

## Jurist, politician and humanist

### Early years

On February 15, 1884 Friedrich Tessmann was born at Korb Castle, son of Ernst Tessmann from Greifswald (Germany) and Agnes Schmitz-Werröcke, a Rhinelander.

After attending the Benedictine grammar school at Meran he, at first, studied German philology in Munich before, complying with the wishes of his father, he took up studying law in Vienna taking his degrees in Innsbruck. The young doctor of jurisprudence worked for the imperial and royal governor of Innsbruck and later for the district commission of Bozen. In World War I he served as a soldier in Galicia at the Russian front. When Italy entered the war he served as a captain in the area of Tre Cime.

### Beginnings of the Tessmann collection

In 1924 Friedrich Tessmann was entrusted with the administration of the estates of the Campofranco family at Kaltern. After the death of Princess Campofranco he retired to his manorhouse "Lindenheim" at Eppan to apply himself wholeheartedly to regional studies. This research work initiated the wish to collect Tyrolensia and to unite them in a specialized library. His friend, the Germanist and art historian Karl Theodor Hoeniger, assisted him at this ambitious task by competence and advice so that Tessman was soon the owner of 12.000 books, graphics, drawings, maps and museum objects. At that time already he placed his collection at the disposal of friends and Schlern-authors at the so-called Carli-house at the upper fruit market of Bozen. World War II stopped library activities abruptly.

### Political career

In 1948 Friedrich Tessmann was elected to the first South Tyrolean legislative assembly and became head of the agricultural department. In the course of his political activities he specially stood up for the cooperatives. The law on "closed farms" basically bears his mark as well.

### The donation

For health reasons he retired from politics in 1952 and looked for a way to make his collection accessible to research and studies. He decided to pass the collection over to the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The donation was notarized on May 3, 1957 thus forming the legal headstone for the "Dr. Friedrich Tessmann library". This donation was subject to certain conditions: The collection had to remain in South Tyrol, it should be made publicly available and enlarged continuously. The South Tyrolean institute of culture took full responsibility for premises and administration of the collection.

### The library

Friedrich Tessmann did not live to see the public opening of "his" library at the oil-house of the Braitenberg family in Dr.-Streitergasse, Bozen, on September 22, 1958. After long sufferings he died at Gries/Bozen on June 23, 1958. The editor of "Schlern", Karl Maria Mayr, a friend for many years, appreciated his merits with the following words: "From our round a kindred spirit of noblest character has departed, an altruistic fellow campaigner for the continued existence and preservation of the cultural heritage of our people."



## 50 years Tessmann library

1958 – 2008

50 years ago, on September 22, 1958, the Tessmann library opened its doors for the first time, just as it is 50 years ago this year that its founder, Dr. Friedrich Tessmann, died.



Dr. Friedrich Teßmann (1884 – 1958)

This double jubilee is the reason for a small exhibition at the provincial library.

From April 2008 exhibits, formerly owned by Dr. Friedrich Tessmann and thus belonging to the elemental stock of the provincial library, can be seen in our entrance hall, alternating monthly.



## History of the library

### Beginnings

#### 1934 "the tastefully furnished literary parlour" (Karl Theodor Hoeniger)

Dr. Friedrich Tessmann houses his private collection of Tyrolensia, about 12 000 copies, in the garden annex of the Carli-house at the upper fruit market of Bozen, placing it at the disposal of his friends and the so-called "Schlern-round".

#### 1943 bombs falling on Bozen

The library is evacuated and, for safety reasons, removed to the municipal museum of Bozen and, in part, to Tessmann's manor house "Lindenheim" at Eppan.

#### 1957 donation of the collection to the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW)

Friedrich Tessmann passes his extensive collection on to the AAS which, according to the wishes of the donator, assures that the works remain in South Tyrol, that the collection is made publicly accessible for research reasons and is to be extended. The South Tyrolean institute of culture, founded in 1954, is responsible for the premises and the administration.

### Tessmann library

#### 1958 ceremonial opening of the Tessmann

library at the "oil-house" of the Braitenberg family at 20 Streitergasse.

1960 beginning of cataloguing and all-day borrowing service.

#### 1967 move to Waltherhaus

The stock of the Tessmann library, having increased to about 29 000 copies, moves, together with the South Tyrolean institute of culture, to the newly erected House of Culture "Walther von der Vogelweide".

#### Provincial library "Dr. Friedrich Tessmann"

1982 In the course of implementing the status of autonomy the provincial act no.5 of February 16, 1982 sets up a **provincial library for the German and Ladinian language** groups, named "Dr. Friedrich Tessmann". Thus the library (Tessmann and cultural institute stocks) passes from a private corporation into an autonomous and public corporation.

1985 The provincial library, together with the South Tyrolean provincial archives and the national archives, moves to a **newly erected building** at 8 Armando-Diaz-Straße. Within a few weeks the stock, meanwhile increased to 130.734 copies, can be relocated.

1989 Via centre-libraries in the larger centres of the country a **borrowing service** permits all the citizens access to the stock of the provincial library

#### 1992 beginning of EDP-era

In that year, for the first time, cataloguing is done per provisorial software. After three years all the operational procedures (borrowing, ordering, cataloguing and literature research) are computerized.

#### 1998 - 2006 A new house is coming into being

Since 1995 a new seat of the provincial library has been taken into consideration, leading to a feasibility study for a central library in Bozen, housing the provincial library as well as the Italian provincial library and the municipal library of Bozen. In 2006 the project of the Bozen architect Christoph Mayr Fingerle comes off as winner of a two-stage contest. It is to be realized by 2012.

#### 2007 By transferring the right of a deposit copy

to both provincial libraries the role of the "Tessmann" as a memory institution in order to preserve the cultural heritage is legally safeguarded.

#### 2007 provincial library online

The digital newspaper archives indicate the first step towards a provincial library online. Historically and contemporarily relevant newspapers are constantly digitalized and can be read at multi media work stations. From 2008 they will be available via internet.

The "tastefully furnished literary parlour" has become a modern service industry. The provincial library "Dr. Friedrich Tessmann" disposes of about 385.000 media and 1.250 current newspaper subscriptions available to over 28.000 enlisted borrowers.