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Digital Memory and a 'Massacre': Uzbek Identity in the Age of Social Media

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Key Points

- Once separated by geographic borders, Uzbeks in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and around the world are now able to share their grievances through the internet and social media.
- Perhaps more than any other event since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the reaction to the violence in Southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010 hardened the lines of the Uzbek ethnic community.
- Ethnic Uzbeks appear to increasingly think of themselves as a group transcending the geographic, political, and religious boundaries that once divided them. The central aspect of this communal identity is a feeling of shared victimhood and suffering.
- The emergence of Uzbek online communities in which the reaction to the Osh violence took place threatens the Uzbekistani government's idea of territorial nationalism.
- The redefinition of pan-Uzbek identity through shared victimhood also reinforces the idea that being Muslim is a vital part of being Uzbek. This could be one of the most important lasting effects of the June violence, particularly if legal or civic efforts to achieve some kind of justice continue to fail and no secular alternatives can be found.

On June 11, 2010, over 100,000 ethnic Uzbeks crossed the border from southern Kyrgyzstan into Uzbekistan.[1] They were fleeing riots that had overtaken the city of Osh, killing nearly 500 people, destroying over 2800 properties, and leaving tens of thousands homeless. Though the causes of the violence were manifold and remain debated, the political and economic grievances behind it played out along ethnic lines.[2] Nearly all the victims were Uzbek; the perpetrators, Kyrgyz.

Uzbeks around the world in a way that earlier outbreaks of civil or state violence never did.

This paper examines the transnational effort by ethnic Uzbeks to document the 2010 violence in Kyrgyzstan and mobilize international support—first for intervention to stop the conflict as it unfolded, and then to preserve evidence of alleged injustices suffered by the community.[5] Combining analysis of digital media with recent ethnographic fieldwork in Southern Kyrgyzstan, the paper addresses questions about

Social media made the plight of Uzbeks in Southern Kyrgyzstan resonate with Uzbeks around the world in a way that earlier outbreaks of civil or state violence never did

The year 2010 was not the first time Uzbeks crossed the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan border to escape persecution. In May 2005, the government of Uzbekistan fired on a public protest in the city of Andijon, killing over 700 Uzbek citizens. Thousands more fled over the border to Osh—the very city from where Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks would flee to Andijon five years later. These parallel journeys speak to the Uzbek search for a reprieve from state surveillance and public persecution, a mission that so far has proven futile. Even abroad, Uzbeks have been targeted for political assassination.[3]

Uzbek political rights have been trampled for as long as "Uzbek" has been an ethnic category.[4] But while repression endures, the way Uzbeks are able to discuss their plight has changed. Once separated by geographic borders, Uzbeks in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and around the world are now able to share their grievances through the internet—in particular, through social media, which has transformed narratives of the 2010 violence. Though Uzbek activists had previously attempted to mobilize scattered co-ethnics to mount international political pressure for issues affecting Uzbeks—like the 2005 Andijon violence—these attempts failed to achieve broad resonance. Social media made the plight of Uzbeks in Southern Kyrgyzstan resonate with

how "digital memory" of violence influences how people adapt to post-conflict everyday life. It also addresses how narratives produced by the global community – most of whom did not experience the conflict itself – shape, and sometimes conflict with, the understanding of the conflict for those who experienced it.

As soon as the riots began, Uzbeks around the world began discussing them on Uzbek-language websites. In these forums, the scope, brutality, and savagery of the June violence was communicated without restraint—in marked contrast to the international media, which portrayed Uzbeks as voiceless, passive victims; and to the Kyrgyzstani and Uzbekistan state media, which responded with tepid, carefully measured statements. Few leaders in Kyrgyzstan acknowledged that the violence targeted Uzbeks at all, while calls for investigation by the Uzbekistani government played lip service to public discontent. In both countries, coverage of the events was censored.

Online works on the 2010 violence range from materials unique to the internet age—such as cell phone videos, blog entries, digital photographs, and Mp3s—to classic literary forms like poetry that contributors believe both reflect the uniqueness of Uzbek culture and unite the

ethnic community. Many Uzbeks struggled with how to rally the support of co-ethnics while also attracting international concern. While the desire for international intervention led some to translate their works or publish them in more widely understood languages, the bulk of the discussion took place in Uzbek and therefore tends to be inaccessible to those outside the Uzbek community.

The intense dialogue catalyzed by digital technology has transformed ethnic and state relations in Central Asia. Perhaps more than any other event since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the reaction to the violence in Southern Kyrgyzstan hardened the lines of the Uzbek ethnic community. Ethnic Uzbeks appear to increasingly think of themselves as a group transcending the geographic, political, and religious boundaries that once divided them.

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Building a digital community

The emergence of Uzbek online communities in which the reaction to the Osh violence took place threatens the Uzbekistani government's idea of territorial nationalism. Uzbek online communities consist not only of Uzbeks in Uzbekistan, but ethnic Uzbeks born in neighboring states such as Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan as well as Uzbeks living abroad. Until roughly a decade ago, it was very difficult for these groups to communicate with each other on a regular basis. The collapse of the Soviet Union had transformed soft borders between republics into hard lines between states, blocking Uzbeks in Uzbekistan off from fellow Uzbeks in Central Asia. Uzbeks who were exiled abroad in the 1990s were effectively silenced, with little ability to share their ideas in a public forum or communicate with other Uzbeks who shared their views.

After the May 2005 violence in Andijon, everything changed. During the crackdown that followed, many of Uzbekistan's journalists, poets, and activists were driven from the country. They fled to neighboring Kyrgyzstan—from Andijon to Osh in many cases—and most were eventually given asylum in Europe and North America. The Andijon massacre, and the widespread exile of dissidents in its aftermath, was intended to silence critics of the Uzbek government. Yet this was the opposite of what happened. Refugees from Andijon dramatically increased the number of Uzbeks living abroad, many of whom were critical of the government, and nearly all of whom now had regular internet access for the first time.[6]

At the exact moment Uzbeks were fleeing Uzbekistan, digital media was undergoing a transformation. The Andijon events coincided with the emergence of blogs and free blogging services—in particular Ucoz.ru, a Russian-language blogging service launched in 2005—that made it easy for Uzbeks with little internet experience to publish their works and respond to them. Scattered around the world, Uzbeks developed a community through commentary—in which language, not citizenship, is the passport for entry.

At the center of this community's efforts was Andijon. The unprecedented violence brought once feuding activists together to expose the truth behind the massacre and seek justice. It also prompted Uzbeks to go online to look for uncensored Uzbek-language information about the events, thus expanding the audience of opposition websites beyond the opposition. Though the websites often focused on critiquing the Uzbek government, the people behind them were often not from Uzbekistan. One of the most popular sites, *Isyonkor*, was founded by an Uzbek from Tajikistan who described himself in an inter-

view as a "child of Turkistan" whose efforts were geared toward getting Uzbeks to reject artificial boundaries created by borders and unite with each other online.[7]

Uzbeks from Kyrgyzstan also played an active role in these online political spaces long before 2010. One of the best-known journalists to write about the Andijon violence, Alisher Saipov, was an Uzbek born in Osh, Kyrgyzstan. He also died in Osh, at the age of 26, assassinated by men presumed to be agents of the Uzbek government.

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Saipov's death revealed how threatening the Uzbek government found this new online community and what measures they would take to control it.[8]

Saipov's death also heralded an era marked by an increasing sense of futility surrounding the Andijon events and the prospect of political reform in Uzbekistan. Uzbeks had created dozens of websites documenting the violence, including interviews with witnesses and survivors, photos from the scene, and articles and poems commemorating the victims and condemning the government. They lobbied international organizations and posted petitions online, but these efforts yielded no pragmatic results. The Uzbek government remains strong to this day.

Online, Uzbeks expressed frustration over their inability to bring about political change. As the years went by, their focus on Andijon became less, and their online conversations turned into internal feuds over who was responsible for their own failure.

Social Memory and New Media

Though Uzbeks writing online did little to alter the political structure in Uzbekistan, their efforts show how effective the internet is in building a counter-narrative of a tragedy. Their version of the Andijon events was radically different than the one the Karimov government portrayed to its citizens, and difficult for the government to remove. Digital memory challenges the state directive to forget. By 2010, Uzbeks had become experts at tragedy preservation. They had also incorporated Andijon into a broader narrative of Uzbek identity. Andijon was portrayed as yet another chapter in the saga of centuries of oppression, whether by khans, tsars, the Soviets, or Karimov. Victimhood and persecution—and a longing for justice—were portrayed as inherent to Uzbek life.

In June 2010, Uzbeks around the world watched online video of Uzbeks from Osh crossing the border into Andijon, a reverse of the journey taken five years prior. Once again, Uzbeks were being targeted by brutal force, and once again it was being documented—but this time in far greater detail. New technologies like cell phone cameras and social media networks allowed Uzbeks to disseminate evidence far more widely and quickly than they could during the Andijon events.

The 2010 violence in Kyrgyzstan was the first Central Asian mass casualty conflict to take place in the era of social media. Reactions to the atrocities were published in real time but preserved for all time, usually retrievable through a Google search. This paradoxical quality of digital media—in which instantaneous and often heated reactions are preserved for prosperity, often outside their original context—is changing how citizens react to mass violence in ways social scientists do not yet fully understand. Digital memory has created a catalogue of sins, searchable and accessible, impervious to the human desire to move on.

Ethnicity as the Critical Factor: "Today I was found guilty of being an Uzbek"[9]

Uzbeks use digital media not only to convey what happened, but also to attempt to understand why they were singled out for attack. Though many conflicting arguments emerge, most believe that regardless of what initially spurred the violence, ethnicity was what perpetuated it.

These events were contextualized as part of a long-term systematic repression[14] of Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks that could be traced back to the late Soviet period and endured to the present day, meaning similar outbreaks of violence would likely occur in the future. In a short, brutal poem, one Osh resident mourned:

My body is a sack full of black charcoal
Sooner or later I'll be burned
What are you to do now, my Uzbeks?[15]

Though some early responses were full of rage and threats, promises of physical vengeance, and occasional rumors of an organized armed resistance, the dominating concern of online discussants was justice

Perhaps surprisingly, Uzbeks rarely discuss the political or socio-economic factors that many outside experts cite as probable causes. Uzbeks feel that they were victimized for their ethnicity, with more specific agendas—targeting based on wealth or political affiliation, for example—irrelevant.[10] They see their future as arbitrary and uncertain, because there is little that can be done to change their position or to predict when the violence will begin anew. This sense of unpredictable, inevitable persecution unites the Uzbek online community, even if individual discussants happen to live far from the areas where the violence took place or across state borders that had long divided Uzbeks into separate groups.[11]

In online forums, many Uzbeks argued that the 2010 events were part of an officially sanctioned ethnic cleansing program.[12] Accounts of ongoing harassment and small-scale attacks emphasize the alleged role of Kyrgyzstani police and security forces in either abetting the violence or directly causing it.[13] A year after the events, discussants believed that neither the conditions that led to the June violence nor official attitudes from Kyrgyz authorities had significantly changed. New stories emerged about attacks against Uzbeks and their families, as well as official harassment from Kyrgyzstani law enforcement.

Attention to the 1990 Osh violence also increased as online discussants revisited and reinterpreted regional history.[16] Discussants identified similar themes and patterns, and sometimes accused the same ethnic Kyrgyz officials of "planning" and funding both riots.[17,18,19,20] In a detailed analysis tweeted and reposted on several forums, one Uzbek academic studying in the United States describes the resemblance between the two bloody episodes as "two volumes written by the same author."[21] Uzbeks outside of Southern Kyrgyzstan expressed deep regret for "failing to recognize" what now seemed to them to be an institutional, systemic potential for violence and discrimination.[22]

Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan denounced what they describe as an information war waged against them in the Kyrgyz press.[23] They believed that the Kyrgyz media and Kyrgyz political elites blamed them for inciting the violence in collusion with international Islamic terrorist groups.[24] In an open letter to an Uzbek dissident website, one Osh resident said he had become so frustrated with the bias in the Kyrgyzstan-based media that he eventually smashed his television in anger.[25] Even further, the Uzbek commentators often accused Kyrgyz nationalist activists of distributing videos and photographs of dead ethnic Uzbeks or their burnt-out homes that reverse the ethnicity of the

victims and falsely claim to be evidence of Uzbek violence against ethnic Kyrgyz.[26] Though specific cases were rarely presented, Uzbek websites give weight to these claims by translating and republishing reports from international human rights investigators that find Uzbeks were overwhelmingly the victims of the June violence, rather than the perpetrators.[27]

The sense that the majority ethnic Kyrgyz population of Kyrgyzstan suspects all Uzbeks of supporting of Islamic terrorism or ethnic separatism has long made Uzbeks feel excluded from Kyrgyzstani society.[28] Uzbeks saw the late November 2010 announcements by Kyrgyzstani Security Services that they had uncovered a group of "nationalist-separatist" terror cells inside Kyrgyzstan as an attempt to whip up popular hysteria against ethnic Uzbeks. When the existence of the cell was first announced, the government emphasized that the group was composed of criminals of various ethnicities. But after a special forces operation in Osh on November 29 that left four Uzbeks dead, the story changed to reflect anti-Uzbek sentiment. Kyrgyz government officials justified the raid by claiming that the men in both Bishkek and Osh were members of international Islamic terrorist organizations pursuing nationalist-separatist goals and that they planned to kill "at least 12,000 people" in Kyrgyzstan.[29]

The arrest and exile of Uzbek community leaders, the wildly disproportionate prosecution of ethnic Uzbeks on charges of inciting the violence, and the intimidation of human rights advocates or Uzbeks defense attorneys were seen by many as a sign of institutional change in Kyrgyzstan, a redefinition of citizenship based on ethnicity. Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan described this ethnicization of the country and accompanying violence as a loss of brotherhood – a betrayal on the part of trusted neighbors – resulting in a lost homeland.[30] Contrary to separatist accusations that fly in the Kyrgyz language press, Uzbek discussants say that Kyrgyzstan is their homeland. In being driven out of Kyrgyzstan they do not feel they are "returning home" to Uzbekistan or other places—as the Kyrgyz description of Uzbeks as a "diaspora" would indicate—but are losing their homes, being scattered to the wind.[31]

Fire, Rape, and Murder: "No one can remain indifferent"

As Uzbeks documented the violence of June 10-14 online, common symbols and themes began to emerge. These symbols informed both the creative works inspired by the events and the political campaigns of those seeking reparation.

The primary symbol of the violence is fire. Videos, photographs, and descriptions of Uzbeks being burned alive and of Uzbek neighborhoods or businesses in flames dominate the discussions across all mediums, from amateur blogs to formal religious addresses.[32] Self-publication and participant documentation allowed Uzbeks to spread video and photographic evidence and archive it even after attempts at deletion.[33] Cellular phone videos of victims being burned alive, apparently filmed by ethnic Kyrgyz onlookers, became the primary symbols of the violence for Uzbeks, shared repeatedly and discussed on a range of forums.[34] In one video, a teenage Uzbek boy is beaten brutally by a crowd of Kyrgyz teens in Osh and then set on fire. The crowd looks on and yells, "Don't put him out!" as his assailants hold back several onlookers who halfheartedly try to extinguish him as he slowly dies in front of the crowd.[35]

Another dominant theme is rape, particularly the rape of young girls and children. As above, amateur video documentary evidence of women and girls and their relatives recounting their own stories spread virally across the internet and are often referenced in text discussions about the events. Discussants describe the sexual violence in terms that emphasize inhuman brutality, citing gang-rapes of young children and virgin girls, frequently with the humiliating detail (sometimes symbolically, sometimes literally) of their fathers being forced to watch.[36]

The graphic nature of the content provoked a strong reaction in the community. Many expressed feelings of horror, shock, and profound helplessness in the face of what they called "an inhuman savagery."[37] Discussants gave their own accounts of elderly men and women being thrown into flaming homes to burn to death, of

attackers cutting fetuses out of the wombs of pregnant women, of relatives finding the bodies of their loved ones partially eaten by stray dogs, and of women's bodies found with their breasts cut off.[38] Though these most anecdotes are not usually accompanied with documentary evidence and may be apocryphal, a substantial amount of documentary material of similar deadly violence gives weight to these stories.

The attacks are interpreted as a direct assault on the survival of Uzbek communities and Uzbek culture. Discussants emphasized the murder of community elders and pregnant women, the physical destruction of Uzbek neighborhoods and photographic evidence of the murder of some entire families to make this clear.[39] They believe the attacks were directed against the values that Uzbeks hold most sacred and that exemplify their culture and community: protection of unmarried women, conservative sexual mores, respect for elders, the importance of the home as the center of family life, the reproduction of family and culture, Islam, and the neighborhood (*mahalla*) as a center of mutual ties and obligations that protects Uzbek culture in a country where Uzbeks are a minority.[40]

In their online commentary, Uzbek authors extend the fire imagery to describe the scale of the destruction and discrimination against Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan. In contrast to the way the sudden outburst of violence is portrayed in international media and commentary—as an explosive event that inflicts a great deal of damage quickly but then fades away—the Uzbek narrative characterizes the violence not as an explosion but as a conflagration.

Saidjahon Ravoniy, an Uzbek poet and activist from Andijon, was one of several commentators who compared the fire in Osh to the Russian forest fires that burned through much of that summer. Ravoniy laments that while everyone could see the massive destruction in Russia, few understood the extent of the fires that burned in Kyrgyzstan, and the world seemed more upset over snakes and insects burning in Russian forests than the human beings who were consumed, and continued to be consumed, in the Kyrgyzstan persecution.[41]

Shared Victimhood: "To All Uzbeks in Uzbekistan and Everywhere Else"[42]

Many of the discussants—especially those writing from Kyrgyzstan where they reported that oppression and both official and officially tolerated harassment, attacks, and physical abuse continued—felt they were abandoned by the world. The systems that they hoped would provide security or justice failed them. Many authors felt that the Uzbek online documentation of the tragedies presented ample evidence that the violence took place and that Uzbeks were overwhelmingly the victims (and not the aggressors, as the Kyrgyz government and media claimed).

One of the most common ways Uzbek discussants expressed these views was through open letters. These were written to each other (as in the letter quoted above in the subheading) or to regional and international political leaders, though these latter addresses are usually written in Russian or English for a wider audience, but published online.[43] The internal conversations within the Uzbek community often argue that the pleas for help from the outside world had failed. From this betrayal emerged a stronger sense of Uzbek communal responsibility, that they had no one to look out for them but themselves.[44]

Participants in this conversation included Uzbeks in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and exiles across Europe and the United States – a mix that once again indicates the internet's role in strengthening ethnic bonds. Yet within this online community, sentiment varied. Letters from Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan were often resentful towards Uzbeks in Uzbekistan or the government of Uzbekistan for not coming to their aid during the violence. Letters from Uzbeks outside Kyrgyzstan often express regret, remorse, and sometimes criticism of the Karimov government on those same grounds.[45]

With little help coming from Kyrgyz officials or the international community, Uzbeks living in Kyrgyzstan turned to Uzbeks abroad for help and advice. In one instance, they turned

to the famous exiled Muslim scholar and cleric Obidxon Qori Sobitxon O'g'li (Nazarov) in Sweden for questions about the meaning of their suffering, for advice about whether or not they should remain in Kyrgyzstan, whether they should participate in Kyrgyzstan's political system, and whether or not it would be a sin to take vengeance for their suffering.[46] (In February 2012, Nazarov was shot in an attempted assignation that many analysts assume was ordered by the Uzbek government.)

Sometimes Uzbeks abroad offered help and advice to Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks that reached so far into the intimate details of their lives that some felt it crossed the boundaries of what was appropriate. An Uzbekistani refugee living in Idaho was so moved by accounts he had read online of women being shunned by their male relatives or husbands they were raped during the violence that he wrote an open letter upbraiding his suffering co-ethnics for their behavior and what he criticized as religious illiteracy. Quoting a recent sermon by the influential Kara-Suu imam Rashod Kamalov— who declared that the women were victims in God's eyes and their purity and honor was intact— the Idaho-based author publicly offered to marry one of the victims himself and bring her to America to live with him.[47]

Posted comments in response indicated that Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks did not always appreciate this level of interest in their private lives. Nonetheless the incident is a good illustration of the extent to which many living outside of Kyrgyzstan felt personally affected by the tragedy, and willing to take great measures to alleviate the pain of the victims.

Searching for Justice, in this World or the Next

> "…Then [on the Day of Judgment] the little children whose cries were cut short when they were murdered in Osh will have a chance to say: "Oh, Lord! Why did this evil person kill me?" They will make their appeal to the Creator [himself], *inshallah*."[48]
> –Muniyb, *Suffering and Misfortune*

Though some early responses were full of rage and threats, promises of physical vengeance, and occasional rumors of an organized armed resistance, the dominating concern of online discussants was justice. Most were deeply disappointed that despite all the means available to seek justice—whether Kyrgyzstani courts, Uzbek security forces, the UN, or international law—Uzbeks continued to face unfair treatment in the Kyrgyzstani media, courts, and politics. Online Uzbeks of all backgrounds pondered the theme of justice—both in the here and now and divine justice on Judgment Day.[49]

The emphasis on finding a religious meaning for the tragedy and a religiously based appeal to justice seems to be linked to the frustration with the lack of justice by other available means. Many appeal primarily to a sense of ultimate morality, to the hope for divine justice, and the importance of the concept of *qiyomat* (Judgment Day) in the traditional Muslim worldview. Despite the emphasis on divine judgment, actors continued to seek justice in the here and now as well.

Uzbeks "initiatives" to investigate and document the June tragedy and its ongoing aftereffects are a key part of the community effort to seek justice. These initiatives united activists, investigators, victims and refugees across state borders and included Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Europe, and the United States. Together they published research drawing from the websites that had been created by the broader Uzbek community to bear witness to the violence.[50]

Secular civic efforts such as these provide an important outlet for the Uzbek community to tell its story to the rest of the world, and they often tailored these reports to the international community by publishing them in Russian, English and other languages. Engaging in a secular and civic discussion of justice, however, does not preclude many of the authors from also locating the tragedy in an Islam-based religious morality and eschatology.[51] This hope for divine justice, the sense that— as victims of oppression—they have God on their side, and the struggle to understand the senseless violence of human tragedy and find meaning for suffering in an Islamic worldview pervades much of the writing about the events and their aftermath.

In many cases, it appears that the redefinition of pan-Uzbek identity through shared victimhood also reinforces the idea that being Muslim is a vital part of being Uzbek. This could be one of the most important lasting effects of the June violence, particularly if legal or civic efforts to achieve some kind of justice continue to fail and no secular alternatives can be found.

Conclusion

For many after the June 2010 events, the internet intensified a sense of belonging in a broader Uzbek community. The central aspect of this communal identity is a feeling of shared victimhood and suffering. Having followed economic hardships and widespread disappointment with post-Soviet "transitional democracies", the June 2010 events may shape Uzbeks' perceptions of themselves as an aggrieved or oppressed minority, even though they are the largest and most militarily powerful ethnic group in Central Asia. This "victim" identity could likely make Uzbekistani Uzbeks in particular more sensitive to perceived slights from neighboring states or other ethnic groups in the region.

Here a contrast emerges between perspectives of people who felt drawn into the conflict from afar —that is, mainly through online interaction— and those who lived through it personally. As time passed, interview respondents living in Osh (based on fieldwork conducted in 2011 and 2012) stressed the importance of moving on from the conflict and of shifting the victim identity onto the city as a multi-ethnic community. Some argued that Uzbeks should accept ethnic Kyrgyz discourses of blame in order to return to peaceful everyday life, even if they disagreed with the Kyrgyz views. Many expressed a desire to move on, and shifted the rationale for the attacks away from ethnicity and onto economic and criminal motivations, often stressing that they were not attacked by their neighbors, but by outsiders, hired thugs, or "*jigits* come down from the mountains."

Yet for the broader Uzbek public and particularly for the Uzbekistani political opposition, who founded many of the websites where the initial discourse took place, the pursuit of justice for co-ethnics attacked on the basis of their common identity remains the dominant paradigm through which the events are viewed.

The Andijon violence in May 2005 provoked a similarly strong online public reaction and discussion among Uzbeks. Because the Andijon violence was "Uzbek on Uzbek" (however it was spun or interpreted), and because the Karimov government launched an official narrative explaining that violence and took strong measures to punish dissenting voices, discussion of Andijon has been both forced "underground" and stigmatized as an opposition cause. Discussants are forced to take a political stand regarding Andijon: voicing doubt about any of the Uzbekistani government's contradictory explanations of the violence is automatically an oppositional act. Though it is an issue of great importance to many Uzbeks and citizens of Uzbekistan in general, the politicization of the Andijon events prevented it from gaining traction as a popular movement.

This discussion of the Osh events has a very different character. The government of Uzbekistan has made no strong statements creating any official stance and provided an unusual amount of leeway for Uzbeks to discuss an emotionally charged issue, notably allowing collaboration with international organizations and committees, cooperation between actors across borders, and participation of Uzbekistan's intellectual and creative elites in what appear to be unscripted forums and artistic works.

Popular anger and dissatisfaction on this issue are primarily directed towards outside actors (ethnic Kyrgyz, Kyrgyzstani politicians, foreign instigators, etc). The Karimov government has structured its legitimacy on claims to authentic ethnic Uzbek nationalism. For these reasons it seems likely that relatively open discussion of these issues may be allowed to continue, especially if current events drive interest in the plight of Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan and elsewhere. This unusually permissive environment combined with the new communicative capacity of digital technology may have created the broader ethnic Uzbek community's first international public debate since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Whether a publically debated issue can help create a genuine public sphere—and how that might affect the region—remains to be seen.

Endnotes

1. International Crisis Group, *Kyrgyzstan: Widening Ethnic Divisions in the South, Asia Report No. 222.* March 29, 2012, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/central-asia/kyrgyzstan/222-kyrgyzstan-widening-ethnic-divisions-in-the-south.pdf. The conflict temporarily displaced up to 400,000 total, approximately 100,000 of which went to Uzbekistan temporarily.
2. Madeleine Reeves, "The Ethnicisation of Violence in Southern Kyrgyzstan," *OpenDemocracy Russia*, 21 June 2010. http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/madeleine-reeves/ethnicisation-of-violence-in-southern-kyrgyzstan-0.
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4. Alisher lkhamov, "Archeology of Uzbek Identity." Anthropology and Archeology of Eurasia 44, no. 4 (2006): 10-36.
5. The effort continues and most of the digital archives created to store evidence of the conflict are still online; however, the scope of the analysis of online materials presented here focuses mostly on things published by mid-2011.
6. Sarah Kendzior, 'Digital Distrust: Uzbek Cynicism and Solidarity in the Internet Age," *American Ethnologist* 38, no. 3 (2011): 559-575.
7. Isyonkor was closed in 2007. A successor site, Yangi Dunyo, became very popular among Uzbek political exiles before closing in 2012.
8. Kendzior, "A Reporter Without Borders: Internet Politics and State Violence in Uzbekistan".
9. *Adolat (Justice);* Bahoroy; "O'zbekligim ayb bo'ldi menga bugun [Poem]" [Uzbek: Today I was Found Guilty of Being an Uzbek"],July 2, 2010, http://www.adolat.com/?p=1321&lang=uz.
10. Subsequent outside analysis concluded that economic and sometimes political factors indeed seem to play an important role in determining the patterns and locations for violence, particularly of physical property destruction. While these themes are sometimes present in the online discussion, they seem to be almost downplayed in order to emphasize the apparent randomness and ethnic-only based targeting of physical (person to person) violence, which is given more weight and importance than economic and physical damage. This is also likely a conscious or unconscious strategy to rally other Uzbeks to the cause and expand the sense of real or potential victimhood.
11. See Matteo Fumagalli, 'Ethnicity, state formation and foreign policy: Uzbekistan and 'Uzbeks abroad'," *Central Asian Survey* 26, no. 1 (2007):105–122; Morgan Y. Liu, "Recognizing the Khan: authority, space, and political imagination among Uzbek men in post-Soviet Osh, Kyrgyzstan," PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2002.
12. *Yangi Dunyo* (and others); Abdufattoh Mannapov; "Davom etayotgan insoniylikka qarshi jinoyat haqida" [Uzbek: "Regarding the Continuing Crime against Humanity"]; 30 August 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=14454; Accessed 18 November 2010. Abdufattoh Mannapov is a US-based Uzbek academic and (anti-Karimov) opposition activist. *Yangi Dunyo*; Marat Zakhidov; "Ne otmyvayushiysia zachistka na yuge Kyrgyzstana" [Russian: "The Unwashable Stain of the [Ethnic] Cleansing in Southern Kyrgyzstan"]; 10 November 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15729 Acc 16 November 2010; Zakhidov is an Uzbekistan-based independent human rights activist sponsored by a German NGO.
13. *Yangi Dunyo* (and others); Abdufattoh Mannapov; "Yurak bardosh berolmas bunga" http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15716 Accessed 10 Nov 2010; Abdufattoh Mannapov is a US-based Uzbek academic and (anti-Karimov) opposition activist.
14. The word used for "repression" in Uzbek (*qatag'in)* has direct connotations with the repression of native culture and peoples during Stalin's purges in the 1930s. The Uzbek government has only recently begun to permit speaking openly and publicly about the Stalin era repression, opening a much talked about museum to victims of the Soviet poli-

cies that uses this same word in its title.

15. Internet; Adolat.com; Bahoroy; "O'zbekligim ayb bo'ldi menga bugun" [Uzbek: "Today I was found guilty of being an Uzbek"]; http://www.adolat.com/?p=1321&lang=uz; Accessed 15 August 2010.
16. It is sadly ironic, or according to some conspiracy speculation in the Uzbek community "no coincidence," that the 2010 Osh pogroms began only a week after the 20th anniversary of the 1990 violence. The publication of articles and histories commemorating the 20th anniversary of the violence likely contributed to the frequency with which actors in this discussion connect the two. See, for example, this article, published only two days before the new violence began: See: Ferghana.ru; "Oshkaia Reznia 1990 goda. Khronologia tragedii" [Russian: The Osh Massacre of 1990: Chronology of a Tragedy"]; 8 June 2010; http://www.ferghana.ru/ article.php?id=6601; Accessed 20 October 2010; Ferghana.ru is a Moscow-based independent Central Asia news and information outlet that publishes in Russian, Uzbek, English, and French.
17. *Yangi Dunyo*; "O'sh shaxridan Bahrom" [Bahrom from Osh city]; "Ikkinchi Kirg'inga Karimov Aybdor" [Uzbek: "The Second Massacre is Karimov's Fault"]; 2 October 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15120. Accessed 4 Oct 2010.
18. *Yangi Dunyo*; Sergei Burlachenko and Kadyrjon Batyrov; "Slyozy Kyrgyzov, Gore Uzbekov" [Russian: "Tears of the Kyrgyz, the Grief of the Uzbeks"]; 18 September 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=14862; Accessed 21 Sep 2010; Source is an interview with Kadryjon Batyrov, a controversial social and political, and economic leader of the Uzbek community in Kyrgyzstan currently hiding in exile.
19 *Yangi Dunyo*; "Leaders of the Uzbek Community in Kyrgyzstan;" "Obrashchenie k narodu Kyrgyzstana" [Russian: "Address to the People of Kyrgyzstan"]; 19 September 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=14887; Accessed 4 Oct 2010; Source is an anonymous open letter that appears to be from members of the Uzbek cultural association previously headed by Batyrov.
20. *Yangi Dunyo* [and others]; Ravshan Gapirov; "Prezidentu Respubliki Uzbekistan I.A. Karimovu" [Russian: "To The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov"]; 30 September 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15075; Accessed 4 Oct. 2010;. Gapirov is an ethnic Uzbek human rights activist in Osh, source is an open letter published on Yangi Dunyo, a Europe-based Uzbek and Russian language website.
21. *Kundalik Bitiklarim* (Daily Musings); Behzod; "Qirg'iziston Janubidagi Qonli Voqealar Qiyosi Tahlili: 1990 va 2010" [Uzbek: "The Bloody Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan in Comparative Analysis: 1990 and 2010;"
http://kundalik.wordpress.com/2010/08/20/qirgiziston-janubidagi-qonli-voqealar-qiyosiy-tahlili-1990-va-2010-yillar/#more-849; Accessed 15 August 2010.
22. *Yangi Dunyo*; "O'sh shaxridan Bahrom" [Bahrom from Osh city]; "Ikkinchi Kirg'inga Karimov Aybdor" [Uzbek: "The Second Massacre is Karimov's Fault"]; 2 October 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15120. Accessed 4 Oct 2010. "Bahrom" is an anonymous guest contributor who self-identifies as an Osh resident. *Musulman O'zbekistan* [and other sites]; Ubaydullo Avvob (Muniyb); *Musibat va Munosabat: Didagiryon Dardnoma* [Uzbek: *Suffering and Misfortune: An epistle of tears and grief*]; 8 August 2010; available via: http://yangidunyo.com/?p=13851; Accessed 20 October 2010; *Yangi Dunyo*; B. Musaev; "Bez viny vinovaty i Kyrgyzskii Mankurtizm" [Russian: "The Innocent are Guilty and Kyrgyz Mankurtism"]; 18 September 2010; www.yangidunyo.com/?p=14857. Accessed 21 Sep. 2010.
23. *Yangi Dunyo* [and others]; Ravshan Gapirov; "Prezidentu Respubliki Uzbekistan I.A. Karimovu" [Russian: "To The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov"]; 30 September 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15075; Accessed 4 Oct. 2010.
24. *Adolat* (Justice); Oshlik [An Osh resident]; "O'zbekistandagi va boshka barcha O'zbeklarga" [Uzbek: "To Uzbeks in Uzbekistan and All Others [Everywhere Else]"]; 8 July 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=1587&lang=uz; Accessed 21 October 2010; "Osh resident" is an anonymous source who self-identifies, the substance of the letter is an angry complaint directed at

the Uzbek government for turning away tens of thousands of Uzbek refugees and failing to intervene to protect the Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks. In reference to the Kyrgyz side of the situation, he says: "Uzbeks are oppressed, Uzbeks are shot, Uzbeks' homes are turned to ashes, but the Kyrgyz government is blaming it all on Uzbeks, as if we're all raving lunatics. They are telling the rest of the world that we're all terrorists and extremists… It's absurd, we had nothing more than sticks and pieces of pipe to defend ourselves with, and now they've even taken those away from us. After the way they slandered Uzbeks on the news yesterday, I smashed my television."

25. Ibid.
26. The Association for Human Rights in Central Asia; "V Oshe za $1 prodaetsia fil'm o zverskikh uzbekov" [Russian: "In Osh a Film about the "Savage Uzbeks" is Being Sold for $1"]; 12 September 2010; Available via: http://uzbektragedy.com/ru/?p=316; Accessed 15 October 2010; The Association for Human Rights in Central Asia self identifies as a Kyrgyzstan-based human rights organization, no independent confirmation of their location or ethnic makeup was given. *Parus.kg;* Sultanbek Kamchibekov; "Kyrgyzstan: Kak dal'she zhit'? Oshkikh natsionalistov mir ne beret" [Russian: "Kyrgyzstan: How do we go on? The Osh Nationalists Won't Leave Us in Peace"]; 25 August 2010; http://www.paruskg.info/2010/08/25/31148; Accessed 21 October 2010. *Uznews.net*; "Razzhiganie natsionalnoy rozni v Oshe po-myrzakmatovski" [Russian: "Inciting Inter-ethnic Conflict in Osh, Myrzakmatov-Style"]; 25 August 2010; http://www.uznews.net/news_single. php?lng=ru&sub=usual&cid=32&nid=14878; Accessed 25 August 2010; *Adolat (Justice);* "Iznasilovanii v obschezhitii Osha ne bylo" [Russian: "The Rapes in the Osh Dormitory Never Happened"]; 30 July; http://www.adolat.com/?p=3087&lang=ru; Accessed 21 October 2010.
27. Below are three recent examples of this trend, but the instances on only the larger and more popular websites are in the hundreds. In addition to translating reports originally published in English or Russian, many sites frequently repost or reference news originally published by Ozodlik Radiosi (RFE/RL Uzbek), BBC Uzbek, and Amerika Ovozi (VOA Uzbek). These sites have a wide following and are frequently quoted even on Uzbek language Islamist websites. Drawing from a common (apparently trusted) source of information this way, in addition to the frequent inter-referencing and linking that the sites cited here do with one another, seems to build a stronger sense of identity and shared purpose in the community. It also reveals that USGOV funded projects like Ozodlik Radiosi may play a larger role in influencing the discussion than might have been assumed. *Adolat;* "Korrespondent Eurasianet ne smog naidti v Oshe bezdomnykh kyrgyzov" [Russian: "Eurasianet Correspondent Couldn't Find Homeless Kyrgyz in Osh"]; 20 September 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=4072&lang=ru; Accessed 21 October 2010; Source is a translation of an article originally published on *Eurasianet* written by David Trilling; the article recounts how the reporter attempted to verify Kyrgyz claims that thousands of ethnic Kyrgyz were also made homeless by the June violence, though each location activists or members of the public indicated to him were resettlement camps providing temporary housing to Kyrgyz victims proved to be empty, and no evidence was found that they had ever been occupied for temporary housing. *Uzbek Tragedy (O'zbek Fojeasi);* Amerika Ovozi (Voice of America Uzbek Service); "Inson huquqlari tashkilotlari Azimjon Asqarovga chiqarilgan hukmdan norozi" [Uzbek: "Human Rights Organizations Protest Verdict Against Azimjon Asqarov"]; 17 September 2010; http://uzbektragedy.com/uz/?p=174; Accessed 21 October 2010; Source article is a reprint of a USGOV-sponsored Uzbek language news service report that indicates a number of human rights organizations around the world have issued statements condemning the life-sentence verdict given to ethnic Uzbek human rights activist Asqarov, whom many claim has been accused of inciting inter-ethnic conflict based on falsified evidence in retaliation for his attempts to document attacks by KG government forces on unarmed Uzbek citizens. *Yangi Dunyo;* BBC Uzbek Service (repost); "Qirg'iziston: O'sh va Jalalabod Voqealari Yu-

zasidan Halqaro Tekshiruv Boshlandi" [Uzbek: "International Investigation of the Osh and Jalalabad Events Has Begun"]; 18 October 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15469; Accessed 21 October 2010; Source article is a re-post of a BBC Uzbek Service article.

28. Liu, "Recognizing the Khan: authority, space, and political imagination among Uzbek men in post-Soviet Osh, Kyrgyzstan. This stereotype arises in part because radical Islamist groups like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan was founded by a small group of disaffected Ferghana Valley Uzbeks, but it also comes in large part from long-held stereotypes that both groups hold about the other's attitudes towards Islam. Uzbeks are often considered the "most religious" ethnicity in Central Asia, in no small part because of the important role the cities of Bukhara and Samarqand (in today's Uzbekistan) played in the history of Islamic civilization. In reality, however, the distinction between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks (and Persian speakers, who were for most of history the dominant group in the settled oasis cities like Bukhara and Samarqand in spite of the fact that these are now considered Uzbek cities) depends more on the differences in urban vs. nomadic cultural patterns, in both the way the two groups understand their religious identity and the other cultural characteristics that separate these very closely related Turkic groups. Regardless of its origins, the stereotypes about religious differences hold that Uzbeks, as the more traditionally Muslim group, will therefore be more prone to being influenced by foreign religious missionaries and extremist groups, and their identity as more traditional Muslims somehow conflicts with loyalties to the Kyrgyzstani state or their membership as Kyrgyzstani citizens, in spite of the fact that Kyrgyz are also a majority Muslim society.
29. *Beliy Parus (*White Sail); "Eks-parlimentarii finansirovali terakti v Kyrgyzstane? Zaderzhannie v Oshe daiut 'sensatsionnye' pokozaniia" [Russian: "Ex-Parliamentarians Financed the Terrorist Acts in Kyrgyzstan? Detainees in Osh Give "Sensational" Testimony"]; 30 November 2010; http://www.paruskg.info/2010/11/30/36159; Accessed 1 December 2010. *Beliy Parus* is an independently owned web-based opposition publication based in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Ferghana.ru; "V Bishkeke proizashel vzryv: Pod podozreniem 'separatisty'" [Russian: "Explosion in Bishkek—"Separatists" Under Suspicion"]; 30 November 2010; http://ferghana-blog.livejournal.com/121251.html; Accessed 30 November 2010. 24.kg; Yulia Mazykina; "Miroslav Niyazov: My iavleemsia sviditelimi togo, kak v Kyrgyzstane ochevidnii separatizm vyshel za ramki ekstremisma i prevrashchaetsia v terrorism" [Russian: "Miroslav Niyazov [ex chair of the Kyrgyz National Security Council]: We Are Witnessing Blatant Separatism Exceeding the Boundaries of Extremism and Becoming Terrorism"]; 29 November 2010; http://24kg.org/community/87793-miroslav-niyazov-my-yavlyaemsya-svidetelyami-togo.html; Accessed 29 November 2010.
30 *Islam Ovozi (The Voice of Islam); "*Muhtoj" and Obidxon Qori Nazarov; "Oshdan Hijrat Qilsa Bo'ladimi?" [Uzbek: "Is it Permissible to Abandon Osh and Go Into Exile?"]; 25 June 2010; http://www.islomovozi.com/?p=663; Accessed 7 October 2010. Source is an Osh resident's open letter to Obidxon Qori asking his opinion, as a religious authority, on whether or not it is permissible to flee a Muslim country for a non-Muslim land when the conditions become unbearable.
31. Yangi Dunyo (New World); Sobir Hakimov; "O'zbeklar Kelgindi MIllat Emas" [Uzbek: "Uzbeks [in Kyrgyzstan] Are Not an Imported Nationality"]; 7 November 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15712; Accessed 10 November 2010; Hakimov self identifies as an Osh-based ethnic Uzbek activist; this is likely a pseudonym. *Adolat (Justice);* "Painkiller;" "*Letters to the Editor:* Kyrgyzy i Uzbeky: bratskie narody" [Russian with Uzbek intermixed: "Kyrgyz and Uzbeks: Brotherly Peoples"]; 17 June 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=194&lang=ru;Accessed 15 August 2010; *Musulman O'zbekistan* [and other sites]; Ubaydullo Avvob (Muniyb); *Musibat va Munosabat: Didagiryon Dardnoma* [Uzbek: *Suffering and Misfortune: An epistle of tears and grief*]; 8 August 2010; available via: http://yangidunyo.com/?p=13851; Accessed 20 October 2010.
32. *Musulman O'zbekistan* [and other sites]; Ubaydullo Avvob (Muniyb); *Musibat va Munosa-*

bat: Didagiryon Dardnoma [Uzbek: *Suffering and Misfortune: An epistle of tears and grief*]; 8 August 2010; available via: http://yangidunyo.com/?p=13851; Accessed 20 October 2010; *Adolat (Justice);* "Painkiller;" "*Letters to the Editor:* Kyrgyzy i Uzbeky: bratskie narody" [Russian with Uzbek intermixed: "Kyrgyz and Uzbeks: Brotherly Peoples"]; 17 June 2010; http://www.adolat.com/ ?p=194&lang=ru; Accessed 15 August 2010; *Yangi Dunyo;* Saidjon Ravoniy; "Prosti, esli kto byl dovelen' [Poem]" [Russian: "Forgive us, If Someone Was Satisfied"]; 13 September 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=14769; Accessed 21 Sep 2010; Internet; *Adolat (Justice);* Bahoroy; "O'zbekligim ayb bo'ldi menga bugun [Poem]" [Uzbek: Today I was Found Guilty of Being an Uzbek"]; 2 July 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=1321&lang=uz; Accessed 15 August 2010;

33. Though the most violent video clips originally posted to YouTube are taken down by moderators because of their graphic content, at least one new website has been created specifically devoted to archiving and chronicling the graphic documentary content and videos are mirrored and stored on multiple file sharing sites all over the internet. Sometimes this is done overtly and legally, but Uzbek dissidents have long mastered the ability to hack video and audio archive and sharing sites and store their content there unbeknownst to the actual owners of the sites. For an example of a legal website dedicated to archiving graphic documentary content in Uzbek, Russian, and English, see: *The Uzbek Tragedy*; http://uzbektragedy.com/; Accessed 20 October 2010;
34. Adolat (Justice); "Zazhivo sozhzhenye Uzbekskie deti [video]" [Russian: "Uzbek Children Burned Alive"]; 2 August 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=3241&lang=ru; Accessed 21 October 2010; Adolat (Justice); "Kyrgyzy zhgut Uzbekov—muzhchinu i odnu zhenschinu zazhivo [Video]" [Russian: "Kyrgyz burn Uzbeks—a man and a woman—alive"]; 25 July 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=2963&lang=ru; Accessed 21 October 2010.
35. For a detailed description of this and other videos and more information about digital archiving of these events, see: *Registan.net*; Sarah Kendzior; "Digital Memory and a Massacre." 23 June 2010; http://www.registan.net/index.php/2010/06/23/digital-memory-and-a-massacre-2/; Accessed 20 October 2010; A graphic description of another video in which two Uzbek boys are murdered by a crowd of Kyrgyz was included in an open letter to the Kyrgyz government from an influential Uzbek imam, translated into Russian and English for a wider audience. *Islam Ovozi* (The Voice of Islam); Obidxon Qori Sobitxon O'g'li (Nazarov); "Qirg'iz Rahbarlari, halq bilan birga bo'ling!" [Uzbek: "Kyrgyz Leaders: Join Together With Your People!"]. 21 June 2010; http://www.islomovozi.com/?p=661; Accessed 20 October 2010.
36. *Adolat (Justice);* Bahoroy; "O'zbekligim ayb bo'ldi menga bugun [Poem]" [Uzbek: Today I was Found Guilty of Being an Uzbek"]; 2 July 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=1321&lang=uz; Accessed 15 August 2010; *O'zbek Fojea* (Uzbek Tragedy); Author unknown; "Zo'rlanganlar hikoya qiladi [Video]" [Uzbek: "Rape victims tell their story."] 27 July 2010; http://uzbektragedy.com/uz/?p=134; Accessed 20 October 2010; *Musulman O'zbekistan* [and other sites]; Ubaydullo Avvob (Muniyb); *Musibat va Munosabat: Didagiryon Dardnoma* [Uzbek: *Suffering and Misfortune: An epistle of tears and grief*]; 8 August 2010; available via: http://yangidunyo.com/?p=13851; Accessed 20 October 2010: *Legendy i Istorii Vostoka* (Legends and Histories of the East) [and other sites]; Alisher Taksanov; "Ya Etoga Ne Proshu I Ne Zabudu" [Russian: "This I Will Neither Forgive nor Forget"]; 21 June 2010; http://alisher1966.livejournal.com/127664.html; Accessed 20 October 2010; Alisher Taksanov is an influential academic, literary critic, and writer from Tashkent who publishes commentary on Uzbek current events from exile in Europe. *Kundalik Bitiklarim* (Daily Musings); Behzod; "Qirg'iziston Janubidagi Qonli Voqealar Qiyosi Tahlili: 1990 va 2010" [Uzbek: "The Bloody Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan in Comparative Analysis: 1990 and 2010;" http://kundalik.wordpress.com/2010/08/20/qirgiziston-janubidagi-qonli-voqealar-qiyosiy-tahlili-1990-va-2010-yillar/#more-849; Accessed 15 August 2010; *Kundalik Bitiklarim* is a private, independent website published in the U.S.

37. The word probably most commonly used in Uzbek to describe "violence" that took place is *vahshiylik,* which is best rendered in English as savagery or butchery, connoting an animal or barbaric kind of violence. The attackers are frequently described as *vahshiylar,* that is, savages or butchers (a person who commits *vahshiylik).* Russian and English texts about the violence, even when written by Uzbek respondents, tend to be more formal and less evocative, and use analytical terms that are more common to the language of human rights or the international community (*reznia,* massacre, or *nasilie,* violence).
38. Sobir Hakimov; *Yangi Dunyo (New World);* "Oshdan Maqtub: Bir Fojea Tarixi" [Uzbek: "A Letter from Osh: One Tragedy's History"]; 17 November 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15837. Accessed 18 November 2010.
39. *Adolat (Justice);* "Painkiller;" "*Letters to the Editor:* Kyrgyzy i Uzbeky: bratskie narody" [Russian with Uzbek intermixed: "Kyrgyz and Uzbeks: Brotherly Peoples"]; 17 June 2010; http://www.adolat.com/ ?p=194&lang=ru; Accessed 15 August 2010; *Yangi Dunyo* (New World); Expert Rabochaya gruppa [Russian: Expert Working Group]; "Oshskaia gar'" [Russian: "The Ashes of Osh"]; 16 August 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=14098; Accessed 20 October 2010; *Uzbek Tragedy;* "Photos"; 26 July 2010; http://uzbektragedy.com/?page_id=1312; Accessed 21 October 2010; *Musulman O'zbekistan* (Muslim Uzbekistan); "Foto bezparyadkov v Oshe" [Russian: "Photos of the Unrest in Osh"]; No date. http://www.muslimuzbekistan.com/ru/special/photofacts/osh2010.php; Accessed 21 October 2010; *Yangi Dunyo*; Bek Tashmukhamedov; "Poroki Kyrgyzskoi gosudarstvennosti" [Russian: "The Failures of Kyrgyz Governance"]; 11 September 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=14744; Accessed 21 Sep 2010; *Islam Ovozi (The Voice of Islam)*; "Abdullo Toshkandi," and Obidxon Qori Sobitxon O'g'li (Nazarov); "O'zbeklar referedumga qatnashishlari kerakmi, yo'qmi?" [Uzbek: "Should Uzbeks Participate in the Referendum or Not?"]; 26 June 2010; http://www.islomovozi.com/?p=665; Accessed 7 October 2010.
40. These include things like religion (dialogues often accuse Kyrgyz collaborators of betraying their religion and sometimes include salient but likely apocryphal or symbolic details like attackers throwing Qur'ans into the toilet), the protection and seclusion of girls and unmarried women, the boundaries and tight-knit community of the *mahallas* (traditional Uzbek neighborhoods that have inbuilt institutions of self-governance and community obligations), cultivation of the land (in contrast to nomadic traditions of their neighbors), an emphasis on family honor, and religious brotherhood across ethnicity. None of these traits are necessarily unique to Uzbeks in an objective sense, but family values especially are given a great degree of stress in these dialogues, and discussants are especially upset by their communities being scattered and families separated.
41. Saidjahon Ravoniy, Yangi Dunyo.
42. *Adolat* (Justice); Oshlik [An Osh resident]; "O'zbekistandagi va boshka barcha O'zbeklarga" [Uzbek: "To Uzbeks in Uzbekistan and All Others [Everywhere Else]"]; 8 July 2010; http://www.adolat.com/?p=1587&lang=uz; Accessed 21 October 2010; "Osh resident" is an anonymous source who self-identifies, the substance of the letter is an angry complaint directed at the Uzbek government for turning away tens of thousands of Uzbek refugees and failing to intervene to protect the Kyrgyzstani Uzbeks.
43. Anonymous; Yangi Dunyo; "Spasite prozhivayushikh v Kyrgyzstane uzbekov ot genotsida" [Russian: "Save the Uzbeks Living in Kyrgyzstan from Genocide!"] 22 July 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=13375 Accessed 3 December 2010. This is an excellent example of a more extreme version of this kind of "open letter," it describes itself as being from "the numerous, patriotically-inclined representatives of the Uzbek ethnicity residing in Kyrgyzstan," and is addressed to "all living patriots of world civilization." Broad, desperate appeals like this one were fairly common in the weeks following the worst of the violence and seem to become less common as Uzbeks began to give up on this method and turned the conversation to one another.

44. Sobir Mahmudov; *Yangi Dunyo;* "Oshdan maqtub: Dunyoda Haqiqat Bormi?" [Uzbek: "Letter from Osh: Is there Justice in the World?"] 12 November 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15777. Accessed 29 November 2010; Source is an ethnic Uzbek activist based on Osh, the document is an open letter detailing continued persecution of Uzbeks that the author describes as having re-intensified after Osh Mayor Myrzakmatov returned from a short leave of absence. *Musulman O'zbekistan* [and other sites]; Ubaydullo Avvob (Muniyb); *Musibat va Munosabat: Didagiryon Dardnoma* [Uzbek: *Suffering and Misfortune: An epistle of tears and grief*]; 8 August 2010; available via: http://yangidunyo.com/?p=13851; Accessed 20 October 2010.
45. *Yangi Dunyo*; "O'sh shaxridan Bahrom" [Bahrom from Osh city]; "Ikkinchi Kirg'inga Karimov Aybdor" [Uzbek: "The Second Massacre is Karimov's Fault"]; 2 October 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15120. Accessed 4 Oct 2010.
46. *Islam Ovozi (The Voice of Islam); "*Muhtoj" and Obidxon Qori Nazarov; "Oshdan Hijrat Qilsa Bo'ladimi?" [Uzbek: "Is it Permissible to Abandon Osh and Go Into Exile?"]; 25 June 2010; http://www.islomovozi.com/?p=663; Accessed 7 October 2010. Source is an Osh resident's open letter to Obidxon Qori asking his opinion, as a religious authority, on whether or not it is permissible to flee a Muslim country for a non-Muslim land when the conditions become unbearable. *Islam Ovozi (The Voice of Islam)*; "Abdullo Toshkandi," and Obidxon Qori Sobitxon O'g'li (Nazarov); "O'zbeklar referedumga qatnashishlari kerakmi, yo'qmi?" [Uzbek: "Should Uzbeks Participate in the Referendum or Not?"]; 26 June 2010; http://www.islomovozi.com/?p=665; Accessed 7 October 2010. "Chetdagi O'zbeklardan" and Obidxon Qori Sobitxon O'g'li (Nazarov); *Islam Ovozi*; "Qirg'in uchun qasos olish farzmi?" [Uzbek: "Is It a Religious Obligation to Avenge the Massacre?"] 12 November 2010; http://www.islomovozi.com/?p=4080; Accessed 22 November 2010.
47. Shuhrat Ahmadjonov; *Yangi Dunyo (and others);* "Uylanadigan Bor," [Uzbek: "There Are Those Who Wish to Marry [Them]!"]; 7 November 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=15691; Accessed 10 Nov 2010. The author insists that he attempted to have his letter published on a number of different sites, and was upset that some of them refused to publish it (apparently because he wanted widest possible dissemination of his offer).
48. *Musulman O'zbekistan* [and other sites]; Ubaydulloh Avvob (Muniyb), *Musibat va Munosabat, Birinchi Qism: Didagiryon Dardnoma* [Uzbek: Suffering and Misfortune, Part 1: An Episte of Grief and Tears]. August 2010; Available via: Page 9.
49 Jo'natguvchi Sardor Ho'ja Shahrixoniy; Yangi Dunyo; "Kyrgyzga O'lim!" [Uzbek: "Death to the Kyrgyz"]; 7 August 2010; http://yangidunyo.com/?p=13815; Accessed 3 December 2010. This source is a long poem that claims to be a response to the Kyrgyz nationalist slogan "Death to the Sarts" that was infamously spray painted on a number of houses and businesses in Osh and Jalalabad and this poem indicates may be the title to poem written in Kyrgyz. The author indicates that he wrote the poem in Uzbekistan, his likely pseudonymous name that he uses to sign the poem could be interpreted something like "exiled commander" Ho'ja Sharhrixoniy. However, "Sardor" is also a reasonably common first name, so this doesn't necessarily represent a militant connotation. The poem itself is dark and threatening, however, and calls Uzbeks to train their children that Kyrgyz are an enemy who must be fought.
50. The Osh Initiative/Expert Working Group. *Doklad Po Resul'tatam Nezavisimogo Obschestvennogo Rassledovaniya Iyunskikh (2010) Sobytiy v Kyrgyzstane* [Russian: *Report of the Results of an Independent Civic Investigation of the June 2010 Events in Kyrgyzstan*]; January 2010. Association Droits De l'Homme en Asie Centrale—Groupe d'Osh; *Journal du Groupe d'Osh;* June 2010-present; http://journalosh.wordpress.com/; Accessed 20 January 2011. Source is the website for the France-based Association for Human Rights in Central Asia, Osh Group/Initiative, led by Nadezhda Ataeva. At date of publication (January 2010) the group had not released a full report on its investigation, but direct correspondence with Ms. Ataeyeva indicated that a significant report is planned for release in early 2011.

Sukhrobjon Ismoilov; "Otchet—Oshkaia Initsiativa—Iiun' 2010 Kyrgyzstan" [Russian: "Findings—the Osh Inatiative—June 2010 Kyrgyzstan"]; 7 January 2011; http://yangi-dunyo.com/?p=16477; Accessed 20 January 2011. Sukhrobjon Ismoilov is the director of the Osh Initative, he posted the report on Yangi Dunyo the same day it was released to embassies and other civic organizations in Tashkent.

51. Ravshon Gapirov*; Uzigabek*; "Sobytie posle vzryva v mahalle Majnun-tal g. Osh" [Russian: "The Events Following the Explosion in the Majnun-tal Neighborhood of Osh" [Open letter to President Otunbaeva]; 3 December 2010; http://uzigabek.ucoz.ru/publ/ sobytie_posle_vzryva_v_makhalle _mazhnun_tal_g_osh/1-1-0-251; Accessed 10 December 2010; Gapirov is a the head of the human rights organization *Pravosudie—Istina* (Justice is Truth) based in Osh. His open letter to President Otunbaeva complains that he and another human rights activist were badly beaten by a group of men in public in Osh that week and the police refuse to investigate. He cites this as a typical example of the situation of Uzbeks in Osh, and though he references civil and secular law and international norms through most of the letter, at the end he specifically ties his view of justice and an acceptable, peaceful life with an Islamic worldview.