

**Martha C. Nussbaum**, *The Cosmopolitan Tradition: A Noble but Flawed Ideal* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 2019).

Recent decades have been marked by a rapidly progressing internationalisation and the subsequent surge in nationalisms. The latter has led many thinkers to reemphasize the importance of cosmopolitanism. In her fascinating study, Martha Nussbaum, far from uncritically accepting or sceptically rejecting the cosmopolitan ideal, explores it as a noble but flawed one. The seriousness of engagement with the topic testifies to her devotion to think not only about, but with, the cosmopolitan tradition, and to interrogate it from the perspective of today's challenges.

Drawing on her previous scholarship on cosmopolitanism, Nussbaum dialogues with the Stoics, Hugo Grotius, Adam Smith, and various contemporary thinkers, exploring the tensions inherent in the idea of the world citizenship from the perspective of the two notions fundamental to her thinking: dignity and vulnerability. Those reflections go back as far as to her first books, whereby, while endorsing the Stoics' stress on the universal notion of human dignity and their philosophy of *Kosmu polites*, Nussbaum allows us to appreciate that the Stoic ideal is abstract and fails to acknowledge the vulnerability of dignified beings and the material implications related to it. Stoic's stress that the soul can be free and nourished from within, even under the conditions of external enslavement, can be interpreted as dismissive of the importance of material conditions. Nussbaum, in turn, encourages us to grasp that from the universal dignity of vulnerable human beings stems the universal right to have access to the resources that allow people to live dignified lives. In rooting dignity in vulnerability, and not reason, Nussbaum effectively subverts the Stoic privileging of the moral intellect and makes an argument for the inclusion in the community of rights of the nonhuman animals.

Following Grotius and Smith in criticising the idea of the world state in the light of the notion of autonomy, Nussbaum further argues that the world-state can lack in resources of accountability and scrutiny. National sovereignty and individual autonomy are closely connected and hindering one would hinder the other. Drawing attention to the importance of material concreteness to the abstract ideals, Nussbaum discloses that the cosmopolitan ideal is, for many of us, too abstract to inspire attitudes of self-sacrifice and real help. However, what remains central to Nussbaum's reflections is the Stoics' stress on the universal and equal dignity and humanity of our fellow human beings, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, social class and level of ability. Her Capabilities Approach, based on the notions of vulnerability and dignity, is a unique contribution to furthering the ideal of equality and a fruitful perspective from which to reflect and act on today's cosmopolitanism.