WHAT REALLY HAPPENED IN OSH? COMPARING THE KYRGYZSTAN INQUIRY COMMISSION REPORT WITH INDIGENOUS ACCOUNTS OF THE VIOLENT EVENTS OF JUNE 2010

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by
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ABSTRACT

Despite the vast number of studies on the 2010 Osh Events, research on the comparative study of the official reports and indigenous memoirs on the interethnic conflict in the south of Kyrgyzstan have remained untapped. While anatomizing the tragic June events, scholars have focused mostly on the emergence of the conflict and used national and international reports to reference perceived facts or conclusions in their research. This thesis provides a different perspective on the 2010 Osh Events by exploring international and national reports along with indigenous memoirs, while comparing contradictions and similarities in their conclusions. Using a combined methodology of qualitative content analysis of reports by: The Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission (the KIC); National, Parliamentary and Ombudsman’s Commissions; a report by Uzbekistani lawyer Suhrobjon Ismoilov; and two memoirs by prominent ethnic Kyrgyz politicians, Melis Myrzakmatov and Sadyr Japarov, in addition to in-depth interviews (N=9) on the Osh Events with experts, this thesis argues that the conclusions of national reports and indigenous memoirs contradict the conclusions proposed by the KIC, while ethnic Uzbek reports agree with it. Analysis of the indigenous ethnic Kyrgyz memoirs reveal that the authors’ participation in the conflict, their political experiences and ethnic affiliations have shaped (and potentially biased) their viewpoints of the Osh Events. The study also reveals that while National and Parliamentary Commissions see former President Kurmanbek Bakiev’s clan and leaders of Uzbek community as instigators of the interethnic conflict, the Ombudsman’s Commission finds the historical legacy of the 1990 Osh Events as the main cause of the 2010 Osh Events.
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<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>HRW</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
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<td>ICG</td>
<td>International Crisis Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>KGB</td>
<td>“Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti” (Committee for State Security [of the USSR])</td>
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<td>KIC</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission</td>
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<td>GKNB</td>
<td>“Gosudarstvenniy Komitet Natsionalnoi Bezopasnosti” (State National Security Committee)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GoK</td>
<td>Government of Kyrgyzstan</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<td>NCI</td>
<td>National Commission of Inquiry</td>
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<td>PC</td>
<td>Parliamentary Commission</td>
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<td>PG</td>
<td>Provisional Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
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<td>RFE</td>
<td>Radio Free Europe</td>
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<td>SDPK</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan</td>
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<td>SSR</td>
<td>Soviet Socialist Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>UVD</td>
<td>“Upravlenie Vnutrennih Del” (Department of Internal Affairs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>United States (of America)</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>U.S. Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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Chapter One

WHY REVISIT THE “OSH EVENTS”?

The 2010 ethnic conflict in the city and oblast (province) of Osh (and to a lesser extent, in neighboring Jalalabad) of southern Kyrgyzstan allegedly originated from a small brawl between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbek young men on the night of June 10th, leading to deadly violence for at least the four consequent days. According to a 2011 report compiled by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry into the Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan (hereafter “Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission,” also known as KIC, an international group invited and sanctioned by the then Government of Kyrgyzstan), the Osh 2010 conflict left in total 470 people dead, 1,900 others injured and 2,800 properties destroyed or in one degree or another damaged.

Babak Rezvani (2013) has characterized the 2010 Osh Events as “an ethno-territorial conflict” (61). And while both parties committed atrocities during the conflict, David Gullette and John Heathershaw (2015) confirm what KIC has also claimed, that “systematic denial of rights” to ethnic Uzbeks and their casualties outnumbering the ethnic Kyrgyz made a number of international organizations to call the events as “pogroms against Uzbeks” (189).

Each of the commissions (international and national) mandated to investigate the 2010 Osh Events proposed their own version of truth; each also faced limitations in their work. By revisiting those reports, this thesis attempts to compare and contrast the KIC report with reports by the Government of Kyrgyzstan and selected indigenous memoirs on the Osh Events.
Background

The root of the conflict of the June 2010 Osh Events, i.e. the interethnic violence between the Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks of southern Kyrgyzstan, according to Arne Haugen (2003), goes back to the Soviet Union’s border delimitations of the newly formed Central Asian entities in mid-1920s, which among other things, resulted in disagreement on the delimitations of the newly formed borders. At the end, based on “economic and administrative needs” of Kyrgyzstan (189), Soviet cartographers decided to place Osh province not in Uzbekistan, but Kyrgyzstan, a decision which many claim undermined Osh’s ethnographic composition where the majority of the population were ethnic Uzbeks. Since then, the two ethnic groups in southern Kyrgyzstan have experienced a number of disputes, including two major bouts of violence erupting exactly twenty years apart, in June 1990 and June 2010, resulting in over 600 casualties combined (KIC 2011, Galdini 2014; Razakov 1993).

Osh is situated in the Ferghana Valley, itself an area split among Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, an area that is densely populated by a mixture of various ethnic groups, the largest being Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, and Tajiks (Fumagalli 2007b). Anna
Matveeva (2011a) claims that the 1990 and 2010 clashes had similar causes: “rise of ethno-nationalism on both sides,” a weakened political authority and “a sense of historical opportunity to make gains” (2). Since independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, the Kyrgyz Government has attempted to enhance the ethnic Kyrgyz identity of the majority titular population of the country, while also expecting minorities, including the Uzbeks, to adopt a civic Kyrgyzstani identity. According to Marlene Laruelle (2012), the ensuing imbalance between identities in the state-building process has led to Kyrgyzstan’s failure in developing a pluralistic society. The new Government of Kyrgyzstan, headed by interim President Roza Otunbaeva, established after the April 2010 “revolution,” which led to the fall of Kurmanbek Bakiev’s regime, instead of taking preventive measures to avoid the clash of ethnicities in the south, was preoccupied with technocratic issues in Bishkek, including the task of introducing political reforms and crafting a new constitution.

To avoid international accusations of inaction on determining the causes behind the June 2010 events, President Otunbaeva asked for assistance from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations, the European Union (EU) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in the establishment of an independent body to investigate the said events. This led to the formation of the state-approved Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission (KIC) for that task. To complete its report and to come up with its narrative of the events, the KIC (2011) considered detailed interviews with “750 witnesses, 700 documents, thousands of photographs and video extracts” (ii). The KIC report talks about the historical background of the conflict and the political context of both the 1990 and 2010 clashes. It also lists a series of recommendations for post-2010 conflict rehabilitation of the region and means of preventing similar conflicts in the future.
According to Matveeva (2011a), the KIC report came to the same conclusion as what Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the International Crisis Group (ICG) had highlighted in their own reports, that is, “the failure of a state to protect its citizens.” The KIC, however, goes much further in that it qualifies the 2010 Osh Events, including the supposed state complicity in them, “as crimes against humanity” (3). Most of the KIC report’s findings and recommendations were seen as satisfactory to external players, such as the U.S. State Department, the UN, the EU, and the OSCE, but not the Kyrgyz Government which warned that the findings could instigate further interethnic clashes.

Kyrgyzstan’s own National Commission into the Investigation of Events in June 2010 claims that the said events were the fault of a few irresponsible politicians in the country who instigated the conflict and that ordinary Kyrgyz and Uzbeks were both victims (GoK 2011). In this and some other ways, the KIC and the National Commission reports contradicted each other. In addition, the recommendations by the KIC for the Government of Kyrgyzstan (GoK) on resolving issues of conflict in the country were interpreted “as a violation of sovereignty.” As sign of its disagreement with the KIC report, the Jogorku Kenesh (Kyrgyzstan’s “Supreme Council,” a unicameral parliament), declared the head of the KIC, Finnish Parliamentarian Kimmo Kiljunen, as persona non grata (Gullette and Heathershaw 2015, 190).

In his account of the Osh 2010 Events, In Search of the Truth, the Mayor of Osh of the time, Melis Myrzakmatov (2012), writes that the “real guilty parties escaped justice,” a reference to the informal leaders of the ethnic Uzbek community (8). Myrzakmatov claims that the KIC report is superficial and portrays “the investigators’ incomplete understanding of the ethnic peculiarities of the Ferghana Valley,” where Osh is located (240). One of the former opposition leaders, Sadyr
Japarov (2015), in his own book, *Ten Years in Politics*, blames Kadyrjan Batyrov, a leader among the ethnic Uzbeks of Kyrgyzstan who now lives in exile in Europe, for his inflammatory speeches and actions which Japarov claims triggered the 2010 interethnic conflict. The KIC report (2011), however, does not blame Batyrov for the conflict and writes that contrary to what critics and rumors claim, Batyrov’s speeches on Uzbek language TV channels were not “a call for autonomy” (37).

**Research question**

According to some observers, including HRW (2010), the findings of the KIC report on the Osh Events were difficult for the main actors of the 2010 conflict to accept and would not be seen as “impartial and credible” (91). Taking into account these arguments, this thesis investigates the deviation of the KIC report from national memoirs of local leaders who were witnesses to parts of the Osh Events. This thesis, thus, aims at answering the following key question: *What are the local narratives by way of Kyrgyzstan’s National, Parliamentary and Ombudsman’s Commission reports and memoirs of Melis Myrzakmatov, Sadyr Japarov, and report of Suhrobjon Ismoilov on the June 2010 Osh Events?* In line with this main question, this thesis will also address the following sub-questions: *What are the key divergences of the said narratives from each other? And: How and to what extent do the above mentioned narratives differ from the Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission (KIC) report?*

**Theoretical framework**

This thesis seeks to determine the key differences between the KIC report on the June 2010 Osh Events and the National, Parliamentary and Ombudsman’s Commissions reports and selected memoirs of key local observers or protagonists of the events. To that end, reviewing the body of literature on the interethnic conflict in Osh and its
portrayal in the world and official interpretations of both the international community and the Government of Kyrgyzstan about the causes of the conflict will enhance a deeper understanding about the June 2010 Osh Events. Tim Epkenhans (2016), who studied the Tajik civil war of 1992-1997 using the autobiographies of a number of local observers and protagonists of that conflict, compared them with both the official Tajik government’s and the social scientific and historical studies and interpretations of the civil war and came to a conclusion that the “local conflict dynamics often deviate from the master narratives rationalizing the conflict in academic papers and political discourses” (1). In the case of the June 2010 Osh Events in Kyrgyzstan, analysis of the divergence of memoirs and local observers and the KIC report in understanding the interethnic conflict and comparison of those autobiographical accounts with international or national interpretations would not only be a novelty in the ongoing study in the relatively large literature on the Osh Events, but may also shed some new light on the said tragic incidences.

The theory of “Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict” (hereafter “Ethnic Conflict Theory”) developed by Donald L. Horowitz (1985) argues that individuals’ ethnic affiliations do not cease only around the household, and that they can even influence the political and economic structure of the state. According to Horowitz, the issue of ethnicity often revives during wartime and afterwards, and that the emergence of “ethnic sentiments have been supported by the widespread diffusion of the doctrine of ‘national self-determination’” (4). Horowitz identifies four significant dimensions in the explanation of ethnic conflicts. They are: the “severity of division,” “hierarchical nature” of ethnic groups, “centralization” of groups, and their “ascriptive differences.” Horowitz also highlights the overlap between ethnicity and kinship, and the fusion and confusion of one “sphere [being] extended into the other” (61). At times of crisis,
ethnic groups, who are attached to their kinship, first of all, may attempt to expand their kinship network and thus maximize their political power. Horowitz’s Theory of Ethnic Conflict will assist this thesis in examining ethnic and political affiliations of Kyrgyz and Uzbeks when analyzing the memoirs and national reports on the 2010 Osh Events.

Furthermore, “Framing Theory” as developed by Erving Goffman (1974) claims that individuals interpret what is happening around them through their primary “frameworks.” Dennis Chong and James Druckman (2007) define “framing” as a process “by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (104). Goffman (1974) defines “primary framework” as a subject or phenomenon “seen as rendering what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful” (21). He further claims that two types of frameworks are used by individuals in interpreting data: “natural” and “social.” Natural framework describes the events as “undirected, unoriented, unanimated, unguided,” where no actor physically interferes in the outcome. Social framework, on the contrary, is “guided doings” and “provide background understanding of events that incorporate the will, aim, and controlling effort of an intelligence and a live agency” (22). Thus, the same information could be interpreted differently depending on the type of framework.

**Hypotheses**

This thesis will test the following three hypotheses:

**H1:** Indigenous memoirs of the June 2010 Osh Events in Kyrgyzstan differ from each other depending on the author’s participation in the conflict, political affiliation and ethnicity.

**H2:** Ethnic Kyrgyz memoirs and narratives contradict the KIC report, while ethnic Uzbek narratives agree with it.
**H3:** National, Parliamentary, and Ombudsman’s Commission reports share similar conclusions on the former Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiev’s role of instigating the ethnic violence.

**Methodology**

To answer the above-mentioned research questions, this thesis will firstly use **qualitative content analysis** of five key reports and two memoirs of local observers of the Osh Events of June 2010. The second method used is **in-depth expert interviews** \((N=9)\) with former members of the National, Parliamentary, and Ombudsman’s Commissions on the Osh Events, in addition to experts familiar with the KIC report and the local narratives. As the available memoirs covering the Osh Events are primarily written by ethnic Kyrgyz, to gauge the perspectives of the said events from ethnic Uzbek viewpoints, efforts will be made to include Uzbek Kyrgyzstanis familiar with the Osh Events among the expert individuals to be interviewed.

**Research significance**

This thesis is significant for the following two reasons: **Firstly**, the absence of a substantial public inquiry into the KIC report and the diverging conclusions of that report with the Government of Kyrgyzstan’s findings provides an opportunity to systematically compare the two narratives on the Osh Events. **Secondly**, few previous studies on the Osh Events have paid attention to the consideration of local memoirs of observers and protagonists of the said events.

**Research limitations**

Like every research, this thesis, too, has a few limitations. The first is the selection of local biographies, narratives, and memoirs on the Osh Events, which are limited in numbers. Furthermore, they are also in Kyrgyz or Russian languages, and thus, a key
limitation of this thesis is in the difficulty of gaining access to documented Uzbek language observer and protagonist accounts of the Osh Events.

**Conclusion**

In an attempt of gaining a deep understanding of the Osh Events of June 2010, Chapter Two of this thesis will discuss the Osh Events of 1990 and its causal factors. Per the literature it will review, Chapter Two will also consider the historical, political, socio-economic and geographical aspects of the eruption of the June 2010 ethnic strife. Chapter Three focuses on the reports of various commissions established by the Government of Kyrgyzstan to investigate the tragic ethnic violence of June 2010 and also indigenous memoirs written by eye-witnesses with their own version of truth about the conflict. And finally, Chapter Four is devoted to the analysis and testing of the three hypotheses of this thesis.
Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW: THE “OSH EVENTS” OF 1990 AND 2010

While there is a vast literature on the Osh Events of 2010, the 1990 interethnic conflict, also in Osh (but also Uzgen province), has seen only limited number of scientific investigations. There is disagreement among scholars who have studied both Osh Events on the reasons behind the emergence of the interethnic conflict among the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks, the death toll, and the damages and consequences from the said events. And despite the wide research studies on the 2010 Osh Events, there is a dearth of research that simultaneously explores indigenous memoirs and reports of different commissions, including the international and national ones, in understanding the 2010 interethnic conflict. In this chapter, I will discuss selected literature on: The interethnic conflict of 1990 and 2010 in the southern Kyrgyzstan. I will also focus on the historical, political, socioeconomic, and geographic causal factors, in particular, of the 2010 Osh Events.

The Osh Events of June 1990

The Osh Events of 1990 mainly encompasses an interethnic conflict between Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks in Osh and Uzgen provinces, located in the south of the then still Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR). Talant Razakov (1993), an associate professor at the educational center of the Kyrgyz State National Security, in his book *Osh Events: Based on KGB Materials*, asserts that Mikhail Gorbachev’s *perestroika* (“restructuring” or “reforming”) [and *glasnost* (“openness”)] processes in the Soviet Union revived “nationalism and national egoism” which, in turn, engendered frictions among ethnic groups (41). Razakov claims that the rising tensions between the ethnic
Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in Uzgen prior to the Osh Events and the work of the “Adolat” (“Justice”) and “Osh Aymagi” (“Osh Region”) informal organizations could have served as a predictor to the tragedy, one which could potentially have been avoided had the government adequately addressed social and economic issues raised (45). Adolat, an Uzbek-dominated group, which, among other things, sought autonomy for Osh, supposedly had as many as 400,000 members, claim Kølln and Rohde (2013). Osh Aymagi had reportedly collected 7,000 claims from the ethnic Kyrgyz demanding land from the Uzbek-dominated Lenin kolkhoz, what some ethnic Uzbeks had interpreted as a threat of mass land seizures (Razakov 1993).

Witnessing the provincial government’s favoritism towards the Kyrgyz, some ethnic Uzbeks displayed their discontent through kicking out Kyrgyz tenants from their apartments and made 17 demands including the abovementioned autonomy and the Uzbek language to take official status. Razakov asserts that ethnic Uzbeks were forced to take such positions under pressure from extremist elements within “Adolat,” who threatened to burn the homes of dissenters.

According to the KGB documents, an estimated 1,500 ethnic Kyrgyz fought against an estimated 12,000 Uzbeks after the announcement of chairman of the city executive committee about the favorability of Uzbek demands except the autonomy demand which violated the USSR’s constitution (Razakov 1993). This last point of the chairman reportedly particularly angered the Uzbek crowd who began to march towards the city center of Osh. The city’s law enforcement and police could not contain the ensuing clash. The first secretary of Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan Absamat Masaliev’s televised appeal on 5 June 1990 for the unity of ethnic Kyrgyz-Uzbek relations came too late as the “two sides were driven with the thirst of vengeance and showed ... mercy neither to children or women, nor to
the elderly” (52). Razakov tells these events from his personal experience and what he labels as the reckless power of rumors and its manipulation over the masses. After the initial violence and killings, KGB employees, along with the “militsiya” (police), detained several ringleaders and adult males at places of alleged bloodbaths, while also attempting to dispel rumors about mass killings of Uzbeks by Kyrgyz or vice versa.

Based on explanatory memorandums of Kyrgyz witnesses from the Uzgen conflict written to the Prosecutor’s Office of the Kyrgyz SSR, “Uzbeks owned guns and en masse attacked Kyrgyz” who made only 15% of the city’s population, and proceeded to loot and burn their properties. On the other hand, Uzbek witnesses in their explanatory statements mentioned the rumors and the actions of Kyrgyz beating Uzbeks, while Russian witnesses mentioned Kyrgyz men sending off their wives, children and elders to safer places (Razakov 1993, 57). Due to paralysis of the local government, people found hope and trust in Asylbu Abdurahmanova, a deputy chairman of Osh province executive committee. When aksakals (“white bearded” males) “could not stop the inter-ethnic clash,” women took the lead and reconciled both ethnic groups, what was followed by return of the Kyrgyz refugees to their homes by the end of August 1990 (69).

Razakov further claims the lack of transparency in investigation processes as Kyrgyz investigators stood aside due to their ethnic affiliations. This caused a quandary as otherwise qualified investigators from other regions of Kyrgyzstan mostly did not know the Uzbek language and local southern traditions and therefore let some inaccuracies to occur. Razakov highlights the significance of the Soviet army in preventing even a larger scale scandal that could have arisen in the borders between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.
Many scholars give references to Valeriy Tishkov (1995) with his article “Don’t Kill Me, I’m a Kyrgyz!: An Anthropological Analysis of Violence in the Osh Ethnic Conflict”, which has become one of the primary sources in the study of the 1990 clashes. Tishkov characterizes the 1990 Osh Events as a “riot-type conflict” (134). According to the USSR census of 1989, the population of Osh province was 1.3 million in which ethnic Kyrgyz made 60%, Uzbeks 26% and Russians comprising less than 6% of the total population. Ethnic Uzbeks, concentrated in the cities of Osh and Uzgen, outnumbering the ethnic Kyrgyz. Tishkov notes that due to perestroika, the new leaders broke the balance of distribution of “high ranking-positions among three regional clans” (134). The violence of 4-10 June 1990 took the lives of 120 Uzbeks, 50 Kyrgyz and one Russian. Tishkov also notes that the 1990 Osh Events remained one of the only conflicts of its kind in the USSR which went through court investigations, where perpetrators were identified and imprisoned. Despite all the judges and lawyers were ethnic Kyrgyz, Russians and Ukrainians participated as members of a jury, and he claims that the process was “a true breakthrough towards creating a civic society with diminishing ethnic nationalism” (136). The trial process was conducted in Russian and translation into Kyrgyz was also provided.

Tishkov’s analysis, based on a social geography of ethnic violence, proves that Uzgen and Osh were geographically flat and therefore, the conflict happened in a type of a pogrom with less duration, whereas in mountainous settings, clashes usually transform into protracted conflicts. By examining the statements of witnesses at the court, Tishkov concludes that although females were not involved in the violent episodes, they were active in “mobilizing the men” (140). Motivation developed from rumors or myths of inter-ethnic violent incidences served as a significant factor in “provoking intergroup aggression” (146). Unlike other scholars who have analyzed
the 1990 Osh Events at the macro-level, Tishkov’s analysis is from the micro-level. He concludes that the theory of social paranoia best explains the 1990 Osh riots. Three mythologems: 1) the existence of an ancient Kyrgyz nation; 2) indigenous Kyrgyz living in the territory of their national state; and 3) all the resources in the territory of the state, institutions belonging to the Kyrgyz nation, claims Tishkov, heightened the paranoia and the level of violence.

Abilabek Asankanov (1996) labels the 1990 Osh Events as “Turkic self-genocide” (116). He claims that various socioeconomic and political factors prompted the tensions between the ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the region. Based on survey research, Asankanov argues that regardless of the ethnicity of respondents, the majority identified socioeconomic reasons of low salaries and low living standards, in particular, as the main causes of the clash. During the 1990 ethnic strife, young people were “the main destabilizing force” (118). A reason for this may have been that a newly introduced market economy had created unemployment especially among youth. With low salaries, young people could not afford housing and many were enrolled in a waiting list for dwelling or a land plot. Asankanov states that it was “a criminal error” of the authorities to allocate plots of land to the protesting Kyrgyz crowd without any consultation with their superiors, a decision which caused a radical opposition to rise (120).

Asankanov also claims that the “criminal collusion of the nomenklatura, the militia and the business sector,” was one of the main reasons behind the clash (120). Following the national policy of the USSR, all ethnic groups were ideally to have been represented in the bodies of the government with any excessive representation of ethnic group in one organ of the power to have been forbidden. Despite the disproportion of the representation in government bodies of ethnic Kyrgyz in the
south, there was “a mutual aid” between the two groups as ethnic Kyrgyz dominated in government works, ethnic Uzbeks dominated the market and the trade sector (121). That’s how ethnic Kyrgyz possessed political power and ethnic Uzbeks economic. Furthermore, the economically powerful ethnic Uzbeks aspired for political power and had joined the informal organization “Adolat” which was advocating for autonomy for Osh province towards the end of the Soviet era.

Olga Brusina (1990) rejects the aforementioned factors and asserts that the causes of the conflict go back to the year 1924 and the “national-territorial delimitations” (3). Brusina claims that while ethnic Kyrgyz historically were nomads and lived in the mountainous areas, ethnic Uzbeks tended to reside in plains preferring a sedentary lifestyle. As a result, “sedentary farmers of the Ferghana Valley became the founders of towns and cities including Osh and Uzgen” (3). The number of ethnic Kyrgyz living in these territories was minimal and only after the Soviet Union’s compulsory forced sedentarization and collectivization of the nomads did the numbers of ethnic Kyrgyz begin to rise in urban areas. As proof, Brusina quotes the 1926 census where ethnic Kyrgyz made up a mere 1% out of 30,635 people in the city of Osh, while Uzbeks made just over 90%; similarly, the city of Uzgen with a population of 10,701 had an ethnic Kyrgyz made of just over 2%, while ethnic Uzbeks constituted over 93% of the total population.

According to Brusina, new residents of the cities found jobs in the field of heavy industry, construction and transport companies, which provided hostels to their employees during their tenure. However, ethnic Kyrgyz in order to become permanent residents of the cities aspired for their own houses. They thus started to live in poorer conditions and work in less prestigious jobs while ethnic Uzbeks as permanent residents occupied the most prestigious positions at work and lived in their private
houses. Such an atmosphere created a discontented community of ethnic Kyrgyz, who were considered as non-natives while native ethnic Uzbeks benefitted from social conditions, and due to the socioeconomic inequality, the tension between these groups accelerated. Similar to Razakov (1993), Brusina also concludes that if the state of emergency in the south of the country had further weakened, Uzbeks on the borders of Andijan and Ferghana provinces of neighboring Uzbekistan would have intervened and the conflict would have generated even larger-scale atrocities.

The 1990 Osh Events was not discussed much outside of the USSR. There are only a few mentions in international literature that briefly capture the riots. Francis X. Clines (1990), a New York Times reporter, wrote of “growing ethnic rioting and Soviet troop countermeasures” that left 40 people dead in three days. Clines wrote:

the trouble was touched off by ... demands for homesites in a tract of 80 acres being released by the Government [for ethnic Kyrgyz who had] ... protested and demanded land for housing. The Government's decision [in turn had] prompted protests ... [a month before] by Uzbeks who complained they were not receiving a fair share ... Waiting lists for housing are often more than a decade long in [parts of the Soviet Union as Kyrgyzstan]. (Clines 1990)

Clines also wrote of: “Long-simmering enmities between the indigenous Kirghiz [sic.] majority and the ethnic Uzbek minority” and referred to the conflict as having been “over the distribution of sorely needed homestead land.” He also wrote that “a significant part of the toll,” i.e. loss of life and injuries, were likely due to “Soviet forces [having] fired machine guns and tear-gas grenades in facing a protest crowd of 20,000 Uzbeks” who were “throwing rocks and gasoline bombs in anger over the awarding of building plots to Kirghiz.”

Clines further wrote of the unavailability of having access to information from the area for the territory which was closed for international reporters. While referring to the official Soviet press agency Tass, Clines wrote that the Osh “unrest had [also]
spread to Frunze” (the former name of Kyrgyzstan’s capital Bishkek), where “troops fired into the air to disperse students who were reportedly trying to stone the local Communist Party chief at a meeting that had been called in an attempt to ease the community anger [among the ethnic Kyrgyz in the capital city]” (Clines 1990).

**The Osh Events of June 2010**

Unlike the 1990 interethnic conflict between the ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the south of Kyrgyzstan, the 2010 clashes have been plentifully studied, researched and analyzed by a multitude of scholars. The 1990 Osh Events, having take place at a time when Kyrgyzstan was still a part of the Soviet Union, was in effect closed for foreign study; however, the 2010 conflict was open to foreign independent investigation, reporting and academic study. Interpretations of the conflict, however, as I will elaborate below, vary due to historical, political, socioeconomic and geographic reasons.

**Historical arguments**

Arne Haugen (2003) claims that although the Russian Central Committee had determined the boundaries of the Soviet republics in the post-October Revolution era, it was allegedly Stalin, himself, who drew the borders. Border demarcation in Ferghana Valley, where Osh is located, was complex due to the valley’s heterogeneous ethnic composition and economic significance of its fertile lands. The Uzbek committee that directly dealt with the Russian Central Committee on determining the state territories claimed that based on the “national-ethnographic” principle introduced by Moscow, the city and province of Osh, should be included in the Uzbek SSR (181). However, the Kyrgyz, concentrating on the “double necessity” of Osh, that is, the plan to use it as a market place and an administrative center, had
no intentions to give up the region so easily (189). Both parties brought ethnic, socio-economic and geographic circumstances into the argument. The Kyrgyz as traditionally nomadic pastoralists needed markets, while the Uzbeks as sedentary agriculturalists focused on water acquisition. Besides Osh, writes Haugen, the ethnic Kyrgyz had claimed Andijan, as well, however when the borders were drawn, Osh was included in Kyrgyzstan and Andijan in Uzbekistan.

During the Soviet border delimitation process, ethnic Uzbeks throughout Soviet Central Asia were involved in arguments with ethnic Turkmens, Kazakhs, Tajiks, and Kyrgyz and were often able to receive the territories they claimed. This raised the question among other ethnicities as to whether “Uzbeks were a favored group?” Haugen (2003) agrees that the Soviets favored Uzbeks and considered them as being “politically mature” compared to other ethnic groups in the region (208).

According to Rezvani (2013), the immediate causes of the 2010 conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan were: “the legacy of the Soviet ethno-political system,” the ethnic Uzbeks’ “transborder dominance,” and “a mosaic type of ethno-geographic configuration” of the Ferghana Valley (76). Rezvani characterizes the 2010 Osh Events as an “ethno-territorial conflict” and claims that Soviet border delimitation had caused “ethnic security dilemmas” in the region (73). The Soviet ethno-political nation building whereby five titular ethnic republics were formed in Central Asia encouraged the rise of ethno-nationalism, where many among the dominant ethnicities saw themselves as native and ‘the others’ as tenants. Though ethnic Uzbeks are considered as a minority in Kyrgyzstan, they have a large kin-country next door (Uzbekistan) whose population outnumbers any other ethnic group in the region. Rezvani argues that such “transborder dominance” has allowed ethnic Uzbeks to rely on external support and often could be accused of having separatist intentions which
can potentially seriously alarm the dominant ethnic group in Kyrgyzstan, even enticing violent preemptive steps (74).

Rezvani criticizes Uzbekistan’s “chauvinist” nation building policies, whereby the government has aggressively registered other ethnic minorities as Uzbeks and in the process neglecting their lingual and cultural differences. He claims that Askar Akaev’s (the first president of independent Kyrgyzstan, 1991-2005) civic model of nationalism improved interethnic relations in the country; however, Bakiev’s policies (2005-2010) relied on informal institutions like tribalism and nepotism, with a special focus on the appointment of southerners (where he’s from) in government positions, which created not only a north-south tension, but also a segregation of ethnic Uzbeks in the south. Rezvani finds political and territorial factors important in understanding the Kyrgyz-Uzbek violence, while considering the cultural factor to be not as significant. He states that the 2010 conflict was “a largely one-sided violence against the Uzbeks” and refers to the ethnic Uzbeks as “underdogs” during the conflict (61). Furthermore, Rezvani mentions that President Otunbaeva’s (2010-2011) accusing of the Bakievs in the instigation of the interethnic conflict could well be true. It may not have been Kurmanbek Bakiev, himself, claims Rezvani, but his son Maxim or relatives together with the representatives of local authorities who were the instigators of the violence.

Michele Commercio (2017) sees the historical legacy of the 1990s as the main cause of the 2010 Osh Events. According to her, “structural violence” had been practiced in Kyrgyzstan with the Kyrgyz possessing political power and Uzbeks economic power (2). In synchrony, the Kyrgyz lacked economic resources, while the Uzbeks lacked political resources. Politically dominant Kyrgyz resented Uzbeks and both groups aspired to achieve the particular power that they lacked. Commercio
shares the same view as of Matveeva et al. (2012) that the Osh Development Plan was perceived as a threat to the Uzbek community who understood it as “a destruction of their culture” (Commercio 2017, 8). Structural violence, argues Commercio, “fueled the 1990 riots” and generated the 2010 conflict, as well (16).

Political arguments

Eric McGlinchey (2011a) disparagingly refers to the region as “Trashcanistan” for its “political mess” (2). He also claims that in comparison to Uzbek and Kazakh political elites, Kyrgyzstan’s political elite is “narrow and fragmented” (23). The Soviet Union, he says, played a pivotal role in the formation of political elites in Central Asia; however, in Kyrgyzstan’s case in 1990, Moscow performed an atypical action: It did not attempt to rescue a common large single party in Kyrgyzstan as it had in Kazakhstan in 1986 and Uzbekistan in 1989. After the 1990 Osh Events, Kyrgyz SSR’s First Secretary Absamat Masaliev was perceived as being responsible for the riots and the new president of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akaev, was selected from the outside of the Communist Party nomenklatura. Unlike Kazakhstan’s Nursultan Nazarbaev and Uzbekistan’s Islam Karimov whose republics had oil and gas, Akaev had to deal with scarce economic resources to gain the loyalty of a winning coalition. Until 2001, Akaev maintained the coalition with the help of foreign aid; however, with the establishment of the American Base in Manas International Airport in 2001 and its associated lucrative fuel contracts, Akaev and then Bakiev “outright stole state wealth,” which made the sidelined Kyrgyz elite infuriated and motivated to topple Akaev in 2005 and Bakiev in 2010 (in what many have referred to as “revolutions”). The Kyrgyz elite, claims McGlinchey, have mastered the art of mobilization (45).

In a more detailed discussion on the Osh Events, McGlinchey (2011b) argues that the interim President Otunbaeva made a mistake by dissolving the Bakiev era’s
parliament after the April 2010 revolution and, in the process, “alienating regional authorities” (97). McGlinchey claims that although southern elites were in favor of Bakiev, they could have assisted Otunbaeva in the establishment of stability in the region. Thus, Otunbaeva’s attempt to form legitimate democratic institutions “undermined illiberal yet long-standing [informal, but strong] institutions of Kyrgyz autocracy” that guaranteed stability (97). Based on McGlinchey’s analysis, an amalgam of endemic political instability and failures of the Government to cooperate with southern elites were the main causes of the interethnic conflict.

Another Central Asian expert, Kathleen Collins (2011) claims that the Kyrgyz authorities exhausted the previous regime’s “clannish ruling circle” that undermined formal institutions with the interim leader Otunbaeva’s initiative to change the Constitution by limiting the president’s power and electing a new president under a new constitution (154). The interethnic violence in the south, argues Collins, could not stop Otunbaeva from securing the Government’s legitimacy. Collins states that the Government even found ways to make displaced people in the provinces of Osh and Jalalabad including Uzbek refugees vote in the referendum. The June 2010 Osh Events took place when only two weeks were remaining until the constitutional referendum; and Collins claims that the timing and planning of the conflict specifically “targeting the Uzbek community” was an effort to subvert the Kyrgyz Government’s democratic transition (160). According to Collins, with the “malign legacy” of the Osh Events, the chances of legitimacy of a new Kyrgyz democracy were weakened (162).

Unlike Collins and McGlinchey, Reuel Hanks (2011) finds “identity construction” as a causal factor of the 2010 Osh Events. According to Hanks, Akaev’s ideology promotion was paradoxical, in that in parallel to “Kyrgyzstan is our common
home” motto that promoted civic identity, he also developed the “Epic Manas” that appealed to the “Kyrgyzness” of the country, thus excluding non-Kyrgyz citizens. Bakiev’s ideology in comparison to Akaev’s was “obtuse and ill-defined,” writes Hanks, and lacked a clear cut strategy (183). Hanks also claims that both governments of Akaev and Bakiev failed to develop a sense of pluralistic national identity, marginalized and “ostracized” ethnic Uzbeks, limited their political access and wrongly treated them as “by-products of machinations of Soviet decision-makers” (185).

Erica Marat (2008) partially concurs with Hanks. She states that Akaev’s civic-based ideology was not effective in practice due to the inability of Kyrgyz political elites and people to separate the “ideas of citizenship, nationality, nation, and ethnicity.” Moreover, the constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic distinguishes the ethnic Kyrgyz by referring to them as a “titular nationality” having a “titular language” (34). Marat rejects Hanks’ claim about the Epic Manas’ promotion of “Kyrgyzness,” and instead argues that the seven maxims of Manas—“national unity and solidarity,” “international harmony, friendship and cooperation,” “national dignity and patriotism,” “prosperity and welfare through tireless labor,” “humanism, generosity, [and] tolerance,” “harmony with nature,” and “strengthening and protection of Kyrgyz statehood” (35)—do not convey any calls for ethnic nationalism, but rather are intended to appeal to every citizen of the state regardless of his/her ethnicity as the maxims carry more “general values” (36). Marat argues that unlike Akaev, Bakiev neglected national ideology and did not use it to legitimize his power. This, while the population, after the 2005 Tulip Revolution had expected Bakiev to come up with a new ideology; however, Bakiev, perhaps fearing the power of the masses and its ousting capability, could not foresee the long-term nor did he design long-term
ideological strategies.

Morgan Y. Liu (2012) goes beyond the interethnic conflict and discusses what is meant to be Uzbek in Osh. Liu points out that Osh Uzbeks have been historically ostracized by both the Kyrgyz and Uzbek Governments, “one for being of the wrong nation and one for being in the wrong state” (43). The Osh Uzbeks ethnically affiliate themselves to Uzbekistan, but their citizenship belongs to Kyrgyzstan. However, the 2005 Andijan Massacre in Uzbekistan terrified the Osh Uzbeks and made them appreciative of enjoying comparatively more freedom and economic opportunities in Kyrgyzstan. When Uzbekistan closed its borders with Kyrgyzstan in 1999, given the threat by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan rebels, what had once been a simple administration border turned into a sensitive international border with checks and fences, complicating the connection of Osh Uzbeks with their relatives in Uzbekistan who lived only a few kilometers away. Liu claims that ethnic Uzbeks’ uncertainty in affiliation to both (or to neither) nation-states will continue for long “because the terms of their belonging to either are problematic and unstable” (73).

Socioeconomic arguments

In her book, World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breads Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability, Amy Chua (2003) analyzes how under certain circumstances, free market democracy can lead not to stability, but to resentment and instability. Chua focuses on ethnic minorities who for varying reasons come to dominate the market and become a source of resentment for indigenous majorities. Examples of Chinese minority dominance in Southeast Asia, Tutsis in Rwanda, Whites in South Africa, Jews in Russia, and “pigmentocracy” in Latin America support Chua’s argument. She concludes that the market gives wealth to the hands of “market-dominant minorities” while democracy gives “political power to the
impoverished majorities” (6). Chua writes:

In these circumstances the pursuit of free market democracy becomes an engine of potentially catastrophic ethno-nationalism, pitting a frustrated “indigenous” majority, easily aroused by opportunistic vote-seeking politicians, against a resented, wealthy ethnic minority. (7)

Free market accompanied by democratization, Chua asserts, can lead some governments to even initiate ethnic cleansing or other strategies that include “forced emigration, expulsions, and in the worst cases pogroms, extermination, and genocide” (163). That’s how the Ethiopian government used scapegoating methods by depriving disproportionately the wealthy Eritrean minority of their citizenship. Belgium’s favoritism of Tutsis by granting them ethnic identity cards, best education and administrative positions, years later became a basis of the genocide committed by majority Hutus towards the Tutsis whom had now become a disproportionately wealthy “outsider” minority (170). In this formula, Chua claims that “crony capitalism,” that of a corrupt relationship between “indigenous leaders” and a “market-dominant minority,” often leads to the majority's resentment of economically powerful minorities (147).

Damir Esenaliev and Susan Steiner (2011) argue that in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbeks have been perceived as economically more powerful than their Kyrgyz counterparts, and that media outlets often label Uzbeks as “rich.” Checking the correlates of welfare: “per capita consumption, per capita income and an asset index” (18), including the size of the household, employment, and educational level, Esenaliev and Steiner claim that Uzbeks have been “indeed better off than Kyrgyz households,” a reality which “particularly [held] in the beginning of the 1990s” under Akaev’s rule (3). They also claim that a large difference had existed between the ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbek especially when it comes to the “magnitude of the coefficients and the level of statistical significance in rural areas” (18)
Central Asian experts, who worked with the KIC, Anna Matveeva, Igor Savin and Bahrom Faizullaev, in their joint work “Kyrgyzstan: Tragedy in the South” (Matveeva et al. 2012) assert that the adoption of the 2004 Language Law that obliged all applicants for public service to prove their proficiency in Kyrgyz led to a (further) rise in ethnic Kyrgyz to occupy most of the new civil sector vacancies. To the contrary, Uzbeks found (as they traditionally had as well) the “private sector attractive” (5). At the same time, the rise of informal institutions during the Bakiev’s regime forced the Uzbek community to increasingly do business via corrupt methods. Having limited power in the south, the Kyrgyz Government asked the Uzbek community to cooperate in seizing Bakiev’s power, while Uzbek leaders, in turn, had sought an opportunity to lobby their interests and secure their assets. The Kyrgyz authorities motivated the ethnic Uzbek informal leader Batyrov to also lobby for his interests; however, under the pressure of the masses, the Government had to imitate the arrest of Batyrov, instead. Soon after the June 2010 events, Batyrov managed to flee to Ukraine, later seeking asylum in Sweden (Grytsenko 2011).

The Osh Development Plan on urban infrastructure, according to Matveeva et al. (2012), was another significant factor in explaining the interethnic conflict. The urbanization plan of Osh was first developed in the communist era, but with the Soviet collapse it came to a halt until it was revived under Bakiev. The Mayor of Osh, Melis Myrzakmatov, an ethnic Kyrgyz, revived the idea of urbanizing Osh, including the Uzbek traditional mahallas (neighborhoods) by developing modern apartment

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1 On the causes behind the 2010 Osh Events, Kadyrjan Batyrov, an ethnic Uzbek businessman, former MP of Kyrgyzstan, and former head of the University of People’s Friendship located in southern Jalalabad, is quoted of having said: “ethnic violence between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz was sparked not by … [people’s] hatred but by the politicians who wanted to use it for their benefits. [Ethnic] Kyrgyz,” says Batyrov, “are peaceable people. This conflict was needed by those who stole in [former President] Bakiev’s time or those who feared for their own seats” in the government (Grytsenko 2011). Batyrov fled Kyrgyzstan in 2010 and sought asylum in Sweden. Courts in Kyrgyzstan sentenced him in absentia in 2011 and 2014 to life imprisonment for “inciting ethnic hatred” and “organizing” the Osh Events. Batyrov reportedly died due to natural causes in Ukraine on 5 December 2018 at age 62. (RFE 2018).
blocks, instead of one-story traditional homes. The Soviet-era *mahallas* had been closed neighborhoods with “fenced houses, narrow streets and outdated sanitation systems.” Urbanization of *mahallas*, Matveeva et al. argue, would stop street trade and “end practices of paying token taxes into the budget” (17). However, the Uzbek community perceived the plan as a threat to their interests and resented the mayor’s unilateral decision; they also assumed that the mayor was to personally benefit from restructuring the *mahallas* and gaining more space for his business connections.

Matteo Fumagalli (2007a) had observed the political behavior of ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan prior to the June 2010. The first census after the Soviet demise shows that ethnic Uzbeks constituted the largest ethnic group in Central Asia, making up 78% of the total population in Uzbekistan, 15% in Tajikistan, just below 14% in Kyrgyzstan, 2.4% in Kazakhstan and just over 9% in Turkmenistan (571). For Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks, according to Fumagalli’s forecast prior to the 2010 Osh Events, “grievances and memories of past injustices” could serve as “a mobilizing idea” in the repetition of the Osh conflict (578). Memory, argues Fumagalli, can serve as “a demobilizing idea” for ethnic Uzbeks who are in fear to lose their family [or] property and become further marginalized (579). The 2002 Aksy protests and the 2005 Tulip Revolution can serve as examples. According to Fumagalli, relying on the fact that Uzbeks constitute the second largest ethnic community in Kyrgyzstan, they refused to be labeled as minority or diaspora, which has its own implications such as isolation and categorization. Fumagalli also points out that the Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan had already admitted that autonomy is dangerous and has consequences (583).
Emre Gurbuz (2013) underlines the fact that since independence Kyrgyzstan has attempted to increase state capacity via “authoritarian and non-authoritarian measures” (192). Gurbuz labels Kyrgyzstan as having been a “soft-authoritarian regime” under Akaev’s tenure and a “hard-authoritarian regime” under Bakiev’s presidency. Tribalism and regionalism, according to Gurbuz, play significant roles in the formation of political structure in Kyrgyzstan. “A geographical division and lack of cultural contact with different societies,” argues Gurbuz, divided the Kyrgyzstani population into the north and the south (198). There was a sequence of north-south order in the country’s presidency, as well: Akaev, from the north; Bakiev, from the south; and when Otunbaeva and Atambaev, both from the north, became presidents, regionalism was further exacerbated. The 2010 Osh Events portrayed the limited capacity of the state in the southern part of the country. Among other things, Otunbaeva’s team was mostly made up of northern politicians, and thus the south retaliated against Bishkek when it attempted to remove Myrzakmatov, the mayor of Osh. Myrzakmatov simply neglected Bishkek’s order and remained in power, demonstrating a clear example of “incapacity” of the central government (198).

Alisher Khamidov, Nick Megoran and John Heathershaw (2017), in turn, assert that many scholars have failed to consider the “geographic variation” factor of Kyrgyzstan in understanding the interethnic violence of 2010 (1120). As major clashes occurred in Osh (and to some extend in neighboring Jalalabad) province, some areas close to the epicenter stayed untouched. Khamidov et al. thus argue that local communities and their leaders have the power to prevent acts of violence. The said writers are convinced that conflict prevention did take place in nearby Aravan and Uzgen in 2010, for example. The peacekeeping concept “local turn,” i.e.
containment of the conflict by local actors, can be applied in those cases as residents of Aravan and Uzgen are hypothesized to have more sustainable “horizontal” and “vertical” ties than their colleagues in Osh who lacked “vertical ties to the crowds of hooligans” attacking neighborhoods (12). Khamidov et al. also note that Aravan survived the ethnic violence because unlike Osh and Jalalabad, Aravan is relatively small, has been immune from internal migration, and able to preserve kinship and cooperation ties between ethnic groups.

**Conclusion**

The 1990 ethnic conflict identified the unfair distribution of land as a main cause of the violence; however, the 2010 Osh Events is thought to have emerged due to a combination of factors discussed above. It can be argued that various investigations including the KIC and national commissions have been unable to fully diagnose the conflict in its multi-factoral dimensions. Chapter Three will be devoted to a literature review of the international and national commission reports and memoirs of largely the protagonists or observers of the 2010 Osh Events.
Chapter Three
INTERNATIONAL VS. INDIGENOUS ACCOUNTS OF THE 2010 OSH EVENTS

After the violent June 2010 Osh Events in southern Kyrgyzstan, numerous reports, books and memoirs detailing the events were written. The Government produced three official reports on the basis of the investigations conducted by National, Parliamentary, and Ombudsman’s Commissions. Local human rights organizations Kylym Shamy (‘Torch of the Century’), Citizens against Corruption, Ukuk (‘Rights’) and Spravedlivost (‘Justice’) presented their own publications on the 2010 Osh Events. Another entity, NGO Osh Initiative, based outside of the country, published its own report that mostly expresses the ethnic Uzbeks’ viewpoint. At the same time, the international community formed its own investigation commission, KIC, the formation of which was approved by the Kyrgyz government, to recreate the chronology of the violence in the south. Books and memoirs mostly written in Kyrgyz or Russian on the Osh Events depicted their own version of truth and revealed some valuable information in understanding the conflict. This chapter is divided into three parts: international reports, national reports and indigenous memoirs and narratives on the 2010 Osh Events.

International reports on the 2010 Osh Events

Among the international organizations, Human Rights Watch was the first to present its report on the 2010 Osh Events: “Where is the Justice? Interethnic Violence in Southern Kyrgyzstan and its Aftermath,” published on 16 August 2010. HRW’s report, among other things, tells of the significance of the ethnic Uzbek leader Batyrov’s assistance to the Provisional Government of Otunbaeva (PG) in regaining
power in the south which “encouraged ethnic Uzbeks to air their political grievances” before the constitutional referendum planned for June 27 of 2010 (25). Based on HRW’s findings, representatives of both ethnic groups did not use firearms in their initial fights; however, then the Kyrgyz crowds outnumbered the government forces and obtained their weapons, thus aggravating the situation. Along with criticizing the inability of the PG to contain the ethnic strife, HRW raises the question not about the capacity of the security forces, but their reaction to “acts of violence depending on the ethnicity of the perpetrators,” stating that:

By and large, the security forces seemed to focus resources on disarming the Uzbek population, even after Kyrgyz mobs started to systematically attack Uzbek neighborhoods on June 11, posing an obvious and imminent danger. (48)

According to the HRW report, there have been a series of human rights violations during the sweep operations and arbitrary arrests. Criminal investigations by the authorities, in turn, “disproportionately targeted ethnic Uzbeks” during the said operations (65). Many of the victims in detention had been “severely beaten, subjected to torture, such as asphyxiation and burning with cigarette stubs” (66) by law enforcement officers, while the families of detainees had been intimidated and the lawyers whose clients were Uzbeks were harassed and threatened.

The next international report released was “The Pogroms in Kyrgyzstan” by the International Crisis Group. The ICG (2010) report calls the PG “unruly and disunited,” and claims that the first deputy to President Otunbaeva, Almazbek Atambaev, during the four-day violence “disappeared completely from the public eye” (4) and Omurbek Tekebaev, another dominant figure, promoted a “hastily drafted constitution” (5) to legitimize the power of the new Government. The Mayor of Osh Melis Myrzakmatov, the ICG report claims, a former MP from Ak Zhol Party and loyal to the Bakiev’s regime, attempted to cooperate with Bakiev’s clan and the
PG at the same time; however, sensing the demise of the Bakiev’s regime, he positioned himself as a supporter of the Government, instead. “A post-Soviet tycoon” and leader of Rodina Party, Batyrov, according to the ICG, demonstrated the “moderation of Uzbek demands,” arguing that if in 1990 the Uzbek community was interested in pursuit autonomy which triggered the clash between the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks, this time around, they only aspired the Uzbek language to be given a legal status in Uzbek-dominant areas in the south of Kyrgyzstan (8).

The ICG report also pays attention to the international opinion. The U.S. and Russia stayed pessimistic while preferring to recognize Otunbaeva’s government as “the only available option” (20) and while the U.S. promised a new transparent contract with Manas Air Base and to finance OSCE’s police mission (an offer which the PG refused), Russia “placed the matter in the hands” of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (21). Another pessimistic attitude was shown by Uzbekistan’s President Islam Karimov as his “behavior was motivated by self-interest: the desire to ensure at all cost that events in the south of Kyrgyzstan did not undermine his tightly controlled but brittle regime” (28). Based on the analysis of the ICG, the main political winner of the crisis was the Mayor of Osh, Myrzakmatov, who by undermining the PG’s power in the south, turned into a national hero.

The Independent International Commission of Inquiry into the Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan (KIC) initiated and funded by the Nordic countries found support for its efforts by the leader of the PG Otunbaeva. Kyrgyzstan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs had sent a letter to the UN in support of the KIC headed by the Finnish politician, Kimmo Kiljunen, on 6 July 2010. The UN along with the EU, the OSCE and the CIS, in turn, decided to back the KIC with the authority and relevant mandate to investigate the Osh Events beginning on 29 September 2010. The terms of
reference of the KIC (2011) included: “investigate facts and circumstances” of the conflict, “qualify the violations and crimes under international law,” find those responsible for the events and finally propose recommendations to avoid future conflicts (xiv). The KIC mandate did not include criminal investigation, as that was considered the responsibility of the Government of Kyrgyzstan; however, the Government with its agencies did its best to assist the KIC in data collection. The commission, in turn, in its working method applied reasonable standards by collecting relevant evidence to shed light on the incident.

The KIC report states that both the 1990 and the 2010 clashes occurred during the political brew “when political leaders were maneuvering to replace old elites” (10). KIC also held that the generally accepted “dispute over title to land” cause of the 1990 seems “too simplistic” reason for the conflict (10). A political vacuum after Bakiev’s exile provoked a “three-way power struggle between supporters of the PG, supporters of the ousted President Bakiev and representatives of the Uzbek community” (11). Unlike the PG, the KIC does not find evidence of Bakiev’s instigation of the interethnic conflict. Instead, the KIC highlights the PG’s preoccupation with division of power, Bakiev’s properties and crafting a new constitution that, in turn, led to a poor assessment of the situation in the south with inadequate security response by the PG. The report claims that the PG used the ethnic Uzbeks as an “additional resource” in fighting against the Bakievs, but then made them a “scapegoat” when the tension escalated (21). The KIC names Kamchybek Tashiev and Akhmatbek Keldibekov, leaders of Ata Jurt Party; Adakhan Madumarov, leader of Butun Kyrgyzstan Party; and Myrzakmatov, the Mayor of Osh, as nationalists who contributed to the escalation of tensions.
According to the KIC, the PG opened 5,162 criminal cases against individuals charged in participating in the violence, but that it accused far more ethnic Uzbeks than ethnic Kyrgyz—“79% Uzbeks, 18% Kyrgyz and 3% others”—in having been responsible for the violence, while all the presiding judges over the trials of the accused were ethnic Kyrgyz (39). Injustice in charges and sentences given to the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks for the same crime was obvious, reported the KIC: “Kyrgyz defendants ... received conditional prison sentences, whereas Uzbek defendants received sentences of 20 years or life” (75). The KIC report does not categorize the clash as an “armed conflict under international humanitarian law” (49). It reports of planned violence committed in the mahallas of Osh including: “murder, rape, other forms of sexual and physical violence and persecution against an identifiable group on ethnic grounds,” conditions which led the KIC to controversially define such systematic actions as a “crime against humanity” while unplanned reaction of Jalalabad to the Osh Events did not qualify under such a crime (51). The Osh Events were not classified as “genocide” by the KIC due to the facts that the ethnic Kyrgyz had no intention to destroy the ethnic Uzbeks.

The KIC sharply criticizes the security forces of the government for their involvement in the attacks of the mahallas in Osh, their surrendering of weapons to civilians and the police’s taking the position of an observer instead of containing the conflict. In line with criticism, the KIC also shows appreciation of the PG’s establishment of State of Emergency in Osh as early as it was possible. The KIC finalizes its report with recommendations for the Government of Kyrgyzstan to avoid future conflicts on ethnic basis.

Another report written by joint cooperation of U.S.-based Freedom House, Memorial Human Rights Center (Russia), and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee,
titled “A Chronicle of Violence: The Events in the South of Kyrgyzstan in June 2010 (Osh Region)” (2012) became a source of reference for many scholars for its impartiality. Vitaliy Ponomarev, Director of Memorial’s Central Asian program, headed the general research component. While other reports discuss conflicts in Osh and Jalalabad provinces in sequence, this report only focuses on the Osh region. The joint report claims that starting from the end of April up until June 2010, tensions among the Kyrgyz and the Uzbek criminal groups became normal daily occurrences. Rumors told of mobilization of a large number of Uzbeks in Osh and Furkhat (eastern suburb of Osh), which have allegedly not been investigated by police (Ponomarev 2012). Ponomarev assures that small incidents of ethnic conflicts in May 2010 “helped form a mechanism for mobilization among both ethnic groups” in June (19). He considers the speeches of Uzbek community leaders in Kyzyl-Kyshtak village of the Kara-Suu district on 5 May as one of the milestones in the acceleration of the events. According to Ponomarev, based on the UVD (Department of Internal Affairs) documents in the 15 May speech of Kadyrjan Batyrov “there is nothing that can be considered as a call for violence and illegal activity or discrimination against citizens on ethnic grounds” (20). However, the ethnic Kyrgyz had agonistic reactions to Batyrov’s speech.

The Ponomarev-headed report considers all the official and unofficial reports written on the 2010 Osh Events. It claims that the KIC report’s attempt to recreate four days of violence was “unsuccessful” and “due to incorrect dates and times cited, the reconstruction of events found in the KIC report sometimes describes incidents that did not take place” (10). National, Parliamentary, and Ombudsman’s Commission reports, in turn, Ponomarev writes, “consciously avoided a detailed analysis of key events” during the pogrom and “presented stereotypes that had been formed among
the ruling elite in the south at that time” (8). He also claims that a statement about Uzbek mosques’ *azan* (Islamic call for prayer), specifically its time as presented by the reports of Ombudsman’s Commission, Parliamentary Commission, UVD document and a report by MP Ismail Isakov, did not match each other. According to the joint report, “the most well-known myth is regarding the numerous murders and mass rapes of Kyrgyz girls by Uzbeks in the dormitory of Osh State University” that assisted in mobilizing the crowd in a short period of time, and which lacks the necessary basis in facts (59). In addition, the number of deaths during the Osh Events was reportedly exaggerated by mass media and diminished by the authorities. Based on the information presented by the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, the number of the deaths was “418 persons: 266 Uzbeks and 104 Kyrgyz, 5 from other nationalities and 43 unknown” (193). The Ponomarev-headed report claims that “by the spring of 2011, the estimates of the number of victims of the conflict in the materials from official organs and [NGOs] ... in Kyrgyzstan, including missing persons, ranges from about 465 to 500 persons” (197).

**National reports on the 2010 Osh Events**

By presidential decree, the National Commission of Inquiry (NCI) was established on 12 July 2010 to investigate the interethnic conflict in Osh and Jalalabad provinces and headed by Abdygany Erkebaev. To guarantee the impartiality and transparency of the investigation, the NCI interviewed the head of the PG Otunbaeva along with her team including Atambaev, Omurbek Tekebaev, Azimbek Beknazarov, Temir Sariev, attorney-general Kubatbek Baibolov, MPs Kamchybek Tashiev, Kursan Asanov and Jyldyz Joldosheva; in addition to NGO directors; representatives of national and foreign mass media; and international experts.
The report of this commission along with historico-cultural and political roots of the Osh Events, discusses how a poor delimitation of borders between Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan causes numerous misunderstandings and tensions. The 1990 clash, writes the NCI, had served as “an unforgettable lesson for state leaders” due to their ineptitude to assess the situation immediately and conduct public awareness campaigns. Based on the analysis of the 2010 clash, the initial plan for the interethnic conflict started in the north of the country, namely, in “Hawaii” restaurant in the town Tokmok and in the village of Maevka, Chui province. The report states that although “the extremists could not pursue their interests in the north, they realized their antagonistic ambitions in the Osh and Jalalabad provinces” (Kabar 2011).

The NCI is of the opinion that the 2010 Osh Events erupted due to the “cooperation of Uzbek community leaders with Bakiev’s clan” (Kabar 2011). The report asserts that former MPs Batyrov, Abdrasulov and Salahitdinov assembled up to 5,000 ethnic Uzbeks to conduct demonstrations to pursue their interests. In addition, “Bakiev’s supporters, criminal world, drug dealers, religious extremists under the influence of external forces” assisted in the outbreak of the ethnic violence in the south. The report accuses the PG along with its southern branches, mayors, governors and security forces of ineptitude to stop the accelerating conflict. One of the main mistakes of the PG, according to NCI, was the release of arrested individuals in the 2008 Nookat case without ultimate investigation which intensified the position of religious extremists and representatives of terrorist groups and the re-emergence of their activities (Kabar 2011).

Aside from the NCI, a Parliamentary Commission (PC) headed by Tokon Mamytov was formed in January of 2011 and included 25 MPs, five representatives from each parliamentary faction. Disagreements among members erupted within the
commission and only 21 MPs signed the PC’s final report and three members Ismail Isakov, Jyldyz Joldosheva and Shirin Aytmatova proposed their version in separate reports which are not mentioned in the PC report (Stobdan 2014). Tokon Mamyтов in his report claims that “the interethnic conflict was planned and organized by Kadyrjan Batyrov, Inomjan Abdurasulov, Karamat Abdullaeva, Jallalidin Salakhuddinov and other companions” (RFE 2011a). The PC report highlights that Batyrov’s speech on 15 May 2010 addressed to ethnic Uzbeks was politically motivated, was aired on three television stations in the south (Mezon, Osh, and Smart TVs), and that the Prosecutor’s Office and the State National Security Committee (GKNB) did not take any measures in stopping it. The PC report claims that Batyrov did not only limit himself with a demand for autonomy and instigation of interethnic conflict, but also attempted “to provoke a military conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan by attacking checkpoint Dostuk in Osh, in particular on the border guards of Uzbekistan,” which was contained by the border guards of Uzbekistan with the use of arms (GoK 2011, 23). Besides the Uzbek community leaders, the report also emphasizes the contribution of Bakiev’s clan, criminal forces and drug traffickers in the eruption of the ethnic violence (RFE 2011b).

Similar to other reports, the PC report also blames the PG and law enforcement body for failing to prevent the violence. The PG, it claims, “could not formulate its methods on dissemination of its genuine power in Jalalabad and Osh provinces and the city of Osh” (GoK 2011, 45). Certain rumors, claims the report, circulated on the Internet exacerbated the tension between the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. “Information about killing of 20 Uzbeks during the sweep operations carried out by the law enforcement of Kyrgyzstan in Nariman village of Kara-Suu region” and “Kyrgyz burning alive 200 Uzbeks in Kara-Suu mosque” found no factual basis,
states the report (46). The report also highlights large financial spending on mass media and foreign mercenaries’ participation in the ethnic violence. However, the report did not give any evidence of the supposed “third forces’” involvement in the conflict (Stobdan 2014, 41).

As mentioned above, three members of the PC, who did not agree with the conclusions of the commission, proposed their own versions. MP Isakov blamed former President Bakiev and his regime. Isakov states that if the events of 7 April 2010 (aka “Revolution” or regime change) had not happened, interethnic conflict would, in turn, not have erupted (RFE 2011a). Another member of the PC, MP Joldosheva, proposed her version where she claims that “setting of Bakiev’s family house and the Kyrgyz flag on fire by Kadyrjan Batyrov and Asylbek Tekebaev (brother of Omurbek Tekebaev, the PG member) was the biggest mistake” (Stobdan 2014, 42).

On the basis of the Ombudsman’s Law of the Kyrgyz Republic, an independent commission was established on 5 August 2010 to investigate the tragic Osh Events. The Ombudsman’s commission report (2011) first discusses the 1990 clashes and its emergence due to the perestroika process that had led to “national self-consciousness” (95). According to the Ombudsman’s report, exacerbation of socio-economic issues particularly the lack of sufficient land plots; emergence of informal organizations; the rise of national self-consciousness of the ethnic Kyrgyz, who had felt to have had a low status in the country while being as part of the titular nation; and the sentiments of ethnic Uzbeks, who had a discontent due to perceived discrimination from the Kyrgyz, and the inability of the government to address those issues on time had triggered the June 1990 Osh Events.
The Ombudsman’s report asserts that the 1990 and 2010 ethnic clashes share the same key cause and consequences, which is political instability combined with impunity of genuine responsible individuals for the conflict. The report also adds that provocative speeches of Uzbek leader Batyrov that aired on Osh and Mezon TVs “offended the honor and dignity of the Kyrgyz nation” (98). The Ombudsman criticizes the capacity of local government and accentuates local officials’ inability to carry out public awareness campaigns. Weak police and poorly technically equipped law enforcement added to the rapid acceleration of the tension. The report also mentions an interesting fact not mentioned in other reports: “During the mass riots, the number of foreign journalists increased as if they had already known about the events” (98). Several international media outlets labeled the conflict as a genocide which according to the Ombudsman’s report, was “absolutely inaccurate” (99). The report argues that if Uzbeks had been discriminated, “they would not have two Uzbek universities, 135 schools with Uzbek language teaching, Drama Theatre, three television channels and five newspapers” in Kyrgyzstan that no other Uzbek diaspora in any country have (99).

The Ombudsman’s report also notes the Government’s incompetence to protect its citizens regardless of their nationality and criticizes the Bakiev’s regime along with the PG for their inability to establish “inclusive national security system” (99). The Law “On the right of citizens to assemble peacefully without arms and hold peaceful demonstrations” in the Kyrgyz Republic, according to the Ombudsman, was paradoxical due to the fact that initial peaceful demonstrations later turned into the events that violated human rights. The report also accuses both Bakiev and Akaev’s regimes of not being able to address the roots of the problem, instead of solving issues on the surface. However, the Ombudsman’s report claims that the main responsibility
belongs to the PG which let the ethnic violence happen, and claims that “both ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks are guilty” (102).

**Indigenous memoirs and narratives on the 2010 Osh Events**

There are many ethnic Kyrgyz writers and eye-witnesses that have written about the 2010 Osh Events. In his autobiographical account *In Search of the Truth*, Melis Myrzakmatov (2012), who had become the Mayor of Osh in 2009, writes that he was a university student during the 1990 interethnic conflict in Osh. In his opinion, the 1990 clashes were not assessed properly by the Soviet government as it let the real instigators of the ethnic violence, a number of ethnic Uzbek separatists, escape criminal charges. Myrzakmatov highlights that the Soviet government’s documents about the 1990 Osh Events did not mention the word “separatism” anywhere in it, that many of the imprisoned were ethnic Kyrgyz, which led to the discontent among the Kyrgyz, in particular the students in the city of Osh.

While experiencing the 2010 interethnic conflict, Myrzakmatov points out how the investigation committees in their reports returned to the topic of earlier unresolved separatism issue. Myrzakmatov blames the “inability to lead adequate policy,” “lack of holistic ideology,” and “lack of corresponding solutions directed against separatist actions” as the main causes of both the 1990 and 2010 interethnic conflicts in southern Kyrgyzstan (10).

Although Myrzakmatov does not blame ordinary Uzbeks in the eruption of the violence in 2010, he still finds instigators of the conflict to belong to ethnic Uzbeks. In order to contain the conflict, Myrzakmatov claims to have alarmed the PG to take measures; however, he says that the PG leaders showed indifferent attitude towards the situation in Osh and “added fuel to the fire, playing a cat and mouse with separatist leaders and the Uzbek community” (41). The PG members distrusted
Myrzakmatov for being “Bakiev’s person” given that he had become mayor via Bakiev-era ruling political party Ak Zhol. Myrzakmatov, in turn, (perhaps correctly) claims that members of the PG, including Otunbaeva, for being minister of foreign affairs during the Bakiev’s regime, Atambaev for being prime minister, Azimbek Beknazarov for being chief prosecutor can also be considered as Bakiev’s persons. As the PG finds “Bakiev’s people” and “third forces” responsible for the instigation of the ethnic strife, Myrzakmatov supports the KIC’s statement about Bakiev’s innocence in the Osh Events and assures that the PG deceived the people by putting all blame to the Bakievs. He further writes:

To the contrary, short-sighted representatives of the authorities were not aware that through their own actions, they were exacerbating the state of affairs and growing apart from people of the south. Hence, in their opinion, are half of the population of Kyrgyzstan Bakiev’s people? (66)

The national and parliamentary commissions, according to Myrzakmatov, investigated the Osh Events “on the superficial level,” and consequently their reports did not single out the perpetrators’ identifications and “did not meet people’s expectations in the south” (78).

An opposition leader and a former member of the Kyrgyz Parliament, Sadyr Japarov, in his memoir Ten Years in Politics (2015) devotes a chapter to the 2010 Osh Events. Japarov emphasizes that after the 2010 April Revolution, the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK) and Ata Meken political parties became interested in Batyrov due to the upcoming parliamentary elections. The SDPK, claims Japarov, headed by Atambaev attempted to gain Uzbek votes via Batyrov’s support and “even agreed to grant ethnic Uzbeks with autonomy in Osh province” (19). On the other hand, the Ata Meken Party led by Tekebaev also attempted to negotiate with Batyrov. Thus, according to Japarov, Batyrov’s self-esteem grew and became a spirit
of the Uzbek community in reaching their long-awaited purposes.

Japarov notes that Batyrov together with his companion Kamchybek Tashiev, they arrived in Osh on 12 June and engaged in atrocities themselves. By giving names of the local authorities who participated in the conflict and did their responsibilities, Japarov criticizes the PG for the fact that he “could not spot a single member of the PG during the conflicts” in Osh and Jalalabad, in particular Atambaev who allegedly had hid in his house until the situation had stabilized (21). All the members of the PG met Japarov upon his arrival to Manas airport with a group of severely injured citizens in desperate need of medical care and instead of treating them, the PG members approached with investigation questions. In his conclusion, Japarov blames the “election for being an evil itself” and recognizes that the PG opened a Pandora’s box when it made “a political trade” with Kadyrjan Batyrov (21).

The ousted president of Kyrgyzstan, Kurmanbek Bakiev, finds the new Kyrgyz Government, the PG, accountable for the ethnic strife in Osh and Jalalabad. In his memoir Pain, Love and Hope: My Kyrgyzstan Bakiev (2015) claims that he left the country to prevent a civil war that could have waged especially during the Osh Events. According to Bakiev, elements within the PG were behind both the 7 April 2010 Revolution and the June 2010 Osh Events, and it was them who pushed the civilians to the “bloody meat grinder” (77). Bakiev thus sees a connection between the April Revolution and the June Osh Events, and claims that the interethnic conflict was the “direct outcome of the coercive regime change” (84). After the April Revolution, the Government engaged itself in various illegal acts such as “blackmail, disinformation, [and] manipulation” of the mass consciousness and cooperation with ethnic Uzbek criminal environment, so claims Bakiev (78). He alleges that the various commissions of inquiry, including the KIC, were not granted sufficient authority to
adequately question the representatives of the Kyrgyz Government, as the authorities were doing their best, in Bakiev’s view, to clean up the traces of their involvement in the Osh Events and throw the blame on him and his supporters, instead.

A journalist Yrysbek Omurzakov has written a book called April 7 and Conflict in the South in 2010: Through the Eyes of a Journalist (2013) where he extensively discusses national and international reports and his findings on the interethnic conflict. Omurzakov claims that the KIC, headed by the Finnish parliamentarian Kiljunen, became suspicious in the public’s eyes when in parallel a film, An Hour of the Jackal (a documentary on the Osh Events produced by an ethnic Uzbek oppositionist abroad), was released in Finland. “A lack of knowledge on historical and social aspects of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek relations and ignorance of the mentality of both ethnic groups” writes Omurzakov, made Kiljunen conclude in favor of Uzbeks (136). For the KIC’s statements about the persecution of Uzbeks outnumbering the Kyrgyz after the conflict and underrepresentation of Uzbeks in the law enforcement body of the GoK, Omurzakov responds that self-defending ethnic Kyrgyz have not been charged and ethnic Uzbeks are naturally affiliated with trade and find jobs in the state bodies as not having promising futures. Omurzakov also writes that the Parliamentary Commission headed by Mamytov concludes its report with general statement “each side is guilty” and could not name the genuine responsible individuals for the violence (136). Omurzakov claims that the report of the Ombudsman’s Commission is “more objective” where “unresolved socio-economic factors” and “a careless investigation of the 1990 clash” along with the Government’s little attention in the south of the country best explains the emergence of the 2010 ethnic strife (137).
Omurzakov’s next findings include statistical facts about the ethnic Uzbek representation in the country. He writes that a Kyrgyz-Uzbek University since its foundation have been headed by rector M. Mamasaidov and then A. Ismanjanov of Uzbek ethnicity; Uzbek Language and Literature Department under Osh State University had been headed by R. Tursunov, also an Uzbek; and the Babur Uzbek Drama Theatre was headed by an ethnic Uzbek B. Tuhmatov. There were also Uzbek cultural centers, Uzbek language newspapers and several television channels including Osh TV, Mezon TV, and DDD in the country. “In 2009-2010 among 57 schools in Osh there were 14 Kyrgyz, 14 Russian, 8 Uzbek-Russian, 9 Kyrgyz-Russian, 2 Kyrgyz-Russian-Uzbek and 1 Kyrgyz-Uzbek” (155). He names a number of ethnic Uzbek professors who also work in the universities of Osh. In addition, he lists the names of ethnic Uzbek MPs (“B. Juraev, E. Kochkarov, S. Kamalov, A. Sabirov, D. Sabirov, A. Artykov, Fattahov, Hakimov, K. Batyrov, I. Abdrasulov, J. Salahitdinov, M. Mamasaidov, O. Nazarov and E. Akramov”) who had been in the Jogorku Kenesh, while also writes that three individuals of Uzbek nationality: Alisher Sabirov, Sherkozy Mirzakarimov and Rasul Rayimberdiev have been Major Generals and Amangeldi Muraliev had been the governor of Osh province, who later became prime minister of Kyrgyzstan. In addition, he claims there were ethnic Uzbeks in senior provincial government positions in the south (Omurzakov 2013). By mentioning these facts Omurzakov compares the status of ethnic Kyrgyz in Uzbekistan and cannot single out any ethnic Kyrgyz holding any leading positions or degrees in Uzbekistan.

Abdimalik Tajibaev in his book Causal Factors of the Tragic Osh Events (2014) asserts that the demonstrations held by Kadyrjan Batyrov in May and June were instigated by the Provisional Government. He writes:
The PG aspired to push its draft constitution through the referendum to legitimize Roza Otunbaeva’s power and Batyrov-organized demonstrations requested by the PG were supposed to distract people’s attention from the constitution and hastily hold the referendum; however, the PG did not expect the situation would get out of control. (Tajibaev 2014, 16)

As National and Parliamentary Commissions were established by the Government, “both of them depicted the PG’s agenda” and “due to the PG’s provision of inaccurate information to the KIC,” its conclusion did not meet people’s expectations, claims Tajibaev (118). He complains that years after the 2010 Osh Events, the Government has not united all the reports of these commissions and has not made its final conclusion. According to Tajibaev, the absence of official political assessment of the 2010 Osh Events by the government may lead to the “third wave” of the interethnic conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan.

Syrtdai Musaev in his article “Continuation of An Hour of the Jackal or report that undermines the ethnic Kyrgyz,” published in the newspaper Kyrgyz Ruhu, states that the KIC report is biased in favor of ethnic Uzbeks. The article claims that the “KIC report did not mention Uzbeks calling azan ... untimely so as to attack the ethnic Kyrgyz, already prepared manholes for guns to shoot and written signs of SOS on their roofs, burning of a Kyrgyz flag by Uzbeks, killings of disarmed members of official government” and even if it did, he writes, then the KIC generalized it by smoothing those facts (Musaev 2011, 7). According to Musaev, the KIC report does not answer the main questions that it had initially been mandated, and contained, instead, “repetition of the same ideas by different sentences and intentionally complicated styles of the text, make the reader to easily get tired from reading” (3). When the ethnic Kyrgyz antagonized the KIC conclusions, Musaev assumes the conspiracy that it went on to release An Hour of the Jackal, which allegedly could be a continuation of the report.
As mentioned above, this thesis’s main limitation was gaining access to the reports, memoirs or books in Uzbek-language or written by Uzbek authors on Osh Events. Therefore, the only material that this thesis has in this category belongs to Suhrobyon Ismoilov, a citizen of Uzbekistan, and a lawyer and a director of Expert Working Group, a human rights analysis action team, and also a regional representative of Alisher Navoi Institute in Central Asia. Ismoilov was one of the co-founders of the NGO Osh Initiative, based outside of Kyrgyzstan, which came up with its own independent report on the 2010 Osh Events that also caused a public outcry. Later, it became known that the Osh Initiative merged with the Institute of Alisher Navoi. Ismoilov’s report “June 2010 Events in Kyrgyzstan: Repercussions and Consequences” (2011), talks about the “mass pogroms” in the south of Kyrgyzstan and emphasizes the fears of Alisher Navoi Institute about the possibility of another ethnic strife, if proper measures are not taken to mitigate the conflict potential (2). “Unpunished and uncontrolled civil adventurism” including the numerous demonstrations held by regular citizens, claims Ismoilov, depicts the absence of the law and order in the country and land grabbing by forces, where the lands of [ethnic] Uzbeks were supposedly overtaken by the Kyrgyz near Osh in November 2010 (3).

According to Ismoilov, ethnic Uzbeks have been interesting to ethnic Kyrgyz politicians only during elections and forgotten afterwards. By considering the reports of NCI, PC and Ombudsman’s Commission, Ismoilov concludes that all blame “President Bakiev and his supporters, the leaders of Uzbek community, external forces in the face of foreign mercenaries” and portray the PG as a victim of circumstances (6). The Government of Kyrgyzstan first welcomed the KIC to investigate the ethnic violence and then rejected its recommendations, asserts
Ismoilov. The report also discusses the rise of ethno-nationalism, arbitrary arrests, torture and harassment of lawyers during and aftermath of the conflict. To support his statement on harassment of lawyers, Ismoilov, brings the case of Dilbar Turdieva, who was defending the rights of 10 Uzbek detainees. “When we were leaving the courtroom, the crowd was waiting for us outside the court. When the crowd noticed me, it attacked and started to beat me. They warned me about what will happen if I keep defending my clients,” Turdieva is quoted (11). Another lawyer Ulugbek Osmanov clarifies that “during the process in case of actions against the law, the judge has a right to dismiss the intruder or fine him/her. However, [we had] zero reaction from the judge’s side. I think the judges themselves are afraid because they hastily hold the process just to get done with the cases” (11). Based on the petitions of the civil activists and lawyers about the harassment, Ismoilov writes that the Prosecutor’s Office reportedly opened cases; however, no results were shown. Ismoilov concludes with a strong point that if the ethnic Kyrgyz keep claiming that they are the representatives of the titular nation, then “titular nation should be a role model for others in respecting law and existing order, norms of basic human decency, general requirements of morality and compassion” (18).

**Conclusion**

The common issue that unites all the above mentioned reports on the 2010 Osh Events is that none were able to identify the real instigators of the conflict, give the names of the perpetrators and recreate a detailed inclusive chronology of the ethnic violence. The KIC report claimed as impartial by largely the international community and ethnic Uzbeks, found an antagonistic reflection in the ethnic Kyrgyz public eye, while three government-produced reports of NCI, PC and Ombudsman’s Commission pursued their own agenda under the PG’s instruction and were only able to pinpoint
the Bakiev’s clan accompanied by Uzbek community leaders as causal factor of the tragic events. Having all the official and unofficial reports in hand, the Kyrgyz Government has yet to finalize its official account of the 2010 Osh Events and this fact has alarmed many observers about the possibility of the repetition of the conflict if the Government tries to ignore the issue or move on without adequate consideration of the conflict and proactive measures of violence prevention. The following chapter will be devoted to analysis and testing of the proposed hypotheses of this thesis.
Chapter Four

ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESES TESTING

This chapter is divided into three parts corresponding to the three hypotheses of this thesis: \( H_1 \): Divergence of indigenous memoirs on Osh Events, \( H_2 \): Contradictions and similarities of local memoirs with the KIC report, and \( H_3 \): Similarities of Government-produced reports. The Analysis and hypothesis testing will rely on four official reports: the KIC report, the National Commission of Inquiry report, the Parliamentary Commission report, and the Ombudsman’s Commission report. The analysis will rely on two memoirs (by Melis Myrzakmatov and Sadyr Japarov) and one report written by Uzbekistani lawyer Suhrobjon Ismoilov of the Alisher Navoi Institute. In addition to these reports and memoirs, I will also rely on nine in-depth expert interviews.

Each official report has its own strong and weak points. Despite eight years having gone by since the end of the interethnic conflict, the Government of Kyrgyzstan has not made a final conclusion of all the reports written on the Osh Events and has not proposed its final conclusions with tangible results and recommendations in preventing future outbreaks of inter-ethnic violence. Conversations on interethnic conflict is preferred to stay untouched at the national level, presumably so as not to open old wounds and to avoid future tensions among the various ethnic groups residing in the territory of Kyrgyzstan. As conclusions of these reports do not match each other and as each commission had its own agenda, this thesis has also attempted to consider memoirs of protagonists or observers of the 2010 Osh Events by looking for some detailed information that the reports may not mention and will compare the emergence, chronology of the events and data on the
atrocities of the conflict.

The main research question of this thesis was: *What are the local narratives by way of Kyrgyzstan’s National, Parliamentary, and Ombudsman’s Commission reports, and memoirs of Melis Myrzakmatov, Sadyr Japarov and Suhrobjon Ismoilov on the June 2010 Osh Events?* In line with this main question, this thesis was also to address the following sub-questions: *What are the key divergences of the said narratives from each other?* And: *How and to what extent do the above mentioned narratives differ from the KIC report?* Below, I address each of the three hypotheses corresponding to the said questions.

**Hypothesis 1**

There are memoirs on the 2010 Osh Events written by politicians, ordinary eye-witnesses or journalists. Each memoir contains detailed information that no others mention about the conflict. The memoirs entail different data, cases, stories of victims and the way they perceive who are the perpetrators and who are the main victims. The first Hypothesis of this thesis was:

**H₁**: Indigenous memoirs of the June 2010 Osh Events in Kyrgyzstan differ from each other depending on the author’s participation in the conflict, political affiliation and ethnicity.

Based on the content analysis of memoirs by Melis Myrzakmatov, Sadyr Japarov and conducted interviews, there is clear evidence in support of H₁. The memoir of the Mayor of Osh, Myrzakmatov, *In Search of the Truth*, does not include his biography, but starts with the 1990 Osh Events and then discusses the 2010 Osh Events. Besides his own narrative on the interethnic conflict, the book includes official decrees, minutes of joint meetings, letters addressed to the PG, his speeches and interviews with mass media outlets, and photos of Osh. *In Search of the Truth* was first published in Kyrgyz in 2011, then in Russian, and later was translated into
English. The memoir also provides a chronology of the events and the number of dead and injured people and destroyed properties based on the data of Osh provincial department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and concludes with excerpts from the reports of the KIC, NCI and PC. As Mayor, Myrzakmatov was responsible for the well-being of Osh citizens. As a representative of a multi-ethnic region of Osh and also despite accusations by the KIC, international reports and foreign media for his ethno-nationalistic statements, Myrzakmatov is cautious in his writing about putting blame on a particular ethnic group, in particular ethnic Uzbeks. He writes:

The ordinary people of Uzbek ethnicity are not guilty. The conflict was started by separatists and people who were misled. But it is well known that the instigators of the violent conflict were people of Uzbek ethnicity. (Myrzakmatov 2012, 20)

In Search of the Truth contains a chapter about the ethnic Kyrgyz’s claimed great ancestors as Tileke Baatyr, Azhy biy, Alymbek Datka, Kurmanjan Datka and Abdylda Bek who are known as having made significant contributions in the consolidation of the Kyrgyz statehood. Myrzakmatov perceives these Kyrgyz leaders as role models after whom large monuments have been built in the city of Osh. He includes photos of the monuments in his book. The former Mayor of Osh openly expresses his political affiliation in his memoir. As he came to Mayor’s position from Ak Zhol party, he stayed loyal to Bakiev until Bakiev had fled the country after the 2010 April Revolution. Myrzakmatov does not criticize or blame Bakiev for the instigation of the interethnic conflict. He admits that he had worked with Bakiev as other members of the PG, but also took his own path not following both governments. He writes:

If I was on the side of Bakiev, then I would have tried my best to restore his power. But such a rash step would facilitate the separation of the country to south and north, [and] would undermine the integrity of the state. Therefore, in order to preserve the unity of the country, I put my head on the stake; I did not allow myself to be influenced by
my preference for either the old or new governments but was concerned with the immediate situation developing in front of us. (47)

The next memoir, *Ten Years in Politics*, is written by opposition leader Sadyr Japarov, who is imprisoned today. Japarov starts his book with his an autobiography and in a chronological order describes major political events since the 2005 with the participation of the government and the opposition. He uses a narrative style providing dialogues in some places and the book does not provide any photographs or copies of government documents. The general public and readers of Japarov’s book have been polarized into two camps, as one group appreciates the bravery of the politician for speaking up and revealing the true faces of some significant political figures, while another camp accused Japarov of lying. The book also supposedly exposes the reader to many secret and hidden events or cases with the participation of prominent politicians.

In chapter three of the book, Japarov discusses the 2010 April Revolution and the ethnic Uzbek leader Kadyrjan Batyrov, while in chapter four of the book he examines the 2010 Osh Events. Japarov’s role in the conflict in comparison to the Osh Mayor Melis Myrzakmatov, was less active. Japarov was an MP representing the Issyk-Kul province in the north of Kyrgyzstan, and he is not well known by the southerners. He joined a group of southern politicians as Kamchybek Tashiev and the Ata Jurt Party, whose main constituents came from the south of the country.

In the memoir, Japarov (2015) reveals an allegedly political trade between the members of the PG and Kadyrjan Batyrov. It is clear that Japarov first of all blames the members of the PG, Atambaev and Tekebaev in particular for encouraging Batyrov in advocating his demands in exchange for gaining Uzbek votes in the parliamentary elections. Japarov writes: “Atambaev, in order to get votes for the SDPK, agreed to do everything what Kadyrjan Batyrov asked for,” including the
following demands: “Make the Osh oblast as an Uzbek autonomous oblast and me as its president,” in response to which, Atambaev supposedly said: “I concur,” writes Japarov (19).

According to Baltagul Nurumbetov, the head of the Osh branch of the People’s Assembly of Kyrgyzstan, all these memoirs including that of Myrzakmatov and Japarov have been written to expose themselves in a positive way. Myrzakmatov, for example, has painted himself as a sort of “national hero.” Nurumbetov claims that memoirs written by ethnic Kyrgyz certainly favor the Kyrgyz side and those of Uzbek authors favor the Uzbek side. The former Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tursunbek Akun, shares the same view and doubts the objectivity of these memoirs. And according to an anonymous ethnic Uzbek working for a international organization, besides one’s political affiliation, personal experience and history, memoirs can additionally be based on the authors’ religious prejudices, ethnic belonging and even emotional state and pride. “Memoirs are probably a good source for inspiration for producing movies, but not necessarily documentaries that are based on facts and analysis,” claims anonymous. Another anonymous interlocutor points out the local memoirs’ weak methodology and says that memoirs make outrageous claims which make one to conclude that they favor forms of conspiracy theory.

By emphasizing indigenous memoirs’ attachment to the authors’ political experiences and ethnicity, an anonymous ethnic Uzbek researcher advises to read all such memoirs with skepticism as the authors’ express their own, often biased

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2 Author interview with Baltagul Nurumbetov, Doctor of Historical Sciences and Head of Osh Branch of the People’s Assembly of Kyrgyzstan, In-person interview, Osh, 15 October 2018.  
3 Author interview with Tursunbek Akun, Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic during the Osh Events, Telephone interview, 23 October 2018.  
4 Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek employee of international organization during the 2010 Osh Events, Email interview, 16 October 2018.  
5 Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek author on the 2010 Osh Events, Telephone interview, 28 October 2018.
The viewpoints. Still, despite questioning impartiality and credibility of the Myrzakmatov’s book, anonymous also highlights its positive sides:

As an analyst, I was fascinated to read chapters of his book… I found incredible how these books emphasize different parts, different segments of the story. In some ways, they do contribute to [create] a holistic picture… All of these perceptions shed light on this complex phenomenon [of 2010 Osh Events].

An independent journalist Shohruh Saipov who personally attended the presentation of Myrzakmatov’s memoir, recalls:

It was exactly that period when ethnic Uzbek journalists were in fear and stopped attending state-initiated activities. I was the only Uzbek to attend the presentation. At the end of the book presentation, thinking about the possible benefits of this book for both ethnic groups, I asked the author [Myrzakmatov] whether he was planning to publish the book in Uzbek language and for which I received a negative answer. There was no reason to continue my next questions due to the audience’s sharp glance at me. I have read the whole book and it does not blame any ethnic group in the conflict; however, it expresses that it was preplanned by ethnic Uzbeks.

Myrzakmatov, claims the anonymous interlocutor, was open about his nationalistic attitudes and the book was, indeed, biased. When the anonymous interlocutor talked about In Search of the Truth, his voice volume increased and dissolved into laughter when he mentioned about the inaccurate facts indicated in the book. He said:

Many details of the book are questionable. [Myrzakmatov] does not mention large-scale events and discusses very little on the attacks of Uzbek mahallas. The book includes almost no discussion on how many Uzbeks died. Also mentioning about his ancestors and being descendents of Manas have no relation to the topic. He said that Uzbeks were armed to the teeth, which is incorrect. How could Uzbeks be armed to the teeth? I am an ethnic Uzbek and I haven’t seen my relatives or friends owning arms.

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6 Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek researcher, In-person interview, 15 October 2018.
7 Ibid.
8 Author interview with Shohruh Saipov, independent journalist and expert on the international and national reports on Osh Events, Telephone interview, 19 October 2018.
9 Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek author, op. cit.
10 Ibid.
He called the book “ludicrous and amateurish” and noted the fact that the international community has paid a serious attention to this memoir and brought justified criticism.\textsuperscript{11}

In conclusion, based on the analysis of the memoirs’ content and interviews, it appears that indigenous memoirs are indeed different from each other based on authors’ political experiences, ethnic belonging and their roles in the conflict. During the interviews when asked questions about local memoirs, all the respondents mentioned Myrzakmatov’s book and how well they were familiar with it; however, only one of them was well familiar with Japarov’s memoir. This is likely due to the fact that Myrzakmatov, an ethnic Kyrgyz from the south of the country, was one of the main actors of the conflict and a representative of the regional government, while Japarov, also ethnic Kyrgyz but from the north, had no official position in the south and participated in the events along with his comrades including Kamchybek Tashiev and Akhmatbek Keldibekov. Since the appointment of Myrzakmatov as Mayor of Osh, his popularity had risen in the south. But along with his domestic popularity, the international community had made its critical comments on Myrzakmatov’s hypernationalistic statements. All that said, I argue that we can be relatively certain that $H_1$ holds to be largely true.

**Hypothesis 2**

$H_2$: Ethnic Kyrgyz memoirs and narratives contradict the KIC report, while ethnic Uzbek narratives agree with it.

Ethnic Kyrgyz memoirs and narratives partially agree and disagree with the KIC report. Melis Myrzakmatov’s (2012) memoir agrees with the KIC on the fact that the former President “Kurmanbek Bakiev was not implicated in the tragic [Osh] events”\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
as the PG had been claiming (67). However, Myrzakmatov’s account of the Osh Events opposed a number of KIC’s recommendation including when they propose that “the state should restore the name ‘Republic of Kyrgyzstan’ as more responsive to the civic basis of nation building than the name ‘the Kyrgyz Republic’” (83). According to Myrzakmatov, the Kyrgyz Republic is similar to other Central Asian states, since its formation has evolved “as a nation state.” In retrospect, he writes, it used to be “Kyrgyz Autonomous Region, Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic and leaders of the Soviet Union always regarded the title ‘Kyrgyz’ with respect [to what is today Kyrgyzstan]” (80).

Another disagreement between In Search of the Truth and the KIC report is that the KIC does not give evidence of separatism and does not mention ethnic Uzbeks’ mobilization in early May 2010 and alleged attacks on ethnic Kyrgyz. On this issue, Myrzakmatov claims that the “KIC does not want to see the evidence and has insisted on promulgating its own findings” (249). Myrzakmatov, however, provides provocative statements and interviews of the Uzbek community leader Batyrov, and mentions the early May gatherings of people of Uzbek ethnicity based on the operational data of the Osh Department of Internal Affairs.

Japarov’s (2015) memoir, Ten Years in Politics, in turn, agrees with the KIC’s statements about the PG’s priorities prior to and during the Osh Events, including the “re-division of power and Bakiev’s assets and the proposed new constitution” (21) and adds that in parallel to crafting a new Constitution, a preparation for the parliamentary elections scheduled for 10 October 2010 had begun. Based on his personal experiences as leader of the Ata Jurt Party running for parliamentary elections, Japarov provides information that has not been considered by the KIC. He claims that that the SDPK, headed by Atambaev, and the Ata Meken Party, headed by
Tekebaev, were two factions which had won significant Uzbek votes that made up the “30% in the south” figure and thus attempted to pull Batyrov to their side (19). Using this opportunity, claims Japarov, Batyrov mobilized the ethnic Uzbek community and commenced on his propaganda.

Journalist Yrysbek Omurzakov (2013), in turn, opposes the KIC’s statements, claiming that there were:

limited numbers of Uzbek officers in the police force, the army, and the national security service. Uzbek numbers [were] even lower in the judicial and prosecution services. Of the 110 judges in the 28 courts of southern Kyrgyzstan, only one [was] an ethnic Uzbek, while in December 2010, only one Uzbek investigator held a position at the national agency. (18)

Omurzakov claims that ethnic Uzbeks themselves made a choice to work in bazaars and not in low-paid government jobs. Although he does not provide a direct response for the aforementioned fact, he continues to bring statistical facts of ethnic Uzbek representation in educational, political and cultural spheres, which was also broadly mentioned by the KIC. Unlike the KIC, however, Omurzakov provides concrete numbers and a list of Uzbeks with their names who have received high-ranking state awards, PhDs, MPs of the Jogorku Kenesh and governors and deputy governors in the south of the country. The book agrees with the KIC’s statement about Uzbek community leader Batyrov having been used as an additional resource by the PG and Omurzakov embarrasses the PG for such actions and raises the question about the “PG’s request to issue diplomatic passport” for Batyrov which would eventually assist in his escape (162).

Suhrobjon Ismoilov’s (2011) report, in turn, not only agrees with the KIC report, but also goes beyond and anatomizes certain conclusions. It confirms the KIC statement about the emergence of “a new generation of southern Kyrgyz politicians” in the face of Kamchymbek Tashiev (Ata Jurt Party), Akhmatbek Keldibekov (Ata Jurt
Party), Adakhan Madumarov (Butun Kyrgyzstan Party), and Osh Mayor Myrzakmatov. Ismoilov continues further by accusing “representatives of southern elites, law enforcement and security organs, organized crime and also members of Bakiev’s clan” of forming “certain forces” in the country, which control the government via political factions (2). As the KIC (2011) report that calls the Ata Jurt Party “radically nationalist” (21), Ismoilov (2011), too, also calls it “nationalistic” (5) and highlights the fact that nothing has changed after the Osh Events where nationalistic Ata Jurt Party gained relatively more votes on the parliamentary elections than the SDPK, Ar Namys, Respublika and Ata Meken Parties.

Ismoilov criticizes that all three national reports by the NCI, PC and Ombudsman’s Commission share the same biased conclusion; but that, the KIC report, which was sanctioned by the PG, was also rejected by Kyrgyzstan’s parliament. Ismoilov considers other reports on the Osh Events by HRW and indigenous human rights organizations of Spravedlivost, Coalition against Torture, and Kylym Shamy. Similar to the KIC, he discusses abuse and torture of Uzbek detainees and pays detailed attention to the harassment of human rights activists and lawyers whose clients were ethnic Uzbeks. Ismoilov (2011) agrees with the KIC’s body count of atrocities and mentions that the government’s promise of compensation for the dead at “20,000 soms per person,” equivalent to about US$400 during the same period, was very little and that the total number of recipients was also unknown (13). Ismoilov’s report further tells of the “absence of transparency in the actions of the state bodies engaged in the rehabilitation process of southern provinces of Kyrgyzstan” (14).

Chas Shakala (‘An Hour of the Jackal’) and Genocide Continues: The Jackals Have not Left are books and films produced reportedly by ethnic Uzbek opposition
based in Europe. Any related videos or articles to these materials are under strict control of the Kyrgyz Government and access them on the Internet is blocked to supposedly stop tensions between two ethnic groups. One of the rare spectators of these materials is Head of Osh People’s Assembly, Baltagul Nurumbetov, whose job is to make both groups cooperate and solve issues on the table in a civilized manner. The aforementioned books, according to Nurumbetov, have been written by Uzbek separatists who are in exile and ordinary Uzbeks are tired to discuss these issues. He shared a story which both Kyrgyz and Uzbek sides may have experienced and urges to be cautious from misleading propaganda:

The head of mahalla [neighborhood] enters the Uzbek classroom. He enters the class with school principal’s company. The committee chair asks from the class who are 9-10th grade students: “Who are you? Students answer: “Students”. He continues: “Who else are you?”

Students: “citizens of Kyrgyzstan.” He asks one more time and concludes with “You are Uzbeks” or ozu beks which means “Self-contained.” He keeps motivating the class to hold their heads up in front their teacher, until the principal’s signal to stop. Upon their leave, the principal tells the committee chair that the teacher in the classroom was a Kyrgyz teacher teaching Uzbek language. Later, the committee chair asks apology from the teacher. This story happened to my employee.12

According to Nurumbetov, such incidents of propaganda happens among ethnic Kyrgyz too and it can emerge due to the lack of education and old grievances.

As an ethnic Uzbek analyst, anonymous interviewee tells about the “fear among Uzbek writers and intellectuals”13 to discuss the Osh Events in their conversations or writings. The anonymous claims that Kyrgyzstan’s security agency began to watch Uzbek intellectuals due to the fear that they can be a new challenge for the government similar to the Uzbek businessmen or community leaders in 2010. Today’s government, according to the anonymous source, is similar to Bakiev’s

12 Author interview with Nurumbetov, op. cit.
regime in terms of avoidance of ethnic minority issues:

I think they [the authorities] do not want any Uzbek leader to emerge. They want local-level Uzbek leaders to help them during the elections, but they do not want national-level Uzbek leaders. They are afraid that Uzbeks will mobilize around each other. [There were] several national-level leaders like Kadyrjan Batyrakov and Salahudinov. It was them who could mobilize people [and] Kyrgyz leaders do not want any of these. They want rayon [district]-level leaders. That’s why they are working hard to ensure that nobody gets there [i.e. to the national level].

The Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tursunbek Akun, confirms that he has not read, but has heard about An Hour of the Jackal and Genocide Continues: The Jackals Haven’t Left. Akun doesn’t think that there is a direct link between these books, which have been written by separatists and released in Finland, and the KIC, and blames both the Kyrgyz Government and the KIC for not attempting to better communicate with each other:

We [Kyrgyz] invited the KIC chair [Kimmo Kiljunen] and could not listen to him. When he was not given a voice, of course, he turned against us. The parliament should have listened to him instead of prohibiting his entry to the country. The parliament made a mistake. The KIC also had its advantages. After that [incidence] they [KIC] made their mind that the ethnic Kyrgyz are afraid because of their sins and made the Kyrgyz look guilty. The KIC should have listened to us and we should have listened to the KIC.

Independent journalist Shohruh Saipov claims that the KIC report, although found to be one-sided by the government, was closer to the reality than any other report. Saipov claims that both the KIC and the Government found 70-80% of ethnic Uzbeks hurt from the conflict. The Kiljunen-headed KIC report does not specifically say that primary perpetrators were Kyrgyz or ethnic Uzbeks were victims, but nonetheless categorizes the conflict as “crime against humanity,” asserts Saipov.

However, the government interpreted it as [an accusation of] genocide. First of all, it [KIC] does not characterize the conflict as a genocide.

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13 Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek researcher, op. cit.
14 Ibid.
15 Author interview with Akun, op. cit.
However, based on several facts, the KIC categorized the ethnic strife as crimes against humanity: the use of military equipment, unarmed Uzbeks during the one or two days of the conflict, Uzbeks having died from sniper shots. The NCI, PC and KIC reports do not mention a single Kyrgyz having died from sniper shot. Today around 400 ethnic Uzbeks have been imprisoned due to mass riots. I have not heard any Kyrgyz being charged by that article [mass riot]. Only two Kyrgyz were detained, however, released later due to their relatives’ demonstrations. This proves to be a one-sided [biased] policy. 16

As head of the Research Secretariat of the International Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission on the Osh Events, Anna Matveeva claims that “circumstances of the release,” not the content of the KIC report, created a discontent among the citizens of Kyrgyzstan. 17 By circumstances of the release, Matveeva means that the report was leaked to the website of a news agency 24.kg and that the parliament, in turn, feared for its consequences. According to Matveeva, besides its release, alienation of ethnic Kyrgyz during the investigation process and three translated versions of the KIC report into Russian language performed by three different organizations could have created misunderstandings in Kyrgyzstan. 18 Matveeva states that the “KIC report is not about interethnic relations per se,” but that it is also about human rights and the role of the state. Like other official reports that have strengths and weaknesses, the KIC also had some points that Matveeva does not agree with; however, she preferred not to discuss those issues.

A local activist and permanent resident of Osh city, Akilay Karimova, claims that the KIC report served as part of fundraising for the government:

In order to receive donors’ aid and prove that we are in difficult circumstances, [they emphasized that] Uzbeks are left without their businesses and houses—the KIC report describes everything like that. Then [President] Otunbaeva starts to visit the world including the UN

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16 Author interview with Saipov, op. cit.
17 Author interview with Anna Matveeva, Head of the Research Secretariat of the International Kyrgyzstan Inquiry Commission on the Osh Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010, Skype interview, 19 October 2018.
18 Ibid.
and asks for aid from donors. That’s why this report is one-sided in order to be legitimate for the big fundraising.\(^\text{19}\)

Suhrobjon Ismoilov (2011) does not deny the aforementioned fact in his report and claims that the PG leader Roza Otunbaeva estimated the “cost of the rehabilitation of southern cities and its economy worth for US$450 million” (15). While giving a speech at a UN high-level plenary meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in September of 2010, says Ismoilov, Otunbaeva “expressed her hope that donor-states will provide [the] agreed financial aid to Kyrgyzstan worth US$1.1 billion fully and on time” (15).

While all the reports and memoirs devoted to the 2010 Osh Events focus on the destruction, atrocities and weak central government, an anonymous ethnic Uzbek researcher points out that the 2010 interethnic conflict was “constructive in sending a strong message to ethnic minorities not only in the south, but also in Bishkek.”\(^\text{20}\) As positive implications of the events, the anonymous source identifies the resolution of three dilemmas that the state had been facing since its formation:

The first dilemma was how to divide political power and institutions. Should we be a parliamentary republic or presidential? So, how to divide power between president and the people. The second dilemma was related to foreign relations. Should we pursue multi-vector policy or stick to Russia or U.S. EU or China? The third dilemma was related to the identity of the state. Should we pursue civic model of citizenship or ethnic-based model? Because these issues were not addressed properly by the leaders, the 2010 [Osh] Events addressed them in an interesting way.\(^\text{21}\)

The same source asserts that after the 2010 Osh Events Kyrgyzstan became a parliamentary republic, its foreign policy was settled to stay close to Russia with Atambaev in power, and the final dilemma on ethnicity was also resolved. In addition,

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\(^{19}\) Author interview with Akylai Karimova, local activist and eye-witness of the 2010 Osh Events, Aga Khan Foundation, Telephone interview, 28 October 2018.

\(^{20}\) Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek researcher, op. cit.

\(^{21}\) Ibid.
a debatable question on ‘who is the master of Osh?’ was answered by the interethnic conflict. “When two masters fight, one of them – stronger and the one who loses, respects and accepts. The winner also helps him get up. Something similar happened in 2010,” says the anonymous interlocutor.22

Given the feedback on the inquiries and memoirs, I conclude that that there is an overall consensus that ethnic Kyrgyz memoirs and narratives radically contradict with the KIC while Uzbek narratives closely agree with it. As such, there is sufficient proof to back the veracity of H2.

**Hypothesis 3**

After the 2010 Osh Events, the National Commission of Inquiry was formed with the primary task to investigate the interethnic conflict. As the NCI report’s conclusions did not seem satisfactory, Kyrgyzstan’s parliament, *Jogorku Kenesh*, created another commission entitled the Parliamentary Commission that included 25 MPs and caused a dichotomy among its members in their conclusions. Next, yet another investigative body, the Ombudsman’s Independent Commission was formed which also presented its results in a report. Hypothesis 3 attempted to link the three reports by way of their findings and blame put on the former head of state, President Kurmanbek Bakiev:

**H3**: National, Parliamentary, and Ombudsman’s Commission reports share similar conclusions on the former Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiev’s role of instigating the ethnic violence.

The NCI, headed by Abdygany Erkebaev presented its report in January 2011. The report concludes:

By considering all the national and international assessments given on the Osh Events, the NCI concludes that several Uzbek community leaders accompanied by Bakiev’s clan organized the Kyrgyz-Uzbek

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22 Ibid.
clashes that violently took the lives of the many people and left many injured, with properties looted and burnt.\(^{23}\) (Kabar 2011)

The NCI report also highlights that historical and political roots of the problem go back to the Soviet era where ethnic conflicts had been hidden and that the absence of an adequate evaluation of the 1990 Osh Events contributed in the development of further tensions two decades later. The report claims that neither Akaev nor Bakiev had designed a clear strategy on the social and economic development of the south of the country. During these difficult socioeconomic circumstances several ethnic Uzbek leaders created a political party Vatan (‘Motherland’, later known by its Russian name Rodina) to lobby their interests in the parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic. According to the NCI conclusions, a political confrontation between the “supporters of the old regime and a new Kyrgyz elite” generated “the most suitable conditions” for ethnic Uzbek leaders driven by extremist motivations to gain some power and advocate for the “diaspora’s” (i.e. ethnic Uzbeks’) interests (Kabar 2011).

Besides the mass meetings led by MPs Batyrov, Abdrasulov and Salahitdinov, the NCI report underlines that the “criminal world, drug trafficking, religious extremists and other external forces” played a part in the outbreak of the ethnic strife. The number of the dead were reported by the NCI at 426, injured at 1,930, and the estimated material damage were worth at about 4 billion soms (around US$100 million). In line with the general accusation of the PG for its weak police and security forces, the NCI accuses some of its leaders A. Beknazarov, I. Isakov, B. Sherniyazov, K. Duishebaev and governors and mayors of the southern provinces of negligence and inability to contain the conflict (Kabar 2011).

The Parliamentary Commission, in turn, headed by Tokon Mamytov, characterizes the Osh Events as a conflict “where behind the linguistic disagreements,

\(^{23}\) Translation from Kyrgyz by author.
deep divisions between different national communities are hidden” (GoK 2011, 42).

The PC report repeats the conclusion of the NCI, albeit differently worded:

After the events of [the 2010] April [Revolution], an opportunity to pursue some political and economic purposes in general unstable circumstances became real for certain leaders of the diaspora and representatives of financial circles to maintain and expand their existing opportunities. Separate financial (oligarchic), nationalist and criminal groups began to claim for political subjectivity and demonstrate their absolute independence from the interests of the Kyrgyz Republic.24 (42)

The PC report highlights a weak presence of central power in Osh and Jalalabad provinces and claims that a confrontation between the Bakiev’s supporters and the PG took the shape of interethnic conflict between the ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. Similar to the NCI’s conclusion, the PC notes “a lack of professional and analytical capacities of the State National Security,” and ministries of Internal Affairs and Defense (45). The report also claims that the tragic June events could have been prevented if not for the PG’s cancellation of state of emergency in Jalalabad province on 1 June 2010 without corresponding analysis and not expanding the state of emergency to Osh province. Based on the PC report, the number of dead were 437 people, over 2,000 people injured and 33 missing. Like the NCI report, the PC also concludes that “a lack of effective information support system of the executive authorities in emergency conditions” to some degree contributed in losing “an information war” which damaged the country’s image in the international arena (46).

Apart from the NCI and PC reports, the Ombudsman’s Independent Commission was formed on 5 August 2010, headed by Ombudsman Tursunbek Akun, himself. While the aforementioned reports pay a very short visit to the 1990 Osh Events, the Ombudsman’s Commission discusses the 1990 interethnic violence and its causes in detail, and proposes its own conclusions. Like the NCI, the report of the
The Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic (2011) identifies the 1990 Osh Events as the root of the problem and claims that the absence of proper political assessment had caused the repetition of violence in form of the 2010 Osh Events. According to the Ombudsman’s report, the 1990 and 2010 interethnic clashes share the same causes: “political instability and impunity of genuinely responsible individuals” for the conflict (97).25

The report sees the role of the state and its “ineptitude to protect its citizens regardless of their race and nationalities” as the main cause of the large-scale bloodshed in the south of the country (99). In addition, it does not deny the guilt of former presidents, but puts the main responsibility on the shoulders of the PG. According to the Ombudsman’s report, “both ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks are guilty” in the interethnic conflict (102). The report claims the number of the dead people at 408 and 2,574 injured, while close to 2,400 facilities were burnt, in addition to over 3,000 small and medium-sized businesses having been damaged. When interviewed for this thesis, the former Ombudsman, Tursunbek Akun, said:

> Our commission conducted a neutral investigation where we identified that the ethnic Kyrgyz had not started the conflict, but only responded. Although we were not called as nationalists after our announcement that both the 1990 and 2010 conflicts had been started by the ethnic Uzbeks, the international community came to dislike us. Our commission’s conclusions were among the first that came up with investigation conclusions. In the 1990s, Uzbek deputies from Kokon, Margalan, Andijan and Namangan assembled and sought autonomy. Kadyrjan Batyrov came up with the same demand [in 2010].26

Due to the NCI’s long working process that is four to five months, Akun claims the National Commission “lost its meaning”; whereas the Ombudsman’s Commission came up with its conclusion within only one month. The PC report did

24 Translation from Russian by author.
25 Translation from Russian by author.
26 Author interview with Akun, op. cit.
not reveal the political reasons behind the violence and a division within the commission in particular harmed the work of the PC, says Akun. However, the former Ombudsman appreciates the NCI’s work and its head Abdygany Erkebaev for being relatively objective.27

Matveeva, the former head of the Research Secretariat of the KIC, notes the cooperation of the KIC with NCI in terms of exchanging working materials in their regular meetings, but with each commission preserving its independence:

As NCI was under the president, that was our way [through] the president. If we wanted to meet with the president or vice versa, that would be through the NCI. We were not competing with each other. The NCI was not a Government commission, but an independent commission mandated by the president.28

Matveeva in general appreciates the work of the NCI and finds it to be objective except for its “premise about separatism and the ‘third party’,” which has no evidence, a point which she labels as an “analytical failure” of the NCI. The PC had promised to bring the responsible politicians to justice, and had alleged some members of the PG to have been personally responsible; however, with the political rivalry of MPs, this did not go anywhere, says Matveeva. Among these three reports, Matveeva takes the Ombudsman’s report as “the least serious piece” relating it to the “personality of the Ombudsman.”29

An ethnic Uzbek independent journalist, Saipov considers that the local commissions “defended the titular nation.”30 In addition to Saipov, anonymous Uzbek author of articles on the Osh Events also found local reports “far from objectivity.” According to the anonymous source, NCI, PC and the Ombudsman’s Commission reports put the blame for the 2010 Osh Events on Akaev and then Bakiev. He also

27 Ibid.
28 Author interview with Matveeva, op. cit.
29 Ibid.
questions their methodology and the number of interviews that they undertook.31

Kuduret Halmatov, Professor of Kyrgyzstan’s History at the Jalalabad State University and an eye-witness of the interethnic clashes of 2010 in Jalalabad, asserts that the Kyrgyz commissions seemed to favor the Kyrgyz side more, while Uzbek commissions favored their side.32 Halmatov claims that none of the established commissions had been neutral and all hid significant details related to the fair investigation of the conflict. He expects, however, that after some time, there will finally be an objective report on the 2010 Osh Events. About Bakiev’s involvement in the interethnic violence, Halmatov argues:

Lately, it has often seen that a blame on any problem in the country is put to an individual who is not present in the country. Bakiev did not aspire for interethnic violence … I do not deny the information that the interethnic clash was planned by the government that came after the Bakiev’s regime. The PG had enough capacity to stop the conflict overnight, if it so desired.33

The anonymous ethnic Uzbek researcher shares the same opinion with Halmatov and is optimistic about the appearance of an impartial report on 2010 Osh Events in the future. He agrees with the general credibility of the KIC report and sees it as “more or less impartial”; he, however, underlines that the KIC had its own political agenda, too:

It [KIC] was all under pressure. It was outpouring with sympathy to Uzbeks. It interviewed more Uzbeks than Kyrgyz. In that sense, this report is also biased. Because the international commission has already formed its opinion and they completely subscribed that Uzbeks are under attack. They are fleeing Kyrgyzstan. The KIC report has [failed to] transcend these kinds of stereotypes or preconceived perceptions.34

30 Author interview with Saipov, op. cit.
31 Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek author, op. cit.
32 Author interview with Kuduret Halmatov, Professor of Kyrgyzstan’s History at the Jalalabad State University and author of PhD dissertation “Ethnic Kyrgyz in Uzbekistan: Ethno-Cultural Relations,” In-person interview, Jalalabad, 12 November 2018.
33 Ibid
34 Author interview with anonymous ethnic Uzbek researcher, op. cit.
Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that $H_3$ fails to be proven (or its null hypothesis of no relationship is found to hold). The NCI and PC conclusions claim that the Bakiev’s clan and Uzbek community leaders colluded and both are instigators of the interethnic conflict, while the Ombudsman’s Commission report only slightly mentions Bakiev’s regime along with Akaev’s, which he blames for not having paid much attention to the resolution of the underlying interethnic tensions remaining from the 1990 Osh Events. The NCI and PC could not identify Bakiev’s sole participation in the plotting of the conflict, but generalized the opposing side as Bakiev’s people.

**Conclusion**

The 2010 Osh Events paralyzed the central government. All the reports, whether being national or international, official or unofficial, found the Provisional Government at least partially responsible for the tragic bloodshed in the south of Kyrgyzstan. The International Commission established by the request of the PG to investigate the Kyrgyz-Uzbek ethnic conflict (the KIC), in turn, presented a report that turned into a source of the discontent among the citizens and Government of Kyrgyzstan. In line with the KIC report, national commissions in the face of the NCI, PC and Ombudsman’s Commissions presented their own findings. Statistical data on atrocities especially the number of dead, injured and damaged properties seem to appear differently in each report. As reports attempted to recreate the chronology of the ethnic violence, except for the Ombudsman’s report, they did not focus on prior or subsequent incidents which were important in the development of a holistic picture of the conflict.

Melis Myrzakmatov’s *In Search of the Truth* is exceptional in this case, for it focuses on the pre- during and post 2010 Osh Events. Sadyr Japarov’s *Ten Years in
Politics looks at the interethnic conflict from the different perspectives in comparison to others. It pays close attention to the elections and political bargain between the leaders of the PG and Uzbek community. As a human rights lawyer, Suhrobjon Ismoilov in his report concentrates on human rights violations, arbitrary arrests and harassment of lawyers and human rights activists who defended the rights of the ethnic Uzbek detainees.

Analysis of memoirs written on the 2010 Osh Events mainly demonstrated that author’s ethnic belonging, political experiences and participation in the conflict shaped the general conclusions of the memoir. Inquiry outcomes also unanimously claimed that the side of an author too on the causes of the Osh Events is a function of their ethnicity, that is, if an ethnic Kyrgyz writes a memoir or a report, he/she will very likely favor the Kyrgyz side, while an Uzbek author will also likely favor the Uzbek side. Due to the fact that the KIC’s conclusions did not meet the expectations of the citizens and Government of Kyrgyzstan, many of the interview respondents favor an international neutral body unaffiliated with the Kyrgyz or Uzbeks to investigate the conflict impartially in the future.
Chapter Five

CONCLUSIONS

As opposed to the 1990 Osh Events which were poorly investigated and studied, the June 2010 interethnic clashes in southern Kyrgyzstan have been open to numerous investigations by the Government of Kyrgyzstan, NGOs, the international community, and scholars. Although those who have conducted academic studies on the June 2010 Osh Events have differed in their conclusions on the emergence and causes of the conflict, as told in Chapter Two of this thesis, they nonetheless have come to the general consensus that the said tragic occurrence was not caused by one political or social factor alone, but by a likely combination of historical, political, socio-economic and geographical factors. And as detailed in Chapter Three, investigative bodies looking into the June 2010 Osh Events have not fully elaborated on the above-mentioned factors, but have mainly focused on recreation of the four-day violence in June and identification of the responsible bodies or individuals in instigating the conflict.

The purpose of this thesis was to scrutinize the official reports and indigenous memoirs and narratives written on the 2010 Osh Events. The objective was also to determine the divergence in the conclusions of the reports and memoirs. The thesis attempted to answering the following general question: What are the local narratives by way of Kyrgyzstan’s National, Parliamentary, and Ombudsman’s Commission reports, and memoirs of Melis Myrzakmatov, Sadyr Japarov, and report of Suhrobjon Ismoilov on the June 2010 Osh Events? The thesis also attempted to address these sub-questions: What are the key divergences of the said narratives from each other? And how and to what extent do the narratives differ from the KIC report?
The results of this thesis concurred that the national reports and indigenous memoirs on the June 2010 Osh Events reinforce Horowitz’s (1985) Theory of Ethnic Conflict where the individual’s or author’s ethnic affiliation, here Kyrgyz or Uzbek, shape the overall conclusions of the memoir or report. According to Horowitz, “ethnic conflict is a recurrent phenomenon” which reemerges during or after the warfare (4). Horowitz asserts that ethnicity is “based on a myth of collective ancestry, which usually carries with it traits believed to be innate,” and that some “notion of ascription, however diluted, and affinity deriving from it are inseparable from the concept of ethnicity” (52). Ethnic groups attached to their kinship try to expand their political power during the crisis. According to Rothchild (1989), ethnic groups often demonstrate “severe anxiety” when their security is threatened by their rival groups and such anxieties may include:

fears about survival, swamping and subordination; moreover, these anxieties, which arise from diffuse sense of danger of exaggerated proportions, have the effect of limiting and modifying perceptions, and therefore, become the source of extreme collective reactions. (296)

The memoirs on the 2010 Osh Events were written by individuals who were politicians, while the reports were written by politicians, scholars, experts and representatives of other entities. The two memoirs by prominent politicians examined by this thesis focused on the ethnic conflict and the authors reveal and often refer to their ethnicity throughout their writings. In addition, the composition of official national investigative commissions revealed that the majority of their members were representatives of the titular nation, i.e. ethnic Kyrgyz, and it can be argued that these commissions would not undermine the perceived interests of their ethnic cohorts.

In addition, “Framing Theory” assisted in explaining how indigenous memoirs and reports are interpreted by the public and why they may face either public support or antagonism. Goffman (1974) explains how individuals interpret the information
through primary “frameworks” that he divides into “natural” and “social.” By natural framework he means “unguided, undirected, unoriented” events where “no willful agency causally or intentionally interferes” or guides the outcome, while social framework means “guided doings” where “motive and intent are involved … [and] a continues corrective control” is applied (22).

In the case of this thesis, social framework can be an explanation of possible self-serving interpretation of the reports and memoirs on the June 2010 Osh Events. Matveeva, the head of the Research Secretariat of the KIC, interviewed for this thesis, noted, for example, how an online news agency, 24.kg, provided one-sided interpretation of the KIC conclusions to the public. Matveeva also told of her doubts that MPs of the Jogorku Kenesh had read the whole KIC report and that instead they had likely taken certain arbitrary quotes, which consequently led them and the general public towards a negative perception of the report. On the other hand, the government-mandated national commissions preserved the interests of President Otunbaeva’s provisional government on their agenda and feared coming up with definite conclusions which would have involved bringing responsible individuals including some of the members of the PG to justice.

Utilizing content analysis, interviews and literature review, the first hypothesis of this thesis (H₁) about indigenous memoirs’ divergence from each other based on the authors’ ethnic belonging, political experiences and their roles in the conflict, proved to be largely true. Melis Myrzakmatov’s In Search of the Truth differed from Sadyr Japarov’s Ten Years in Politics in terms of the author’s role in the interethnic conflict, his regional belonging and his popularity at the national and international level. The results of the inquiry revealed that almost all of the interviewees were well

35 Author interview with Matveeva, op. cit.
familiar with Myrzakmatov’s memoir as it entirely focused on the ethnic strife, while Japarov’s memoir focused on the major political activities in the country since 2005 and among them two chapters were allocated to discuss the Osh Events. Based on the content analysis, Myrzakmatov demonstrates his ethnic affiliation openly, and ethnicity in conjunction with his political experience, and he being one of the main actors in the June 2010 interethnic conflict, can be argued have shaped his overall position and his views on the Osh Events.

The second hypothesis (H₂), that of ethnic Kyrgyz memoirs and narratives contradicting the KIC report, while ethnic Uzbek narratives agreeing with it, was determined to be solidly valid given results of content analysis of the KIC report, indigenous memoirs and narratives on Osh Events, in addition to feedback from the interviewees. The analysis showed that accounts of the memoirs contradict the international commission’s conclusions. The memoirs written by the ethnic Kyrgyz refer to an early May 2010 demonstrations and attacks on ethnic Kyrgyz supposedly organized by the ethnic Uzbek and conclude that the Uzbeks thus started the conflict and that the ethnic Kyrgyz were mere victims who were defending themselves. Still, memoirs also come to a consensus that ordinary ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz are not guilty in the conflict, while both sides suffered losing their family members and property. On the other hand, the KIC report, accepted by the international community as an impartial and transparent report, concludes that there was a systematic attack on Uzbek mahallas by the Kyrgyz. Given the number of the dead where ethnic Uzbeks outnumbered the Kyrgyz and considering destroyed properties, the KIC concludes that it was primarily the ethnic Uzbeks who were the victims of the 2010 Osh Events.

Due to the government’s near-censorship of the materials related to the Osh Events, this thesis had a limitation in gaining access to memoirs written by ethnic
Uzbeks. A report written by Suhrobjon Ismoilov, an Uzbekistani lawyer and a regional representative of the Alisher Navoi Institute in Central Asia, was thus an alternative source. Other books, such as *Chas Shakala* and *Genocide Continues: The Jackals Have Not Left* allegedly written by Uzbek separatists in exile, and released in Finland, were briefly mentioned in the analysis based on the knowledge and answers of the interview respondents. Despite limitations, the analysis and testing of $H_2$ did squarely demonstrate that the ethnic Kyrgyz memoirs and narratives contradicted the KIC report, while ethnic Uzbek memoirs agreed with the KIC conclusions.

The third hypothesis ($H_3$) concerned with the similarities of the conclusions of the national reports by the National Commission of Inquiry, the Parliamentary Commission and the Ombudsman’s Commission, where it was hypothesized that all three blame former President Bakiev’s role in the instigation of the interethnic conflict. Relying on content analysis of the aforementioned reports, however, $H_3$ failed to be proven. The reports by the NCI and PC identify not Bakiev’s but his clans’ alleged collaboration with the informal leaders of the Uzbek community, Batyrov, Abdrasulov and Salahitdinov, together serving as key instigators of the June 2010 interethnic violence. The Ombudsman’s report blames the legacy of the 1990 Osh Events and absence of proper political assessment of it in its aftermath for the 2010 Osh Events.

In conclusion, each report and memoir written on the 2010 Osh Events entails its own version of truth based on the origin of its author or his/her affiliation and should not be ignored while studying the interethnic conflict. Although memoirs are reportedly and often rightly one-sided or may have unreliable factual basis, information provided by the authors could nonetheless serve as one piece of a still not fully solved tragic puzzle.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

1. Tursunbek Akun, Ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic during the Osh Events, Telephone interview, 23 October 2018.


3. Anonymous, ethnic Uzbek employee of international organization during the 2010 Osh Events, Email interview, 16 October 2018.


9. Shohruh Saipov, independent journalist and expert on the international and national reports on Osh Events, Telephone interview, 19 October 2018.