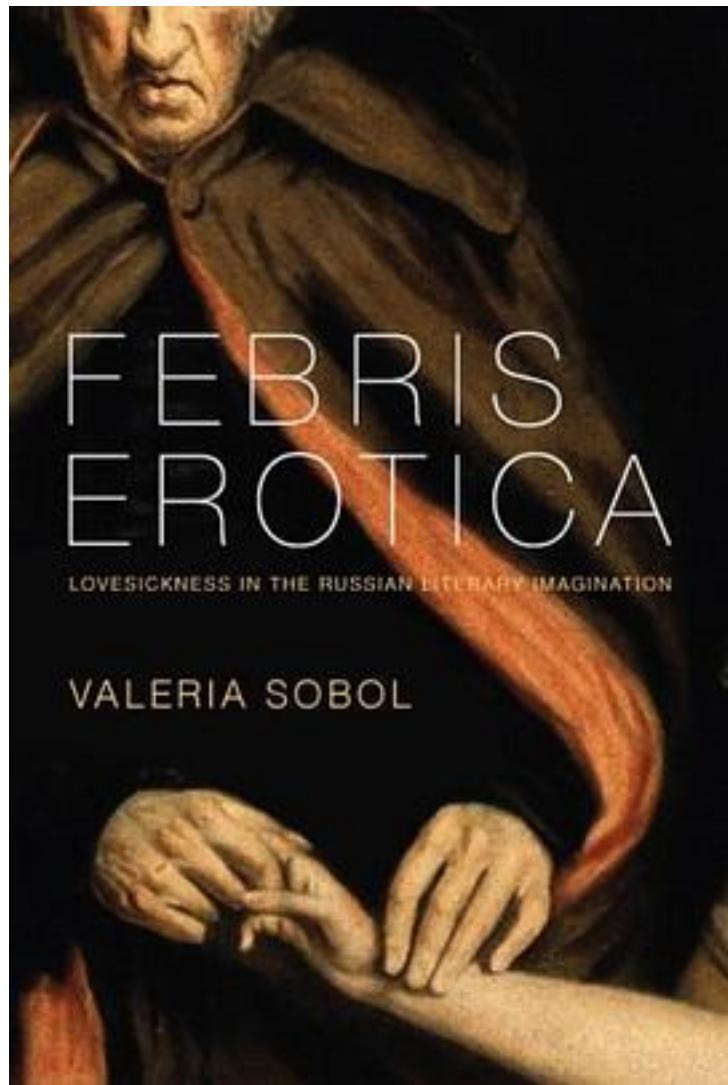


Febris Erotica



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出版者:

出版时间:2009-4

装帧:

isbn:9780295988955

Valeria Sobol probes beyond the perception of 'love and death' as a constant theme of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian literature, examining what underlies the stereotype about the destructive power of romantic love and why Russian writers so willingly employ this cliche. Using this defamiliarized approach, Sobol investigates the medical and cultural traditions that give shape to the convention and considers the philosophical implications of this familiar motif. In "Febris Erotica", Sobol argues that Russian writers were deeply preoccupied with the nature of the relationship between mind and body and were persistent in their use of lovesickness not simply as a traditional theme but as a way to address pressing philosophical, ethical, and ideological concerns through a recognizable literary trope. Finally, Sobol offers a short history of the *topos* of lovesickness in Western literature and medicine and examines its appropriation in early modern Russia. Valeria Sobol is assistant professor of Slavic languages and literatures at the University of Illinois.

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