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Description

China was virtually closed to visitors from the West until the middle of the nineteenth century. Its opening coincided with the advent of the camera, which gives the early photographs included in this book a double feeling of discovery, of the landscape and its people, and

of the potentiality of the new medium. The camera was a curious witness to the capture of the forbidden city of Peking in 1860, to the beauty and treasures of the Summer Palace, to the execution of criminals in Canton, to...[\[Show more\]](#) details of ordinary Chinese life; and - notably in the photographs of M. Miller and John Thomson - it revealed its ability for portraiture and genre. These photographs, unknown to the public until now, have been collected from archives in Europe, America and Asia. They include images by Beato, Wilson and Mennie, and by many lesser-known photographers. They widen our understanding of what China was like in the final decades of the Dragon Throne and form a vivid and unforgettable picture of a culture destined for radical, irrevocable change.

Collections [ANU Press \(1965-Present\)](#)

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