

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## **The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911–1937**

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

Studies in modern capitalism. Etudes sur le capitalisme moderne

Editorial board. Comité de rédaction

Maurice Aymard, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris

Jacques Revel, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris

Immanuel Wallerstein, Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economies, Historical Systems, and Civilizations, Binghamton, New York

This series is devoted to an attempt to comprehend capitalism as a world-system. It will include monographs, collections of essays and colloquia around specific themes, written by historians and social scientists united by a common concern for the study of large-scale, long-term social structure and social change.

The series is a joint enterprise of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris and the Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economies, Historical Systems, and Civilizations at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

For other titles in the series please see the end of the book.

This book is published as part of the joint publishing agreement established in 1977 between the Fondation de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Titles published under this arrangement may appear in any European language or, in the case of volumes of collected essays, in several languages.

New books will appear either as individual titles or in one of the series which the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and the Cambridge University Press have jointly agreed to publish. All books published jointly by the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and the Cambridge University Press will be distributed by the Press throughout the world.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

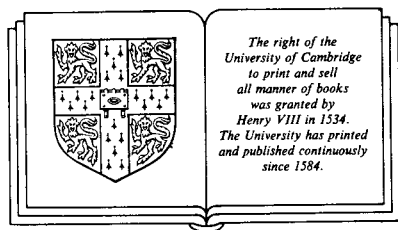
Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911–1937

MARIE-CLAIRE BERGÈRE

Translated by JANET LLOYD



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge

New York Port Chester Melbourne Sydney

EDITIONS DE

LA MAISON DES SCIENCES DE L'HOMME

Paris

Cambridge University Press  
 978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937  
 Marie-Claire Bergère  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press  
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

With Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme  
 54 Boulevard Raspail, 75270 Paris Cedex 06, France

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
 Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521110716](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521110716)

Originally published in France as *L'Age d'or de la bourgeoisie chinoise*  
 by Flammarion 1986  
 and © Editions Flammarion 1986

First published in English by Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and Cambridge  
 University Press 1989 as *The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie*

English translation © Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and Cambridge University Press 1989

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
 no reproduction of any part may take place without the written  
 permission of the copyright holder.

This digitally printed version 2009

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Bergère, Marie-Claire.  
 [Age d'or de la bourgeoisie chinoise, 1911–1937. English]  
 The golden age of the Chinese bourgeoisie, 1911–1937 /  
 Marie-Claire Bergère; translated by Janet Lloyd.  
 p. cm. – (Studies in modern capitalism – Etudes sur le capitalisme moderne).  
 Translation of: L'âge d'or de la bourgeoisie chinoise, 1911–1937.  
 Bibliography.  
 Includes index.  
 ISBN 0 521 32054 2.  
 1. Middle classes – China – History – 20th century.  
 2. Businessmen – China – History – 20th century. 3. China – Social  
 conditions – 1912–1949. 4. China – Economic conditions – 1912–1949.  
 5. China – Politics and government – 1912–1949. 6. Shanghai (China) –  
 Social conditions. I. Title. II. Series: Studies in modern capitalism.  
 HT690.C55B4713 1989  
 305.5'5'0951 – dc19 88–31515 CIP.

ISBN 978-0-521-32054-2 hardback  
 ISBN 978-0-521-11071-6 paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgement</i>	viii
<i>Note on the transcription of Chinese names</i>	ix
<i>Note on Chinese weights and measurements</i>	ix
Prologue	1
<b>I PRELUDES</b>	
1 Tradition, opening-up and modernity	13
1 Pre-modern growth and the rise of the merchant communities	13
2 The opening-up of China and the birth of the modern sector	24
3 The new urban elites of the treaty ports	37
<b>II THE EMERGENCE OF A BOURGEOIS CLASS</b>	
2 The economic miracle	63
1 The First World War: a magnificent opportunity	64
2 The upsurge of the modern sector and the second wave of Chinese industrialisation	70
3 The modern sector and the national economy: resistance to the world reconversion crisis	83
4 A fragile miracle: the cotton mill crisis (1923–4)	92
3 The new entrepreneurs in the city	99
1 Businessmen in the town	100
2 Businessmen in urban society	123
3 Breaking-through to the ruling classes: the organisations of the new bourgeoisie	131

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi	Contents	
4	The social structures of the new bourgeoisie	140
1	Regional solidarities: the geographic structures of the Shanghai business community	141
2	The family structures of Chinese capitalism	152
3	A rough typology of Chinese entrepreneurs	164
<b>III THE BOURGEOISIE AND THE QUEST FOR POWER AND MODERNITY</b>		
5	The bourgeoisie, the State and the revolution, 1911–27	189
1	1911: the elusive bourgeois revolution	191
2	An unsuccessful Meiji: the failure of Yuan Shikai (1912–16)	201
3	The May Fourth Movement (1919): the bourgeois revolution at last?	207
4	The bid for liberalism (1920–3)	217
5	Counter-revolution and the restoration of State power: the bourgeoisie rally to Chiang Kai-shek (1927)	227
6	Capitalism, Westernisation and nationalism	242
1	Bourgeois nationalism and Chinese nationalism	243
2	Nationalist activism: the practice and ideology of boycotting	251
3	The mirages of neo-colonialism	258
4	Towards a national revolution	266
	Epilogue	272
1	After 1927: the bureaucracy's return in force and the decline of the bourgeoisie	272
2	State capitalism, bureaucratic capitalism and the professionalisation of the bureaucracy under the Nanking government (1927–37)	284
3	Communists and capitalists	293
	<i>Notes</i>	298
	<i>Bibliography</i>	321
	<i>Index</i>	345
	<i>Series list</i>	356

## Illustrations

Map of China	<i>page xi</i>
3.1 The streets of Shanghai, around 1919	101
3.2 The evolution of the populations of the foreign concessions in Shanghai, 1910–1925/27	104
3.3 Structure of Shanghai, around 1919	106
3.4 The distribution of financial establishments in Shanghai, around 1919	111
3.5 The distribution of service industries in Shanghai, around 1919	112
3.6 The distribution of commercial establishments in Shanghai, around 1919	115
3.7 The distribution of mechanical engineering and textile industries in Shanghai, around 1919	118
3.8 The distribution of foodstuff industries in Shanghai, around 1919	119
3.9 The distribution of the different sectors of economic activity in Shanghai, around 1919	122
4.1 Four generations of Shanghai bankers and compradores: the Xi family	148
4.2 Flour mill and cotton mill proprietors: the Rong brothers	154
4.3 A family of wholesalers and industrialists: the Guo family	156
4.4 From officialdom to the cotton industry: the Nie family	162

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## Acknowledgement

The maps and graphic work were produced by Madame Françoise Vergnault, of the Graphics Laboratory of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris. I should like to express my thanks to her.



## Note on the transcription of Chinese names

In this work, I have adopted the *pinyin* system, officially recognised by the People's Republic of China. However, a number of exceptions have been made in the cases of names familiar to the public in other forms, for example geographical names such as Peking, Nanking, Canton and Mukden; personal names such as Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Kia-ngau, T. V. Soong, H. H. Kung and H. D. Fong; and company names such as Wing On and Sincere.

The names of Chinese authors mentioned in the notes and bibliography are transcribed in *pinyin*, except where the authors themselves use another method of transcription, in which case I have respected the form chosen by the author.

## Note on Chinese weights and measurements

*Mu*, unit of area equivalent to 0.0667 hectares.

Picul, unit of weight equivalent to about 60 kilogrammes.

Catty, unit of weight equivalent to about 600 grammes.

Tael, traditional unit of currency corresponding to about 37–8 grammes of silver, depending on the locality and sector of activity involved. The customs tael used in the treaty ports by the Maritime Customs Administration and in statistics in general represented 38.40 grammes of pure silver and was worth 3.40 French francs in 1911, 7.11 francs in 1918 and 17.79 francs in 1920.

Dollar, a silver coin, the format and weight of which varied from one region

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

x      Notes

to another. Its value, expressed in terms of the tael, fluctuated with the market. In Shanghai, it stabilised at around 0.71 of a tael for one dollar in the 1915–25 period. The term ‘dollar’, when not specified further, is used in this work to denote the Chinese silver dollar. When it is a matter of American money, the expression ‘American dollar’ is used.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-11071-6 - The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie 1911-1937

Marie-Claire Bergere

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

