



## PISHQABZ

(PRONOUNCED AS PIŠQABZ پیش‌قبض)

A typical Persian *pishqabz* from the late Safavid Period. This type of dagger has a double-curved blade, and the edge is initially concave, ending in a convex shape. Note that the term *pishqabz* پیش‌قبض consists of two parts: *pish* پیش (adj) means “front” and *qabz* قبض (n) means “handle.” This weapon was tucked under the belt in front of the body. The *Lexicon of Dehkhodā* describes that the weapon *pishqabz* is named after a technique in wrestling. Getting hold of the front part of the pants/girdle was one of the main objectives in traditional wrestling in Iran as it allowed the wrestlers to control their opponents easily. Therefore, someone who grabs hold of the *pishqabz* پیش‌قبض of his opponent gains easy control over him. The handle of this piece is made of the outer surface of walrus ivory (in Persian *shirmahi* = *širmāhi* شیرماهی). The blade is made of a beautiful Persian crucible steel (*fulād-e jōhardār* فولاد جوهردار) in the woodgrain pattern (in Persian *pulād-e jōhardār-e mošābak* پولاد جوهردار مشبک (see Romanowsky, 1967b/1346:78). After the T-spine ends the blade starts to have a midrib in the middle for strengthening purposes. The blade ends in a reinforced tip for penetrating well-protected areas of the opponent’s body. The base of the blade is decorated with gold in floral design (*naqsh-e gol va bote* نقش‌گلوبته). The method of applying gold to the surface of the blade is in gold-overlaying style (in Persian *kuftgari* کوفتگری). For similar examples of Persian *pishqabz* see Ferrell (1998:80-81, lot 2094), Moshtagh Khorasani (2006:618-623), Chodynski (2000:327, item 183), *Weapons of the Islamic World*, 1991:85-86), and Zeller and Rohrer (1955:158-173).

**Inscriptions:** There are four engraved and gilded cartouches on the T-spine of the back of the blade. The middle cartouches in Persian read:

قبضه‌خنجررت جهانگیر است گر چه یکمشت استخوان باشد

*Qabze-ye xanjarat jahāngir ast gar če yek mošt ostexān bāšad* (The handle of your dagger is the conqueror of the world despite that it is only made of bone).

There are also two attributes of God written in Arabic on the T-spine of the dagger: the cartouche on the right reads: *Yā Hannān* يا حنان (Oh the Compassionate/Oh the Gracious) and the cartouche on the left reads: *Yā Mannān* يا منان (Oh the Bounteous/Oh the Benevolent).

**Maker’s mark:** On the base of the T-spine an engraved and gilded maker’s mark reads: *amal-e Mohammad Xān* عمل‌محمدخان (The work of Mohammad Khān).



TYPE PISHQABZ (PRONOUNCED AS PIŠQABZ پیش‌قبض)

ORIGIN PERSIA (IRAN)

PERIOD EARLY 18th CENTURY



TOTAL LENGTH 44,4 cm

LENGTH OF THE BLADE 31,5 cm

WEIGHT 662 grams

WIDTH OF THE BLADE AT THE BASE 5,4 cm

WIDTH OF THE BLADE IN THE MIDDLE 2,7 cm

THICKNESS OF THE BLADE AT THE BASE 18,6 mm

THICKNESS OF THE BLADE IN THE MIDDLE 6,3 mm

THICKNESS OF THE REINFORCED TIP 10 mm

