

**RESEARCH NOTE**

**SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF THE 1911  
REVOLUTIONS IN MONGOLIA AND CHINA**

*Khereid L.Jamsran*

As a result of the 1911 revolutions against the Qing dynasty, Mongolia and China became independent and established their own governments. The revolutions in these two countries had some similarities as well as differences which I would like to discuss briefly.

Similarities

1. Both the Mongols and the Chinese were under Manchu domination for more than two hundred years. The revolutions of 1911 were the result of the anti-Ding movement for national independence in both nations. This meant that these revolutions, both in Mongolia and China, had the single goal of overthrowing the Ding regime and of restoring national independence with their own governmental systems.
2. The Qing dynasty, from the mid-nineteenth century on, became a semi-colony of imperialist powers, so both revolutions were organized on the same souci-political basis.
3. The 1911 revolutions in Mongolia and China had the common aim of restoring national independence through armed struggle.
4. The imperialist powers and progressive people supported the anti-Ding movement for national liberation as well as its fighters or revolutionaries in the Ding Empire.
5. After the overthrow of the Qing dynasty, the revolutionaries in Mongolia and China established their own forms of government.

Differences

1. China was the center of the Qing dynasty. At that time China began to develop trade and industry which gave rise to a working class and national capitalists. However, the feudal Qing regime was an obstacle in the way toward full prosperity of a new society, thus the new classes became politically active and organized illegal revolutionary organizations whose main task was the overthrow of the Qing regime and the establishment of a republican form of government. The 1911 revolution in China was primarily a social revolution.

From the second half of the nineteenth century, Mongolia was opened to China and other foreign countries, and in 1906 the Qing government started a new policy toward Mongolia that was aimed at the exploitation of natural resources and the building of mines, factories and enterprises with foreign investment. Unlike China, Mongolia had neither a working class nor national capitalists, so the number of foreigners, especially Chinese, working at the foreign financed enterprises increased. Therefore, the princes and lamas of Khalkha Mongolia became the leaders of the national liberation movement, and they used nationalism as an ideology in their struggle against the Chinese merchants and the Qing dynasty which threatened to destroy the Mongol's independent social structure and their natural environment.

2. In their first program the Chinese revolutionaries demanded that all nations and territories of the Qing Empire become part of a Republic of China, and that the social orientation of the new China be capitalism. The Mongolian independence leaders stood for the reunification of all Mongols under a national-theocratic monarchy.

3. The Tong Meng Hui, founded in 1905. Organized the 1911 revolution in China but it did not exist in Mongolia. Instead, in late November 1911 some progressive Mongolian princes and lamas established the "provisional administrative office in charge of affairs of Khuree of Khalkha". This office was in effect a provisional government which led the growing protest movement against the new policy of 1906 and the Qing regime.

Sun Zhongshan, known in the West as Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Chinese revolutionaries, issued a manifesto in 1905, called the Sanmin zhuyi (Three People's Principles) which called for a capitalist democratic society. The Mongols, on the other hand, used the various orders of the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu as a guide in their struggle for national independence.

4. The Chinese anti-Qing movement grew into an uprising in Wuchang on October 10, 1911. On December 29 at a meeting of delegations from South China in Nanjing, the revolutionaries declared their independence and Sun Zhongshan was elected the acting president of the Republic of China. Finally, on February 12, 1912 the Qing government was forced to abdicate. That was the victory of the Chinese revolution.

On the same day as the Nanjing meeting, the princes and lamas of Khalkha Mongolia declared their independence and the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu was installed as the head of the Bogdo Khan feudal-theocratic government. That was the first victory of the Mongolian revolution. The new government sought to create an independent state including all parts of Mongolia.

5. In April 1912 Sun Zhongshan was replaced as acting president of the Republic of China by Yuan Shikai who had no interest in the ideals of the revolution. He soon began to ignore the constitution and the parliament, and when Sun Zhongshan tried to oust him in the summer of 1913 by calling for a “second revolution”, he was easily crushed by Yuan. Nonetheless, as a result of the 1911 revolution, the feudal monarchy of the Qing dynasty was overthrown, and China was on its way toward eventual social progress and democracy. That was the historical role of the 1911 revolution in China.

From autumn of 1912, when Outer Mongolia was liberated from alien domination, Yuan Shikai began his attempts to assert Chinese domination of Mongolia. He used different ways to crush Mongolian independence, even by military force at the beginning of 1913 when the joint army of Outer and Inner Mongolia tried to liberate Inner Mongolia. What Yuan could not accomplish militarily, he finally achieved diplomatically in 1915, when in collusion with Tsarist Russia the so-called Tripartite Agreement was signed which reduced Mongolian sovereignty to autonomy under the suzerainty of China. That was the end of the 1911 revolution in Mongolia.

6. The duration of the two revolutions also differed, the Chinese lasting from 1911 to 1913 and the Mongolian from 1911 to 1915.

However shortlived the 1911 revolution in Mongolia may appear, it did serve as the seed of future successes. In 1921, the Khalkha Mongols gained their independence from China. This was a direct result of the national liberation movement and not, as some argue, of Russian instigation. Since 1990, a third stage of Mongolia’s revolution has occurred when as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Mongolia is gaining a greater degree of independence.