

*Mamadou Gologo*

---

# CHINA

**A GREAT PEOPLE  
A GREAT DESTINY**

---

NEW WORLD PRESS PEKING

# CHINA

**A Great People**

**A Great Destiny**

**Mamadou Gologo**

**NEW WORLD PRESS  
PEKING 1965**

## THE EAST WIND

I have just visited China.

I went with much pleasure and even keener interest, a pleasure and interest which increased the longer I stayed there.

It is only today that the peoples of the whole world, and of Africa in particular, are really beginning to form a correct idea of this great country and great people — China and the Chinese.

Previously the artificial barriers set up by colonialism and imperialism prevented the peoples of the Third World from knowing each other well enough to cope better with the struggle each was waging in isolation against foreign domination.

Today, thanks to the series of victories which they have won, new horizons have opened before them. Contact between them is relatively much easier.

However, these contacts should not be confined to mere “diplomatic functions” like those in the heyday of empires or monarchies or, coming closer to our times, like those arranged so often over our heads by our exploiters, who found them the most convenient means of organizing the pillage of our resources, the mortification of our dignity and the suppression of our potentialities to the advantage of their imperialist ideology.

Today a new wind is blowing irresistibly and boisterously over the Third World, from the distant shores

of the suddenly militant Pacific to those of the South Atlantic in the grip of racists. It is blowing hard from China to Chile. **It is the East Wind which is swaying the forests of Asia, Africa and America, aiding their peoples and mobilizing them against the enemies of human freedom.**

This wind can be strengthened.

It should be.

It is for us to increase and widen its scope, so that its redoubled strength may sweep into the ocean all those whose profession it is to oppress other peoples and despoil them of their wealth.

My visit to China was inspired by the sincere desire to strengthen this solidarity.

Suffice it to say that I found China close enough to me to be able to speak of her in a special way.

My account may seem long. But it is inadequate. I would certainly have needed more than a year just to see the whole of the People's Republic of China.

It is my wish, however, that my African readers, for whom above all this modest work is meant, may realize that China and Africa have a common destiny and that we should work together to rally all the living forces of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Together we should be able to tell those who are still massacring our peoples that

their liberty is not ours,

their democracy is not ours,

their peace which allows them to exterminate us is not ours.

Thank you.

**I** have just spent about a month in Asia, in China, to be more exact.

Not long enough, you may say (and I agree), to form a fair idea of a whole continent.

For China is more than a country, she is a continent embodying:

One-third of living and working humanity;

All the inherent potential of one-third of the working world;

Certainly more courage and determination than half mankind is able to show.

**And that represents a tremendous material and moral force, ignored because of political stupidity rather than because of the plots of so-called modern men.**

After I had shaken hands with Chinese people, had long talks with them, eaten at their tables and travelled through their country making the fullest use of my time, I formed a general, if simple, impression dominated by two important and equally simple factors:

1) I felt in the first place the great moral satisfaction of a man who has checked up on the spot and suddenly discovered **that everything told him on this subject was false from A to Z.**

This obviously gives rise to an enriching sense of **"liberation" which only an imbecile, fool or man of bad faith (a fool more dangerous than a pathological lunatic) could fail to appreciate.**

2) In the second place I felt an overwhelming distress at the damage done by dishonest men of all sorts, who had succeeded in imposing their views on many other individuals and peoples, whether aware or not of their injustice.

It is clear that, unless quickly remedied, the consequences of such distortions may do incalculable harm.

The verdict the imperialists and their henchmen are bent on pronouncing against the People's Republic of China today, if these enemies of the people are allowed their way, would be unquestionably wide of the mark, **culminating dramatically in a tremendous judicial error on a world scale.**

In fact, a puppet **court** of corrupted jurymen and a public more and more compromised because of its passive role have brought a charge against the Chinese people (essentially an exemplary people, courageous, friendly and eager to unite with all just peoples). China is accused of being some sort of monster and wrongfully condemned by scoundrelly judges, who are shamelessly trying to exclude her from the family of nations and contemporary human society.

**This is extremely serious.** For in every case, whenever it is proved that the family alone is to be blamed, a society worthy of the name must condemn that family and rehabilitate the unjustly punished child. At all events, such is the law in so-called "civilized" countries as well as those described as "barbarous".

In fact this is not the case here, for the good reason that nearly all Asia supports the People's Republic of China and maintains friendly and neighbourly relations with her.

Generally speaking, moreover, if the family and society in which the child lives are both involved in this injustice or connive at it for some reason or another, the child inevitably grows up in an atmosphere that at first surprises her trusting heart, then staggers her, and ends up by provoking her to adopt positions for which nobody can blame her. For once she reaches this stage, the child is not and cannot in future be held responsible for anything arising from her relations with the rest of the world, since it has adopted such a biased attitude towards her.

Such, in brief, is the situation into which **political stupidity and many other absurdities of one kind or another are trying to drive the People's Republic of China.**

Nevertheless, it is still not too late to correct this error in which nearly the entire world has shared.

We must say that it is becoming more and more impossible to keep up the pretence of denying the existence of the **People's Republic of China.**

Mankind owes *much* to China, and will *certainly owe her much more* for a long time to come.

In regard to the Chinese people, those who knew something of their intellectual ability advised, **"Better leave them to sleep, otherwise. . . ."**

Had they been more explicit, it is certain that mankind would not today be confronted by this question mark which has no reason to exist. The truth would have been known for some time and nobody would have admitted for a moment the possibility of **doubting the existence of this vital part of the world, China, without whom the world would become an invalid deprived of brain and brawn.** Of course, the real aim of those prophets of doom was to transform what they fallaciously

called the **sleep of China** into the **death agony of China**. . . .

They did not know that China has and will continue to have an iron constitution. . . . Obviously, none of the **sun's** friends or enemies, whatever they may say, really wants to see the sun extinguished.

And China certainly continues and will continue, in spite of all, to be the **rising sun**. No one can prevent this. If this fact were admitted once and for all the world would surely be all the better for it. So while waiting for mankind to come to its senses, there is something to be said for letting those who want to hide the **sun** amuse themselves if they can, without undue alarm, by stretching frenzied arms to the sky like frantic sorcerers.

Reason and good sense will prevail sooner or later in restoring China to her rightful place. Moreover, the sooner this happens the better, otherwise China will sooner or later, but irrevocably, sweep away the stupidity and ignorance which are trying to block her way.

This being so, we may well ask the reason for this stubborn stupidity.

As new nations are born and grow, as peoples gain a clearer understanding of the reality of their existence and are able to prove it more forcefully every day, the wild prophecies of the spokesmen of imperialism in the state of euphoria that results from long exploitation of the credulity and weaknesses of others will crumble into dust. Inevitably these lies will change into clouds to be blown far away from the horizons of courage and loyalty by the mighty wind of truth and the impetuous awakening of the people's energies.

Gone is that period of prodigious scope for the arbitrary presentation of men and ideas, that long period during which the imperialists gave explanations to suit themselves, to the detriment of others, of action and inaction, existence and non-existence, determination and apathy, friendship and enmity; when they tried to find one-sided definitions of what a people wanted or did not want, fraudulently attributing all virtues to themselves, all ability to control world affairs without consulting other peoples.

Yes, the time has come to affirm that **history neither creates truth nor determines social relations, but on the contrary it is social relations and truth which make history.**

The bourgeois historians and capitalists, who never saw anything beyond the disputable successes won for their countries by their fighting power in the general or in some specific class struggle, who thought they would always be able to predict historical events thanks to the advantages gained by their countries in national and international relations, today find themselves face to face with historical reality. In fact, every passing day ruthlessly saps the foundations of the fragile edifice they had erected in defiance of the findings of historical materialism.

In our time the right to speak has come back to the people, to the people alone in their conscious daily activities. This is no longer the privilege of one individual or group, of one country rather than another. This historical phenomenon has taken place because **the active substance of history is rightly quarried from and by the people during their continuous struggle to win equality**

**for all, justice for all, and democracy by means of the conscious labour of all for the common good.**

More clearly and more firmly every day the people are rejecting all ideas of a special superiority in social relations, for this idea runs counter to mankind's way to salvation, the future of all peoples, the universal conscience which has too long been flouted, the will of the masses of workers which has too long been opposed, and the dignity of all peoples which has too long been affronted.

In this new era opening up before mankind, an era in which the struggle for supremacy will be harder, in which individual and collective sacrifices will certainly have to be paid for more dearly than any individual or collective victories before, **what is the position of the People's Republic of China? for what and for whom are her people working? what do her people want at this moment, when men's minds are confused and gratuitous explanations are given in the name of the people and their principles without allowing the first a hearing or objectively analysing the second?**

I can answer this fundamental question in one sentence.

I will say, I will affirm with a clear conscience which no one, including the Chinese, can buy, I will affirm on the honour which I hold so dear, **that China is a great nation inhabited by a great people with a great and incomparable destiny.**

**A strong people who stand and will always stand on the side of weaker peoples.**

**A rich people, with enormous potentialities, who unite and will always unite with the ranks of the poor. A great people who will always remain true to themselves,**

**to the principles they have laid down for their own happiness and that of all other peoples.**

Efforts have been made to find numerous shortcomings among the Chinese and numerous bad ideas, notably those labelled “dogmatism”, “sectarianism” or “intransigence”. Many people actually call these “Chinese positions”. Some do so for ulterior purposes, advancing arguments clear only to themselves; others simply repeat what they have heard, without asking themselves why this problem which did not exist yesterday should suddenly have appeared out of the blue. They make no attempt to learn all the facts of the case, in order to form a sounder opinion.

In my view, the assertion that the Chinese people are victims of “dogmatism”, “sectarianism” or “intransigence” is completely unwarranted, in so far as what is called dogmatism, sectarianism or intransigence is **the passionate determination that constantly inspires and mobilizes the whole Chinese people to:**

**Do away once for all with the exploitation of man by man and of one people by another;**

**Win unconditional freedom and independence for all peoples;**

**Liquidate colonialism without any compromise or hesitation;**

**Struggle against imperialism, the root of all aggression, oppression and humiliation;**

**Achieve peace on earth, the real peace for which all people long, not an imposed peace, shadowed by intimidation.**

But more of this later.

Let me first give a brief but faithful account of my visit to the People's Republic of China. I shall describe how I lived there, what I saw and what I heard.

My conclusions will appear at the end. They will please some, annoy others, and leave the rest indifferent.

I am not out to please or shock anyone.

But I cannot forgive indifference, for no one should remain indifferent to the situation of the People's Republic of China.

In the world there are countries, systems and principles approved of by some and rejected by others, but it is criminal to ignore the existence of a country as huge as a continent, the home of 650 million workers who are for world peace, of course, but first of all are for freedom for all peoples.

About three years ago I was invited by the All-China Journalists' Association to visit China. Subsequently I travelled widely in many countries at the invitation of many other organizations, but the Chinese comrades never made any objection to this in our everyday relations.

It was only in November 22 that I was at last able to leave Bamako for Peking by way of Djakarta, where I first took part in the Second Conference of the Secretariat of the Afro-Asian Journalists' Association.

The conference ended on December 2 and on the 4th I set off for the capital of the People's Republic of China in a "Convair 990" of the Indonesian GARUDA Company, stopping only at Bangkok and Hongkong on the way.

Leaving Djakarta at 7 a.m. local time on December 4, we reached Bangkok at 11.30. I was immediately struck by the intense activity round the airport of the capital of Thailand. On that day grand manoeuvres of the U.S.

Air Force were taking place supported by Thailand's military aircraft. Some jet-fighters roared through the sky over the city. Our plane threaded its way through that aerial crush to land among the heavy transport machines, bulging craft which eyed us suspiciously at a distance.

To my vast relief, we left this war atmosphere at 12.30 and arrived in Hongkong at 14.30.

The city is confined to a sort of bay, like a giant octopus sheltering behind the hills of granite which surround it, except in certain well-chosen spots where they permit the sea to kiss the feet of the city. Because of this, entry into and egress from Hongkong are strictly controlled.

The runway itself is artificial. It is in the form of an embankment, the greatest part of which has been reclaimed from the sea.

The English always choose well and always take good care of what they have chosen. If not for this, the English would not be what they are today. **Hongkong** is a **citadel** rather than a city, a **sentinel** far from his garrison, standing guard on the flank of China, stony-faced, in the rigid posture of a "**home guard**".

Hongkong will tell you at once that she has no secrets. But in spite of that, you have the feeling that she knows all your secrets. . . . This too is very English.

I was impressed by the number of people, the beauty and the bustle of the big city stores. These give you an impression of opulence that contrasts harshly with the profusion of loiterers, beggars and shady characters who accost you despite your protests. A crowd of them barred my way when I wanted to step outside my hotel.

Luckily, my Chinese friends had seen to everything. At the airport we were met by representatives of the

China International Travel Service who took care of all the necessary formalities. They conducted me safe and sound to the **Golden Gate Hotel** through a capitalist city where luxury and indescribable suffering exist indiscriminately side by side.

I spent one night in Hongkong and at 9 o'clock on December 5 I took the train for Canton.

After a run of 32 kilometres, the train reached the station of Shumchun on the border.

I have omitted to mention that I travelled from Djakarta with my respected Japanese comrade, **Yuichi Kobayashi**, President of the Japanese Journalists' Association. This great anti-imperialist fighter is extremely competent and much respected by Afro-Asian journalists for his just ideas and his militant action against colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism.

At the Shumchun station we were welcomed by:

**Chan Chi-ching**, member of the standing committee of the Chinese Journalists' Association, come specially from Peking to meet us,

**Lo Miao**, deputy secretary-general of the Canton branch of the Chinese Journalists' Association.

They gave us a warm welcome. We dined in the station restaurant from 11 to 12.30.

This station is radically different from the one in Hongkong — friendly and chock-a-block with people brimming over with vitality and kindness. On the walls of the corridors, rooms and halls were pictures and yet more pictures of Health, Agriculture, Youth and Culture, in a word of all the political, economic, social and cultural life of modern China.

It was not only the station that had changed, but the men, women and children too. They do not look at all

like those in Hongkong. In a word, the people have been transformed. The panorama of misery stretching over 32 kilometres was replaced by a picture of life which delighted the eye with its uniformity of colours and well-being. But let us wait until we have gone further and had a closer look at the People's Republic of China before returning to this opening chapter.

We left Shumchun at 1 p.m. for Canton, arriving there at 5.20. Four hours and more we travelled through a rich, carefully tended plain with paddy-fields stretching as far as the eye could see, covered by sheaves of rice. It was the harvest season. A crowd in blue swarmed over the well-irrigated and well-drained countryside. I marvelled at the beauty of this scene that recalled to me, on a larger scale, the Niger office plains of Mali at harvest time. I immediately thought how fine it would be if our Mali rice-growers could come and see how the paddy-fields in south China are cultivated, the techniques employed, and the way the peasants carry out their everyday revolutionary tasks.

Here and there long plumes of smoke billowed out of chimneys, most of which, I was told, belonged to chemical fertilizer plants. And no better place could have been found for such an industry.

The whole fertile land breathed confidence in the future and a sense of present security.

In Canton, after an enthusiastic welcome, we were taken to a hotel for guests of honour.

This building, with a modern exterior and a traditional interior, had all imaginable comforts. It was as welcoming as the Chinese themselves, as if representing a people who have a long and splendid tradition of hospitality, characterized by tact in everything, whose general rule

is to be pleasant to strangers, to welcome them like brothers and make them feel at home until their departure. This is certainly not easy to do in our time, but the Chinese people carry it off with the same ease as they drink tea every moment of the day.

At six we rejoined our hosts for a most enjoyable dinner. They assured us of a warm welcome. We responded equally cordially, secretly vowing to make at least a fair return for the genuine friendship with which we were surrounded.

A limited programme was quickly worked out. We embarked on it immediately after leaving the restaurant. At 7.45 we visited the permanent Chrysanthemum Exhibition. This exhibition undoubtedly corresponds to the "Floralies" in France of which I have heard. I admit that I had never previously taken any interest in "the history of flowers". I remain African in all that I consider vital: my feelings, temperament, way of thinking, heart, reason and culture. . . . I must stop this catalogue, otherwise I run the risk of lapsing into chauvinism.

Well, in Africa "flowers have no history" and make no trouble even if we don't look at them or offer them. . . .

I agreed to visit the chrysanthemum show, but I was under no illusions and had no ulterior motive for going. I went simply out of politeness. But after a trip through that enormous garden, I readily understood that after all flowers have a history and a most eloquent language, not at all like the language of the deaf and dumb.

At the Chrysanthemum Exhibition I admired over a hundred varieties of these flowers described in lyric and epic poems both ancient and modern in China.

The stands were surrounded by the serried ranks of a dense and enthusiastic crowd, composed largely of

peasants and workers who are almost indistinguishable because all are dressed in blue. They made a background and foil for the rainbow colours of the stands whose size, different shades and artistic arrangement harmonized so well that they seemed designs in relief on a huge living carpet.

Traditional music, folk games, puppet shows, films, chess, magic mirrors, wooden horses and divers other attractions for children were there to enable people to relax and enjoy themselves after the day's work. They showed me everything, explained it all and asked for my opinion on everything I saw there. It struck me at once that the workers of the People's Republic of China suffer from no "superiority" complex but are open to suggestions of every kind, even from those who have not yet begun to parallel their achievements.

**That is the objective attitude of all workers who believe in work and in the laws of work.**

The chrysanthemum show fulfils part of the Chinese people's need for cultural expression. Its origin goes far back into the history of the country.

**"He who has no respect for his own work cannot appreciate the work of others."**

This was the thought that occurred to me as I went round the stands, one of which attracted my attention particularly because of the Chinese text inscribed over it. I learnt that this was a reproduction of a famous poem by Chairman Mao Tse-tung. It is more of a revolutionary watchword than pure poetry. Here the poet and the fighter have combined to achieve the desired effect. It is a call to the revolutionary Chinese people to **"make Chinese culture sparkle with the thousand colours of a thousand varieties of chrysanthemums"**.