

The Communal Age in Western Europe, c.1100-1800: Towns, Villages and Parishes in Pre-Modern Society (Studies in European History)

Beat Kümin

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The Communal Age in Western Europe, c. 1100-1800 offers a fresh interpretation of the significance of towns, villages and parishes in the medieval and early modern period. Drawing on a wide range of primary and secondary sources from numerous regions, Beat Kümin:

- explains how local communities empowered common people through collective agency and a degree of local autonomy
- demonstrates how communal units impacted on key historical developments, from the Reformation to state formation
- provides case studies of the Italian city, the English parish and the village in the Holy Roman Empire
- surveys communal origins, constitutions and cultural representations, as well as contested issues such as gender roles and inner tensions
- evaluates related historiographical debates on communalism and republicanism.

Informed by a genuinely comparative and integrated approach, this original volume offers an excellent introduction to European history 'from below', and to the fundamental building blocks of European society.



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