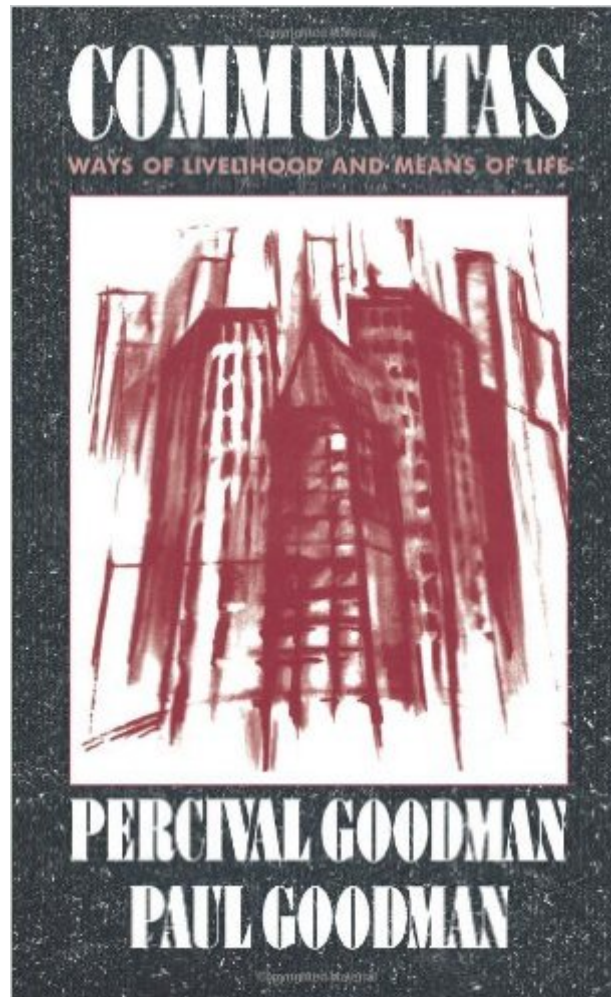


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Communitas: Means Of Livelihood And Ways Of Life (Morningside Books)



Synopsis

-- Lewis Mumford

Book Information

Series: Morningside Books

Paperback: 280 pages

Publisher: Columbia University Press; 0002-Revised edition (August 1, 1990)

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Customer Reviews

For some reason, this visionary book has kept its relevance for over fifty years (revised early Sixties). A work of Goodman's youth, around the time he taught at Black Mountain College, *Communitas* is by turns common sensical, prophetic, poetic, absurdly idealistic, & frequently (deliberately) hilarious. What was so terribly dehumanizing about American cities (the model here is New York) in the Forties has not been corrected in any major way. In the aftermath of 9/11, with that horrible, gaping hole where the Towers stood, one turns again to *Communitas* & reads about banning cars from New York, making the the city's avenues pedestrian & bike friendly, preserving good neighborhoods with indigenous personalities, & transforming other harsh, declining or gentrifying areas into safe, humane areas that are welcoming & which provide homes, schools & shopping areas that erase racial & class divides. The Goodmans eagerly to take on Frank Lloyd Wright, Bucky Fuller, the international & all the other various schools of designs for living then current. They reach back to earlier American, British & European models of community that showed promise through their partial successes. This is a deeply felt & humane call for holistic, human-sized communities within our cities. Ultimately, the solutions may not be so grandiose as some of those suggested here. But the World Trade Center Towers, awesome as they were, were coldly &

absurdly beyond human scale; symbols of our subservience to a system of economics that is usually blind to basic human requirements; gigantic obstacles to the simple warmth of an afternoon's sunshine. I suspect Paul Goodman despised them.

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