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HISTORY OF STATE BORDER PROTECTION IN DIFFICULT-TO-ACCESS AREAS

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Abstract: This article examines the historical demarcation of the State Border in difficult-to-access areas, its significance, the nature of the relations involved in establishing borders, the historical processes of border formation, the main stages in the history of borders, the development of weapons used in border protection, as well as the causes of border conflicts.

Keywords: civilization, sovereignty, political, geographical, legal and military borders, reed beds, forests and swamps, economic and cultural relations, empires, the Great Wall of China.

The state border is one of the distinctive features of the political institution that forms the basis of the political system of a state within a defined territorial integrity.

A border is a political and fundamental element of the state, as well as a factor of control. It may also be regarded as a specific organism that, throughout all stages of its development, must maintain its connection with its territory.

A State Border is a line defining the limits of a country's territory on land, in water, underground, and in airspace, together with the vertical plane extending along that line; in other words, it represents the spatial limit of state sovereignty. The primary purpose of state borders is to define the territorial limits of a state.

Borders are lines that define the boundaries between states or territories, and their development and transformation are the result of historical processes. Their formation, modification, and security are of great importance worldwide. Borders have existed since ancient times. The earliest territorial boundaries were formed on the basis of tribal structures. In the period before the Common Era, ancient civilizations such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, and China established various boundaries in order to define and protect their territories.

It is well known that, depending on the geographical characteristics of state borders and border areas, borders may pass through plains, deserts, mountains, and river sections. In difficult-to-access sections of such border and adjacent areas, the protection and defense of the State Border create considerably greater challenges than under normal conditions.

Difficult-to-access areas are territories in which several types of restrictions limit the effective use of the available capabilities of military personnel, technical border-protection systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, as well as other weapons, combat equipment, and special-purpose equipment.

The history of border development is closely connected with the history of human civilization and reflects the processes of formation, expansion, and transformation of states, empires, and societies.

In our view, it is appropriate to analyze the formation and development trends of State Border protection in *difficult-to-access areas* by dividing them into **six main stages.**

Stage 1. Historical evidence shows that in primitive societies (5th century BC), borders did not have clearly defined forms. Tribes divided territories on the basis of natural barriers such as rivers, mountains, and forests, as well as hunting grounds and areas of settlement. During this period, borders had a largely symbolic meaning and, due to the absence of strong state structures, they changed constantly. The construction of the Great Wall of China (221 BC) is regarded as one of the earliest examples of a clearly defined defensive border line, and border guards were mainly armed with crossbows [1].

With the emergence of states such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, and ancient China, their borders began to be defined more precisely. During this period, borders were often formed on the basis of military power and economic interests. For example, the Roman Empire built walls, such as Hadrian's Wall, and established guard posts to expand and protect its frontiers. In China, the Great Wall was constructed to protect the country against continuous attacks by nomadic peoples. It was during this period that difficult-to-access sections of state borders were often left unguarded and regarded as natural barriers.

In protecting borders, cavalry units used swords, bows, crossbows, and armor.

Stage 2. During the Middle Ages, because the feudal system prevailed in Europe, borders were often controlled by individual feudal lords or kingdoms. Religion and dynastic interests played an important role in the formation of borders during this period. At the same time, in Eastern states such as the Ottoman Empire, borders expanded through military conquest and control over trade routes, while cavalry forces and fortifications became increasingly important [2].

In particular, various improvised signaling devices and wild animals were used for border protection in reed beds, forests, and swampy areas. The main weapons of border guards during this period included bows, muskets, and artillery pieces. At the same time, border violators generally attempted to conduct their activities in flat and open terrain.

Stage 3. *The initial period in the development of State Border protection* (17th–18th centuries). This period can be regarded as the beginning of the systematic development of clearly defined state borders and organized border protection. With the formation of nation-states in Europe, borders began to be delineated more precisely. The development of cartography also made it possible to define borders more accurately in geographical terms.

State Border protection was mainly organized in three directions: in flat terrain, in difficult-to-access areas such as mountains, swamps, reed beds, and forests, and along water boundaries.

Leading empires attempted to organize protection in difficult-to-access areas by constructing various artificial walls and other types of engineering structures, as well as by deploying permanent border guard units and patrol forces. They also sought to maintain border security by appointing informants from among the local population in border zones and border regions.

By this period, firearms and fortifications had developed considerably, and flintlock muskets, rifles, and revolvers began to be used in border protection [3].

Stage 4. This period represents one of the major stages in the development of State Border protection and was characterized by new approaches and views in the following areas:

first, reliable protection of State Borders and ensuring their security became one of the principal objectives of states;

second, leading foreign states developed subordinate legal and regulatory acts governing State Border protection and continuously coordinated relevant issues with neighboring border states;

third, states began to organize State Border protection on land, at sea and on inland waters, and in the airspace;

fourth, border guard units with clearly defined organizational structures were established, and various types of border patrol services were introduced;

fifth, due to the increase in illegal activities in difficult-to-access border areas, including illegal migration, unlawful trade, drug trafficking, and smuggling of duty-free goods, leading states sought to deploy additional forces and resources in these areas;

sixth, border search and reconnaissance units were established in border zones and regions in order to organize search activities and collect necessary intelligence, and their activities were coordinated;

seventh, in order to ensure reliable border protection and security, border guard units in leading states began to apply appropriate tactical methods based on their available capabilities and the specific characteristics of the terrain;

eighth, attention increasingly shifted not only to border sections located in open and flat terrain but also to difficult-to-access sections. The main reason for this was the growing activity in such areas not only of local border violators but also of illegal armed groups.

As a result, during this period leading foreign states increasingly recognized the need to protect and defend their borders in all operational domains.

Stage 5. Following the Treaty of Versailles, many empires collapsed, resulting in the emergence of new states and new borders. After the Second World War, the borders of a number of states in Eastern Europe and Asia changed again.

Personnel of units responsible for organizing State Border protection were equipped with modern weapons of that period, including rifles, pistols, machine guns, and, in some cases, artillery systems. At the same time, modern signaling and engineering equipment began to be introduced into State Border protection and defense systems.

Leading foreign states developed and introduced new regulatory and doctrinal documents, including regulations, conventions, and protocols, concerning the organization of border protection in difficult-to-access areas. Based on these documents, tactical procedures and search standards for border units operating in difficult-to-access terrain were amended and supplemented in order to take into account the specific characteristics of such areas compared with flat terrain. The number of border patrols operating in difficult-to-access areas was also increased. Special procedures governing movement in border zones and regions were introduced [4].

Stage 6. This period entered history as a stage of restructuring and modernization in the organization and conduct of State Border protection. New risks and threats, as well as various forms of economic and political challenges, began to emerge in the field of border security.

According to the findings of research institutions in leading foreign states, conflicts, risks, threats, and other manifestations of border violations increasingly shifted from conventional land border sections toward difficult-to-access areas [5].

In general, this period was distinguished by the emergence of a new and modern approach to the protection and defense of State Borders in difficult-to-access areas.

At present, border guard units within the armed forces of leading foreign states are gradually moving away from traditional and classical methods of conducting combat operations in difficult-to-access border areas. Instead, they are increasingly seeking to plan and conduct border protection through unconventional operational formations, new search procedures, and flexible tactical methods based on the principle of *"step-by-step clearance and protection."*

Based on the analysis presented above, it can be concluded that from the emergence of State Borders to the present day, the development of scientific approaches and practical recommendations aimed at ensuring reliable border protection by units operating in difficult-to-access areas has remained a relevant and important task.

Therefore, it can be concluded that studying and analyzing the systems used by border guard units of leading foreign states to counter border violations in difficult-to-access areas, and adapting the most appropriate practices to our own capabilities, should become one of our principal objectives in strengthening the combat capabilities of our units and improving the effectiveness of their employment.

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