



ḲĀNOM

ḲĀNOM (khanom, khanum), a title for highborn women in the pre-modern Turkish and Persian worlds. In early Islamic Turkish, it was used for a khan's wife or a princess, hence as a higher title than *begüm*. It is attested from Timurid times onwards, and the ambassador to the Timurid court Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo (early 15th century) designates the wives of Timur as *cano* in his Spanish text (Yule and Burnell, p. 479). From later 17th-century Safavid Persia, Sir John Chardin, speaking of the Shah's womenfolk, states that "Celles dont le roi a des enfans, celles qui sont les maîtresses, et celles qui sont dans les hautes charges, sont traitées de *kanum*, qui est le féminin du mot de *kan*" (Doerfer III, p. 182). In older Ottoman Turkish usage, *ḳānum* had this exalted meaning, but over the course of time, both modern Persian and modern Turkish usage have come to use *ḳānom/hanum* as a general title of respect for women.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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