**Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975)**

Chiang Kai-shek (also known as Jiǎng Jièshí 蔣介石 or Jiǎng Zhōngzhèng 蔣中正) was a Chinese soldier and statesman, head of the Nationalist government from 1928 to 1949 and head of the Chinese Nationalist government in exile in Taiwan from 1950 until his death in 1975.

Chiang initially pursued a military career in North China and in Japan, where he became attracted to republican ideas. A protégé of Dr. Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), the founder of the Chinese Nationalist Party Kuomintang (KMT), Chiang became the commandant of the Nationalist Party of China Army Officer Academy (popularly known as Whampoa Military Academy). Chiang assumed power when Sun died in 1925 and attempted to unify the nation by leading the Northern Expedition against the rule of local warlords. Chinese reunification occurred under Chiang’s KMT government in 1928. The KMT continued to launch ruthless campaigns against communists before and after reunification. However, in the second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), Chinese communists and nationalists formed a united front. Following the defeat of Japan in 1945, the long-standing tension between the KMT and Mao’s Communist Party (CCP) caused civil war to erupt in 1946. Chiang lost continental China to Mao and fled to Taiwan in 1949, where he set up an autocratic regime under an imposed martial law. With the help of American aid he pushed the island’s economic development. After his death in 1975 his son Chiang Ching-kuo ([蒋](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E8%92%8B)[经](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E7%BB%8F)[国](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E5%9B%BD)) (1910-1988) succeeded him in 1978.

*Claudia Kotte, Humboldt* *Universität*

**List of works**

Kai-shek, C. (1957) *Soviet Russia in China: A Summing-up at Seventy*,New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy.

**References and further reading**

Crozier, B. (1976) *The Man Who Lost China*: *The First Full Biography of Chiang Kai-shek*, New York: Scribner.

Fenby, J. (2003) *Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and the China He Lost*, New York: The Free Press.

Morwood, W. (1980) *Duel for the Middle Kingdom: The Struggle Between Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung for Control of China,* New York: Everest House.

Taylor, J. (2009) *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-shek and the Struggle for Modern China,* Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.