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# 20:21 Vision: Twentieth-Century Lessons for the Twenty-First Century

Von Bill Emmott

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# 20:21 VISION

TWENTIETH-CENTURY  
LESSONS FOR THE  
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Bill Emmott

By the Editor in Chief of *The Economist*

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**Von Bill Emmott : 20:21 Vision: Twentieth-Century Lessons for the Twenty-First Century** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 20:21 Vision: Twentieth-Century Lessons for the Twenty-First Century:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.  
Structured, clear, very interestingVon Ein KundeIn this excellent book Emmott develops a scenarios on how the 21.

Century may develop. He does this in the structured and precise way which makes the Economist to one of the leading economic and political weekly magazines. Especially well done is the analysis of historical developments which he uses to "predict" what the future may look like following Churchill who understood that "... the further backward you look the further forward you can see...." This book is certainly worthwhile to read as a good source of food for thought.

**Kurzbeschreibung** The Editor in Chief of The Economist illuminates what global issues mattered in the last century-- and how the ways in which we deal with them will shape our lives in the next. The attacks on September 11th, 2001, shook the rich West out of its complacency; suddenly, peace looked to be in peril. Even before that time prosperity was endangered, as campaigns mounted against the purported evils of capitalist globalization, such as inequality, pollution, and financial instability, and as America's high-tech stockmarket boom turned to bust. Yet, in the decade following the end of the Cold War, prospects had looked so rosy, with peace prevailing among the world's great powers, with billions of people joining the world market economy, and with great waves of technological change driving economies forwards. What to make of such confusion and disappointment? What will the 21st century be like now? Bill Emmott, editor of the world's leading current affairs weekly, The Economist, argues that the best way to think about the future is to look back at the past, at the forces that have shaped our world and at what they tell us about the things that really matter in determining whether we are at peace or at war, in a state of liberty or repression, in a period of prosperity or of depression. From the twentieth century we can learn that two questions matter above all others: Will America continue to lead the world and to protect its peace? And will we continue to accept capitalism, with all its strengths and weaknesses, or will it be challenged once again? Bill Emmott's 20:21 Vision provides the answers that matter for all our lives in the twenty-first century. From Publishers Weekly Emmott, who predicted in 1989 that Japan's economic ascent would falter (in *The Sun Also Sets*), now applies his powers of conjecture again to project how broad historical forces will shape the 21st century, based on an analysis of the 20th. Editor in chief of the Economist, Emmott is a believer in the relative benevolence of American dominance and the relative rewards of unleashed capitalism. The two most important dynamics of the 20th century, he says, were the "United States taking over from Britain" as the protector of global order and capitalism's struggle against its authoritarian antagonists. Emmott believes the most crucial questions for the 21st century are whether America "will continue to keep the peace" and whether "capitalism will survive." Assessing the potential threats to American supremacy--China, Japan, the European Union, terrorism and the precariousness of America's commitment to internationalism--Emmott is cautiously optimistic about America's capacity to continue its leadership role. He is sometimes uncritical in prescribing freer markets as a panacea, but his endorsement of capitalism is carefully qualified. He identifies four flaws threatening its survival: Capitalism is "Unpopular," "Unstable," "Unequal" and "Unclean," in the words of his chapter headings. Despite limited government interventions to correct these dysfunctions, Emmott is hopeful that capitalism can expand its domain in the coming century. It is a wide-ranging and speculative project, and Emmott occasionally floats off into a breezy punditry. But mostly, his arguments are well grounded and his vision of the future is insightful. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist As the abatement of the cold war released international politics and economics to flow in new directions, Emmott observed affairs from one of the most influential posts in journalism: the editorship of the Economist. His book will draw keen attention because of his prognostications about the world's next decades, especially considering trends of the 1990s indicative of danger and instability, including currency collapses, global warming, Islamic terrorism, and Chinese-American friction. Although he cautions readers to remain calm, Emmott elucidates myriad ways the international environment could dramatically deteriorate. However, he also posits that ameliorating trends will be ascendant, provided that America retains global hegemony and capitalism "retains the current, unusual allegiance it commands around the world." Emmott's sly injection of the word unusual underpins his survey of capitalism's twentieth-century history, in which it was accepted (except where abolished) for its bounty but resented for its inherent accentuation of inequality. A sensible, comprehensible package of prophecies. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved