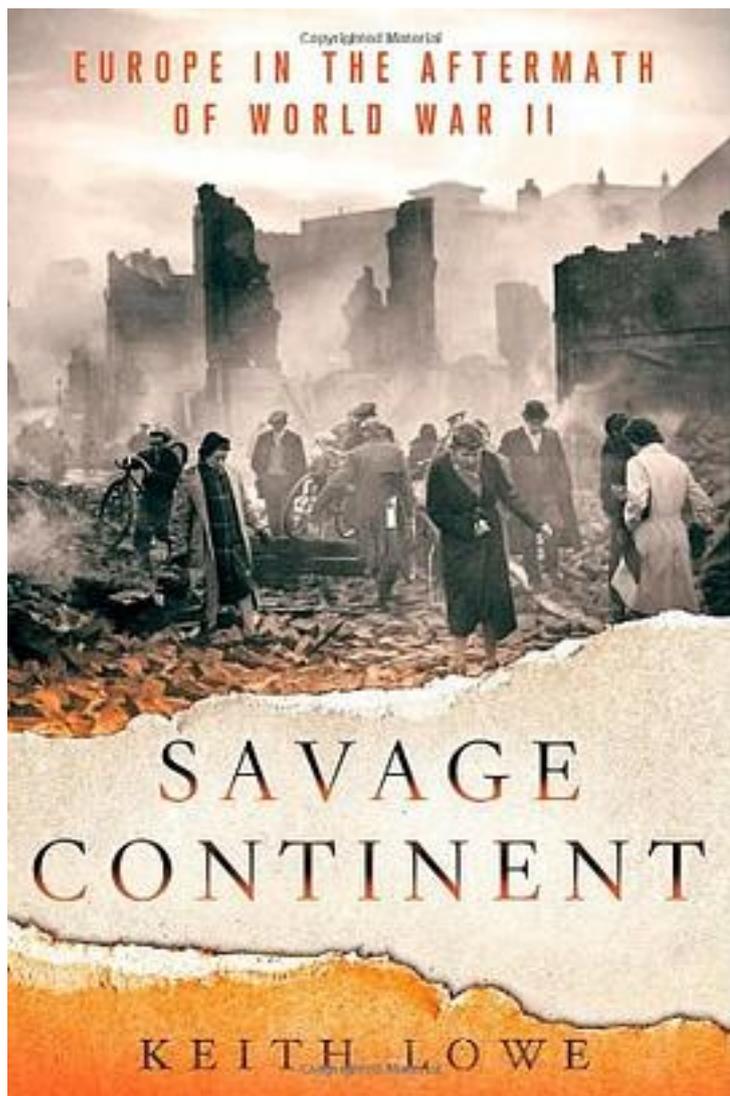


Savage Continent



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Savage Continent: Europe in the Aftermath of World War Two, By Keith Lowe

Brendan Simms

In his memoir *If This is a Man*, the Italian writer Primo Levi recalls that the most terrifying time for him at Auschwitz was not the years of incarceration by the Nazis, when beatings, hunger, back-breaking work and the threat of murder were omnipresent. He came closest to despair during the vacuum between the flight of the guards and the arrival of the Red Army. This period, in which the prisoners were effectively left to their own devices, was characterised by a complete breakdown of all authority, however unjust, as well as the system of supply. I was reminded of these passages when reading Keith Lowe's *Savage Continent*: an excellent account of the two years or so between the end of hostilities in Europe with the defeat of Hitler, and the establishment of the Cold War order.

As the author points out, the Second World War did not end in 1945. In large parts of the continent, the contest lasted a lot longer as Polish, Ukrainian, Baltic and Greek partisans battled on in the mountains and forests of Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. Some of these stories, such as the post-war travails of the Greeks, are well known to Western audiences, but the activities of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian anti-Soviet "Forest Brothers" are not. Perhaps the most arresting fact in this compelling book is that the last Estonian guerrilla fighter, August Sabbe, was killed as late as 1978, trying to escape capture.

Even where there was no fighting, Lowe demonstrates, Europe was in flux. A contemporary observer described Germany, the crossroads of the continent, as "one huge ants' nest", in which everyone was on the move. There were refugees everywhere, some trying to escape the victors, others returning to their homes. Millions of German prisoners of war were crammed into insanitary Anglo-American camps in the West; and they were the lucky ones, unlike those captured by the Russians and taken to camps in Siberia, or murdered en route. Almost everywhere, the Nazi collapse was followed by a bloody settling of scores against real or alleged collaborators. Lowe shows that the numbers affected in places like France to have been much exaggerated by subsequent myth-makers; in Yugoslavia, on the other hand, the reckoning was truly horrific, the more so as British troops were actively involved in sending men and women back to face certain death at Tito's hands.

All this was accompanied by the greatest population shifts in Europe since the Dark Ages. These had, of course, begun during the war. Lowe notes the huge void left by the Nazi murder of the Jews, but he points out that it was not so much the Holocaust itself as the persistence of anti-Semitism in places like Poland and Hungary which persuaded so many survivors to make for Israel or the US. In eastern Poland and western Ukraine, new borders led to a massive exchange of populations attended by great hardship and brutality.

The principal post-war victims, however, were the Germans, systematically expelled by the Czechs and Poles from lands which they had settled for hundreds of years. Lowe describes these events too with admirable sensitivity, placing them squarely in the context of prior Nazi policies, without in any way justifying them.

Europe was also in political flux. The war had destroyed the standing of the old elites, and brought the Red Army into the heart of the continent. It was Soviet power, rather than the failure of the ancien regime as such, which underpinned the wave of Communist takeovers in Eastern Europe. Lowe describes the Romanian case in

fascinating detail. Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Bulgaria all met broadly similar fates: red terror, arrests, expropriation of land and property, and executions. In Greece, the boot was on the other foot, as the right-wing government parlayed first British then American help into brutal victory over the communists. Lowe notes the "unpleasant symmetry" caused by Cold War imperatives without in any way denying that "the capitalist model of politics was self-evidently more inclusive, more democratic and ultimately more successful than Stalinist communism".

Savage Continent is thus a fitting title for this book, and surely also an allusion to Dark Continent, Mark Mazower's brilliant history of the 20th century. Lowe's vivid descriptions of Europeans scrambling for scraps of food, rampant theft and "destruction of morals" are a timely reminder that a certain humility is in order when we look at less fortunate continents today. The author is also right to remind us, with respect to current travails in Iraq and Afghanistan, just how long it took to rebuild Europe and for democracy to take root – or to return.

That said, Lowe could perhaps have said more about the Europeans who emerged from the war with a new and uplifting vision: that the only way for the continent to prevent this from happening again, and to realise its full potential, was to chart a course towards greater unity. It was in the midst of the ruins described by this book that men such as Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, Alcide de Gasperi and Altero Spinelli were taking the first steps towards what was to become the European Union. In this sense, Europe is a continent which contains not only the seeds of its self-destruction but also of its renewal.

作者介绍:

基思·罗威 (Keith Lowe)，全职作家和历史学家，曾做过十余年的历史类图书出版商。他被公认为二战史权威，经常在英国和美国的电视广播上发表意见。饱受赞誉的历史著作《火焰地狱：1943年汉堡灭顶之灾》(Inferno: The Devastation of Hamburg, 1943) 即出自他之手。

黎英亮，历史学博士，华南师范大学讲师，著有《现代国际生活的规则：国际法的诞生》《何谓民族？：普法战争与厄内斯特·勒南的民族主义思想》，译有《浩劫之地》(即将出版)。

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标签

历史

二战

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history

欧洲

英文原版

二战史

野蛮大陆

评论

战后反犹的回潮……唉

Revenge or forgiveness. Remembrance or oblivion. These postwar challenges are never carried out according to heavenly justice: there will be more unjust vengeance and undeserved forgiveness.

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书评

二战结束之后，在荷兰与德国交界处竖着这样一处标识：“此地乃文明世界之尽头。”是的，那时的欧洲已沦为野蛮大陆。在战争的摧毁性打击下，“一切坚固的东西都烟消云散了”，秩序、法律甚至道德，在不少地方早已荡然无存，是非对错失去意义，人们为了生存无所不用其极，在破败...

忘掉过去的人，注定要重蹈覆辙。——乔治·桑塔亚纳（George Santayana）
人类通过什么方式能将自己高贵的灵魂驱逐出肉体？被驱逐出的灵魂又能在肮脏的泥潭中下陷到多么深的污秽中？
第一个问题，也许只有战争，才能把人性中最低贱的性格挖掘出来，而灵魂，则被自己远远地抛出...

初读此书时，以为又是一本受害者口述历史堆砌而成的伤痕文学。的确，本书第一部分战争遗产中花了大量的篇幅描述战争为欧洲大陆造成的破坏，第二部分也列举了大量的实例描述战胜国士兵和民众对战败国的复仇，大量引用口述资料和回忆录，这样的事实罗列并无新意，战后的创伤和仇...

“我想要描述给你听，但又不知从何说起。” 战争会有遗产吗？
我曾经在知乎上看到过一个说法，说战争能促使人类进步，二战后欧洲的迅速崛起就是一个例证。而如果你捧起《野蛮大陆》这本书，就会了解，我们站在时间的这一头，回望过去所定义出的“迅速”，实际上是怎样一种充...

赢得战争，输掉和平
说到二战之后的欧洲，我们很容易想到经济的恢复与文明的重建，这与今天发达的欧洲看起来顺理成章。但《野蛮大陆》向我们提示了一个被忽略的阶段，在战争与和平之间，欧洲也曾经历数年的动荡与混乱，这正是“野蛮大陆”的题中之义。
战争的结束并非意味着正...

所有叫嚣战争的人都该先读读这本书，看一场战争对人类伤害会造成的伤害有多么深刻。这本书的阅读是一段压抑绝望的过程，基恩·罗威让我们见证了人类可以野蛮到什么地步，生命能够轻贱到何种程度。
比起人类，凶猛野兽的残忍要逊色百倍，在新的时代，借助强大的组织能力、缜密思...

1945-1949年的欧洲大陆，二战后的野蛮报复、种族清洗与世界秩序的重建。复杂和混乱到以至于根本就很难搞清楚历史的真相到底是什么，每一国都是从有利于自己的角度出发来看待历史、编写数据，真正的客观工作很难做到，特别是紧随其后的就是意识形态之间争锋相对。欧洲大陆原本是...

一本能够引起哗然的历史著作通常两个特点必居其一：要么用了更新的历史资料，要么提供了一反常态的观念架构，挑战你的认知惯性。《野蛮大陆》同时满足了这两个特点。

作者基思·罗威被公认为二战史权威，继《火焰地狱：1943年汉堡灭顶之灾》后，他将目光投向二战尾声和战后初...

依据英、法、德、美、意、波兰、乌克兰、捷克、斯洛伐克、匈牙利和克罗地亚等多国的档案文献、目击证言、回应录、日记和书信，作者向我们描绘了二战结束之后那个满目焦土、混乱无序的欧洲大陆，道德严重败坏，丑恶人性充分暴露，因饥饿绝望而变得残酷无情的年代。在对二战的...

savage

continent，此处的savage翻译成野蛮，我觉得都难以表现二战以及战后陷入复仇深渊的欧洲大陆的残忍、血腥、癫狂的程度。残暴这个词可能更妥帖，“野蛮”一般指未开化的人，然而当文明人退化，兽性毕现，残存的稍微高等的人性竟然是“人比野兽更可怕”的原因——人发挥“...

首次读到的基思·罗威的文章，是《大家》公号里的一篇《并未结束的战争》，讲的是二战后全球范围内并未结束的厮杀，难得的好文章。

我因此去搜索他的作品，了解到他是位二战史专家，了解到他会亲自去各国查找当地史料以求真实，了解到他异常关心的是二战时被侮辱与被损害的芸芸...

像书中所写的一样，未看此书以前的我以为二战后欧洲就恢复平静，各国开始有序恢复经济。尽管已忘记冷战如何开始，想着冷战总没有二战对各国的影响大，直到我读了《野蛮大陆》。

1945-1949年是中国内战时期，之后建立新中国，想必欧洲也是一样。然而，从目录就看得出来，大不一...

《野蛮大陆：第二次世界大战后的欧洲》来自于英国的基思罗威。[em]e400637[/em]
二战后的欧洲，大多数人想到的是东西欧的决裂，铁幕的降临。但却恰恰是这二战结束到铁幕降临前的这段岁月，才是欧洲大陆最野蛮，最混乱，最血腥的时期。大多数人却往往忽略，甚至刻意忘却这段时...

第二次世界大战不仅仅是传统意义的领土冲突，它同时也是种族战争和意识形态战争，中间还夹杂着几场纯粹出于地方原因而引发的内战。——《野蛮大陆》P412
二战后的欧洲成为了废墟，同时也是一处道德的泥潭。号称解放者的支持了种族屠杀，号称自由民主的支持着独裁，而这些都发生...

135，爱伦堡：只要这些灰绿色爬虫还活着，我们就无法生存。今日，世上无书；今夜，天上无星；今天，只存一念：杀死德国人。
152，D的意志。Deutsche的首字母，意为德意志。蒙奇.D.路飞。
187，性，还象征着欧洲男人被阉割。这些男人，已经在对抗德国军事力量的斗争中证明了自己...

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