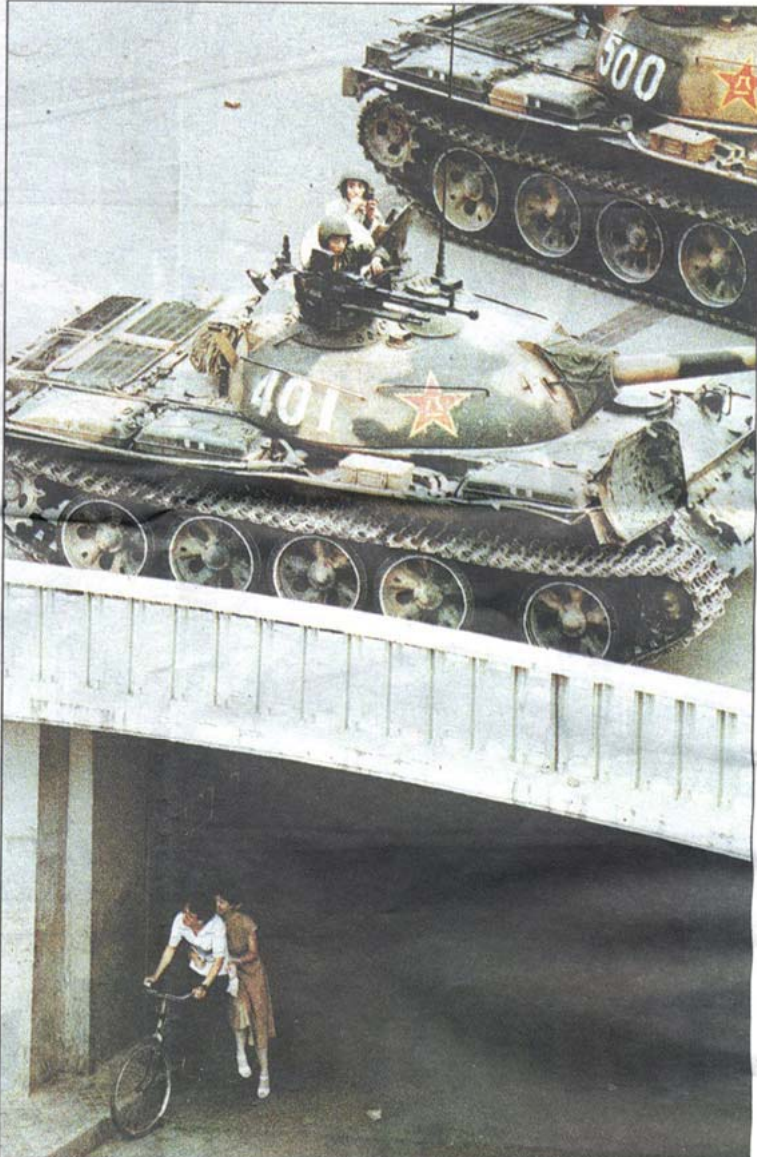


Discover the real

China



THREAT: Taking cover as tanks cross Janguomenwai bridge, Beijing, 1989



IMMOBILE SOLUTIONS: Congested cities are seeing more accidents, 2005

By **Beverley Glick**

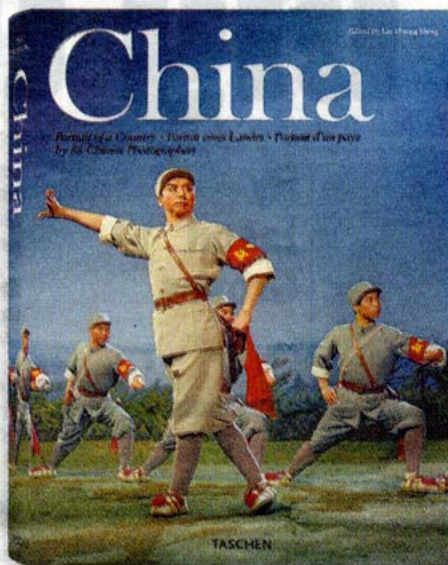
AT 8.08PM ON August 8, 2008, the eyes of the world will be on the People's Republic of China as the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics gets under way.

This auspicious time and date has been carefully selected by the superstitious Chinese to ensure the success of the Games in a country that has become accustomed to painful events, none more so than in the past 60 years.

A visual record of this turbulent period has been put together in China, *Portrait Of A Country*, by Pulitzer prize-winning photographer Liu Heung Shing. It traces the history of China from 1948, the year before the People's Republic was proclaimed, until the eve of the Olympics.

Taken from the archives of 88 of the nation's photographers, these illuminating pictures are displayed in chronological order to demonstrate not only how far China has come during the period of economic reform since late 1978 but also to glimpse the spectres that haunt the collective memory.

The cover depicts a colourful scene from Shajiang, one of the



● To order a copy of *China, Portrait Of A Country*, edited by Liu Heung Shing (Taschen, £29.99/ www.taschen.com), call 0871 521 1302 (calls cost 10p per minute from BT landlines), or send a cheque or PO to: The Express Bookshop, PO Box 200, Falmouth TR11 4WJ, or order online at www.expressbookshop.com. UK delivery is free. Liu Heung Shing will give a talk as part of the PhotoVoice Lecture Series on September 23, 2008, at the Royal Geographical Society. To buy tickets, go to www.photovoice.org or call 020 7033 3878.

few operas and ballets allowed to be performed during Mao's Cultural Revolution, which lasted from 1966 to 1976.

By 1980, little seems to have improved for ordinary people. One image shows stern newlyweds posing for their wedding photo – but they can only afford to rent the upper part of their outfits.

There is a glimmer of hope in the picture of a young couple waiting beneath a bridge in Beijing, as tanks rolled above them a day after the protests in Tianenmen Square in June 1989. But could they have envisaged the benefits and problems that a superheated economy has visited on their country?

Fast forward to 2005, and we see victims of a traffic accident using their mobile phones to report the incident. In the Beijing of the 21st century, motorbikes, bicycles and cars compete for right of way, their owners paying little heed to traffic laws.

Three years later and China is hosting one of the great global events. The epic sweep of these photographs tell the powerful story of how the People's Republic has reached that landmark.

**CHINA'S BRUTAL CRACKDOWN:
PAGES 42-43**



AUSTERE: Wedding photos in spite of poverty, 1980