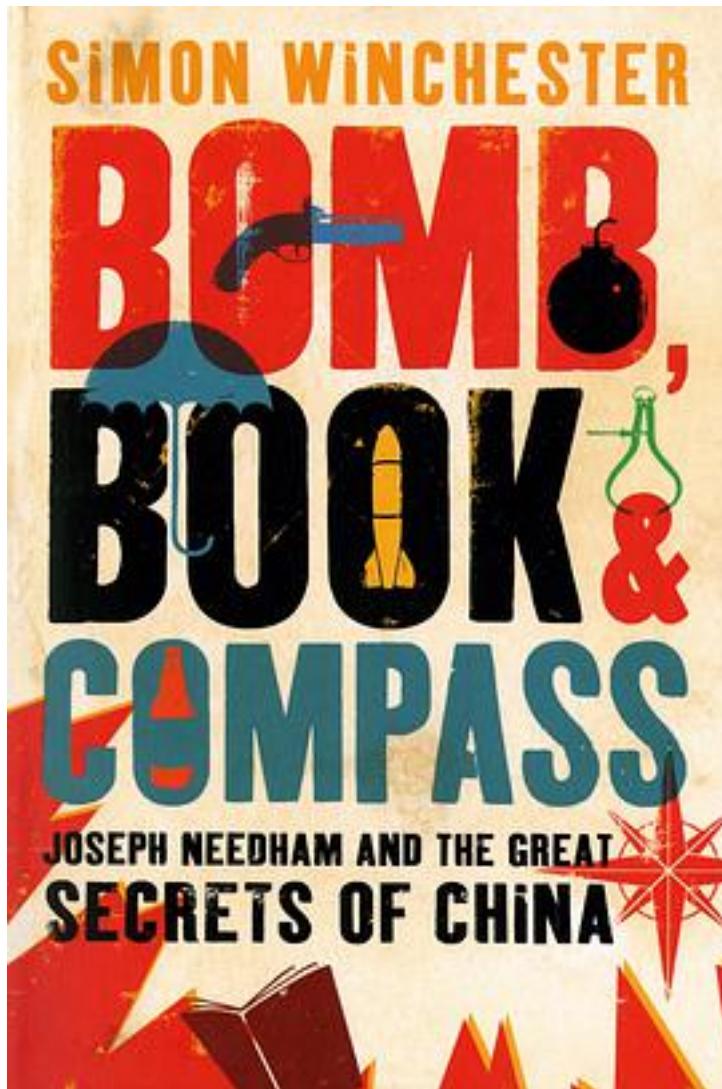


Bomb, Book and Compass



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The seventeenth-century philosopher-statesman Francis Bacon famously declared that nothing had changed the world more profoundly than three great inventions: gunpowder, printing and the compass. What he didn't know was that the Chinese had been successfully using all three, long before the west ever 'invented' them. And yet it was another 300 years before a remarkable man called Joseph Needham embarked on his epic, lifetime's work which would finally set the record straight. Inspired by a wartime mission to occupied China, he started writing what would become a twenty-four-volume masterpiece, chronicling the nation's astonishing history of invention and technology over five thousand years. It was, and remains, the greatest work on China ever created in the Western world. In "Bomb, Book and Compass", Simon Winchester tells the story of Joseph Needham, his magnificent book, the passion that inspired it, and the remarkable rise of the Chinese nation that continues to this day.

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