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Madame Chiang's Speech: Rhetorical Strategies in Her 1943 U.S. Address

Shinjae Park 

General Education Department, Kookmin University, Seoul 02707, Republic of Korea

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the rhetorical strategies used by Madame Chiang Kai-shek during her 1943 U.S. tour to reshape American perceptions of China and counter Orientalist discourses. By strategically employing language in her speeches, she sought to reframe China as a modern and democratic society rather than an exotic or inferior culture. Her rhetoric focused on emphasizing democratic ideals, historical justice, and cultural identity, using specific linguistic features and discourse structures to appeal to American audiences and establish China as a credible partner. The study explores how her use of language, analyzed through a qualitative approach, contributed to changing cultural narratives and influencing Sino-American relations, highlighting the power of rhetorical strategies in cross-cultural communication and public diplomacy. This analysis offers insights into the role of strategic language use in shaping international perceptions and challenging cultural stereotypes.

Keywords: Rhetorical Strategies; Madame Chiang; Discursive Strategies; Persuasion Techniques; Narrative Framing

1. Introduction

The way the West has viewed the East has been deeply influenced by Orientalism, a mindset that has often framed Asian cultures as exotic, inferior, or fundamentally different

from Western norms. Edward Said^[1] argues that Orientalism serves as a tool for the West to assert its cultural and political dominance over the East, an attitude reflected in how the United States historically treated Chinese immigrants. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 serves as a clear example of

*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Shinjae Park, General Education Department, Kookmin University, Seoul 02707, Republic of Korea; Email: muhando@kookmin.ac.kr

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this mindset. The law banned Chinese laborers from entering the country, citing concerns that their presence would disrupt the “good order” of American society^[2]. Such legislation did more than just exclude Chinese immigrants; it entrenched anti-Chinese sentiment and strengthened the perception of Chinese people as perpetual outsiders who could not integrate into American culture.

Within this climate of exclusion and stereotyping, Madame Chiang Kai-shek (Mayling Soong Chiang) emerged as a significant figure capable of reshaping American views on China. Her 1943 U.S. tour, during which she delivered a series of speeches advocating for support in China’s war against Japan, marked a key moment in cultural diplomacy. Her visit occurred at a critical juncture in World War II, as China sought to solidify its role as an Allied power and gain recognition as an equal partner in the fight for global democracy. Madame Chiang’s speeches serve as a case study in cultural diplomacy, illustrating how rhetoric can be used to bridge cultural divides and influence international alliances.

Educated in the United States and fluent in English, Madame Chiang was uniquely positioned to bridge the cultural divide, presenting China not as a mysterious, distant place but as a modern nation committed to democratic values and worthy of Western support^[3]. Her speeches, including her famous address to the U.S. Congress and writings such as *China Emergent*, aimed to counter the negative stereotypes that had long characterized Western views of China. Instead, she sought to depict China as a country with democratic aspirations that shared common ideals with the West^[4, 5].

Madame Chiang’s approach was about more than just gaining support for China’s war effort; it was an attempt to reshape how the West perceived the East in a broader sense. She used themes of democracy, historical justice, and cultural identity to reframe China as an ally in the global fight for freedom and democracy, rather than as a backward nation in need of Western intervention. By challenging Orientalist views and drawing connections between Chinese and American ideals, she aimed to foster a sense of shared purpose. Her speeches often referenced Western political thinkers, like Thomas Jefferson, and highlighted China’s own political traditions, such as Sun Yat-sen’s Three Principles of the People, to emphasize that China’s commitment to democracy was authentic and longstanding, not just an imitation of Western models^[6]. Existing scholarship, such as Said’s theory of

Orientalism and studies on cultural diplomacy^[1], provides a theoretical foundation for analyzing her efforts. These frameworks allow us to examine how she subverted stereotypes and created a new narrative of China as a democratic ally.

Furthermore, Madame Chiang also addressed cultural and gender stereotypes in her speeches. At a time when Asian women were often viewed through the lens of submissive Orientalist stereotypes, her public persona as a confident, educated, and articulate woman helped challenge these narrow portrayals. She highlighted the role of Chinese women in the nation’s modernization efforts, reframing them not as passive figures but as active contributors to China’s progress. By emphasizing the evolving status of women in China, she not only countered Western misconceptions but also connected China’s internal reforms to broader global movements for women’s rights^[4]. These efforts not only bolstered China’s wartime position but also laid the groundwork for a broader reimagining of U.S.-China relations, paving the way for greater recognition of China’s agency and contributions in the international arena.

This paper aims to analyze Madame Chiang’s rhetorical strategies during her 1943 U.S. tour and argue that her efforts played a crucial role in challenging Orientalist stereotypes and shifting American perceptions of China. It will explore how her emphasis on democratic ideals, references to historical injustices, and challenges to gender stereotypes worked together to reshape China’s image as a modern, democratic ally. By examining her speeches and their broader impact, this study seeks to understand how Madame Chiang used her rhetoric to secure China’s place in the global community and to foster a more nuanced view of U.S.-China relations. The following are the research questions addressed in this paper:

- Research question 1. How did Madame Chiang’s rhetorical strategies during her 1943 U.S. tour challenge Orientalist discourses and stereotypes prevalent in American perceptions of China?
- Research question 2. In what ways did her linguistic choices and rhetorical devices related to democratic ideals, historical justice, and cultural identity help reframe China as a modern and democratic partner for Western audiences?
- Research question 3. What discursive strategies did she use to counter cultural biases, including gender stereotypes, and how did these strategies contribute

to changing the cultural perception of China within the context of U.S.-China relations?

These questions aim to analyze Madame Chiang's rhetorical strategies from a linguistic perspective, focusing on how her use of language and discourse structures contributed to reshaping cultural and political narratives. This study also examines the broader impact of rhetoric on international communication and public diplomacy. To address these research questions, a qualitative rhetorical analysis methodology is adopted. By analyzing transcripts of Madame Chiang's speeches, along with historical and media records, the study investigates how her use of language and rhetorical strategies challenged prevailing stereotypes and reshaped China's image in the international arena.

2. Historical Background

2.1. Orientalism

Orientalism, as described by Edward Said, involves Western portrayals of Eastern societies as exotic, mysterious, or fundamentally different. This outlook has deeply influenced American views of China, especially during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the U.S. government and media often depicted Chinese people as "others" who could not integrate into mainstream society^[1]. This mindset was supported by policies like the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which banned Chinese laborers, citing fears that they threatened societal stability^[2].

Throughout this period, portrayals of China in U.S. media often relied on stereotypes, depicting the country as a land of opium dens and old customs. These images reinforced the idea that China was fundamentally different from the West, justifying policies that treated Chinese immigrants as cultural threats. This view also influenced U.S. foreign policy, such as the "Open Door Policy," which aimed to ensure equal trade in China but was based on the idea that the U.S. was helping to modernize an inferior society^[7].

The complexities in Sino-American relations were further influenced by the geopolitical interests shaping Western involvement in China. The concessions the Qing Dynasty made to foreign powers, like granting extraterritorial rights, showed China's vulnerability to exploitation. These agreements were used to justify the so-called civilizing mission of the West, while undermining China's sovereignty^[6].

Madame Chiang later referenced these historical grievances in her speeches, condemning exploitation and asserting China's long struggle for equality^[4].

World War II marked a shift in Sino-American relations. The Japanese invasion and China's resistance helped build American sympathy, changing the view of China from a backward nation to a brave ally in the global fight against fascism^[6]. This change in perception provided an opportunity for Madame Chiang to emphasize China's democratic ideals during her 1943 tour^[5].

2.2. Madame Chiang's Background

Mayling Soong Chiang, born in 1898 into a prominent Christian family in Shanghai, grew up with both cultural and financial advantages. Her father, Charles Soong, was a successful businessman and a devoted Christian who made sure his children got a Western-style education. This background helped Madame Chiang develop the skills needed to engage with both Eastern and Western cultures, which later became crucial in her diplomatic work^[3].

Studying in the United States played a big part in shaping her views and communication style. She first attended Wesleyan College in Georgia, then transferred to Wellesley College in Massachusetts, where she studied English literature and philosophy^[5]. Her time in the U.S. not only helped her become fluent in English but also exposed her to Western ideas, especially around democracy and individual rights. This Western education gave her a unique position to act as a bridge between Chinese and American societies^[4].

Her experiences at American colleges also influenced how she approached public speaking. In her speeches, she often referenced Western literature and philosophy, like the writings of Thomas Jefferson, to connect with American audiences^[3]. Her understanding of American values and rhetorical methods helped her convey China's message in a way that resonated with Western listeners. Her Christian upbringing also aligned her with the American cultural values of that time, further supporting her efforts to gain U.S. support for China during World War II^[8].

In addition, Madame Chiang's background enabled her to challenge typical gender expectations in both China and the West. At a time when Asian women were often seen as passive, her confident public presence and intellectual abilities went against these stereotypes. She represented a

mix of traditional Chinese values and modern Western ideals, allowing her to present herself as both a true representative of Chinese culture and a supporter of democratic principles^[9]. Her ability to navigate these cultural roles was key to her success in diplomacy, as she used her personal experiences to connect with various audiences.

3. Madame Chiang's Rhetorical Influence and Legacy

3.1. Madame Chiang's Phetoric: Key Themes

During her 1943 U.S. tour, Madame Chiang skillfully used her speaking abilities to rally support for China's war efforts and challenge existing views. Her speeches centered on three key themes: democracy, historical justice, and cultural identity^[3]. By focusing on these ideas, she framed China as an active partner in the global struggle for democracy and human rights, presenting it not as a passive nation in need of Western assistance, but as a country capable of contributing to shared values and fighting alongside the Allied forces for a common cause.

3.1.1. Democratic Ideals and the Three Principles

A major focus of her speeches was promoting Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People—Nationalism, People's Rights, and People's Livelihood—as the basis of China's political ideals. This approach allowed her to show that China had a long-standing commitment to democratic values, not just copying Western models^[6]. By pointing out that China's path to democracy was different from the West's, she questioned the idea that democracy belonged only to Western nations.

Madame Chiang often included references to Western political thinkers, such as Thomas Jefferson, to connect with American values while highlighting China's distinct approach. In her work "China Emergent," she argued that while Chinese democracy was influenced by Western ideas, it was adapted to suit China's own culture^[6]. This helped her to validate China's political system while appealing to American audiences, who were more likely to support a country they saw as sharing similar democratic ideals. Yang^[3] explains that, in doing so, she built a bridge between Eastern and Western political thought, positioning China as an ally

committed to freedom and self-determination.

3.1.2. Historical Injustice and Equality

Madame Chiang's speeches often brought up the unfair treatment China had faced under Western imperialism, including unequal treaties and exploitation during the Qing Dynasty. By framing China's modern fight for sovereignty as part of its ongoing struggle for equality, she aimed to generate sympathy from her Western audience. In her address to the U.S. Congress, she highlighted the injustices of extraterritorial rights imposed on China, contrasting the country's past with its current resistance against Japan^[4, 8].

This approach was not just about correcting misconceptions about China's history but also about redefining China's role from a victim to an active player in global politics. By emphasizing China's progress and reforms, she aimed to present the country as an equal in the international community, rather than a nation that needed Western guidance^[5]. Bradley points out that this challenged the paternalistic attitudes in American foreign policy, which often saw the West as the bringer of civilization^[7].

3.1.3. Using Rhetorical Devices

Madame Chiang used various rhetorical techniques to make her speeches emotionally and intellectually appealing. During her 1943 tour of the United States, Madame Chiang highlighted the steadfastness of the Chinese people in enduring Japan's brutal aggression. Her primary aim was to secure both financial and military assistance for China in her address to the U.S. Congress. However, she ensured that China was portrayed as an equal member of the international community rather than succumbing to Western demands in desperation. As Lintin observed, "through her rhetorical actions, both in word and deed, Madame Chiang demonstrated her intense belief in democracy and her commitment to a future democratic system in China"^[5].

Madame Chiang captivated her American audiences by emphasizing her deep connection to American culture and values. In her address to the U.S. Congress, she employed the phrase "Let us" anaphorically, repeating it four times to denounce Japanese atrocities. This rhetorical strategy, reminiscent of the U.S. Declaration of Independence's indictment and later echoed in Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 speech "I Have a Dream," underscored her alignment with American ideals. "Let us not forget that during the first four and a half

years of total aggression China has borne Japan's sadistic fury unaided and alone," she declared.

To further establish her affinity with the American people, Madame Chiang referenced her American education and commended the United States as "the cauldron of democracy" and "the incubator of democratic principles"^[3]. She also connected these democratic ideals to China's own heritage by invoking Sun Yat-sen's call for "the fortitude to carry on"^[3]. Her rhetoric emphasized China's status as an equal partner among nations and underscored the necessity of international cooperation. "Since international interdependence is now so universally recognized, can we not also say that all nations should become members of one corporate body?" she asked, drawing on the principles of the 1942 Declaration of United Nations, of which China was a signatory^[4].

Madame Chiang appealed to Congress to support China's efforts against Japanese aggression, urging the Allies to prioritize lasting peace over short-term expediency. She expressed confidence that "at the writing of peace, America and our other gallant Allies will not be obtunded by the mirage of contingent reasons of expediency". Through her efforts, Madame Chiang not only secured critical American support for China but also reshaped how China was perceived in the United States, presenting it as a resilient and equal partner on the world stage^[6].

3.2. Challenging Orientalist Views

A key part of Madame Chiang's strategy was to push back against the Orientalist stereotypes that had shaped how the West viewed China and its people for a long time. Orientalism, as defined by Said^[1], involves portraying Eastern societies as exotic, inferior, or in need of Western help. These stereotypes were deeply rooted in American society, where Chinese people were often seen as mysterious or incapable of modernization.

3.2.1. Redefine Chinese Women's Image

Madame Chiang's public presence played an important role in challenging gender stereotypes that portrayed Asian women as passive or submissive. Her confident demeanor, fluent English, and Western education allowed her to present herself as a modern and empowered figure who defied these narrow views. By blending traditional Chinese values with Western sophistication, she created a hybrid identity that

challenged the common Western image of Asian women as docile and dependent^[9].

Her speeches often addressed the evolving role of women in China, linking the country's progress to the global movement for women's rights. For example, in interviews and public appearances, she highlighted how Chinese women were gaining more economic and political freedoms, moving beyond traditional roles as "dutiful wives and wise mothers"^[4]. This helped to reframe Chinese women not as symbols of a "backward" culture, but as active participants in the country's modernization efforts.

3.2.2. Reclaiming China's Cultural Legacy

Madame Chiang also aimed to reclaim China's cultural heritage by emphasizing its contributions to modern political thought. She challenged Orientalist portrayals of Chinese traditions as outdated by presenting them as dynamic sources of democratic values. For instance, she highlighted Confucian concepts like *Li* (etiquette) and *Yi* (righteousness), aligning them with democratic ideals of civic responsibility and justice^[6]. This helped to position Chinese culture as a strong foundation for the country's democratic aspirations, rather than a barrier to progress^[8].

By doing this, Madame Chiang aimed to break down the rigid divide between East and West that Orientalism had established. Instead of accepting Western modernity as the only path forward, she promoted a vision of progress that included Chinese traditions, showing that China could evolve on its own terms. Yang^[3] argues that this approach not only challenged the dominance of Western narratives but also offered an alternative view of global modernity that embraced multiple cultural perspectives.

3.2.3. Challenging U.S. Paternalism

By countering Orientalist stereotypes and reclaiming China's narrative, Madame Chiang also took on the paternalistic tone often found in U.S. foreign policy. She emphasized China's resilience and ongoing reforms, challenging the idea that the country needed saving by the West. This reframed the discussion from one of dependency to one of partnership, presenting China as a capable and equal participant in the Allied war efforts during World War II^[4].

Madame Chiang's rhetoric not only aimed to gain immediate support for China's war effort but also sought to shift the longer-term Western view of China. By strategically

using rhetoric, she effectively challenged deep-seated stereotypes and presented a narrative of China as a nation with its own agency and potential for democratic governance^[3].

3.3. Impact and Legacy

Madame Chiang's 1943 U.S. tour had a significant effect on how Americans viewed China and helped shape Sino-American relations during and after World War II. Her strategies not only helped secure support for China during the war but also influenced broader discussions about China's modernization and its role in the global community.

3.3.1. Short-Term Achievement

One of the immediate impacts of Madame Chiang's efforts was the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, a significant change in U.S. immigration policy. Her influential speech to Congress emphasized shared democratic values and the need for U.S. support in China's fight against Japan, effectively appealing to American ideals of freedom and justice (U.S. Congress, 1943). By framing the Chinese people as allies in a global struggle for democracy and equality, rather than as perpetual outsiders, she helped shift public opinion towards a more empathetic and inclusive view of Chinese immigrants. This legislative change represented not just a legal amendment, but a symbolic shift in U.S.-China relations, moving away from policies based on exclusion and racial prejudice and toward a relationship founded on mutual respect and shared goals.

Madame Chiang's role in securing this change went beyond her speechmaking; her entire tour was marked by strategic interactions with American leaders and the media where she consistently presented China as a nation with a commitment to modernity and democratic values. Her efforts played a crucial role in securing vital financial and military aid for China, which included billions of dollars in wartime assistance. This support was essential for China's continued resistance against Japan and significantly bolstered the Chinese war effort^[4]. By portraying China as a nation resisting totalitarianism, she framed the U.S. aid not as charity, but as a necessary investment in the global fight for freedom. This diplomatic success helped strengthen China's position during the war, while also setting a foundation for deeper post-war economic and diplomatic ties between the two nations.

Madame Chiang's tour also had a cultural impact in

the short term. Her charismatic public appearances and the extensive media coverage she received helped humanize the Chinese people to the American public, presenting them as partners in the fight against fascism. Her personal story and eloquent speeches helped challenge the negative stereotypes of Chinese people in the U.S., fostering a greater sense of understanding and solidarity.

3.3.2. Long-Term Achievement

Madame Chiang's 1943 tour not only brought immediate benefits, but it also laid the groundwork for a more nuanced and lasting understanding of China in the United States. By framing China as an emerging democracy and aligning the country's struggle with American values, she helped shift the perception of China from a distant, struggling nation to a strategic partner with a shared vision for global stability and peace. This change in perspective influenced American policymakers, leading them to view China not merely as a recipient of aid, but as a potential ally in the larger geopolitical context, particularly during the tensions of the Cold War^[3]. Her rhetoric contributed to fostering a long-term shift in U.S.-China relations, opening the door for continued diplomatic engagement even during periods of political tension.

Madame Chiang's emphasis on democratic values also had a significant, long-lasting impact on Taiwan's political trajectory. After the Nationalist government retreated to Taiwan in 1949, the democratic ideals she promoted during her U.S. tour continued to resonate in Taiwan's evolving political landscape. The principles she advocated for—freedom, human rights, and democratic governance—became ingrained in Taiwan's political culture and played a role in shaping the island's transition toward a more democratic system in the late 20th century. Her legacy in promoting democracy helped establish Taiwan's identity as a bastion of Chinese democracy and contributed to its distinct political path from mainland China^[6].

Moreover, Madame Chiang's influence can be seen in the ongoing cultural and diplomatic exchanges between Taiwan and the United States. Her work laid a foundation for the long-standing support Taiwan has received from the U.S., rooted in shared democratic ideals. This relationship has continued to evolve, with Taiwan often being viewed as a model of democracy in Asia. Her impact extended beyond her lifetime, as her ideas and efforts continued to influence

the discourse on Taiwan's position in the international community and its relations with other democratic nations.

3.3.3. Legacy in Diplomacy

Madame Chiang's approach to public diplomacy set an important example for future diplomatic efforts by showing how rhetoric can be used strategically to shape how nations are perceived and influence foreign policy. Her ability to connect with different audiences by emphasizing shared cultural values and familiar themes made her speeches not only persuasive but also impactful across various cultural contexts^[4]. By focusing on universal ideas like democracy and human rights while also incorporating elements of Chinese culture, Madame Chiang showed how effective communication could change a nation's image and build international support^[9]. Her approach demonstrated that successful diplomacy doesn't always have to rely solely on political deals or economic agreements. Instead, it can also be achieved through the power of language and messaging that appeals to common ideals and values^[7].

Her methods have influenced how many countries today try to reshape their global image and gain support from the international community. For example, nations like South Korea and Japan use cultural diplomacy, such as promoting their pop culture and traditions, to improve their international standing and foster stronger connections worldwide, which echoes Madame Chiang's strategies^[10]. This shows that her legacy is still relevant, especially in an age where communication and media play a significant role in shaping global perceptions. According to Yang^[3], Madame Chiang's legacy reminds us that diplomacy is not just about government negotiations, but also about reaching people's hearts and minds through effective and thoughtful communication.

3.4. Comparative Analysis with Other Leaders

Madame Chiang's rhetorical strategies can be compared to those of other well-known figures in diplomatic history, especially those who used their positions to promote democratic values and shift cultural views.

3.4.1. Female Leaders

Madame Chiang is often compared to Eleanor Roosevelt, who similarly used her platform during World War II to advocate for human rights and democratic values. Both

women played crucial roles in shaping public opinion and promoting social justice, but Madame Chiang faced the additional challenge of representing a non-Western nation. This meant she had to navigate deeply rooted cultural biases and challenge Orientalist views in the U.S., which often depicted China as exotic and fundamentally different from the West^[5, 11]. While Roosevelt focused largely on domestic social issues and American democratic ideals^[12-14], Madame Chiang's efforts extended beyond national borders, making her a key figure in shaping U.S.-China relations during a time of global conflict. Her speeches not only advocated for China's war effort but also sought to reframe China's image in the American consciousness, presenting it as a modern and democratic nation aligned with the principles of freedom and human rights.

Madame Chiang's rhetorical strategies were more complex than those of her Western counterpart. Unlike Roosevelt, who was primarily addressing domestic audiences and advocating for American-style democratic reforms, Madame Chiang had to tailor her message to bridge cultural divides and create common ground with Western audiences unfamiliar with Chinese political history. She often used references to Western political ideals, such as those of Thomas Jefferson, alongside Chinese concepts like Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People, to appeal to American values while still emphasizing China's distinct path toward democracy^[4]. This blend of cultural references enabled her to build a narrative that positioned China as an equal partner in the global fight for democracy, rather than a recipient of Western guidance.

In contrast to Song Qingling, who aligned herself with the Chinese Communist Party, Madame Chiang presented a different vision for China's political future. While Song supported a socialist approach that resonated with Communist ideals^[15-17], Madame Chiang used her platform to advocate for a version of Chinese democracy that would align more closely with Western liberal values^[9]. This divergence in political messaging between the two leaders illustrates how they used competing narratives to shape public perceptions about China's direction during a turbulent period. Song's speeches often emphasized class struggle and socialist solidarity, whereas Madame Chiang focused on universal principles of human rights and democratic governance to appeal to both Chinese and Western audiences.

3.4.2. Male Diplomats

Madame Chiang's approach to public diplomacy significantly differed from that of male diplomats of her time, including her husband, Chiang Kai-shek. While Chiang Kai-shek's speeches often focused on military strategies and nationalist themes aimed at rallying support for China's war efforts, Madame Chiang employed a softer approach that emphasized cultural diplomacy and moral values^[4]. Her rhetoric did not center on battlefield tactics or appeals to patriotic fervor; instead, it used themes of shared democratic ideals, historical justice, and cultural identity to connect with her audience on a personal level. This strategy allowed her to engage Western audiences in a way that many male leaders could not, leveraging her identity as a Western-educated Chinese woman to challenge stereotypes and present China as a moral and democratic partner^[18].

Madame Chiang's approach to public diplomacy contrasted sharply with that of male leaders like Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt, who emphasized military strategy and political resilience during World War II. While Churchill's speeches were designed to inspire defiance and national resolve, often focusing on themes of struggle and sacrifice^[19-21], Madame Chiang adopted a more empathetic approach that highlighted cultural diplomacy and moral values. Her rhetoric presented China's fight as not just a military endeavor but a shared struggle for democratic principles and human rights. Similarly, while Roosevelt's addresses, such as his "Four Freedoms" speech, focused on mobilizing public support through calls for unity and the defense of liberty, his emphasis was largely on strategic political aims rather than the cultural diplomacy that characterized Madame Chiang's speeches^[22]. By leveraging her unique position as a Western-educated Chinese woman, Madame Chiang used a softer approach that connected with Western audiences on a personal level, challenging cultural stereotypes and evoking empathy^[23]. This distinguished her efforts from the more conventional appeals of her male counterparts, who centered their rhetoric around strategic wartime needs^[21].

4. Conclusions

Madame Chiang's 1943 U.S. tour stands as a notable example of how rhetoric can influence international percep-

tions and challenge entrenched stereotypes. Her speeches combined appeals to democratic ideals, historical justice, and cultural identity, creating a narrative that resonated with both American values and China's unique traditions. By positioning China as an equal partner in the global fight for democracy and human rights, Madame Chiang contributed to redefining U.S.-China relations and challenged Orientalist narratives that had long shaped Western perceptions of the East.

The analysis of her rhetorical strategies reveals her ability to engage with multiple layers of discourse, from challenging stereotypes to reframing China's identity on the global stage. The following sections address the research questions, outlining how her speeches achieved these goals and exploring the broader implications of her efforts.

4.1. Addressing Research Questions

4.1.1. Challenging Orientalist Discourses and Stereotypes

Madame Chiang's 1943 U.S. tour demonstrated how rhetoric could be effectively used to challenge Orientalist discourses and long-standing stereotypes about China. In her speeches, she reframed China not as a nation in need of Western rescue but as an equal partner in the global fight for democracy and human rights^[24, 25]. By emphasizing Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People, she highlighted China's unique history of democratic values, distinct from Western models, directly countering the stereotype of China as a "backward" nation. Her ability to align Chinese historical narratives with universal ideals of equality and fairness suggests an effort to subvert Orientalist portrayals by positioning China as a nation capable of contributing meaningfully to modern global discourse.

4.1.2. Reframing China through Democracy and Cultural Identity

Madame Chiang employed a range of linguistic and rhetorical devices, such as repetition, metaphors, and references to American historical figures, to foster a sense of shared values between China and the United States. This approach demonstrated that democracy was not exclusively a Western concept but one that China could also embody and promote. For instance, her repeated use of key phrases like "Let us" in her U.S. Congress speech created a collective

ethos that paralleled American revolutionary rhetoric, emphasizing unity in the fight for justice. By addressing historical injustices under Western imperialism, she connected China's struggle for independence to broader ideals of equality and fairness, reshaping its image as a modern, democratic partner for Western audiences^[3].

4.1.3. Countering Cultural Biases and Gender Stereotypes

Her rhetoric also directly confronted cultural biases, particularly those portraying Chinese women as passive or submissive. Through her public persona as a modern, confident, and articulate leader, she redefined the image of Chinese women as active participants in China's modernization. She explicitly highlighted the progress of Chinese women in achieving economic and political freedoms, presenting them as symbols of China's evolving cultural identity. Additionally, she reclaimed traditional Chinese values, such as Confucian ideals, showing how they could align with democratic principles, thereby bridging the divide between Eastern and Western perspectives.

4.2. Broader Impacts and Limitations

Madame Chiang's efforts extended beyond cultural perceptions. She addressed the paternalistic tone of U.S. foreign policy by emphasizing China's resilience and progress, presenting it as an equal ally in the war effort rather than as a nation dependent on Western intervention. Her approach [Modified Content] appears to have shifted the narrative from dependency to partnership, positioning China as a capable and sovereign nation.

Her advocacy had immediate and lasting impacts. In the short term, her speeches contributed to the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 and secured critical financial and military support for China's resistance against Japan. Over time, her rhetoric may have helped to reshape U.S. perceptions of China, fostering a shift from seeing it as a recipient of aid to recognizing it as a strategic partner. This transformation in perception laid the foundation for more robust diplomatic relations, even during contentious periods like the Cold War. Her emphasis on democratic values also influenced Taiwan's political development after the Nationalist government relocated there in 1949. As Taiwan transitioned toward democracy in the latter half of the 20th

century, her speeches reinforced its identity as a center of Chinese democracy.

However, her influence was not without limitations. While her speeches inspired American audiences, their effects were often short-lived, and U.S. support for the Nationalist government waned after World War II. Her promotion of democratic ideals abroad contrasted sharply with her association with the authoritarian policies of the Nationalist government in Taiwan, leading to criticism for perceived inconsistencies. Furthermore, her privileged background and U.S.-centered education distanced her from the everyday realities of the Chinese populace, raising questions about her representation of the broader Chinese experience. Additionally, this study relies on qualitative analysis to explore Madame Chiang's rhetorical strategies, and it does not include quantitative methods that might provide statistical insights or audience-based data. Future research could address this limitation by incorporating quantitative approaches, such as sentiment analysis or audience reception studies, to complement the qualitative findings and broaden the scope of the analysis.

4.3. Final Reflections

Madame Chiang's approach to public diplomacy set a model for future efforts, demonstrating how cultural connections and shared values could shape international perceptions. While criticisms exist regarding her association with an authoritarian regime, her impact on U.S.-China relations and global diplomacy remains noteworthy. Her legacy continues to hold relevance in discussions about the role of rhetoric and public diplomacy in shaping international relations. Ultimately, her work illustrates how the strategic use of language can potentially challenge entrenched narratives, foster international understanding, and contribute to global narratives of equality and cooperation.

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