

# Blazon



1494 (or 1496)

Albrecht Dürer, on his trip to Italy, visits Klausen and makes a sketch of the town, which he later uses for his copperplate engraving entitled *Nemesis*.



1957

A mass demonstration at Sigmundskron Castle, near Bozen-Bolzano. 35 000 South Tyrolean people attend the rally of Silvius Magnago, the new chairman of the South Tyrolean People's Party (SVP), demanding separation from the Italian Trentino province.



1921

Around 400 Fascists from different Italian regions arrive at the Bozen-Bolzano Spring Fair where, during the costume parade, they attack participants and spectators with clubs, pistols and hand grenades. Around 50 South Tyrolean people are injured. The school teacher Franz Innerhofer is shot while trying to protect one of his pupils.



1919

During the Peace Conference in Paris following the end of WW1, the German-speaking territory of Tyrol is split in two. The section south of the Brenner Pass is ceded to Italy.



1922

Benito Mussolini takes over power in Italy and enforces measures of 'denationalization' of South Tyrol's German-speaking population, as well as mass settlement of ethnic Italians in the territory.



1986

Bomb attack at the Lana-Burgstall railway station claimed by the terrorist organization "Ein Tirol". A message spray-painted on the station walls reads, "*Alexander Langer Sau Walsche*": South Tyrolean intellectual Langer is called a sow and a *Walsche* (a derogatory South Tyrolean term to indicate Italians).



1973

Writer and poet Norbert Conrad Kaser spends his summer working at the highway toll gate in Sterzing, near the Austrian border. Primary school teacher, aspiring Capuchin friar, Italian Communist Party member and tireless traveller, Kaser is a fierce critic of Tyrolean conservatism. During a talk in Brixen, he calls the audience to "pluck the Tyrolean eagle like a chicken". In a poem written in Italian, *la tua terra*, he writes: "do you know that your land / can make you die" (*sai che la tua terra / ti può far morire*).



1959 and 1984

On the occasion of the 150th and the 175th anniversary of the Tyrolean war of liberation of 1809, a gigantic crown of thorns, symbolising the painful division of Tyrol, is carried by a group of *Schützen* in a parade in Innsbruck. *Schützen* (literally: shooters) was a militia formed in 1511 to protect the borders of Tyrol. Dissolved as a result of the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, *Schützen* have survived as private folk associations in Austria and Italy until today.



1767

Andreas Hofer, Tyrolean folk hero and leader of the 1809 Tyrolean Rebellion against the Napoleonic invasion, is born in St. Leonhard in Passeier. The Andreas-Hofer-Bund, the only South Tyrolean anti-Nazi resistance organization, formed in 1939, will be named after him. Hans Egarter, Josef Mayr-Nusser, Friedl Volgger and Erich Amonn, its main leaders, mostly come from a Catholic background. Mayr-Nusser refuses to recite the Hitler oath after being drafted as a Nazi soldier, and is sentenced to death at the Dachau concentration camp. He dies en route to the camp in 1945.



1939

Hitler and Mussolini enforce the Option Agreement: German and Ladin-speaking South Tyrolean people are forced to choose between declaring themselves Italians – therefore abandoning their language and traditions – or being relocated to Third Reich territories. 86% of the population opt for emigration; they are called *Optanten*. Those who choose to stay are called *Dableiber*. By 1943, only about 75 000 *Optanten* have emigrated, of whom 50 000 returned after the war.



1981

Ever resistant to imposed ethnic boundaries, Alexander Langer refuses to declare his linguistic group (German, Italian or Ladin) during the 1981 census in Bozen-Bolzano. This choice makes him ineligible to run for local elections. Langer had been active in the Italian radical leftist political organization *Lotta Continua* before joining the Green Party of South Tyrol, eventually becoming president of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament in 1989.



1961

On the night between 11 and 12 June, 37 electricity pylons are blown up in South Tyrol by the BAS (*Befreiungsausschuss Südtirol*, "South Tyrolean Liberation Committee"), to claim worldwide attention for the "South Tyrolean question". The date is chosen as a reference to the local custom to light fires (*Herz-Jesu-Feuer* / "Sacred Heart Fires") to commemorate the 1796

vow the Tyroleans made to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, asking protection for their land.



1978  
Norbert Conrad Kaser dies in Bruneck from the consequences of his alcoholism. His funeral would be remembered as a rare moment of encounter for dissident and progressive South Tyrolean intellectuals. Alexander Langer would later write: "The destiny of Norbert C. Kaser is symbolic for many in South Tyrol. [...] It was at Norbert's funeral when I decided to return to South Tyrol, that we wanted no more dead, that something had to be done." Langer will later found the interethnic movement Neue Linke/Nuova Sinistra ("New Left").



1961  
On the morning of 12 June, road maintenance worker Giovanni Postal dies in an attempt to remove a bomb placed on a tree by the BAS in Salorno, near the southern border of South Tyrol. He is the first victim of the *Bomberjahre* ("bomb years").



1952  
Ettore Tolomei, Italian irredentist and former Fascist senator, is buried in the Montan cemetery. His tomb will be repeatedly damaged, as a sign of contempt. Tolomei had been the main designer of the Fascist policy for the Italianization of South Tyrol. He invented a detailed Italian toponymy to substitute German names, most notably translating the German "Südtirol" with the Italian "Alto Adige". His program had included the prohibition of the term "Tirol" (and its variations), imposition of Italian as the only official language, closure of German-language schools, press and political parties.



1964  
In a hay barn near Saltaus, BAS member Luis Amplatz is shot in his sleep by Christian Kerbler, probably an agent of the Italian intelligence agency. Fellow BAS member Georg Klotz is also injured with two shots, but manages to escape across the border to Austria. Kerbler is later sentenced *in absentia* by an Italian jury, but will never be caught.



1943  
Italian ceasefire with the Allies. With the establishment of the *Operationszone Alpenvorland* ("Operational Zone of the Alpine Foothills"), South Tyrol is occupied by German Wehrmacht troops and becomes *de facto* part of the Nazi *Reichsgau* of Tyrol-Vorarlberg. Anton Spechtenhauser, mayor of Graun im Vinschgau, is arrested thanks to the active help of local Nazi officials. An unscrupulous businessman, collaborator of the Fascist regime, and opponent of the emigration to the Reich,

he would die in the Majdanek extermination camp, near Lublin.



1946  
Signing of the Paris Agreement by Italy's Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi and Austria's Foreign Minister Karl Gruber, as an integral part of the Peace Treaty between the Allies and Italy. The agreement envisages special measures to preserve the ethnic identity of the South Tyrolean People.



1969  
Long negotiations between Italy and Austria result in the adoption of the so-called "Package" (*Paket*), a catalogue of measures for a new autonomy statute in South Tyrol, approved by the SVP (South Tyrolean People's Party), the Italian Parliament and the Austrian National Council. Its full implementation would be completed in 1992.



1995  
Alexander Langer takes his own life near Florence, hanging himself from an apricot tree. Ten years before his suicide, he had written, "Where there is a latent multilingual vocation, it should be cultivated with care. It is a drive to relativize, to grasp differences, subtleties, nuances that do not suffer translation. All the more so in a Europe with more and more refugees, immigrants ..."



1981  
South Tyrolean mountaineer Reinhold Messner, in a TV show, states that he is upset with the continuous abuse of the *Heimat* myth in South Tyrol, perpetrated "by a people who has betrayed their *Heimat* like no other, when in 1939, by an overwhelming majority, had opted for Germany, willing to leave their land". After the ensuing controversy, in 1989 Messner edits a book named *Die Option. 1939 stimmten 86% der Südtiroler für das Aufgeben ihrer Heimat. Warum?* ("The Option. In 1939, 86% of South Tyroleans voted to give up their homeland. Why?")

The information for this Blazon was compiled from an abundance of sources by the artist.