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Problems of Enclaves from the Perspective of Interethnic and Interstate Relations in the Ferghana Valley

Problemy enklaw z perspektywy stosunków międzyetnicznych i między państwowych w Kotlinie Fergańskiej

• Abstrakt •

Kotlina Fergańska to najgęściej zaludniona część Azji Środkowej. Na terenie Kotliny przecinają się granice Uzbekistanu, Kirgistanu i Tadżykistanu. Granice państwowe tych trzech państw poradzieckich zostały określone podczas narodowo-terytorialnego podziału ziemi w latach 20. XX wieku, a więc w okresie podziałów terytorialnych we wczesnym okresie sowieckim. Wytyczone w owym czasie granice nie zostały powszechnie zaakceptowane przez Uzbekistan, Kirgistan i Tadżykistan, a tym samym w dobie niepodległości tych państw stały się przedmiotem żaźartej debaty. Region ten charakteryzuje się dużą gęstością zaludnienia i wysokim tempem wzrostu. Fakty te, jak również polityka wodna i partykularne cele każdego z państw, spowodowały, że Kotlina Fergańska stała się geograficznym ogniskiem konfliktów w regionie.

Problemy enklaw należy postrzegać jako jeden z czynników prowadzących do lokalnych konfliktów na poziomie między państwowym. Celem artykułu jest sklasyfikowanie Fergańskich enklaw zgodnie z międzynarodowymi definicjami naukowymi oraz ocena ich wpływu w kontekście relacji między państwami macierzystymi

• Abstract •

The Ferghana Valley is the most densely populated part of Central Asia. The borders of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan intersect across the Valley. The state lines of these three post-Soviet states were determined during the national-territorial land division in the 1920s. Borders of these three post-Soviet states were drawn during the 1920s, which was a period of territorial land divisions in the early Soviet period. The boundaries drawn at that time have not been universally accepted by these modern post-Soviet states, and have thus become the subject of fierce debate since the time of their independence. This region has a high population density and a high growth rate. These facts, along with the water policies and the objectives of each state, has caused the Ferghana Valley to become a geographical focus of regional conflicts.

Enclave problems appear as one of the factors leading to local conflicts at the interstate level. The purpose of this article is to classify Ferghana enclaves in accordance with international scientific definitions and to assess their impact in the context of relations between the

oraz otaczającymi. Problem ten zostanie omówiony z perspektywy stosunków międzyetnicznych i między państwowych w Kolinie. W artykule zaprezentowano również ewolucję enklaw w Ferganie, ich problemy, historię stosunków między państwowych w okresie poradzieckim, miejsce i rolę państw Kotliny Fergańskiej w rozstrzygnięciu sporów o granice państwowe.

Słowa kluczowe: enklawa; eksklawa; państwo macierzyste; państwo otaczające; delimitacja; demarkacja; państwa narodowe; nakładanie się wytyczonych działek; izolacja; prawdziwa enklawa; tożsamość etniczna; konflikt etniczny; generowanie konfliktów; tytularna grupa etniczna; wola polityczna; granica administracyjna

kin- and surrounding states. This problem will be discussed from the perspective of interethnic and interstate relations in the Valley. The article shows the evolution of enclaves in Fergana, their problems, the history of interstate relations in the post-Soviet period, the position and role of the Fergana states in resolving disputes about the state borders.

Keywords: enclave; exclave; kinstate; surrounding state; delimitation; demarcation; national states; overlaid plots; isolation; true enclave; ethnic identification; ethnic conflict; conflict generation; titular ethnic group; political will; administrative border

To this day, published research papers on the problems of enclaves are relatively few. Before the Second World War the problem of the Fergana enclaves was not acute, hence the scientific terminology was formed mainly in the second half of the 20th century. One of the first researchers who worked on determining the definition of an enclave was Pierre Raton. He defined the term ‘enclave’ as follows: a part of a territory of one state completely surrounded by the territory of another state. Raton worked in the 1950s as a lawyer at the United Nations (Raton, 1958, p. 186). This paper uses Raton’s analysis of the legal nature and status of enclaves from the standpoint of the kin- and surrounding states (Raton, 1958, pp. 188–191).

Among other pioneers who studied the issue of enclaves, it is necessary to underline the study of G.W.S. Robinson, who published his policy essay “Exclaves” in the journal “Annals of the Association of American Geographers” in 1959. Robinson notes exclaves in his article as “[...] not significant phenomenon” due to its rarity and small size. Although at the same time, Robinson describes this phenomenon as value “to illustrate relations between states [...]”. Robinson argues that the exclave is associated with the kinstate not only politically, but also economically. For this, there should be an effective and regular communication between the enclave and the kinstate. In this regard, Robinson correctly notes that the problem of maintaining and developing enclaves depends on the kinstate, the neighboring country, and the enclave itself (Robinson, 1959).

Although enclaves in the territories of the Central Asian republics existed in the Soviet times, their characteristics as enclaves appeared only after the collapse

of the USSR. Beginning in the second half of the 1990s, an interest of the international scientific community to the post-Soviet enclaves has begun to rise.

One of the researchers is Susan Nies, who claims that each enclave is special, but not unique (Nies, 2003, p. 394). However, according to Nies, a systematic study of enclaves may reveal certain common features (2003, pp. 396–398). Among the enclaves of the post-Soviet countries, Kaliningrad region and Nagorno-Karabakh are the research objects of the study of Nies.

Among the Russian-speaking researchers in the study of enclaves, it is necessary to note the research activity of Yevgeny Vinokurov. He published his monograph entitled *The Theory of Enclaves* in 2007 (Vinokurov, 2007). The monograph presents a political and economic study of enclave territories around the world. The value of the monograph lies in the fact that the author did a broad review of his predecessors, supplemented them, as well as demonstrated own thoughts. Vinokurov also shared his methodology of studying enclaves. In this monograph, the Ferghana enclaves, the title of this article, are in the field of view of Vinokurov (Vinokurov, 2007, pp. 101–105). Some of the research schemes designed by Yevgeny Vinokurov are used in writing this article.

Introduction

The Ferghana Valley is one of the most densely populated areas of Central Asia. It may be said to be a subregion within a region. The Valley is located in the south-eastern part of Central Asia. Geographically, this is a huge basin up to 300 km in length, and up to 170 km in width. The territory is fringed with the high mountain ranges of the Tien Shan and Pamir-Alai mountain systems on all sides: in the north-west – there are Kuraminsky and Chatkalsky, in the north-east – Ferghana, in the south – Turkestan and Alai mountain systems. Only in the west has the valley a narrow, natural outlet to the remaining regions of Central Asia, which is known in the literature as “Khojent Gate” (Gubaeva, 2012, p. 3), and in this territory Kayrakkum Reservoir is built.

Politically, the Ferghana Valley is divided between Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Administratively, the Uzbek part of the valley consists of: Ferghana, Namangan and Andijan vilayets, the Kyrgyz part of the valley consists of Jalal-Abad, Osh and Batken regions, and the Tajik part is represented by the Sogdian vilayet.

Throughout almost its entire history of geographical and political integrity, the Ferghana Valley, only in the 1920s, during the Soviet era, in the course of the process of national-territorial demarcation, was divided among the above-mentioned

three countries. In some areas of Central Asia, in particular in Ferghana, the Soviet administration drew borders, without taking into account ethnic composition and local forms of farming, which after the collapse of the USSR have often become the cause of conflicts.

The Ferghana Valley is considered as one of the most conflict generating territories in Central Asia due to its mixed population. The first ethnic conflicts in Ferghana occurred in the second half of the 80s of the 20th century. The feature of the subregion is that each conflict can develop or transform into an ethnic conflict. The evidence of this: “Ferghana pogroms”¹ – the events that took place in May and June 1989 in the Ferghana region of then-Uzbek SSR; the Osh events, which took place on June 4–6, 1990²; the Osh events, the interethnic conflict that occurred on June 10–15, 2010³.

Another feature of Ferghana which differs it from the other regions of Central Asia is the presence of enclaves in its territory. The Ferghana enclaves, the total number of which is eight, continue to be “difficult territories” in the relations between the states of the Valley from the beginning of the 1990s. The state borders, under the USSR, were only conditional borderlines between once allied republics, which have now become isolating borders for the enclaves. As is known, the importance of enclaves, both in international politics and regional politics, far exceeds relative weight in terms of population and territory. In the case of Ferghana, these “islands” negatively affect the relationship between the kin-⁴ and the surrounding states.

Classification of the Ferghana Enclaves

As is known, an enclave is part of a state surrounded by the territory of another state. At the same time, the enclave relative to the main territory of the country (the kinstate) will be an exclave. Enclaves on the world map appeared in different periods and in different circumstances:

1. The first wave was caused by the principles of pre-Westphalian sovereignty systems in Europe;

¹ Ethnic conflict between Uzbeks and Meskhetian Turks.

² An ethnic conflict between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks that took place in the Osh region of the then-Kyrgyz SSR. The conflict also partially covered the neighboring Namangun and Andijan regions of the Uzbek SSR.

³ The Osh events are ethnic conflicts involving Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. It covered Osh, Jalal-Abad oblasts, partly Batkent oblast of Kyrgyzstan.

⁴ The kinstate is the state of which the enclave is a part of.

2. The second wave was associated with the formation of a number of European states – Spain, Portugal, France, Britain, the Netherlands, and later Germany – the colonial empires;
3. The third wave was directly generated by the collapse of the colonial empires of Europe;
4. The collapse of post-socialist multinational states, namely the Soviet Union, caused the fourth wave of formation of enclaves (Vinokurov, 2007, pp. 23–24).

The emergence of the Ferghana enclaves refers to the fourth wave indicated above. During the collapse of the USSR in 1990–1991, twenty enclaves occurred, and eight of them are in the Ferghana Valley (Vinokurov, 2007, p. 54). Although the Ferghana enclaves were also known during the years of Soviet power, their specific enclave features were manifested only with the acquisition of independence by the kinstates.

The following enclaves are located in the Ferghana Valley: Sokh, Chongara (Chon-Qora), Shahimardan, Dzhangail (Jani-Ayil), Barak, Sarvak, Vorukh, and Kayragach. The total population there is about 100 thousand people (*Konflikty v anklavakh Tsentral'noy Azii*, 2013). In the largest enclaves, in particular such as: Sokh, Vorukh and Shahimardan, the population is growing rapidly.

As is known from the world practice, in the life of each enclave such parameters as location, area and population are important. Depending on the degree of isolation of the states surrounding them, all the Ferghana enclaves are true enclaves. The qualification according to the criterion of the population number subdivides the enclaves into four groups: large, middle, small, and micro-enclaves:

1. Large enclaves – from 100 thousand inhabitants;
2. Middle enclaves – 10–99 thousand inhabitants;
3. Small enclaves – 1–9 thousand inhabitants;
4. Micro-enclaves – less than 1 thousand inhabitants (Vinokurov, 2007, p. 50).

According to these parameters, the Ferghana enclaves look as follows: the Sokh – an enclave of Kyrgyzstan, an exclave of Uzbekistan. The Sokh district – known as an independent administrative unit within the Ferghana province of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The center of the district is the village of Ravon. The territory of the district is 352 km². The exclave Sokh extends from 3 to 13 kilometers from east to west and about 35 kilometers from north to south. The Sokh is located along the Sokh River⁵. From the main part of Uzbekistan, the enclave

⁵ Left tributary of the Syrdarya river.

is isolated by the territory of Kyrgyzstan. To be more precise, the enclave is located between the Batken and Kadamzhay districts of the Batken region. As is known, the standard method of measuring distance is measuring from the border of the enclave to the nearest border of the main territory. In the case of the Sokh, this distance between its border and the main territory is about 5 km. There are 19 populated centres on the territory of the exclave. At the same time, according to various sources, the population of the Sokh ranges from 59 thousand to 80 thousand people. Thus, the So'x (Sokh) enclave is classified as a middle enclave. The Sokh is an exclave of Uzbekistan, but the ethnic composition of its population is almost homogeneous. According to the official information – 99,4% of the inhabitants are the Tajik. The share of the Uzbeks is – 0,2% (*Farg'ona viloyati hokimligi rasmiy veb sayti*, 2017).

To the north of the Sokh, there is another enclave – the Chongara. In many sources, along with this name, the names Kalach and Northern Sokh are used to indicate this enclave. The name Chongara will be used in the article. The Chongara is an exclave of Uzbekistan, surrounded by the Batken region of Kyrgyzstan. The enclave is located on the right bank of the Sokh river. There are two populated centres on the territory of the exclave: Chongara and Kalacha. The enclave is about 2 kilometers long and 1 kilometer wide. The area is approximately 3 km². The Chongara is classified as a micro-enclave. The distance from the northern border of the Chongara to the closest point of the main territory of Uzbekistan is about 2,5 km.

To the east of the above mentioned enclaves, about 80 kilometers from the city of Batken, there is the enclave of Shahimardan. The Shahimardan is an exclave of Uzbekistan, an enclave in the territory of Kadamzhay district of Batken region. The exclave actually consists of two parts: the larger, more densely populated southern part (Shahimardan), and the smaller, sparsely populated northern part (Dzhangail, in some sources Halmion). In this article, Dzhangail is discussed as a separate enclave. The Shahimardan is located in the foothills of the Alai Range, along the river of Shahimardan. Administratively, the enclave belongs to the Ferghana region, Ferghana viloyet of Uzbekistan. The area of the Shahimardan is about 90 km². The population is about 6000 people. In terms of population, the Shahimardan belongs to a small enclave. The ethnic picture in the enclave is as follows: over 91% of the population are the Uzbeks, the remaining 9% are the Kyrgyz. There are two populated centres in the enclave: the main village is called the Shahimardan and the smaller settlement is called Yerdan. The distance between the enclave and the main territory of Uzbekistan is about 17 km.

The Dzhangail is a tiny enclave in the Kadamzhay district. The Dzhangail is the exclave of Uzbekistan; administratively, the Dzhangail refers to the Ferghana

district of the Ferghana vilayet. The enclave area is less than 1 km². It is classified as a micro-enclave. The distance between the enclave and the main territory of Uzbekistan is within 1 km.

In addition to the enclaves mentioned above, in the territory of Kyrgyzstan there are exclaves of Tajikistan: Vorukh and Kayragach. The Vorukh is an enclave in Batken district, Batken region of Kyrgyzstan. There is one village in the enclave, and this village is called Vorukh as well. Administratively, the Vorukh is part of the Isfara district, the Sogdian vilayet of Tajikistan. The enclave is located on the Isfara river⁶ basin. The enclave area is 130 km². The population is over 31 thousand people. The ethnic composition there is 95% of the Tajiks, the remaining 5% is the Kyrgyz (Tajikistan, 2012). The distance to the main territory of Tajikistan is within 6 km. The Vorukh, in terms of population, like the Sokh, is classified as a middle enclave.

The Kayragach (in some sources the territory is called the Western Kalacha) is a small enclave in the territory of Leilek district, Batken region of Kyrgyzstan. The Kayragach is an exclave of Tajikistan and is located about 130 kilometers to the west of Batken, in the middle reaches of the Bulakbashisai River (Robinson, 2010). In close proximity, there is the Kayragach railway station (Kyrgyzstan). Therefore, the enclave, along with the name Western Kalacha, is also called Kayragach. This article will use the name Kayragach. The territory of the Tajik exclave is less than 1 km². Administratively, the exclave is part of the Isfara district of the Sogdian province of Tajikistan. The population in this enclave is over 150 people (*Konflikty v anklavakh Tsentral'noy Azii*, 2013). All the residents are ethnically the Tajiks. The Kayragach is a micro-enclave in terms of population. The distance from the enclave to the main territory of Tajikistan is within of 2–2,5 km.

The remaining two enclaves of the Sarvak and Barak are located in Uzbekistan. The Sarvak is an enclave in the territory of the Pap district of Namangan vilayet of Uzbekistan. The Sarvak is the exclave of Tajikistan, administratively it is related to the Asht district of Sogdian vilayet. The Sarvak is about 14 km long and about 600 meters wide. The enclave is located along the Sarvaksoy River. The area is approximately 8,4 km². There are several small population centres in the enclave. The closest distance to the main part of Tajikistan is 1,2 km. The population is more than 560 people, all of them are ethnically the Uzbeks. The enclave is classified as a micro-enclave.

⁶ The river of the Syrdarya basin. In the upper reaches it is called Ak-Suu, in the middle reaches it is called Karavshin.

The Barak is an enclave in the Kurgantepa district of Andijan viloyati of Uzbekistan. The Barak is a village and the exclave of Kyrgyzstan. The territory of the Barak together with adjacent areas is of about 230 hectares. The main part of the inhabitants, about 60%, are the Kyrgyz. The population is less than one thousand people. Thus, Barak falls into the category of micro-enclaves. Administratively, the Barak exclave belongs to the Ak-Tashk rural district, the Karasu district of Osh region. It is separated from the main territory of Kyrgyzstan by a strip of 1,5 km wide.

As is known, depending on the distance to their kinstates, enclaves are divided into the following four groups:

1. 10 km or less (the distance that can be overcome on foot and by non-vehicle means);
2. 10–100 km;
3. 100–1000 km;
4. more than 1000 km (Vinokurov, 2007, p. 58).

Analyzing the distances between the exclaves and the main territory of the states to which they belong, it can be stated that, with the exception of the Shahimardan, this figure is from 1 to 7 km. Seven out of the eight enclaves fall into the first category of enclaves, which are located in close proximity to their kin territory.

Enclaves as territories with marked borders do not exist in the void. They are usually surrounded by foreign countries with their own often conflicting interests. The main parties for an enclave are the kin and the surrounding state. These two sides and the enclave are the components of a triangle, which will be represented as the triangle of the KES (“kinstate – enclave – surrounding state”). The proposed KES triangle consists of four vectors: the first is the relationship of the kinstate and the enclave (I); the second is the relationship of the enclave and the surrounding state (II); the third is the relationship of the kin and the surrounding states (III); and fourth, the relations of the kinstate and the surrounding states on a matter directly related to the enclave (IV). The vectors forming a triangle are directed in both directions, which reflects the mutual influence of the parties (Vinokurov, 2007, pp. 79–80).

In order to analyze the situation taking place around the Ferghana enclaves, it is necessary again to return to the history of the occurrence of these enclaves. As described above, the history of the Ferghana enclaves takes roots from the process of national-territorial demarcation carried out in 1924–1925. At present, there are many problems regarding the enclaves – in fact, every state in Ferghana has its own position and reproaches, which are not generally recognized by the other side (state).

According to Nick Megoran, the British political geographer who studies interethnic and interstate relations in the Ferghana Valley, the division of borders was only partially based on the ethnic principle, as a result of which, at the international level of the union republics, the enclaves arose. According to Nick Megoran, it is very likely that it was Moscow's deliberate goal to create the basis for inter-republican conflicts in Central Asia in order to be able to constantly intervene in the internal affairs of the republics on the rights of the Supreme Court. Still some disagreements regarding the borders remained. In 1955, the Parity Commission was created to establish a demarcation line between the territory of the Uzbek and Kyrgyz SSR. The duties of the Parity Commission included the settlement of unresolved inter-republican disputes. The Commission failed to fulfill the objectives assigned to it (Megoran, 2002, p. 39). After the collapse of the Soviet Union and obtaining the independence of the Central Asian republics, in the 1990s some attempts were again made to solve the problems of the enclaves. For example, during negotiations, Uzbekistan made an unsuccessful attempt to annex Sokh and Kalacha⁷ to its territory and offered to make an exchange with Kyrgyzstan (Megoran, 2002, p. 110).

Interstate relations in the Ferghana Valley, especially in the neighboring Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, have significantly deteriorated, since along with obtaining the independence there was a "surge in nationalistic (ethnic) mood" that started in the second half of the 1980s, during the so-called "Gorbachev democracy" period. This trend was observed in the Uzbek-Tajik, as well as Tajik-Kyrgyz relations. According to a Tajik political scientist, Parviz Mullodzhanov, the so-called "wars of historians" contributed to the conflicts, a special scope of which occurred in the 1960s–1980s. Then, under the tacit patronage of political elites among the allied republics, completely mutually exclusive visions of the history of the region were developed, and today these visions form the basis of the national ideology of the states (Sarkorova, 2016).

Undoubtedly, situations in the region which took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union had a negative impact on the lives of the boarder population, but the inhabitants of the enclaves experienced a much greater negative impact. For the residents of the capitals of neighboring republics in 1991 recognizing themselves citizens of an independent national state was easy. For peoples living in the boarder of enclaves, the separation of republics brought a fundamental change in the whole way of their life. Suddenly, frequently visited places have turned out to be the territory of a foreign state, while neighbors and even relatives became foreigners. Before the separation, as citizens of allied states, the inhabitants

⁷ The author meant Chongara.

of the Valley commuted and communicated easily with each other. Inhabitants of the enclaves did not have a feeling of alienation or isolation at that time. Due to economic activity in the Soviet period, the historically overlaid economic systems of landscape only intensified.

The first significant barriers to closing the borders arose in 1993. Then, Uzbekistan formally closed the border with Kyrgyzstan in order to prevent the Russian ruble from “flooding” the valley. As practice shows, with each closing of the border, a series of events of a “peculiar chain reaction” begins: a period of isolation and contradiction. The enclaves acutely suffered from such practices. Usually the life of the population of enclaves is closely interconnected with the kinstate (Line I of KES). In the case of the Ferghana enclaves, in their daily communication with the kinstate, until recently, artificial barriers have been persisted, which consisted of different components. All the Ferghana enclaves, except the Sokh, are administratively subordinate to the districts of the nearest large administrative unit (vilayets and regions).

As previously classified, all the enclaves except the Sokh, Vorukh, and Shohimardon belong to the micro-enclave. Due to the extremely limited nature of their economic potential, the economy of micro-enclaves depends entirely on their communication with the outside world, on their kinstate and surrounding states.

Not to mention the micro-enclaves, the resources of the middle enclaves like the Vorukh and Sokh are very limited. For example, in the Vorukh, where the population is about 33 thousand, the majority of able-bodied residents annually leave for Russia as labor migrants. The remaining able-bodied men and women are engaged in agriculture. According to authorities, 2,700 individual dekhkan⁸ farms have been created in the enclave, each of which has approximately 37 acres of land. Residents of villages are mainly engaged in gardening. Part of the crop is sold fresh in the markets of the cities of Sogdian vilayet, the rest is used for the production of dried fruits, which are sent to Russia for sale (Rasul-zade, 2017).

In the Sokh enclave, the situation is similar in terms of economy. According to the official information, 792 small businesses are registered in the Sokh district. Since the local population is mainly engaged in subsidiary farming, 377 of them are farms (*Farg'ona viloyati hokimligi rasmiy veb sayti*, 2017). Local farms predominantly grow potatoes. Namely, the Sokh district plays an important role in providing Uzbekistan with potatoes (*Tadzhikskiy Sokh: chem zhiyet naseleniye samogo malen'kogo rayona Fergany*, 2018). Since the mid-1990s, a significant number of local men regularly leave for the Russian Federation to work.

⁸ Historically established designation for Central Asian peasants.

As previously written, the Shahimardan enclave belongs to the group of small enclaves. The Shahimardan (formerly Hamzaabad) is known among tourists as a popular resort where various respiratory diseases are treated via natural climate. Local recreation centers serve as a real salvation from the heat to many residents of the Ferghana Valley, in particular on its Uzbek part. In the late 1990s, due to disagreements between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, there was a decrease in the influx of tourists, and conflicts caused unemployment of the local population (*Poselok Shakhimardan – odno iz svyatykh mest Uzbekistana*, 2018).

Comparing the above-mentioned three enclaves, it is obvious that the Ferghana enclaves are highly dependent on their kinstates and are in need of constant support of their kinstate (I).

The second vector of the triangle is the relationship of the enclave with the state surrounding it. In the case of the Ferghana Valley, this vector directly affects the second vector of the KES (II), the relation between the enclave and the surrounding states, as well as the fourth vector (IV), the relation between the kinstate and the surrounding states on issues directly related to the enclave. It should be noted, as practice evidences, these vectors are directed in both directions, and have a direct mutual influence.

Relations between Enclaves and their Surrounding States

Analyzing the relationship vectors above-mentioned, it is customary to move from the less problematic to the most problematic. Following the adopted lines and the frequency of references in publications of the independence period, the enclaves can be arranged as follows: Kayragach, Dzhangail, Chongara, Shahimardan, Barak, Sokh, Sarvak, and Vorukh. Arranging the line in this order, the following pattern can be determined: the smaller the enclave, the less “political friction” is around this enclave. The only exception is the Barak enclave.

A small enclave “Kayragach” is located in the Leilek district of the Kyrgyz Republic. Initially, the Kayragach accommodated the service and business facilities of the Tajik railway system. They were not the subject of disputes between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The Kayragach – registered as an enclave during the work of the Parity Commission of the Governments of the Kyrgyz SSR and the Tajik SSR in 1959 and 1989 – it was described as “Section No. 1 of the Tajik SSR of the collective farm Moscow of the Proletarsky district of the Leninabad region”⁹

⁹ Now Isfara district of Sughd vilayets.

(Alamanov, 2018, p. 457). The Kayragach is a micro-enclave because of which there have been no conflicts. In some sources as of 2017, it says that no one lived in the Kayragach, and the enclave territory was an empty place along the river (Zverintseva, 2018).

A similar situation is observed in the tiny Dzhangail exclave. This exclave of Uzbekistan, surrounded by the Kadamzhay district of Kyrgyzstan, is nowhere mentioned as a spot of conflict. The quiet surrounding of Dzhangail is explained by its very limited space, with an area of less than 1 km², in addition to this is the lack of a permanent population in it (*Konflikty v anklavakh Tsentral'noy Azii*, 2013).

In turn, the population of the Chongara enclave is in close contact with the surrounding Kyrgyz settlements. At the same time, there are several more Kyrgyz villages settled from the Chongara to the main territory of the Sokh enclave, whose inhabitants travel actively through the territory of the Sokh (Buyanovskiy, 2017). The Kyrgyz citizens often come to the Uzbek exclave for their daily goods. Relations of the enclave with the state surrounding it are generally characterized as quiet. It should be noted that rarely but there are conflicts between residents. The reasons of conflicts are usually domestic problems.

The issues directly related to the enclave more than once were in the focus of attention of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, in particular, in the focus of attention of the government delegations of the two states on issues of delimitation of the state border. From the first days of independence, the positions of the parties greatly separated regarding Chongara, particularly as of its enclavity. The Kyrgyz scientist Salamat Alamanov, referring to historical sources about the formation of the Chongara enclave, puts forward the following arguments: “In accordance with protocol No. 7 of the Plenum of the SredAzLikvidkom¹⁰ of March 17, 1925, the village of Chongara was located in headland in the river basin Sokh on the overlaid plot wedging into the territory of Chongara – the Kyrgyz Autonomous Region. Subsequently, the Tajik population living in this village was isolated with the surrounding of Kyrgyz collective farms’ economic borders. This territory, at the present time, still exists in those conditions (Alamanov, 2018, pp. 455–456).

The reason for the additional disputes was in-situ oil of the Chongara enclave. At the same time, in 2003, one of the Uzbek experts informed that there was very little oil in Chongara – “a few buckets a day”. The Kyrgyz counterparts, nevertheless, held the opposite point of view. According to Kyrgyz experts, a meeting of the bilateral commission on economic cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan was held in Tashkent in the same year. At the meeting, the issue of

¹⁰ Central Asian Liquidation Committee.

transferring oil fields in the areas of the Chongara, which were then exploited by Uzbekistan, was raised. As a result of negotiations, it was decided that Kyrghyzneftgaz OJSC would prepare documents confirming the ownership of these facilities in Kyrghyzstan. Only after this will the question of the possibility of transferring these deposits to Kyrghyzstan be decided (Bryantseva, 2003). Further negotiations on the ownership of oil fields are not known. As of 2016, one of the inhabitants of the Chongara enclave informed: “There is oil here, but Kyrghyzstan does not allow it to be developed [...]” (Buyanovskiy, 2017).

The example of the Chongara demonstrates the trace of the vectors given in the KES scheme: the relationship of the enclave with its surrounding state (I), the main thing is how it affects the relationship of the kinstate and the surrounding states (III).

Along with the Chongara, the Uzbek exclave Shahimardan during the period of independence, unlike the Tajik Vorukh and the Uzbek Sokh, did not become the object of major conflicts. It can be assumed that, in some way, the touristic capacity of the enclave contributed to the conflict-free state of affairs. As is known, in addition to its healthcare facilities, the Shahimardan is also famous for sacred places that are popular not only among Uzbeks, but are also widely revered by citizens of neighboring states. After the independence of the countries of the region, these places have become difficult to access for mass pilgrimage. In 1998, a glacial mudflow occurred along the Shahimardan riverbed. The mudflow caused a catastrophic destruction and human casualties. Most of the resorts and sanatoriums of the Soviet era were destroyed, and the roads were washed away. The enclave has become difficult to visit for several years. In 1999, the armed fighters of the terrorist organization the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan attempted to break through the adjacent territories of Tajikistan and Kyrghyzstan into the Ferghana Valley. After that, the Uzbek authorities mined the mountainous sections of the borders, including the Shahimardan surroundings, and thus way Uzbekistan limited an access to the enclave. The access control regime was introduced by Kyrghyzstan as well: residents of the Ferghana region could pass using one-time passes, the remaining citizens of Uzbekistan had to receive visas (Kudryashov, 2019).

The introduction of a visa regime between the two countries hurt the economic interests of both Shahimardans and Kyrghyz citizens living along the road leading to Shahimardan. The unemployment rate in two villages – Shahimardan and Yerdan – reached 80% (Shakhnazarov, 2002).

Relations between the kinstate and the surrounding state of Shahimardan were negatively affected by the case when, in 2004, the deputies of the Kyrghyz Parliament recommended the Kyrghyz government to address to Uzbekistan the territo-

rial claims for the Shahimardan. The initiative of the Kyrgyz deputies to return the enclave in 2004 was unexpectedly supported by then-Prime Minister Nikolai Tanayev. He publicly stated that the enclave belongs to the “Kyrgyz territory”. The officials in Tashkent on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the press service of the President and Parliament did not respond to the statement of the Kyrgyz side (Kislov, 2005).

The barriers set by the parties made life difficult for the inhabitants of the enclave. Politics, transforming into a domestic plane, had an extremely negative impact on the well-being of not only the residents of the Shahimardan, but also the neighboring Kyrgyz settlements. In the spring of 2007, the governments of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan ratified an agreement to support regional tourism, allowing citizens of both countries visa-free travel to the enclave for up to two months (Kudryashov, 2019).

In January 2013, the borders of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan were closed due to a border conflict in the Uzbek exclave of Sokh. As a consequence, the situation in the Shahimardan became more complicated. As a result, the parties were forced to agree on the passage of humanitarian aid to the blocked enclaves. Within the framework of the agreement, the Uzbek authorities delivered humanitarian aid to the Shahimardan (*Kirgiziya i Uzbekistan dogovorilis' o propuske gumanitarnoy pomoshchi v zablokirovannyye anklavy*, 2013). After these incidents, the situation around the Shahimardan has repeatedly changed.

The Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations in different years did not bypass the only exclave of Kyrgyzstan in the territory of a neighboring country. Despite the fact that the enclave is located several kilometers from the kinstate, for many years this “island Kyrgyzstan” continues to be a stumbling block between neighboring states. Uzbekistan refused the enclave to give a corridor to connect with the kinstate. The village is connected with the kinstate not only by strong family ties, but also, there are constant urgent needs for administrative contact between them. During the favorable years for the enclave, the residents of the Barak used the Ak-Tash border checkpoint located only 2,5 km from the village to get to the main Kyrgyzstan.

The situation in the case of the Barak depended directly on the relationship between the kinstate and the surrounding states (III), which could hardly be called friendly during the reign of Karimov. The inhabitants of the exclave experienced great difficulties when they crossed the Kyrgyz-Uzbek state border. The enclave was isolated, becoming hostages of politics, negative relations of the surrounding and kinstate. As a result, according to Almaz Karimov, the resident of Barak, the residents literally stayed hungry (Beyshebenek kyzy, 2018).

The situation became even more complicated in connection with the Osh events in June 2010. As a result of the influx of Uzbek refugees, about 250 Kyrgyz were forced to leave the Barak (*Iz kirgizskogo anklava v Uzbekistane sbezhali neskol'ko soten zhiteley*, 2010) due to the threat of a recurrence of ethnic conflict against the background of bloodshed in Osh. The escaped residents of the Barak were placed in the border village of Ak-Tash, the Karasuy district of the Osh region. After the stabilization of the situation in Osh, some of the residents returned to the village. Due to the events in Osh, the Uzbek side tightened the rules for entering the village, and a year later the Kyrgyz government decided to resettle all their residents. Two years later, the Ak-Tash border checkpoint on the way to Barak was completely closed, after which the village settlers began to move to the main part of the country *en masse*. The Kyrgyz authorities allocated land to the escaped village settlers in the Besh-Ui section in the rural district of Sary-Kolot and in the district of Ak-Tash. 153 people received land plots (Beyshebenbek kyzy, 2018). Starting from 2012 to 2014, during the meetings of the intergovernmental commission, the issue of the Barak, in particular the opening of roads to the enclave, was repeatedly discussed. Then the enclave of Shahimardan (Yanushkevich, 2017) became the object of negotiations as well.

As previously noted, the Sokh is the largest enclave in the Ferghana Valley and has repeatedly caused conflicts that have grown to the interstate level. It is worth to note the fact that many researchers pay attention to, that is, the predominant part of the population of the enclave which is not identified as a titular ethnic group of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The share of ethnic Uzbeks in the Sokh is very small. Over 99% of the Sokh residents are ethnic Tajiks. The enclave has twenty-six schools and four colleges. Accordingly, education at all schools and colleges is conducted in the Tajik language (Nadzhibulla, 2010).

If to pay attention to the history of the Sokh enclave, at the time of the division of the Ferghana Valley the Uzbek SSR and the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Region¹¹ as part of the RSFSR were considered as the “applicants” to the Sokh. In those years, the present-day Tajikistan was formed within the Uzbek SSR, and Tajikistan had the status of an autonomous republic.

In accordance with the line of March 17, 1925, the territory of Uzbekistan in the river basin of Sokh wedged into the borders of Kyrgyzstan with a relatively narrow “headland” – the wedge that created overlaid plot with a length of about 50 km and a width of up to 20 km, stretching from north to south. Inside this

¹¹ Present-day Kyrgyzstan from June 1924 to May 1926 was known as the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Region (KKAO), a part of the RSFSR.

wedge there were Kyrgyz settlements: Zartash, Otukchu, Chongara, Sekirtme, Kara-Tumshuk, Ak-Turpak, and others. At first, more than 50 complaints about the border lines from new state entities were stated (Alamanov, 2018).

The further formation of the border in the Sokh region was associated with the process of collectivization of peasant farms carried out in 1929–1937. The organization of collective farms was carried out by combining private farms within kishlaks, which were historically formed on a national basis. The populations of the aforementioned Kyrgyz villages, having organized collective farms, with their territories drawn by economic borders, were assigned to the Kyrgyz administrative regions. The collective farms of the Tajik population living within the current enclave of the Sokh remained part of Uzbekistan. Thus, the economic boundaries of collective farms of the period of collectivization, which separated the Kyrgyz population from the Tajik, subsequently entrenched as administrative.

The enclave status of this territory in the river basin Sokh was first agreed upon during the work of the Parity Commission of the Governments of the Kyrgyz SSR and the Uzbek SSR in 1955, where the principle of marking the lines along the borders of actual land use was guided in establishing the border lines that had been formed by January 1, 1955. The results of this commission were not approved by the Supreme Councils of the two republics (Alamanov, 2018). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, those outlined border lines subsequently made up the current enclave border. The administrative borders that turned into the state borders created great problems for the inhabitants of the enclave. To get to the Sokh and get back to the main territory of Uzbekistan, people should cross the border of a neighboring state more than once. This circumstance makes communication of the Sokh population with the “mainland” part of Uzbekistan extremely difficult (Musayev, 2001).

During the years of independence, the Sokh enclave and the problems that appear around it have more than once become the objects of discussion between the competent departments of the two states. There was no progress on this issue for a long time. On February 26, 2001, the Kyrgyz-Uzbek Memorandum was signed in order to regulate the legal framework for delimiting the state border between Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, signed by the prime ministers of both countries, in which it emphasized the “worthwhileness” of connecting the Sokh enclave with the rest of Uzbekistan. It should be noted that this memorandum was adopted secretly, without the knowledge and participation of the Parliaments of both countries.

In April 2001, with the release of the Batken regional newspaper, the content of the agreement became public in Kyrgyzstan. Since that time, “passions” over

the Sokh have flared up more strongly, mutual territorial claims of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan were extinguished, and accordingly it exacerbated the importance of such risk factors in interethnic relations as problems of water use, land scarcity, etc. The emotional rhetoric about the Sokh problem and the mutual reproaches of the parties continued for a long time. For example, the then-Chairman of the State Border Committee, General I. Isakov, in the context of his reasoning, stated that Kyrgyzstan needed to show its character to its neighbors. In turn, the deputy of the Jogorku Kenesh¹² T. Bakiruulu spoke as follows: “Most of the population wants to join Kyrgyzstan. To decide the fate of the enclave, it is necessary, as already the world practice shows, to hold a referendum in the Sokh. Let the residents decide their own fate” (Musayev, 2001). Mutual reproaches and man-made barriers contributed to the deepening of social tension in the Sokh itself, as well as in the territories bordering the enclave. Many experts said that in the Sokh there was a latent (silent) stage of conflict development.

The riots in April in Bishkek and the June events in Osh in 2010 negatively affected the already difficult situation around the Sokh enclave. As a result of the closure of the border of the kinstate, the enclave remained in complete isolation.

In addition to the above-described vectors of relations between the surrounding and the kinstate, in the case of Sokh, the attention must also be given to the relations of the enclave with the kinstate (I), but from a slightly different angle. Apart from the political tensions between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, the Sokh suffered from long-standing disagreements between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. For many decades, the Sokh schools have been the main training places in preparing certified alumni for the Tajik higher education institutions. Yet, the Uzbek education officials did not recognize the Tajik university diplomas. In this regard, the Sokh graduates had no choice but to enter the universities of Uzbekistan (Nadzhibulla, 2010).

As usual, conflicts in disputed territories begin due to disagreements at the household level. Over the past decades, the Sokh has become a hotbed of growing hostility, fueled by the population growth and increasing competition for pasture and water in this almost entirely agricultural subregion (Val'samaki, 2013). As a result, ethnic antagonism has been only intensified.

On January 6, 2013, in the Kyrgyz village of Charbak, about a thousand residents of the village of Khushyar from the Sokh exclave attacked the local residents who were dissatisfied with the extension of electric wires to the border outpost. According to information from various sources, more than 30 Kyrgyzs were taken hostage. They were mainly residents of Charbak, the citizens of Kyrgyzstan who

¹² Supreme Council, unicameral Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic.

were passing through the enclave during the riot (Kolbayev, 2013). As a result of the conflict, 20 cars of citizens of Kyrgyzstan were smashed. Also, 15 supports of the power line were broken, and rioters took with them about 1,5 kilometers of electric wires (Aydarov, 2013). A day later, on January 7, in the morning, 14 hostages were released – women and children. By the evening of the same day, the remaining citizens of Kyrgyzstan who were in hostage were released through holding negotiations (Kolbayev, 2013).

As for the reason for the causes of the conflict, the Chief of the General Staff of the Border Troops of Kyrgyzstan, Iskander Mambetaliev comments as follows: “first, this is the uncertainty of the interstate border between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, which so far has not gone through complete demarcation and delimitation. This is the main reason. Second, we opened a new border outpost in the border village of Charbak. We are doing everything to create necessary conditions for our border guards. Of course, when a border post is established, some restrictions are introduced for the citizens of Uzbekistan. Perhaps they did not like the strengthening of border controls on this section of the interstate border” (Baktybayev, 2013). The words of the Kyrgyz military explain that the main problem of the enclaves is the uncertainty of the interstate borders, and because of it there are conflicts.

After the conflict was resolved, all border crossings leading to the Sokh were closed (Val’samaki, 2013). The Kyrgyz authorities, led by the Minister of the Internal Affairs, Shamil Atakhanov, and the Batken Oblast Governor, Zhanysh Razakov, demanded a repair of the material damage before the blockade of the Sokh would be open.

Although, after the 2013 conflict, the border points were opened, the problem of the Sokh, as a disputed site, has not yet been removed from the agenda. It should be noted that in the situation around the Sokh enclave, all the vectors of the KES scheme and their active mutual influence are traced.

The Sarvak, although it is an exclave of Tajikistan, the Uzbeks predominate in the ethnic composition of the enclave (Zverintseva, 2018). In this aspect, the inhabitants of the enclave are identified with the population of the surrounding state. According to Uzbekistan, the village of Sarvak, with the resolutions of the Decree of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR No. 1313 dated June 29, 1935, was transferred to Tajikistan for ten years. In the following years, the rental period was repeatedly extended. The last time this was done on the basis of a decision of the Union Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Agriculture in 1981, the lease expired on January 1, 1990. However, the Tajik authorities still consider this territory “their own” (Alamanov, 2018).

After the collapse of the USSR, regarding the Sarvak, the stances of the surrounding state and the kinstate were conflicting. The Uzbek side insisted on the return of this territory. The Republic of Tajikistan did not accept the claims of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Alamanov, 2018). Due to the conflicting positions of the parties during the years of independence, in terms of communication with the kinstate, life in the Sarvak was similar to the everyday rhythm of other Ferghana enclaves.

After the events of 1999, the borders of the enclave were mined by the security forces of Uzbekistan. From the beginning of mining of the borders in 1999 till 2005, as a result of the explosion of anti-personnel mines, 8 people died and 6 were seriously injured among the Sarvak residents. According to Marzbon Shodmonov, a resident of the neighboring Tajik village of council Punuk, who knew the area well, the Sarvak was practically not an enclave until the middle of the first decade of the 2000s. As of 2010, in order to get to the Sarvak through the border post established by the Uzbek security forces, it was necessary to travel 11 kilometers through the territory of Uzbekistan. In addition to this, the Uzbek side set a schedule for crossing the state borders. Only the residents of the village of the Sarvak could cross the state border of Tajikistan with Uzbekistan, and that was allowed only on Thursdays and Saturdays. At the same time, entry and exit by vehicle or on foot were allowed only to those who were included in the list provided by the administration of the above-mentioned village of council Punuk. This also referred to the village of Sarvak (Rasul-zade, 2010).

An extreme isolation (the width of the enclave is only 600 m on average) of the enclave was accompanied by many problems for the inhabitants of Sarvak. Since the inhabitants are mainly engaged in cattle breeding, because of the narrow territory of the enclave, cattle often crossed to the Uzbek territory. Such cases caused conflicts between the local residents and the border guards. Also, it was difficult for the Sarvak residents to export their agricultural products for sale (Zverintseva, 2018).

In the case of the Sarvak enclave, the “strained chain” of relations originates from the third vector of KES (III). The relations between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan during the period of independence of the states did not differ with amicability. The specified third vector has been aggravated in connection with the positions of the parties regarding the ownership of the enclave (IV). These vectors negatively affected the second vector – in relation to the enclave with the state surrounding it. As a result of the mutual influence of all vectors (III, IV, and II), they serve as a kind of barrier in the normal activity of the first vector (I) – the relations of the kinstate and the enclave.

The situation of the Vorukh, the second Tajik exclave, was similar to the Sarvak, but unlike the first, the Vorukh due to its parameters was often a spot of con-

flict. To have a systematic understanding of the conflicts in this enclave, it is worth to delve into the history of the creation of the Vorukh enclave. The conditions for the formation of the Vorukh are similar to the history of the other enclaves of the subregion, and it originates from the national-territorial demarcation of 1924–1925. During this process, the part of the river basin Isfara, along which the Vorukh enclave was formed, was assigned to the then-Uzbek SSR.

The border line on this site are marked from the river Sokh “[...] in a southwest direction till the hibernating area of Kurman-bek from which it stretches to the direction of the village Isfara. Just before three miles to the village Isfara, the border line turns to south and stretches along the Isfara River to the villages. The Nyman covers coastal villages in Uzbekistan. Starting from the Nyman village the border line is marked as a closed curve which covers villages Charcu, Matcha, Ak-Turpak, Chary, Kekh located on the altitude of 8624, 4886, Kekh and the estuary of the Chatyr-Sai river, Sanys-sai (Kamysh-sai), Churgena, $\frac{3}{4}$ Bulak-Bashi river and the river Isfara from the intersection of the meridian $40^{\circ}13'$ parallel to $39^{\circ}48'$. Locking on the bank of the river Isfara and in front of the resort of Khairaabad, the border line turns east (west) and passes the mountains between Shurab and Kyzyl-Dzhar, between the mountains of Dzhaman-kul and the city of Kok-tyube, and then the border line approaches the border of Khojent district”. According to this line, in this section an overlaid plot was formed inside the territory of the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Region, occupying a significant area in the river basin Isfara, stretching from north to south for 40–45 km. The settlements of Kyrgyz such as Ak-Sai, Kapchigay, Kek-tash, and others remained within this overlaid plot. The Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee approved the border line dated March 17, 1925 by its resolution of May 4, 1925 (Alamanov, 2018).

The organization of collective farms – kolkhozes – was carried out through combining private farms within kishlaks, which were historically formed on a national basis. The populations of the aforementioned Kyrgyz villages, having organized collective farms, marked territories of their economic borders, were assigned to the Batken administrative district of the Kyrgyz autonomy. The collective farms of the Tajik population living within the current enclave of Vorukh remained as part of Uzbekistan. Subsequently, in 1929, when the Tajik SSR was separated from Uzbekistan, the territory was transferred to this new republic as part of the Khojent district. Thus, the economic boundaries of collective farms of the period of collectivization, which separated the Kyrgyz population from the Tajik population, later became entrenched as administrative, and the controversial issue on this territory passed into the inter-republican relations of the Kyrgyz SSR and the Tajik SSR (Alamanov, 2018).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the dispute over the Vorukh was inherited by independent Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It is worth noting the stances of the parties regarding the Vorukh (IV) are radically different. For example, for the Kyrgyz side, the Vorukh is an enclave; in turn, the Tajik side does not agree with this stance. For Tajikistan, the Vorukh, on the basis of maps drawn during the national-territorial demarcation, is a territory entering in a form of a “wedge” deep into the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Until today, the intergovernmental commission on delimitation and demarcation between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan has not been able to agree on a clear definition of the border line because Tajikistan offers to work with documents and maps from 1924–1927, while Kyrgyzstan suggests using maps from the period 1958–1959 and 1989. On maps of the early 1920s, the Vorukh is inside the borders of the Tajik SSR, but on maps of the 1950s, the Vorukh is an enclave in Kyrgyzstan (Kholikzod, 2019).

As practice shows, conflicts often arise over land, water, illegal border crossings and interethnic differences where unmarked sections of border exist. In the case of the Vorukh, conflict cases arise on the basis of inconsistency between the states regarding the borders of the enclave, that is, conflicts reach interstate relations between the kin and the surrounding states on issues that concern the enclave itself (IV). As a result, the relationship of the enclave with the surrounding state is intensified (II). The latter, in turn, negatively affects the Tajik-Kyrgyz relations (III).

The largest conflict in the Vorukh, over the past ten years, took place on January 11, 2014. There was a shooting between the border guards of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in the area of the water supply facility in the Batken district. The incident took place near the village of Kok-Tash. The reason was the Kok-Tash–Ak-Sai bypass highway which was being built by the Kyrgyz in order to avoid the Tajik enclave Vorukh. Tajikistan complained that the bypass highway was entering their territory. The Kyrgyz authorities claimed that the road construction was several kilometers away the conditional border line. During the conflict, six military personnel from the Kyrgyz side and two people from the Tajik side were injured. All border checkpoints were closed. Only by January 28, the situation was fully stabilized. In 2018, there were several clashes on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border (*Kak na porokhovoy bochke...*, 2019).

Analyzing the situation taking place around the enclaves of the Ferghana Valley, one common problem can be identified – an inconsistency of a certain part of their borders. The reason for this problem must be viewed from the context of bilateral relations of the three states of the subregion, in particular from the perspective of their interaction in the delimitation and demarcation of the state border.

Interstate Relations and Description of Borders from the Perspective of Enclaves

The study of a large amount of resources, the chronological framework of which begins from the moment the republics gained independence, and systematic analysis of the history of relations among the states of Ferghana, allows for periodization that can be conditionally divided as follows:

- 1991–2016;
- 2016–to the present.

This division is connected with the presidency of Islam Karimov.

Though it is customary to follow objective logic in the analysis of various social and political events in political science, the presidency of I. Karimov is a good example of a subjective factor in political processes both domestically and in the international arena (Garbuzarova, 2016, p. 13), particularly in the case of the Ferghana Valley.

As is well known, the fate of the disputed territories, in particular the enclaves, directly depends on the authority and resources of the state to which it belongs. Here, the military power counts first. From the perspective of owning military power, Uzbekistan has been and remains a leader in the Ferghana subregion. During the period of independence, interstate relations in Ferghana depended largely on the will of Uzbekistan.

Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations

Diplomatic relations between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan as independent republics were established in 1993. Despite the fact that the states signed the Treaty of Eternal Friendship between the countries in 1996, in reality, bilateral relations cannot be characterized as amicable for many years.

Among the state borders of the three states, the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border is the longest (*Vzaimootnosheniya mezhdru Kyrgyzstanom i Uzbekistanom*, 2015), i.e., 1378 km (Yanushkevich, 2017). At the same time, this area was the most restless during the period of independence. Each of the states countered the not-delimited plots of lands as “their own”. There were cases when without the knowledge of a neighbor some steps were taken to develop property. As a result, clashes between border guards repeatedly broke out in disputed areas (Altynbayev, 2019).

After the independence of the countries, the parties have not made any progress for many years in coordinating the disputed sections of the state border.

The complexity of the issue is primarily due to the fact that the parties cannot agree on mutually acceptable documents that could be referred to. As noted earlier, Kyrgyzstan relies on the documents of the Parity Commission of the governments of the Kyrgyz SSR and the Uzbek SSR dated to 1955, and Uzbekistan followed the documents of the national-territorial delimitation dated to 1924–1927.

As of 2003, after lengthy negotiations, the republics delimited 654 km out of 1378 km of the joint state border (Yanushkevich, 2017). Until 2010, the Kyrgyz-Uzbek commission on delimitation and demarcation, through a series of mutual concessions, agreed on 1,050 km. However, after April 2010, the work of the commission was paralyzed and the negotiations on the issue of ownership of the remaining 58 disputed land plots and on the procedure for access to the Uzbek enclaves Sokh and Shahimardan on the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as the Kyrgyz enclave Barak on the territory of Uzbekistan were suspended (*Vzaimootnosheniya mezhdu Kyrgyzstanom i Uzbekistanom*, 2015).

The armed conflicts, in particular, the so-called Osh events of 2010 had a negative impact on the border negotiation. This conflict was preceded by the overthrow of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev in April 2010, who, having left Bishkek, moved to his hometown of Jalal-Abad and proposed a movement of the capital to the south – to Osh or Jalal-Abad (Chernyavskiy, 2010, p. 47). Delegitimation of power and calls for moving the capital to Osh or Jalal-Abad sharply exacerbated the already complex interethnic contradictions. The question about the possibility of secession of territories where the Uzbeks densely inhabited and subsequent joining of these territories to Uzbekistan came up. The Uzbek population saw an opportunity to restore their infringed rights, while the Kyrgyz saw a real threat of the collapse of their state, the borders of which are thought to be as “national” (Dundich, 2012, p. 26).

The armed conflicts between the Kyrgyzs and Uzbeks took place on June 10–15, 2010. The main events took place in the city of Osh and the Osh oblast. According to the official statistics, 893 people died in this unrest (Molchanova, 2011, p. 11). According to some sources, the death toll approached 2,000. Temporary safe refuge in Uzbekistan was given to about 400,000 refugees. Against the background of the Kyrgyz revolution, Uzbekistan unilaterally tightened border controls, closing all checkpoints on the border with Kyrgyzstan. After the June events, the border was opened, but on a short-term basis. Uzbekistan allowed refugees from Kyrgyzstan, in particular from the Osh region, after which the checkpoints were closed again, and then they began to work in a limited mode (Abdykalykova & Bakirov, 2018, p. 125). Undoubtedly, the Osh events of 2010

served as the most negative impact on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek relations, especially on the process of marking the borders.

The resumption of disputes over the clarification of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border began in 2011. At the beginning of 2011, according to the information of the ex-President of Kyrgyzstan Roza Otunbayeva, a border line with a length of 1,058.83 km out of 1,378 was agreed between the delegation of the two countries. As for Uzbekistan, at the beginning of 2013, this country began to exert political pressure on Kyrgyzstan threatening it with cutting off gas, in particular – not supplying the southern region with gas for non-payment of debt in the amount of 552 thousand dollars. The culmination was gas cut off on April 14, 2014, in the city of Osh. In exchange for the resumption of gas supply to Osh, Uzbekistan demanded the provision of a corridor to the Sokh enclave and the suspension of the construction of a hydroelectric power station on the Naryn River. Kyrgyzstan refused to fulfill the requirements of Uzbekistan (Zabolotnaya et al., 2016, p. 112).

This incident influenced the position of the Uzbek side in the delimitation of the state border. As it turns out, in reality not everything was agreed upon, as previously reported by the Kyrgyz officials. In 2014, at regular talks, it turned out that the Uzbek side recognized only 701 km of the border on the agreed sections. The reaction from the Kyrgyz side was not long in coming. In March 2015, Kyrgyzstan transferred to its balance sheet a number of economic objects that had previously belonged to Uzbekistan since the times of the USSR – land plots, motor depots, civil defense facilities, hydraulic structures and some others which were located in Osh, Batken and Jalal-Abad regions. In April 2016, the government of Kyrgyzstan nationalized four Uzbek resorts on Lake Issyk-Kul: Rohat, Dilorom, Golden Sands and Buston (Abdykalykova & Bakirov, 2018, p. 126). After this step, the political tension in bilateral relations has only increased.

Uzbek-Tajik relations

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan were established on October 22, 1992 (*Otnosheniya Tadjikistana s Uzbekistanom*, 2013). At the same time, one of the main documents regulating the vector of bilateral relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the republics, signed on January 4, 1993 in Tashkent. On June 15, 2002, a Treaty of Eternal Friendship was signed between the states (*Otnosheniya Tadjikistana i Uzbekistana vchera, segodnya, zavtra*, 2015).

But despite such a “solid” legal base, the relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan could hardly be called friendly.

One of the pressing problems between the states, which stood from the first days of their independence, was the delimitation and demarcation of the border. The length of the state border of Tajikistan with Uzbekistan is over 1,330 km, about 20% of which, after the collapse of the USSR, turned out to be unspecified (Khrolenko, 2018).

In the mid-1990s, Uzbekistan played an important role in determining the outcome of the devastating civil war in Tajikistan, supporting the civil war along with Russia, the Popular Front movement, which eventually brought Emomali Rahmon to power. In the late 1990s, the Tajik authorities openly accused Uzbekistan of supporting Colonel Mahmud Khudoiberdiyev, who had previously rebelled against the Rahmon regime. Tashkent denied these accusations, although various sources wrote about the support of the President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov shown to the rebellious Tajik colonel, who ended up in Uzbekistan in 1998 (Dzhurayev, 2012, pp. 1–2).

The bilateral relations entered an unfriendly phase in 2000, after the border raid of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)¹³ militants on the southern regions of Uzbekistan across the Uzbek-Tajik border. Uzbekistan accused Tajikistan of being unable to control the activities of militants on its territory and unilaterally mined a number of not yet delimited border zones. The mines were supposed to protect Uzbekistan from the IMU militants, but their main victims actually turned out to be, and still remain, residents of bordering villages and their livestock. In the same year, both states introduced a visa regime. Introducing a visa-regime complicated the already problematic commuting between citizens of the two countries (Dzhurayev, 2012, p. 2). Since then, over the next 18 years, more than 800 civilians have been blown up by mines, out of which 474 people died, including women and children (Khrolenko, 2018).

On October 5, 2002, an Agreement on the Tajik-Uzbek state border was signed between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Then, it was reported that the negotiations would continue on the final approval of the remaining about 60 km of the border section (*Otnosheniya Tadjhikistana s Uzbekistanom*, 2013).

One of the economic priorities for the Tajik authorities has been and remains the development of the republic’s hydropower capacity. Among the promising projects since Soviet times has been the construction of the Rogun hydroelectric

¹³ The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), an organization created in 1996, is recognized as a terrorist organization in many countries, and is persecuted.

power station on the Vakhsh river¹⁴. The official Tashkent opposed the construction of the hydroelectric power station. The argument put forward by Uzbekistan was that in a case of an earthquake, the dam construction could collapse. As a result, millions of the residents of the Central Asian region would die. In addition, Uzbekistan feared a significant shortage of water in the country during the period of the reservoir storage. In August 2014, Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Rustam Azimov said that “the Republic of Uzbekistan will never, under any circumstances, provide support to this project” (*S kazhdym godom vse luchshe...*, 2018).

Over the years, the recriminations reached their peak. The main part of the border with Tajikistan was closed. For comparison: in 2002, there were 16 checkpoints between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and in 2010, this number was reduced to two. Moreover, a visa regime was established between the countries. According to intergovernmental agreements, only residents of border areas could cross the border without obtaining a visa. The period of stay in the neighboring state was limited to five days (Yakubov, 2018).

The latest stage of the deterioration of relations was called the “rail war”, when Uzbekistan prohibited the transit of freight cars bound for Tajikistan. In November 2011, Uzbekistan completely closed the Termez-Kurgan-Tyube railway line (between Galaba and Amuzang stations), referring to a terrorist explosion that destroyed rails on the Uzbek-Afghan border (Termez is the main hub in the Northern distribution network). The Tajik government immediately accused Tashkent of organizing a blockade of southern Tajikistan, which receives goods for daily life via this railway communication. In March–April 2012, tensions between the countries increased after Uzbekistan, instead of repairing it, began to dismantle the Termez-Kurgan-Tyube railway tracks. Further, in early April 2012, Uzbekistan suspended the supply of natural gas to Tajikistan, referring to the completion of contractual obligations between Tajikistan and the need to supply gas to China (Dzhurayev, 2012, p. 2).

Difficulties in Uzbek-Kyrgyz and Uzbek-Tajik relations continued until the second half of 2016. On September 2, 2016, at 79 years of age, President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov died. The turning point in relations with neighboring countries occurred with the arrival of Shavkat Mirziyoyev as the president of Uzbekistan. From the first days of his presidency, Mirziyoyev revised the country’s foreign policy, calling Central Asia the main priority of Uzbekistan’s foreign policy, and began to actively develop regional partnership.

¹⁴ The river in Tajikistan, merging with the Pyanj River forms the Amu Darya.

Since September 2016, the solution of border issues between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan has gained new strength. During a telephone conversation between Almazbek Atambayev and Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the mutual interest of the parties in the successful completion of joint work on the delimitation and demarcation of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz state border was confirmed (Yanushkevich, 2017). In December of that year, after Mirziyoyev was elected as the President of Uzbekistan, Atambayev paid a working visit to Samarkand (Norov, 2017).

On September 5–6, 2017, the first visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Kyrgyzstan in the last 17 years took place. During Mirziyoyev's visit to Bishkek, the parties signed a number of documents covering cooperation in the field of economics, higher education, science, as well as many other issues. Meanwhile, the parties signed a Joint Statement obliging both countries to work together on problems and seek a compromise on the delicate issue of water resources. By far, the most anticipated moment of the meeting was the signing of an agreement on border demarcation. After many years of work to resolve some of the contradictions, about 80% of the common border was demarcated. Out of 1,378 km, only 217 km of the border were not included in the agreement (Yeniseyev, 2017), which stretches to more than 50 land sections (Arykbayev, 2017). The sections of the border that were not included in the delimitation agreement were to be agreed by the end of 2017, but the work on delimitation and demarcation of these territories remains unfinished (Beyshenbek kyzy, 2018).

Along with the Uzbek-Kyrgyz relations, some progress has also been made in Uzbek-Tajik relations. On March 9, 2018, the Uzbek leader visited Dushanbe. As a result of the negotiations, 27 documents were signed, covering both demarcation, delimitation of state borders, and demining of adjacent territories. During the meeting of the presidents of the two countries, an agreement on separate sections of the Uzbek-Tajik border was signed. As a result, more than 10 checkpoints were opened on the border of the two countries in 2018, and Uzbekistan restored the Galaba-Amuzan railway line (*S kazhdym godom vse luchshe...*, 2018).

After the meeting of the presidents, there has been progress in the delimitation of borders. As of April of the same year, 90% of the state borders between the two republics were agreed and regulated (Khrolenko, 2018). The most disputable sections remained unresolved. Some high-ranking Tajik officials also spoke about the progress in the delimitation of the state border. First Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, Zakhidi Nizomiddin, reported to the members of the parliament: "To date, only one section on the Tajik-Uzbek state border remains unclear". This land site that remained unresolved was the land adjacent to the dam of the Farhad hydroelectric power station, with about two kilometers long (*Parlament*

Tadzhikistana ratifitsiroval dogovor po granitse s Uzbekistanom, 2018). At the same time, there was no information anywhere about reaching an agreement on the Sarvak enclave.

Positive shifts in the description of the borders were also observed in the Uzbek-Kyrgyz vector. As of August 2019, a total of 92% of the border was described, and 10 more sections remained to be agreed upon (Altynbayev, 2019). But these sections of the border are characterized as the most disputable ones.

Kyrgyz-Tajik relations

Diplomatic relations between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were established on January 14, 1993. The length of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border is about 971 km. Although, in terms of the pace of events, the Kyrgyz-Tajik relations are incomparable with the Kyrgyz-Uzbek relations, at least until relatively recently they could hardly be called “friendly” either. In many respects, the nature of bilateral relations was negatively influenced by the disputes between the parties around the delimitation and demarcation of the state border.

The process of delimitation and demarcation of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border began in 2002 (Asanov, 2019). Nevertheless, the work of the intergovernmental commission on border delimitation was not characterized as successful. The reason for this was, as previously mentioned, the problems of enclaves, as well as a significant divergence of the positions of the parties on the crossing of the border line.

As of 2013, the state border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan was determined only by 60%. Only in the mountainous areas there were no disagreements (Beyshembiyev, 2013, p. 7). Over the next 5 years, there was no progress in border delimitation. As of February 2018, 519 km of the common border were not defined, 70 disputed sections remained unresolved. According to the state border service of Kyrgyzstan, in 2017, the most border incidents occurred precisely at the border with Tajikistan (*Zheenbekov pribyl v Tadzhikistan s ofitsial'nyy vizitom*, 2018).

In February 2018, the President of Kyrgyzstan Sooranbay Jeenbekov paid an official visit to Tajikistan. During the meeting, the parties stressed the importance of enhancing the work of the Kyrgyz-Tajik Intergovernmental Commission on the delimitation and demarcation of the state border in the spirit of constructive cooperation, mutual understanding and trust (*Ofitsial'nyy vizit Prezidenta Kyrgyzskoy Respubliki v Respubliku Tadzhikistan*, 2018).

The second time the presidents met in the “problem zone”, at the cross section of the border between the villages of Ak-Sai and Vorukh. Then the Kyrgyz

president said the following words: “We are well aware of the living conditions of our peoples in the border areas, we are aware of all unresolved issues. We intend to do everything so that local residents do not experience problems. Together, we intend to resolve all the issues. We want to make our borders the gates of peace, friendship and good neighborliness. I believe that there are no unsolvable problems” (“*Sdelayem granitsy vorotami mira*”..., 2019). But these summit meetings did not produce any tangible results. As of October 2019, 10 conflicts occurred on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border in less than a year (Niyazova, 2019).

Since the parties met on the border of the Vorukh exclave, it can be assumed that it was the problem of this section of the border that became central during the meeting of the presidents. The meeting in the border area did not bring a positive effect either. This is confirmed by a later interview of the Deputy Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Zhenish Razakov, who, regarding the description of the borders and the problem of the Vorukh enclave, said the following: “Out of 970 km of the border, 519 are described and specified. There are no questions about them. Due to the fact that each side has its own interests, the tension keeps in the relationship. The Tajik side is trying to open a separate corridor to the Vorukh enclave. We cannot provide that. There is our village Ak-Sai in the middle of that territory” (Asanov, 2019).

Less than two months after the July meeting of the parties, another conflict broke out on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border with a shootout and casualties. In January 2020, the media reported that the parties agreed to exchange two plots, in particular the Aryk-Asty plot in the Ak-Sai village of the Batken region and the Samarkandek plot in the Samarkandek village (*Tadzhikistan i Kyrgyzstan nachnut obmen zemlyami s dvukh prigranichnykh uchastkov*, 2020). Thus, although very slowly, the delimitation of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border is being carried out, while maintaining its conflict generation.

Conclusion

Since 1991, “the problem of the Ferghana enclaves” has continued as a difficult issue in the relations between Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. As a product of the Soviet period, the post-Soviet stage of the life of these “islands” has negatively affected the relationship between the kinstate and the surrounding states and the negative affect has been slowing down the process of delimiting the state border.

Due to the excessive politicization of the history of this region and the “autochthony” of the ethnic groups, accordingly, it proves its “historical rights” to many adjacent areas, the population of the enclaved border areas, especially residents of

the enclaves continue to suffer. “Adequate measures” taken by one state regarding the enclaves have been met with “objective countermeasures” of another state. This continued throughout the whole period of independence, and the “mutually exclusive regional history” only strengthened the mutual antagonism.

The change of power in Uzbekistan, which took place in 2016, made its own adjustments to the interstate relations of the neighboring countries in Ferghana. The new regional policy of the Uzbek leadership has brought a thaw into the relationship between the parties. As a result, the process of describing the boundaries has moved off the ground. The states that have common borders with Uzbekistan began to announce the deadlines with their descriptions. The actions taken by Mirziyev, as well as the progress observed with the delimitation of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border, also influenced Kyrgyz-Tajik relations. But real shifts in the process of describing the border in this area were not observed. Moreover, in the area of the Vorukh enclave, several conflicts took place with the participation of local residents and the military.

Despite the intensification of the process of delimitation of the Uzbek-Kyrgyz, Kyrgyz-Tajik borders, the border has not yet been delimited. It remains to coordinate the most difficult areas – the enclaves.

According to Megoran, there are three options for solving the problems of the Ferghana enclaves: the first, exchange of territories; the second, the creation of corridors from borders to enclaves; the third, the introduction of free movement in the border areas. Taking into account the close proximity of most of the enclaves from their kinstates, and also taking into account the specifics of each of them, one of the above-given options can be adopted.

Summarizing the article, it can be noted that over the past four years, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have done a lot towards the final description of the borders. At the same time, an outlook, however, remains uncertain whether this problem will be solved or not. The parties, as the history shows, do not have enough political will to finally resolve the delimitation of borders and, along with these, the problem of enclaves.

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