

A SEMIOTIC APPROACH TO THE TRANSYLVANIAN RUG ON THE BASIS OF THOMAS DE KEYSER'S PAINTING

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Abstract

This study discusses the painting of the famous artist Thomas de Keyser in the 17th century in the Netherlands, "The portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk, and the "rug" in this painting, which became fashionable in this era, from a semiotic perspective.

The purpose of the study is to examine the fashionable rug in the painting in terms of the period and the geography that it was produced in addition to a semiotic perspective.

The first part of the study includes the Transylvanian rugs, in the second and the third part, Thomas de Keyser's painting which is presented and the Transylvanian rug of West Anatolian origin is given with a semiotic perspective.

The visual sign, the rug as a decorative element in Thomas De Keyser's painting, as a fashion of the daily life of the Golden Age in terms of the signifier and the signified, as a result of evolving from the natural interior space to the subjective work of the painting, taking the layered discourses which he has created with his messages and codes to the reader from the canvas.

Keywords: Semiotics Thomas De Keyser, Golden Age, Western Anatolia, Transylvanian rugs

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1. Introduction

In the process of human development, with many revolutions and innumerable inventions, semiotics emerged in the beginning of the second half of the 20th century. With a broader and simpler definition, semiotics develops a model that will enable people to understand the world they live in. Anyone who is trying to understand the environment is already at some point a "sign hunter". With more effort, this understanding process can be transformed into a systematic method. Semiotics provides this method (Rifat, 2009, 23).

A person living in a world of signs and objects with specific qualities and different functions is also a sign and participates in the signs system. The main theme of the semiotics is the question of the meaning of life and human. Both visual and verbal communication basically led to semiotics in search for the system of signs in the context of science and meaning.

Signs that refer to something other than themselves are associated with each other as a whole of formal, literary, linguistic and operational structures and are organized with certain codes and coded in a systematic way. Fiske suggests that these signs and codes are communicated to others with notifications, and that this communication takes place in the framework of a network of social relations.

This study discusses the pictorial image of Western Anatolia "Transylvanian" rug in the painting called "Constantine Huygens and his Clerk" by Thomas de Keyser, a famous portrait painter of Dutch Golden Age Art from the present day, with a semiotic viewpoint in the light of the codes formed in the East-West cultural axis.

In this framework, the analyses were carried out about how the meaning was built in order to establish the necessary connections with the three basic elements constituting the sign, the signifier and the signified as the most general semiotics analysis method. In this context, the paintings of the masters of Dutch art were examined and the information obtained was interpreted to form the theoretical substructure of the work. The research universe consists of Thomas de Keyser's, one of the masters of the 17th century Dutch painting work called the "Portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk", and the Transylvanian type rug in this painting.

Transylvanian rugs, which have a special place in the history of rug making and which have been mentioned in the literature with this name almost as a distinct kind as they have been found in the Eastern Europe, in Transylvanian churches, are consisted of prayer rugs woven in Western Anatolia between the 16th and 19th centuries (Ölçer, 2007, 11). Some of the prayer rugs (Figure 1) known as Siebenbürgerer the "Transylvanians" were made in various centers of Anatolia, and most of them are in Uşak group (Aslanapa, 2005, 150).



Figure 1. Black Church, Braşov a must see for every carpet connoisseur: Ushak, Lotto, ‘Bird’, Cintamani rugs and the greatest ensemble of ‘Transylvanian’ rugs, in outstanding condition.

The number of rugs produced in Western Anatolia and exported to Europe after its production reached important amount by the Venetian merchants by sea starting from the 13th century and by the Eastern European roads which were controlled by the Ottoman Empire in the mid-15th century.

However, the vast majority of these types of rugs, woven in Anatolia, Uşak in the East, Bergama in the Northwest and İzmir in the Southwest, have been preserved in Transylvania until present (Frances, 2007, 72). These rugs, bought by the wealthy and professional organizations in this region, were donated to churches by some philanthropists in addition to their interior uses.

A large number of these prayer rugs were found especially in the small churches of Brashov and Sighisoara (Alantar, 2006, 124).

Around 400 full or partial Anatolian rugs dating back to the end of the 15th century are preserved in the churches, warehouses and museums of the Saxon Protestant community in Transylvania. The name of the donor is written on some rugs, which proves that the rugs have been in the same church for more than three hundred years and constitute the oldest collection of the world in this kind (Ionescu&Kertesz, 2007, 31).

These types of prayer rugs were produced for centuries to perform salaat and to pray, and they were preserved in the sacred places of people who had another religion but believed in the same God. This emphasizes the unlimited universality of art.

The rug, a decorative object for the indoor space, began to be seen in painting in Renaissance in Europe. In a wide variety of paintings depicted in Dutch painting from the mid-16th century onwards, there were also Transylvanian rugs at the beginning of the 17th century.

The second most frequent Anatolian rug type in Dutch painting of the time was the so-called "Transylvanian" Uşak or Manisa rugs. They were not represented by earlier European artists, which supports the hypothesis that these rugs appeared on the European market by the end of the sixteenth century, when most European painters and their patrons (except English and Dutch) had already largely lost interest in rugs (source:turkotek)

Transylvanian rugs with different types are examined in two broad categories. Transylvanian rugs were painted by the masters of Dutch art, which gave them documentary qualities. These images constitute a direct source of data in classification and identification of approximate production dates.

The first Transylvanian rugs seen in the northern geography were depicted in Cornelis de Vos's "Portrait of Abraham Grapheus". Later, they were used in Thomas de Keyser's four paintings between 1625 and 1632 and the paintings of many artists including 1665, Caspar Netscher, "Lady at her toilet"(Figure4) 1670, Cornelis de Man, "Interior of townhouse", 1675, E.de Witte, "Family in an Interior".

The representations of the Transylvanian rugs in the first group are more than those in the second group. Representations were found in 46 paintings from the Netherlands. The peak occurs in the period 1663-1667, mainly because of the large number represented by Casper Netscher (Ydema, 1991, 49)

There is little description of Transylvania rugs in the second group in Dutch art. Undoubtedly, the finest representation of a rug from the second group is found in *A family Portrait Group Making Music*, made in 1663 by Pieter de Hooch (Ydema, 1991, 49).

In the 17th century, Thomas de Keyser, one of the most renowned names of Dutch art of architecture and painting, was interested in the prayer rug type rugs of popular decorative objects of the era and produces paintings that include them.

The earliest pattern of the corner medallions is undoubtedly the one with interlacing arabesques. A rug with such corner medallions was meticulously reproduced by Thomas de Keyser on several occasions. *Portrait of Constantin Huyghens and his Clerk*, (1627), (Figure2), *Portrait of an Unknown Manor Portrait of a Gentleman* (1632),(Figure3), *Portrait of a Couple at a Table* (1625-35) and *Portrait of an Unknown Woman or Portrait of a Lady* (1632). The famous portrait of Huygen's has already been mentioned; another, perhaps even more interesting representation as it indicates that the rug had in fact two niches

at one end of the field, is his *Portrait of an Unknown Man* dating from 1632 (Ydema, 1991, 49-147).



Figure 2.
Thomas de Keyser,
1627, *Portrait of Constantin Huyghens and his Clerk*,
92.4 x 69.3 cm,
National Gallery, London



Figure 3.
Thomas de Keyser,
1632, *Portrait of a Gentleman*,
79 x 53 cm,
Louvre Museum, Paris



Figure 4.

Caspar Netscher, Lady at her toilet, 1670

Oil on Panel, 42,6x33,6 cm.

English Heritage, The Wellington Collection, Apsley House

2. Portrait of Constantin Huygens and his Clerk

De Keyser's portrait is truly unique among Dutch works of the seventeenth century (Figure 3). The closest compositional parallels are found in paintings by Flemish artists like Anthony van Dyck (Hawley, 2008, 13).

Semiotics, as a model that enables people to understand the world they live in, can transform this understanding process into a systematic method with more effort. Semiotics is not only interested in sign, it also covers the formation period of the meaning. Units forming a meaningful and structured whole point to the existence of syntagmatic relations between the sign systems. It implies that the not similar structures, but opposing structures creates the meaning. Hence, semiotics seeks to work in a consistency conforming to the structure of the product (outcome) and production (process), even when approaching literary and artistic products (outcome) and production (processes) of intense meaning, which are considered to be at the highest stages of intellectual, linguistic and fictional creation of human (Rifat, 2009, 21-23).

The dating of these Transylvanian rugs is primarily based on the 17th century pictorial source material. An impressive representation of such a rug in Thomas de Keyser's "Portrait of Constantin Huygens and his Clerk" (1627) been referred to frequently, not only because it is a very good example, but also because it is a very early one (Ydema, 1991, 49)

Thomas De Keyser's painting, which we handle with a semiotic approach, is his work called "Portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk", dated 1627. The painting, which is the canonical image of one of the strongest intellectuals of the Golden Age Netherlands, is an interesting example in this regard with the image of the Transylvanian rug as the "signifier". Each signifier points to another signifier and the signifier chains that create the understanding turn into an endless game of meaning.

Huygens, one of the popular Dutch people of the 17th century, chose to depict Thomas de Keyser sitting while doing intellectual work, and taking a note from his clerk, which constitutes the unique structure of the composition. The artist does not only elegantly make the composition dramatic through this lean action, but also establishes a social hierarchy between the characters. His attitude and behavior that ends the tradition of great masters in painting while developing it lies under the differences between this work of Thomas de Keyser and other outstanding Dutch paintings.

De Keyser has carefully calculated how these objects function within the painted framework. Indeed, Huygens and De Keyser have developed the clerk's image through space and the objects which occupy it. The space has become Huygens's stage and the objects the theatrical props (Hawley, J., 2008, 33). Obviously, a prerequisite for achieving such a portrait is the social status. Huygens' clothes help him to understand the social class that he was a member of. In the painting; a young aristocrat, who was a counselor and secretary of Prince Frederic and the members of Orange Principality in 1625, who was raised to knighthood by I. James, with the gloved right hand, ruffle, spurred riding boots, and a hat.

The painting, which has an important place in the "trend of rugs in paintings", which was based on the Pre-Renaissance in the history of art, is a documentary painting used to introduce Huygens by scientists researching the political personality of Huygens, secretary of Stadhouders Frederik Hendrik and William II. As a farsighted person who recognized and supported the talent of Rembrandt and Jan Lievens, Leiden's young artists, Huygens goes way beyond the high political role he had at the beginning of his life (Hawley, 2008,1).

Erwin Panofsky, have stated the importance of identifying the images right. The interest in the painting is Huygens's identity, which is associated with other figures and objects around him. This interest has continued for centuries not only in terms of researchers who have worked only on this period but also in the context of aesthetic perception.

As a significant political personality of the period, the fact that young and rich Huygens have positive qualities is important in terms of the pictorial presence of rug theme. "Huygens and his clerk" describes both an ordinary working moment of the high-level bureaucracy of the twentieth century, and affirms the place they are in and each object. The rug is an object that was frequently discussed in the paintings of western artists from religious paintings to mythological subjects and everyday spaces. Therefore, it supports and determines the issue that is described in the painting rather than being a pictorial image on its own. The painting reflects the tension between the main characters and the rug, including all the ties that took place between the west and the east, to readers. Not only it repeats the state of the rug as a sign of wealth and status, but visually, it also joins the canonical structures of the history of painting art. Here, semioticians can refer to "uniformity- the formal coincidence between one or more structures, resulting from the similarity of the network of associations forming them (Greimas; 1993, 197).

The work of art we deal with, such as language and writing, is a discourse that has been shown to the reader with all its subjectivity including the signifier and the signified as a visual sign. It occurs depending on tradition in history, and with a formal stylistic emulation in the light of historical data, repeating the narrative structure of the tradition.

The known rug feature change shape by adding new figures and time-dependent items to traditional figures while repeating the structures as a visual element depending on the richness of the variety of nature. In a visual sign, such as a linguistic signifier, takes place in the context of "form and content", "signifier and signified".

We will examine De Keyser's painting called "Portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk" via sectioning process following Jacques Fontanille's view as "sectional study of a semiotic object is the first analytical work to be done in order to reveal its fundamental antagonisms and to carry out an examination according to objective criteria (Fontanille, 1994, 79).

De Keyser's depiction, the painting of the young aristocrat who appeared doing his normal work, reveals an asymmetric structure consisting of a left plane and a right plane, including the middle plane. By separating the painting in two sections and by reading that offers two separate analyses, we can see that the two painting planes also contain other reading possibilities.

The plane on the left and center of the reader's view is almost the focal point of the painting, and it shows the main characters, Huygens and his clerk, which supports the vertical composition of the painting plane, a two-dimensional structure. The figurative structures that make up the main characters of the painting are Huygens and his clerk. The viewer of De Keyser's moderately-sized full-length portrait is confronted, at least initially, with the countenance of a man surrounded by the tools of his profession—in front of him, a table strewn with books, two globes, a lute, piece of paper, and pen and ink well, while behind him stands his clerk presenting a letter. There is little, if any, overt reference made to Huygens's upcoming marriage. Nor does his staid facial expression betray the *vrolicke* demeanor expressed in his poem of 2 August (Hawley, 2008, 9)

Huygens is portrayed as a member of the "cavalier" class, when he was knighted by King I as part of Sir Dudley Carleton's diplomatic mission in 1622, with his spurred boots and rank, describing his international connections. On his heels, the clerk obediently offers a paper in a folded form that he held in his bare hand to the gloved hand Huygens with hat. Moreover, the painting appears to relate to the theater and contemporary stage design in its use of the tapestry as an "omdraeyendedoecken" (rotating curtain) and openness along the left and right sides of the stage, both of which had become popular in the first half of the seventeenth century.

The most notable of such elements on Huygens's own "stage" is the tapestry which has been pulled back to reveal the entrance into the room. Such pulling away is selective; the viewer sees only what the artist and patron allow—the partially open door by which Huygens's clerk has entered the room. The opening along the back of a room was a particularly popular motif in Dutch art, known as the *doorsien*, or "view through" (Hawley, 2008,33).

The light on the portraits emphasizes the relationship between their statues as well making Huygen's and the clerk's heads visible who were shown from the front and the side, respectively. The first plane, in which the main figure becomes clear, is the first outstanding part of the overall painting which clarifies the statistical meaning as a major sign in the painting.

The portrait of young Huygens with the self-confidence, in his eyes, portrayed as slightly bent, while taking the letter, diverges the reader's point of view and differs from the traditional postures. This posture might have been preferred by the artist to soften the official stance of the strong political personality in the painting. Huygens' outfit and gloves are the sign of the elegance of an elite class of his time. The stylistic rhetoric that describes the artist's feelings and views forms the signified structure. Moreover, the right edge of the tapestry, visible along the back wall, is pulled back to reveal the entrance to the room. The tapestry, like the Porcellis painting, shows Huygens as a discerning collector and provides evidence of the range of his collection and taste.

In the left plane, a general discourse for Huygens reflects a basic method because it contains a distinctive personality that was emphasized and outstanding.

The plane to the right of the reader's point of view, where we will direct our attention, is the plane where Huygen was surrounded by symbolic objects that depict his rich and famous political personality and it emphasizes a basic horizontal space. Each object points to Huygens's distinguished bright personality and political situation. In the Golden Age of Dutch art, an object can have more than one meaning. In the painting, as well as being a musical instrument, the lute on the table may refer to the close marriage of him with Suzannavan Baerle by being associated with love. In a world in which knowledge and enlightenment came to the fore, new discoveries by sea were intensely carried out; the globes symbolizing the contemporary information, the great interest to the geographical discoveries of the century, can be metaphoric as one of the stars of the eternal universe for Huygens' unique love. The letter which the clerk is giving leads the reader to questions in uncertainty by giving no clue of being public or private.

The right plane, which stands out with the clear tone of white papers on which Huygens' left hand stands in the secondary position draws the reader in this direction for a journey of discovery with its narrative dimension. The strong political position of the young Huygens and the antagonism and the tension created by the art of the eastern art lying under his arm shows a traditional approach.

Here, the reader reads a painting with an attitude that matches Umberto Eco's "encyclopedic knowledge" in the light of cultural and historical codes.

Before Huygens sits, the table was covered with an early Western Anatolian rug showing the wealth and status by observing the fashion of the period, with objects which represents different intellectual explorations were scattered on it. De Keyser's painting takes place among these visual myths, whose historical formation process began in Central Asia, which were produced by the anonymous artisans of the East and painted by the masters of Europe. The rug on the table is a decorative element that western artists frequently painted in accordance with the fashion from time to time. These very expensive rugs on the tables of the kings, nobles and the bourgeois, or rarely depicted as spread under the feet of the royal family and Saint Mary, are also the sign of the status and wealth of the person who ordered the painting in the history of art. A pictorial image, as signifier, both with its harmony with

the main characters in the painting and as the signified, has the effects of western and eastern cultures on each other.

The star and cartridge borders, surrounded by protective strips and secondary borders with reciprocal clover patterns and a chain-like pattern, are so subtle in these tables that they can be directly linked the rugs at present (Franses, 2007, 75).

The sectioning made on the painting brings innovation to the traditional style with Huygens' posture in the theatrical stage arrangement, while the left and right planes repeat the tradition in formal and stylistic context.

"Portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk" is unique in that it depicts an environment which readers as well as artists know and desire. Every detail in the environment, for example the painting of the waters cape attributed to the large Jan Porcellisseen on the obscure fire place, emphasizes the intellectual taste of Huygens.

At first glance, the painting seems to be more striking on the left plane. By placing Huygens and his clerk in the focal point of the painting, the artist draws narrative dimension of the painting in this direction.

Huygens must have liked the painting very much that he wrote the poems about the painting. Besides, the painting, also in this respect, shows the feature of being the only painting in the history of painting art for which poems were written. On January 31, 1627, he wrote his first poem for his portrait painted by De Keyser. The poem, first of which was in Latin, constitutes an example for the next two.

De Keyser seems like he determined Huygens' young and political stance by pointing to the current and the new one with the small sized painting of the famous painter Porcellis on the fire place, and to the art of the East with the rugs in both sections of the painting.

Through this painting of the artist, we can say that the popular prayer rugs and Transylvanian rugs in paintings take all their meaning from the tension that exists in the essence of fundamental contradictions such as east and west, traditional and contemporary in the Golden Age.

Table 1: Example paintings

Painting's Topic	Painting's Main Character	Embodied Element
1660, A lady at her toilette, P.J.Codde,	Young woman in yellow dress	Transylvanian rug originated from Western Anatolia
1664. Lady with a parrot, C. Netscher.	Young woman holding a parrot in her hand	Transylvanian rug originated from Uşak
1627 Portrait of Constantin Huygens and his Clerk	Constantin Huygens	Transylvanian rug on table

Table 2. Sectioning

1. Section	Left plane including the middle plane	young aristocrat and his clerk	vertical
2. Section	Right plane	The table covered by the Transylvanian rug and metaphorical objects on it	horizontal

Table 3. Portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk, the Syntagmatic Structure of the Subject

Persons	Main figure	Secondary figure	Table	The different posture of the main character	Metaphorical meanings of the Transylvanian rug and the objects on it
A lady	+	+	+	-	-
Lady	+	+	-	-	-
Constantin Huygens and his Clerk	+	+	+	+	+

Table 4. The Rug and its Thematic Values in Sample paintings

Persons and Functions	Main Character	Work done	The Structure of the Signified Rug
A lady combing her hair	Positive	Positive	Wealth Conventional
Lady holding a parrot in hand at balcony	Positive	Positive	Wealth Conventional
Constantin Huygens and his Clerk	Positive	Positive	Old/Wealth Conflictual

2.1. Rug as "Signifier" in Dutch Painting

A variety of techniques has been used in paintings since the ancient ages, depending on the artist and the period. The contribution of all the techniques that make up the history of painting art is undoubtedly important. The creative effects of the Baroque art spreading from the south to the north of European geography on the northern painting technique enable the Golden Age Dutch to occupy a privileged position in art history.

It is the first step of applying a homogeneous neutral color tone on the white painting surface. The transparency degree of the paint in this layer is very important. Intermediate layers highlighted by light dark (chiaroscuro) that will be provided in a top layer evolve to the main

layer where the optic effect is created during the pass of daylight on the canvas surface painted with colors gradually with light-shadow emphasis. The painting, concluded with the Glaze layer, opens the gates of a magical world to the reader through the cultural codes that the reader understands not only the world he describes.

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Artist De Keyser also skillfully paints Western Anatolian-Transylvanian rugs as a signifier of the artwork. The general character of prayer rug type Transylvanian rugs have niches on both sides of the base. In addition to these, there are also types of prayer rugs with a single niche. It is unclear whether the rugs in the artist's work has double-sided niches. The rug in this and other portraits by Thomas de Keyser may have had two niches at one end (for which reason the representations are very interesting, as surviving examples of this variant are unknown). Still, because in all of his portraits de Keyser showed the rug with medallions in the visible end of the field, the possibility exist that the rug may have had niches on the other end of the field as well. Otherwise, one would expect an occasional representation showing the rug from the lowerend without the corner medallions (Ydema, 1991, 147)

The star and cartridge borders, surrounded by protective strips and secondary borders with reciprocal clover patterns and a chain-like pattern, are so subtle in these tables that they can be directly linked the rugs at present (Frances, 2007, 75)

It may be thought that the painter painted the layer of transparent color called the imprimatur, which is the fashion of the artist's era, with a basic flat tint that is applied to the primer-painting surface and forms color harmony. Rich colors must have been formed on this transparent layer, depending on the density and thickness of the colors created by the artist. We can make this determination from the tangible data obtained from the laboratory studies on the paintings of other contemporary artists. The Transylvanian rugs in De Keyser's works also emphasize formal narration with the signifier's plane. The artist is most likely, like the other great masters of the 17th century Golden Age, must have started this emphasis by painting the color he used and the darker color on the lining in a transparent state. Starting from the lining, the necessity of ensuring that each floor has affected by light, its major element, suggests that the base might have been made with a tint (monochrome) color.

Studies on the Golden Age paintings in the laboratory environment, such as X-rays and infrared radiographs, makes us understand the work shops of the great masters of that period (source: essentialvermeer)

For example, according to Ernstvan Wetering, the fact that Rembrandt, contemporary with Thomas de Keyser, used no other artistic material than linseed oil, that he used in almost all of his compositions puts an end to almost all speculation. Walnut oil is rarely used for translucent primers colored in medium darkness. Occasionally, the combination of egg and linseed oil is also visible on the surface of the painting. Wetering refers to transparent layers of color seen on each other. It was found that the homogeneous layer of color applied on the primer has been diversified to be hot, gray and double layered according to the composition of the painting. Colors such as Van Dycbrown, sienna, ocr-brown, yellow-brown and the

irtones are the most commonly used base colors prepared on the surface of the lining for a color harmony with warmtones (Wetering, 1986, 33). Mixtures of earth tones and blends are visible in the base colors of gray tones. The cool gray base color optically affects the colorful semitones. Although the function of the first layer which is applied to the base is limited, it combines with the transparent color layers applied on it with light, creating a very rich range of colors for the reader of the painting. Another base applied as double layer is the surface created by applying a light-gray layer on homogenous tanned brown application on the canvas applied in white tones (Wetering, 1986,38). Research data obtained from the laboratory environment show that, in the Northern European Baroque painting art, the first layer applied on the white lined canvas was designed to create the color harmony of the dyes that will be used in the advanced stages of the painting. It is seen that each artist completes his/her painting by continuing the phases of the painting with translucent floors that makes the first base layers visible, or by covering the entire surface, in such a way that the desired result is achieved.

From time to time, painting the image with this neutral first layer of color may be done for convenience in the context of creating a more relaxed visibility of the artist's design in the later stages of the painting, which has a finished look with a tone of a plain color.

Basically, the first painting (underpainting) of a work is created with the aim of preparing the sub-structure of the composition. The shapes, colors (monochrome) and tones of the beings are determined during this initial painting phase. It provides an optical combination with all the paint layers that will come on it. This inter layer, in which light and dark areas are determined, preserves its independent existence as a dominant color layer in the formation of the main painting. Experts have found that in most of the artist's paintings, this first layer is monochrome applications based on a single color.

It is seen that the first painting (underpainting) of the canvas surface prepared with single-color, the common technique of the Golden Age of Dutch painting art, is applied in four different ways (Wetering, 1986:22-26). During the first painting phase on the base where the hot tone dominates, a large number of paintings were found in which brown tones and rich earth tones were used. There are also light gray monochrome works on yellow base color. From time to time, it was revealed that there were the layers of the first paintings on the bases where grey color was used. It is seen that the first painting layers with gray and dark tones are applied on the grounds consisting of ocr-brown and blends, and the transparent tones, and shades, and the local tones are applied on the base dominated by the light gray color. There is a mixed first painting in which some colors are used as pale colors in some areas, with a single color based study on canvas ground with dark brown color.

3. Conclusion

Art is the result that the famous writer Tolstoy reached at the end of his book about art; as a way of communication, art is the way which people pursue as long as they exist, the method of revealing the reality of own being whatever it is.

Umberto Eco, the Italian semioticians who has made great contributions to the development of contemporary semiotics, has developed the "expression-content" pair to replace the "signifier-signified" pair, and has defined the sign as something that represents something in a meaningful way.

The Netherlands became an important art center in the world of the 17th century with the influence of the libertarian thought created by the rich bourgeois and culture-art people who fled to the North from the religion-based unrest in France and Germany.

With the wealth created by geographical and commercial profits and the rich culture, artists produced masterpieces of art history by becoming competent on the *imprimatur* technique which was based on the most effective use of the striking effect of light and shadow.

In order to be able to understand the literal meanings and connotations of sign systems of the evaluated work of the Golden Age artist De Keyser, it is necessary to take into consideration the cultural differences between east and west. Within the centuries of political, cultural and commercial relations between the East and the West, prayer rug-type Transylvanian rugs are in presence in both communities. At the basis of this existential state that have occurred over a long period of time, there are the reasons, the pivot points. No symbolic process accepted in the society is causeless, and all of them have a point of origin.

The rug as the signifier is a material establishment that gives shape to an artistic content, the signified, on which a three-dimensional illusion is performed by the artist on a two-dimensional material structure. It is a display that allows the viewer to communicate with the rug in the painting by connotation of the rug, even if it is not the rug it characterize. One of the artist's paintings, the prayer rug Transylvanian rug is a sign of wealth and status in the culture of northwestern geography. It performs the conveying meaning function of the sign, giving the expression of handcrafted rug of the East, that is enabling us to animate the signified adequately in our mind. Understanding, signification process starts with the reader of the painting. The reader of the painting perceives what the signifier of the rug means and what cultural values it symbolizes in the light of cultural codes of the period. Establishing relations between the concepts of the signifier and the signified in the reading and understanding process reveals the concept of signification. Indeed, meaning does not unite monolithic beings; two elements do not approach each other, because each one of the signifier and the signified is both an element and a relation (Barthes, 2016, s. 54). For example, the pictorial image that emerges in the reader who views the prayer rug type Transylvanian rug in the painting of the artist creates the concept of rug for that person. Thus, the person has a clear connection between the image and concept of Transylvanian rugs.

The direct meaning conveyed by the rug in Thomas Keyser's work is a set of indirect meanings which constitute the nature and structure of the message of the work and bring together in a system.

The prayer rug type Transylvanian rug in the painting expresses itself with all self and subjectivity, and comes out as a visual discourse for the reader. Today, when traditional art is

re-read, the reconciliation or conflict relations of the plastic discourse, which carries its own internal tension that brings the past and the present together, necessarily arises spontaneously.

This discourse comes to light with an interaction created by the continuation of formal and historical traces, focused on form and content.

Western Anatolian prayer rug type Transylvania rug, painted by Thomas De Keyser in his work "Portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk" in accordance with the interior space fashion of the Golden Age era; like all other types of rugs in paintings painted by contemporary masters, was crafted with light use and original narration. With a semiotic approach, the visual narrative power of the stylistic narration, the signifier of De Keyser's "Portrait of Constantine Huygens and his Clerk" that varies and changes with the styles of rugs in the contemporary paintings, repeats the narrative in the contextual context.

As it is in all the Golden Age paintings in which the rug is a decorative element, this work by Thomas de Keyser presents a multi-layered meaning and image universe, bringing east and west together with a conception of artistic evaluation unique to the day.

Thus, we can say that the East-West pair emerges as the most important of the layers of meaning of the visual discourse as a pair, which is related to each other rather than a basic contrast in this painting. This painting, painted with the artistic understanding of the artist, meets with a complex and diverse cultural structure created by the common memory that humanity has evolved through the ages and transmitted to today.

In today's contemporary art, the production of layers of original meaning, realized by re-reading and re-reading traditional values, comes out. The re-reading of the tradition brings with it a compromise and conflict with the values laid out by art history.

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