Beckett’s *German Diaries* present two challenges. First, how are we to read them? And second, how do they illuminate Beckett’s postwar work? What I’ll argue in this presentation is that Beckett’s trip to Germany, though a tour of cultural sites and artistic works, increasingly becomes overwhelmed by politics, in the steady and unrelenting aesthetic, linguistic, and personal encounters with fascism. As Beckett becomes aware of what Victor Klemperer would call the *Lingua Tertii Imperii*, his initial attempts to keep politics separate from aesthetic decisions, collapse into ironical engagements whose moments of humor should not occlude how they lead Beckett to a sustained and powerful political aesthetic. The struggle in the diaries shows up, as I’ve argued elsewhere, in how the form of the diaries formally oppose propagandistic historical narratives or in the ways that Beckett’s intent to break apart language can be registered as partly a response to political ideology. Less-commented upon effects require analysis as well: Beckett advocates an aesthetic that takes people at their word, that physicalizes political rhetoric. One result in the work is amphibolies of aesthetic and political concepts, whose interpretation uneasily wobbles upon concepts of atrocity and murder. Again, in Germany, Beckett ironically develops an aesthetic theory in religious terms while simultaneously diagnosing the religious fanaticism of fascist propaganda, its will to incarnate language, its reliance on faith. This synthesis appears in his creative work too. Beckett’s postwar work also engages other fundamental aspects of Nazi power: catastrophism, food politics, degeneration. With a series of close readings I will illustrate some ways that Beckett’s political aesthetic can be mapped from these autobiographical diaries.