

SUMMARY

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ICONOLOGY'S SHADOW

This essay discusses two concurrent intellectual initiatives in the mid-twentieth century. Well-known in European and American art history is **iconology** – the study of ‘meaning’ in works of art – and in particular the work of Panofsky and his legacy. At around the same time, especially in literature and philosophy in Germany and France, **phenomenology** appeared on the scene. Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Gadamer, among others, encouraged a focus on ‘poetic entanglement’ or ‘embodied experience’. The experience of a work of art and not its analysis is what of primary importance for these thinkers. Contrasting these two systems of thought can be revealing not only in terms of twentieth-century intellectual history but as combative precursors to trends in early twenty-first ‘object theory’ or ‘affect studies’ in the evolution of the history of art. What one ‘method’ deliberately omits, the other provocatively explores. It often comes down to a distinction between *representation* and *presentation*.