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Elements in Beckett Studies

edited by

Dirk Van Hulle

University of Oxford

Mark Nixon

University of Reading

POSTCOGNITIVIST BECKETT

Olga Beloborodova

University of Antwerp



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Postcognitivist Beckett

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Olga Beloborodova
University of Antwerp

Author for correspondence: Olga Beloborodova,
olga.beloborodova@uantwerpen.be

Abstract: The aim of this Element is to offer a reassessment of Beckett's alleged Cartesianism using the theoretical framework of extended cognition – a cluster of present-day philosophical theories that question the mind's brain-bound nature and see cognition primarily as a process of interaction between the human brain and the environment it operates in. The principal argument defended here is that despite the Cartesian bias introduced by early Beckett scholarship, Beckett's fictional minds are not isolated 'skullscapes'. Instead, they are grounded in interaction with their fictional storyworlds, however impoverished those may have become in the later part of his writing career.

Keywords: Beckett studies, extended cognition, postcognitivism, fictional minds, Cartesian dualism

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