

EROTICISM IN LITERATURE

In medieval literature, eroticism had its natural place, but in the 16th century, erotic literature disappeared. From the 18th century onwards, the underground libertarian literature spread rapidly. Smuggled under the coats of travelling salesmen or bound into other books, it crossed national borders and spread among the bourgeoisie, despite being prohibited. In the second half of the 18th century, erotic and pornographic works also reached the Baltics.

Erotic literature was usually kept secret; for example in the 19th century, they were hidden in so-called poison cabinets. It is easier to find "rules of gallant language". In Baltic libraries, one of the genre's main works can be found – Samuel Richardson's sexually loaded *Pamela: Or Virtue Rewarded*. In the 1780s, gallant letters became fashionable, which were in fact nothing more than brothel and prostitute novels that took place in European capitals, such as Johann Friedel's *Compliments from Vienna* or *Letters of compliments from Berlin*. Erotic literature also included robinsonades, which often consisted of sequences of erotic experiences lined up one after another.

In the 18th century, doctors began to talk more and more about sexuality. Medical records fulfilled the function of an apparent erotic literature. Talking about the urges must have helped tame it. It was an era of combating onanism, to which doctors throughout Europe committed themselves, and behind it was the fight against homosexuality.

EROTIC LITERATURE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

In 1923, *Ralf Rond 27* was published, containing anti-morality songs, translated roughly as: "then hides behind the curtains with a lover / 'til rubbing off the lust from last o' her holes"; "just as a woman cares not 'bout just / who pokes a whole in her virgin crust"; "how Joseph the lad put more / than his trust in the virgin whore"; "she's a virgin at every hello / and a harlot at every goodbye". The authorities were determined that this was an anti-morality work to be destroyed. Henrik Saar, who wrote under the name Kivilombi Ints, was also convicted of keeping and distributing anti-morality literature. He disseminated the work *Tallinn's Secrets*, which described preparations for sexual acts; sexual intercourse between a girl at school age and an elderly businessman; orgies; and a sexual act between men.