



KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte

Via Miano, 2, 80131, Napoli

Form compiled by Maria Rosaria Sansone (head of decorative arts, majolica and porcelain, historical furnishings), in collaboration with Davide Domenici

Introduction

The Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte holds a small but significant collection of Indigenous American artefacts. Some objects, mainly colonial productions from New Spain, can be traced back to the Farnese collections of Parma, while a group of four artefacts (two Mesoamerican Mixtec penates, a wooden Kágaba-Kogi sculpture from the Sierra de Santa Marta in Colombia, and a Chimú bottle from the northern coast of Peru) derive from the collection of Cardinal Stefano Borgia (1731–1804).

Cultural Areas

Mesoamerica; Northern Andes; Central and Southern Andes

Collections

#01

<i>Name of the collection</i>	American objects from the Farnese collections
-------------------------------	--

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

2022RH CY5P | CUP B53D23023080006



KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

<i>Collector</i>	Members of the Farnese family
<i>Cultural areas</i>	Mesoamerica
<i>Ethnic group / community / cultural context</i>	New Spain
<i>Description of the Collection</i>	A frog in breccia marble, with obsidian eyes, probably of pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican origin; two coco chocolateros from New Spain with metal mounts (seventeenth century); an engraved coconut, probably from New Spain (eighteenth century).
<i>History of the collection</i>	Sixteenth–eighteenth centuries. The collecting history of these objects is unknown; between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries they entered the Farnese collections of Parma. The two coco chocolateros are recorded in a Farnese inventory of 1644, while the engraved coconut was recorded for the first time in 1727. The Farnese collections were transferred to Naples after 1734, following the conquest of the Kingdom of Naples by Charles of Bourbon, already Duke of Parma and Piacenza and husband of Elisabetta Farnese, the last descendant of the noble family. The collection was exhibited at Capodimonte from 1758 onwards. In 1777 it was moved to the Palazzo degli Studi, later the Real Museo Borbonico from 1816 and the Museo Nazionale

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
2022RH CY5P | CUP B53D23023080006





KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

	from 1861. In 1957 the “modern” objects from the collection were again transferred to Capodimonte, to what is today the Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte.
Online Database	
Web page	
Bibliography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domenici, D. 2023. “The Grand History of a Small Collection. American Objects from the Farnese and Borgia collections at the Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte (Naples, Italy).” In <i>Functions of European Museums with American Collections, Contributions to New World Archeology</i>, ed. V. Solanilla, 16: 9-22. • Martino, L. 1996. “Dalla «Galleria delle cose rare» di Parma al Museo di Capodimonte. Gli oggetti d’arte di Casa Farnese.” In <i>Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte. La collezione Farnese. Le arti decorative</i>, 119–129. Napoli: Electa.

#02

Name of the collection	American objects from the Borgia collection
Collector	Stefano Borgia (1731–1804)
Cultural areas	Mesoamerica; Northern Andes; Central and Southern Andes

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
2022RH CY5P | CUP B53D23023080006



KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

<i>Ethnic group / community / cultural context</i>	Mixteca (Mesoamerica) Kágaba-Kogi (Northern Andes) Chimú (Central and Southern Andes)
<i>Description of the Collection</i>	Two Mixtec greenstone penates (7.8 × 4.1 cm; 3.4 × 2 cm) depict male individuals in a squatting position with their hands joined on their belly. Mixtec cultural sphere (Oaxaca, Mexico), Late Postclassic period (c. AD 1250–1521).
<i>History of the collection</i>	Wooden sculpture from the Sierra de Santa Marta (Colombia) attributable to the Kágaba-Kogi cultural sphere. It represents a standing individual on a crescent-shaped support. It may date back to the sixteenth century. It forms part of a group of sculptures brought to Rome in 1691 by the Augustinian friar Francisco Romero and ending up in the collection of Propaganda Fide, the remaining members of which are today preserved in the Vatican Museums – Anima Mundi.
<i>Online Database</i>	
<i>Web page</i>	
<i>Bibliography</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bishof, H. 1974. “Una Colección Etnográfica de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (Colombia) – Siglo XVII.” In <i>Atti del XL Congresso Internazionale degli</i>

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



KNOT

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS:
REASSESSING THE INDIGENOUS
AMERICAN HERITAGE IN ITALY

	<p><i>Americanisti</i>, Roma-Genova 3–10 Settembre, vol. II, pp. 391–398. Genova: Tilgher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domenici, D. 2023. “The Grand History of a Small Collection. American Objects from the Farnese and Borgia collections at the Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte (Naples, Italy).” <i>Functions of European Museums with American Collections, Contributions to New World Archeology</i>, ed. V. Solanilla, 16: 9-22.• López Luján, L., D. Domenici. 2024. “La estatuilla de Huitzilopochtli del Musée du quai Branly de Paris.” <i>Arqueología Mexicana</i> 188: 26-39.• Germano, A., M. Nocca, eds., 2001. <i>La collezione Borgia. Curiosità e tesoro da ogni parte del mondo</i>. Napoli: Electa.• Martino, L. 1996. “Dalla «Galleria delle cose rare» di Parma al Museo di Capodimonte. Gli oggetti d’arte di Casa Farnese.” In <i>Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte. La collezione Farnese. Le arti decorative</i>, 119–129. Napoli: Electa.• Nocca, Marco. ed., 2001. <i>Le quattro voci del mondo: arte, culture e saperi nella collezione di Stefano Borgia 1731–1804</i>. Napoli: Electa.
--	---

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