

Soviet Censorship and Latvian Drama

Abstract: The aim of the article is to trace some aspects in the development of Latvian drama during the decades following the Second World War. It was a unique period in the history of Latvian literature when art was often judged according to its supposed influence on society and seen as means of promoting socialist ideals. The arguments in this article are based on case studies of two leading Latvian playwrights of the period, Arvīds Grigulis and Gunārs Priede. These studies examine the experience of ideological pressure and its impact on the individual.

Keywords: Latvian literature, Latvian drama, Socialist realism, Censorship.

The aim of the article is to follow certain aspects of the development of Latvian drama during the decades after the Second World War. This was a unique period in the history of Latvian literature when art was judged according to its supposed influence on society and used as means of promoting socialist ideals. However, this situation is not unusual when seen in perspective. Drama and theatre have often served as means of propaganda during different historical periods. The Soviet period serves as a good example of how censorship works and how ideological demands influence the creativity of individuals.

This paper is based on case studies of two leading Latvian playwrights of the period, Arvīds Grigulis and Gunārs Priede, and examines their experience of Soviet ideological pressure and the impact that this pressure had on them.

In a sense, the beginnings of the ideology that later takes root in Soviet drama can be traced back to the culture of Latvian theatre and drama from the middle of the 1930s. After the establishment of Kārlis Ulmanis' authoritarian regime in May of 1934, a change took place in the cultural climate that was marked by the opening of the new theatre season in autumn of that year. This was especially felt in the repertoire politics of the Latvian National Theatre. In an introductory

essay for the 1934 season, *Teātra Vēstnesis* (*Theatre News*), the monthly magazine for the theatre, stated that “a new era has begun and more attention must to be devoted to national topics”¹. For the anniversary of Latvian independence on November 18th, one of the most popular epic works of the time was dramatized for the stage. It was the novel *Dvēseļu putenis* (*Blizzard of Souls* 1933–1934) by Aleksandrs Grīns, which describes the heroic deeds of the Latvian Riflemen during the First World War. The dramatization of patriotic themes continued throughout the rest of the 1930s and resulted in the appearance of many new patriotic plays. Several types of plots, characteristic of this new ideology, can be identified in the plays written during the second half of the 1930:

- 1) Plays describing the historical changes that took place in Latvian society during the period of independence, for example, *Bierantos* (*Bieranti Manor*, 1936) and *Skolotāja meita* (*The Teacher's Daughter*, 1937) by Līgotņu Jēkabs. These plays show how the initial enthusiasm created by the establishment of a new independent state gradually turns into disappointment as people experience the negative impact of the political quarrels caused by a system made up of many small parties. The changes coincide with a crisis in the private lives of the main heroes. The last scenes take place after the establishment of the Ulmanis' regime. The strong will of the political leader is indirectly shown to be a catalyst for unification of the entire nation. The individual characters are now also able to restore order to their lives. All contradictions are resolved, and each character finds his or her true place in the collaborative mechanisms of society.
- 2) Works that praise the role of the younger generation. Young people are commonly seen as that force in society which can overcome old divisions artificially preserved by the older generation. Often a conflict between two neighbouring, hostile families is resolved following the example of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. In Latvian plays of the period, like *Vecie un jaunie* (*The Old and the Young*, 1934) by Jānis Akuraters and *Zelta atslēga* (*The Golden Key*, 1936) by Jānis Grots, the young lovers overcome all obstacles and unify not only their hearts, but also their family estates.

1 *Teātra Vēstnesis*, 1934/35, Nr. 1, p. 1.

- 3) Plays praising heroic deeds of the national past, for example *Pumpurs un Lāčlēsis* (*Pumpurs and Lāčplēsis*, 1938) by Aleksandrs Grīns. None of these historical dramas directly celebrated the activities of President Ulmanis, but plots devoted to characters with a strong will were meant to be seen as indirectly praising the contemporary political leader. In a certain sense, the trends described above paved the way for the totalitarian ideology that became clearly visible during the second part of the 1940s.

As Soviet troops were approaching Latvia in the autumn of 1944, thousands of people, including hundreds of intellectuals, left their homeland and fled to the West. Among them were Mārtiņš Zīverts and Anšlavs Eglītis, who were never subjected to ideological demands. Dozens of leading Latvian actors fled as well. This left the Latvian stage almost deserted. Scarcely known writers now occupied the places of leading dramatists, and produced plays heavily influenced by Soviet propaganda. One of the best educated among them was Arvīds Grigulis (1906–1989) who became literary advisor at the Drama Theatre in Riga (as the National Theatre was now renamed) after his return to Latvia in 1944 after having lived as a refugee for several years elsewhere in the Soviet Union. Previously a social-democrat, Grigulis now occupied important positions within the communist regime and, presumably, felt under pressure to please the new authorities. However, he preserved his sharp eye for observation, and, strangely enough, was able to create plays that mixed his personal experience with the official dogma.

Grigulis' ideological position is clearly manifested in his first three plays – *Uz kuru ostu?* (*To Which Harbour?*, 1945), *Kā Garpēteros vēsturi taisīja* (*How History was made in Garpēteri*, 1946), and *Māls un porcelāns* (*Clay and Porcelain*, 1947). These works ridicule the earlier Latvian intelligentsia and others who tried to oppose or escape the new Soviet order and celebrate the efforts of a new generation of Socialists.

The first of these plays focuses on the breakdown of former pillars of society. In several scenes that occur from the late 1930s until the mid-1940s, Grigulis shows how the leading officials of pre-war Latvia gradually lose their impact on society. The writer consciously uses the model of nationalistic propaganda that showed historical development as an unavoidable movement towards the

establishment of Ulmanis' regime, transforming it to meet the needs of Soviet ideology. Consider Director Dreimanis' festive address at the end of the Act One of *Uz kuru ostu?*:

I want to talk about everything that our beloved president can and cannot do. (He wipes his eyes.) What was I? Nothing. Garbage. Yes, my friends, a piece of garbage who had a sad little mouse trap factory at Pērnavas street 34a. I was almost dead from starvation. And what am I now? I have the largest rat and mouse trap factory in the entire Baltic States. I have shares in many companies. Who gave this all to me? He did. Why? Because I made the 15th of May.² I won this easy life for you; otherwise the Communists would have eaten you alive. And for this reason shouldn't we stand united? Let us be united and proud. Yes, united, terrible and proud. Let the proudest of all songs be sung, let sound the proudest song!³

In Grigulis' 1945 play, Latvian independence appears to bring only a short-lived success as Dreimanis becomes director of the biggest rat and mouse trap factory in the Baltic States, but soon loses his power and becomes trapped himself. Most of the characters ridiculed in the play personify ideological stereotypes of the bourgeoisie such as a bank director, the mayor of Riga, a member of a University Fraternity, etc. Similar stereotypes are used to portray the other side, such a chauffeur, a spy, or a Soviet military officer. One of the most interesting figures in this drama is Gothards Puplausis, the Director of a Savings Bank who is a two-faced hypocrite, but at the same time rather naïve. Grigulis shows his quality as a comedy writer through his ironic characterisations.

Kā Garpēteros vēsturi taisīja, the second of the plays mentioned above, ridicules a formerly wealthy peasant who unsuccessfully tries to avoid having to comply with the new farming rules. The author has given the main character the name *Vēzis* (Crab), in this way comparing the character's difficulty in coming to terms with the changes in society with the backward gait of a crab. Some of the scenes border on the grotesque as the audience sees how every effort undertaken by *Vēzis* produces the opposite of its desired effect. However, Grigulis' approach did not avoid criticism. He was blamed for portraying the hero too simplisti-

2 On the 15th of May 1934, Ulmanis overthrew the existing government and took power in a coup d'état.

3 Arvīds Grigulis, *Kopotī raksti*, t. 3, Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1963, p. 29.

cally and not revealing the real dangers caused by such people. Justifying his ideological position, Grigulis wrote a commentary to his work which was also printed in the theatre program:

Even before opening night, this play has caused much discussion. Is character of Vēzis appropriate within the context of the play? It has been said that Vēzis should be smarter, more dangerous, part of a bad crowd. I think that this would be an ideological mistake. In the first place, that type of character would no longer be comical. He would need a different type of environment. In the second place, the unmasking of such a creature is much less necessary. His anti-Soviet views are clear and any sugar-coating which one might use to give his character depth would come off as rather naïve. In the third place, such a character wouldn't be appropriate for the type of comedy used in the play. And, lastly, such a character is not prevalent in the country side and having him appear in the play could be interpreted as the popularisation of such a character.

Taking all of this into consideration, I created Vēzis as a middling farmer with the attendant characteristics of stupidity and greed⁴.

But Grigulis manuscript is also ideologically contentious. In the Act Three the character of Jānis Pakalns, Director of the Executive Committee, openly threatens Vēzis from his position of power:

Comrade Vēzis, if you had but a little bit of intelligence, you would catch on. The Soviet leaders are patient if they see that a person wants to improve, and is battling to overcome the evil in his environment and within himself. But do not be deceived. It is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength. Radical changes will soon occur throughout Soviet society. We will see construction the like of which none of us could have imagined, even in his wildest dreams. In the name of the Future, every Soviet citizen has the right to remove any and all obstacles from his path, no matter how many hundreds of years they have stood. Small men had better not tangle with the wheels of history. I warn you for the last time!⁵

4 *Ibid.*, p. 658.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 135.

In the historical events that followed in 1949 approximately forty-five thousand Latvians were deported to Siberia. Joining the official ideology and promoting Soviet values became the only possibility for survival. In his speech, Director Pakalns indicates what little meaning historical memory and hundreds of years of tradition had for the new reality.

The third play, *Māls un porcelāns*, written in 1947, follows a new trend of ideological directives. As the demand for positive heroes had become considerably stronger in the late 1940s, in this work Grigulis focuses on the positive example. The hero of the drama, Niklāvs Skulte, undertakes a courageous effort to bring necessary raw materials to his factory by boat during the spring floods. The play follows the example of the Soviet drama of the 1930s where the heroic conquest of nature by men is one of the important themes. Grigulis also adds an important feature to the canon of Socialist Realism – he describes an intelligent old man, a former leading factory worker, who keeps to himself a professional secret necessary for the making of a special sort of porcelain. He finally reveals his secret under the influence of the impressive energy of the new generation. This is a characteristic motif of post-war Soviet plays. However, its full importance is best understood in the context of Director Pakalns speech about the radical changes that would soon occur throughout Soviet society and the suffering of those unwilling to follow the party line.

In his first three plays, Grigulis comes to a clear and unmistakable formulation of his ideological convictions. In his later creative works, only the nuances change. In the first place, these plays make use of sharp conflicts which are mostly resolved in favour of those characters that are loyal to the Soviet state; in addition to this, the majority of ‘right-thinking’ people over those who think differently grows from play to play.

In the second place, when a conflict arises between the public and private goals of a character, preference is always given to that which has greater social meaning, for instance in the play *Māls un porcelāns*, when factory director Benedikta Krusa agrees to the important, but dangerous expedition of Niklāvs Skulte.

In the third place, the mouthpiece of the author’s ideological views always comes from one section of society. In the plays *Kā Garpēteros vēsturi taisīja* and *Māls un porcelāns*

on the one hand, the status-bound heroes *represent Soviet power* (they are all responsible members of some Soviet institution), but on the other hand they *represent the common man* instead of the ‘freshly baked’ Soviet intelligencia. On average the heroes are about 30 years old, in the prime of life when the ‘spontaneity’ of youth has been transformed into the ‘responsibility’ felt by mature adults⁶.

The author consciously avoids a random selection of heroes by using mature representatives of Soviet power for these roles.

In the fourth place, something common to all the plays is a certain falsity in details and a declarative style and in the fifth place, the finales seem artificial.

This tendency was already noted and sharply criticised in the mid-50s by literary scholar Jānis Kalniņš, who emphasised that these predictable endings spoil the logic of character development for the greater part of post-war plays; especially as pertaining to the reformation of the hero at the end of a dramatic work. “It seems that there is no reason to carry the action of every play so far that those characters in need of ‘reform’ chose to change their ways. This has become a literary template that we now also see on the stage”⁷. Instead, so that people would be prompted to think about qualities that the author considered being negative, Grigulis provided the audience with repeated clichés, as in the closing words of Garpetēris’ neighbour Robs in *Kā Garpēteros vēsturi taisīja*: “Isn’t everything I have to say already being said by the millstones that are now turning? Life is like a mill. It unceasingly separates the chaff of stupidity and greed from the grain. The individual grows. The nation grows. I hear the stones saying: great... great... strong... strong... rich...rich... working together ...”⁸.

Grigulis himself accidentally chanced to veer from the ideological mainstream when in two plays of the early 1950s, *Profesors iekārtojas* (*The Professor makes himself at home*, 1953) and *Karavīra šinelis* (*The Soldier’s Greatcoat*, 1955) he made critical observations of Soviet reality. In the first of these plays, the object of Grigulis’ satire became an academic institute where the leading scientists have subverted the research to serve their own private interests. There are several figures who are portrayed with the detail of a sharp observer, for example

6 Mārtiņš Kaprāns, “LPSR ‘simboliskā universa’ dzimšana Arvīda Grīguļa 20.gs. 40.gadu lugās”, *Agora*, t.3, Rīga, 2005, p. 108.

7 Jānis Kalniņš, *Pa gadu kāpnēm*, Rīga: Liesma, 1966, p. 31.

8 Arvīds Grigulis, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

a professor's wife who has used her husband's influence to promote both the building of their house and to organize the defence of her doctoral thesis in the capital of the neighbouring republic, Vilnius. However, Grigulis broke an unwritten rule with his portrayal of a Soviet official – a Professor and Director of a Scientific Institute – as a comic figure. Even if the main hero of the play, Valentīns Vējroze, experiences a conversion at the end of the work and declares his will to return to the lifestyle of a Soviet man, the critical mass of the previous observations was too strong to make the point credible.

Grigulis' drama *Karavīra šinelis* depicts an official who has lost his confidence after the war and engages in a critical evaluation the new reality. The attention of readers and spectators is mainly directed to the comic figures in the play – the merchants and black marketers Augusts Pulvermahers, and Berta and Irāina Pele. Despite a similar conversion of the protagonist in the second part of the drama, which remains rather declarative, the censors were unconvinced.

It was the experience of the severe criticism that was directed towards both of these plays that presumably led to a change in Grigulis' creative work. It should also be mentioned that already in the 1940s he was forced to change the ending of *Māls un porcelāns*. It initially ended with the death of the heroic protagonist. Grigulis must have had plenty of reasons to worry about the stability of his position in the socialist society.

So, in 1957, at the same time that a new wave in the development of Latvian drama was taking place, Grigulis felt himself forced to revert to a submissive position. In Grigulis' play that deals with the events of the period of independence battles between 1918 and 1920 *Baltijas jūra šalc* (*The Baltic Sea Sighs*), we meet the creators of an independent Latvia transformed into cartoon figures and marionettes of the surrounding German forces. These marionettes are, of course, no match for the heroic fighters of the Soviet regime, even if they are later forced into submission.

In the case of Arvīds Grigulis we can observe how ideological coercion together with self-imposed restrictions can cause the decline of a career that otherwise could well have developed much more fully both in terms of professional experience and sharpness of observation.

The debut of a new author, Gunārs Priede (1928 – 2000), caused changes in the development of Latvian drama. He wrote five plays during the second half of the 1950s. His first play, *Jaunākā brāļa vasara* (*The Youngest Brother's Summer*,

1955) is marked by features that can also be attributed to his other works of the same period. Common to all of Priede's plays is the important role played by the younger generation. His protagonists are often young people whom the author created based on direct observations of his contemporaries. This fact makes these plays different from earlier dramas written by older writers. But he is not only an advocate of youth; he also sees the complexity of life that includes contradictory world views. As theatre critic Lilija Dzene stressed:

In these protagonists, especially in Uģis as portrayed by Eduards Pāvuls, we recognise ourselves. The author catches that moment, so important for our generation, when having finished our education, diplomas in hand, we were thrust into the world and stood there, at our first jobs, in wonderment and confusion that the world was not as simple as we had been taught, that there – in the real world – were people already ahead of us, also smart, thanks to their hard won experience⁹.

Even if conflicts seemingly remained concentrated on social problems – for example, in *Jaunākā brāļa vasara* a young technician faces the difficulties arising in a *kolkhoz* where the construction of a cattle shed has not been coordinated with the perspective plan of the village – the real focus in these plays is on relationships, especially love stories. The outcome of the personal experiences of his protagonists is not in any way linked to the 'social value' of the person. When compared to earlier Soviet plays this is a significant difference. (Although interestingly enough, already in Grigulis' *Māls un porcelāns* we can observe something similar, where the director of the factory, Benedikta Krusa, loses the fight for Niklāvs heart to a socially less important artist, Kaiva Atvasara. The topic of unrequited love reappears in some of Grigulis' later works and shows the potential of his artistic skills that were never really fulfilled.)

In his next drama *Lai arī rudens* (*Although it is Autumn*, 1956) Priede demonstrates even more distinctly a new tendency apparent in modern plays. Important, clearly formulated problems become background issues or disappear altogether and seemingly insignificant details take precedence. The more clearly he shows everyday activities, the more clearly we can see the nuances in hu-

9 Lilija Dzene, *Aktieris pret savu gribu*: Dokumentāls stāstījums par Eduardu Pāvulu, Rīga: Liesma, 1987, p. 47.

man relationships. This play has a central event around which everything else takes place – a fishing trip during a storm that turns into a personal trial. From a modern perspective the dramatic fishing trip seems over exaggerated, because it happens as a result of socialist competition. The idea that young people must prove themselves through achievement is important to Priede, but in this case it appears to be the author's compromise with the dramaturgical views of that time. However, his early works testify to the fact that Priede style does not generally include exaggerated characters and situations.

Priede creates believable, nuanced characters. The play *Lai arī rudens* takes place in Ventspils. This is an important city for Gunārs Priede, since he spent his childhood there. He precisely describes its atmosphere and attributes. One of the most interesting characters is Anna Ugālniece, who is convincing in her wisdom, empathy and the lack of hurried judgements. A new theme for post-war drama is that of the prodigal son. In the conflict between Dzintars, an exemplary, yet in some sense typical post-war hero and Valters, who has been beaten down by the trials of his life, Priede does not indulge in simplified, cardboard characters. As Lilija Dzene writes, “with Valters, Latvian literature receives a new kind of anti-hero; he is lost, broken inside and dark as a smoke-blackened lamp.”¹⁰ The author does not agree with the character Dzintars' annihilating opinion of Valters, but attempts to uncover the valuable core of his personality that would allow him to find himself and his place in society. The idea that a person's worth cannot be measured by his luck in love is presented in a heightened manner.

As an artist in the 1950s Priede was very successful. His first drama was even performed by the *Maliņ teatr* (*Small Theatre*) in Moscow only a year after it was first performed in Riga. However, Priede also faced the restrictions of Soviet censorship a decade later as he proceeded with his critical evaluation of the realities of Soviet life. Similarly to Grigulis' *Profesors iekārtojas*, some of Priede's plays include representatives of the new Soviet upper class as subjects of criticism. In Priede's *Tava labā slava* (*Your Good Reputation*, 1964), for example, a musician sacrifices his creativity in order to take part in activities that bring him official honours.

Priede even directly criticizes the suppressive mechanisms of censorship. In his play *Trīspadmitā* (*The Thirteenth*, 1965) there is a confrontation between a poet writing song texts which appeal to young audiences and a member of an evaluation committee who strictly opposes the alleged immorality of these texts.

10 *Idem.*, p. 50–51.

Priede avoids making this confrontation too simple by introducing a motif of mutual attraction between the two characters. His point is intensified by the fact that this committee representative is powerless to stop the suppression of these songs that she herself initiated, even if no other member of the committee has ever attended any concerts given by the band. In the film script *Četri balti krekli* (*Four white shirts*) based on *Trīspadsmītā*, the social criticism is presented even more overtly by an absurd discussion by the committee that leads to the decision to support censorship. The screen version was suppressed and was only shown publicly twenty years later.

But the clearest confrontation between the writer and the bureaucratic system followed in 1967 when Priede wrote a play entitled *Smaržo sēnes* (*The Smell of Mushrooms*). In this work an old communist who still keeps to her beliefs is confronted with an old companion who has now completely changed his position in life and become a high official in the communist party, showing no interest in the lives of ordinary people. The contrast is intensified by the fact that the two never actually meet in the course of the play, and the audience never sees the official. The old lady who has come to the birthday celebration of this official suddenly dies of a stroke, and her dead body lies in the basement of his private house as no one dares to interrupt the celebrations attended by foreign guests. Priede's play was banned by the censorship, and for five years no one of his works appeared on the professional stage.

The return of Gunārs Priede's dramaturgy to the stage took place in 1972 when his play *Otīlija un viņas bērnubērni* (*Otīlija and her Grandchildren*) was staged at the *Jaunatnes teātris* (Youth Theatre). It was through the interpretation of this ensemble under the direction of Ādolfs Šapiro that gave Priede's work its second wind. Even those plays written at the beginning of the 1970s – *Ugunskurs lejā pie stacijas* (*A Fire Down by the Station*), and *Zilā* (*The Blue One*) – were exposed to the suspicious attitude of theatre goers¹¹. The essential difference in this case was that during the battle for bringing these plays to the stage, the director Šapiro came to his own conceptualisation of Priede's dramaturgy and

11 Opening night of the play *Ugunskurs lejā pie stacijas* (*A Fire down by the Station*) took place in November, 1973 – more than six months after the production was first showed to the censors. In 1972 the play *Zilā* (*The Blue One*) was published in the journal *Karogs* (*The Flag*), however, it was four years before it was allowed on the stage in Latvia and it first premiered in Estonia at the Pärnu Theatre (Silvija Radzobe, Edite Tišheizere, Guna Zeltiņa, *Latvijas teātris*: 70. gadi, Rīga: Zinātne, 1993, p. 78, 255).

was ready to collaborate, offering his ideas for stylistic solutions, which opened new possibilities for the interpretation of the philosophy within the play, as well as its layers of symbolism. This was instrumental in bringing a new period of development to Latvian drama. This period can be characterised by the gradual return of the principles of Modernism to both the written script and its interpretation. These new processes can also be seen in the first works of Jānis Jurkāns and Lelde Stumbre. Finding a way for their work to reach an audience was complicated not only by the still active bureaucracy, but also by the attitude of the audience itself, whose experience during the preceding several decades was limited to that of Realistic art.

After a period of stagnation, the creative work of Gunārs Priede continued and in the 1980s he wrote some of his best plays; however, the crisis he experienced because of the ban on his work left its scars on his creative processes. Paradoxically enough, at the same time that he was facing suppressions of his plays in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Priede was the head of the Latvian Writers' Union. This fact also demonstrates the strange nature of Soviet rule in Latvia which seldom dared to interfere in the physical life or even the administrative work of its intellectuals, but at the same time closely followed and strictly prevented any professional and creative undertakings that did not correspond to the canon of Socialist Realism.

Conclusion

In this article several trends have been traced in the development of Latvian drama during the decades following World War II. The early period of development covered approximately one decade, between 1945 and 1955. During this period, the most characteristic works of orthodox Socialist Realism were created. Even plays of one of the most talented writers of the period, Arvīds Grigulis, characteristically reveal the schemes of the dominating approach. As, however, Grigulis wanted to change his attitude and in the early 1950s created plays where the observation of reality was more critical, his works faced severe criticism that forced him to return to rather retrograde position.

In the middle of the 1950s the first works of a new dramatist, Gunārs Priede, marked a change in the development of the Latvian drama, focusing on repre-

sentatives of a new generation that enthusiastically depicted the contradictions embedded in everyday situations. The beginning of Priede's career can be called a success story. However, in the 1960s he was faced with a scenario similar to that experienced by Grigulis when criticism and administrative suppression of his works caused a dramatic breach in his development. Priede's works were not staged by professional companies for a five year period (1967–1972) and these events subsequently influenced his later works.

The study of the creative careers of two Latvian writers reveals how deep was the impact of the restrictions imposed on literature during the first decades of the Soviet rule in Latvia. It influenced not only the generation of authors who were involved in the literary process immediately after World War II but continued to haunt authors for many years to come.

Sovietinē cenzūra ir latvių drama

S a n t r a u k a

Straipsnis atskleidžia latvių dramų raidos tendencijas po Antrojo pasaulinio karo. Ankstyvuojant laikotarpiu, kuris apima 1945–1955 m., buvo sukurti būdingiausi ortodoksinio socrealizmo kūriniai. Arvīdo Grigulio, vieno talentingiausių to periodo rašytojų, tekstai reprezentuoja menininkų pastangas įtikti valdžios lūkesčiams. Kai šis dramaturgas pakeitė savo požiūrį ir 6-ojo dešimtmečio pradžioje ėmė kurti labiau apgalvotą pjesių realybę, sulaukė griežtos kritikos, vėl privertusios jį grįžti prie sovietinės ideologijos. 1950-ųjų viduryje rašytojo Gunāro Priedes debiutas ženklino latvių dramų pokyčius. Jis sutelkė dėmesį į jaunesniąją kartą ir su užsidegimu vaidavo kasdienėse situacijose kylančias prieštaras. Tačiau po sėkmingos karjeros pradžios, 7-ajame dešimtmetyje, Priedei teko patirti panašų scenarijų, kaip ir Griguliui: kritika bei administracinis spaudimas giliai pažeidė jo kūrybos plėtotę. Šių dviejų rašytojų kūrybinės karjeros analizė atskleidžia, kaip giliai latvių literatūrą paveikė pirmaisiais sovietmečio dešimtmečiais primesti suvaržymai. Cenzūra darė įtaką ne tik tai autorių kartai, kuri įsitraukė į literatūros procesą iškart po Antrojo pasaulinio karo, bet persekiojo rašytojus dar ilgus metus.

Raktažodžiai: latvių literatūra, latvių drama, socialistinis realizmas, cenzūra.
