



Ethnic violence and peace in southern Kyrgyzstan

Intragroup policing and intergroup non-aggression pacts

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Abstract

The paper attempts to explain the following question: “why ethnic violence and riots broke out in some neighborhoods but not in others? It contributes to our understanding of communal violence and ethnic conflict with a novel approach that will widen our perspectives on the relationship between ethnic politics and security studies at local level (micro-spatial scale). While other works try to explain ethnic violence at highly aggregated national or regional levels, this dissertation analyzes the problem at neighborhood scale. To analyze the spatial variation in violence and peace, this research employs the concepts of security dilemma and pact-making that are usually used in international relations and security studies. I would like to show that theoretical insights drawn from international relations and security studies literature can be applicable not only to the analysis of inter-state wars and civil wars but also to the analysis of local dynamics of ethnic violence and interethnic peace at disaggregated spatial scale such as ethnic communities based in one town or in one neighborhood. I compare violent and non-violent neighborhoods in Osh city across different dimensions. The main argument of this research is the following. The spatial variation in violent and non-violent outcomes across towns and villages and urban neighborhoods, districts, and blocks within these towns can be explained to the great extent by the presence and absence of intragroup policing and non-aggression intergroup pacts among village- and neighborhood-scale subgroups of both ethnic communities. In-group policing, a concept advanced by Fearon and Laitin (1996) is a crucial mechanism for understanding ethnic violence and peace in southern Kyrgyzstan. By itself, effective in-group policing – even in the absence of a non-aggression pact with out-group members – increases the likelihood of peaceful outcome or significantly decreases the possibility of intensive violent outbreaks in respective localities. Intracommunal policing is a necessary condition for the efficient intercommunal pacts as strong in-group policing establishes firm discipline and order within community and signals to an out-group about the credible commitment to the terms of a pact. On

the other hand, intercommunal pacts reduce uncertainty and lessen fears (McFaul 2002, 217) by re-embedding trust and re-assuring in peaceful intentions between residentially-segregated Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities. However, whether intergroup pacts and in-group policing are successful depends also on several contingent and structural factors and the spatial environment of neighborhoods.



Jury:

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Bio

Joldon Kutmanaliev is a PhD researcher at the Department of Social and Political Science of the European University Institute. His current research seeks to explain spatial variations in violence during the ethnic conflict in 2010 in Kyrgyzstan. Joldon received his BA diploma in history from the Bishkek Humanities University in Kyrgyzstan, MA diploma in political science from the Central European University in Hungary. He was a visiting fellow at Government Department, Cornell University in spring semesters 2005-2007. Before coming to the EUI, he was a lecturer at the Department of Oriental Studies and International Relations, the Bishkek Humanities University in Kyrgyzstan.