

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD BACKGROUND

History

AFRICA

Northwest Africa *Songhai (also spelled Songhay) Empire* Black Muslim rulers; great trading state (fl. fifteenth–sixteenth century); centered on middle Niger River and present-day Mali; major cities: Gao, Timbuktu, and Jenne; economy divided between pagan pastoralists and urban Muslim traders; strong army repulsed rival armies until 1591, when local troops were defeated by Moroccans armed with Portuguese-supplied firearms.

AMERICAS

Andes *Early Colonial period, 1534–1600* Weak Spanish hold on region until 1581; warfare among Spanish; Inca uprisings (Manco Capac, 1536; Tupac Amaru, 1571). Viceroyalty of Peru (capital, Lima) ruled Venezuela and Brazil. Potosí silver mines discovered (1545).

Mesoamerica *Early Postconquest period* Spanish subjugated native peoples quickly, except for Maya in Yucatán, who resisted until 1540. Charles V gave task of converting Indians to the Franciscans (Valley of Mexico), the Dominicans (Oaxaca), and the Augustinians (northern Mexico). Silver mines discovered in Zacatecas (1546).

Native North America *Calusa culture* Village society based on fishing, in southwest Florida; shell and fishbone tools and weapons; wood dwellings built on pilings; ceremonial mounds; traded fish, skins, and amber with tribes in Cuba and elsewhere; resisted Spanish explorers; only 3,000 living in 50 villages, in 1650.

ASIA

China *Ming Dynasty* Ming rule weakened by factions among civil officials; rising power of palace eunuchs. Artistic and literary criticism flourished.

India *Mogul empire* Akbar, an able ruler and reformer; ended extortion; extended trade; pursued policy of tolerance toward non-Muslims. Great patron of art, music, and poetry. Planned, but never finished, royal city at Fatehpur Sikri, near Agra.

Japan *Azuchi-Momoyama period, 1573–1603* End of feudalism; country unified. An age of magnificence and ostentation. Building of great castles and mansions replaced temple architecture.

Culture

AMERICAS

Andes *Early Colonial period: Drinking Cup (Qero)* This wooden cup illustrates the hybrid style that emerged during this period. The cup's shape and geometric pattern were of Inca origin, and the flower motif was a Spanish influence.

Mesoamerica *Early Postconquest period: Eagle in a Cactus (Symbol of Mexico)* This image is the central motif of the frontispiece to the Codex Mendoza, a manuscript made in about 1550 by Aztec artists under the supervision of Spanish friars, for the viceroy of New Spain. This image was the Aztec symbol for Tenochtitlán, their capital. Today, it has been adopted as the symbol of Mexico and is featured on the national flag.

ASIA

China *Ming Dynasty Saying Farewell at Hsün-yang* Archaizing, the faithful copying of older artistic styles, was a long-standing feature of Chinese culture. The Wu school artist Ch'iu Ying (about 1494–1552) showed this archaizing tendency in *Saying Farewell at Hsün-yang*, based on the “red and green” manner of eighth century T'ang masters. This archaizing feature of Chinese culture reflects Confucian values and stands in stark opposition to the West's worship of originality. *The Wang Shiyuan Garden* This courtyard garden—built as part of a residence—was not a place of retreat. A covered walk with lattice windows surrounded it, so that the garden offered ever-changing scenes and frames of reference.

India *Mogul Empire Gardeners Beating the Giant Zamurrad Trapped in a Well* This painting was part of a series of over 1,400 that illustrated the Persian *Romance of Amir Hamza*. The entire suite was one of the first productions of the imperial workshop founded by Emperor Akbar, who created the Mogul school of painting. The Akbari style adapts the Persian miniature to Indian taste. Its sense of extended space and its agitated action surpass that of the Persian prototype. *Panch Mahal (Palace of Five Stories)* This palace, built in Akbar's royal city of Fatehpur Sikri, blended Islamic and Hindu elements. Its failure to be completed was an ironic commentary on the worldly dreams of this great ruler.