

# Review of: "Menschenbild: An Important Factor for our Identity"

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This article starts off in a promising way, setting itself up as an introduction to the idea of "Menschenbilder," a central construct in German philosophy and anthropology. However, after very painstakingly coming up with a definition of the term as "a bundle of convictions..." the paper goes on to talk about Menschenbilder as a kind of individual, psychological construct. Then through a series of unsubstantiated (and unconvincing) assertions about the thin and abstract nature of Menschenbilder in contemporary societies, it seems to make the case that these Menschenbilder are also a societal construct, a matter of interest to sociology.

The disciplinary context, perspective and purpose of the article is utterly unclear. This is exacerbated by the lack of explicit reference to other works--with the exception of Nietzsche. It seems to me that introducing Menschenbilder makes sense in the philosophical context with which the paper began. This would mean referencing ideas and texts like those of Kant, Nietzsche, Plessner, etc. It would be helpful to introduce different menschenbilder from various contexts and periods: homo faber, homo rationalis, etc. Also, no discussion of Menschenbilder is complete without talking about the human as the undetermined being as Nietzsche puts it. To define an image of the human is to exclude and include, and this in itself is problematic.

In any case, the paper needs to be less repetitive in introducing, defining and explaining what Menschenbild is. It should avoid giving the impression that it is presenting a kind of loose psychology and sociology of stereotypes and preconceptions. It needs to be explicit in positioning itself in relation to anthropology and other disciplines, and the author should consider drawing on the broad and rich tradition in German anthropology instead of giving the impression that he is working *sui generis*.