

# Cosmopolitan Ethic in Action



**KNOT SO TRUE**  
RUBANA HUQ

**I**N spite of Trump calling Bob Woodward, the author of the book *Fear, a liar*; in spite of a world where winners have booms raining on them instead of ovation, like in the case of Naomi Osaka, the winner of the Grand Slam final, who stood as a victim instead of a winner when she beat Serena Williams; in spite of a young man getting shot in Chicago for protesting against guns...the world is still sane, just because there are many others who don't follow the Trumpian Alternative Universe and who genuinely feel homes, offices, social circuits are dominated by diversities and co-existence and not disruptions.

Thus, from the early morning waking hours, we state, adapt and move on. In the middle of all this is: tolerance. That is being cosmopolitan.

I was recently reminded of the concept of "Cosmopolitan Ethic" by an event which was celebrating HE Aga Khan's diamond jubilee celebrations marking his completion of 60 years at the helm of the Ismaili community. The Aga Khan has been calling for cosmopolitan ethic in action to be rooted in a strong culture of "tolerance". This 81-year-old lives in France, is one of the 15 wealthiest royals in the world, worth USD 800 million according to *Forbes* and yes...most pleasantly he is a philanthropist.

Nothing is new except that which has been forgotten. Civilisation after civilisation has said the same things, coined the same philosophies and yet, once forgotten or swept under the carpet, we present the same concept in a new format. The concept of Cosmopolitan Ethic has also been around us for the longest time possible. It's just that we choose to forget what inconveniences us and when there's a conflict of interest.

Terence, the North African slave, who was taken to Rome in the second century AD wrote lovely plays. He had a notably firm grasp on human diversity while uttering "So many men, so many opinions!" And in his comedy, *The Self Tormentor*, he refers to the very basic of cosmopolitan ethics. He wrote: "I am human; nothing human is alien to me." Cosmopolitanism also dates back to the Cynics of the 4th century BC who first coined the expression: Citizen of the Cosmos.

Even if we turn to Islam, the concept of cosmopolitanism holds. *Surah Nisa's* 1st Ayat is enough for us to explain the basic philosophy: "O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul." In the 13th verse of *Surah Hujarat*, Allah says "O mankind We have created you male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know one another..." (49:13). Similarly, in the 48th verse of *Surah Maidah*, the Quran reads "...To each among you have We prescribed a law and an open way. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single people..." (5:48). In reality, the



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Quran teaches one to tolerate differences and not to impose one's faith on others (2:256): "There shall be no compulsion in acceptance of the religion." Cosmopolitanism also has its modern roots in philosophy. Dating back to 1790, Kant's cosmopolitan theory is itself more nuanced than is usually spotted. Kant argues about the citizens of a state having an imperfect duty of civic patriotism and eventually defends the establishment of a voluntary league of states leading to a federation of republics based on the political autonomy of peoples. He argues that the citizens' cosmopolitan

right and one moral principle should be the basis of all interactions between states and foreigners anywhere on earth.

However, diversity does not allow us to shape every belief in one model, one religion. Yet we learn from diversity, which ends up being a strength. How, though?

The basic answer can be derived from the cosmopolitan position of Anthony Appiah, the British-born Ghanaian-American philosopher and cultural theorist. To paraphrase Appiah, Cosmopolitan Ethic is to be able to value the other, to be able to live and

co-exist with the diversities of the modern world is what is essentially ingrained in cosmopolitanism. Broadly speaking, cosmopolitan ethics is based on the principle that all human beings belong to a single community, where inclusive morality, shared economic interest and social relationship will positively impact cultural differences. Cosmopolitans also view all the people of the earth as many branches of a single family, of which the universe is a state. But cosmopolitans do not expect every person or every society to converge on a single mode of life or value system. Rather cosmopolitans are, in general, globalists, applaud human dignity across the nations and resist narrow nationalism.

If we, as cosmopolitans, are to critique existing communities and states and reject an exclusionary, divisive outlook in morality and politics that encompass the universe, let us also realistically remember that the current world is too conflicted to be united. Yet, let us not despair and while we weigh in this disappointment, let us all look hard for the truth and not give up our small spaces where we naturally believe that everyone matters.

As humans, let us not indulge in differences. Life is too short to be divisive; too brief to be belligerent. Thus, in this short life of ours, let us reject communitarianism and choose cosmopolitanism as an ethic to practise and to live by.

Dr Rubana Huq is the managing director of Mohammadi Group.

## Brits in a fix over Brexit

### Deal, No Deal, or No Exit!



**AN OPEN DIALOGUE**  
ABDULLAH SHIBLI

**P**RIME Minister Theresa May recently was on a three-nation tour of Africa. Her first stop was South Africa, the first by a British prime minister since 2011.

She then went on to Nigeria and Kenya, becoming the first British PM to visit the East African country in over 30 years.

The PM was accompanied by a delegation of 29 business leaders to promote "the breadth and depth of British expertise in technology, infrastructure, and financial and professional services," according to an announcement from Downing Street. The African safari was part of a British drive to reach out to countries with which May plans to rebuild old trade relationships which fell by the wayside during the 45 years of EU membership. "This week I am looking forward to discussing how we can do that alongside Africa to help deliver important investment and jobs as well as continue to work together to maintain stability and security," the PM added.

The initiative to find new trading partners may take the British PM and her emissaries to many other capitals in the coming months as the UK prepares to cut the umbilical cord with the EU.

The UK is scheduled to leave the European Union at 11pm UK time on Friday, March 29, 2019. The two sides are currently negotiating the terms of departure, which include the future of citizens in each other's territory and business relations between the two entities. While March 2019 is still more than six months away, there are some important deadlines to meet, since any deal negotiated has to be approved by the EU and UK parliaments. For EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier, the next quarterly EU summit on October 18-19 is a critical milestone, and the treaty

must also be approved by the respective parliaments by January 2019. However, as time goes by, it appears that there is a slight possibility that the UK will leave the EU without a deal on trade issues, and this "No Deal Brexit" is seriously being discussed both in London and Brussels.

British citizens and particularly businesses are dreading the thought of

disagreements on policy. Subsequently, the Labour Party, with the support of some Tories who favour staying in the EU, called for a new referendum on Brexit. Theresa May has left no doubt that she is strongly opposed to any notion of another vote. However, many in the UK are still in a state of "can't make up my mind" syndrome. And, to make it worse, Dominic Raab, the new

effect on the economy. May's own Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, warned against a no deal exit. The government reported at the end of August, that over the past 12 months, GDP growth has been just 1.3 percent. "Inflation picked up slightly in July - to 2.5% - and is likely to remain stuck around this level in the months ahead. That will put a dampener on the growth

She said that findings had shown that only one-third of IoD members had made plans for a no-deal Brexit, with the majority waiting for further clarity on the terms of the withdrawal agreement in the transitional period. Allie Renison, head of Europe and trade policy at IoD added, "A lot of these companies don't know all the different information they need to put into this."

The uncertainty is aiding a fringe section of British political actors who are in favour of remaining in the EU and are sometimes using scare tactics and pessimistic predictions: a) in case there is No Deal and, b) even with an agreed-upon deal. The Brexiters disparagingly term the scaremongering as "Project Fear", or fear of destitution. To dispel the Project Fear camp, Brexit Secretary Raab promised that there will be no shortages of bacon, lettuce, and tomato, three essential ingredients for a "BLT sandwich", a British staple. "Let me assure you that, contrary to one of the wilder claims, you will still be able to enjoy a BLT after Brexit," said Raab.

In the face of all the rough seas she is facing—tough EU-UK negotiations, the lack of any agreement, and the looming March exit—the British PM was unfazed during the mission to Africa.

"I've said right from the beginning that no deal is better than a bad deal. I think it's absolutely right that the government is putting the preparations in place for no deal because we don't know what the outcome of this is going to be. But alongside that what we're doing is working for a good deal."

"Look at what the director of the World Trade Organization has said. He said about a no-deal situation that it would not be a walk in the park but it wouldn't be the end of the world." As the world can see, May is no pushover!

Dr Abdullah Shibli is an economist, and Senior Research Fellow, International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI), a think-tank in Boston, USA. His new book *Economic Crosscurrents* will be published later this year.



The UK is scheduled to leave the EU on March 29, 2019.

PHOTO: DANIEL LEAL-OLIVAS/AFP

No Deal Brexit, and many are found scratching their heads and contemplating a contingency plan. However, according to various polls, most Brits are keeping their fingers crossed in light of the volatility they experienced in recent months. First, two dedicated Brexiters, Boris Johnson, the Foreign Secretary and David Davis, the Brexit Secretary, resigned in June over

Brexit Secretary came out swinging and tried to reassure the citizens that such an outcome is not going to be so bad after all! This happened in the wake of the British government's publication of the first 25 of the 80 planned technical notices designed to help businesses navigate a no-deal Brexit.

Unfortunately, even rumours of a No Deal Brexit are having a dampening

of consumer spending, even though recent retail sales figures have been encouraging," *The Guardian* reported on August 28.

Claudia Catelin from the Institute of Directors (IoD), a leading business group, warned that businesses have "a short time" in which to make plans and that planning for a no-deal Brexit is a "logical baseline".

### ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY



SEPTEMBER 12, 1992

#### FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN GOES INTO SPACE

Mae C. Jemison, a physician, was a Mission Specialist on STS-47 which was the 50th space flight of NASA's Space Shuttle Program. It was the space shuttle Endeavour's second flight. During over 190 hours she spent in space, she conducted experiments on weightlessness and motion sickness.

### CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- |                             |                      |                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>               | 36 Snare             | 17 Vaulted area        |
| 1 Pack tight                | 39 Lake near Buffalo | 18 New driver, often   |
| 5 Parody                    | 40 Castle parts      | 19 Move slowly         |
| 10 Humdinger                | 41 Dispatched        | 20 Tarragon or thyme   |
| 11 "Yeah, right!"           | 42 Field pests       | 21 Andy's son          |
| 12 Says further             | 43 Fill completely   | 22 Large: Prefix       |
| 13 Blackened                |                      | 25 Sugar source        |
| 14 Spaghetti toper          | <b>DOWN</b>          | 26 Naive               |
| 16 Plane neighbour          | 1 Chowder chunk      | 28 Bath bars           |
| 20 Cooking class, for short | 2 Ill-mannered       | 30 Pitched             |
| 23 Stew sphere              | 3 Emmy winner Alan   | 31 Fruit basket items  |
| 24 Foils' kin               | 5 Do refinery work   | 33 Open space          |
| 25 Diamond corners          | 6 Sacred song        | 34 Gum flavour         |
| 27 Convoy member            | 7 Wilder's "--Town"  | 35 Rose on the diamond |
| 28 Placid                   | 8 Galena, for one    | 36 List-ending abbr.   |
| 29 Allen Ginsberg, for one  | 9 Flowed into        | 37 Negative link       |
| 32 Incubator part           | 11 Jacob's father    | 38 Binary base         |
|                             | 15 Honey bunch       |                        |

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30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
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#### YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

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### BEETLE BAILEY

### BY MORT WALKER



### BABY BLUES

### BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

