



## ḲĀṢṢĀ

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**ḲĀṢṢĀ**, an Arabic term that in the early Muslim period as well as later denoted people and things that were “special, elite, private” as against those that were “public, common, general” (*‘amma*; Morony, p. 258; see [CLASS SYSTEM iv](#)). However, soon the term was also used to denote the private crown lands and other properties, real and moveable, owned or controlled directly by the ruler, as well as all functions, activities, and artifacts pertaining to the ruler, his court, and his family.

The so-called *kāleša* or public crown lands (confiscated or abandoned land) was part of the *kāṣṣa* holdings, and often the dividing line between the two was blurred. Both stood in contrast to *amlāk-e divāni* or *mamālek*, which referred to state lands. During the 18th century the term *kāṣṣa*, as well as *divāni* and *mamālek*, fell into disuse and was replaced by the term *kāleša* denoting all crown domains. Henceforth, the ruler’s private property was referred to as *molk-e kāṣṣ* and as *amlāk-e saṭṭanati* (Lambton, 1953, pp. 167-68; Floor, 1998, p. 337).

### EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD

With the conquest of Sasanian Iran, the leaders of the newly arisen Islamic empire had to make decisions concerning what to do with the conquered lands, in particular the former royal properties, other confiscated estates, abandoned lands, and properties of uncertain status, both real and moveable. As there were no clear rules, the Qur’anic guideline (VIII:41) was applied, according to which one-fifth (*koms*) of the booty (*ḡanima*) was to be set aside



for the prophet and his relatives and the remainder to be divided among the other combatants. This was in accordance with the pre-Islamic custom of *fay'*, whereby booty was divided into five shares by the victors. However, there was no agreement what property was subject to *fay'* and what was not. For example, in Iraq royal estates, mills, drained swamps, and property belonging to fire temples or to those who fell in battle were exempted from *fay'* by most Muslim authorities, although others disagreed (Abu Yusuf, p. 75; Aghnides, p. 508; Lokkegaard, pp. 50, 224; van Berchem, pp. 41-42).

Almost immediately there were accusations that those in power, the Ommayyads, were monopolizing the *fay'* for their own use and that of relatives and supporters, giving rise to resentment and armed rebellions (Moroni, pp. 261, 477). Under the early caliphs, it was common practice to set aside one-fifth of the booty for them as well, which was transformed into their property. Such lands were denoted as *ṣawāfi* (land taken for the treasury from the conquered territories), *ṣawāfi al-ostān*, *ṣawāfi al-solṭān*, *qeṣṭ*, or crown lands. The caliph's private property was referred to as *ziā' al-solṭān*. The term *ziā'* denoted tithe land given to Muslims that was not subject to *karāj* (see [fiscal system iii](#)). It also happened that caliphs transformed drained lands or other estates into *ṣawāfi* lands and allotted these to themselves and their supporters as *eqṭā' al-tamlīk* (see [eqṭā'](#)).

The biggest owner of *ziā'* during the 'Abbasid epoch was the caliph himself; his estates were managed by the *divān al-ziā' al-kāṣṣa*; estates directly maintained by the state (*solṭāniya*, *divāniya*) were likewise divided into *ziā'*. The private property (*kāṣṣ*) of the 'Abbasids was substantial in Khorasan, Fars, Azarbaijan, as well as in other parts of Iran, and increasing (Shaban, pp. 89, 124, 132; Schmucker, p. 142; Lokkegaard, p. 58; Spuler, 1952, pp. 443-45; Petrushevskii, tr., II, p. 448; Mez, pp. 105-6, 115-16; Schwarz, VII, p. 876; Bosworth, 1968, p. 82). Due to arbitrary rule and injustice, many landowners in conquered areas sought the ruler's protection (*eltejā'*) and transformed their lands into crown land and shared the proceeds with the caliphs (Lokkegaard, pp. 68-70; Ḥasan Qomi, p. 187).

Over time, Islamic scholars would adjust the concept of *fay'* as actual practice that had little to do with Islamic rules. Islamic jurists were mainly concerned with the practical consequences of land allocation rather than its legal status. Discussion was focused on whether lands were the joint and inalienable possession of the Muslim community and managed by its leaders or were held by the imam for the community and at his full disposal. Each legal school had



divergent opinions on several aspects of these questions (Schmucker, *passim*). The revenues from crown lands were collected by the *bayt al-māl al-kāṣṣa*, while the revenues of other state properties went into the general *bayt al-māl*—a split system that had come into being under the ‘Abbasids.

Initially the difference between royal private property (*kāṣṣa*) and state property (*solṭaniya* or *divāniya*) was adhered to, but soon the line between the ruler’s private and state property was blurred and caliphs drew on both in case of need, without having to account to anybody (Spuler, 1952, pp. 445-46; Mez, pp. 113-14; Wellhausen, pp. 171-72; Fischel; Lambton, 1953, p. 17; Bosworth, 1963, p. 68). This development probably was due to the need for money as well as greed and was justified by politicians such as Neẓām-al-Molk, who argued that “the country and the peasants belong to the ruling power” (Neẓām-al-Molk, tr., p. 33/chap. 5). His contemporary, Mo’ayyed-al-Din (d. 592/1196), vizier of the caliph al-Nāṣer be’llāh (1180-225), likewise argued: “All [Muslim] lands belong to the commander of the faithful” (Rāvandi, pp. 381-82; Barthold, p. 348). Naṣir-al-Din Ṭusi (d. 672/1274), an Il-khanid minister, tried to put a good face on this reality by distinguishing between the ruler’s revenues from his private assets (*kāṣṣa*) and those “destined for the welfare of the kingdom” (*māl-e maṣāleḥ-e pādšāhi*; Minorsky, p. 69).

The system applied by local rulers in Iran indicates that they only adhered to a longstanding practice. For example, the Saffarid ‘Amr b. Layṭ (r. 879-900) had four treasuries, one of which (*kazina-ye māl-e kāṣṣ*) was for the upkeep of his court (Gardizi, p. 142; Barthold, p. 221). The Samanids had an office to manage the crown lands, called *divān-e mamlaka-ye kāṣṣ*, whose revenues were all dedicated to the ruler’s court (Naršaki, p. 36, tr., p. 26; Barthold, pp. 229, 231). Under the Ghaznavids the *divān-e wekālat* administered crown lands and the finances of the royal household. The private properties of the Ghaznavids (*ziā’-e ḡazni-e kāṣṣ*) were managed by the *wakil-e kāṣṣ*. These included not only land, but also herds and cash. Revenue assignments were given from confiscated land and land without heir (*ṭayyārāt*; Bosworth, 1963, pp. 69-70). In 1002, there was a *divān al-kāṣṣa* under the Buyids in Baghdad. It was a continuation of the *divān al-ziā’ al-kāṣṣa* and was in charge of the Buyid family’s domains taken from the caliph’s property, confiscations, and other goods. The caliph’s private estates (*ziā’ al-solṭān*) were given as fiefs to the army (Busse, pp. 149, 314-15; Barthold, p. 231).

SALJUQ AND MONGOL PERIOD



Under the Saljuqs the *eqtā'* or revenue assignment dominated the system of land administration; crown lands did not play a major role. Nevertheless, these *eqtā'*s were granted from public lands, for those granted from *kāṣṣa* were reserved for the ruler and his family. Therefore there was an administration for the royal domains (*amlāk-e kākāṣṣ*); moveable crown property was referred to as *asbāb-e kākāṣṣ*, and both were managed by the *divān-e kākāṣṣ*. The *amlāk-e kāleṣāt-e divān* is also mentioned and presumably administered public crown lands (Horst, pp. 19-20, 60-61; Montajab-al-Din, pp. 33, 52-53, 67, 72-73). Under the K̄vārazmšāhs the *amlāk al-kākāṣṣ* were likewise managed by the *divān al-kākāṣṣ* (Nasavi, tr., pp. 175, 374, 407).

Under the Mongols crown lands were very important due to the fact that so many people had been killed, resulting in much conquered, abandoned, neglected, and/or unclaimed lands, which were all transformed into crown lands. There was great insecurity concerning property rights, resulting in the increase of state and crown lands (*dālāy* and *inju*). Private property was often confiscated and, as with abandoned lands, added to the *inju*. Some of these confiscated lands were identifiable as the *kākāṣṣa-ye atābaki*, which the Il-khans had taken from the Salghurid rulers of Fars, known as *Atābakān-e Fars* (r. 1148-1287; Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, pp. 123-24; Ḥafeẓ-e Abru, 1996-99, II, p. 183; Zarkub, p. 94). The properties acquired were divided into *dālā* or *dālāy* and *inju*—terms denoting that they belonged to the ruler. The same terms were applied to properties granted as appanages to his relatives (Rašid-al-Din, pp. 19-20, 351; Doerfer, I, p. 325; Petrushevskii, tr., II, p. 448). A. Zarkub makes an interesting statement to the effect that, when Maḥmudšāh Inju (r. 1304-25) became independent in Fars, "*inju* and *dālā* became one" (Zarkub, p. 101), suggesting that *dālā* was crown land granted as an appanage, while *inju* was crown land belonging directly to the ruler. The term *inju* denoted not only landed estates but also persons, because everybody living and working on these estates was dependent on the Il-khan. Sometimes cities, such as Ani under Abu Sa'id (r. 1316-35), hoped to be protected by becoming *inju* property, in the same manner as the practice of *eltejā'* (seeking refuge, protection) under the early caliphs (Petrushevskii, tr., II, pp. 250-51; Rašid-al-Din, tr. Quatremère, pp. 130, n. 112).

Because *inju* is a Mongolian term, Persian officials also used the term *inju-ye kākāṣṣa*, presumably for clarity's sake. As a result, *inju* and *kākāṣṣa* gradually became synonyms (Rašid-al-Din, tr. Quatremère, pp. 130-32 and note 12; Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, p. 74). According to Petrushevskii and Lambton, eventually



there came to be no distinction made between *dālāy* and *inju*, and the former term fell into disuse (Petrushevskii, tr., II, p. 460; Lambton, 1978). However, Waṣṣāf continued to use both as distinct terms throughout his work; there even existed a *divān-e dālāy va inju* around 1300 (Nāṣer-al-Din Monši, pp. 61, 64; Aqṣarāyi, p. 228).

*Amlāk-e kāṣṣa*, including *dālāy*, were given to others to manage and usually were farmed out as *moqāṭā'a* or fixedsum lease contracts (Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, pp. 138, 161-62, 205-6, 217). Peasants working on *inju* lands were known as *ra'iyat-e kāṣṣ* (Petrushevskii, tr., II, p. 458). Its revenues were administered by the *divān-e inju*, *ḥokumat-e inju*, or *divān-e kāṣṣ* and recorded in the *awrāq-e moḥāsabāt-e inju* (Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, pp. 138, 160, 231; Petrushevskii, tr., II, p. 455; Rašid-al-Din, tr. Quatremère, pp. 130-32 and note 12). Its chief was a powerful courtier (Petrushevskii, tr., II, p. 455). Under Abaqa Khan (r. 1265-82, q.v.) the *inju* lands were entrusted to the *inju noyān* (Qoṭbi, p. 192). Later the term *inju* not only denoted lands given to members of the royal family, but also those given in appanage to their dependent khans and officials, for the Ilkhans gave *inju* and *waqf* property in usufruct to their khans, even as a gift (Petrushevskii, tr., II, pp. 251-52). An *inju* property was usually inherited by members of the royal family, but it was sometimes sold like any other property (Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, pp. 74, 194, 234; Lambton, 1953, p. 87). Gāzān Khan (r. 1295-1304) transferred *inju* land to each horde for their upkeep and that of the Mongol princesses (Rašid-al-Din, p. 330). He further used *inju* land to grant *eqtā's* (Rašid-al-Din, pp. 305-6; Lambton, 1953, p. 89), while some crown lands were turned into *awqāf-e kāṣṣ* for his chief wife's sons. According to Waṣṣāf, officials who were not mentioned in the deed received payments from these properties (Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, pp. 137, 161, 193, 211; see also Lambton, 1953, p. 87). The *awqāf-e kāṣṣ-e gāzāni* still existed two generations later; together with the *awqāf-e kāṣṣ va 'amm*, they were overseen by the chief judge (*qāzi*; Naḵjavāni, I/1, pp 193, 196, 200-201, 232).

Waṣṣāf writes that *inju* and *dālāy* were accounted separately from *kālešajāt va arbābi*, which shows that privately owned landed estates still existed. His statement also makes it likely that *kālešajāt* (abandoned lands exempt from taxes) were also part of the ruler's property (Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, p. 263; Petrushevskii, tr., II, p. 460). Moreover, Waṣṣāf explicitly refers to the ruler's, *kālešajāt* and reports the transfer of land to the *divān-e kālešāt* (Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, pp. 211, 232). This institution was in charge of implementing Gāzān Khan's fiscal and land reforms and dealt with the tenants who developed these



lands and were known as *tāni* (pl. *tonnā*; Petrushevskii, tr., II, pp. 457, 460-62). Local officials (*molāzem*) were responsible for the reform's implementation, but the *divān-e kālešajāt* had to assess the situation every two years (Rašid-al-Din, p. 356; Lambton, 1953, p. 91; Spuler, 1955, p. 268). Ġāzān Khan used his *kālešajāt* to finance the postal system. He also transferred large estates near Baghdad and Shiraz to the *divan-e kāleša* and made seeds, animals, and other inputs available to those tilling the land in exchange for an annual payment (Waṣṣāf, red. Āyati, pp. 211-12, 232-33; Rašid-al-Din, p. 274).

*Amlāk-e kāşş* or *amlāk-e kāşsa* continued to denote private royal property or property “pertaining to the royal court” (Naḳjavāni, II, p. 309) under the Ilkhanid successor states, such as that of the [Jalayerids](#) (r. 1335-432). Confiscation of a private property by the ruler was called *kāşş kardan* (Jorfādqāni, p. 357) or *kāşş-e divan gardānidan* (Naḳjavāni, I/1, p. 302). The crown lands were variously referred to as *motamallakāt-e soltāni* (Naḳjavāni, I/1, p. 297), *kāşsa-ye kodāvandi* (Naḳjavāni, I/2, p. 369), or *dehhā-ye kāşsa* (Naḳjavāni, I/2, p. 418). Buildings and similar property belonging to the ruler also were designated with the term *kāşsa*, such as *anbār-e kāşsa*, *bāġāt-e kāşsa*, *‘emārat-e kāşsa* (Naḳjavāni, I/1, pp. 371-72, 461-62, 498), as was moveable property. Terms for herds, for instance, included *čārpāyān-e kāşsa*, *jofthā-ye kāşsa*, and *šotorān-e kāşsa* (Naḳjavāni, I/1, pp. 376, 380, I/2, p. 384; Māzandarāni, fols. 116a, 122b, 129a [aġnām], 131a [gusfand]). The staff managing these properties were variously referred to as *nowwāb-e kāşsa*, *mo‘tamedin-e kāşsa*, *wokalā-ye kāşsa* (Naḳjavāni, I/1, pp. 43, 380, 395, 461-62). Purveyors who had to collect supplies (*taḥwilāt*) for the royal court were *garak-yarāq-e kāşş* (Naḳjavāni, I/2, pp. 495; 488-89; Māzandarāni, fol. 95b). The people working on crown lands were known as *‘awāmel-e kāşsa* (Naḳjavāni, I/2, pp. 371, 380) or *nowkarān-e kāşsa* (Naḳjavāni, II, pp. 52, 155). Their revenues were called *wojuh-e kāşsa* (Naḳjavāni, I/2, pp. 373, 381, 422, 424, 498). In addition, there were *‘ommāl-e kāleš* or *a‘māl-e kāleš*, which presumably referred respectively to staff of the public crown domains as well as to the crown domains themselves (Naḳjavāni, II, pp. 310-11).

A similar situation existed under the Injuids (r. 1335-57) and Mozaffarids (r. 1314-93), in whose territory the term inju was still used, although the inju of Fars was explicitly denoted as *māl-e kāşş-e padšāh* and *amlāk-e divān-e bozorg* (Šabānkāra’i, p. 296). In Fars there was an inju administration referred to as *ḥokumat-e inju-e mamālek-e Fārs* (Šabānkāra’i, p. 296). Ḥāfez-e Abru mentions the *amlāk-e kāşsa* of Amir Maḥmudšāh Inju (r. 725-36/1325-36; Ḥāfez-e Abru,



1971, p. 187).

Under the Timurids likewise sizeable crown lands (*kāṣṣa*) existed, but not much is known about their extent (Chekhovich, pp. 66, 67, 128-29, 164 [*bāḡ-e kāṣṣa*], 254). Although a distinction was made between *kāleṣāt* (public crown lands) and *kāṣṣa* (private crown lands), terms such as *kāleṣa-ye solṭāni* and *mamlakat-e pādšāhi* were used as synonyms. (Subtelny, pp. 224-26, 353 n.; Chekhovich, p. 64 [*kāṣṣa-ye pādšāhi*]). *Kāleṣa-ye solṭāni* was either leased or assigned as revenue grants, mostly to the military (Subtelny, pp. 159, 220). There was both new and old *kāleṣa*; presumably the old lands had been inherited (Subtelny, p. 263; Chekhovich, pp. 121, 330). All kinds of property, even cash, could be *kāṣṣa* (Kvāndamir, p. 137). Solṭan Ḥosayn (r. 1469-1506) deeded many royal domains as *waqf*, but before he did so, he first privatized these as *kāleṣa-ye solṭāni* (Subtelny, pp. 220, 225-26, 353 n. 1). In 15th-century Yazd, there was much *kāleṣa* property in flourishing condition (Aḥmad Kāteb, pp. 180, 201, 205, 207, 218).

#### SAFAVID PERIOD

During the Safavid period, a change occurred in how land was considered. The division between crown (*kāṣṣa*) and state (*divāni* or *mamālek*) lands still existed. However, this distinction was not based on ownership, but rather on which state agency controlled its revenue. The country was divided into *kāṣṣa*, over which the shah had direct control, and *mamālek* provinces, over which the shah allowed his vassals to control the revenue within certain bounds. This change in focus was due to the fact that the Safavid shahs claimed ownership of all land, and others could only enjoy the usufruct, not the ownership, of land (Du Mans, p. 226; Chardin, V, pp. 249-50, 394-95; Sanson, p. 91).

*Kāṣṣa*, which included the ruler's private property, designated those lands whose revenues were earmarked for the functioning of the court and the royal household. The *mamālek* lands were those allocated for the financing of the state's other administrative and military infrastructure. Therefore, *teyuls* or revenue assignments were only granted from *mamālek* lands; those found drawing upon *kāṣṣa* were only given to royal relatives or *kāṣṣa* staff. The monarch kept close control over *kāṣṣa* by appointing royal viziers to govern *kāṣṣa* provinces. The *kāṣṣa* lands were recorded in *dafāter-e kāṣṣa*, and their revenues were managed by an officer called *nāzer-e sarkār-e kāṣṣa-e šarifa*, and as of about 1600 by a *mostawfi-e kāṣṣa*. Nevertheless, both *kāṣṣa* and



mamālek lands and their revenues were under the overall and final control of the grand vizier (*wazir-e a'lā*). As in the earlier period, purveyors (*garakyarāq*) supplied the court with its needs from crown lands (Mirzā Sami'ā, tr., pp. 94-95, 123, 177-78; Mirzā Rafi'ā, tr., pp. 55, 156; Nāşeri and Raḥimlu, pp. 57-58; Floor, 1998, pp. 108-9; idem, 2003, pp. 27, 41, 44, 78).

The first major increase in *kāşşa* lands began in the 1540s; the process received a further boost under *Shah 'Abbās I* (r. 1587-629), and finally *Shah Şafi I* (r. 1629-42) made the largest increase in *kāşşa* lands by transforming major mamālek provinces such as Fars and Qazvin into *kāşşa*. Under *Shah 'Abbās II* (r. 1642-66), Kerman became a *kāşşa* province, but Gilan, Mazandaran, Yazd, Khorasan, and Azarbaijan did not, as J. Chardin maintained (Chardin, V, p. 251; see Nāşeri and Raḥimlu, pp. 154-56, 195, 203, 215, 245, 282, 302).

*Kāleşa*, as in previous centuries, was the land that was acquired through conquest, abandonment and/or neglect by its owners, and confiscation, or whose owners were unknown. Several 16th-century decrees denote these lands as *amlāk-e kāleşa-ye amwāl al-zāye'a va şunki va dunki-e majhul al-molk* (Floor, 1998, p. 111). Terms like *dunki va beyt al-māl* suggest that these estates were held for the Muslim community if the owners were unknown or were without heir (Floor, 1998, p. 111). *Kāleşa* lands were managed by the *kāşşa* administration, even if they constituted a separate category (Moḥammad Mofid, III, p. 173). In Kerman, for example, the *kāleşa* properties were managed by a *wazir-e kāleşa* in the 17th century (Maşizi, pp. 246, 339, 349, 369, 372, 377), who was assisted by agents (*motaşaddi*; *ibid.*, pp. 358, 395, 489) or workmen (*'amala-ye fa'la-ye kāleşa*; *ibid.*, pp. 291, 339, 348, 500). *Dakāt* or canonical tax was paid over and above the revenues of the *kāleşajāt* and given to deserving people in Kerman (*ibid.*, pp. 307, 480). The revenues were recorded in a separate register, and the *kāleşajāt* were often farmed out to leaseholders (*mosta'jer*; *ibid.*, pp. 405, 447, 505, 526, 529).

Thus, the shah also had direct control over the revenues of *kāleşa* properties, which is also clear from the use of terms like *kāleşāt-e pādşāhi* and *kāleşāt-e sarkār-e homāyun* under *Shah Şafi* (Tafreşi, pp. 35, 227). The shah used to give various types of grants to deserving people and pay the royal and provincial governors' army from *kāleşajāt* (Sanson, p. 106; Chardin, V, pp. 250-52, 279, 298-99, 303-4, 380-82). *Shah 'Abbās I* financed his construction program in Isfahan and other provinces from the revenues of *kāşşa* and *kāleşa* (Nāşeri and Raḥimlu, p. 58). The state might return confiscated lands to the original



owners, while neglected estates could be farmed out to those who wanted to develop them, in which case they were called *kāleša-ye enteqāli*. By the end of the Safavid period there were: (1) *kāleša-ye mahāll*, crown lands in and around Isfahan and Kerman; (2) *kāleša-ye qadim* (probably domains acquired before ca. 1600); and (3) *kāleša-ye enteqāli* (estates given out for development under certain conditions). At the end of the 17th century, *kāleša* revenues were estimated at 100,000 tumans; therefore, if the annual state revenue was indeed 700,000 tumans, then the *kāleša* portion represented 14 percent of total revenues (Chardin, V, p. 412; *Tadkerat al-moluk*, tr. Minorsky, p. 184; Floor, 1998, pp. 108-14).

#### AFSHARID AND QAJAR PERIOD

After the Safavids the administrative and fiscal distinction between *kāšša* and *mamālek* lands disappeared. There is still occasional mention of *divāni* lands and *kāleša*, that is, lands the ruler acquired through confiscation. Under Nāder Shah Afšār (r. 1736-47), *kāleša* holdings increased enormously, mainly due to the large confiscations, in particular of *waqf* lands, in 1738 and 1747. They were managed by the *divān-e kāleša*, which recorded them in the *raqabāt-e nāderi* (Fasā'i, I, pp. 540, 544; II, pp. 960, 1045; Jāberi Anšāri, pp. 36-38; Floor, 1998, pp. 241-42). After Nāder Shah's death, some of these lands were returned to the owners (Jāberi Anšāri, p. 49).

In the Qajar period, *kāleša* was acquired through: (1) inheritance from the previous regime, or *kāleša-ye qadim*; (2) purchase by the monarch or the crown price, or *kāleša-ye divāni*; (3) confiscation from rebels or criminals, or *amlāk-e zabṭi*; (4) cession of lands by owners to pay a debt or tax arrears, or *amlāk-e motašarrefi*; and (5) abandonment of land by their owners, or *amlāk-e badri* or *sarfuti* (Lambton, 1953, p. 154; Floor, 1998, p. 335). Although the Qajars inherited much *kāleša* lands Āqā Moḥammad Khan (r. 1794-97, q.v.) and Faṭḥ-'Ali Shah (r. 1797-834, q.v.) added much more (Kinneir, p. 47; Lambton, 1998, p. 147; Floor, 1998, pp. 336-37). Under the latter, allegedly one-eighth of Fars and Persian Iraq was in the hands of the shah (Waring, p. 85). Another major increase occurred under Moḥammad Shah (r. 1834-48), when he confiscated the vast properties of Ḥāji Mirzā Āqāsi (q.v.), his grand vizier, and of various rebels. He had the total of *kāleša* properties recorded in the *raqabāt-e moḥammadšāhi*, which included and superseded all previous inventories. This register included also *kāleša*, because the shah wanted to make a distinction between his private property (*molḵ-e kāšš*) and public crown domains (Floor, 1998, pp. 336-38).



The shah used *molk-e kâṣṣ* and *kāleša-ye enteqāli* to provide income to family members (Floor, 1998, pp. 337), while *kāleša* in general was used to grant *teyuls* and pay the army (Floor, 1998, pp. 333-34). By 1860, one-third to one-half of Iran allegedly was *kāleša* land, much of which was neglected due to oppressive and arbitrary tenure arrangements (Eastwick, p. 70). Although some halfhearted and incidental attempts were made to develop the productivity of *kāleša* lands (see, e.g., Jāberi Anṣāri, p. 51), the situation deteriorated, a trend made worse by the 1871-73 famine, when much land was abandoned. In 1886 Nāṣer-al-Din Shah (r. 1848-96) needed money. He therefore started selling *kālešajāt*, with the objective to make these lands more productive and also raise funds for himself. Prior to that year such lands were farmed out for short periods and not longer than the farmer's lifetime. As a result of the new policy, much land was sold, and even peasant-owned (*ḳorda māleki*) land was usurped and sold as *kāleša-ye enteqāli*. The government did not sell *kāleša* lands in Tehran and Tabriz, but, by 1900, it no longer owned a single *kāleša* village in Isfahan, Kerman, Erāq-e 'Ajam, Rasht, Fars, and Zanjaan (Floor, 1998, pp. 334-45).

Nevertheless, the problem of low productivity on the remaining public crown lands persisted. Therefore, to raise the productivity of public domains, the newly elected Majles in 1910 decided to sell part of the *kāleša* lands, whose status was changed into that of public lands; the private properties of the shah were referred to as *amlāk-e salṭanati* or *amlāk-e šāhi*. The Majles also abolished the artificial conversion rates or *tas'ir-e ajnās* on *kāleša-ye enteqāli* and established a so-called company (*kompāni-e kālešajāt*) to farm out public domains. This decision was barely implemented when parliament was suspended in 1911; moreover, Joseph Mornard, a Belgian working in the capacity of the treasurer-general, put a stop to any further activity. The crown's land office (*edāra-ye kālešajāt*) took over management of all public domains. Because of different conditions under which *kālešajāt-e enteqāli* had been transferred to individuals in the past, the government tried to make a distinction to allow for these differences, but the situation remained unsatisfactory. For instance, it did not deal with the *kālešajat-e ḥasab al-moqāta'a*, that is, those that had been granted as *eqṭā's* or revenue assignments (Floor, 1998, p. 343). After the coup d'état of 1921, the new prime minister, Sayyed Žiā'-al-Din Ṭabāṭabā'i, announced that *kāleša* lands would be distributed among peasants. However, his government lasted only a few months, and the plan was shelved. At that time much property was confiscated from rebels and fiscal defaulters, which increased the extent of *kāleša*



(Lambton, 1969, pp. 49-50).

#### PAHLAVI PERIOD

The new Pahlavi government tried to improve productivity and the position of peasants. In 1925, *qarapešk k̄ālešajāt* around Tehran was sold to peasants to make it more productive (Kāzemi; Floor, 1998, p. 340). Some *k̄āleša* was sold in 1927 in Khuzestan, and in 1933 in Sistan, to promote peasant proprietorship, but the effort was a failure due to the dishonesty of officials, oppression by landlords, and water control issues (Lambton, 1953, pp. 244-54). Reza Shah (r. 1925-41) acquired over 2,000 villages and parts of villages as his private property, which was managed separately from *k̄āleša* (for working conditions, see Barimāni). After his abdication, these estates were transferred to the state as *amlāk-e vāgodāri* (transfer estates) by a decree of 11 September 1941. A law passed on 2 June 1942 set up the legal procedure for their return to their original owners (Lambton, 1969, pp. 49-50). In Azarbaijan, in 1946, the communist Democratic Party of Azarbaijan (Ferqa-ye demokrāt-e Āzarbāyjān), which had taken control of the local government, allowed peasants to take possession of all state domains—and also lands of those who had fled or opposed it—without any documentation or distribution, but this action was annulled when the central government took control of Azarbaijan at the end of the year.

These developments induced in 1946 the communist Tuda Party to propose that *amlāk-e salṭanati* and *k̄āleša* be given to peasants, a proposal that the government of Aḥmad Qawām (Qawām-al-Salṭana) accepted (Gharatchedaghi, pp. 34-38). However, nothing came of this due to the fall of that government. On 11 July 1949, it was decided to transfer to Mohammad Reza Shah (r. 1941-79) those royal estates that had not yet been returned to the original owners. These estates were made into *waqf* and handed over to the Pahlavi Foundation (Bonyād-e Pahlavi) to be used for health and education purposes (Lambton, 1969, pp. 49-50; for the arrangements of the sale of *k̄āleša*, see Gharatchedaghi, pp. 39-42). In 1952, Mohammad Reza Shah made a timid beginning with the distribution of crown lands; these were returned to the state under Moḥammad Moṣaddeq, but, after his ouster in 1953, the shah continued to distribute crown lands (U.S. Army, 445; Gharatchedaghi, pp. 43-46). An estimation of land ownership in Iran by 1954 is shown in [Table 1](#).

In 1956 a law was passed to distribute all *k̄ālešajāt* except pastures, forests, buildings, and properties needed for government institutions. This task was



entrusted to the *kālešajāt* department within the Ministry of Agriculture. Distribution started in 1958, but by 1961 only 55 of the 1,350 *kāleša* villages had been distributed, although the number of *kāleša* villages is variously reported (U.S. Army, pp. 453-54; Gharatchedaghi, pp. 47-66; Najmabadi, pp. 59-98). According to the 1956 census, the crown estate villages amounted to 812, or 2 percent of the total of some 40,000 villages (*Iran Almanac*, 1963, p. 386). A new land-reform law passed in 1962 would speed up the land distribution process. On 31 January 1963, the newspaper *Eṭṭelā'āt* reported that, between 1953 and 1962, 517 of 1,008 villages had been distributed (that is, long-term leased) by the shah; the remainder were in dispute, and their title had been transferred to the Pahlavi Foundation for distribution. State-owned estates in urban areas were sold to the highest bidders (*Iran Almanac*, 1963, p. 395; for later years see *ibid.*, 1965, p. 525; 1966, pp. 571-72; 1968, p. 534; 1969, pp. 522-23; 1970, pp. 523-24; 1972, pp. 560-61; 1973, pp. 406-7; Lambton, 1969, pp. 118-19, 156-61; Najmabadi, pp. 99-100). This signaled the end of *kāleša* property in Iran.

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