptions among international experts and journalists about fully opportunist behavior of the participants in this conflict. To be more precise, a high degree of opportunistic behavior was apparent in many observed cases of attacks and looting, however, this should not allow simplistic accounts to prevail. If Kyrgyz radicals in Uzgen area were motivated solely by opportunist incentives, why would they go to Osh instead of attacking a closer and more convenient target – Uzgen? Many Kyrgyz participants in riots were driven by fear because information and rumors coming from Osh about killings of Kyrgyz convinced them that their immediate enemies were Uzbeks in Osh, not in Uzgen. On the other side, some Uzbek militant groups in Osh and Jalalabat initiated violence, a preemptive move based on a fear of potential Kyrgyz aggression.

The evidence from Uzgen and some other segregated places also complements Varshney's argument. His model does not explain what happens when there is a low level – or complete absence – of intercommunal associational and everyday engagement. Segregated groups in multiethnic societies is a widespread phenomenon in many countries. However, what we observe is that most communities and towns with complete absence of intercommunal associational quotidian engagement and civic ties remained peaceful despite ethnic tensions (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 715–17). In other words, ethnic communities can remain peaceful even in the absence of cross-cutting bonds. As Varshney himself admits, gaps in his argument about peace between segregated communities can be addressed by another mechanism of peace, namely in-group policing advanced by Fearon and Laitin (1996). He suggested that this mechanism may be applicable to segregated environments and proposed that the model should be examined empirically. If exerted by elders and ethnic organizations, "intraethnic policing may lead to the same result that interethnic engagement does in India" (Varshney 2002, 300). This research sheds light on the identified gap and, as proposed by Varshney, empirically tested Fearon and Laitin's model of interethnic cooperation by applying it to the case of the June 2010 ethnic violence between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz.

In-group policing often implicitly requires mutual understanding or explicit agreements. In practice, geographically-concentrated or residentially-segregated groups that are engaged in in-group policing often make an informal pact which serves their interests. As Fearon and Laitin suggest, groups, by adopting a policy of in-group sanctions against violators, "they take advantage of the fact that each group has better information about the behavior of its own members than about the other group and so can target individuals rather than whole groups" (1996, 722). Fearon and Laitin's model of interethnic

cooperation suggests that in-group policing, an informal institutional mechanism, emerges, when the state authority is weak or breaks down, to reduce the problem of opportunism in intergroup relations. It thus helps to preserve interethnic peace (1996, 715). In-group policing is a key mechanism that explains peaceful outcomes in many segregated neighborhoods during the June 2010 ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan.

However, if peace breaks down, in-group policing can be complemented by non-aggression agreements not to let a violent conflict to spiral further between local ethnic communities still unaffected by the ethnic violence. When violence breaks out, it can undermine trust between ethnic communities and therefore, group leaders may engage in open negotiations to mediate tensions, reassure each other in peaceful intentions, and recover trust. Therefore, in such situations, explicit agreements about mutual non-aggressive intentions can foster restoration of trustful relations between ethnic communities.

This research highlights the critical role of moderate leaders in connecting intercommunal and intracommunal interests. It identifies several structural and contingent factors requisite for the occurrence, efficiency, and stability of intragroup policing and non-aggression pacts. In-group policing is effective if several essential conditions specified by Fearon and Laitin are met. An essential condition is the ability of group leaders to publicly punish in-group members for opportunist behavior and violation of intergroup peace. If leaders fail to "publicly sanction one's co-ethnics for violations against the out-group [it] will lead the out-group to begin a spiral or feuds [and] the in-group equilibrium will break down … when sanctioning is costly" (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 723). The ability to publicly sanction violators without high costs requires leaders to exercise strong social control over their constituency. The leaders' legitimacy and power must be accepted by the majority members of local community and backed by strong ethnic and communal social norms.

Strategic response to ethnic violence is partially contingent on informal leaders' ideology. Leaders can influence the balance of power between radicals and moderates within their communities, which can shape the community's overall response to uncertainty and promote trust and reduce uncertainty in intercommunal relations, as demonstrated by action of moderate leaders in Uchar, Toloiokon, Turan, and Uzgen. If they are passive or suspicious of the other ethnic community, uncertainty may lead to radicalization within groups and to escalation between communities that can spiral into violent conflict.

The research findings of this dissertation show that the leaders' legitimacy and the strength of social control over respective constituencies develops under long-term influence of local structural factors.

However, once the violence breaks out and the emerging anarchy dominates the scene, short-term contingent factors come into play in an increasingly significant way that also affects the capacity of local leaders to conduct self-policing and commit to the conditions of non-aggression pacts. Particularly, strong local social norms provide the basis for effective in-group policing in the long-term based on the structural-historical context, while the constellation of domestic forces and, to a lesser extent, intergroup balance of power, at the moment of conflict, affect the efficiency of in-group policing and the probability of pact-occurrence in the 'immediate-strategic context' (Jones Luong 2002). If community social norms developed historically under influence of structural and institutional factors help communal leaders to exert social control, the dynamics of ethnic violence and contingent events alter power relations and trigger power shifts. Thus, local intragroup and intergroup power balances were formed under the effect of both structural and contingent factors. Leaders and local communities faced a difficult choice to develop a strategic response to emerging anarchy and uncertainty. The strategic response of local communities is often determined in intragroup and intergroup interactions where actors contribute to the strategic action based on evaluation of their relative power. As Jones Luong argues

> individuals … utilize both the previous institutional setting (or the structural-historical context) and present dynamic circumstances (or the immediate-strategic context) in order to assess the degree and direction in which their relative power is changing, and then to develop strategies over the *outcome* to be vis-à-vis other actors (Jones Luong 2002, 14).

The neighborhoods' responses to uncertainty were contingent on the degree of the strength of in-group policing which, in turn, depended on the strength of local social norms and power balances.

Structural conditions included socio-economic, institutional, and spatial dimensions. As discussed in chapter 7, in Osh and other towns, strong community norms developed in neighborhoods with mostly long-term residents living in individual housing units. On the other hand, districts with a high concentration of multi-story apartment complexes and high and unstable residential mobility suffered from the problem of social disorder and opportunistic behavior. In-group policing is effective in strong and homogenous communities with established rules and good knowledge about members of the group. Examples among others include Turan district and Toloikon in Osh, the 1st and the 8th quarter in Jalalabat, and local communities in Uzgen. Spiral violence is more pertinent to larger communities with a large share of outsiders who do not have incentives to comply with intragroup rules due to weak ties with local communities. They do not live in those communities for a long time, so residential rotation is high, and ties with this community are weak as are incentives to long-term community commitments. Leaders in such neighborhoods are weak, community norms are unstable, fragile, and not widely shared within the

neighborhood, and sanctions against anti-social behavior are costly. I discussed the problems of this kind of neighborhood in chapter 6, exemplified by the case of *Oshskii Raion* and other similar neighborhoods located around the grand bazaar. This difference in neighborhoods' socio-economic and ethno-demographic characteristics derive from the previous urban and social policies of town administrations.

Nevertheless, contingent events and strategic interactions can mitigate or even remove structural constraints (Beissinger 2002, 2007). Even though structural factors provide a strong basis for the strength or weakness of local communities and norms that facilitate or hinder local leaders to exert strong social control over respective communities, in-group policing failed in some strong communities. Still other strong communities were involved in violence even if intragroup policing did not fail. These failures resulted from spillover effects and contingent intra- and intergroup interactions. In the first case, the main cause of the failure of in-group policing results from spillover effects related to intragroup interactions. This happens when a strong and peaceful community is infiltrated by thugs and radicals or exposed to an influx of outsiders such as embittered refugees or militant co-ethnics from other areas. In both cases, they change local intragroup balance of power. Arrival of aggressive outsiders shifts power towards radicals. Outsiders subvert policing activities of moderate leaders by instigating retaliating attacks or preemptive violence. They sabotage any attempts by moderates to initiate a non-aggression pact with the out-group members. Sometimes extremist outsiders replace moderate leaders and force local young males to join violence against the out-group.

This scheme took place in Nariman, where radical leaders of embittered refugees took over local power and instigated violence. The same script was precluded in Uchar where local moderates managed to resist aggressive outsiders. This shows that having structural advantages moderate leaders can revert spillover effects. In weak communities, even a small band of opportunists can cause disorder. Infiltration of instigators and thugs assumes some elements of pre-planning. Several community leaders reported in interviews with me about the infiltration of unknown outsider instigators in their communities at the onset of the ethnic violence. Similar accounts appear in international investigative reports regarding the trigger event at the Alai Hotel. In Turan, local leaders informed me about their concern with the infiltration of a growing number of unknown aggressive young males in their neighborhood at the onset of violence, which was disrupted by the closure of the neighborhood borders. This research does not have sufficient evidence on infiltration activities; more research on this is required.

Outsiders are an important variable that allows us to understand the micro-scale security dynamics in local communities. Some communal leaders wanted to keep outsiders away and not to involve them in

the neighborhood affairs even for the sake of security. They realized that involving outsiders involves high-risks of losing control over their constituencies. On the other hand, some other neighborhoods, distrustful and suspicious of each other's intentions, were probably willing to seek support of outsiders to secure their own physical safety. This example is represented by Zapadnyi neighborhood, where the local population supported outsiders out of fear of possible Uzbek attacks. Outsiders gained the upper hand especially in areas with weak community policing, and where leaders of neighboring ethnic communities had not communicated with each other in peaceful times.

Yet another scenario refers to the cases where violence erupted in strong neighborhoods even without involvement of outsiders. Unlike the previous scenario where violence was a result of intragroup interactions, in this case, violence relates to the dynamics of intergroup interactions. Obviously, some strong neighborhoods were attacked due to spillover of violence coming from neighboring areas. However, here I refer to strong communities exposed to non-spillover violence. Radicals dominated in such neighborhoods which became a hotbed for violent ethnic mobilization (the areas around the UDN in Jalalabat). Leaders in such neighborhoods were exposed to interethnic fears and/or radical views against the out-group members. Violence broke out in such neighborhoods following the action-reaction dynamics of the security dilemma. One example discussed in this dissertation is Kojo-mahalla/Tash Bulak neighborhood in Jalalabat, analyzed in chapter 9, and another is Furkat in Osh, described in chapter 5. These Uzbek neighborhoods attacked large Kyrgyz groups out of fear. Preemptive attacks backfired. Violence spiraled. Kyrgyz first retreated but then returned with weapons. Retaliation attacks were horrible, especially in the case of Furkat. Preemptive attacks were counterproductive as they shifted the balance of power among Kyrgyz towards radicals.

Analyzing the dynamics of the two-level strategic interactions is important for understanding variation of violence in segregated neighborhoods. Although self-policing is mainly an intragroup mechanism, this institutional arrangement was developed precisely to solve problems of tension and lack of trust in intercommunal relations. As Fearon and Laitin suggest, "interactions between individuals from different ethnic groups are marked by a distinct tension and lack of trust, which we explain as a strategic consequence of problems of asymmetric information due to the lower density of social networks across groups and to the differential ability to distinguish types inside versus outside the group" (1996, 727). Low density of intercommunal social ties was identified by Varshney (2002) to be the main mechanism leading to intercommunal violence. In ethnically-mixed neighborhoods, problems of asymmetric information and lack of trust is mitigated by the higher density of interethnic social networks. Therefore, residents in mixed

neighborhoods develop mechanisms of cooperation similar to what Varshney argues in his work. According to him, higher density of intercommunal ties leads to lower probability of ethnic violence. In segregated neighborhoods, interethnic social networks are at a very low level which leads to asymmetric information that produces tensions and creates problems of opportunism in interethnic interactions and a mechanism of in-group policing is designed to manage them (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 727). In this sense, intergroup agreements complement intragroup policing well. They help to deal with lack of trust and uncertainty in intercommunal relations. In chapter 2, I already discussed in details the importance and theoretical assumptions of intergroup pacts. Here, I briefly provide a few empirical observations.

Intergroup networks and a constellation of domestic actors are important to explain the success and failure of non-aggression pacts and in-group policing. Intercommunal networks between moderate leaders were crucial to initiate negotiations but without credible commitment a pact is not viable. Strong in-group policing and visible in-group sanctions against opportunists signals credibility of commitments. Here, I reproduce a list of conducive conditions related to leaders' role for intercommunal pacts in the towns of southern Kyrgyzstan that I discussed in table 2.1: 1) Leaders provide compliance of community residents with the terms of a pact in exchange for communal security; 2) To ensure compliance leaders should be deeply socially-embedded in and have "multifold roots in their social bases" in neighborhood-based constituencies; 3) Leaders without real connections to local community (or weak social control) will likely have difficulty to control locals and persuade them to comply with a pact and to organize such pacts in general; 4) If the leaders of one side sees that the other side does not have real power in a community or does not have ties with it then they will not trust the other side's compliance (credible commitment problem) to a pact or will not make pact at all; 5) Leaders initiate pact-making out of fear of possible spiral escalation of violence and make an agreement to conduct intra-group policing in respective communities; 6) Commitment to a pact requires firm-discipline in decision-making patterns and sanctions: Leaders must be capable of punishing violators who do not comply with a pact, and; 7) Perception of the future threats to the interethnic peace may explain the post-conflict pacts – peace declarations during *dastarkon*-feast meetings sponsored by local authorities.

In pacted neighborhoods, there should be legitimate leaders and strong intracommunal ties and social norms. To make a pact, leaders of both sides should exercise strong social control over constituency, if one of the negotiating parties cannot control its constituency then such pacts become meaningless as one of party cannot guarantee non-aggression (security). Therefore, a necessary condition for the success of pacts is strong in-group policing on both sides. Other requisite conditions for pact-making include social

ties between local leaders and absence of outsiders in the community. Pact-making communities should be located, preferably, in non-transit territory and have residentially segregated homogenous ethnic population, and presence of an adjacent segregated out-group neighborhood.

In this dissertation, I do not want to overestimate the causal power and influence of in-group policing and non-aggression pacts on peaceful outcomes. These mechanisms played a key role in preventing local level violence, however, some limitations must be mentioned. The very fact of pact-making does not automatically lead to peaceful relations. In-group policing cannot fully explain what causes violence between ethnic groups. Similarly, the absence of pacts does not imply the presence of violence. Pacts cannot guarantee peace if, especially under the influence of external factors, environmental conditions change, triggering unpredictable dynamics of contingent events and intragroup and intergroup interactions. However, pacts signify attempts to normalize relations, re-establish trust, re-assure peaceful intentions across groups and reduce chances for violent outbreaks between pacted neighborhoods.

Pacts contribute to peaceful outcomes. However, even when pacts ensure short-term peace, they do not guarantee strong and long-term cooperative relations between two communities in the future. Agreements have short-term stabilization effect on relations between two neighborhoods during or in the aftermath of ethnic violence but by itself alone, it is unlikely to sustain long-term ethnic cooperation. If intercommunal non-aggression continues and even transforms into cooperation between leaders, then it is more likely that the cooperation flourishes/develops because of these very conditions that brought leaders together and made them possible to negotiate the pact. Agreements also create opportunities and space for future cooperation (by bringing together the leaders). During these short interactions leaders have opportunity to build common ground for determining the future course of relationships. Some peaceful agreements indeed led to progress in social relations between communal leaders. During my fieldwork, I observed post-conflict progress in interethnic cooperation between communal leaders in several neighborhoods. For example, one outcome was a deliberate post-conflict arrangement by a fraction of Kyrgyz and Uzbek leaders from Uzgen *raion* to meet frequently and mitigate ethnic divisions.

However, to reach full-scale sustainable peace and long-term consolidated cooperation requires intercommunal civic engagement at grass-roots level which is possible with the development of intercommunal associational civic engagement and civil society emphasized by Varshney and the changes in (structural, social) conditions. In-group policing and intercommunal agreements at leaders' level do positively influence intercommunal cooperation in the short-term. However, in the long-term such delegative cooperation and diplomacy may lead to the retention of high levels of ethnic segregation and

interethnic and intergroup interactions and dependence on ethnic leaders. Intercommunal relations delegated exclusively to local ethnic leaders who will enjoy decision-making power regarding ethnic diplomacy can create incentives to conserve such relations and to abuse intergroup relations for personal interests. In other words, ethnic peace based only on interactions between leaders, pacts, and self-policing is vulnerable to external factors and politically-oriented ethnic manipulation and susceptible to ideological views of local leaders. in-group policing is based and depends on intracommunal mechanisms. It can be effective when social capital and intercommunal civic links within a community are weak or absent. However, these mechanisms of peace are fragile and provide an inferior alternative to a strong civil society.

# Appendix A

List of interviewees (all names are withheld)

| N | role/status | ethnicity | residence | time | Interview place |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Resident | Kyrgyz | Uchar, Osh | July, 2010 | Osh |
| 2. | Human rights activist, NGO leader, community leader | Uzbek | Turan, Osh | July, 2010 | Osh |
| 3. | Resident, NGO leader | Kyrgyz | Cheremushki, Osh | August, 2010 | Osh |
| 4. | Journalist, resident | Kyrgyz | Cheremushki, Osh | July, 2012 | Bishkek |
| 5. | Deputy head of international organization (monitored conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan) | Foreign citizen | | July, 2012 | Bishkek |
| 6. | Expert, professor at American University in Central Asia | N/A | Bishkek | July, 2012 | Bishkek |
| 7. | Resident | Uzbek | Cheremushki, Osh | July, 2012 | Osh |
| 8. | Researcher | Uzbek | Osh and Aravan | July, 2012 | Osh |
| 9. | Human rights activist, NGO leader | Uzbek | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 10. | Human rights activist, NGO leader, community leader | Uzbek | Turan, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 11. | Head of cultural organization, community leader | Uzbek | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 12. | Journalist, expert | Uzbek | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 13. | Expert, international organization staff | Uzbek | Cheremushki, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 14. | Community leader, former high-level official | Uzbek | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 15. | Community leader, NGO leader | Kyrgyz | City center, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 16. | Community leader, human rights activist, mediator | Uzbek | Shark, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 17. | Journalist | Kyrgyz | Zapadnyi, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 18. | Official, youth activist | Kyrgyz | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 19. | Journalist | Kyrgyz | Zapadnyi, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 20. | Expert, NGO worker | Kyrgyz | Manas-Ata, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 21. | Youth activist | Uzbek | Amir Temur, Osh | August 2012 | Osh |
| 22. | Human rights activist, NGO leader | Uzbek | Teshik Tash, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 23. | International organization staff | Kyrgyz | Manas-Ata, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 24. | Community leader, official at territorial council (district) | Uzbek | Turan | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 25. | NGO leader, mediators project | Kyrgyz | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 26. | International organization staff | Kyrgyz/Uzbek | Osh and Mady | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 27. | NGO worker, mediators project | Kyrgyz | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 28. | Deputy mayor | Uzbek | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 29. | First deputy mayor | Kyrgyz | Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 30. | Journalist | Uzbek | Kyzyl Kyshtak, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 31. | International organization staff | Foreign citizen | | August, 2012 | Osh |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32. | Official at village council | Kyrgyz | Shamaldy Sai, Jalalabat province | August 2012 | Shamaldy-Sai |
| 33. | Resident, guard | Kyrgyz | Osh and Alai | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 34. | Resident, professor at Osh State University | Kyrgyz | Turan, Osh | August, 2012 | Osh |
| 35. | Resident, bank personnel | Kyrgyz | Toktogul, Uzgen district | August, 2012 | Uzgen |
| 36. | Resident, bazaar trader | Uzbek | Uzgen | August, 2012 | Uzgen |
| 37. | Resident, bazaar trader | Kyrgyz | Sheraly, Uzgen district | August, 2012 | Uzgen |
| 38. | Resident, bazaar trader | Kyrgyz | Zerger, Uzgen district | August, 2012 | Bishkek |
| 39. | Journalist | Kyrgyz | Cheremushki, Osh | July, 2013 | Bishkek |
| 40. | Military officer | Kyrgyz | N/A | July, 2013 | Bishkek |
| 41. | Community leader, district official | Kyrgyz | Manas-Ata, Osh | July 2013 | Osh |
| 42. | Community leader | Kyrgyz | Alymbek Datka, Osh | July 2013 | Osh |
| 43. | Journalist | Kyrgyz | Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 44. | Community leader, head of territorial council | Uzbek | Ak-Buura, Osh | August, 2013 | Osh |
| 45. | Leader of district women council | Kyrgyz | Ak-Buura, Osh | August, 2013 | Osh |
| 46. | Community leader | Kyrgyz | Ak-Buura, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 47. | Community leader | Uzbek | Ak-Buura, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 48. | Community leader | Uzbek | Ak-Buura, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 49. | Resident, OSCE project mediator | Uzbek | Dostuk, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 50. | Community leader, district official | Kyrgyz | Alymbek Datka, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 51. | Head of district's elders court | Uzbek | Ak-Buura, Osh | August, 2013 | Osh |
| 52. | Senior district official, community leader | Uzbek | Amir Temur, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 53. | Community leader, district official | Kyrgyz | Cheremushki, Osh | August, 2013 | Osh |
| 54. | Resident | Russian | Zapadnyi, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 55. | Resident | Russian | Ak-Tilek, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 56. | Youth activist | Uzbek | Amir Temur | August 2013 | Osh |
| 57. | Youth activist | Kyrgyz | Zapadnyi, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 58. | Community leader, NGO worker | Uzbek | Sheit Tepe, Osh | August 2013 | Osh |
| 59. | Resident, OSCE project mediator | Uzbek | Alymbek Datka, Osh | August, 2013 | Osh |
| 60. | Senior district official | Kyrgyz | Ak-Tilek, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 61. | Community leader | Uzbek | Shark, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 62. | Youth activist | Kyrgyz | Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 63. | Resident | Uzbek | Dostuk, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 64. | Community leader | Uzbek | Shark, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 65. | Community leader | Kyrgyz | Suleiman-Too, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 66. | Resident | Meskhetian Turk | Zapadnyi | September 2013 | Osh |
| 67. | District official | Uzbek | Suleiman-Too, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 68. | Head of territorial council (district) | Kyrgyz | Kurmanjan Datka, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 69. | Head of territorial council | Kyrgyz | Zapadnyi, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 70. | Head of territorial council | Kyrgyz | Dostuk, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 71. | Community leader | Uzbek | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 72. | Community leader, former official, NGO leader | Uzbek | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 73. | Community leader | Kyrgyz | Toloikon, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 74. | Community leader, former official, NGO leader | Uzbek | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 75. | Community leader, NGO worker | Kyrgyz | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 76. | Community leader, teacher | Uzbek | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 77. | Community leader, teacher | Russian | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 78. | Community leader, veteran of Afghan war | Uzbek | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 79. | Community leader, head of mahalla (domkom) | Uzbek | Uzgen | September 2013 | Uzgen |
| 80. | Community leader, village official | Kyrgyz | Nariman. Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 81. | Community leader, city MP | Kyrgyz | Uchar, Osh | September 2013 | Osh |
| 82. | City official | Kyrgyz | Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 83. | Community leader, OSCE project mediator | Kyrgyz | Barpy, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 84. | NGO leader, OSCE project | Kyrgyz | Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 85. | Community leader, village official | Uzbek | Suzak, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 86. | Community leader, domkom | Uzbek | Aitmatov district Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 87. | District official | Kyrgyz | Aitmatov district, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 88. | Community leader, former domkom | Uighur | Aitmatov district, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 89. | Community leader, member of *aksakal* (elders) city council | Uzbek | Dostuk district, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 90. | Community leader, imam | Uzbek | Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 91. | Community leader, member of *aksakal* (elders) court | Kyrgyz | Sputnik, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 92. | Senior district official | Kyrgyz | Dostuk, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 93. | District official | Uzbek | Kurmanbek, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 94. | Community leader, domkom | Kyrgyz | Dostuk, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 95. | Community leader, domkom | Uzbek | Kurmanbek, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 96. | Police officer | Kyrgyz | Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 97. | Journalist | Kyrgyz | Suzak, Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |
| 98. | High-ranking police officer | Kyrgyz | Jalalabat | October 2013 | Jalalabat |

| 99. | High-ranking police officer | Kyrgyz | Uzgen | July 2014 | Bishkek |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100. | Community leader | Kyrgyz | Kenesh, Uzgen | July 2014 | Uzgen |
| 101. | Senior district official | Uzbek | Osh | August 2014 | Osh |
| 102. | Military officer | Kyrgyz | Osh | August 2014 | Osh |
| 103. | Community leader, former deputy mayor | Uzbek | Uzgen | August 2014 | Uzgen |
| 104. | Community leader, official | Kyrgyz | Jazy, Uzgen | August 2014 | Uzgen |
| 105. | Community leader, former official | Kyrgyz | Myrza-Aryk, Uzgen | August 2014 | Uzgen |
| 106. | Police officer | Uzbek | Osh | August 2014 | Osh |
| 107. | Community leader, former district official | Kyrgyz | Nariman, Osh | August 2014 | Osh |
| 108. | Community leader, domkom | Uzbek | Turan, Osh | August 2014 | Osh |
| 109. | Community leader, domkom | Uzbek | Turan, Osh | August 2014 | Osh |
| 110. | Women mediators | Kyrgyz/Uzbek | Osh | August 2014 | Osh |
| 111. | Journalist | Uzbek | Majirim-Tal, Osh | August 2016 | Osh |

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