

China's Achievements of the Past



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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Exploration and travel	3
Importing travel	4
Industry	5-6
Inventions	7-8
Everyday objects	9-10
Paper money	11
Mechanical clocks	12-13
Conclusion	14
Glossary	15-16

You will be learning all the cool and great inventions that China achieved around the second century.

We will be talking about their inventions on exploration and travel, industry military technology, and everyday object.

Each of these inventions affect our daily lives today. Did you know China invented almost all of the things we use today? Its just that overtime we changed all of these inventions and made them better with technology.



Exploration And Travel

The Chinese made the first compass in the third century of B.C.E. They were made out of pieces of a magnetic mineral called lodestone. The Earth was like a big magnet so that's why they used a magnetic material which is lodestone.

The first compass that the Chinese used was the like picture in the right.



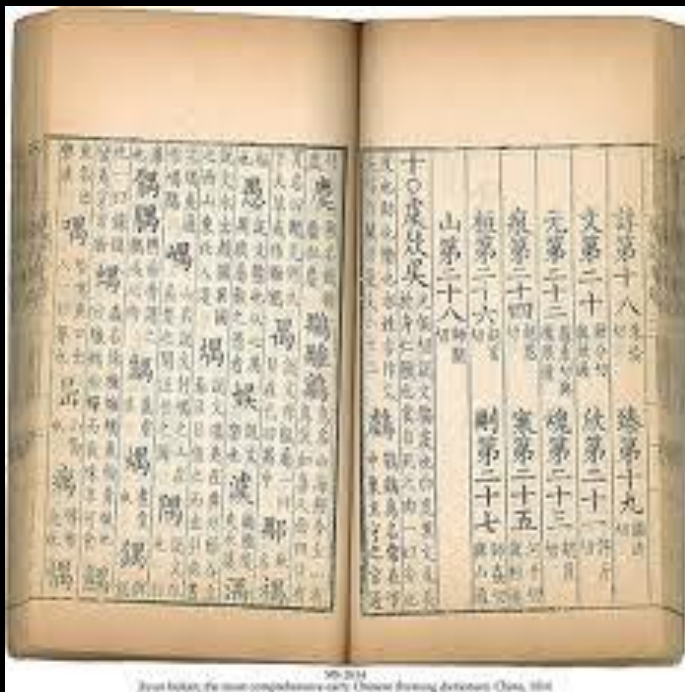
Importing Travel

The Chinese made many inventions for transporting to places like paddleboats which made sailing easier. They also made a canal lock which was used to make the water rise and fall. They also found a way to make bridges better. They called the bridges **segmental** arch bridge. These bridges were flatter and broader than regular bridges.



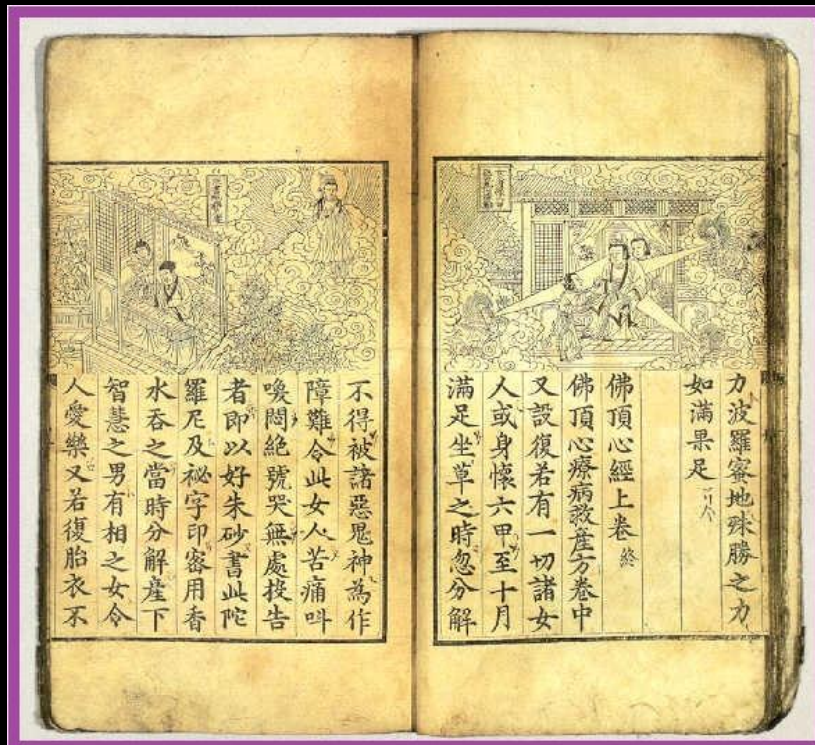
The Chinese invented paper which was part of art. It was invented during the second century.

Paper was made out of bark of the mulberry tree. Papermaking became an important industry in China.



This is hard to believe because this invention touches our daily lives today.

Chinese had many great inventions. As said, before paper was part of art and then they invented woodblock printing.



Printing was also part of their industry. Around the seventh century the Chinese invented woodblock printing.

Inventions

The Chinese invented many objects that were very useful and that we still use today. These inventions include gunpowder and the **catapult**.



Gunpowder was used to power some very powerful weapons.

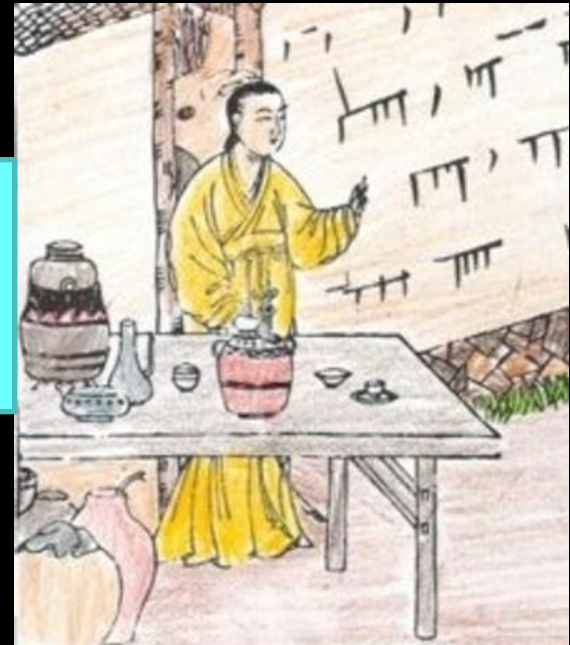


Some other great Chinese inventions where alchemy and the catapult.



The **catapult** was used to fire objects like artillery shells at enemies

Alchemy was a practice of blend between science and magic. This is important to us because **alchemy** lead to new inventions like gunpowder.



Everyday Objects

Playing Cards

During the 9th century C.E., the Chinese invented playing cards. The paper cards, of course, were very different from the paper cards that are used all around the world today. For example, the printers used woodblock printing, which is the method of printing on **textiles** and later thick paper. Also, there were only 30 cards compared to today's 52 cards. In addition, famous artists made the designs on these playing cards.

The Chinese playing Cards that were invented in the 9th century C.E. looked like the picture on the left, while the picture on the right shows today's playing cards.



Paper Money

By the late eight or early ninth century C.E., **Song printers** were already using woodblock to print paper money. Before this, the only form of money were coins, so these paper money were a great advantage because it was easier to store and travel with.

10 cash coins

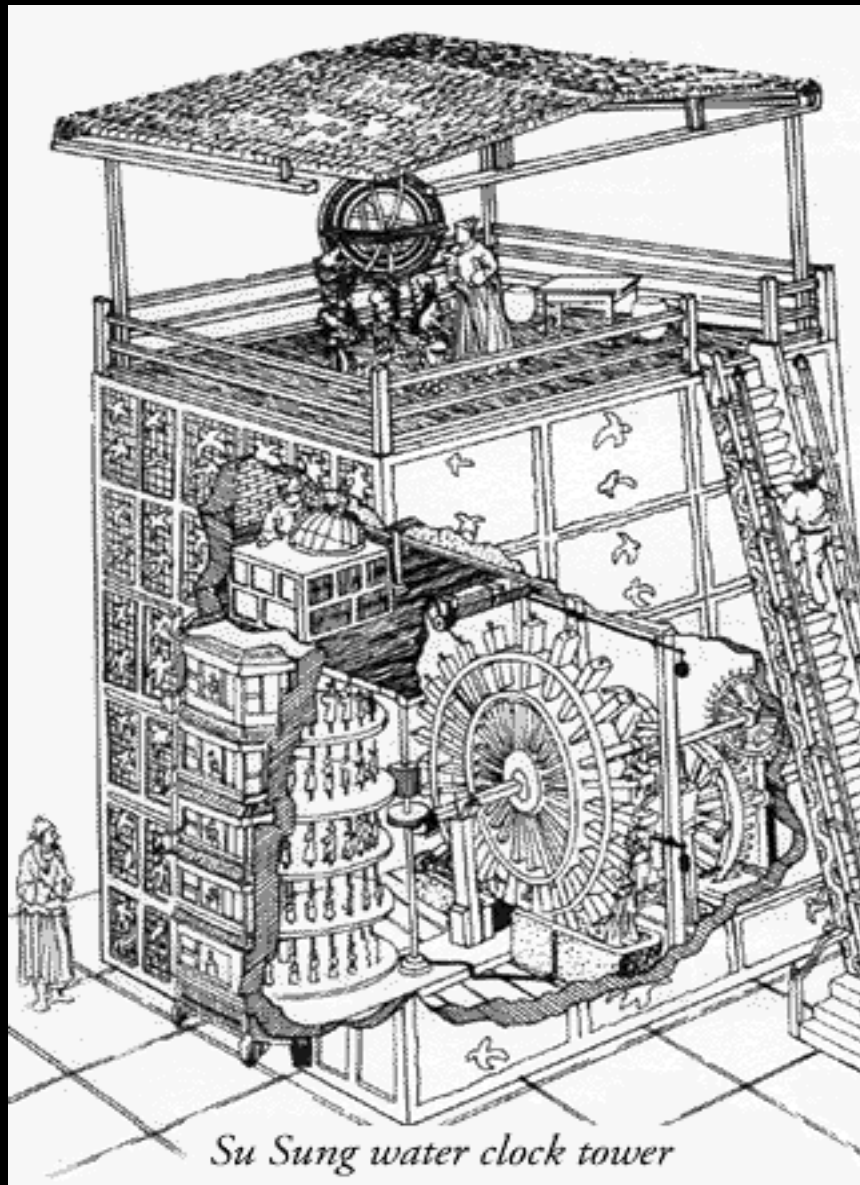


one-ounce silver sycee ingot



Mechanical Clocks

On about the 8th century , one of the greatest inventions in our history was the mechanical clock. The difficulty in inventing this was to figure out a way in which a wheel no bigger than a room could turn at the same speed as the Earth, continuously. However, they did it so, anyways. They made a clock that made one complete turn every 24 hours because of dripping water. Every quarter hour, drums would beat and every hour, a bell would ring. These sounds would help the people know what time it was. Later on, dials and hands were added to these clocks.



The picture shows The Chinese first invented mechanical clocks.

Su Sung water clock tower

Conclusion

The Chinese made many inventions that helped them travel, these inventions include the compass, paddleboat, canal locks, and the segmental arch bridge. The Chinese also made **industrial** inventions like paper and printing blocks. Alchemy, gun powder, and the catapult are some of the Chinese military inventions. The Chinese also made made many everyday objects like playing cards and playing money. These are all the military, **industrial**, everyday, and transporting inventions that the Chinese have invented.

Glossary

- Alchemy- a form of chemistry and speculative philosophy practiced in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and concerned principally with discovering methods for transmuting baser metals into gold and with finding a universal solvent and an elixir of life.
- Catapult- a device used to throw or hurl a missile a great distance without the aid of explosive device.
- C.E. - (common era) a designation for the world's most commonly used year-numbering system. Dates before 1 C.E. were called B.C.E. (before the Common Era).
- Industry- organized action of making of goods and services for sale.
- Mulberry tree- any of several trees of the genus *Morus* (a type of flowering plant) having edible fruit that resembles the blackberry.

- Segmental- of, pertaining to, or characterized by segments
- Sycee ingot - a type of metal or gold material that is cast into a shape suitable for more processing and is used as a currency in China until the 20th century.
- Textile- flexible material consisting of a network of natural or artificial fibers often referred to as thread or yarn.