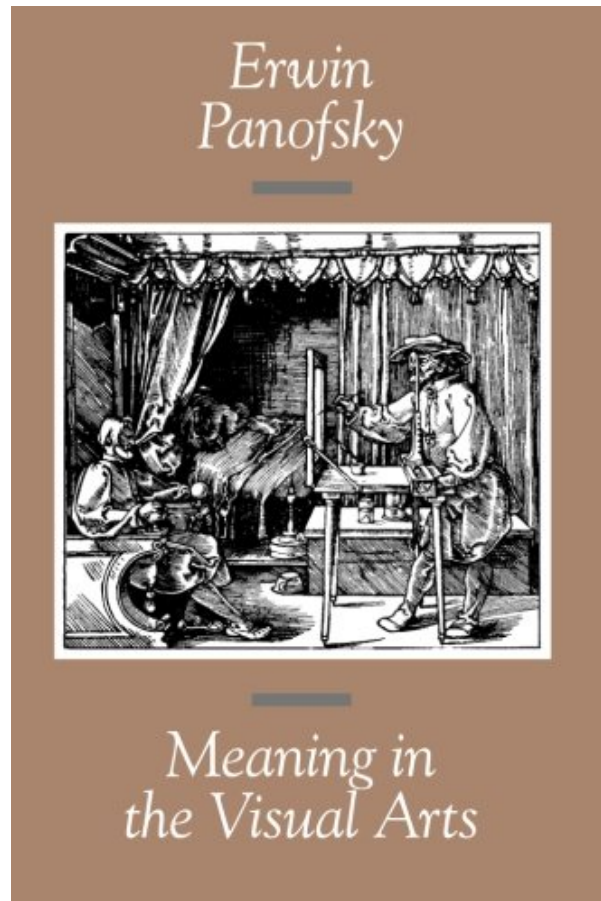


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The papers in this volume represent a cross-section of Panofsky's major work.

Language Notes

Text: English, German (translation)

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Since its original publication, Erwin Panofsky's *Meaning in the Visual Arts* has been standard reading for students of art history. It is both an introduction to the study of art and, for those with more specialized interests, a profound discussion of art and life in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Panofsky's historical technique reveals an abundance of detail, detail he skillfully relates to the life and work of individual painters and their times.

The papers in this volume represent a cross-section of Panofsky's major work. Included are selections from his well-known *Studies in Iconology* and *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, plus an introduction and an epilogue—"The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline" and "Three Decades of Art History in the United States: Impressions of a Transplanted European"—as well as pieces written especially for this collection. All display Panofsky's vast erudition and deep commitment to a humanistic conception of art and art history.

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A classic by one of the great art history theorists

By Clarinet

A classic by one of the great art history theorists. I only remove one star because there are a couple of his essays that I would have rather had than a couple that were included in this anthology. Nonetheless I bought the book used and it was in perfect condition and well worth the price

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An Introduction to Panofsky

By Kenneth Hughes

Erwin Panofsky was indisputably one of the greatest art historians of the twentieth, or any other, century, virtually one of the founding fathers of the discipline in its modern form. His work ranged from rarified theoretical speculations on abstract aesthetic topics to very concrete exegeses of well known paintings, and

the titles of some of his books indicate the breadth of that scholarly panorama: "Perspective as Symbolic Form" and "Idea: A Concept in Art Theory" on one hand, to "The Life and Art of Albrecht Durer" and "Problems in Titian, Mostly Iconographic" on the other. He is best known for his work on the Renaissance and on iconography, and although some of his conclusions have been challenged by more recent scholarship (he died in 1968), his "Studies in Iconology," from 1939, is a masterpiece and remains the most influential study in that field.

In fact, though, all of Panofsky's work is essential reading in whatever area he chose to write on, and this volume of collected pieces, in gathering together representative examples, serves as an excellent introduction. The only serious omission is a sample of his work on early Netherlandish painting, which was a major preoccupation and a two-volume book of that title. But it does contain the introductory chapters to his books on iconography and the Abbey Church of St.-Denis; essays on Durer's reception of classical antiquity and Poussin and the elegiac tradition; some occasional pieces on Titian and Vasari, etc. Most of these pieces are reprinted from previous English-language sources, but some of them have been translated from the German and appear here in English for the first time.

Panofsky is not easy to read. That is not because his organization is confusing or his writing unclear; on the contrary, he writes extremely clearly, especially for a German-trained academic. But his thinking is very precise and he wastes no words, so everything is very tightly argued and constructed, and he is not done with a subject until he has wrung out of it more meaning than you thought it could contain. One does well not to let one's attention flag and to be prepared for frequent rereading. But it is well worth the effort. Panofsky was one of the intellectual giants of the last century, and any acquaintance with his thinking is an invaluable experience; when you study a couple of his pages closely and realize that you have just learned more than you usually do from a couple of chapters of other writers, you know you are in good hands and are inspired to keep reading.

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Essays by a great scholar in the field

By Shalom Freedman

Panofsky was one of the great founding fathers of Art History. His studies in Iconology opened up a whole new way of reading meaning into works of Art. In this work he combines masterful scholarship with great theoretical innovativeness to provide his own reading of the world of Art. Though his systematic approach can at times feel abstract he nonetheless continually gives the sense that the understanding of works of Art is an intellectual adventure of the highest order and of the most profound meanings.

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