

Balance between Universalism and Local Identity

Homi K. Bhabha's concept of nationalism underscores the role of mythical, imagined and material factors in constructing national identities. Since narrow historical and cultural affiliations shape nations, the national identities become averse to humanism envisioned by Plato and Socrates. While Al-Ghazali's work tended to balance between promoting local identity and justice, Bhabha has advocated for global citizenship based on shared humanity. Although nationalism has immensely advanced narrow perspectives, it has remained a double-edge sword. While it has highlighted the need for pluralism, it has advanced the desire for expansionism — manifested in genocide in Palestine and Bosnia. In doing so, it has exposed the facade of democracy — promoting imperialism under the guise of equality. Imperialism cultivated nationalism, causing weaker to seek defense in turbulent waters of self-determination while being confined to narrow interests. Hence, the power of nationalism depends on the way it is utilized. Therefore, a balance approach is needed between universalism and national pride.

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