

**This item is the archived peer-reviewed author-version of:**

Beckett's Non-Anthropomorphic Anthropology

**Reference:**

Van Hulle Dirk.- Beckett's Non-Anthropomorphic Anthropology  
Modernism/modernity - ISSN 1071-6068 - 24:2(2017), p. 391-398

## Beckett's Non-anthropomorphic Anthropology

By Dirk Van Hulle, University of Antwerp

What explains the apparent connection between Samuel Beckett and philosophy? Bruno Clément tried to formulate a reply to this question, arguing that "there is a 'philosophical' discourse already in Beckett's texts . . . so strongly giving rise to confusion that one might speak about a 'philosophy' of Beckett, through which one believes that the influence of such and such a philosopher, such and such a philosophy might be detected in his novels, plays, and even in his poems."<sup>1</sup>

Nonetheless, Beckett was very explicit when, in an interview with Tom Driver, he stated emphatically that he was not a philosopher. The other statement that is often quoted in connection with the question of Beckett's relation to philosophy is that he would not have had any reason to write his novels if he could have expressed their topic in philosophical terms.<sup>2</sup> Especially the second statement does indicate that Beckett acknowledged a connection with philosophy, but that the difference is a matter of language. That the enigmatic connection remains a hot topic in Beckett studies is evidenced by the four books under discussion: S. E. Gontarski places

Beckett between Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze; S. E. Wilmer and Audronė Žukauskaitė indicate in the title that their collection of essays is not so much about Beckett and Deleuze but about Deleuze and Beckett; Andre Furlani discusses a Beckett "after Wittgenstein"; and Jean-Michel Rabaté discusses Beckett's works in interaction with a variety of philosophers, ranging from pre-Beckett philosophers such as René Descartes, Arnold Geulincx, and Immanuel Kant to post-Beckett thinkers such as Theodor Adorno, Alain Badiou, and Roland Barthes.

The quotation that constitutes the striking title of Rabaté's book Think, Pig!, referring to Lucky's "tirade" in Waiting for Godot, applies to all the books under discussion, and perhaps to all Beckett criticism in general. Reading Beckett involves many things, but it always entails the imperative to think. Beckett himself turned the imperative into a noun when he referred to Lucky's speech as the "think" in the notebook to his 1975 West Berlin production of Warten auf Godot (Furlani, Beckett After Wittgenstein, 53).

"Thinking" is also the term with which one of Beckett's translators characterized his works. On 19 January 1954, after having translated Molloy (1951) into German, Erich Franzen told Beckett that he would not be able to translate the next two novels, Malone meurt (1951) and L'Innommable (1953). Beckett replied that he

was disappointed to hear Franzen would not be taking on the other two books and asked him: "Is it reluctance to tarry in such a world? I can well understand that."<sup>3</sup> Franzen told Beckett that he simply felt unqualified and that he would have to meet Beckett in person more frequently than his translator's fee would allow him. His decision had nothing to do with his appreciation of Beckett's work, which remained undiminished. The way he describes Beckett's work in his letter dated February 10, 1954 is remarkable as he characterizes it as "thinking" and as a radically different sort of "anthropology":

I greatly admire the daring and power of your *thinking* which does not shy from confronting the ultimate consequences of your approach. And I feel deeply touched by your determined pursuit of an "anthropology" far more deserving this name than anything of the sort taught either in the departments of "humanities" or by modern philosophers—not to mention story-tellers (with the possible exception of Faulkner when he is not rhapsodic). (26; emphasis added)<sup>4</sup>

Franzen's attempt to define Beckett's "thinking" by what it is not resembles Molloy's characterization of anthropology: "What I liked in anthropology was its

inexhaustible faculty of negation, its relentless definition of man, as though he were no better than God, in terms of what he is not."<sup>5</sup> The Spectator in Beckett's play Eleutheria calls this "negative anthropology" when he addresses the protagonist, Victor Krap: "You are asked what kind of a life it is that you're leading. You tell us all about what it isn't. Excuse me, I hope I haven't offended you: you tell us a little about what it isn't. That's what's called negative anthropology."<sup>6</sup> Franzen views Beckett's "anthropology" as distinguishing the human from the "humanities," from philosophy, and from story-telling—three negative definitions that may help us triangulate the topics addressed in the four books under discussion.

### **Not the Anthropology of Story-tellers**

The human being has been dubbed "the storytelling animal" by Jonathan Gottschall in his book about "how stories make us human." He argues, from an evolutionary perspective, that the human mind is tuned to detect patterns; this urge for meaningful patterns translates into "a hunger for story"; and, if the mind cannot detect any meaningful patterns in the world, "it will try to impose them."<sup>7</sup> Beckett was all too well aware of this urge, but while Gottschall embraces and champions it, Beckett criticizes our tendency to impose narrative

patterns on the world or on the self to make them seem meaningful. Instead of telling stories, therefore, Beckett stages the urge to tell stories, as in Endgame, making Hamm tell his chronicle or Nagg (re)tell the story of the English tailor comparing the perfection of his trousers to the imperfection of God's creation. While Hamm constantly interrupts himself to comment on the telling of his tale, Nagg's story ends anticlimactically with his metacomment on how he told it.

Rather than a form of storytelling, Beckett's work is a form of "thinking," as Franzen suggested, and it is as such that the four books under discussion here approach it. In the aptly titled Think, Pig!, Jean-Michel Rabaté reads Nagg's story first of all as a retelling of the same story in Beckett's essay "La peinture des van Velde ou Le Monde et le Pantalon":

LE CLIENT: Dieu a fait le monde en six jours, et vous, vous n'êtes pas foutu de me faire un pantalon en six mois.

LE TAILLEUR: Mais Monsieur, regardez le monde, et regardez votre pantalon.<sup>8</sup>

THE CLIENT: God has made the world in six days and you, you are not even capable of making a pair of trousers in six months.

THE TAILOR: But Sir, look at the world, and look at your trousers.

In his nimble-spirited and marvelously readable book, Rabaté reads Nagg's story as a rewriting of (Sigmund Freud's comment on) Kant's famous statement at the end of the Critique of Practical Reason: "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily they are reflected on: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me" (Rabaté, Think, Pig!, quoted on 86). Beckett encountered this statement through the filter of Wilhelm Windelband's neo-Kantian summary in his History of Philosophy, which presents it as a triumph of human rationality and moral worth. When Beckett read an ironic debunking of Kant's claim in Freud's New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (1933), he took notes and interrupted himself with a telling ellipsis at the crucial moment: "The philosopher Kant once declared that nothing proved to him the greatness of God more convincingly than the starry heavens and the moral conscience within us. The stars are unquestionably superb . . ." (quoted on 86). In Freud's Lectures, the sentence goes on as follows: ". . . but as regards conscience God had done an uneven and careless piece of work, for a large majority of men have brought along with them only a modest amount of it or

scarcely enough to be worth mentioning" (quoted on 87).<sup>9</sup> Beckett used his note on Freud/Kant in his discussion of André Masson's paintings in "Three Dialogues with Georges Duthuit" (Disjecta, 141). When Kant's turn from awe to a feeling of superiority of our moral worth was applied to art in for instance the works of Leonardo da Vinci or André Masson, Beckett felt there was a glibness about the heroism and *Schadenfreude* with which they faced cosmic annihilation or "*disfazione*," knowing that for them nothing would be lost (141). The glibness lies in the transformation of nihilistic enjoyment into an illusion of omnipotence, in the "dialectical sleight of hand by which loss automatically becomes the artist's gain" (Rabaté, Think, Pig!, 90). In his criticism of this attitude, Beckett is true to his ethical impulse, which Rabaté defines as an "ethics of nonrelation," puncturing the "humanistic illusion that we are alike": "On the contrary, it is because we are all infinitely different that a true rapport can be posited" (91). That is why Beckett (inspired by Arnold Geulincx) prefers Bram van Velde's "*nescio*" ("I do not know, therefore I paint") to Masson's heroic approach.

Kant's definition of beauty as "purposiveness without a purpose" (or in Moran's words, in *Molloy*, "*finalité sans fin*") is also criticized by Beckett. What Beckett questions is the self-assurance implicit in



Kant's statement, which "asserts a principle according to which meaning is granted to the world" (119). In Rabaté's characteristic style, treating serious matters with both playfulness and clarity, he explains how its mechanism works and makes explicit what Beckett implies:

"reflective judgment stemming from my perception of beautiful objects can give me an idea that the world containing such beautiful objects has the form of teleology. If I see beauty in the world, the world acquires the form of a purpose, without necessarily being teleological in itself" (119). Beckett, however, does not gratuitously poke fun at Kant's philosophy. Rabaté sees a direct link between aesthetics and ethics, the ethical principle entailing the duty to represent what cannot be represented: "Like Mr. Knott, here is the knot tying up aesthetics and ethics in Beckett" (120).

Against the quasi-teleology of Kant's aesthetic system, Beckett's works suggest what might be called a dysteleology, not a work in progress like Joyce's, but a work in "mere gress," which Beckett preferred because of its "purity from destination and hence from schedule."<sup>10</sup> For as Rabaté notes, "[T]he relentless slaughter that we call 'progress' is the triumphant march of humanity" (Rabaté, Think, Pig!, 20).

**Not the Anthropology of the "Humanities"**

Beckett associates both "progress" and the pseudo-teleology related to beauty in Kant's "Zweckmässigkeit ohne Zweck" to the notion of the "human." When, in the novel Molloy, Gaber alludes to Keats's "Endymion," praising life as "a thing of beauty" and "a joy for ever," Moran wonders: "Do you think he meant human life?" (Beckett, Molloy, 226). Rabaté duly places this and other passages in their historical context. In this case, the passage becomes more interesting against the background of postwar humanism, against which Beckett's anti-anthropomorphic position can be read as a form of "antihumanism," which is perceptible in "La peinture des van Velde ou le Monde et le Pantalon" (1945), notably when Beckett proposes: "To conclude . . . let's talk about the 'human'":

Here is a word, no doubt a concept too, that has to be reserved for times of huge slaughters. One needs the pestilence, Lisbon and a major religious butchery [*boucherie*] for people to think of loving one another, of leaving the neighboring gardener in peace, of being radically simple.

This is a word that is being bandied around today with an unrivalled fury. Just like dum-dum bullets. (Disjecta, 131; Rabaté, Think, Pig!, 19)

The anthropomorphic stance is parodied and criticized concisely in The Unnamable: "Pupil Mahood, repeat after me, Man is a higher mammal. I couldn't."<sup>11</sup> Rabaté invites us to think differently from Mahood's would-be instructor, to take up a "minimalist position" like Voltaire ("Il faut cultiver notre jardin"), to "move beyond the human and try to think otherwise - like an animal, perhaps like a goat or a pig," and to do so with the help of Beckett's "philosophy of the 'low'" in the literal sense of "bathos," Greek for "deep," as Beckett noted in his "Whoroscope" notebook (Rabaté, Think, Pig!, 8, 9).

Beckett's critique of humanism and of anthropomorphism could easily lead one to categorize him as a thinker of the posthuman, but Rabaté is wary of making this deduction, concluding that Beckett cannot simply be enlisted in "the camp of the posthuman," for "no sooner do we meet formulations [in Beckett's works] that anticipate Deleuze's and Guattari's idea of a 'body without organs' than we meet the old couple of God and the human" (41, 44).

Gilles Deleuze's work has inspired Beckettians in various ways, as the collection Deleuze and Beckett, edited by Wilmer and Žukauskaitė, shows. The book is divided into four parts, the first of which (with contributions by Anthony Uhlmann, Gontarski and

Žukauskaitė) deals with key Deleuzian concepts such as difference, becoming, and multiplicity. The second part (with Benjamin Keatinge, Isabelle Ost, and Timothy S. Murphy on Psychoanalysis and Sociality) opens with a sharp “schizoanalytic” reading of Beckett’s works, elucidating aspects of his writing that psychoanalytic interpretations tend to overlook. Molloy is thus presented as a “knowingly elaborate parody” in which “Molloy refuses to be neuroticized into the psychoanalytic myth of Oedipus or psychoticized as a beleaguered vagrant of deficient mental and physical faculties” (Deleuze and Beckett, 91).

In the third part, “Space, Time and Memory,” Garin Dowd argues that, in the creation of characters as “impersonal singularities,” Beckett anticipates the Deleuzian concept of “any-space-whatever” (*espace quelconque*) (165). Space “behaves like duration,” David Addyman notes in “Different Spaces: Beckett, Deleuze, Bergson” (140). By referring to Beckett’s September 1934 letters to Thomas McGreevy, in which he contrasts Cézanne’s paintings of Mont Sainte-Victoire with all the anthropomorphized landscapes - or in Rubens’s case even “hyperanthropomorphized” landscapes, Addyman convincingly argues that Beckett did not simply adopt Bergson’s concept of time, but also applied the attributes of *durée*

to space, not unlike Deleuze in Bergsonism (1966) (quoted on 144).

As indicated above, the collection's title puts Deleuze first. Ruben Borg, however, doesn't. (Borg's essay opens the collection's fourth section, "Theatre and Performance," which also includes essays by Daniel Koczy, and Arka Chattopadhyay). Borg's "Beckett and Deleuze, Tragic Thinkers" subtly analyzes Beckett's parody of Oedipus by means of "First Love," suggesting that Beckett and Deleuze "share an understanding of the power of tragic thought in modernity" (203). From a Deleuzian perspective, as the editors note, Beckett's characters are "involved in continual becoming and flux," which is also a Bergsonian theme (18).

While Addyman discusses Beckett, Deleuze, and Bergson in that order, S. E. Gontarski puts Beckett between Bergson and Deleuze in his essay, "Creative Involution: Bergson, Beckett, Deleuze." The essay is also part of Gontarski's book of the same title, published in Edinburgh University Press's "Other Becketts" series. The "in-between" position of Beckett's name is more than a matter of chronology: the concept of "in-betweenness"—with an emphasis on flow and becoming, as applied by Deleuze to Godard's cinema—is also applicable to Beckett's works, as Gontarski argues in a chapter that opens with Deleuze and Guattari's definition of the

rhizome as something that has no beginning or end and is "always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo" (Gontarski, Creative, quoted on 147). Beckett is "in the middle" of what Gontarski discerns as a "philosophical genealogy, a line of flight that has neither need for nor interest in the periodization of Modernism, a line of which Beckett (even reluctantly) is part" (101). For modernism, Gontarski proposes, is "less an historical period than a movement, than movement itself" (1).

### **Not the Anthropology of Modern Philosophers**

In the letter quoted above, Franzen spoke of Beckett's "thinking" as distinct from that of modern philosophers. There are philosophers, such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, who show more affinities with the writer Beckett than with their colleagues. Beckett said he was not a philosopher; but "Was Wittgenstein?" asks Andre Furlani (Furlani, Beckett After, 19). Whereas the philosopher has been called an anti-philosopher by Badiou, the writer kept minimizing and reducing setting and characterization to such an extent that his works often "read like extended philosophical examples or thought experiments," as Peter Fifield describes them.<sup>12</sup>

One of these smaller thought experiments in Beckett's works is the question of evolution, reduced to

the flea in Endgame: "But humanity might start from there all over again! Catch him, for the love of God!"<sup>13</sup> In contrast to Darwin's theory of evolution, "which explains evolution in terms of an external principle of differentiation," Bergson's philosophy of becoming, according to Gontarski, sees evolution as following an internal principle, tracing the driving force to an "inner life force, an *élan vital*, or what Deleuze will finally call neo-Darwinism or involution," suggesting "an inward turn" (Gontarski, Creative, 56).

Not only is this "creative involution" presented as an "inward turn," it is also said to break free from "a linear model of evolution, as a tree, say, evolution progressing towards or culminating in an end, a telos, usually 'man' or humanity" (56). This description may apply to "social Darwinism" and other misreadings of On the Origin of Species, but Darwin's theory is certainly not teleological, which was one of the reasons it was felt as a threat to many people in the second half of the nineteenth century: it suggested that man was *not* the culmination of any divine plan (as in, for instance, the Book of Genesis). That was also the reason why Freud included Darwin's theory in his list of the three most serious blows to humanity's pride: after Copernicus had shown that the earth was not the center of the universe, Darwin had shown that human beings did not have any

privileged position among other species. (The third blow, according to Freud, was his own suggestion that the human being was not even master of his own mind.)

The problem with the so-called "inward turn" is that it has dominated the discourse of modernist writers and their critics for decades, while other thinkers, such as E. B. Holt (The Freudian Wish and its Place in Ethics), Gilbert Ryle (The Concept of Mind), and more recently Andy Clark and David Chalmers ("The Extended Mind"), Mark Rowlands (The New Science of the Mind: From Extended Mind to Embodied Phenomenology), Richard Menary ("Writing as Thinking"), Daniel Hutto and Erik Myin (Radical Enactivism), as well as cognitive narratologists such as Marco Caracciolo and David Herman have argued, and continue to argue, for active externalism and a notion of the mind conceived in a constant interaction with the environment. The chapter in which this "inward turn" is suggested is called "The Invention of the Modern," while Herman, for instance, recently called the so-called "inward turn" of modernism a critical commonplace and made a plea for a reassessment of this view in his essay "Re-Minding Modernism."<sup>14</sup> Gontarski's insistence on this "inward turn" (even in the first paragraph of the first chapter) reads like a statement against these recent paradigms. Nonetheless, I think both perspectives are reconcilable, because Gontarski's view



of modernism "blurs distinctions . . . between interior and exterior," and the blurring of this border between inside and outside is also advanced by proponents of extended, embedded, enactive, and embodied cognition (Gontarski, Creative, 1). As Beckett wrote to Duthuit, "what are called outside and inside are one and the same."<sup>15</sup> Furlani, in turn, refers to this passage to illustrate Beckett's rapport with Wittgenstein, who argued precisely *against* "inwardness": central to Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations is the embodiment of the mind, which Furlani advances as an alternative to "Cartesian inwardness" (Furlani, Beckett After, 37).

The inner state, according to Furlani, is a chimera, and for Wittgenstein this has consequences with regard to language. Thought and utterance are simultaneous, according to Wittgenstein: "Speech is not the translation of a preverbal thought" (53). A nice example would be this conversation between the title characters of the first novel Beckett wrote after the Second World War, Mercier and Camier: "I was *thinking* of *saying* something, *said* Mercier, but on second *thoughts* I'll keep it to myself. / Selfish pig, *said* Mercier."<sup>16</sup> On the one hand, Mercier seems to create a Cartesian dichotomy between inside and outside. On the other hand,

he thinks *while* speaking and perhaps *by* speaking, which results in "second thoughts."

Furlani, however, uses another example to illustrate Wittgenstein's view of cognition: Lucky's "think," which he even sees as "the apogee of this notion of mental process" (Furlani, Beckett After, 54). Lucky's situation also serves to illustrate a similar point Wittgenstein makes with regard to the notion of pain. The philosophical problem of private experience, according to Wittgenstein, is not that each individual has her or his own instance of a particular experience, but that nobody knows "whether the other also has *this* or something else"; in the characterization of Lucky, Beckett "severs the spurious association between the privacy of pain and introspection" (48). Lucky's mental life is unavailable. Furlani uses this as an illustration of Wittgenstein's refutation of the Cartesian distinction between inner and outer that underlies assumptions regarding pain behavior. He discredits the Cartesian suggestion that pain arises from inward experience (46). And Beckett could read about this in David Pole's book The Later Philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1958), which is one of the many books on Wittgenstein in Beckett's extant library (beckettarchive.org).

It is noteworthy—and to researchers doing archival research in Beckett studies also a joy to see—how

intensively Furlani makes use of recent findings such as the books in Beckett's personal library.<sup>17</sup> Both Furlani and Rabaté make use of archival material with a certain self-evidence, because this recourse is clearly advantageous to their research and critical endeavour. It seems a very long time indeed since Beckett studies (particularly with regard to the topic of Beckett and philosophy) briefly seemed to be divided into theoretical versus archival/historicizing approaches, represented, respectively, by Garin Dowd and Matthew Feldman in their polemics in Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui (2008). Beckett studies of the past decade have shown that these approaches are actually mutually complementary. In the case of Beckett and Wittgenstein, one could even speak of congruence, as Furlani duly points out (28). Furlani refers, for instance, to Gontarski, who, as early as 1977, drew attention to the fact that Beckett reminded himself to "vaguely" descriptions of the set in a draft of Happy Days (131). There is no need, therefore, to speak of an "archival turn," which might imply, on the one hand, that making use of the archive would be a new thing, whereas it has been part of Beckett studies since several decades; and, on the other hand, that it could be just a short-lived fashion (*quod non*). A combination of philosophical and archival research can be beneficial to both historicizing and theoretical approaches. On the one

hand, it is not because Lucky's speech was probably written before Beckett had read Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations that there cannot be any affinity between Beckett's "investigations" and Wittgenstein's "think." On the other hand, it can be helpful even in a theoretical argument, to make use of archival material, which, as the four books under discussion show, is a useful element critics have at their disposal in the interpretative.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, for instance, Furlani refers to Paul Engelmann's Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein, with a Memoir (one of the books in Beckett's library) to help explain why a whole generation mistook Wittgenstein for a positivist, namely because "he draws the line between what we can speak about and what we must be silent about just as they do" (Furlani, Beckett After; quoted on 61). But Engelmann goes on to explain the difference, as Beckett could read: "The difference is only that they have nothing to be silent about. Positivism holds—and this is its essence—that what we can speak about is all that matters in life. *Whereas Wittgenstein passionately believes that all that really matters in human life is precisely what, in his view, we must be silent about*" (61; emphasis in original). Also in his later work, such as the Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein writes: "Words fail us" ("Es fehlen uns die Worte"), expressed

with almost the same words as Mrs. Williams in Beckett's dramatic fragment Human Wishes: "Words fail us" or Winnie in Happy Days: "Words fail. There are times when even they fail."<sup>19</sup> Perhaps it is the irony of any study on the things of which one cannot speak, like Furlani's, that the analogy between the famous last paragraph of the Tractatus ("Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent") and The Unnamable's "I shall have to speak of things of which I cannot speak" is not only spoken of, but even occurs twice (Furlani, Beckett After, quoted on 20, 117).<sup>20</sup> As Fritz Mauthner already complained more than a century ago, we only have words to utter our critique of language.

But we do have more than one language to do so. A week after the letter to Franzen, quoted above, Beckett explained to Hans Naumann that one of the reasons why he decided to write in French was "le besoin d'être mal armé" ("the need to be ill-equipped") (Letters vol. 2, 462).

### **Thinking/Writing/Becoming Degree Zero**

The pun on Mallarmé (mal armé) is noted by both Furlani (Beckett after Wittgenstein, 65) and Rabaté, who analyses Beckett's statement in the historical context of postwar Paris (Rabaté, Think, Pig!, 186). Jean-Paul Sartre defined writing in terms of communication and

commitment, using two notions: language (to communicate ideas) and style (the means of expression). This view was challenged by Roland Barthes, whose Writing Degree Zero was published in 1947, only months after the publication of Sartre's What Is Literature? Barthes introduced a third term, *écriture*, with which he emancipated writing "from the dilemma in which one had to choose between a private discourse and the socially responsible position of the committed intellectual" (192). Barthes's main example of a "style-less style" or "writing degree zero" was Albert Camus's L'Étranger (1942), which introduced the tropes of epistemic qualification and negation that are so characteristic of Beckett's French postwar writings. Beckett's late-modernist writing "without style" thus became a simple vernacular, rejecting "the high modernist idea of mastery over an array of ancient styles that will have to be recombined, parodied, ironized, and transcended" (193). Rabaté concludes: "Here was a site that Samuel Beckett had decided to inhabit," "a language to learn in and from," which leads him back to the critique of anthropomorphism "underpin[ning] all of Beckett's ethics and aesthetics" (194). In this way, "thinking" by means of "writing" (*écriture*) has brought us to "degree zero," which is also where Gontarski ends his book (Part 3, "Posteriors"). Quoting Deleuze and Guattari's What Is Philosophy? ("Becoming animal, plant,

molecular, becoming zero"), Gontarski's final chapter, on Beckett and William Burroughs, "Becoming Degree Zero," alludes to Barthes's book (Gontarski, Creative, 184). Beckett's critique of anthropomorphism, his negative anthropology, thus takes shape as what Franzen called his "thinking": thinking as writing and becoming zero, asymptotically approaching the limit of the human.

Beckett after Wittgenstein. Andre Furlani. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2015. Pp. xii + 248. \$99.95 (cloth); \$34.95 (paper).

Creative Involution: Bergson, Beckett, Deleuze. S. E. Gontarski. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015. Pp. xii + 196. \$120.00 (cloth).

Think, Pig! Beckett at the Limit of the Human. Jean-Michel Rabaté. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016. Pp. vi + 240. \$95.00 (cloth); \$32.00 (paper).

Deleuze and Beckett. Edited by S. E. Wilmer and Audronė Žukauskaitė. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Pp. xii + 253.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bruno Clément, "What the Philosophers Do with Samuel Beckett" in Beckett after Beckett, ed. S. E. Gontarski and Anthony Uhlmann (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 116-37, 121.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Lawrence Graver and Raymond Federman, eds., Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage. (New York: Routledge, 2005), 240, 242.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Beckett and Erich Franzen, "Correspondence on Translating Molloy," in Babel 3 (1984), 21-35, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel Beckett and Erich Franzen, "Correspondence on Translating Molloy," in Babel 3 (1984), 21-35, 26; emphasis added.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Beckett, Molloy (New York: Grove Press, 1955), 52.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Beckett, Eleutheria, trans. Barbara Wright (London: Faber and Faber, 1996), 147.

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Gottschall, The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012), 103-4.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Beckett, Disjecta, ed. Ruby Cohn (New York: Grove Press, 1984), 118.

<sup>9</sup> Freud, Sigmund, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1989), 77.



- 
- <sup>10</sup> The Letters of Samuel Beckett, vol. 1: 1929-1940, ed. Martha Dow Fehsenfeld and Lois More Overbeck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 186.
- <sup>11</sup> Samuel Beckett, The Unnamable (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 69.
- <sup>12</sup> Peter Fifield, "Samuel Beckett with, in, and around Philosophy," in The New Cambridge Companion to Samuel Beckett, ed. Dirk Van Hulle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 151.
- <sup>13</sup> Beckett, Endgame and Act Without Words (New York: Grove Press, 2009), 41.
- <sup>14</sup> David Herman, "Re-Minding Modernism," in The Emergence of Mind: Representations of Consciousness in Narrative Discourse in English, ed. David Herman (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 243-71.
- <sup>15</sup> The Letters of Samuel Beckett, vol. 2: 1941-1956, ed. George Craig, Martha Dow Fehsenfeld, Dan Gunn, and Lois More Overbeck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 140.
- <sup>16</sup> Samuel Beckett, Mercier and Camier (New York: Grove Press 1975), 67; emphasis added.
- <sup>17</sup> See Dirk Van Hulle and Mark Nixon, Samuel Beckett's Library (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and the Beckett Digital Library (BDL; [www.beckettarchive.org](http://www.beckettarchive.org)).

---

<sup>18</sup> Herman, Luc and Bart Vervaeck, "Narrative Interest as Cultural Negotiation," Narrative, 17.1 (2009): 111-129.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Furlani, Beckett After, 142; Beckett, "Human Wishes" in Disjecta, 160; Samuel Beckett, Happy Days: A Play in Two Acts (New York: Grove Press, 2013), 26.

<sup>20</sup> Apart from this perhaps unnecessary repetition, there are a few small mistakes that might be corrected in a second edition: Victor Krap (from Beckett's play Eleutheria) is spelled "Victor Krapp" (68), which creates a "neatness of identifications" that Beckett called dangerous; for according to the opening line of Beckett's essay on Joyce's "Work in Progress," "[t]he danger is in the neatness of identifications" not of "classifications" (18). But these are minor quibbles about a book that is excellently researched.