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*Film and Adolescent Delinquency – Polemics in Yugoslav
Public 1951–1952*

Summary

When Yugoslav party and state leadership in 1949 realized that the country wouldn't be able to survive faced with isolation and military threats from the state members of Cominform, it tried to grasp at straws with severe ideological enemies - USA and its allies in the West. Connecting FPRY to the West resulted besides other things in buying great number of Hollywood movies with concurrent prizes that flooded whole Yugoslavia. Occurrence of the movies that were strong propaganda machines of so called "American way of life" caused the resistance of conservative staff in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia that realized that fundamental values recently gained through the national liberation war and revolution could be endangered. As at the same time adolescent delinquency was increased, conservatives had thesis that two cases of manslaughter by negligence of two kids playing and series of robberies done by two boys from Belgrade were result of watching the western *The Oklahoma Kid* of Lloyd Bacon and crime movie *The Asphalt Jungle* of John Huston. Polemics between conservative and progressive party staff and between Yugoslav cineastes over the influence of the movies on adolescent delinquency was present in the press in the course of 1951 and 1952. It contained keen words and the outcome of it was embargo on screening of the film *The Asphalt Jungle* on the territory of the National Republic of Croatia.

Controversial movies influenced to some extent increase of criminal behavior among young people but they did not have decisive influence. Reason for the young people to go astray was influence of unfavorable economic and social circumstance in Yugoslavia where they lived and grew up as individuals. All of them were in the margins of society, coming from devastated and uneducated families and they certainly watched the movies uncritically without understanding their true message. The attempt of conservative party staff to stop import of Hollywood films and in that way stop penetration of American cultural pattern, failed. Hollywood movies remained permanently dominant on the repertoire of the Yugoslav cinemas and the values of American, before all popular culture became commonly accepted among the young Yugoslavs till the breakdown of the country.