

Between Hitler and Mussolini

A Political History of South Tyrol

Gabriel Kuhn

A gripping political history of South Tyrol, Europe's forgotten borderland, *Between Hitler and Mussolini* explores fascism, nationalism, resistance, and self-determination while confronting a question that remains urgent today: what should the left do when just causes are championed by the political right?

If people know South Tyrol at all, it is as the picturesque German-speaking corner of Italy on the southern edge of the Alps. Less known is the region's turbulent political history. Annexed by Italy in 1919, South Tyrol became a pawn in European power struggles, the subject of a cynical pact between Italian and German fascists, and the site of a militant secessionist campaign in the 1960s.

With family roots in the province, Gabriel Kuhn, who grew up in neighboring North Tyrol, traces this history while confronting a difficult question: what happens when a struggle based on self-determination and anticolonialism is led by right-wing nationalist forces? The dilemma reaches far beyond South Tyrol.

Combining political history with critical analysis, *Between Hitler and Mussolini* examines the region's path since its incorporation into Italy and assesses the secessionist movement that shaped its modern identity. At the same time, it recovers the voices of progressive currents that were often overshadowed by reactionary politics on all sides.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gabriel Kuhn is a Tyrolean-born writer and translator. He lives in Stockholm, Sweden. Among his books with PM Press are *From Hash Rebels to Urban Guerrillas: A Documentary History of the 2nd of June Movement* and *Liberating Sápmi: Indigenous Resistance in Europe's Far North*.

ACCOLADES

"Gabriel Kuhn highlights a fundamental challenge for the left, namely, how to deal with situations in which justified political causes—such as self-determination and resistance against oppressive forces—are advanced by right-wing forces? Kuhn concedes that the South Tyrol question has historically been dominated by right-wingers and nationalists, with the left often being absent. In his opinion, the left must not abandon questions that are difficult but develop progressive perspectives."

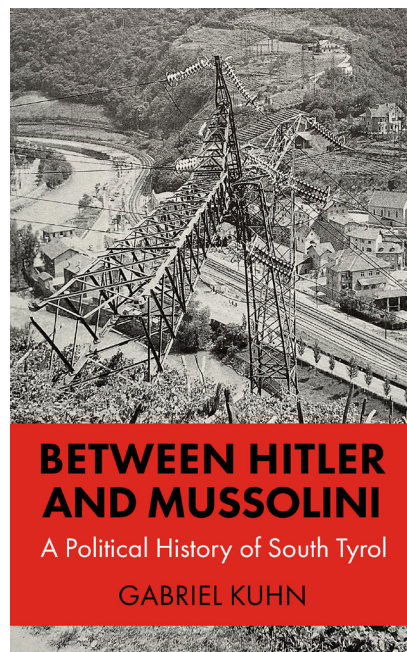
—Martin Hanni, filmmaker, publicist, and head of SALTO Kultur-Resort

"Kuhn's work raises two questions: 1) Are there indeed no socialist perspectives on South Tyrol? 2) Why are such perspectives not part of the region's collective memory, even for someone like Kuhn who feels affiliated with the socialist workers' movement?"

—Joachim Gatterer, author of *Rote Milben im Gefieder: Sozialdemokratische, kommunistische und grün-alternative Parteipolitik in Südtirol*

"The history of South Tyrol and its autonomy status is important for many intrastate conflicts. Ethnic minorities the world over have looked at it for guidelines."

—Thomas Benedikter, author of *Europe's Ethnic Mosaic: A Short Guide to Minority Rights in Europe*



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