



Borders and Brethren: Iran and the Challenge of Azerbaijani Identity (BCSIA Studies in International Security) (Belfer Center Studies in International Security)

Brenda Shaffer

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The Azerbaijani people have been divided between Iran and the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan for more than 150 years, yet they have retained their ethnic identity. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of an independent Azerbaijan have only served to reinforce their collective identity. In *Borders and Brethren*, Brenda Shaffer examines trends in Azerbaijani collective identity from the period of the Islamic Revolution in Iran through the Soviet breakup and the beginnings of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1979-2000). Challenging the mainstream view in contemporary Iranian studies, Shaffer argues that a distinctive Azerbaijani identity exists in Iran and that Azerbaijani ethnicity must be a part of studies of Iranian society and assessments of regime stability in Iran. She analyzes how Azerbaijanis have maintained their identity and how that identity has assumed different forms in the former Soviet Union and Iran. In addition to contributing to the study of ethnic identity, the book reveals the dilemmas of ethnic politics in Iran.

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