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*"In Sympathy with the Ephemeral Life": Adorno's Reading of Beckett's Endgame*

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This essay argues that for Adorno Beckett's *Endgame* exemplifies the relation between artistic autonomy, on the one hand, and the expression of "authenticity", on the other. The work is the literary counter-part to what Adorno calls the "logic of disintegration" that works to systematically dismantle the "prepared and objectified form of all concepts which the cognitive subject faces, primarily and directly". The "logic of disintegration" results from a specific change of perspective yielded by what Adorno calls the "idea of natural-history", through which both sides of the concept are estranged and de-familiarized. Similarly, in *Endgame*, so Adorno's reading holds, far from confirming the Existentialist view of the "human condition", the drama shows such a condition to be one that has been historically produced.