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# Puppets, Compatriots, and Souls in Heaven: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Chiang Kai-shek's Early Wartime Rhetoric

Lutgard LAMS and Wei-lun LU

**Abstract:** The study adopts a critical discourse analysis approach to Chiang Kai-shek's (CKS) internal nationalist propaganda and authoritarian discourse practices, investigating his New Year and National Day speeches in the 1950s. Authoritarian characteristics are evident in strategies such as legitimization, reification, or myth-making, in the antagonist categorisation of Self versus Other, in Self-glorification and the idolisation of the dead, in the hegemonic creation of commonality and unity, and in the metaphorical conceptualisation of reality. Patterns of idolising the dead serve to impose and legitimise CKS's worldview among his citizens. Another pattern is CKS's invention of imaginary compatriots within the "enslaved China" waiting for the best time to overthrow the "bandits'" rule. Reference to these imaginary agents indirectly presents to his audience a false but better impression of the Self, and a dimmer view of the communist bandits. A third pattern is CKS's metaphorical use of language, such as references to communist China as a puppet regime of Russia.

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**Keywords:** Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek, authoritarian discourse, discursive strategies, leadership discourse

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## Introduction

The ways in which political leaders appropriate verbal means for ideological purposes have been extensively studied in the field of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Chilton 2004; van Dijk 1995). Herein it has been argued that leadership discourse is a type of social practice, where power relations in society are legitimised and reinforced by various discourse strategies. In the field, few studies are based on a representative body of authentic data when it comes to analysing Chinese leadership discourse. While speeches of contemporary leaders in China or Taiwan have been investigated (Holt and Chang 2009; Lams 2018a, 2018b; Lams and Liao 2011; Lu and Ahrens 2008), remarkably few studies have been conducted on the discourse features of the prime actor on the Taiwanese political scene during early Kuomintang (Guomindang, KMT) rule on the island: General Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi; hereafter, CKS). Therefore, this article intends to fill this gap by presenting an analysis of CKS's leadership discourse, hoping to contribute to a deeper understanding of how a political elite uses language to mobilise the state and consolidate leadership in a Chinese context.

The many facets of the authoritarian rule of the KMT regime under CKS's leadership have been discussed from numerous perspectives (see other contributions in this topical issue), with the exception of the role of language in maintaining or subverting power relations – as extensively researched in CDA. Not unlike the Chinese leaders who, from ancient times to the contemporary era, knew how to use language to instil their authoritarian worldview in the minds of their citizens (Cao 2014; Ji 2004; Lams 2014; Link 1992; Marinelli 2014; Schoenhals 1992; Zhang 2011), CKS, the Chinese KMT leader, exhibited a similar meta-pragmatic awareness of powerful discursive tactics in his widespread use of propaganda and indoctrination. Hence, this article aims to explore the characteristics of the authoritarian discursive style in CKS's public speeches. While the diachronic study by Lu and Ahrens (2008) details how the ideological orientation of Republic of China (ROC) presidents shapes the use of metaphors in their public speeches, this analysis did not concern authoritarian discourse itself – and CKS only featured as one of the political actors. However, the language use and style of CKS is worthy of investigation in itself, given the leading role he played in republican China as the head of the KMT.

CKS fought alongside the communists against the Japanese army, and, a few years later, engaged in the civil war between the Communist and Nationalist Parties. After having lost the mainland to the Communist Party, he withdrew his army and transferred the government of the ROC to Taiwan, and ruled as the president and supreme leader of the ROC until his death in 1975. Re-imposition of Chinese authority on the island of Taiwan after the Japanese withdrawal in 1945 did not go smoothly. The seeds of local Taiwanese discontent with the KMT leadership had been planted by the notoriously strict administrative style of Chen Yi, the KMT-appointed governor of Taiwan from 1945 onwards. The early enthusiasm of the Taiwanese, who had welcomed the Chinese liberation of the island from Japanese rule (1895–1945), quickly turned to bitterness when feelings of mutual distrust arose because of the KMT army officials' fear of Japanese or communist collaborators in Taiwan. Also, during the civil war on the mainland, the Nationalists had reportedly looted Taiwan, “stripping its people of as much as \$1 billion in property” (Tucker 1994: 27). The relative prosperity of the island had been replaced by unemployment, inflation, and a sharp drop in production. As Tucker writes,

The breakdown of local services such as sanitation, while officials concentrated on collecting booty instead of garbage, led to the emergence of plague, smallpox, and malaria [...]. Taiwan appeared to have passed from subjugation at the hands of an imperial government in Tokyo to a far more irresponsible and costly subjugation at the hands of an inept government in Nanking. (Tucker 1994: 28)

The disillusionment engendered by KMT policies eventually resulted in an ethnic and political clash between the native Taiwanese and the newcomers, triggered by the 28 February 1947 Incident, which has been widely documented in the literature. For a first-hand insight into the political circumstances of early Nationalist rule after 1945, see Kerr (1966) and Peng (1972). These events sowed the seeds for the sustained tense relationship between the KMT regime and the local Taiwanese population, exacerbated by CKS's mobilisation of young Taiwanese men for a war on what to them seemed “foreign” territory (see, for example, Chen 2012; Lee 2014; Wu 1987).

Not surprisingly, upon CKS's military withdrawal from the mainland to continue ROC rule in Taiwan, the KMT leader faced a popu-

lation that was reluctant to assist him in his ambition to regain control over mainland China. Having to counter local dissent and opposition, he instituted martial law, arguing that the “free China” – as he called Taiwan – had to be protected from communist insurgency. That Taiwan could hardly be called a free China and actually underwent a “white terror” period has been poignantly described in the biographical novel *A Taste of Freedom* by the international law scholar and future presidential candidate Peng Ming-min (1972). Many studies have been conducted on the coercive institutions and state violence under KMT authoritarianism (see, among others, Chen 2016; Greitens 2013; Tsang 1993). CKS's ambition to reconquer the mainland created an institutionally enforced discursive manipulation of people's minds to turn against Maoist China. In close connection to Cheng's article in this issue dealing with this topic, the present study<sup>1</sup> looks into the exact nuts and bolts of the discursive strategies used in CKS's linguistic ideological engineering. This is a study of the verbal strategies through which CKS further consolidated his leadership, aiming to better understand the importance of language and ideology in the realm of political leadership and propaganda in general. Further, we strive to take examples from the ROC up into the global research on leadership discourse.

## Theoretical Framework

The wider framework draws on the theoretical insights of CDA (Chilton 2004; Fairclough 1989, 1992; Van Dijk 1995), viewing language use in social contexts as a social practice. CDA assumes that social power relations are established and reinforced in discourse, with that of political leaders being an oft-researched topic. Since CDA reveals the ideological assumptions embodied in leadership discourse, the concept of ideology plays a crucial role in the analysis – and is to be understood as taken-for-granted or unquestioned significations or constructions of reality that contribute “to the production, reproduc-

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tion or transformation of relations of domination” (Fairclough 1992: 87). Based on Gramsci’s (1971) notion of “hegemony,” CDA theorists hold that underlying ideological discourse is a quest for maintaining power and domination, serving the interests of certain groups (e.g. political leaders). However these specific interests are disguised, with persuasive discourse leading people into believing or accepting that dominance is legitimate and in the interests of everyone.

Therefore, a subtle discursive process of consensus-building by state institutions (such as the educational and legal systems, the police, and the military), political alliances, and the media shapes power as jointly produced for the common good. Hegemony is reached when the discourse is presented as natural, and when other voices are sidelined. Naturalisation is a universal trait of any political actor or group intent on maintaining leadership, but is especially salient in the official discourse of authoritarian leaders (Lams, Crauwels, and Serban 2014). In authoritarian regimes – where the state installs Party departments across all sectors of society, thereby eliminating state–society distinctions – repressiveness takes over society as a totalising goal in itself. Therefore, one can find the traits of totalitarian discourses in authoritarian regimes. As Lams, Crauwels, and Serban argue,

We can talk of totalitarian discourses in authoritarian regimes, especially in establishing a cult of the centralized/authoritative power, or of the military, as a type of the cult of personality that reshapes both national history and society entirely according to an authoritative vision. Political power is concentrated in a military or single party personality and the totalizing discourse gathers the society under the banners of this ongoing cult of personality. In countries with authoritarian regimes the official discourse – that is, the discourse of individuals and institutions representing the state – is totalitarian by metonymy [...]. The military or a single party takes over the entire society, explaining its past, present and future existence. (Lams, Crauwels, and Serban 2014: 4)

Admittedly, in authoritarian regimes such as the one under CKS’s leadership the denial of individualism is less present than it is in totalitarian systems. This is because they still allow “for the activities of religious bodies and civil associations as long as the people involved are not critical of the leadership and the military” (Lams, Crauwels, and Serban 2014: 5). The personality cult of the leader, “enhanced by the metaphor of the father figure” (Lams 2014: 191), typifies totalitarian leadership discourse – as evident, for example, in the representa-



tion of Hitler as the father or the secularised messiah in Nazi Germany discourse (Sepp 2014), honorific references to father Generalissimo Kim Il-Sung in North Korean history textbooks (Frayse-Kim 2014), and in the former dictatorial discourse of the Marcos family in the Philippines (Tigno and Franco 2014).

In addition to referring to the Self as the caring parent, the dictator or autocrat will typically adopt a nationalist discourse that reminisces about a mythical past, filled with nostalgic references to the founding father(s) of the nation. This referential strategy is not unique to authoritarian leaders, however. It can also be found in the discourse of nationalist leaders in more democratic societies. In this political environment, the stories of the founding fathers serve to construct a common national identity (e.g. the United States' founding fathers) and could also be used for political expediency to rally citizens around the flag in times of external threat. In the case of dictators and autocrats, however, reference to the founding fathers usually serves to legitimise continued one-party rule, and constitutes an emotional ploy to incite citizens into following these fathers as role models – heroes willing to surrender their lives for the good of the nation (see the notion of “necropolitics,” as explained by Cheng in this topical issue).

To analyse the ways in which hegemony or consensus is achieved in Chinese leadership discourse at the highest political level, the current article examines the national leader's public speeches to identify the use of discursive strategies that reveal ideological meaning construction, as first proposed by Thompson (1990). These consist of: (1) legitimisation; (2) myth-making or reification of contentious issues into non-negotiable truths – the process of reification portrays processes as natural or permanent events, thus obliterating their historical, social, or political character; (3) essentialist and antagonist categorisations of in- and out-groups, by the glorification of the Self and expurgation of the Other; (4) unification and instilling a national sense of commonality and cohesion; and, (5) dissimulation, by diverting attention from existing relations through powerful metaphorical conceptualisation, steering people's opinions in one direction while eliminating alternative meanings. While these strategies are not limited to authoritarian discourses and are also employed in any nationalist discourse to varying degrees, they cumulatively typify the ideologi-

cal operation of authoritarian discourses – as illustrated by Lams (2014) regarding the Chinese communist leadership discourse.

Signs of totalitarian discourse also become apparent in the mobilising and inciteful tone of a “wooden tongue,” imbued with pathos, and in nationalist exhortative speech acts. The present study browses through a selection of CKS’s speeches in search of this type of “linguistic engineering” (Ji 2004), which aims to steer popular opinion – and, as a consequence, action. In addition to examining these discursive traits of authoritarian and nationalist leadership discourse, the current article also looks into the conceptualisation power of tropes therein, such as metaphors. Hence, its analytical framework is equally informed by critical metaphor analysis (CMA) (Charteris-Black 2004, 2005). This goes a step further than CDA by incorporating the “contemporary theory of metaphor” (Kövecses 2002; Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Yu 1998) into the analysis, and concentrates on how the use of metaphor reflects the ideological preferences of the speaker in the political domain. It has been argued that metaphor plays a central role in persuasion in public discourse (e.g. Pelclova and Lu 2018), serving to highlight certain aspects of reality and to hide others. As such, the speaker may get to manipulate the worldview that they intend to present via verbal means and the hearer will pick up the communicated worldview in subtle ways.

Metaphor in leadership discourse has been extensively studied, and has been pinpointed as a powerful implicit mechanism for political leaders to introduce their worldviews and naturalise and sanction the ideological content that underlies their rhetoric (Charteris-Black 2005). When it comes to Taiwanese/Chinese politics, it has been pointed out (Lu and Ahrens 2008) that KMT leaders’ use of metaphor, from CKS to Lee Teng-hui (Li Denghui), has a strong focus on the concept of “building” (i.e. comparing a country to a building) and that their usage of building metaphors is very different from the way in which they were applied in the discourse of Chen Shui-bian (Chen Shuibian), leader of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP; the party was established in 1986 as a political and ideological reaction against KMT rule), in the early years of the new century. In the KMT leaders’ speeches, the building metaphor occurred much more frequently than in those of their DPP counterpart and was used in a retrospective way, in referring to the establishment of the country in 1911 and its glorious past – which are figuratively compared to the

foundation of a building. By inference, the father of the nation, Sun Yat-sen (Sun Yixian), and the martyrs are likened to construction workers who contribute to laying the groundwork of the country-as-building. They are therefore presented as deserving people's respect, due to their hard work and achievements.

## Empirical Analysis: Strategies of Symbolic Meaning-Generation and Rhetorical Patterns in CKS's Public Speeches

As concerns corpus selection, the language samples investigated are representative and authoritative, containing public speeches delivered on New Year's Day and Double Tenth Day (National Day) by CKS during his presidential term from 1955 to early 1960 (marking the end of his second such term). Only those in CKS's second term are included for the sake of representativeness, to ensure that the language analysed is that produced by a leader who had by then consolidated total power over the Taiwanese population in a region which, as noted, he called free China – as opposed to “red China,” which was not free. The period is limited to the early 1960s to remain consistent with the overall focus of this journal issue, which lies on the formative years – or the “making of authoritarianism.”

The scope of the study is limited to public speeches to control for the same target audience, which is CKS's fellow citizens (rather than certain smaller social groups). Only speeches delivered on New Year's Day and Double Tenth Day are included, due to the political significance of these occasions (more on this below). The sample speeches were taken from the official website of the CKS Memorial Foundation, to ensure the authoritativeness of the data analysed.

A methodological point to note is that although CKS delivered many speeches that could have been included in the scope of the present study, we focus only on those given on New Year's Day and Double Tenth Day, for two reasons. First, these are important days on which the national leader speaks to the nation as a whole rather than addressing a specific audience, like the military, youth, overseas Chinese, or the Catholic community. Second, nowadays in Taiwan, most public holidays that used to be of political significance – such as Taiwan Retrocession Day (25 October), Sun Yat-sen's birthday (12 November), Constitution Day (25 December), among others – are no

longer celebrated as national holidays. The fact that New Year's Day and Double Tenth Day are still observed as such indicates the political significance of these dates. Their importance is also evidenced by the fact that only addresses given on these days are published in the English version on the website of the Office of the President.

The findings of the empirical analysis show clear patterns in the use of ideologically motivated discursive strategies, each of which are illustrated in the next section with examples from the data. The speech excerpts are presented with the relevant linguistic features underlined, and the dates of the speeches are given at the end of each excerpt. All translations were done by the authors themselves.

Besides these ideological strategies, other rhetorical manoeuvring was found to contribute to the authoritative nature of the speeches. These comprise utilising the force of exhortative speech acts to mobilise the people, emotional appeals clad in moral argumentation, megalomaniac expressions of grandeur, and the strategic use of conditional phrases in tandem with parallelism and repetition – creating a sense of urgency, and legitimising the course of action requested of citizens. These patterns of leadership discourse are exemplified in the section on “rhetorical patterns.”

## Strategies of Symbolic Meaning-Generation

The following paragraphs outline the most salient patterns in the use of discursive strategies. Among these are legitimation, myth-making, the categorisation of groups, unification, and dissimulation. They cumulatively make up the strength of CKS's arguments intended to mobilise the people of Taiwan into military action against the communist Other.

### *Legitimation Strategies*

The strategy of “legitimation” constructs the demands for human sacrifice in a total war against the communists as the “mission” of a modern nation. CKS repeatedly refers to the ROC's “historical role,” depicts the nation as the “pioneer of Asian democracy,” and uses phrases indicating the necessity of the anti-communist fight in terms of “responsibility for the future of the nation's history, for the fate of humankind.” Legitimation is thus also realised in the climactic discursive move from the local to the universal.

As can be seen in example (1), CKS emphasises the historical and critical role of “us” being posted at the front line (前哨, *qianshao*), which is a military metaphor, and holding the world’s security “in our hands,” thus framing his people’s position as being at the turning point of Asian history. The same idea is reiterated in the National Day speech of 1960, which legitimises military action to “fight for independence and freedom for all ethnic groups in Asia, and to eliminate catastrophe from the entire world.” This strategy constitutes a securitisation narrative. Example (2) presents the establishment of the country as a landmark in the 3,000-year span of Chinese history, depicting it as the first democratic country in Asia. Example (3) points out the historicity of the democratic mission, and the responsibility of everyone to contribute to this noble goal.

(1) 我們站在這太平洋的前哨，掌握著亞洲安危的樞紐，一舉一動，都影響國際的觀聽；為成為敗，更關係世界的安危。我們的任務是特別艱鉅，我們的前途是無限光明。We stand at the front line facing the Pacific Ocean with the very security of Asia in our hands. Whatever we do, the world is looking at us. The world’s security is dependent on our success. Our task is a formidable one, but our future is infinitely bright. (01.01.1955)

(2) 我們追念國父在四十四年以前領導革命先烈，擲頭顱，流鮮血，推翻了三千年來專制的政體，締造了亞洲第一個三民主義的民主國家，這是我們中華民國最光榮的歷史，亦是我們全國軍民最偉大的紀念日子。We (should) come to think about our national father, who led the martyrs to sacrifice their lives and shed their blood, and in the end succeeded in overthrowing the despotic political body that lasted for 3,000 years, and established the first democratic country of the people, by the people, and for the people in Asia. This is the most glorious part of the history of the Republic of China and the greatest day to remember for us – army and citizens alike – in the entire country. (10.10.1955)

(3) 今天大家的責任，就是要解救大陸全體同胞的苦難，[...] 我們乃在亞洲首先建立了第一個民主自由國家，揭開了萬丈光芒的亞洲民主自由的歷史序幕！The responsibility of everyone today is to relieve the suffering of all compatriots on the mainland [...]. The country has unveiled the historical prelude to democracy and freedom in Asia, which is full of glory! (10.10.1961)

In addition, legitimation is achieved by referring to a “sense of emergency,” and presenting the KMT government – which calls for the

fight against the common enemy – as existing in a “state of exception” (Agamben 2005). Hereby total war against the CCP can be legitimised. This is a typical discursive strategy for militarising the country (for CKS’s other strategies, see Cheng in this topical issue).

Example (4) is an expression of such a sense of emergency, which is achieved through the exhortation to citizens not to let go of the timely opportunity for revolution. It finds expression in the combination of negative modality, instantiated by the phrase 決不能 (*jué bù néng*) “must not,” and the semantic description of time as 稍縱即逝 (*shāo zòng jí shì*) “an opportunity that will disappear immediately if let go of.” Through this linguistic construction, the natural conclusion of taking immediate action (instantiated by the phrase 加緊 (*jiā jǐn*) “stepping up preparations for a counterattack”) can be arrived at. The same applies to the combination of the adverb 從速 (*cóng sù*) “speed up” and the action verb 起來 (*qǐ lái*) “rise” in example (5), which – following this line of thinking – exemplifies CKS urging the country to cooperate and to take action as soon as possible. Example (6) illustrates how the message of urgency is clad in a restrictive conditional 只有我們 …才能 (*zhǐ yǒu wǒ men … cái néng*) “only in this way can we,” which eliminates any alternative plan of action.

(4) 但是今日海內外同胞應該切實知道：我們每一個人，都有接應這一反共抗暴的責任，我們決不能放過這一時機；從今天起，我們更應砥礪禮義廉恥的民族氣節，發揚孝悌忠信的固有德性，加緊反攻大陸準備，及時支援大陸同胞這革命鬥爭的實際行動，來迎接這稍縱即逝的革命機運。But now, all compatriots in this country and overseas should really keep in mind that each and all of us share the responsibility for fighting communism and despotism, so we must not give up this great opportunity; from this day on, we should all the more sharpen our national trait and cherish our traditional ethics, so we may step up preparations for a counterattack at full speed and reach out a helping hand to our compatriots on the mainland, so that we may welcome the fleeting window of opportunity for revolution. (01.01.1956)

(5) 大家應該從速起來，在青天白日獨立自由的大旗之下，共同一致，來繼承我們國父孫中山先生的建國遺志，發揚我們先烈為國家與人民而獻身的救國精神，消滅共匪，打倒俄寇，恢復中華民國獨立平等與自由，重建民有民治民享的三民主義新中國。Everybody should get up as soon as we can, and, under the beautiful flag of the Republic of China (that has the blue sky and the white sun on it), together we inherit the will of our national father,

Dr. Sun Yat-sen, in order to proclaim the gist of saving the country, for which our forerunners died, wipe out the communist bandits, and destroy the Russian thieves, so that we may restore the independence, equality and freedom of the Republic of China and may reconstruct a new China of the people, by the people, and for the people. (10.10.1956)

(6) 也只有我們抱定長期奮鬥的決心，才能結合台海戰爭與大陸革命，成為一個反攻復國的整個力量。Only if we hold our determination to fight for a long time can we combine the Taiwan Strait war with the mainland revolution to become a total force for counterattack and resumption of the country. (10.10.1958)

In the data examined, another legitimising strategy worth mentioning is the recurrent idolisation of the dead. This is done to justify CKS's demands that people dedicate their lives, in terms of comforting the souls in heaven. This mechanism will be discussed in the section below on dissimulation by metaphorical conceptualisation.

### *Myth-Making Strategies*

In the data, another discursive strategy of CKS for creating social reality is the practice of reification (e.g. naturalisation) as well as the invention of imaginary compatriots in China waiting to be “rescued from the communist yoke.” Naturalisation is achieved, for example, by the use of presuppositions and the adoption of an assertive style. This is realised through declaratives and/or the absence of modal verbs and adverbs. Examples (7) and (8) illustrate the declarative mode of diction, eliminating alternative versions of reality. Example (9) shows how myth arises by presupposing that mainland compatriots expect to be rescued. In example (10), the propositions about “pilferage” and “madness and intensified atrocities” are presented as unquestioned truths.

(7) 同胞們！我們軍事反攻的行動，只有三個 [...]。“Dear compatriots! There are only three types of military counteraction.” (10.10.1955)

(8) 今日大陸上受難的同胞已經不能再忍受其恐怖和壓榨，只有自動的起來反抗，死中求生了。共匪為了鎮壓民眾的反抗，也只有加緊的迫害和摧殘。故大陸上，抗暴與殘害已成為悲慘的循環，自必釀成全體民眾的大革命。在這中間，共匪自然而然會走上了他崩潰的絕路，而且目前也正在加速的走上這崩潰的絕路。 Today, our compatriots who suffer in the mainland can no longer

endure the tyranny and exploitation (by the Communist Party), and the only way out for them is to rise up (against communist rule). The only thing that the communist bandits can do is to scale up the oppression and devastation more than ever. Therefore, on the mainland, anti-tyranny and oppression together have become a miserable circle, which will in the end lead to a great revolution by all people. Meanwhile, the communist bandits will naturally reach a dead-end and collapse, which is now on its way and the end will soon come in no time. (10.10.1955)

(9) 更惟有這樣，才能不負我們在水深火熱中，掙扎苦鬥的大陸同胞迫切的期待！“Only this way can we live up to the eager expectations of the mainland compatriots, who are struggling hard to be rescued!” (10.10.1957)

(10) 自奸匪竊據大陸八年以來，其喪心病狂，愈演愈烈的暴行，勢將迫使我國家民族永淪浩劫。Given [the evil bandits'] pilferage of the mainland in the past eight years, their madness and intensified atrocities are bound to compel the nation to perpetuate its catastrophe. (10.10.1957)

### ***Strategy of Categorising Groups into Opposite Polarities***

Categorising people in an essentialist and antagonist way creates polarities of in- and out-groups, with positive Self and negative Other representations. The Self is glorified as the first democratic country in Asia, thereby constructing a rhetorical contrast between the democratic foundation of the Self and the non-democratic Other – namely, the autocratic imperial Qing rule or the communist rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)/Russia. While the Self as well as the need for citizens' sacrifice are glorified, a common enemy is constructed. In combination with the naturalisation strategy, this antagonist practice can be very powerful in discursively constructing political reality and influencing popular opinion. While previous excerpts already comprise examples of how the communist Other is demonised, example (11) includes the illustrious phrase 共匪 (*gongfei*) “communist bandits” while (12) makes a reference to the CCP as a “puppet regime” (傀儡, *kuilei*):

(11) 同胞們！我們都知道共匪朱毛革命的極權暴政，不僅是君主專制的流毒，而且他們在蘇俄帝國主義操縱之下，完全將我們人民的生命和自由，國家的領土和主權奉獻於俄帝，以逞其賣國滅種的瘋狂獸性。Dear compatriots! We all know that the utter tyr-



anny of the communist bandits Zhu and Mao is a poisonous remnant of the aristocratic despotism; moreover, under the control of Soviet imperialism, they have sacrificed everything to it – everything including our people's lives and freedom, our land and sovereignty, so that they may have their own crazy way as traitors like animals. (01.01.1957)

In the data, frequent instantiations can be found of such a rhetorical strategy, with relatively negative appraisals of the CCP, its leaders, and of Russia. Example (12) is a typical instance, where the leaders of the CCP – Zhu and Mao – are compared to puppets 傀儡 controlled by the Russian Communist Party.

(12) … 我們政府且在本國領土之上，領導全國同胞，與此俄共傀儡的漢奸朱毛，正在再接再厲的作堅忍的搏鬥。On the territory of our country, our government has also led the entire nation, in perseverance, in fighting against Zhu and Mao's puppet regime (controlled by) the Russian communists. (10.10.1956)

### *Strategy of Unification*

Bringing citizens together under the banner of “commonality” serves to infuse a national spirit of unity. The speeches are replete with deictic markers, such as the inclusive “us,” “our,” “compatriots,” or references made to “the whole country,” “everyone.” This marks off compatriots and those with similar anti-communist values from others. Additionally, the many nationalist references to “people” (“people-centred,” “people-dominated,” “people-to-people”), echo the political philosophy of the “Three Principles of the People” – as propagated by Sun Yat-sen, founder of the ROC and the very person who is repeatedly called the father of the nation. Example (13) demonstrates the cumulative force of the unifying linguistic devices.

(13) 我們中華民族為了救自己，為了救亞洲，為了救世界人類，必須無分地區，無分種族，無分職業，無分宗教信仰和一切階級，都應該下定決心，站在救國家與救民族以自救的青天白日旗幟之下，團結起來，共同一致，來消滅此無恥漢奸萬惡共匪，竭盡我們這一代救國救民的職責。我們相信，凡我同胞在反賣國、反奴役、反清算和反極權的反共鬥爭之中，無論在國內或國外… In order to save ourselves, to save the entirety of Asia, and to save humankind in the world, we, the Chinese people, regardless of area, race, occupation, religion, and class, all must be determined and stand together under the national flag of the blue sky and the

white sun, symbolic of saving the country and the nation to save oneself, in order to annihilate the shameless Han-betrayers and the most evil communist bandits and to fulfil the responsibility of saving the country and the people on our shoulders. We believe that all our compatriots, in the anti-communist war against slavery and totalitarianism, no matter where you are [...]. (01.01.1956)

Example (14) similarly refers to Sun Yat-sen as “our father,” and to “our common mission” to expel the Russian thieves, eliminate Zhu/Mao (bandits), revitalise the mainland, rescue our compatriots, and to rebuild the ROC as a modern nation.

(14) 中正願與我全國軍民同胞，在我們國父領導革命、艱難締造中華民國的開國紀念日，互相策勉，共同奮鬥，來完成我們驅除俄寇，消滅朱毛，光復大陸，解救同胞，重建中華民國為「民有、民治、民享」三民主義現代國家的共同使命。Chung-cheng [CKS] is dedicated to working together with the military and civilian compatriots of our entire nation, on the anniversary of the revolutionary founding of our country by our father, who created the ROC. It is our common mission to expel the Russian thieves, eliminate Zhu/Mao (bandits), revitalise the mainland, rescue our compatriots, and to rebuild the ROC as a modern nation, by, for, and with the people – with the Three Principles of the People as our contemporary country’s guiding principle. (01.01.1956)

### *Strategy of Dissimulation by Metaphorical Conceptualisation*

Constructing social or political reality through the use of metaphors is instrumental in establishing domination by deflecting attention from existing relations. In every speech analysed, there is ample evidence of figurative language – such as the metaphor of the communist bandits and the family one referring to our national father or the “fatherland.” The examples presented earlier clearly illustrate this practice.

A striking conceptualisation, one worthy of elaboration, is the description of the ancestors, slain in war, as martyrs. Idolising the dead appears, as noted, to be a frequent persuasive strategy in CKS’s wartime discourse. In example (15), CKS urges the entire nation to inherit the national father’s last will (繼承國父的遺志, *jicheng guofu de yizhi*) and to march together following the trail of blood of the martyrs (踏著先烈的血跡, *tazhe xianlie de xieji*). It is conceptually interesting to dig deeper into the latter phrase, as a “trail of blood” (血跡,

*xiejì*) is a clear metonymic reference to the existence of former battles, thus being based on a war metaphor.

In addition to the war metaphor, one of a journey is also present in the language used. For example, when the nation is said to march, it marches “following” (踏著, *ta zhe*) “the trail left behind by the passage of the predecessors.” Passages like those in example (15) have a persuasive function similar to that of the aforementioned building metaphor, where the martyrs and the national father are metaphorically compared to construction workers who “laid the foundations” of the country. Hence, they are an important target of national worship. The collaboration of war metaphor and journey metaphor in excerpts like example (15) similarly highlights the sacrifice made by the martyrs (via a linguistic elaboration of the concept of “blood”), and achieves the goal of persuasively elevating the status of the martyrs – and thus making them a target of nationwide worship. Example (16) is a natural consequence of such persuasive rhetoric, as when one sheds blood and dies for the country, the individual is to be remembered by the people who enjoy peace and prosperity as a result of this nation-building achievement. Such a rhetorical device can also have a cultural function, as it is equally based on the typical Chinese understanding of death as a return journey to heaven (Lu 2017).

(15) 惟有努力繼承國父的遺志，踏著先烈的血跡，以堅忍不拔的決心，同仇敵愾的行動。The only thing we should do is to strive to inherit our national father's will, marching in the trail of the martyrs' blood, work with perseverance and determination, and act together against the enemy. (10.10.1957)

(16) 以告慰 國父和諸先烈在天之靈！“so that we may comfort the souls of our national father and our martyrs in heaven.” (10.10.1960)

It is worth mentioning that there is a rhetorical pattern in CKS's speeches, which is evident in the fact that the phrase 國父和諸先烈在天之靈 (*guofu han zhu xianlie zaitianzhibing*, “the souls of our national father and our martyrs in heaven”) occurs in 14 out of CKS's total of 41 speeches given throughout his presidency (from 1955 to 1976). Among the 15 occurrences (featuring twice in the New Year's Day speech of 1963), 12 are right in the penultimate part of the speech each time – immediately followed by such typical closing cheers as 中華民國萬歲! (*zhonghuaminguo wansui*) “Long live ROC!” 三民主義萬

歲! (*sanminzhuoyi wansui*) and “Long live the Three Principles of the People!” among a handful of others.

## Rhetorical Patterns

In addition to the above-mentioned symbolic strategies that reveal the hegemonic and naturalising tendencies of authoritarian discourse, the following characteristics of nationalist language style strengthen the authoritative character of these speeches.

### Exhortations

Exhortative speech acts, such as “we must” or “we should,” have the illocutionary force of mobilising the people into making sacrifices for the common good. They serve to rally the people around the national father figure, with the strengthening tactic of adducing a spiritual dimension too (“in the heavenly spirit of the founding father Sun Yat-sen”). The religious aspect re-emerges in multiple references made to the martyrs, whose “spirit” is also “in heaven.” Example (17) illustrates the mood of urgency, while example (18) also uncovers the strategic combination of spiritual and metaphorical language (the father, the martyrs, or the journey) to generate a more forceful propagandistic message.

(17) 大家應該從速起來 “Everyone should get up quickly.”  
(10.10.1956)

(18) 同胞們！我們生當人類命運決定的關頭，又對自己國家民族的歷史負有繼往開來的責任，當此雙十國慶令節，惟有團結一致，繼承國父的遺志，追隨先烈的血跡，同心一德，刻苦奮鬥，消滅共匪，光復河山，才不辜負今天紀念國慶的重大意義，也才可以告慰國父和革命先烈在天之靈。Compatriots! We were born at the most decisive  juncture of the fate of humankind, and we are responsible for the nation’s history and its future. When we celebrate this glorious Double Ten National Day, we must unite and inherit the legacy of the father, follow the blood of the martyrs, and work hard together. The elimination of the communists and the restoration of the rivers and mountains will not fail to commemorate the great significance of the National Day today, and it will also be possible to comfort the national father’s and the revolutionary martyrs’ spirit in heaven. (10.10.1959)

### *Emotions, Virtues, and Moral Values*

Emotive language and moral argumentation are, in addition, used to implant in the minds of the people of Taiwan the moral need to salvage the Chinese nation from communist ideology, as spread by the CCP and stemming from Russian Leninist-Marxist thinking. As evident in examples (19) and (20), the speeches exhibit an abundance of emotional appeals to the virtues of perseverance. Additionally, attempts are made to inculcate a sense of responsibility and urgency by referring to necessity and adding restrictive conditionals. Emotion is further generated by the multiple references made to “martyrs’ blood and sacrifice.”

(19) 若在時機未到之前，必須堅定沉著，忍受一切痛苦，準備未來的行動。如果時機一到，就要有決心、有勇氣，不顧一切犧牲，堅持作戰到底。Before the right time comes, you must persevere and bear all sufferings, thereby prepare yourselves for future actions. If the right time comes, you must be determined, courageous, and fight till the end, regardless of what sacrifice to make. (01.01.1957)

(20) 今天大家的責任，就是要解救大陸全體同胞的苦難。“The responsibility of everyone today is to relieve the suffering of all the compatriots on the mainland.” (01.01.1961)

### *Megalomaniac Expressions*

In addition to this emotion-laden language, positive descriptors of appraisal – such as the adjectives “great,” “glorious,” and their superlatives, as exemplified in example (21) – construct an exhilarating spirit. Not unusual in leaders’ National Day speeches, this creates a semantic field of glory and excitement.

(21) 這是我們中華民國最光榮的歷史，亦是我們全國軍民最偉大的紀念日子。“This is the most glorious history of us the Republic of China and the greatest memorial day of us as a nation.” (10.10.1955)

### *Repetition and Parallelism*

To reinforce all previously mentioned strategies, the rhetorical force of repetition and parallelism further instils the sense of urgency and necessity, and help legitimise war as the only way to rescue the Chinese nation. In addition, the assertive mode triggered by the modal

adverb 一定 (*yiding*) “surely” leaves no room for alternative visions of the future. Examples (22) and (23) illustrate the repeated assertiveness of prediction, and the construction of a sense of urgency through the restrictive conditional phrase “only in this way can we” – being each time reinforced by stylistic parallelism.

(22) 同胞們！人類歷史早已告訴我們：愛國的力量最後一定戰勝賣國的力量；人性的力量最後一定戰勝獸性的力量；民主自由的力量最後一定戰勝極權奴役的力量。Compatriots! Human history has already told us: the power of patriotism surely overcomes that of betrayal; the power of humanity surely overcomes that of brutality; the power of freedom and democracy surely overcomes that of tyranny and slavery. (10.10.1956)

(23) 現在我們面臨國家民族的空前浩劫，惟有努力繼承國父的遺志，踏著先烈的血跡，以堅忍不拔的決心，同仇敵愾的行動，積極支援大陸同胞反共抗暴的革命運動，消滅共匪，驅除俄寇，光復河山，實現三民主義，完成國民革命。也惟有這樣，我們才能告慰國父和先烈以及千百萬反共抗暴中死難同胞在天之靈；更惟有這樣，才能不負我們在水深火熱中，掙扎苦鬥的大陸同胞迫切的期待！Now we are faced with an unprecedented catastrophe of the country and the nation, so we must strive to inherit the national father's legacy, marching in the blood of the martyrs, work in perseverance and determination, and must actively support the anti-communist and anti-tyranny revolutionary initiatives by our compatriots on the mainland, so we may annihilate the communist bandits, drive out the Soviet marauders, restore our land, realise the Three Principles, and complete the national revolution. Only in this way can we comfort the souls in heaven of our national father and the martyrs, and of the millions of our compatriots who died in anti-communist and anti-tyranny efforts; moreover, only in this way can we fulfil the keen expectations of our mainland compatriots in dire straits! (10.10.1957)

## Conclusion

The critical discourse analysis of a selection of CKS's public speeches has identified a number of discursive strategies cumulatively pointing to an authoritarian and hegemonic style of leadership. It is one that eliminates alternative voices, and justifies its demands for sacrifice in well-designed, nationalistic forms of propaganda. The rhetoric of exhortative speech acts, megalomaniac expressions, repetition and

parallelism, metaphorical conceptualisation, emotional language use, and moral appeals to virtues and responsibility all come together to create a sense of urgency and necessity, thus legitimising a securitisation narrative of imminent danger if the leader's commands are not heeded. The level of semantic loading and the strong assertive speech style emphasise the dramatic nature of the perceived precarious situation. Through the use of presupposition, assertive declarations, and the invention of imaginary "compatriots in China, waiting to be rescued from the communist yoke," the contingency of political reality is fixed or naturalised into one hegemonic narrative, closed to alternative readings.

Charged with moral and ideological significance, CKS's leadership rhetoric invariably draws a positive picture of the Self and a condemnatory image of the Other. Underlying the speeches are discursive processes of categorising in- and out-groups, where positive attributes of the Self are contrasted with negative properties predicated of the Other. The positive self-representation of the benevolent KMT leader, CKS, flattering depictions of Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the Republic of China, and negative characterisations of the communist Chinese/Russian Other as well as the imperialist Other in the pre-Republican era all lay bare essentialist and polarising categorisation strategies. KMT, its leaders, and the martyrs who sacrificed their lives are given overwhelming praise for creating the first democratic nation in Asia, while the communist bandits are demonised for endangering China, the rest of Asia, and ultimately world peace. Metaphorical language use serves the purpose of dissimulation, in that it ideologically induces a mixed construal of the country's development as a journey and as a war. This justifies the proposed military course of action in such a way as to deflect attention from existing relations, while also engaging in the essentialist categorisation of the forces of good and evil. CKS's early wartime public speeches are full of metaphors and other tropes as legitimising strategies, being typical of authoritarian leadership discourse.

Besides the practice of dissimulation, other symbolic strategies include unification and legitimation. As for the first, individualities are embraced in a collective identity, irrespective of their political or cultural differences. A national spirit of commonality or unity is reached through repetitive use of the inclusive "we," thus galvanising patriotic fervour and inspiring Taiwanese citizens to follow in the footsteps of

the ROC's national father and the martyrs who died for the Chinese nation. Legitimation is achieved in a variety of ways, as has been illustrated in this article. Multiple references to the historicity as well as urgency of the mission create a securitisation narrative, legitimising the call for future military action. Similarly, the idolisation of the dead justifies CKS's demands to sacrifice one's life in order to comfort these martyrs' souls in heaven.

To conclude, the importance of the present study is at least two-fold. First, it adds further empirical evidence to one of the core theoretical tenets within CDA that language and power are intertwined. This it does by identifying and discussing discursive strategies in hitherto unexplored political speeches in a particular Chinese context, namely the public addresses by the leader of the KMT, Chiang Kai-shek. Often called "Generalissimo," CKS is a textbook example of a Chinese authority figure employing language for strategic and persuasive purposes. The use of his public speeches allows one to identify hegemonic traits within authoritarian leadership discourse, along with other rhetorical strategies typical of authoritarian political leaders.

Second, the study adds empirical discourse research to the fields of Chinese and Asian Studies regarding its use of a representative and authoritative speech sample by CKS – something which has hitherto been lacking to the best of our knowledge. By incorporating the analytical frameworks from CDA/CMA, the study provides a close-up shot of the anatomy of CKS's political and military struggle against communist China by focusing on the linguistic and rhetorical aspects of his governance. The present study, in addition, echoes Cheng's (this issue) analysis of the necropolitical nature of the KMT regime, delineating how the national Self and the communist Other are linguistically demarcated in CKS's speeches and how Taiwanese citizens in that era were thus mobilised to sacrifice their lives and to act in unity for his ideological struggle. It is hoped that this particular case study has demonstrated how language plays a significant role in the rule of authoritarian regimes, especially in their formative stages. Given the global (re)turn to authoritarianism in countries such as China, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Venezuela, the analysis of language use by an authoritarian regime of the past is highly relevant for studies of contemporary political life and governance too.



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