



SMITHSONIAN



Holy Roman Empire
reliquary



Bronze Age
Nebra Sky Disk



Star-Spangled Banner



19th-century European
Facile safety bike



Paleolithic stone
handax



12th-century Indian
silver coin



15th-century French
book of hours

HISTORY *of the WORLD in* 1,000 OBJECTS



Qing
snuff bottle



Viking animal
head decoration



WWI German
reconnaissance aircraft



Egyptian faience
amulet



Tang ceramic horse



18th-century English
armillary sphere



Anglo-Saxon bird brooch



19th-century
telephone



Celtic chariot part



16th-century German
eagle helmet



Etruscan amphora



Civil War drum



Mesopotamian bull's head



Japanese Edo pouch

HISTORY *of the* WORLD *in* 1,000 OBJECTS







SMITHSONIAN

HISTORY
of the WORLD in
1,000 OBJECTS



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MUNICH, AND DELHI

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CONTENTS



EARLY SOCIETIES

20,000–700 BCE

- 012** Early Humans Shaping the World
- 016** The Enigma of the Indus Civilization
- 018** The Cradle of Civilization
- 026** Egyptian Life and Afterlife
- 040** Europe's Bronze Age Warriors
- 043** The Mighty Hittites
- 044** Palace Societies of the Aegean
- 047** The Intrepid Phoenicians
- 048** China's First Celestial Empire
- 054** The Awe-inspiring Gods of the Andes
- 055** The Mystical Land of the Olmec

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

700 BCE–600 CE

- 058** The City-states of Ancient Greece
- 066** Celtic Kingdoms
- 071** The Great Persian Empire
- 074** The Artistic Etruscans
- 080** The Splendor of Rome
- 090** Foreign Rule in Egypt
- 098** India's First Empires
- 100** The Unified Kingdoms of China
- 105** Yayoi and Kofun Japan
- 106** The First Cities of Mesoamerica
- 110** The Mysterious Nazca and Moche

TRADE AND EMPIRE

600–1450

- 114** Europe's Germanic Kingdoms
- 120** Viking Traders and Raiders
- 130** The Glory of Byzantium
- 134** Islamic Courts and Caliphates
- 135** Islamic Cultures of Spain and Africa
- 136** Norman Crusaders and Conquerors
- 146** The Rise of the Holy Roman Empire
- 151** Early Kingdoms of Eastern Europe
- 152** Empires of the Mongol Khans
- 154** Art and Devotion in Classical India
- 160** The Dragon Throne of Imperial China
- 168** Buddhism in Medieval Japan
- 170** Korea's Golden Kingdoms
- 172** Temple Cities of Cambodia
- 174** Seljuk and Early Ottoman Realms
- 176** Spirit of the Greater Southwest
- 178** The Myth-makers of Mesoamerica
- 188** Treasures of the Andes
- 192** The Sculptors of Easter Island



ENLIGHTENMENT AND IMPERIALISM

1450–1750

- 196** Art and Science in Renaissance Europe
- 210** Reformation, War, and Enlightenment
- 222** The Height of Ottoman Power
- 228** Poetry and Power in the Safavid Empire
- 232** Culture in Korea's Last Dynasty
- 236** China's Age of Prosperity
- 244** Last Days of the Samurai
- 254** The Majesty of Mughal India
- 260** The Rise of the Maratha Empire
- 262** The Merchant Empire of Benin
- 266** Ethiopia and the Christian World
- 268** European Settlers in the New World

INDUSTRY AND INDEPENDENCE

1750–1900

- 272** The Birth of the Industrial Age
- 282** Revolution and Republic in France
- 286** The Decline of the Austrian Empire
- 288** Russia Under the Romanovs
- 290** The Race for African Empires
- 294** The Empire of the Sikhs
- 298** Company Rule and the Raj in India
- 302** The Reopening of Japan
- 308** Unrest in Late Imperial China
- 314** Colonial Struggle in Southeast Asia
- 316** Pacific Exploration and Expansion
- 318** Settlers in Australia and New Zealand
- 320** Revolution in Latin America
- 322** Tradition and War in North America
- 328** The Birth of the United States

A SHRINKING WORLD

1900 TO PRESENT

- 340** A Century of Flight
- 344** Transportation for the Masses
- 350** Entertaining the World
- 354** Fighting the World Wars
- 360** Combating Disease
- 364** Life Under the Revolution
- 366** The Western Home
- 372** Fashion for the People
- 376** The Space Age
- 380** The Technology of Modern War
- 382** Connecting the World

TIMELINES OF WORLD HISTORY

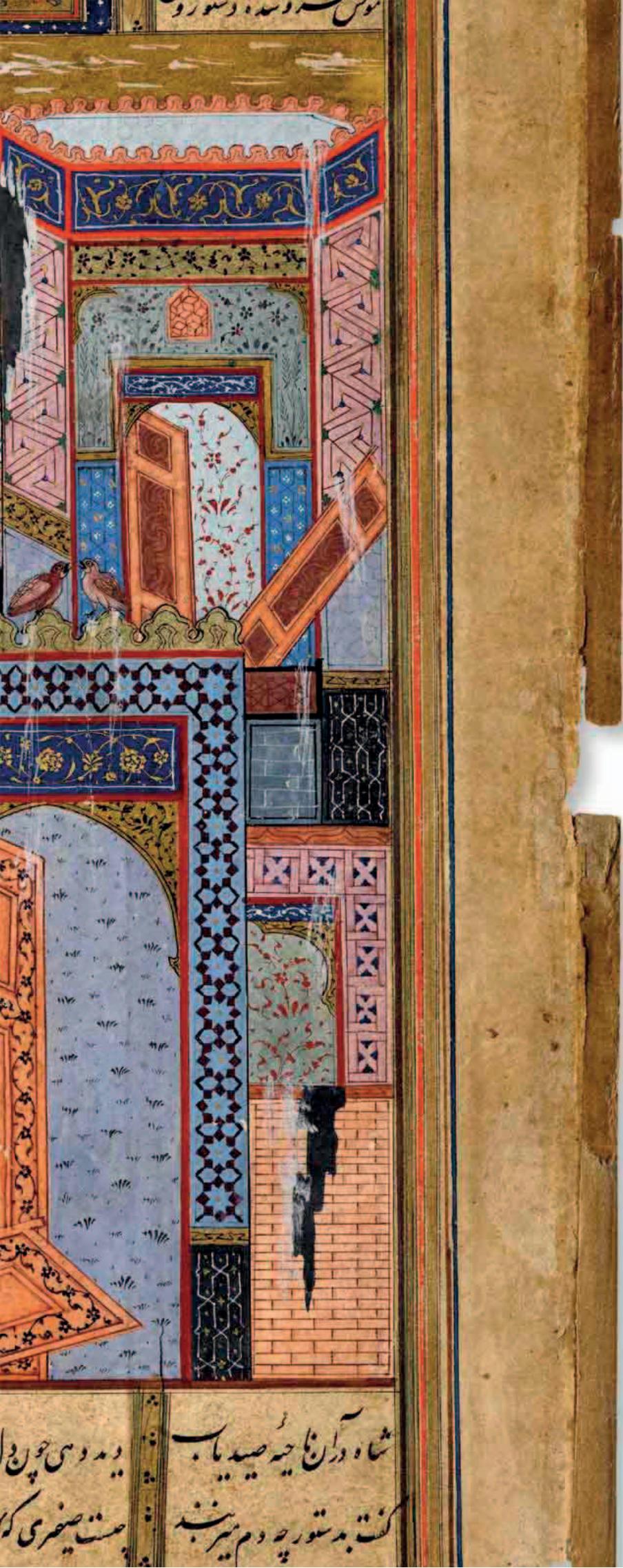
- 386** Early Societies
- 394** Ancient Civilizations
- 410** Trade and Empire
- 427** Enlightenment and Imperialism
- 438** Industry and Independence
- 450** A Shrinking World
- 464** Index
- 478** Acknowledgments



شمن جرا شک دو منع آمده در مکد کر
بسته زنگ ذیرایی ملک روزگار کویم اکرش بود آموزگار

دزد ش تغافه شان شکتر

FOREWORD



There is something magical about the survival of human-made objects from the past. A piece of jewelry, a cup, a sword, or a sandal that has, often arbitrarily, survived the general tide of oblivion seems in some degree to bridge the gulf of years that separates us from the world of our ancestors—whether inhabitants of ancient Egypt or the Roman Empire, the Aztecs of Mexico or Japanese samurai. A collection of such artifacts can vividly represent a long-lost civilization, its daily life, its art and culture, its ways of making war and conducting trade, its rituals and its beliefs.

Many objects have come to us from ancient times through the rituals surrounding death. Our knowledge of the ancient Egyptians, for example, would be much poorer but for their habit of burying personal possessions with the dead. The exquisite decoration and furnishing of palaces and places of worship has been another rich source of surviving artifacts. We are also beholden to the desire of people to record the great events of their own time, which has given us Trajan's column in Rome and the Norman Bayeux Tapestry. Some objects were created to celebrate heroes or gods, like the statues of ancient Greece and Rome. Some are exquisite craft work, such as Japanese Samurai armor and the gold figurines of the West African Asante. Others are famous puzzles, such as the Rosetta Stone, which eventually allowed scholars to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Objects are particularly important when evoking human societies that have left no written records, such as that of the hunters and farmers of the Neolithic era. But objects are also a rich source of information about the more recent past. Historical documents such as England's Magna Carta and the United States Constitution have remained alive as a basis for current political practice, as well as existing as physical objects preserved for posterity. The Watt steam engine shows the mix of practical good sense, skill, and basic science that was to advance the Industrial Revolution, while the Ford Model T transports us back to the early days of modern motorized society.

Collected together in this book, objects from all periods generate a striking impression of the overarching shape of human history and its development from stone tools to spaceflight. They also take us on a breathtaking journey through the ever-varying stages of the human adventure.

R. G. GRANT

Persian life

This Persian illuminated manuscript is from a book of poems completed in 1548. Brightly colored pigments were used to produce works that show aspects of daily life including style of dress and architecture.



After 12,500 BCE, as temperatures rose, vegetation changed and ice sheets melted, and people adopted new ways of living, including agriculture in some areas. As farming and settled life spread, populations increased, and new technologies such as metalworking and monumental construction began. Between 3000 and 1000 BCE, the first civilizations, with cities and writing, emerged in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, China, Mesoamerica, and Andean South America.