



# Intelligent Governance for the 21st Century: A Middle Way between West and East

*By Nicolas Berggruen, Nathan Gardels*

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## **Intelligent Governance for the 21st Century: A Middle Way between West and East** By Nicolas Berggruen, Nathan Gardels

For decades, liberal democracy has been extolled as the best system of governance to have emerged out of the long experience of history. Today, such a confident assertion is far from self-evident. Democracy, in crisis across the West, must prove itself.

In the West today, the authors argue, we no longer live in "industrial democracies," but "consumer democracies" in which the governing ethos has ended up drowning households and governments in debt and resulted in paralyzing partisanship. In contrast, the long-term focus of the decisive and unified leadership of China is boldly moving its nation into the future. But China also faces challenges arising from its meteoric rise. Its burgeoning middle class will increasingly demand more participation, accountability of government, curbing corruption and the rule of law.

As the 21st Century unfolds, both of these core systems of the global order must contend with the same reality: a genuinely multi-polar world where no single power dominates and in which societies themselves are becoming increasingly diverse. The authors argue that a new system of "intelligent governance" is required to meet these new challenges. To cope, the authors argue that both East and West can benefit by adapting each other's best practices. Examining this in relation to widely varying political and cultural contexts, the authors quip that while China must lighten up, the US must tighten up.

This highly timely volume is both a conceptual and practical guide of impressive scope to the challenges of good governance as the world continues to undergo profound transformation in the coming decades.

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**Michael Spence, Nobel laureate, Chairman of the World Bank Commission on Growth and Development, and author of *The Next Convergence***

"Berggruen and Gardels bring invaluable insights into why our Western democracies have become so dysfunctional. They argue that unless we develop a long-term governance perspective, today's 'consumer democracy' will undermine its own future. A brilliant starting point in an urgently needed discussion about how we govern ourselves in this new era."

**Arianna Huffington, Editor-in-Chief, Huffington Post/AOL**

"Do we have something to learn from China's political experience? The authors breach the taboo and say yes, imagining a political system that combines accountability and meritocracy and sketching an emergent globalization that could reenergize multilateralism. Truly a thought-provoking book."

**Pascal Lamy, Director General of the World Trade Organization**

"Drawing on precepts and practices from both West and East, Berggruen and Gardels provide a thoughtful and attention-grabbing view on what constitutes 'intelligent governance'. Required reading for anyone reflecting on how best to deal with the multiplying challenges faced by all our societies."

**Zhang Weiwei, author of *The China Wave: Rise of a Civilizational State***

"The rise of the West once led to the subjugation of the East. Will the rise of the East lead inevitably to another cycle of war and revolution in the world, or will we have the wisdom to break that cycle? This moral challenge confronts each of us as political citizens of the planet we share, and Berggruen and Gardels put it squarely before the reader."

**George Yeo, former foreign minister of Singapore**

About the Author

**Nicolas Berggruen** is President and Chairman of the Nicolas Berggruen Institute.

**Nathan Gardels** is Editor of *New Perspectives Quarterly*.

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