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THE CAREER OF A POST-WAR NAZI

Directed by Jean-Christophe Klotz
Produced by Zadig Productions & ARTE France

2x45'

SUMMARY

This documentary follows the journey of SS commander Walter Rauff as he traveled around the world for four decades after the end of World War II. Through this story - an almost unbelievable one, set in the middle of the Cold War, this film sheds light on the hidden side of international geopolitics, the survival of Nazi criminal networks, and their enduring impact today.

Since the mid-2000s, newly declassified archives have exposed the extent to which Nazi criminals were reintegrated by various states after the Second World War. This documentary focuses on the story of Walter Rauff, an SS commander involved in the persecution and mass murder of Jewish people. His postwar journey reveals a dark and complex network that stretched from the Vatican to West Germany, Egypt, Syria, and even Israel. A network closely monitored by U.S. intelligence services who intended to use it to their advantage. Rauff later resumed his career under Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile, working as an unofficial advisor to the DINA (Chile's secret police). His story exemplifies how Nazi ideologies and methods survived the war and were absorbed into repressive regimes around the world. The disappearance of Nazi war criminals did not mark the end of their influence. Their hateful ideology and brutal tactics persist through their ideological successors, still spreading today.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

We chose to tell this story through the unbelievable career of SS officer Walter Rauff who systematized the use of gas vans to murder hundreds of thousands of Jewish and Romani people, as well as those who were suspected of sympathizing with communists. This man, who was close to the SS' second-in-command Reinhard Heydrich, was a Nazi criminal whose life mirrors that of countless other Holocaust perpetrators: men, who like him, died peacefully in their South America homes, decades after the war. But what makes Rauff a uniquely compelling figure to study, is that his story alone embodies what our film sets out to prove.

This film seeks to deconstruct the official narrative the Allies came up with in the aftermath of Nuremberg. Or rather, it aims to complement this narrative with a far less visible chapter of history, that of the enduring role of Nazi criminal networks after the war. It is not about promoting an alternative narrative - facts are facts. Rather, it is about broadening our perspective to grasp the full picture: the global landscape of post-war geopolitics in all its complexity. The kind of complexity that is missing from today's polarized democratic discourse.

The film will take care to highlight the cartographic dimension of this story. It is a historical road movie, which we will follow step by step as our investigation progresses, guided by the numerous documents we have managed to locate. These documents will be examined either at our home base for research, a minimalist setting that looks a bit like a case room, with lots of puzzle pieces pinned to the walls, or on the road, during the trips that will take us to the places where Rauff went when he was hiding.

The general approach is to contrast the two sides of the same narrative: the official narrative, that of the liberators and rebuilders of Europe, and the democratic ideal; and the unofficial one, that of complicity and even active collaboration of state institutions with these war criminals under the guise of anti-communism. Walter Rauff's journey is the perfect embodiment of this hidden narrative.

The film consists of:

- numerous spectacular historical archives (“the official narrative”) intended to provide context and political and chronological reference points;
- more abstract, mysterious sequences evoking the hidden side of our story, as we search for documents that remained secret for so long and meet the surviving relatives of the protagonists of this two-sided narrative;
- footage filmed at the very locations where Rauff went into hiding, in order to visualize his itinerary with precision, supported by documents;
- finally, interviews with figures from both the intelligence and justice communities who, confronted with the findings of our investigation revealing the role of their elders, will gradually help us piece together the full story.



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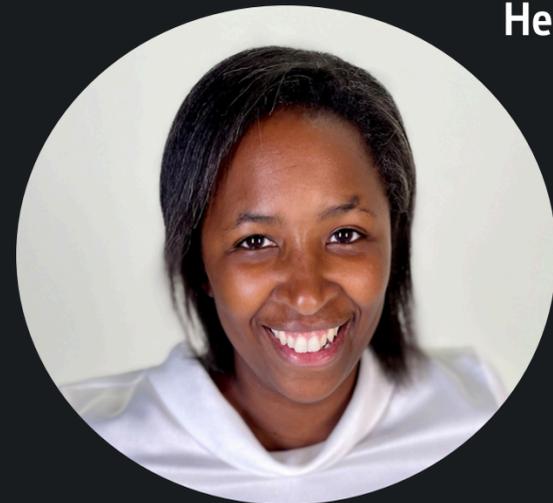
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