

# A Rortyan Dilemma of Conversation

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Richard Rorty in his enterprise to shun epistemology, cannot not have his share of inconsistency if he seriously considers a Davidsonian interpreter as one of his best allies to overcome the problem of cultural differences.

Charges of relativism have been addressed to Rorty. But as he says, "the pragmatist, dominated by the desire for solidarity, can only be criticized for taking his own community too seriously. He can only be criticized for ethnocentrism, not for relativism. To be ethnocentric is to divide the human race into the people to whom one must justify one's beliefs and the others."<sup>1</sup> Indeed the charges of relativism are not sound. The puzzle in Rorty's philosophical views lies deeply somewhere else, namely in the relation of conversation to ethnocentrism. I argue that they cannot be both true. Part 1 of my paper provides an account of what Rorty means by ethnocentrism and conversation. His ethnocentrism, I think, dies out in the wake of his call for cosmopolitanism. In part 2, I stress one of the origins of Rorty's ethnocentrism. Here Davidson comes into the picture. I argue that Rorty goes wrong in attributing ethnocentrism to Davidson: there is no truth in ethnocentrism.

## 1. Rorty's account of ethnocentrism and conversation.

In part I of *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth* (hereafter *O.R.T.*), Rorty says: "There are two principal ways in which reflective human beings try, by placing their lives in a larger context, to give sense to those lives...by telling the story of their contribution to a community....I shall say that stories of the former kind exemplify the desire for solidarity, and that stories of the latter kind exemplify the desire for objectivity."<sup>2</sup> Rorty sides with the desire for solidarity because the other alternative is foiled by its own pretension.

A philosopher who grounds solidarity in objectivity is forced to provide a correct metaphysics and epistemology. But the conditions cannot be met. The claim for objectivity is the claim that truth has an essence to which a given theory of knowledge strives to correspond. However, Rorty writes, "No sooner does one develop an evolutionary epistemology which explains why our science is good than somebody writes a science-fiction story about bug-eyed and monstrous evolutionary epistemologists praising

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Rorty, "Solidarity or Objectivity?" in *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Rorty, "Solidarity or Objectivity?" *O.R.T.*, p. 21.

bug-eyed and monstrous scientists for the survival of their monstrous theories."<sup>3</sup> A philosopher who reduces objectivity to solidarity escapes the drawbacks of metaphysics and epistemology because the problem of solidarity, when put in moral and political terms rather than in epistemological or metaphysical ones, makes clear what is at stake. Objectivity would suppose that we could step outside our community in order to examine it in the light of something which transcends it. But this, from a pragmatist's point of view, cannot be done either for truth or rationality because "there is nothing to be said about truth or rationality apart from descriptions of the familiar procedures of justification which a given society—ours—uses in one or another area of inquiry."<sup>4</sup> This view stands for ethnocentrism, according to Rorty. He grants that a speaker of another society cannot get outside his own conceptual scheme; no given society can but work by its own lights. On this view every society is ethnocentric. But the question arises whether the impossibility of an outside vantage point does not smack of relativism. Rorty, rightly argues that the objection of relativism does not hold.

First, the pragmatist does not have a theory of truth. His view would be a meta-narrative one, i.e. an epistemological one, and thereby relativist if he were defending the idea that there is something on which to plot something else. "Not having any epistemology, *a fortiori*, he does not have a relativist one." Therefore, to accuse the pragmatist of relativism is to put a meta-narrative fish in his mouth.

Second, relativism would be fatal to humanity. On the one hand, each culture would be preserving and appraising blindly its own values. On the other, we could no longer feel indignation or contempt for other members of another society. Besides, we would begin to "consider whether our attempts to get other parts of world to adopt our culture are different in kind from the efforts of fundamentalist missionaries. If we continue this line of thought too long we become... 'wet' liberals."<sup>5</sup> We would be torn between seeing our "own bourgeois liberalism" as an example of cultural bias and using force rather than persuasion to convince other people to adopt the beliefs and values we praise.

Rorty sets the relationship of relativism and ethnocentrism in terms of a dilemma: "either we attach a special privilege to our own community, or we pretend an impossible tolerance for every group." But relativism is refuted; the pragmatist must therefore grasp the ethnocentric horn of the dilemma.<sup>6</sup> Ethnocentrism, as Rorty takes it, runs against the attitude that our social liberal values and beliefs are wrong. It purports rather to cope with the problem of 'wet' liberal by showing a way out. It does not defend

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<sup>3</sup> Rorty, Presidential Address (hereafter Address.), p. 729.

<sup>4</sup> Rorty, *id.*, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Rorty, "On Ethnocentrism", in *O.R.T.*, p. 203.

<sup>6</sup> Rorty, "Solidarity or Objectivity?" in *O.R.T.*, p. 29.

relativism or commensurability, for it does not consist in the application of criteria. If we drop the idea of criteria and consider "inquiry as the continual reweaving of a web of beliefs...then the notion of "local cultural norms" will lose its offensively parochial overtones. For now to say that we must work by our own lights, that we must be ethnocentric, is merely to say that beliefs suggested by another culture must be tested by trying to weave them together with beliefs we already have."<sup>7</sup> The attitude behind the view that, despite the impossibility of shedding our conceptual scheme, parochialism can nonetheless be avoided, amounts to saying that the culture ('ethnos') is not a monad-like. On the contrary the culture prides itself by and because of its ability to enlarge itself in adding more valuable values. Only on that condition can we speak of conversation. But here, if I am right, Rorty defines conversation as a dialogue. Intercourse with other cultures can help modify our ideas about what institutions can best "embody the spirit of Western social democracy. These cultures can tell us what further reforms are needed." If their values and beliefs are sound to the extent that they can be managed as to fit the spirit of our values and beliefs, then we can adopt them "through some sort of give-and-take." In this case conversation would mean dialogue and the ethnocentrism would be an open one, in the sense of adapting itself to what emerges as good in the encounter. If this were all the story ethnocentrism had to tell about its contribution to a community, no problem would arise. The difficulty starts with another meaning of conversation, a prominent one in Rorty's work, namely conversation as persuasion.

If the culture we encounter has nothing we can take, all we have to do is convince, through persuasion, the members of that culture to adopt our own values and beliefs. Rorty argues for persuasion at two levels: persuasion of people within the same culture but with radically different beliefs and values; and persuasion of people from different cultures. The question that relates the two levels is the question of how we can make these people conversational partners in the sense of dialogue.

As for the first level, Rorty claims that the liberal society entrusts power to two particular groups: the group of the agents of diversity or love, namely anthropologists and journalists, on the one hand, and the group of the agents of justice or universality, on the other. The agents of love spread the values and beliefs of the 'ethnos' by persuading the members of another community that they would be better off, could they accept the agent of diversity's 'ethnos.' By providing us with sympathetic interpretations of these people, the agents draw our attention to the existence of people out there that society has failed to notice. They demand that we enlarge the ethnocentric values and beliefs to them. And here come the agents of the second group. These agents of universality "make sure that once these people are admitted as citizens, once they

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<sup>7</sup>Rorty, *id.*, p. 26.

have been shepherded into the light by the connoisseurs of diversity, they are treated just like the rest of us."<sup>8</sup>

In the case of people from different cultures, Rorty takes the anthropologists to be empowered for the spreading of the liberal values. But he also stresses the roles played by people who go to missionary schools or European universities. Persuaded by the values and the beliefs of the 'ethnos' which provides the upbringing, these scholars get themselves empowered to persuade their own fellows in the same way as, at the first level, the few people convinced by the agents of love and of universality manage to persuade their own fellows. In both cases the persuaded persuade "on the basis of invidious comparisons with suggested concrete alternatives," showing how liberal values are better than feudalism or totalitarianism and the like.

Rorty's ethnocentrism does not go unchallenged, though. As a matter of fact, it has been characterized as a form of cultural imperialism especially when Rorty holds the view that the desire of ethnocentrism is "to extend the reference of 'us' as far as we can." The charge of imperialism, in my view, is but a red-herring: it gets us nowhere, and ducks the issue at stake. Besides, it fails to appreciate Rorty's efforts to make sense of what is going on in the real world, to explain the fall of the Wall, for instance. Rorty intends to frame a way out to 'wet' liberalists who take liberal values to be outdated while at the same time not being able to detach themselves from the attitude they despise. Rorty, nonetheless, sets out the problem in a wrong way and seems to be caught in contradiction.

In *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (hereafter P.M.N.), Rorty attempts to "deconstruct the Mirror of Nature" as a series of failures of theories of "correspondence to reality." The notion of correspondence presupposes the idea of something to be brought to light by a commensurable vocabulary. This is but a myth because our various vocabularies will never describe the same thing. All we have to do is generate myriad new directions in a Socratic stance, by picking up "the jargon of the interlocutor rather than translating it into one's own" (P.M.N., p. 318). There is no method for knowing when we have reached truth, or when one gets closer to it. This means that we have to prefer Socrates over Plato. But the calling for siding for Socrates against Plato turns paradoxically to the inverse. Rorty seems to argue that there is some reality to which all societal practices try or should try to correspond to. Despite his saying that conversation is not a "successor subject" to epistemology, that "the cultural space left by the demise of epistemology will not be filled" (P.M.N., p. 315), he ends up with the hint that the void is filled by a form of social foundationalism in terms of ethnocentrism. If I understand him correctly, he is substituting a mirror of nature for the mirror of nature, a mirror that turns out to be the mirror of nature, namely

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<sup>8</sup> Rorty, "On Ethnocentrism," in *O.R.T.*, p. 206.

the ethnocentric mirror of the day. The fight against Plato is not sure to be won. In his Presidential Address before the *American Philosophical Society*, he acknowledges the challenge. He quotes William James:

If this life be not a real fight in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which we may withdraw at will...It feels like a fight. For us, footnotes of Plato that we are, it does feel that way (Address, p. 737).

Rorty's urge for ethnocentrism, as I read him, seems to be indicative of the view that the history of human progress has come to an end. In his Address, he holds that truth and virtue are whatever emerges from the conversation of the West. The liberal democracy "is the worst form of government imaginable, except for all the others which have been tried so far" (O.R.T. p. 29). It has uprooted those forms of social and political organizations not by using philosophical arguments but by offering examples i.e. narratives of advantageous outcomes. There is nothing which meets the purpose of human progress better than this 'ethnos.' Here and there people admit that truth and justice lie in the direction it has marked. The 'ethnos' is "the achievement of objective truth, where "objective truth" is no more and no less than the best idea we currently have to explain what is going on" (P.M.N. p. 385).

Rorty's approach can be characterized as a sort of a Hegelian Owl of Minerva, but minus dialectical contradiction. It is a kind of Hegel's Owl of Minerva because Rorty seems to claim that what is real or objective, in the sense above, is not a given but what we arrive at. When tracing the history of human progress, we notice that the 'ethnos' has continued long enough to make it possible for us to identify its success. According to Rorty, this is not done by the philosophers but by the guardians of diversity and justice empowered by the 'ethnos.' All we do as philosophers amounts to giving a rationale, "a way of making political liberalism look good to persons with philosophical tastes" (O.R.T., p. 211). The Owl of Minerva takes flight at dawn.

My reasons for not characterizing ethnocentrism as the outcome of a dialectical contradiction stems from Rorty's view that ethnocentrism aims at "Cosmopolitanism without Emancipation" (which the title of the last paper of *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*). To say that ethnocentrism aims at emancipation would imply that human beings have a nature, an essence that unfolds itself in the terms of the 'ethnos.' The relation between two given cultures is that of incompatibility, meaning that none hides a contradiction to be overcome by dialectics. For this reason, says Rorty, "there is no reason and no need to subsume the two in a higher synthesis. The group in question may itself shift from the one point of view

to the other (thus "objectivizing" their past selves through a process of "reflection" and making new sentences true of their present selves" (P.M.N., p. 386). Cosmopolitanism does not suggest the idea of self realization of a hidden essence. It does not convey the idea of a spirit returning back into itself in order to be, at the end, what it is at the beginning. The rhetoric of "Cosmopolitanism without Emancipation" is a reformist one, meaning that conversation will make *ad hoc* changes in favorable terms for the sake of the cosmopolitan 'ethnos.'

The inconsistency I decipher in Rorty's conversation-centered philosophy is that the demise of epistemology centered-philosophy heralds a new form of representation. I read Rorty as saying that, from the refusal of an essentialist account of representation, it does not follow the denial of a token of reality imposed on us because of its success. He claims that "there is nothing wrong with liberal democracy, nor with the philosophers who have tried to enlarge its scope. There is only something wrong with the attempt to see their efforts as failures to achieve something which they were not trying to achieve—a demonstration of the "objective" superiority of our way of life" (O.R.T., p. 34). If Rorty is right then, on the one hand, ethno-centrism dissolves in cosmopolitanism. For it supposes at least another ethnocentrism that the former overcomes by comparison. On the other hand, I do not see how he can reconcile his ethno-centrism with the anti-representationalist position he defends. Since Rorty takes ethnocentrism to be "inescapable," he will no longer side for anti-representationalism. But this runs against his use of a Davidsonian theory of interpretation in order to defend ethnocentrism.

## 2. Conversation and a Davidsonian theory of interpretation.

It is by extending Davidson's work "into areas which Davidson has not yet explored" (O.R.T., p. 1), Rorty says, that he finds one of the origins of ethnocentrism. In "Cosmopolitanism Without Emancipation," he attempts to give a satisfactory answer to a question that Jean-François Lyotard raises. The question, as quoted by Rorty, is this: "Can we continue to organize the events which crowd in upon us from the human and nonhuman worlds with the help of the Idea of a universal history of humanity?" (O.R.T., p. 212). To me, this question seems to be a meta-narrative one. If it does not get an epistemological answer, it is self-refuting. An epistemological question which concludes with the impossibility of epistemology destroys itself as a legitimate question. Rorty is sensitive to the puzzle. A satisfactory answer for the question must account for the following: How it is that the agent of love comes to persuade the native to adopt his 'ethnos'? The role of the native's offsprings educated in the schools of the 'ethnos' can be of no help at all: the persuasion of the native is prior to the upbringing of his progenitors. The agent of diversity must first persuade the native before persuading

him to send his sons to the 'ethnos' schools. But for this to be possible, Rorty goes (and he must go) epistemologist.

The anthropologist and the native agree, after all, on an enormous number of platitudes. They usually share beliefs about, for example, the desirability of finding waterholes, the danger of fondling poisonous snakes, the need for shelter in bad weather, the tragedy of the death of loved ones, the value of courage and endurance, and so on. If they did not, as Davidson has remarked, it is hard to see how the two would ever have been able to learn of each other's languages to recognize the other as a language user. . . . This Davidsonian point amounts to saying that the notion of a language untranslatable into ours makes no sense, if 'untranslatable' means 'unlearnable.'<sup>9</sup>

The very idea of an untranslatable language, Rorty agrees, is inconsistent. It would suggest that our different theories about the world look like incompatible systems of rules. He reminds us that the idea would commit its advocates to what Davidson has called the Third Dogma of Empiricism: the scheme-content dualism. But this distinction embodies the idea of something out there which different theories would be trying to organize. The door would be open to cultural relativism, which, by the way, we know to be untenable. Davidson, Rorty suggests, is right. I suggest however that Rorty goes wrong in his peculiar way to make Davidson right.

Rorty attributes to Davidson the part of his ethnocentrism according to which we cannot stand outside our 'ethnos.' In claiming that there must be "meta-rules for pairing off the sentences" a speaker may utter, Rorty seems to acknowledge that interpretation of the utterances of a speaker is prior to persuasion. But he seems to consider a Davidsonian interpreter as one of the deputies of the 'ethnos.' For he seems to take the outcome of a theory of interpretation, namely the attribution of desires, beliefs, and meaning as brought about by the light of the 'ethnos.' Now, the phrase "our light" and some of its various formulations can be found in Davidson's writings. It is an ambiguous phrase indeed and has led even serious philosophers to identify Davidson with what he is not. We can explain away the ambiguity. I offer a hint as my critical inquiry unfolds. I put the contrast between Rorty's ethnocentrism and Davidson's non-ethnocentrism in the following opposite nutshells: Rorty holds that even though we cannot get outside our beliefs, values, and language, we can nonetheless have knowledge of, we can talk about, an objective, public world, which is *the making of our 'ethnos.'* Davidson, on the contrary,

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<sup>9</sup>Rorty, "Cosmopolitanism Without Emancipation" in *O.R.T.*, p. 215.

suggests that although we cannot get outside our beliefs, desires, and language, we can nevertheless have knowledge of, talk about an objective public world which *is not our making*. Rorty suggests that it is because both the native and the agent of love share the belief about a good shelter that the anthropologist can use narrative discourse so as to persuade him. Here then persuasion imports a conceptual scheme, that is, ethnocentrism, or its language, suited to the task of organizing the history of human experience into events such as cosmopolitanism. As for Davidson, he is concerned with the question of whether by speaking a language we therein import a conceptual scheme. The answer is No. The meaninglessness of a conceptual scheme is "due simply to what we mean by a system of concepts" such as beliefs, desires and the like.

Given the foregoing points about Rorty's call for meta-rules, the anthropologist must be interpreted by the native in order to persuade him; and the native must be interpreted in order to be persuaded. Rorty cannot deny the interplay without getting himself in an impossible position by way of reply to Lyotard. Suppose that both the native and the anthropologist find themselves caught in rain; and suppose also that the native utters a sentence *S* which, in English reads: "The banana leaf protects from the drops of rain." The agent of love, who was waiting for an opportunity to have his say, utters *S'*: "an umbrella would be better." Prior to bringing the native to prefer an umbrella over a banana leaf, the anthropologist must have attributed to the native the belief that, should they both use banana leaves, they would get wet much less. He must have identified the meaning of the words uttered. In that peculiar conversation, what the anthropologist offers as alternative is the desirability that the 'umbrella' sentence be true. Now the question is: granted that the anthropologist understands his speaker to the extent that he utters a persuasive sentence "an umbrella would be better," how can the native, who cannot speak English and who cannot find a translator in the vicinity, identify the beliefs of his speaker, and what his words mean? *Pace* Quine we can no longer assume meanings as entities. *Pace* Quine also, we know that what prompts a Gavagaian inhabitant to assent to or dissent from "Gavagai?" is not rabbits but stimulations of rabbits. In this sense, Rorty's anthropologist can draw contrasting pictures of banana leaves and umbrellas or show photographs as to serve in his narrative discourse. But this will not suffice because drawing or showing pictures would not help to account for the ability of the interpreter to understand an infinity of sentences the speaker may utter. In addition, as shown above, the very possibility of drawing picture supposes that the agent has made himself understood. The question turns out to be the question of what an interpreter must know and how he can know it. What the interpreter must know is, for empirical purpose, a modified version of Tarski's theory of truth for a language *L* provided it entails, for each sentence *s* of *L*, a theorem of the form:



(T) S is true in L if and only if P

where *s* is replaced by a description of *S* and *P* is replaced by a translation of *S* into the object language of the theory. The theory must meet empirical and semantical constraints. The interpreter must know that each instance of the T-Sentence above is entailed by the theory in such a way that the theory yields interpretation. He knows this only if he knows: first, the T-sentence for the sentence or utterance to be interpreted; second, the T-sentences for all other sentences; and third, the canonical proofs of the T-sentences. The theory of truth is semantical in character. This means that in radical interpretation, Davidson is not implying that we impute our values to the speaker: *pace* Quine we can translate a speaker's sentence of the form "*B ku B*" as being, in English, "*p&p*," or "*p or p*," or "*p or non-p*" or any other logical constant. *Pace* Davidson, given that most of a speaker's utterances are of sentences he holds true under observed circumstances, we can identify not only the logical constants but the predicates and the quantifiers in a speaker's utterance without assumption of prior knowledge of them. When Davidson holds that radical interpretation imposes our logic, he can mean nothing but that the logical properties revealed by the theory are couched in the interpreter's canonical notation. This does not change the literal meaning of the logical constants involved. Otherwise Davidson would be holding the scheme-content dualism which would take logic as separate from interpretation. What justifies the procedure is the principle of charity based on the veridical and holistic character of belief. But we know that holism gives rise to indeterminacy of interpretation. This means that even "when all the evidence is in, alternative ways of stating the facts remain open." Given this consequence, an ethnocentrist can then take persuasion to be preferred over epistemology and still hold that the issue is clearer when put in moral terms where "jibing" will be nothing but "coping:" a theory of action would be better than epistemology. But this cannot be right. In the conversation I have imagined, each partner is trying to get at this point: to have the other choose between two alternatives, that is, to make him prefer that one sentence rather than the other be true. If either partner knows what sentence the speaker prefers to be true he will know what the speaker values, what he believes, and what the words uttered mean. But for the attribution to be possible, the options must be put in words. We cannot justify the attribution of preferences unless we interpret the speech behavior of the speaker. But this theory of action goes radical in the sense that it does not assume that we have a prior access to meaning and the propositional attitudes such as desires, beliefs. It must include a theory of radical interpretation and will be based on Davidson's modified version of Tarski's theory of truth. However, when consideration of the speaker's intentions or his desires come into the picture, the evidential base of the theory of radical interpretation (the attitude of holding true) must be

replaced by the attitude of that of preferring that one sentence be true rather than another. It is not merely knowledge of what causes a speaker to hold a sentence true but knowledge of the degree of belief in its truth and the desirability that the sentence be true which explains the speaker's preference. Suppose that a given speaker prefers that a sentence, say *S* be true rather than another, say *S'*. He values *S* because of the values he sets on its consequences and how he likely believes those consequences. But these quantified beliefs and desires are patterns not accounted for by the modified version of Tarski's theory of truth. Unless a theory of action is called for, there is no way to discover these patterns. Consequently the theory of radical interpretation requires a radical theory of action. This interplay between a radical theory of interpretation and a radical decision theory would lead to a "unified theory of meaning and action" as Davidson calls it. The theory is conceived as a merger of the modified theory of truth and a modification of Ramsey's theory of action. It shows how to scale the utilities of the speaker from which the degrees of belief will be derived. At the same time it will account for attributions of content to belief, desire and for interpretation.

Since rationality is implicit in the propositional attitudes, Davidson suggests that the indispensable principle of charity covers two forms of the norms of the patterns of beliefs and desires: the norms of logical coherence and consistency and the norms of shared beliefs and values. Given these norms how then can the unified theory proceed? (Notice that the theory deals with uninterpreted sentences). Davidson begins with the basic attitude of preferring that *S* be true rather than *S'*. He writes:

Clearly the interpreter can know this (the attitude) without knowing what the sentences mean, what states of affairs the agent values, or what he believes. But the preferring true of sentences by an agent is equally clearly a function of what the agent takes the sentences to mean, the value he sets on various possible or actual states of the world, and the probability he attaches to those states contingent on the truth of the relevant sentences. So it is not absurd to think that all three attitudes of the agent can be derived from sentences preferred true."<sup>10</sup>

We assign the utility scale and discover the degrees of belief provided we can identify the logical connectives of the sentences from sentences preferred true. On the basis of the Scheffer stroke, Davidson provides an account of how the sentential connectives are to be identified. He also

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<sup>10</sup> Davidson, "Toward a Unified Theory of Meaning and Action" pp. 8-9.

gives a way for identifying the quantifiers and the identity symbol for sentences. He is in a position to make comparisons of value and to derive subjective probabilities from them. But I leave out the procedure because there is too much involved to be even summarized within the compass of this paper.

We can see the formal constraints play a crucial role in testing the theory. The causes of beliefs and desires are not to be neglected; but neither the beliefs nor the desires will represent values to be smuggled. Nothing, not even ethnocentrism can make a belief-desire sentence true. I did go through some sketch about Davidson's theory because he is not a worn-out philosopher whose mention of the name would constitute a quotation. The summary was necessary in order to point out that Rorty cannot accept Davidson's view with the proviso that his theory of truth be dropped.

What I have been trying to convey is not a defence of a Davidsonian theory about how, by means of an adequate theory, we can identify the beliefs, desires of a speaker and the meaning of his words. I did not go into any summary of a theory of truth; nor did I suggest how Davidson rework Bayes' action theory in particular. Nor did I talk about what is meant by "desire-belief sentence." These were not my contention. The concern was Rorty. I share his saying that he cannot be criticized as imperialist or relativist. I just joined him in his own territory: ethnocentrism. I suggested that Davidson could not be portrayed as an ethnocentrist. But the dilemma I tried to get at is this: either Rorty espouses a Davidsonian theory of truth or he does not. If he does not, then he fails to answer to Lyotard; as a consequence both would be asking a self-refuting question. But then ethnocentrism goes by the board; or, Davidson is a right ally to Rorty. But then again ethnocentrism goes by the board. In no case is the doctrine unscathed. If Rorty wants to go "all the way with Davidson," he has to take a theory of truth seriously. If these points sound like a defence of a Davidsonian theory of interpretation, then so much the better.

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