



CAUCASUS AND IRAN

CAUCASUS AND IRAN. The Iranian world is bordered in the northwest by the high mountain barrier of the Caucasus, which separates it from the vast Russian plains beyond. In relief, structure, and ecology the Caucasus constitutes a clear frontier between eastern Europe and western Asia, though it is more closely related to the latter. Located on the peripheries of Persia, Turkey, and Russia, it has been for centuries an arena for political, military, religious, and cultural rivalries and expansionism; the resulting movements have influenced the ethnic composition of the population, which is extremely complex and rich in customs, languages, economic activities, and patterns of land use. Although throughout history the Caucasus has usually been incorporated in political entities belonging to the Iranian world, at the beginning of the 13th/19th century Russia took it, along with the Transcaucasus, from the Qajars (1133-1342/1779-1924), severing those historical ties. Since the establishment of Soviet power on Caucasian territory, relations with Persia have been reduced to an insignificant level.

(For historical connections between the Caucasus and the Iranian lands, see [ALANS](#); [ALBANIA](#); [Azarbaijan](#); [ČARKAS](#); [DAGESTAN](#); [GEORGIA](#); [OSSETIA](#).)

i. Physical geography, population, and economy

ii. Language contact

iii. Achaemenid rule in

