

# Cambridge Elements

Elements in Beckett Studies

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## BECKETT AND SADE

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## Beckett and Sade

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**Abstract:** Much has been written on Beckett and Sade, yet nothing systematic has been produced. This Element is systematic by adopting a chronological order, which is necessary given the complexity of Beckett's varying assessments of Sade. Beckett mentioned Sade early in his career, with Proust as a first guide. His other sources were Guillaume Apollinaire, and Mario Praz's book, *La carne, la morte e il diavolo nella letteratura romantica* (1930), from which he took notes about sadism for his *Dream Notebook*. Dante's meditation on the absurdity of justice provides closure, facing Beckett's wonder at the pervasive presence of sadism in humans.

**Keywords:** sadism, torture, the Revolution, ethics, politics

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