

Age Of Anger Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *Age Of Anger* will help you understand the current state of the world better by explaining how we got to this present situation of upheaval we're in and how we might stand a chance of making things better.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



You don't have to look very hard in today's world to realize a lot of people today are just *angry*. They're mad about politics, their own situation, or other groups among many other things. And the more they feel like no one hears them, the worse things become. This anger is increasingly showing itself in the forms of racism, nationalism, and misogyny.

But why are people so mad? When and where did this begin? And what does our increasingly globalized world have to do with it? If we all look a little bit closer, we can see that it didn't just appear out of nowhere. In fact, there have been many signs in the past few hundred years that foreshadowed we would one day come to this.

In *Age of Anger: A History of the Present* Pankaj Mishra gives his take on how we arrived here. He traces our feelings of disaffection, disillusionment, and disappointment back to the way our ideas have changed since the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. He also explores ways we can help the situation we are in, making it's a timely and vital discussion we need to be having.

Let's see how much we can learn from just 3 lessons:

1. Feelings of anger and upheaval have been bubbling below the surface of our societies for quite some time.
2. As we become more globalized, people's unhappiness with the world is intensifying.
3. If we want a better outlook for the future, the West must change the way things are.

Are you looking forward to getting a better understanding of the workings of the world today? Let's get right to it!

Lesson 1: **We can trace increased feelings of anger among societies back to the beginning of the Enlightenment.**

The Enlightenment of the eighteenth century was an extremely influential part of what made Western society what it is today. The Enlightenment refers to the ideas European philosophers had that highly valued science, art, and reason. They also pushed for people to be freed from the shackles of oppressive religion at the time.

Through these values, anyone and everyone could be an important member of society. These ideas were the foundation of European society in the modern world. People were more free and excited about what this all meant. But not long after came disappointment. People soon found that just having these shared ideals and values didn't make everyone equal in society.

To make matters worse, these ideas only contributed to competitiveness, making inequality more concrete. **The circulation of Enlightenment principles shed light on the unfairness and wealth discrepancies all around, making individuals feel disillusioned.** We still see this in today's working-class, and their silent suffering makes them more alienated volatile.

So, they put their faith in strong, populist leaders, hoping to be saved from the unfairness of today's world. We saw it with Napoleon, and we see it with Trump today. And as long as we don't change anything, we will continue to see this widespread disillusionment and frustration.

Lesson 2: **A more globalized world has only escalated people's discontent with the way things are.**

Globalism has meant a lot of things, and one of them has been the fading of borders. Communities aren't held so tightly together, contributing to an increased feeling of "every man for himself. With central churches in society fading and the worldwide internet, many now find themselves lost in a vast ocean of consumerism.

As national identity fades, many people start to feel left behind and want to resist the change. This leads to a call to re-instate national identities by any means

necessary. We see this with the Islamic State and its attempts to establish a nation-state in the Middle East.

This resentment all-too-easily leads to poor decision making. Supremacist networks are able to feed on this alienation and anger and enlist “freedom fighters” with the promise they will have a sense of identity. It also leads to the rise of demagogues-leaders who appeal to the desires and prejudices of the people. They put their faith in the people, who are often violent, in their desperation to feel heard.

This anger is seen all around the world at an alarming rate, and it should be unnerving. The more anger and resentment become commonplace, the more unpredictable people get. The threat of a global civil war feels increasingly possible.

Lesson 3: The West can help improve the situation but first needs to face the facts and correct the error of its ways.

It all seems pretty frightening and hopeless. But Mishra has ways that we can help the situation. This starts with the West. One thing they can do is to come to terms with the fact liberal capitalism has failed.

What was once a promise to make all more wealthy by working hard has become a driver for inequality and self-centered ways of thinking. People are never satisfied but instead disappointed, leading to troubling acts.

Mishra says that the West likes to put blame on religion for the violence in the East. But if you dig deep you find the same thing troubling them as in the West: failed liberal capitalism. An example he shares of this is the Islamist militant Abu Musab al Zarqawi. It was only after the economic system had failed him that he started preaching as a way to attack those he felt were responsible for his failure.

Next, Mishra says that the West needs to stop the Clash of Civilizations theory. It was originally proposed by political scientist Samuel P. Huntington, who help the belief that Islam as a religion was inherently bloodthirsty and as such was a threat to Western society and democracy.

Obviously, this errored way of thinking only serves to make discontent worse in the world. **Mishra suggests that Western leaders and thinkers must step up and recognize the pitfalls of liberal capitalism rather than blaming others for its ill-effects.**

Age Of Anger Review

Age Of Anger is a very relevant commentary on what is happening in the world around us now. It is fascinating to see how a shift in thinking centuries ago had such great ramifications in the future. While interesting to read, it also begged the question, what are we supposed to do about it really? Would it really be better to regress back to pre-enlightenment thinking?

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Who would I recommend the *Age Of Anger* summary to?

The 54-year-old who is afraid of the future of the world, the 22-year-old who is in a philosophy class in college, and anyone who'd like to understand the bigger picture of what's going on in the world today.