

## Document 12.1: Excerpts from *China's Destiny* by Chiang Kai-shek, 1943

*In 1943, during the Second World War, Chiang Kai-shek wrote a book called China's Destiny, a kind of rallying cry to the Chinese people to hold firm against Japanese imperialism, to maintain the values—"propriety, righteousness, integrity and honor"—of democratic China's founder Dr. Sun Yat-sen, and to reject the proletarian revolution of the Communists. Chiang's book was first translated into English during the height of the Civil War, in January 1947.*

Dr. Sun Yat-sen expected of us one thing—determination and perseverance in practical action. Thus he said: "Our Revolution is bound to succeed this time, provided that everybody has the will and the perseverance to go ahead with it." By "determination" he meant that we should all strive to make China one of the most prosperous and powerful nations in the world within ten years. Regarding "perseverance," he had this to say: "If there is a true comprehension of the meaning of the Revolution there will be perseverance. The Revolution has its definite objectives. If one has definite objectives to attain, he will not stop half-way."

The Guomindang is different in nature from the political parties of other countries. The starting point of the Three Principles is *gong*, "public good," and the moving spirit of the National Revolution is *zheng*, "sincerity." The Three Principles have shown their greatness by their capacity to absorb and fuse together all the schools of thought. Our Party members, in applying these Principles, should follow the maxims of "hold fast to what is good" and "strive unfalteringly from the beginning to the end." Their activities should be guided by the plan of the National Revolution and conform to the rules of the Party. In short, aside from requiring its members to observe Party discipline and the Three Principles, the Guomindang places no restrictions upon the individual member's freedom of thought. Indeed, within the rank and file of the Party, there are today erstwhile Statists, Liberals, Communists and Anarchists. Once a person, even an erstwhile enemy of the Guomindang, had embraced the Three Principles and enrolled himself in the Party, no matter what he might have been before or how different his views, not the least grudge or suspicion was entertained against him. He was taken into

complete confidence and accorded full cooperation along with all other Party members. Since the Guomindang was organized in order to preserve our national existence and promote the welfare of all the people by means of a national revolution, the spirit is well expressed in the ancient saying, "All under Heaven for the common good." Every Chinese citizen has the right as well as the duty to become a member of the Guomindang. As the central organ directing the work of revolution and reconstruction, the Party treats the people, be they members or non-members, on an equal footing, without the slightest discrimination. It assumes the responsibility of guiding and training the people so that everyone may have the opportunity and the ability to work for the success of the National Revolution, the realization of the Three Principles, the rebuilding of the state and the revival of the nation. It entertains no bias in favor of or against any profession or class. Furthermore, the Guomindang seeks to take care of and give training to every citizen, and does not deny any qualified person his opportunity of service. It welcomes each and every patriotic citizen to join it in a common struggle for the completion of its mission.

To sum up, the Three Principles are based upon the public good and "absolute sincerity." The Guomindang is dedicated to their realization. It was founded on our nation's ancient virtues, and was organized with the spirit of affection, uprightness, duty and responsibility. In this respect, the Guomindang differs from other political parties of the past, which were characterized by unscrupulous expediency of ruthless machination and were joined by men from purely selfish motives. It is not without reason, therefore, that for the forty-eight years since its beginning, the Guomindang has remained as firm as the Tai Mountain and as steady as the Pole Star, and is now able to forge ahead with renewed vigor as the one permanent revolutionary party of China. It is not accident but rather the result of unselfish and magnanimous policy that the Guomindang has not met the fate of so many other political parties, eliminated as they have been by the selective process of the time....

As for their own activities, it is a fact that the Communists incited conflicts between the Right and Left wings of the Guomindang. Among the masses they agitated for a class

struggle they looked upon peasants and laborers as their own tools and as a monopoly of the Communist Party, and caused a stoppage of production. Other economic and social losses can easily be imagined. Youths who applied themselves conscientiously to study were stigmatized as anti-revolutionaries while those who led irregular and debauched lives were hailed as “awakened youth.” The Communists appealed to the youth to forsake our traditional virtues and even to regard propriety, righteousness, integrity and honor as out of fashion; filial devotion, brotherliness, loyalty and faith as decadent. In this way they degraded themselves well-nigh beyond redemption....

In short, the great tasks of the nation can be accomplished only when they are carried out with absolute sincerity and for the public good. Otherwise, one is apt to make a tool for others, or vice versa; one is apt even to resort to complicity, machinations and all kinds of mean practices in order to gain temporary success. In the end, one cannot escape the inexorable law that “sincerity of itself brings fulfillment” and “without sincerity there would be nothing.” The ultimate result of insincerity therefore is nothing but failure. This holds true in all things, and certainly our Revolution, which is the one great task of the nation cannot be accomplished through opportunistic artifice or pure chance....

This lesson is vital, realistic and valuable; it is worthy of our most serious consideration. It will not lose its significance with the passing of time. I ask every patriotic citizen and every active revolutionary to profit by the lessons of the past. The future, also, of the Revolution cannot but benefit from what has happened. This is why I have taken so much pains to recount this episode of our revolutionary struggle....

Source: Chiang Kai-shek. *China's Destiny*, trans. Wang Chung-hui. New York: Macmillan, 1947. 98–100, 106–108.