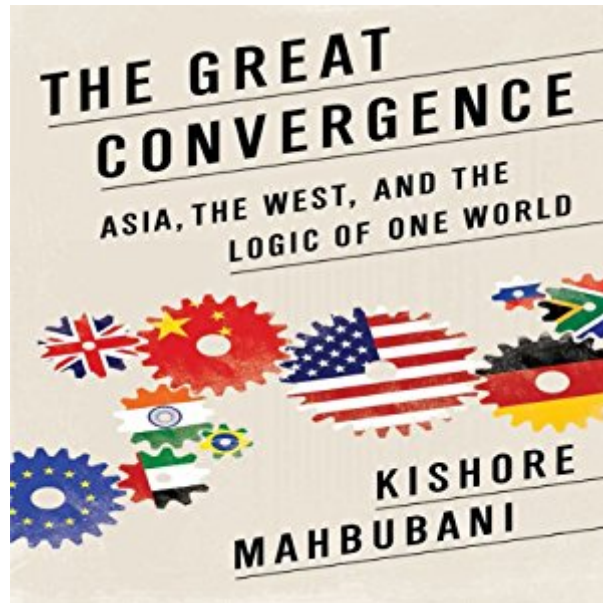


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# The Great Convergence: Asia, The West, And The Logic Of One World



## Synopsis

The 21st century has seen a rise in the global middle class that brings an unprecedented convergence of interests and perceptions, cultures and values. Kishore Mahbubani is optimistic. We are creating a new global civilization. Eighty-eight percent of the world's population outside the West is rising to Western living standards, and sharing Western aspirations. Yet Mahbubani, one of the most perceptive global commentators, also warns that a new global order needs new policies and attitudes. Policymakers all over the world must change their preconceptions and accept that we live in one world. National interests must be balanced with global interests. Power must be shared. The U.S. and Europe must cede some power. China and India, Africa and the Islamic world must be integrated. Mahbubani urges that only through these actions can we create a world that converges benignly. This timely audiobook explains how to move forward and confront many pressing global challenges.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The author takes a new tack on the upheavals we are experiencing in the globalization of the world market and politics. Will war be a thing of the past, as nations cooperate and are trade partners rather than rivals? That is an optimistic view, but one that is possible. It doesn't deal with wars of ideology, however, whether political or religious, or the desire to disrupt and grab power--that is not economic in nature. The author also discusses the end to poverty. Almost anyone is bothered by the fact that a good part of the world, throughout history and even in our age, has suffered disease and

starvation. This suffering is not acceptable to most people. The growth of the Asian powerhouses of China and India has indeed reduced a lot of suffering; the changes are remarkable in a single decade. The good news; we have new markets for high tech and manufactured goods, software, and ideas. The bad news, the old economic systems that relied on a majority of people doing unskilled or semi-skilled labor means that jobs will flow to the areas with the lowest cost of labor. The development of huge cargo ships and the computerization of off-loading at docks already made importation cheaper than home manufacture. But this could change. Either wages will rise as standards of living rise, making importation less advantageous, or cost of fuel could impact on long-distance shipping. The author also discusses how he sees integrating the Islamic world. I am not so sanguine as the author; time and again, history has shown us that an ideological regime can push its agenda against the logic of cooperation and that ideas can take hold of a society and push it to conflict. However, I share the author's view that ultimately, a less impoverished world is a good thing.

Anyone feeling depressed about the current state of our western culture, the economic chaos, high unemployment, dysfunctional government and political polarization should read this book for a dose of salutary optimism. Professor Mahbubani, no Pollyanna himself, is a realist of considerable experience in international politics with a mature view of the world. His book is on the impressive economical progress of Asian countries that has occurred within the past 30 years, greater and faster than it had for the last 300 years. The author credits the emphasis on education, building of infrastructure and market liberalization for such advances. Present conditions and predictions for the future are thoughtfully presented. The enthusiasm is buttressed by sobering statistics, data and graphs, which are the result of "a great convergence" of different (sometimes opposing) cultures and technical advances. "It is truly good news that the vast majority of the world's people now have a common set of material aspirations. Once material aspirations become more important than differing ideological or religious aspirations, an overriding set of common interests will motivate the vast majority of the world's population to work together" and he goes on to emphasize the importance of universal education, "These material aspirations are matched by similarly shared educational aspirations. A hundred years ago, getting into Harvard and Yale may have represented the aspirations of elites in America. Today, getting into Harvard and Yale represents the aspirations of elites all over the world. Parents in Santiago or Singapore, Tehran or Tokyo, Beijing or Budapest, jump for joy when their child gets admitted into Yale." The book has startling examples of progress unimaginable only a few decades ago.

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