

# KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:  
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS  
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

## Grande Museo del Duomo di Milano

Piazza del Duomo 12, 20122 Milano

*Form compiled by Davide Domenici*

### Introduction

The Grande Museo del Duomo di Milano preserves a single indigenous artefact, but one of exceptional importance: a feather mitre made in the sixteenth century by indigenous Mesoamerican artists of New Spain.

### Cultural Areas (tags)

Mesoamerica

### Collections

#01

<i>Name of the collection</i>	<b>Mitre of Saint Charles</b>
<i>Collector</i>	Pius V (Antonio Ghislieri) (1504–1572) Borromeo, Carlo (1538–1584)
<i>Cultural areas</i>	Mesoamerica

Knowledge of Things (KNOT)  
Reassessing the Indigenous American Heritage in Italy

Funding 2021-2027 | PNRR M4C2: PRIN 2022

Funded by European Union NextGenerationEU and Italian Ministry of University and Research

2022RHCY5P | CUP B53D23023080006



Finanziato  
dall'Unione europea  
NextGenerationEU



Ministero  
dell'Università  
e della Ricerca



Italiadomani  
PIANO NAZIONALE  
DI RIPRESA E RESILIENZA



# KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:  
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS  
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

<i>Ethnic group / community / cultural context</i>	P'urhépecha or Nahua (Mexico)
<i>Description of the Collection</i>	<p>The feather mitre – made between the second and third quarters of the sixteenth century by indigenous artists of New Spain using hummingbird feathers and feathers of other birds glued onto agave paper, together with linen, silk and gold thread – bears the monogram of the Holy Name of Jesus and Mary, accompanied by images of the Passion and of the Mass of Saint Gregory. The image is entirely analogous to that visible on a feather mitre preserved at The Hispanic Society of America (New York). The infulae of the mitre are decorated with grotesques. The visual source of both is an unknown print.</p>
<i>History of the collection</i>	<p>According to the Gesuato friar Paolo Morigi (1525–1624), the mitre was donated to Pope Pius V (1504–1572) by some Indigenous people who came to Rome on an unknown date; the pontiff then donated it to his nephew Carlo Borromeo (1538–1584), cardinal and later archbishop of Milan from 1565, from whom the mitre takes its name and who, according to Antonio Frigerio, used it in penitential functions. Carlo Borromeo subsequently donated it to the Duomo: it is mentioned in the inventory of the Sacristy of the Duomo drawn up in 1595. It was later transferred to the Treasury of Saint</p>

Knowledge of Things (KNOT)  
Reassessing the Indigenous American Heritage in Italy

Funding 2021-2027 | PNRR M4C2: PRIN 2022

Funded by European Union NextGenerationEU and Italian Ministry of University and Research

2022RHCY5P | CUP B53D23023080006



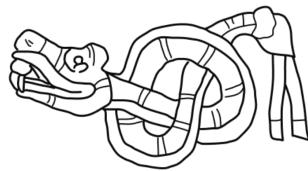
Finanziato  
dall'Unione europea  
NextGenerationEU



Ministero  
dell'Università  
e della Ricerca



Italiadomani  
PIANO NAZIONALE  
DI RIPRESA E RESILIENZA



# KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:  
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS  
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

	Charles, where it was recorded in 1739. In 1953 the work became part of the Museum's collection.
<i>Online Database</i>	
<i>Web page</i>	<a href="https://www.duomomilano.it/catalogo/mitra-di-san-carlo/">https://www.duomomilano.it/catalogo/mitra-di-san-carlo/</a>
<i>Bibliography</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frigerio, A. 1739. <i>Distinto ragguaglio dell'ottava meraviglia del mondo</i>. Milano: Antonio Frigerio.</li><li>• Gallori, C.T. 2013. "Collecting Feathers: A Journey from Mexico into Italian Collections (16th–17th Century)." In <i>Collecting East and West</i>, eds. S. Bracken, A.M. Gáldy, A. Turpin, 61–82. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.</li><li>• Gallori, C.T. 2015. "From Paper to Feathers: The Holy Names of Jesus and Mary from Europe to Mexico." In <i>Images Take Flight: Feather Art in Mexico and Europe, 1400–1700</i>, eds. A. Russo, G. Wolf, and D. Fane, 311–319. Munich: Hirmer.</li><li>• Malvezzi, L. 1840. <i>Il Tesoro del Duomo di Milano</i>. Milano: Boniardi-Pogliani.</li><li>• Morigi, P. 1597. <i>Il Duomo di Milano</i>. Milano: Francesco Paganello.</li><li>• Mapelli Mozzi, C. 1978. "Scheda di Catalogo n. 193." In <i>Tesoro e Museo del Duomo di Milano</i>, eds. R. Bossaglia, M. Cinotti, vol. I, 91–92. Milano: Electa.</li></ul>

Knowledge of Things (KNOT)  
Reassessing the Indigenous American Heritage in Italy

Funding 2021-2027 | PNRR M4C2: PRIN 2022

Funded by European Union NextGenerationEU and Italian Ministry of University and Research

2022RHCY5P | CUP B53D23023080006



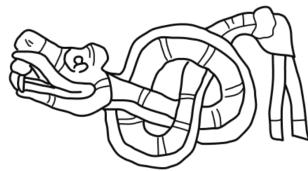
Finanziato  
dall'Unione europea  
NextGenerationEU



Ministero  
dell'Università  
e della Ricerca



Italiadomani  
PIANO NAZIONALE  
DI RIPRESA E RESILIENZA



# KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:  
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS  
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

- Rose, S. 2025. "Mitra con infulae (detta Mitra di San Carlo). Ante 1565". In *Barocco Globale. Il mondo a Roma nel secolo di Bernini*, ed. F. Cappelletti, F. Freddolini, 300-301. Roma: Scuderie del Quirinale-Electa.
- Russo, A. 2014. *The Untranslatable Image: A Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500–1600*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Salmi, M. 1924. "Il tesoro del Duomo di Milano." *Dedalo* 6: 358–382.

**Knowledge of Things (KNOT)**  
**Reassessing the Indigenous American Heritage in Italy**

Funding 2021-2027 | PNRR M4C2: PRIN 2022

Funded by European Union NextGenerationEU and Italian Ministry of University and Research

2022RHCY5P | CUP B53D23023080006



Finanziato  
dall'Unione europea  
NextGenerationEU



Ministero  
dell'Università  
e della Ricerca



Italiadomani  
PIANO NAZIONALE  
DI RIPRESA E RESILIENZA