



ETHNOGRAPHIC COLLECTION OF ALBERTO VOJTĚCH FRIČ IN THE NÁPRSTEK MUSEUM

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ABSTRACT: Alberto Vojtěch Frič (1882–1944) was a Czech botanist, explorer and ethnologist. He made four exploratory journeys to South America (Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia), at first led by his interest in cacti, later due to a desire of getting to know more about life and culture of the native people from the region of Gran Chaco and Mato Grosso. During his trips he collected a lot of valuable ethnographical material from various tribes (Bororo, Kadiweu, Chamacoco, Pilagá, Sanapaná, Angaité, Toba, Lengua etc.) and part of it he donated to the Náprstek Museum in Prague. This article focuses on this part of his collection acquired mostly during his second journey (1903–1905). Based on the correspondence between Frič and his parents, friends, colleagues and the museum and on extracts from his notes, articles and books, it deals with the course of this trip and his collector's activity. The article is accompanied by photographs of representative objects from Frič's collection deposited in the Náprstek Museum with a personal comment from Frič's notes and with a list of all objects donated personally by A. V. Frič to the Náprstek Museum.

KEY WORDS: National Museum – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures, Prague – Alberto Vojtěch Frič (1882–1944) – Brazil – Paraguay – Argentina – Gran Chaco – Mato Grosso – Bororo – Kadiweu – Caduveo – Pilagá – Sanapaná – Angaité – Toba – Lengua – Shavante – ethnographic collection.

Any potential author writing the biography of Alberto Vojtěch Frič (8. 9. 1882–4. 12. 1944) faces both a fascinating as well as a challenging task. This was a man of wide ranging interests and extraordinary character. Frič had an in depth knowledge of botany and dedicated himself to cultivating and classifying cacti. Later he became an explorer and ethnologist (he wrote the following to the editor of the Viennese magazine *Die Zeit*: *"It's been ten years since I left for Brazil to carry out botanical studies and came into contact with Indians for the first time. They endeared themselves to me from our very first meeting.*

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