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**„The Manchu Dynasty and the Chinese
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Zeitungsartikel

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Regest:

Der britische Economist kommentiert am 21. Oktober 1911 die revolutionären Ereignisse in China, die überraschend seien, aber doch Ausdruck einer Bewegung seien, die sich bis zum chinesischen Zusammenbruch im Krieg gegen Japan von 1894 zurückverfolgen lasse. Es handle sich nicht nur um eine Reformbewegung, sondern um den Kampf des chinesischen Volkes gegen die korrupte, inkompetente und regierungsunfähige Mandschu-Dynastie der Qing, die sich auf Kosten der Provinzen bereichert habe. Ihr System habe schon in den 1850er Jahren zur Taiping-Rebellion geführt, doch der Nationalstolz der Chinesen sei auch durch die Konflikte mit den europäischen Mächten, die das Land rücksichtslos geplündert hätten, immer wieder verletzt worden. Der Wettlauf um Einflussphären, Eisenbahn- und Bergbaukonzessionen habe die Aufteilung des Landes vorangetrieben. Dagegen habe sich eine Reformbewegung gebildet, mit einer ausländerfeindlichen Unterströmung, die wiederum zu europäischen Interventionen führte, durch die letztlich die korrupte Mandschu-Dynastie an der Macht gehalten worden sei. Jetzt aber habe die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Zentralregierung und Provinzen, auch im Hinblick auf den Umgang mit den Ausländern und ausländischen Investoren im eigenen Lande eine neue, von erstarkendem Nationalismus geprägte Dimension erreicht. China gehöre den Chinesen, sei die Parole. Vor dieser Entwicklung habe man europäische Investoren frühzeitig gewarnt. Sie werde nun allerdings von dem im Exil geschulten SUN Yat-sen bewusst vorangetrieben, der offenkundig eine effiziente revolutionäre Organisation geschaffen habe, die auch von chinesischen Kaufleuten in Singapur, San Francisco und andernorts unterstützt werde und offenkundig die Sympathie vieler Europäer in China genieße; sie ziele auf ein chinesische föderale Republik und werde vielleicht auch von dem modernen Militär unterstützt, das Yuan Shikai aufgebaut habe. Die chinesische Revolution sei gegen die Mandschu-Dynastie gerichtet und nationalistisch, aber offenkundig nicht anti-europäisch. Der Artikel schließt mit der ausdrücklichen Warnung vor einer europäischen Intervention.

[1. Seite, 804, rechte Spalte]

THE MANCHU DYNASTY AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION.

THE outbreak of rebellion in the Yangtze Valley has been sudden and startling, but it is only the intensified expression of a movement visible ever since the totally unexpected collapse of the Chinese power in the war with Japan in 1894. This is not only a reform movement, though it is organised by advanced reformers trained in the learning of the West; it is a struggle, speaking broadly, of the Chinese people against the Manchu dynasty, which represents a small and dwindling minority of the whole population of the Empire, but stands for and upholds administrative corruption, incompetence, and misrule. This dynasty, representing a race called in, like the Saxons in Britain, to restore order among the Chinese people, established itself in 1644 on the Imperial throne on the failure of heirs to the native monarchy, and gradually, as is the way with ruling houses, became effete. Throughout the nineteenth century it furnished no ruler who was competent for his task; the Imperial Palace became a centre of corruption and misgovernment, and the provinces were left undeveloped and drained of their revenue for the benefit of Manchu rulers or their creatures, and for the clique of Manchus

and their adherents at Peking. From this system sprang the Taiping rebellion of the fifties of the last century; but meanwhile and subsequently the various conflicts with European Powers, in which China was always defeated and often ruthlessly plundered, gave a series of bitter blows to the national pride. The disasters in Tongking were succeeded by the humiliating war with Japan, and by a period of European competition for spheres of influence and railway concessions, during which it was freely said that the partition of China had begun. Along with this came a reform movement, headed by Kuang Yu Wei, and promoted by a number of young Chinese, which was supported by the boy Emperor. It culminated in a plot against the Empress Dowager, and was crushed by her with the aid of Yuan Shih Kai, who now appears as the saviour of the established order[2. Seite, 805, linke Spalte] once more. The popular unrest which had supported the reform movement was diverted into the anti-foreign movement. This found its expression in the Boxer rising, and led to a foreign intervention, which humbled China and disgraced Europe. The intervention, however, effectually dispelled any ideas of the partition of China by exhibiting the jealousies between the intervening Powers; and so China was once more left to work out her own salvation under a dynasty representing perhaps one per cent. of the population in China proper and five per cent. in Manchuria, where its race has gradually been overlaid with Chinese immigrants, and, as in China, is threatened with eventual extinction or absorption.

In this new era, however, the reform movement has taken a new departure, with the ostensible approval and encouragement of the Central Government. A Commission was sent abroad in 1905 to study foreign political systems. Constitutional Government was promised in 1906 by an Imperial Edict, though it was to be preceded by administrative and legal reforms, which have been to some extent carried out; a Consultative Central Assembly and Provincial Assemblies were established last year, a proper Budget is promised for 1912, and a Parliament for 1913. But these latter are only promises, and the more advanced reformers evidently have no confidence in them. What they demand is representative government, which will preserve the rights and claims of the provinces – between which there are differences as strongly marked as those between the States of any Federation – and will give the Chinese nation its full weight in the government of the Empire. At present, in spite of the inchoate reforms above mentioned, there is still the conflict between the Central Government and provincial interests, the drain of revenue to Peking, and, as a necessary consequence, local and central corruption. Coupled with this demand for provincial and popular rights is a marked jealousy of foreign influence. This is seen in the „rights recovery“ movement, which is a Nationalist reaction against the wholesale grants of concessions to foreigners which marked the period of impending partition. The railways may be made by foreign capital, but they are not to be subject to any lien in favour of foreign capitalists; they are to belong to the provincial authorities, and the interest due to foreign investors is to be secured on the general revenues of the province. Similarly, mining concessions have been repurchased by the local authorities from European holders. China, in short, is for the Chinese. We have frequently warned European investors of this movement, and of the risk attaching to capital subscribed under such conditions without competent supervision or real accountancy.

The local spirit was strongly manifested against the foreign loan for the railway through the adjacent province of Szechuan only a month ago; but it has not been the motive-power in the present revolt. One contributory cause of this latter has undoubtedly been the suffering caused by the recent floods, followed by famine. But there have been symptoms of revolt all over the empire for some years – abortive outbreaks in these very provinces in 1907, in these and others in 1910, and in the spring of this present year in Canton. The occasion of the present outbreak, this tremendous uprising, which has already won sensational successes, was the discovery of a bomb factory and the execution of four leading revolutionists, coupled, apparently, with discontent among the troops in the region with their officers; and the circumstances suggest that the outbreak was premature. But it has been cleverly prepared for by Sun Yat Sen, who represents the Young China which is now absorbing Western learning in Japan, the United States, and Europe. A few years ago there were 13,000 Chinese students in Japan; the number probably has not diminished, and certain incidents in connection with the railway projects have shown that they keep up a keen interest during their absence in home politics, and endeavour to exercise an influence on them. Sun Yat Sen seems to have created an efficient revolutionary organisation. throughout China;[2. Seite, 805, rechte Spalte] he has obtained large subscriptions from the Chinese merchants at Singapore, San Francisco, and elsewhere, who, like Irishmen, are often far more prosperous abroad than at home; and he has the sympathy, it would seem, of the European residents in China. His plan is stated to be a Federal Republic; and that may well prove the form of government marked out for a regenerated China; for differences of manners, of interests, and

of dialect have always told heavily against the centralisation aimed at by the Manchu Government. And it is eminently significant that the leader desired by the Government for its troops is Yuan Shih Kai, who has been a great success as an administrator, and is a promoter of the new spirit and of gradual constitutional reform, while his abrupt dismissal early in 1909 for personal reasons by the Regent has probably not increased his loyalty to the Manchu rule, which he has done much to preserve. Moreover, it seems very improbable that the modern troops which he has taken so large a share in creating are free from the kind of nationalism and modernism which inspire the Young Turks. In any case, therefore, the cause of reform is likely to triumph; but, though the movement is Nationalist and anti-Manchu, it seems tolerably clear that it is not anti-European. It is guided by highly educated leaders, who have issued the most stringent orders that foreigners shall be left unharmed; and, as a German paper has pointed out, the Chinese merchants abroad would hardly have subscribed largely to a movement threatening the foreign trade of their country. Again, there could be no heavier blow to the hopes of the reformers than a foreign intervention. So Nationalism may act as a protection, not as a danger, to the foreign residents in China.