

codarts



rotterdam

**2015**

**Bachelor Thesis**

Kenan Tülek

# **How to develop the process of Adaptation from a Conventional plectrum played piece Into the Şelpe Technique?**

**Student: Kenan Tülek**

**Thesis Counselor: Oscar van Dillen**

**Date: 02.03.2015**

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## Introduction

Influenced by my father playing Bağlama (uzun sap) at home in my childhood I also wanted to learn how to play Bağlama. Although my family descends from an area where Bağlama is also played by hand, I always saw the musicians surrounding and on TV's playing with plectrum. The fact that Bağlama can also be played by hand I experienced some years later.

Around the year 2000, with the spreading of the Internet I attained to some Video's and here I first saw Hasret Gültekin in concert playing some little pieces by hand and there I recognized the fingers that moved freely through the strings. At the same time I was overwhelmed of the dynamics this technique brings forth. Afterwards the pieces of Erdal Erzincan (Çeke Çeke) and Erol Parlak (Efsaneyim) played a considerably role for me in learning the Şelpe Technique.

The teaching was not as usually as playing by plectrum so it took a long time to learn Şelpe. My first experience I made in Turkey (Izmir) by learning the piece Efsaneyim, taught by a Bağlama luthier and later on I purchased the Method 1 and 2 of Erol Parlak and kept learning the Şelpe technique auto didactically. Getting to know Erdal Erzincan in Girit (Greece) in 2009 is a milestone for my music career and for my development regarding the Şelpe technique. There I learned the subtleties of the Şelpe Technique by a professional teacher for the first time and this lead me to the Decision to do this job professional. Then in year 2010 I got the Qualification to study at Codarts WMDC and moved to Rotterdam. During this time I began producing my own Adaptations/Arrangement's and realized that I am successful that persuaded me to face up more intensive with the Şelpe Technique.

One of the most important reasons why I grappled intensively with this technique was the fact that Şelpe is played freer and the sound of the Bağlamas (Dede Sazı, Ikitelli Cura) sound more authentic, especially in the pieces of the regions I intensively expose. One further reason is because of the circumstance that Şelpe technique is not as studied as the Plectrum technique.

I studied almost all pieces which were written for the Şelpe technique, that fastly developed after the 1990's, and after I acquired the techniques, I wanted to enrich the repertoire and a little bit to facilitate the work of the masters (there are only a few, playing Şelpe professional) but also to find my own way I decided and to start producing Adaptations.

During the process of producing my own Adaptations I followed the questions how to produce better Adaptations and as a consequence thereof how to produce Adaptations properly. In this thesis I want to give answers to exactly these questions. Things that are important and taken be care when adapting a piece which is played with a plectrum to the Şelpe Technique and how Şelpe developed from the history to nowadays will be part of my

explaining's. Further question like "can all pieces be played with the Şelpe Technique will try to be answered and difficulties that could occur will also be declared.

I would like to thank Hamit Çine, Erol Parlak, Erdal Erzincan, Kemal Dinç, Sinan Ayyıldız, Adem Tosunoğlu and Oscar Van Dillen for their support. The knowledge for this Thesis is attained from diverse Methods, Workshops, Seminars, Interviews, Thesis and private lessons. May my thesis, which consists of this knowledge, will be valuable for the Şelpe Technique and the Adaptions for this technique.

Kenan Tölek

## **1. General information about Bağlama and Şelpe Technique**

Bağlama is one of the most important pieces of the Anatolian Culture. In every flat in Anatolia, no matter if somebody of the occupants can play or not has a Bağlama attached to the wall. This comes from the respect to the Bağlama. The Tradition of playing and singing in Anatolia is very common and the lyrics represent the happiness as well as the sorrow of the inhabitants which are set to music by Bağlama. Erdal Erzincan was telling in one of his concerts that the poplar poets in Erzurum called the Bağlama “Gam curası” (engl.: sorrow cura). The Bağlama, which is played all over Anatolia in different techniques and harmonies, can be divided into two basic playing techniques; Playing with plectrum and playing without plectrum. The Term for playing without a plectrum is mentioned as Şelpe.<sup>1</sup>

The technique of playing by hand is a rooted Bağlama technique in Anatolia which is performed ever since centuries. According to informed sources the technique that exists before playing with plectrum occurred by a traditional way of Master – trainee relationship and is still successfully performed today. Especially because of the Urbanization Şelpe turned out to be forgotten but the personal effort of several Masters of Bağlama put the şelpe Technique into the focus again. There was no need to adopt a special name for this technique because it was a natural way of playing Bağlama in Anatolia so this traditional name was kept as the term for the technique, Şelpe. This traditional technique is especially common in the West Anatolian area, particularly used for Gurbet Havası<sup>2</sup> or the Teke Zortlama<sup>3</sup>. In the Eastern of Turkey şelpe is played by Alevi Clerics and some Aşıks<sup>4</sup> who uses the technique to perform Deyiş<sup>5</sup> and Semah.<sup>6</sup>

In Comparison to the Plectrum technique is the specialty of the Şelpe Technique that the right hand plays the piece. This way of performing can be divided into three elements; Pençe<sup>7</sup>, Tel çekme<sup>8</sup> and Parmak vurma<sup>9</sup>. Inside these three techniques there are any numbers of specifics.

Pençe Technique is more performed in rhythmic pieces like Deyiş or Teke Harmony. Tel çekme Technique is used for long breath songs (uzun hava). After pulling the string with the right hand the player does pull- tapping (legato) to create a sound. Parmak Vurma Technique is played by splitting the right and the left hand and utilized for pieces which

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<sup>1</sup> Ş engl. spelling [sch]

<sup>2</sup> improvisation songs

<sup>3</sup> a type of declamatory of West Anatolian Songs

<sup>4</sup> travelling bards

<sup>5</sup> mystical revelations

<sup>6</sup> mystical and aesthetic body movements in rhythmic harmony

<sup>7</sup> Ç engl. spelling [tsch], persian meaning: five

<sup>8</sup> picking of strings

<sup>9</sup> tapping

require a high agility. There arises a considerable harmony by tapping with the fingers to the high tones and at the same time pulling at the deep tones. By using these three techniques in one another there comes up an overcoming affluence of sounds.

In the Teke Territory and Eastern Anatolia this technique is usually conducted by little size bağlama (Cura, Dede Sazı) with steal strings, but in the meantime Şelpe can also be performed by the big Size Bağlama, too but with wound string Both, the plectrum technique and the Şelpe technique have local differences by performing. The Şelpe Technique is played in different chords and in one of the most widespread Bağlama Harmony (La-Re-Mi).

### **1.1 Term definition and origin of the Şelpe Technique**

There are two different views of the origin of the Şelpe Technique therefore with the Bağlama: The first view is that Bağlama came from Asia to Anatolia and the other perspective argues that Bağlama had always existed in Anatolia. The contention of the first view is established with the fact that the Turks moved from middle Asia to Anatolia and the bağlama closely resemble the saz (dutar, dombra etc.) from middle- Asia. The archaeological researchers plead the Bağlama existed all the while in Anatolia and show pictures from the time before Christ of the Sümer and Hitit where saz are imaged, which resemble the Bağlama.



On the picture we can see archeological findings from the Hitit times with similar instruments like bağlama.

Because we do not have enough sources we cannot give an obvious answer. The fact of the matter is that Bağlama therefore Şelpe Technique obtained its form of today in Asia Minor.

In his book *“Türkiye’de El ile çalma geleneği ve çalış teknikleri”* Erol Parlak writes following sentences about this topic:

“There is a view that as well as the transfer to wood of the cover of the corpus as well as the changes to metal strings implemented in Anatolia.”<sup>10</sup> He believes that the Bağlama originates from the Asian Corpus and developed in Anatolia. I don’t agree with the thesis that Bağlama comes definitely from Asia because there are not enough scientific evidence but Bağlama and its technique developed in Anatolia because there are some differences between the Saz from Asia and the Saz from Anatolia, although they show similarities. For example Bağlama can also be played with an plectrum whereas Dutar and Dombra is only

Played by hand. One further disparity is that only metal strings used on Bağlama whereas in the middle Asia there are only strings of nylon. Also Hamit Cine represent that Bağlama comes from Asia and writes in his Introduction of the Method for *Üçtelli*: “The main structure is not lost and the cultural playing techniques are kept from the middle Asia.”<sup>11</sup> Indeed, Erdal Erzincan is more reserved and says: “To say that one of these two views is the right one would be confining. People from different geographies can produce the same or similar things at the same time without knowing from each other. In the lyrics of Yunus Emre we can read about Corpus, so Bağlama existed in the Asia region.”<sup>12</sup>

Also regarding the definition of Şelpe technique there are different concepts. The question where the name of “Şelpe” originates from and what it really means was researched and discussed for a long time. The Volk did not feel the necessary to give a name because they play in natural way as a part of their culture and did not say that they play Bağlama or Saz. But the Academic community used the term “Şelpe” for the technique which is played by hand. Erdal Erzincan says these sentences to this topic: There is no final definition of the term Şelpe. In Horasan in Iran I earlier heard Şepe (to wave) and later I heard the perception Şelpe. In Horasan Şelpe means this: the name of beating from the top. My grandparents told me that the Cleric tapped three times on to the rear of the pupil who just gave his promise. The folk named this action as “the Pence or Şelpe of the Cleric”.<sup>13</sup> The Name of Şelpe is named in Anatolia since hundreds of years and today it is the most suitable term according to Erdal Erzincan.<sup>14</sup>

The technique of playing by hand is named as Pence in Eastern and Middle Anatolia, but in some provinces also as Şelpe. Again, Erol Parlak is writing following thesis: “In some areas of Anatolia, in Kayseri, Erzincan, Erzurum, Kahramanmaraş, (Elbistan), the technique of playing by hand is widespread and is called “Şelpe” or “Şerpe”.<sup>15</sup> In the Teke area there is no term given for this technique. As I wrote before the people did not need a name for the

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<sup>10</sup> Parlak, Erol; Türkiye’de El ile (şelpe) bağlama çalma geleneği ve çalış teknikleri, Ankara 2000

<sup>11</sup> Hamit Cine, Üç Telli Bağlama Metodu

<sup>12</sup> Erdal Erzincan Bağlama Seminar ( Mannheim 03.12.2011)

<sup>13</sup> Erdal Erzincan Bağlama Seminar (Mannheim 03.12.2011)

<sup>14</sup> Reportage with Erdal Erzincan (Istanbul 10.12.2014)

<sup>15</sup> Reportage with Erol Parlak (Istanbul 11.12.2014)

technique. Hamit Çine who represent the thesis that the *Parmak Cura* and the the Saz played by hand origins from middle Asia, but the term şelpe does not descended from middle Asia but rather origins from the Persian language.<sup>16</sup> Whereas Erol Parlak quotes the Assumption that the term Şelpe has an Asian origin and comes from “Çertme” and changed in course of time to Şelpe. He explains that he is not pleased with the name Şelpe and that the term of “technique of playing by hand” would be more suitable.<sup>17</sup>

Considering that the Teke region (playing technique and the songs are influenced by Asian) don't use the term Şelpe, cannot be assumed that Şelpe comes from Çertme.

As at the same for the origin of Bağlama, in my opinion we cannot give an obvious definition of the Şelpe technique because there is no enough academic literature regarding this topic. The most Literature we use conducts us to the nowadays known Iran. It would be also not right to find a new name for the tradition of hundreds of years and might not be assumed within the community. Although the origin of Şelpe is not occupied the name of playing by technique is called Şelpe.

## **1.2 Areas where playing by hand is coming across and Bağlamas are used for this technique**

One of the most important area where the technique of playing by hand is beyond doubt the *Teke*<sup>18</sup> region especially Burdur and Muğla. Because the people in this area are moving people they kept the Saz little to carry them easily. We can divide the Saz in this area into two aspects. The first one is a Bağlama with two strings and Bağlama with three stings. This names arises of the number of the strings (like at the instruments of the middle-asian, setar, dutar, etc.) and regarding the playing technique they show similarity.

The Bağlama with two strings has two strings of steel and two strings at the above. The so called *Kozağac Cura* has the notes LA downstairs and the notes RE or MI and LA upstairs.(LA,LA & RE,LA or LA,LA & MI,LA) The sound box is usually made of mulberry, the cap of white spruce wood, the grip of butterfly or plum tree (nowadays made by other varieties of trees). The Strings are 0, 18 millimeter. The size of the Corpus of the Cura, which is played by hand or plectrum, suffices from 21 to 26 cm and sometimes there are holes at the cap or/ and at the corpus.

At the Bağlama with three strings there is installed one string at each group and it has various harmony species. The most used Harmonies are the following:

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<sup>16</sup> Reportage with Hamit Çine (24.02.2015)

<sup>17</sup> Reportage with Erol Parlak (Istanbul, 11.12.2014)

<sup>18</sup> Southwest Region of Turkey which captures cities like Antalya, Burdur, Denizli and Isparta.

- *Bağlama düzeni (LA,RE,MI)*
- *Zeybek düzeni (LA,RE,RE)* here are used two octave domains
- *Çiftetelli düzeni (LA,LA,LA)* here are used two octave domains
- *Kaval düzeni (LA,RE,LA)*
- *Boğma Düzeni (LA,LA,RE)*
- *Bozuk Düzeni (LA,MI,SI)*

One Information about Boğma Harmony is important. Savaş Ekici, who has written a book about Ramazan Güngör, writes following sentences in his book about Boğma Harmony:

“The middle string of the upper bridge is not fixed. There is another place in the near to the upper string. By playing in the Boğma harmony, the middle string must be shift to the upper string. The reason for that is that the pieces require that the thumb pushes the upper and the middle string together at the same time. This kind of string chancing is only usual at the Boğma harmony, whereas at other harmonies the stings have always their fix places.”<sup>19</sup>

Here are the same trees used as in the construction of the Bağlama with two strings (*Ikitelli*). In General, strings of 0, 16 mm are attached downstairs and 0,18 mm strings upstairs. In comparison to the two strings bağlama (*Ikitelli*) this Bağlama is only played by hand and the most known artist with performing this technique is *Ramazan Güngör*. The size of this sound box is between 21 to 23 cm.

In the Region of Teke you can see the technique of tapping with the fingers like you never see anywhere else. This sound is produced by simulating the human voice (*Boğaz çalma*<sup>20</sup>) and is especially used for "*Gurbet Havası*"<sup>21</sup> Songs. By tapping with the index finger of the right hand (sometimes only with pulling of the strings) and at the same time pushing with the index finger of the left hand on the MI fret the tone will be created. This sound was especially used in old turkish films.

Other areas where the technique of playing by hand plays a role is the eastern area like Malatya (Arguvan), Kahramanmaraş (Elbistan), Tunceli etc. In this area this technique is mostly performed by Alevi<sup>22</sup> Clerics and is more practiced by doing Pence and sometimes striking onto the cap (fiske). Here we can divide the Saz into two categories;

The first one is called *Dede* or *Balta Saz*. This Saz has a carcass like an axe and has 3 groups of strings. The second is named *Ruzba, Irizva, Ximza* or *Nesimi Cura* and is a saz which two strings (*Ikitelli*).

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<sup>19</sup> Ekici, Savas ; Ramazan Güngör ve Üctelli Kopuzu , Ankara 1993

<sup>20</sup> a method of singing by pushing the throat with the thumb and at the same time moving up-down

<sup>21</sup> a type of improvisation in the region of Teke.

<sup>22</sup> a mystical branch of Islam

Specifies of the *Dede Bağlama* are those; the sound box is made of mulberry and has the form of an axe. That is why it is called *balta* in some areas. At the same time it has twelve fret's which symbolize the twelve Imams, who are revered by the Alevis. The Frets are diatonic bounded and the tones „SI“and the parallel fifth „FA Sharp“are approximately one breach lower than usually. In some other sources<sup>23</sup> it says that Bağlama existed before the Islam and has no correlation with the twelve Imams'. Cimen gives an example of his own Bağlama, which has only eleven fret's. The neck is longer than the neck of the short Bağlama.

In the prayer ceremony of the Alevi's, which is named *Cem*, the *Zakir* (player of the Saz, representing one of the twelve Imams') and the Alevi Clerics play the Bağlama by strike their fingers. (in the order arricular finger (s), annular finger (a), long finger (m) and forefinger (i).

In time past the strings were put single but today we can see double strings 0,18 or 0,20 mm steel strings (it differentiate of the harmony), in the middle one single string of 0,28 mm and upstairs 0,20 or 0,22 mm steel strings. In this areas there is no wound string used for baglamas that are played by hand. Alevi Clerics for example from Kahramanmaraş, Malatya and Tunceli termed the wood string as “Sünni string”<sup>24</sup>

*Aşık Veysel*, which is approved as the most important *asik* of all times, played with that bağlama. The fact that he first played by hand and after a while began to play with plectrum we can read in his poetry and hears in his performance.

<i>Benim her derdime ortak sen oldun hey</i>	<i>you were the only power for my sorrow hey</i>
<i>Ağlarsam ağladın gülersem güldün hey</i>	<i>you cried and laughed with me hey</i>
<i>Sazım bu sesleri turnadan m'aldın hey</i>	<i>did you get the sound from a crane hey</i>
<i><u>Pence</u> vurup sarı teli sızlatma hey</i>	<i>don't let the yellow string hurt by striking pence</i>
<i>Sızlatma hey sızlatma hey sızlatma hey</i>	<i>don't hurt hey don't hurt hey don't hurt hey</i>

The most important representative of the *Ikitelli Bağlama* is Nesimi Çimen. This kind of Bağlama is not as widespread as the *Dede Saz* and today is has 0,18 mm double steel strings downstairs and upstairs one string of 0,20 mm. To achieve an harmonic sound sometimes there are strings in the middle. As we experienced from Mazlum Çimen his father used a corpus with the form of an axe and later on he changed to Saz with round

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<sup>23</sup> Tutorial of Mazlum Çimen about Ikitelli Cura at ITÜ on 16.10.2014

<sup>24</sup> Melih Duygulu, Türk Halk Müzigi Sözlüğü 2014

sound boxes. He preferred little sizes of sound boxes, so the Bağlama of Nesimi is called "*Nesimi cura*". Here are used sound boxes of a size from 17-24 cm, a longer neck in comparison to a short neck Bağlama and has twelve frets.

In Kahramanmaraş- Elbistan Cura with the little size corpus is common whereas in Gaziantep and Malatya we can see an instrument with 30 to 35 cm size.<sup>25</sup>

By twisting the thumb and the index finger and with dermal, string and cap there arises a sound which is called "*cos*" and which can only be reached by the way of "*meleke*"<sup>26</sup>, says the master of *Iktelli Saz*, Mazlum Çimen. The most important specialness is the way of harmony and the Tonic. The harmony that is used at the *Dede Saz* is middle string LA whereas at the *Ruzba* the downstrings are attuned to LA and the upper strings to MI. The tonic is at the downer strings. This harmony is also called *Ruzba Düzeni*. Mostly the first and the fifth finger of left hand are used parallel and there rises a specific harmony. By considering the *Iktelli Cura*, we can estimate the emergence of the Bağlama.

There are several similarities regarding the construction and playing technique between the *ikiteilli Cura* and the *Turkmen Dutar* (the most representative instrument of Turkmen folk music). The melody is played at the lower strings at both instruments whereas the upper strings endorse the melody with harmonic tones.<sup>27</sup>

At the time I spend in Turkey (Erasmus program) I was influenced by the seminars of Mazlum Çimen and at the same time of the recordings of Nesimi Çimen. I measured out the sizes of the *Iktelli Bağlama* and decided to let the same Bağlama build by a luthier. By deepening into the organization process emerged an different type of harmony. This arised of a Variation of the *Ruzba* harmony and of the different attune of the upstairs strings of the *Kozağac Cura*. The down strings of the New Harmony attuned to LA and the upper strings to MI and deep LA. The distance of the upper strings from each other is 5mm instead of 2 mm, which is adjusted from the bridge and so the player can play the down string of the upper group string and the uppermost string can be used to create a backing sound. By striking all the upper strings at the same time and pulling the strings (*tel çekme*) there will be created a different sound. Regarding the sound, I think there comes the high sound of the *Ruzba* and the middle and main sound of *Dede Saz together*.

Another saz where şelpe technique is played on is Kopuz. Also Ramazan Güngör called his *Üçtelli Kopuz*, after he researched in some books and influences of some explorer. But there are some technical and physical differences between the Kopuz of Ramazan Güngör and the Kopuz which is used today. Erkan Oğur, who used the Kopuz in the middle of the

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<sup>25</sup> Melih Duygulu, Türk Halk Müziği Sözlüğü 2014

<sup>26</sup> Habit which emerges from repetition

<sup>27</sup> Erdal Erzincan final thesis

1990's for Film music and in several albums ensured that instrument and performed big effort concerning the constructional and technical development. The topic of the Master thesis of Sinan Cem Eroglu was called "The overcoming technical and physical changes and developments during the process from Kopuz to six stringed Kopuz", where he wrote these sentences: "Kopuz is a Saz, where hand and nail are used but plectrum is not used. Especially by playing without nails the characteristic sound of the Kopuz cannot be produced. This Saz is played by pulling the strings with Nails that are not very long. To play arpeggio you use the thumb, the forefinger and the middle finger of the right hand (southpaw use left). When playing a Melody the forefinger and the middle fingers are preferred. Regarding the playing diction there is no need to pull the strings for every note, but rather the legato technique is used. With different combinations of the three fingers the player can produce various and quick arpeggio. Because it is not really possible to produce the three sounds according with distances at the Kopuz, the according is in general played with delayed arpeggio."<sup>28</sup>

Besides of this style the Kopuz can also be played by the Şelpe Technique. This technic is executed by striking the right hand (southpaw use left) except the thumb. These two styles are used by the players which differentiate depending on player styles and regions. This technic is also used to hear the harmony voices at the same time.<sup>29</sup>

Like the Şelpe also the Kopuz has different harmony shapes. Depending on the makam of the piece the lower and the middle string stay fix only the upper strings are attuned in different chords.

Nowadays Şelpe technique is played, contrary to the tradition of bağlama, with wound strings and with bigger corpus till the size of 40 cm.

Today we can see that the traditional Şelpe Techniques are melted (Teke area and eastern of Anatolia) and the added techniques are used together, so that the technique playing by hand has come to another point. Maybe we could term this playing technique as modern Şelpe Technique.

Areas where the technique of playing by hand is used are the Teke Area and the Eastern of Anatolia. Here are differences regarding the playing techniques and used Saz. Because of the fact that the people of the Teke area always had to move the Saz of their area is quite small. In East Anatolia they use the small Saz as well as the big one. The technique of striking with the fingers is only seen in the Teke area, pulling strings and pence is used in Teke and in East Anatolia. By connecting the Western and Eastern Techniques in the beginning of the 1990's there arised a new and more affluent technique (especially regarding the technique of finger tapping)

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<sup>28</sup> Eroğlu, (2011)

<sup>29</sup> Eroğlu (2011)

## **2. Masters of Şelpe Technique and Individual works**

### **Ramazan Güngör**

Ramazan Güngör was born in Fethiye, a Village of Muğla, in year 1924. His actual profession is carpenter. In Year 1949 he lost his walking competence by an accident at work. Güngör was one of the important performers in that area and at the same time one of the most significant constructor of *Ikitelli* and *üçtelli* Bağlama. Although he was playing the *Üçtelli* Bağlama he always gave the feeling of *Ikitelli Bağlama* by putting Elements of Asia type Bağlama. Ramazan Güngör is the greatest model of the *Yörük Turkmen music*, which contains wide range of cultural pieces and sounds.<sup>30</sup> It is also played in different harmonies, from *Zeybekler*<sup>31</sup> to *gelin ağlatmaları*<sup>32</sup> until *pesrevler* to *boğaz havası*. Güngör made respectable works of the Şelpe Technique, with the result that many musicians visited him and benefit from him and at the same time he plays a big role by passing on the Şelpe Technique to the next generations.

### **Nesimi Çimen**

In year 1931 Nesimi was born in Saimbeyli in Adana. Influenced by his uncle Seyid Yusuf, whom he loved very much, he began to play the *ikitelli* Cura. The master of the Eastern Area has an important place between the masters of playing by hand. Çimen, who has his own playing, and interpretation techniques and melodized pieces of different masters but later on he began performing his own *deyiş* pieces.

### **Talip Özkan**

Özkan was born in Denizli, in the West of Turkey in year 1939. He was influenced by Ramazan Güngör, who was performing the Şelpe Technique in the Western area. In year 1993 he presented the little piece “Gut Gut Boğaz” from *L’art Vivant*, which was published in France. By teaching Hasret Gültekin, who visited him in his flat in France, he contributed that the Şelpe Technique spread and reached big mass of people.

### **Arif Sağ**

Arif Sağ, who was born in Erzurum in 1945, began playing Bağlama in very little years. He was influenced by Clerics who came into the Village. In the *Şan Theatre* concert in year 1982 he played a *Boğaz havası* from the *Teke* Area and carried the technique from village to the urban. This concert of him was an important instance for many young Bağlama players (for example .Erdal Erzincan said, that he first saw Arif Sağ playing the Şelpe Technique.) In year 1995 Arif Sağ, Erdal Erzincan and Erol Parlak build a trio which played

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<sup>30</sup> Erol, Parlak: Türkiye’de Eli le (Şelpe) bağlama çalma geleneği ve çalış teknikleri, Ankara 2000

<sup>31</sup> dance form in West Anatolia

<sup>32</sup> Traditional melancholic Music performing by saying goodbye to a bride

a big role by spreading the technique by its name and technique. Arif Sağ gave concerts in prominent halls until year 1998. In the Album “Concerto for Bağlama” which was published in year 1998 there are many pieces which are played by şelpe technique. In Addition in 2009 he published a Bağlama-method book with Erdal Erzincan, where they present a wide repertoire of many Şelpe pieces.

### **Hasret Gültekin**

Hasret Gültekin was born in Sivas in year 1971 where the Şelpe Technique already existed. Gültekin came together with Haydar Acar, the source of the piece “Deli Derviş”. Also he visited Talip Özkan at his flat in Paris a few times. He developed the Boğaz havası, which he learned from Talip Özkan by adding different techniques and he also convey the idea of playing by hand in other frets. In his last years he played the pieces “Derman sendedir” and “Çeke Çeke” by hand. In addition he conveys the idea that the Teke harmony which is played by one finger can be played by two fingers.<sup>33</sup> At the end of the piece “*Karasaban*” he gave an example by playing with the Ruzba and so payed attention to these techniques but this was not more performed after him.

### **Erdal Erzincan**

Erdal Erzincan, who was born in Erzurum in 1971, was very much influenced by Arif Sağ and first saw the Şelpe Technique played by Arif Sağ. Erzincan had the chance to get to know Ramazan Güngör. He especially exercised at the topic of the technique of playing by fingers and wrote his Thesis at the conservatorium about the Şelpe Technique. In year 1994 he published the Album “*Töre*”, where he did the adaptation of the piece “*Yayla yollarında*” into the Şelpe Technique. It is the first time that tapping is performed on the other frets as well as that a piece is played by tapping from the beginning to the end. In the same year he wrote the first composition for Şelpe Technique “*Bağlama Üvertürü*”. Two years later he took place at the Album “*Garip*” and later in “*Concerto for Bağlama*”. Erdal Erzincan is a musician who made the most adaptations and compositions for the Şelpe Technique. The followings are some examples; Elmas, Karakoyun, Giriftar, Evvel Bahar, Çeke Çeke, Kaytağı. The Bağlama Method which is published with Arif Sağ in 1996 contains several pieces of him.

### **Erol Parlak**

Parlak, who was born in Ağrı in 1964, had met Ramazan Güngör a few times in his time life. He especially concered with the Teke area and wrote his Doctor Thesis in 1998 about "The culture of playing and playing techniques by hand on the Bağlama in Turkey". He was influenced by the grieves of the women at the funeral of Hasret Gültekin and composed the song "Hasret Ağıtı", which is the first improvisation song in that area that is played by the

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<sup>33</sup> Kemal Dinç, personal Interview, 27.01.2015 Rotterdam

fingers. Furthermore he wrote the first Method for the Şelpe Technique in 2002 and published the second one in 2005. In year 2011 the first Method was renewed and published in Turkey translated into English and German and published in those countries as well. Parlak made a few Adaptations and Compositions, some of them are the followings; Naz Barı, Türk Marşı, Hasret Ağıtı, Efsaneyim, Katibim, Şenlik Raksı.

### **Further important personalities**

There are further influential persons who contributed to the Şelpe Technique. Among these there is Hayri Dev who was nominated as a intangible cultural heritage by the UNESCO in year 2008. Hayri Dev is known for authentic performing at Üçetlli Cura, Sipsi and Kemane. Again from the same area Özey Gönüm add very much to spread the technique of Selp in Turkey. He ornamented the "*Nene-Torun*" (grandmother- grandchild) local stories of Teke with the *boğaz* harmonies. Also Hamit Çine from Burdur made some important works of Şelpe technique and published an *üçetlli* Method. Moreover, Çine has several researches about the Teke area.

More musicians who perform with the Selp Technique in West Anatolia are Ali Riza Zorlu from Ula, Kadir Turan from Dirmil, Faik Ince from Kozağaç and Habip Özyürt also from Kozağaç.

Regarding the Alevi Music, there are a few Clerics and musicians who never played with an plectrum so they exclusively played Bağlama by their fingers.

One of them is called Zeynel Batar Dede from Ovacık, whom I met in 2003-2004 and was so much influenced that I made some researches about his songs. Gani Pekşen is an important person who engages with the Şelpe Technique in a more academic way and has several researchers, too. He is known for successful performances of the pence technique. Sinan Ayyıldız and Adem Tosunoğlu are important personalities who were influenced by the masters Erdal Erzincan and Erol Parlak and made a contribution to the Şelpe Technique. In the interviews I made with Adem Tosunoğlu and Sinan Ayyıldız I realized that the Şelpe technique is a technique which is very widely varied and open for developments.

With several and important new researches Ayyıldız and Tosunoğlu are significant models for the new generation.

### **3. Şelpe Technique**

Right hand functions, which give playing bağlama using hands its main characteristic, are three main techniques in Anatolia; "Stroking, Picking and Tapping". Each technique has a rich and colorful structure in itself and when these techniques are used together, an even

richer structure is formed. It will be useful for us to analyze these three techniques individually.

### **3.1 Pençe (Stroking) Technique**

This is one of the Bağlama playing techniques using hands, in which all the strings are tapped from the top to the bottom and from the bottom to the top in different styles. In the Eastern regions this technique is called "Pençe" or "Şelpe" however it has no special name in the Teke region. In this technique, strings are struck on the parts close to the body and the neck, instead of from far like in Bağlama with hand plectrum. Especially in the Teke region, it can be observed that it is applied on the neck as well. While performing with plectrum, especially during folk songs and some Zeybeks, hand is stroked on the strings and a melody with plectrum is formed by Şelpe.

In the pence technique that has various styles and characteristics within it, there are two main functions. These are stroking all the strings from the bottom to the top or from the top to the bottom. These two functions have different expression and tune also show various characteristics within them.

Pence from the top to the bottom generally have two types. One of these is striking with all fingers except thumb, in the order of little finger, ring finger, middle finger and index finger. And the other one is striking all strings rasgueado. These strikes can be applied in various strengths (piano – forte). Especially in Alevi folk songs, staccato can be observed. Another characteristic that can be observed in Anatolia, in Alevi folk songs and Zeybeks strike (fiske) the face of instrument. We clench the hand by placing right hand thumb between the index and middle fingers, then make a sound by striking the face of instrument (closer to the neck) with two fingers ensuingly and swiftly. Another striking method observed mostly in Eastern Anatolia region is tapping all strings from the top to the bottom using only the index finger of right hand. In the folk songs, cos sound made by short expressions nail and lids swish. Three strikes one after the other that represent Allah, Muhammed and Ali, which have an important place in the Alevi belief, are used ensuingly in different parts of the tune.<sup>34</sup>

Another main function of the Stroking Technique is tapping from the bottom to the top. This function is generally used to complete the taps from the top to the bottom and applied using

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<sup>34</sup> Erol Parlak, Tradition of playing bağlama using hands (şelpe) in Turkey and playing techniques, Ankara, 2000

the index finger. In the Teke region this is also called “tekli”.<sup>35</sup> There is also another striking method from the Teke region, which is usually called “rasgueado”. In this tapping method, sound is made by striking the ring finger, middle finger and index finger ensuing and swiftly from the bottom to the top, and this is the characteristic and main striking of the Teke region.

Another expression unique to the Stroking Technique is making a sound by pressing the strings lightly with fingers and moving from the bottom to the top. Again, another expression that gives richness to this technique is the striking method adapted to Bağlama by Erdal Erzincan. In this swift practice firstly strings are stroked using the little finger and the thumb and then the thumb and the little finger. Index finger can also be used instead of the little finger.

### **3.2 Tel Çekme (Picking) Technique**

This is probably the oldest playing methods using hands. For the bottom and middle string, the string is traditionally picked from bottom to top using the index finger, and for the top string, string is picked using the thumb from the top to the bottom. The typical characteristic of this technique observed in the Eastern region and Teke region is tapping a few times using the right and and making as many sounds as possible using the left hand (legato). By this means, swift tunes are performed easily and a more musical structure is obtained. By getting the tonic from the top string while playing the tune on the bottom string, the tune is supported both rhythmically and melodically.

This technique is commonly used in unmeasured folk songs in the East and in Throat folk songs in the Teke region. It is open for improvement and performed creating a mute tone by fading the sound down by placing the hand on the middle bridge. A variation of the mute technique is playing by placing the hand beyond the bridge. Position of the right hand is very important when picking the string. It is usually performed on the part where body and neck join however picking might also be done on the frets. For example, if a hüseyin-i opening is going to be performed, 1<sup>st</sup> finger of the left hand could be pressed on E fret and in Octave string on the E fret could be picked. By this means, a more clear sound is obtained. Strings could also be picked on the middle parts of the lid. As the strings get harder towards the bridge, it would be better to not play too close to the bridge.

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<sup>35</sup> Erol Parlak, Tradition of playing Bağlama using hands (Şelpe) in Turkey and playing techniques, Ankara, 2000

### **3.3. Parmak Vurma (Tapping) Technique**

This technique which is only observed in the Teke region in Anatolia, does not have a deep history reaching the roots of Bağlama like stroking and picking techniques. Prof. Dr. Erol Parlak, who conducted valuable researches about the Şelpe Technique, states the following in this work titled “The Tradition of Bağlama Playing Using Hands (Şelpe) in Turkey and Playing Techniques”:

“... This technique developed based on the easy resonance of the metallic string, which can never be obtained using the catgut, has a history that begins when the metallic strings are used on Bağlama... “Tapping” technique is not observed in Asia and this could be another proof that metallic string was used first in Anatolia.”

In the Teke region, it is a technique to make sound by tapping and picking open strings in Bağlama using generally the index finger and sometimes the middle finger on the fifth tone of Tonic. The most prominent characteristic of this technique compared to the playing with plectrum is dividing the tune between the right and the left hands. Tune is played by tapping and pulling using the right hand fingers and getting support from the left hand. In the Teke region, this is usually performed in the free (*Gurbet*) and rhythmic (*Zortlatma*) folk songs. Today, we see that almost every song can be played using this technique. Especially the songs that require high agility can be played quite easily. This technique is applied by tapping the fret using the inside of right hand fingers and then pulling upwards. During tapping, Thumb is placed on the one fret higher than the fret being tapped and is supported. This technique is traditionally applied using one finger however today; it is performed tapping two fingers. Many new techniques were created as a result of tapping two fingers. Some of these examples are given below.

Tapping one finger simultaneously on the same fret and pulling



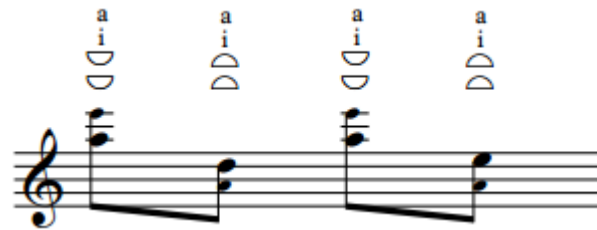
Tapping two fingers simultaneously on the same fret and pulling



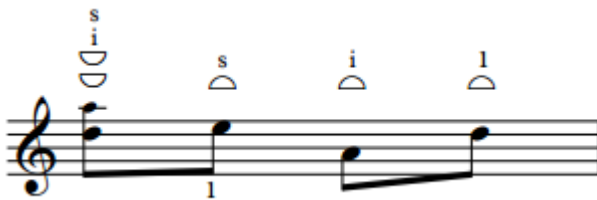
Tapping two fingers simultaneously on the same frets, pulling one finger and keeping the other



Tapping two fingers simultaneously on different frets and pulling



Tapping two fingers simultaneously on different frets, pulling one finger and keeping the other



And another tapping technique is tapping and keeping one finger and then the other finger immediately after.



Tapping right and left hand simultaneously and pulling left and then right hand



Flageolet is another tapping technique. This technique is divided into two; natural flageolet and artificial flageolet and is kind of a flicker of overtones. Natural flageolet does not resonate on every part of the string in instruments however artificial flageolet can be resonated anywhere. Natural flageolet is resonated by not fully placing the finger on the string but touching the fret gently on a point of an empty string. Naturally resonating frets in Bağlama are bottom string G, La and Re frets (middle and top strings on the same fret also resonate naturally). Artificial flageolet is obtained by placing the index finger of the left hand on the fret and gently touching the same fret's octave.

### **3.4 Using Stroking, Picking and Tapping Techniques Together**

In a meter, these three techniques can be applied together. Thanks to this technique which is usually applied in question and answer (combinations such as stroking-tapping, stroking-picking, tapping-picking etc.), a more musical and rich structure is created. Generally in a meter two techniques and sometimes three techniques can be used consecutively.

By using the techniques together, the rich structure of this technique can be observed. These techniques look difficult however in practice they are quite easy and traditionally they are not used together. It is a technique that improved in time.

### **3.5 New Techniques in the Şelpe Technique**

In the tapping technique, generally the right hand is placed on the higher frets and the left hand is used on the lower frets and as a result of hands changing places, a different tune is created. In my interview with Erdal Erzincan, he stated that he is working on a composition these days to improve this technique and highlighted that during the whole song, the right hand is in the lower frets and the left hand is on the higher frets. We can say that this is a first for this technique. This technique has been used in small parts of songs by various artists such as Erdal Erzincan is also a feast for the eyes and is being used throughout the song for the first time. In my interview with Sinan Ayyıldız, he told me that there are studies being conducted to transferring different instruments to the Şelpe technique. He added that he adapted accordion technique in the tune titled “Kolhoz Bari”.

### **3.6 Developments regarding the Şelpe Technique**

As it can be seen above, there are many options within the three main techniques of the Şelpe Technique. Each technique is open for improvement. Music consists of three main elements: Tune, Rhythm and Harmony, and in each technique, one of these elements becomes prominent. In the Stroking technique, Rhythm, in Picking technique, Tune and in Tapping technique, harmony-tune become more prominent. When all of these techniques are played simultaneously in the studios and orchestras, an extraordinarily rich sound and a natural polyphony is created. By using these techniques simultaneously, a serious support is to meet the need for polyphony in folk music. By recognizing and using these techniques, Bağlama Groups and orchestras were found. One of the most important Bağlama Orchestra is founded by Erdal Erzincan and all playing techniques, both using hands and plectrum, are used. The album titled “Erdal Erzincan Bağlama Orchestra” was released in 2013. Erol Parlak Bağlama Quintet had great accomplishments by playing techniques using hands or plectrums are used together, and in 2004 they released an album titled “Eşik”.

As the şelpe technique got more popular, duos, trios, quartets and quintets were formed where playing techniques using hands or plectrum are used together. I, myself, have been using the şelpe technique as well as playing with nails and lute in Kemal Dinç Trio since 2014. These days, my teacher Kemal Dinç and I have a duo in which we provide a rich sound for our audience by using nails and Şelpe Technique.

It can be understood from the interviews conducted with masters that the şelpe technique is not fully developed yet. I also agree this opinion based on my experiences. As performing with plectrum is more common and more researched into, it has mostly completed its development phase. Another reason for this is that almost all Bağlama players using the Şelpe Technique also play using plectrum but not every player using plectrum use Şelpe Technique and they are prejudiced against using this technique. However, these two main

techniques of Bağlama have positive contributions for each other. Bağlama players who master these two techniques such as Erdal Erzincan and Erol Parlak are good examples regarding this matter. They have both adapted many techniques from using plectrum to Selpe and from Selpe to using plectrum.

### **3.7 Transcription Signs used for Selpe Technique and Published Methods**

There are some differences between playing with a plectrum and using the Selpe Technique regarding reading notes and transcription signs. Reading notes written for the Selpe Technique is a lot more difficult than reading the notes written for playing with a plectrum. The reason is that the tune is divided between two octaves; while the right hand taps on more octaves, the left hand performs tapping and pulling in the 2<sup>nd</sup> position which are rather complementary. And this causes big gaps between notes and reading the notes get more difficult. As the folk music is mostly dependent on the oral tradition, there used to be no notes or transcription signs for this technique until quite recently. Many years later, important studies were published by benefiting from the West that is quite developed in these subjects.

*Üçtelli* Method published by Hamit Çine in İzmir is the first Method prepared on playing using hands technique. This method published in 1981 in İzmir. There are short explanations, exercises and songs that are specific to the Teke region. Various accords (Bağlama, Zeybek, Boğma, Bozuk) used in the Teke region are shown and supported with songs. Even though the notes are not written in detail, it is still a good work considering the year that it was published. Transcription signs used are created personally and were not used by anyone else again. We can say that the language and notes used in the method do not totally meet the need.

The first comprehensive transcription signs published for this technique are included in “Tradition of Playing Bağlama Using Hands (Selpe) in Turkey and Playing Techniques” published by Erol Parlak in 2000. The language used in this work covering the signs used in the West, signs used for playing with a plectrum and some new signs were criticized to be too complex. Reading this technique which was already difficult, got even more difficult with new and complex signs for the reasons mentioned above. Also, this technique was new for many people, so initially there were many difficulties. Some of the signs used in the West were adapted successfully however some of them were applied with different meanings, for example the sign V is used for tapping using left hand and right hand. However in the West, this sign means tapping from the bottom for guitar and pushing bow for string instruments. This is one of the points I criticize, another one is that there are too many signs. This was also included in the methods published by Erol Parlak in 2002 and 2005. Both Methods include valuable arrangements prepared by Erdal Erzincan, Arif Sağ and their students as well as Erol Parlak's own arrangements.

Also, there is another transcription system in the Bağlama method published by Arif Sağ and Erdal Erzincan in 2009. This language was adopted as the technique was more recognized and improved, different colors were used for the right hand and the left hand, transcription signs written individually for each note and there were not many signs. We can also say that it is easier to read and decipher considering the previous language. Sign V was used only for tapping using the left hand and for the right hand, a different sign derived from V is used. It should also be mentioned that arrangements and adaptations in this Method which has a distinguished Şelpe repertoire.

Another transcription system is the language developed and implemented by me. I can say that it is adopted and used easily by the students both in private lessons and the workshops that I organize. There are both similar and different signs compared to the above mentioned

Transcription systems. While developing this language, I also put into account that it should also be easy for Western instrument players to decipher it. My teacher Kemal Dinç and Sinan Ayyıldız had great contributions for developing this system. In my Method titled “Lehrbuch für Bağlama (Şelpe-Technik)” that I plan to publish this summer, this language will be used. This Method consists of exercises, etudes for main makam scales and a distinguished repertoire prepared for students at beginner level.

All languages I have mentioned above have both advantages and disadvantages. When a student understands the logic of one, he can easily understand others because there are some similarities between them. A student who masters these 4 different languages mentioned above will have a vast knowledge of songs and can adopt the one that is most suitable for him among different signs or help to improve. It would be wrong to totally reject any of these languages. Just like that şelpe technique did not complete its development phase, transcription signs also need time to be improved and adopted.

### **3.8 The list of the repertoires in the methods for the Şelpe technique**

Unfortunately there are not enough published Methods and Repertoires for the Şelpe technique. Methods that are released for this technique are following:

- Çine, Hamit (Üç telli Method, Izmir 1982)
- Parlak, Erol (Türkiye’de El ile (Şelpe) Bağlama çalma geleneği ve çalış teknikleri, Ankara 2000)
- Parlak, Erol (Şelpe Method 1, Istanbul 2002)
- Parlak, Erol (Şelpe Metod 2, Istanbul 2005)
- Sağ, Arif/Erzincan, Erdal (Bağlama Method, Istanbul 2009)

The list of the method repertoire is given further down. There are different signs of transcription used.

Sarı Zeybek	Habudiyar	Nihavent Longa
Kozağac Zeybeği	Bağlama Üvertürü	Kürdilihicazkar Longa
İki Parmak Zeybeği	Göç Yolları	Fur Elise
Kadioğlu Zeybeği	Efsaneyim	Alla Turca
Kıvrak Zeybek	Kaytağı	Ellik
Gireniz Zeybeği	Naz Barı	Dirmilcikten Gider Yaylanın Yolu
Dukguk Boğazi	Azeri Oyun Havası	Şu Dağların Yüksekine Erseler
Gurbet Gezintisi	Duaz-ı Imam	Elmas
Nene-Torun Boğaz Havası	Giriftar	Sinsin

The pieces on the list that are given above are mostly transferred from music works actually played by plectrum. Some of them are ones which played band earlier and was transferred into plectrum technique later and a few are composed for the Şelpe Technique. We know that there are more compositions for the Şelpe technique that are not yet published. Pesrev, Gelin ağlatma (okşama), Zeybek etc. are traditionally played by hand and with different harmonies, nowadays they almost always played in Bağlama harmony. Even the pieces above are composed for the bağlama harmony. In my opinion there need to be different adaptations for different harmonies, experiments of compositions. The pieces on the repertoire list are composed years ago but because the Şelpe technique has developed in the last years these pieces must be arranged again. For example I arranged pieces like Nihavend Longa, Azeri oyun havası, Menberi, Topal again.

#### **4. How to develop the process of adaptation from a conventional plectrum played piece into Şelpe Technique**

As there is no certain method to adapt the notes written for playing with plectrum into the Şelpe Technique, many Şelpe performers do not dare to get out of the readily adapted notes and try new adaptations. For this reason, always the same adaptations are performed. Mastering the technique and the notes, musical knowledge, aesthetics, patience and a lot of time are needed to create a good adaptation.

Adaptations for this technique in which picking, stroking and tapping techniques are used together, which can also be called the modern şelpe technique, started in early 1990s. Especially Erdal Erzincan and Erol Parlak have contributed a lot to this technique regarding the creation of a certain Şelpe repertoire and its becoming popular. In the interviews I conducted with both of them, I had the chance to learn about the development phase of this technique and received very important tips about what to pay attention to when adapting. Another important point was the question: what to call conversion from performing with plectrum into the Şelpe Technique? We discussed the terms such as Adaptation, Arrangement, Variation and Composition, and had following results:

Adaptation: Application of the techniques of an instrument and a tune to the performing technique using hands.

Examples: Karakoyun (Adaptation: Erdal Erzincan), Turkish Anthem (Adaptation: Erol Parlak), Fur Elise (Adaptation: Sinan Ayyıldız), Haydar Haydar (Adaptation: Adem Tosunoğlu)

Arrangement: Applying a work with more free variations and small compositions.

Examples: Efsaneyim (Arrangement: Erol Parlak), Sarı Zeybek (Arrangement: Erdal Erzincan), Ay Laçın (Arrangement: Sinan Ayyıldız), Kalenin Bedenleri (Arrangement: Adem Tosunoğlu)

Sinan Ayyıldız and Adem Tosunoğlu, who was raised from the Erdal Erzincan and Erol Parlak ecole and who have important studies on the Şelpe Technique, were consulted about the terms. They both supported this, providing examples from their own works.

After giving general information about the subject, these opinions will be supported with examples and more detail will be provided. We will call conversion from performing with plectrum into the Şelpe Technique, “Adaptation”.

Before adapting, it is necessary to learn about the song, its nuances and the characteristics of the region that it is originated.

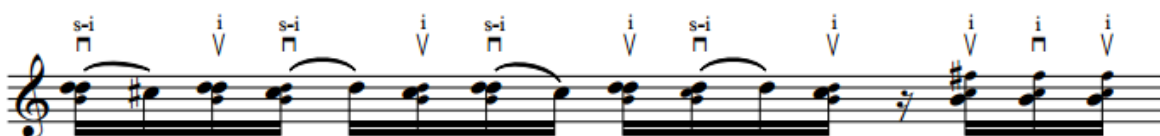
For example, if the song is played with drum and clarion, it is important that both drum's rhythm and clarion's tune are heard. For example, if an Alevi folk song is to be adapted, it is very important to reflect the rhythm and the soul by using strokes and sometimes flicks.

It is also important to learn about the practice and mode, and to consider their positive and negative characteristics. For example, when arranging a song in Hicaz scale, g sharp, which is the fifth (parallel fret) of c sharp fret are not pressed (on both octaves) because it is not included in the scale and this brings some technical disadvantages with it. However in the Cargah scale, pressing Do in octave and fifth G, then keeping the middle finger and pulling the index finger; this would provide fluency.

Another example is about the Practice; if it has a 10/8 (3, 3, 2, 2) practice, the tune to be adapted could be a question and answer between 3 beat and 2 beat.



Or if it has a 4/4 practice, the song could be changed playing the highlights



The next stage is to decide which technique to use and where to use it during adaptation. The audience may find it monotonous when you perform the whole song using stroking technique, picking technique or tapping technique. It is important to use these techniques together and on place. For this, one needs to have vast experience and analyze available adaptations well. I will give more examples on this.

Picking technique can be used in improvisation and after some tension, stroking or tapping technique can be used. Another option would be using legato to lower the tension towards the end of the arrangement. Tapping technique can be used in songs that require high agility and stroking technique can be used in another part of the song. The richness found in each technique makes the process both easier and more difficult.

As I have mentioned above, this situation might be different for folk songs and the song can be played using the stroking technique even on 16th and 32nd notes. Above I have tried to

explain what should be done while adapting a tune that is not conventionally played using hands.

As I have mentioned previously, fluency is quite important while adapting, especially the tune while using the tapping technique. In order to ensure this, small notes that are not in the original note can be added. Small notes to be added among the slow parts could be Tonic, fifth or a note that can connect the note before or after. Here, musician's creativity is really important. The newly added note may form a new small tune or a scale. For example



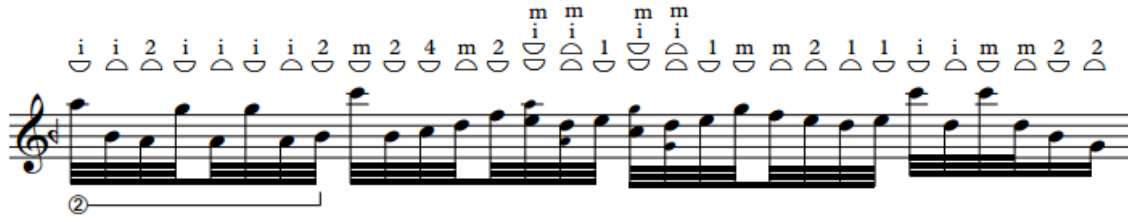
it would be a great advantage for the person doing the adaptation to have a composition experience. Another thing that would make the adaptation successful is to apply variation in turns. By making small changes in the melody, rhythm, dynamic and technique, a more musical structure can be obtained. Certain syncopation can be formed by changing the strong and weak times. Especially if the stroking technique is being used, the song can be performed technically more easily (see e.g. Coş havası)

Adaptation should technically not be too difficult or too easy. If it is too difficult, it will make the audience tired in time and take their energy away. If it is too easy, it might be boring. It is very important to find this balance. The song should have a setup by the arranger and therefore a tension.

For example, tension could be created by starting to play the song slowly and after reaching the peak technically, melodically or dynamically, flatness could be created by using long notes again. As mentioned above, it would be very useful for the adapting person to take composition classes.

It is also very important for the adaptation to be suitable for live performance. For this reason, position choice and position transitions are very important. Using the empty strings in position transitions make it easier for the performer to do the transitions.

A more musical structure can be obtained by tapping the second octave and then pulling in the part played using the tapping technique. It is also important to use the empty strings as much as possible. For example, if G and then La notes are to be played using the tapping technique, it is more logical to tap the top string G fret instead of the middle string and then pulling it to La and use it on the empty string. In the fast passages, it is usually easier to stay in the same string group (e.g. Topal 32th notes part).



Arpeggio technique (making the chords heard ensuingly) in some passages when arranging the tune can be applied by tapping. In some points it would be more harmonious and the transitions would be easier. Arpeggio can be made by using the picking technique like it is done playing the guitar. For this, it is necessary to have Harmony knowledge. The tune should be analyzed and the chords should be identified.

Let's try to understand the arpeggio technique and other points using the song titled Azeri Oyun Havası:

16th notes are abundant in the tune and this gives us an advantage when adapting the song because 16th notes provide fluency for the song. There are a few slow parts in this song and we will ensure fluency by adding 16th notes to these points. When entering the song, we will make the 1/8 note longer and turn it into 1/4 note and the duration of the notes coming after will be shorter. We will do an enthusiastic entrance by stroking and then use the tapping technique. We will make it more fluent by using the arpeggio technique to 3 1/8 notes la, si, do. We will add chord on la and turn 3 1/8 note to 6 16th note. La-Do-Mi-La-Do-Mi. The si note in the original note is missing in this arpeggio, we will add la instead. So, we will play La-Do-Mi-Si-Do-Mi. After making the root sounds of the La chord heard, we will play the B note in the original note and then Do-Mi and pull the 1<sup>st</sup> finger that is on the Mi fret, thus ensure a fluent and connected transition to the next meter. In order to make the adaptation richer, triolet could be added to some parts. This method used frequently in the arrangements of Erdal Erzincan is used especially in the tapping technique. Therefore the song is more dynamic and fluent.

In short, I will list the important points for problems faced when arranging a song and problems faced after the song is arranged and their solutions.

#### **4.1 Problems faced when arranging a song**

- Slow parts in a fluent song (long notes)
- Technique to be chosen (stroking, picking, tapping)
- Choosing a position among many options
- Arrangement's becoming monotonous

#### **4.2 Problems faced after arranging the tune**

- Live performance of the arranged song
- If one part of the song is played wrong or forgotten, long passages cannot be played because big parts of the songs are connected to each other (this is mostly seen in the tapping technique).
- The rhythmic problem due to the change of weak-strong moments

#### **4.3 Solutions to the problems faced when arranging a song**

- Slow parts (Long notes): If the song is being played using the tapping technique, it can be made more fluent by 16th or 32nd notes as I've mentioned above. If it is played by picking technique, get the tonic from the above string. If the stroking technique is being used, it is the most important way to stroke with the right hand and pick the strings with the left hand.
- Choosing the technique for the right hand: For this, the song must be arranged for 3 main techniques, the suitable ones must be chosen and then they should be combined. After some experience, the arranger could easily decide which technique to use in which part looking at the notes.
- When choosing the position, the choice of empty strings and it's being suitable for live playing is very important.
- In order to make the song richer, Variation, Intro, newly added small tunes, triolet, using techniques together and using the richness within the techniques (flageolet, mute, fiske etc.), modulation and changing the mode in a part could be used.

#### **4.4 Solutions to the problems faced after arranging the tune**

- It is important to work on all parts until fluent before playing the arranged song live.
- It is important to concentrate while playing the song using this technique. Even when a single note is not played correctly (especially when tapping), there could be serious problems. For this reason, it should be possible to play all parts of the song using other techniques. For example the performer should be able to use picking or stroking if there was a mistake during tapping.
- For the şelpe technique, exercise is a must and when practicing a metronome must be used because weak-strong always change places in this technique unlike other techniques.

There are many ways and options when arranging a song and in my interview with Erdal Erzincan, he said "There are thousands of options however only one of them is the best

one.” In order to find the right one, you should work in a well-disciplined manner. To give a personal example, I've been working on some arrangements for years.

## **5. Analysis of the pieces used in the attachment**

To show and to explain the things I wrote about the Şelpe technique I attached notes pieces that are arranged by me. Next to the arranged pieces there will also be shown the original notes of the piece. In this Wise it will be easier to see the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic differences. In addition to three arranged pieces I added my own composition *Seyyah* that originated in 2010/2011.

Short notes about the pieces and arrangements:

### **5.1 Menberi**

This piece belongs to Kırşehir area and has a very high level regarding playing by plectrum. It is an advantage that the piece is 4/4 rhythm but because it is in the *hicaz makam* it can be very difficult (for example it is not possible to play fifth of do sharp) When analysis this piece we can divide it into three pieces. In the first part there is no balance between the note values, after long notes follow short notes. In the first part of the arrangement I changed the place of the accents which I played with Pence and give the answers with picking (or pence- tapping). In the second part there are constant sixteenth notes. This can be taken by tapping or pulling the string. In the beginning I played by tapping and put into the original notes short thirty-two (32) rhythm notes to enrich the piece. I took the variations of the second part and showed different positions to save the piece from monotonous. I connect the end of the second part with the third part by tapping. The third part is divided into two parts. A part shows long notes whereas the B part shows the variations of the second part with short notes. To break the speed of the piece and to let the piece more audible I used more pulling of the strings. Between the long notes we take support from the thumb and obtain more rhythm. In the B part of the third section this time we take the sixteenth notes with pulling the strings by doing legato. Making a good analysis of the piece and to find about how much pieces it exist, to decide what really stands out in each part needs experience and technique knowledge to make a good arrangement.

### **5.2 Ardiç Arasında Biten Naneler**

This musical work from the Teke region Denizli Acipayam affords us many advantages. For example the fact that in this area there is the technique of playing by hand, also the fact that the compositions written for this area are to find notational and also visual. The compositions for traditional dance forms (Teke Zortlamasi, Dimidan, Gakgili, Datdiri) are in general 9/16 rhythm and insist of two parts (instrumental part with saz and the singing part).

The first part persists of the instrumental part and has an interval between la and mi. However the second part is going in the high- pitched- sounds. It starts at F sharp – Sol or Si-Do and goes down to the tonic note. After showing the variations of the first part by pitching, I arranged answers by doing Pence and sometimes pitching. When overflowing to the first part again this time I enriched the piece by pence and the technique of pulling the strings.

### **5.3 Nihavend Longa**

Composed in the Nihavend Makam and 2/4 Rhytm which is played very fast. This piece takes place in the Repertoire of the Turkish Classic Music. The reason why I chose this musical work is both to show the Şelpe technique on a piece from the classic Music and to present a different tonic (Sol) with Şelpe technique. This work was arranged in La tonic before therefore in the Buselik Makam although the piece presents many advantages in its own tonic (Sol). Sol tonic is very properly for a bağlama because the empty strings come to important places of the scale (middle string tone, lower string strong). Nihavend and Nikriz Makams give very nice outcomes because the tonic of the Makam is the empty middle string of the bağlama. Because there is fast playing in this piece pitching might be the best adaptable technique. For that reason here is pitching used in the most parts of the piece which insists of three parts. In the first section pitching with the right hand is used together slapping with the left hand (mi-re) and so outcomes a nicer sound. Continuing with pitching in the second part, the third part run by the method of question and answer (Pence and pitching). We can say that this is a high level method of playing Şelpe Technique.

### **5.4 Seyyah**

Seyyah is composed of 12/8 rhytm and proceeds in different makam scales (Çargah, Buselik) and takes different alterations. Seyyah is the first piece that I have composed for the Şelpe technique by myself. In this I used rare used picking techniques (for example slapping I and s fingers at the same time) also rarely used string pulling and pence techniques. These three techniques which represent Şelpe Technique are shown in this piece sufficiently. This musical work is a high leveled work for the Şelpe Technique, too.

When the pieces I list above are analyzed well and compared with the original sheet music we can see that it takes much effort to arrange and to play in the Şelpe technique in contrast to playing by plectrum. Transferring a piece from the plectrum technique to the Şelpe technique is more difficult than transferring a piece which is played with short neck to bozuk harmony (for player who has the knowledge for both).The reason for this is that the right hand uses the plectrum at the short neck and bozuk harmony saz. Whereas in the

Şelpe technique the right hand can use these three techniques and furthermore other techniques.

The different makam techniques, rhythmical pattern and adaptation techniques above are chosen consciously. Each of all the pieces is a result of long term working (months and sometimes years), researching, and analysis of other pieces and experiences of the last years.

## **6. Conclusion**

Unfortunately there are fewer researches about the technique of playing by hand which origin goes far, especially at my main topic „Transferring traditional pieces into the Şelpe technique”. This aspect leads me to masters whose knowledge is very rich regarding Şelpe technique and who really make good adaptations. When researching and collecting knowledge I had the chance to meet and to exchange experiences with all the masters in Istanbul who gave an effort to this technique. I didn't had the chance to travel to the Teke area where playing by hand is established but I met people who went to this territory and made researches and looked at studied their thesis. One further territory of the Şelpe technique is East- Anatolia, where I made recordings in year 2012-2013 in Tunceli. This and other available recordings in other regions were listened and studied by me.

At the end of my main topic *“How to develop the process of adaptation from a convential plectrum played piece into Şelpe technique”* I can state the following headings:

- Paying attention that the main piece is to be heard
- To render the regional specifics audible
- To add little sounds into the long tones to liquidize the piece
- Using of different Harmonies (Zurna, Bozuk etc.) and Tonic (Sol, Re, etc.) so that the important tones of the scale comes to the empty strings of the Bağlama
- Making variations to enrich the piece
- Using different techniques into each other
- Exercising Trying- delude (Deneme-Yanılma yöntemi) method in some parts
- During adaptation trying to create a certain tension (creating a climax)
- To appertain the adapted piece to play in live- performance
- Adapting the whole piece for the three main techniques detached and to unite them afterwards

In this thesis there is detailed knowledge about Şelpe technique that I take from my personal experiences and from different masters. To exercise this in practice there are little examples and at the end of the thesis there are analyzed pieces given. There are answers given about how to solve Problems that might occur at some places of the piece. That gives courage and motivation to the reader. Different bağlamas, chords and playing techniques that are used for the technique of playing by hand are listed but also personal found chords and techniques are represented.

I come to the opinion that this technique can nowadays be named as “Modern Şelpe technique” by uniting the techniques of east and west Anatolia, adding of personal techniques and technical transferring’s from other instruments, which enriches the technique.

Developed results regarding the origin of Bağlama and Şelpe, different techniques, transcriptions signs etc.:

- There are researches about the origin of Bağlama and Şelpe but because there are unfortunately not enough literature we can’t go more than to regive the thesis that are argued
- Difficult played pieces by plectrum are more easier to play in the Şelpe technique
- The usage of Zurna, Bozuk, Misket Teke area and Ruzba in Teke Area except of Bağlama harmony
- In comparison to the plectrum technique , the right hand plays also the piece
- Picking (String pulling) and Pence are the origin technique, tapping developed at the same time by changing to metal strings
- Each group of the string group had one string earlier but afterwards the strings were breed and wood strings were added to create more volume.
- Traditionally there are no wood strings used for Bağlama
- The Şelpe technique consists of three main techniques: Pençe,picking and tapping
- Tapping is only seen in the Teke region
- The bağlama which are regarded as sacred in the Alevi- Bektaşî Tradition is used by the Alevi Clerics by the Pence technique
- Every piece can be played by the Şelpe Technique (plectrum based pieces, Turkish and western music) Because the melody is divided and played by both hands is the playing of fast and technical easier

- Şelpe Technique did not accomplish its development
- The Şelpe Technique contributed to the requirements of music to polyphonic tones

As it is the same in the Plectrum Technique, it is difficult to put the right hand into certain patterns in the Şelpe Technique, too. This can be another topic for research. There could be given examples of picking, Pence and tapping. One further topic that might be researched is going to the areas where the technique of playing by hand is grounded in the traditional but almost all pieces are played with plectrum in different harmonies. There could be made arrangements for each of the harmonies and lead the attention of the young generation performer to these chords.

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## 8. Appendix

### Transcriptionsigns for Şelpe-Technique

#### LEFT HAND

1 = Index finger  
2 = Middel finger  
3 = Ring finger  
4 = Little Finger  
5 = Thumb

#### RIGHT HAND

p = Thumb  
i = Index finger  
m = Middel finger  
a = Ring finger  
s = Little Finger

#### STRINGS

① = 1. Stringgroupe  
② = 2. Stringgroupe  
③ = 3. Stringgroupe  
0 = Empty String

#### Tapping Technique

∩ = Hammering with the left and right hand finger on the Neck

∪ = Pulling with the left and right hand finger on the Neck



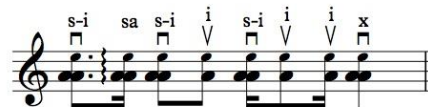
#### Pençe Technique

▣ = Strike down with the right Hand

∇ = Strike up with the right hand

⋈ = Rasgueado

⌘ = Strike down and hammering with the finger (m-i) on the cover



#### Picking Technique

p = Picking with Thumb

i = Picking with Index Finger

m = Picking with Middel finger

a = Picking with Ring finger

s = Picking with Little Finger



T R T MÜZİK DAİRESİ YAYINLARI  
T H M REPERTUAR SIRA No: 1318  
İNCELEME TARİHİ : 24\_5\_1977

YÖRESİ  
DENİZLİ - Acıpayam

KİMDEN ALINDIĞI  
MANSUR KAYMAK

SÜRESİ :

## ARDIÇ ARASINDA BİTEN NANELER

DERLEYEN  
İSMET AKYOL

DERLEME TARİHİ  
— 1976 —

NOTAYA ALAN  
İSMET AKYOL

AR HI DI SA ÇA REL RA LE SIN RI DA NIN Bİ GU TE LÜ N

NA BİT NE MEZ LE Mİ R DO BU ĞU GÜ RÜR ZEL SA LİK

KIZ KI DO ZİM ĞUR SA SUN NA A YET NA MEZ LAR Mİ SAZ

ÇO ZAS LİM ÇÖZ ÇÖZ GÖĞ SÜN DÜĞ



## Ardıç Arasında Biten Naneler

Region : Denizli-Acıpayam

♩ = 105

The musical score is written in 9/16 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of six staves of music. The melody is primarily composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Various ornaments (accents, grace notes, and trills) are indicated above the notes. Fingerings are specified with numbers 1-5 below the notes. The score is divided into measures by bar lines, with some measures containing repeat signs. The overall tempo is marked as 105 beats per minute.

Staff 1: m i m a a 4 m i i 5 2 m m m i i 4

Staff 2: m i m m i i m i i m i m 4

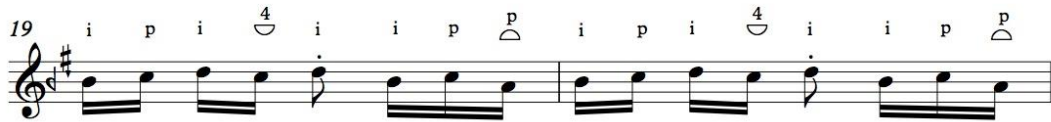
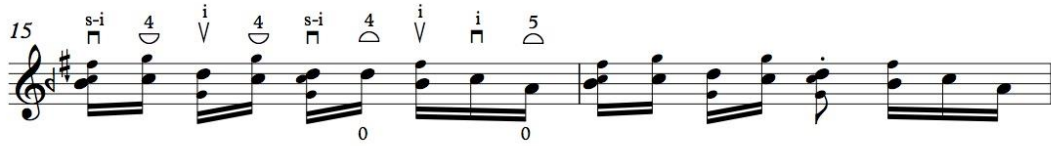
Staff 3: 2 m m m i i 1 1 i i

Staff 4: m i m i i

Staff 5: x i i x i i i s-i i i 2 s-i i i i

Staff 6: s-i 1 i i s-i 1 i i i s-i i i s-i i

## Ardıç Arasında Biten Naneler (2)



## NİHAVEND LONGA

NİM SOFYAN

MÜZİK: KEVSER HANIM

$\text{♩} = 112$

SON

1. 2. 3. 4.

# Nihavend Longa

Composition : Kevser Hanım  
Adaptation : Kenan Tülek

♩ = 112

i i 2 m m 1 3 m m i i i i i i

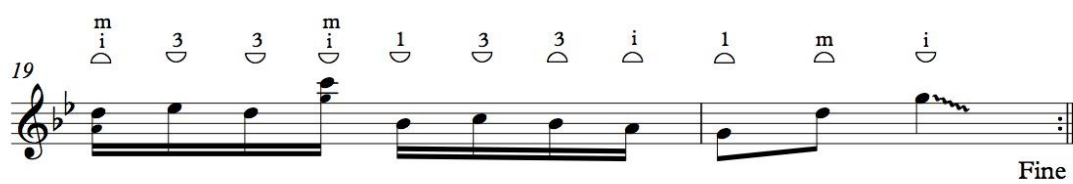
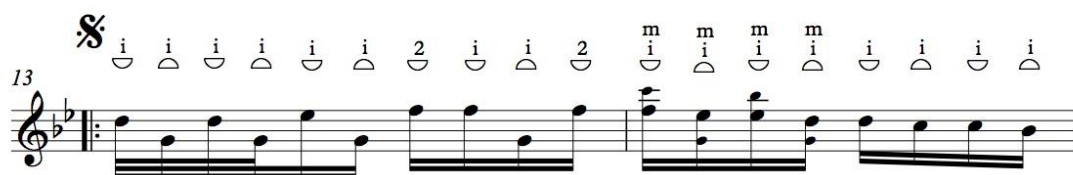
3 i 1 2 m m 1 3 m m i i i i i i 2

5 2 m 1 3 m 1 i i 1 4 i i 3 m m m i

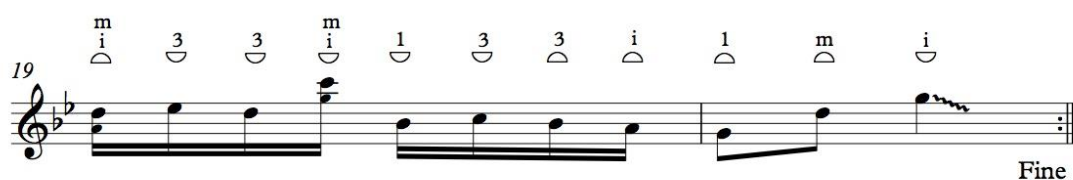
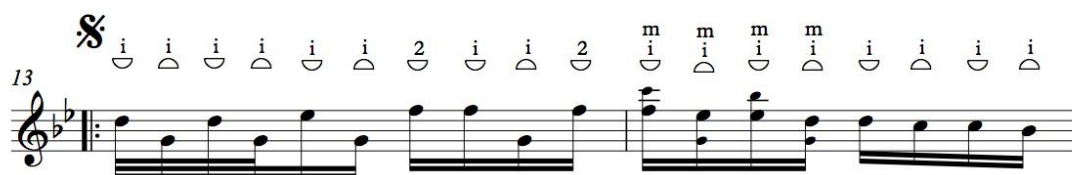
7 m i 3 m i m i 2 i i 4 i i 3 i i 3 i i

9 1 i i 1 i i 1 2 i i 2 1 3 m m m i

## Nihavend Longa (2)



## Nihavend Longa (2)



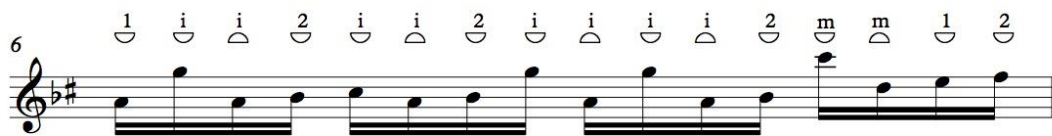
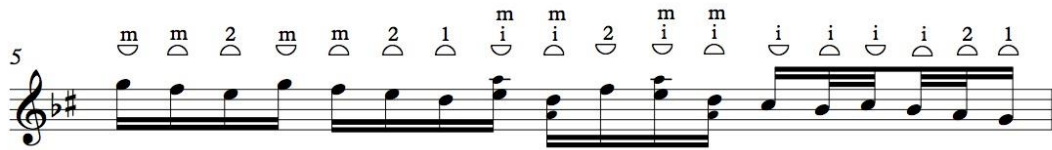
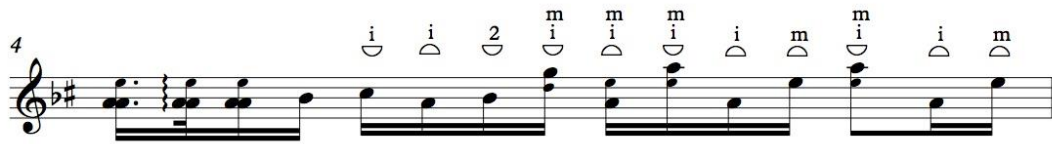
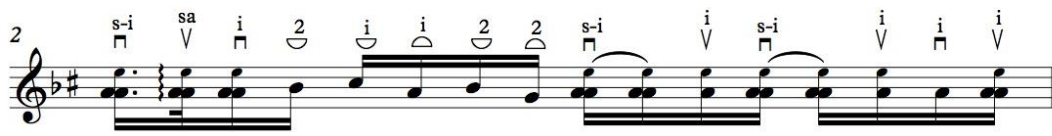
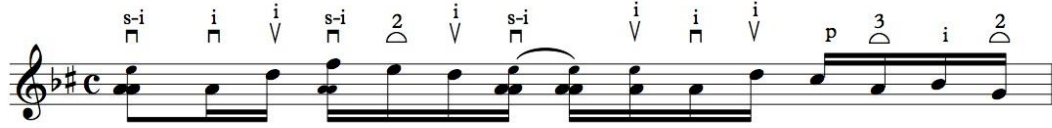
## Menberi

Source : Hisar'lı Ahmet  
Notation : Kenan Tölek

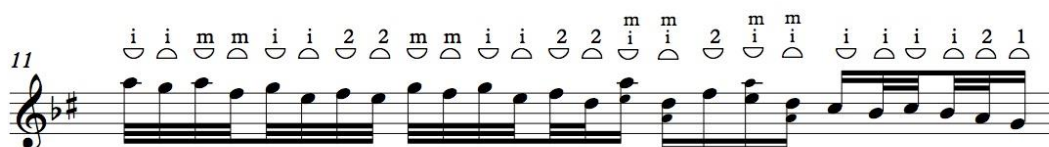
2.poz.

# Menberi

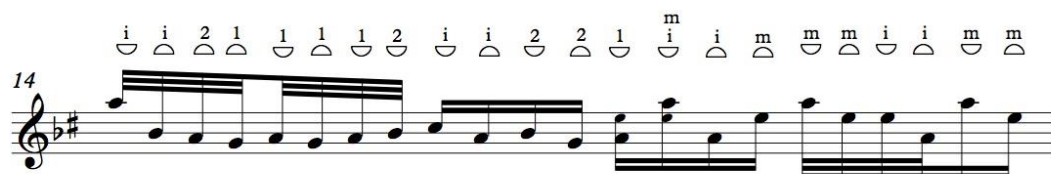
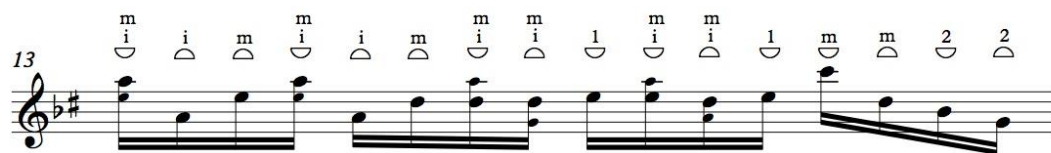
Source : Hisarlı Ahmet  
Adaptation : Kenan Tülek



# Menberi



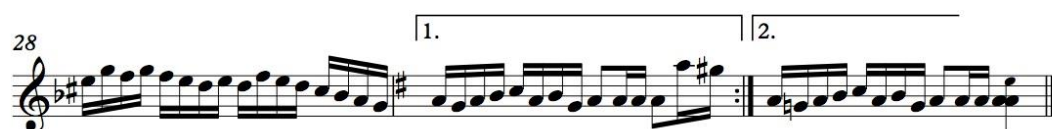
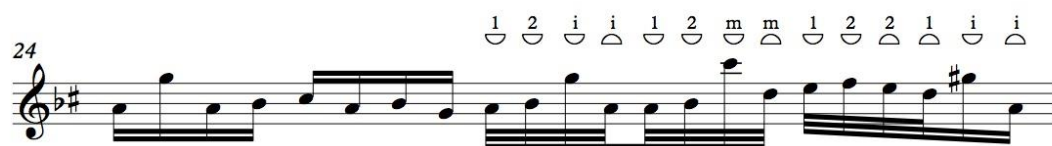
# Menberi



## Menberi



# Menberi



## Seyyah (1)

Composition : Kenan Tülek

12/8

3

5

7

9

11

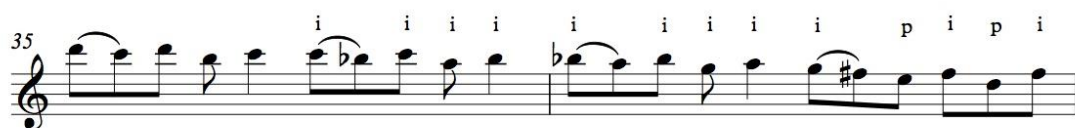
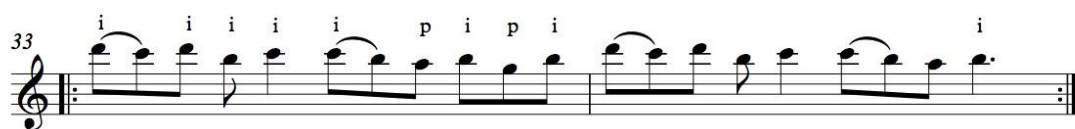
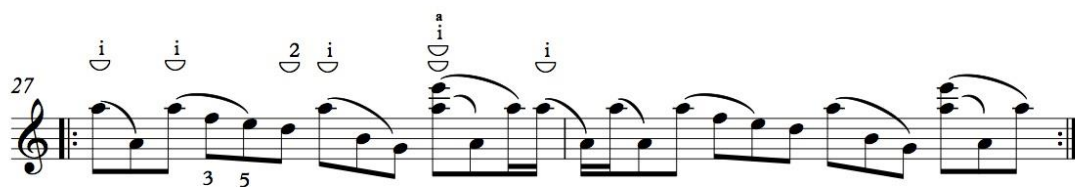
13

*gliss.*

## Seyyah(2)



## Seyyah(3)



## Seyyah(4)

