



SHORT SYNOPSIS |

The land of the Southern Slavs has been more influenced by outside powers than any other region in the world, viciously exploited for centuries and now witnessing the West embarking on a new kind of colonization.

LONG SYNOPSIS |

Ever wondered why the U.S. meddles so much in the internal affairs of other countries? Does it seem strange that someone would want to crush a successful economic structure? How can a country supposedly invade itself? Curious what happens after a "humanitarian" bombing?

For the answer to these and many more questions, one needn't look further than Yugoslavia. You won't get much from the mainstream media or most politicians in the West, as their interests often come in conflict with the truth. However, one film casts a different light on the Yugoslav tragedy that illustrates to which extent a country can still be colonized today.

"The Weight of Chains", a Canadian documentary film by Boris Malagurski, explains how and why Yugoslavia broke up and who really had an interest in it dissolving in a devastating and bloody war. Malagurski then offers a unique look into the current state in which the new Balkan countries are - powerless to choose their own government or write their own laws.

The film advocates the idea that the real heroes of the Yugoslav wars are not corrupt politicians, army generals or war profiteers, but rather normal people who acted as human beings in inhuman times. Some of these positive stories - people going above and beyond to keep the peace or protecting their neighbours regardless of their ethnicity - are presented in the film to illustrate why there are no such things as "evil nations".

Disunity and hatred among people in the Balkans, manufactured by outside powers who had an interest in conquering them, has always brought nothing but suffering. "The Weight of Chains" offers a way out.

PRODUCTION NOTES |

PRE-PRODUCTION | Finding unbiased information on the wars in Yugoslavia was by no means an easy feat. Boris Malagurski, the Writer, Director and Producer of the film, was born in Serbia, and knowing the local language(s) of the South Slavs allowed him to access a multitude of sources, conclude where they overlap and come up with compelling, logical and factual arguments later used in the film. When he started writing the script for "The Weight of Chains" in the Spring of 2009, Malagurski realized just how drastically the script will have to change once he starts interviewing people.

Spending hours at libraries every day for about 6 months, Malagurski went through countless books, journals and even microfilm transcripts of every Senate meeting that mentioned anything concerning Yugoslav matters. He dug out very revealing documents and statements of Western politicians and interest groups who made no secret of their intentions on what is to be done to Yugoslavia and to the newly created republics after its dissolution.

Malagurski's research prompted him to contact several Canadian, American, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Albanian and Slovenian state officials, economists, professors, journalists, book authors, political analysts, humanitarians, musicians, activists and other experts on the topic and arrange interviews with them. He was also granted interviews with those closest to the stories of some of the real heroes of the Yugoslav wars - those who performed acts of humanity in such inhuman times.

PRODUCTION | Production started in Montreal and Ottawa in the Fall of 2009, when several Canadian experts on the topic of Yugoslavia were interviewed. The production of the film was then suspended due to insufficient budget funds, but was finally continued in April 2010, when Vancouver-based filmmaker Boris Malagurski traveled to do interviews in Toronto, Columbus, Dayton, New York and Washington, D.C. The film tour was continued in the Balkans, with trips to Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Serbia (including Kosovo) and filming was finally done in August 2010.

The crew on the biggest part of the tour, in the former Yugoslavia, included Australian videographer Marko Jankovic and production assistant Marinko Bobic, but also dozens of impassioned supporters of the film who offered their time and efforts to help the production of the film in every way that they can and make the filmmakers' trip much more pleasant. While traveling, Malagurski, Jankovic and Bobic encountered several dangerous situations and experienced many difficulties that they were able to overcome. On Malagurski's trip to Kosovo, he was reunited with Mary Walsh, who helped him with his previous film as well. Malagurski also received help from Russian-born Anastasia Trofimova, who was the cinematographer in Pristina.

Radio Television Serbia's support was crucial, as it provided tons of archival footage in support of this young filmmaker's vision. Mileta Kecina, the head of the Belgrade-based program archives, gave Malagurski access to precious video material without which the film could not have been made.

POST-PRODUCTION | The editing of filmed footage started before the filming was even completed. This allowed the pace at which the film was being made to greatly speed up and put things in a better perspective. However, the editing itself was a slow and painstaking process that took a lot out of Malagurski, even though he received initial help from Marko Jankovic.