



SERGEI YESENIN: POET OF THE RUSSIAN SOUL

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Abstract. Yesenin lived only thirty years, but the mark he left in poetry is indelible. The Russian land is rich in talents. Yesenin was born in Konstantinov, where he spent his childhood, and then the years of his youth, here he wrote his first poems. Sergei Yesenin rose to the heights of poetry from the depths of folk life. The world of folk poetic images surrounded him from childhood. Over the years, all the beauty of the native land has been depicted in poems full of love for the Russian land: O Russia - a raspberry field, And the blue that has fallen into the river, I love Your lake anguish to joy and pain.

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Sergey Alexandrovich Yesenin was born on September 21 (October 3, New Style), 1895, in the village of Konstantinovo, Ryazan Province, into a peasant family. He grew up and was educated in an atmosphere deeply rooted in Russian Orthodox traditions. At the age of nine, young Sergey began writing poetry, imitating folk ditties and songs. He studied at a zemstvo school and later at a church parish school. During this period, he wrote his first mature poems and compiled a handwritten collection entitled *Sick Thoughts*. The Russian countryside and nature, folk creativity, and classical Russian literature had a profound influence on the formation of the young poet's artistic worldview and helped shape his natural talent.

At the age of seventeen, Yesenin moved to Moscow, where he initially worked in a merchant's office and later in a printing house. He continued to write poetry, expressing his love for all living things and for his homeland, while his poetic world became increasingly complex and multidimensional. The young poet actively participated in the activities of the Surikov Literary and Musical Circle. His first poems were published in Moscow literary journals in 1914. A year later, he moved to Petrograd, where he became acquainted with prominent poets such as Alexander



Blok and Sergey Gorodetsky, as well as other representatives of the capital's literary elite. He read his poems to them and received high praise and encouragement for his talent.

Yesenin's passion for writing poetry emerged while he was studying at the teachers' parish school in Spas-Klepiki. Naturally, his early works had a spiritual orientation and were not yet imbued with lyrical motifs. Among these early poems are *Stars* and *My Life*. During his years in Moscow (1912–1915), he began to develop greater confidence in his literary abilities and produced more mature poetic works.

It is important to note that several distinctive features characterized his poetry during this period:

- He employed vivid poetic imagery, enriching his works with skillful metaphors and both direct and figurative images.
- His poetry reflected the imagery and themes of the New Peasant movement, which sought to elevate rural life and folk culture in literature.
- Elements of Russian Symbolism were also evident, as Yesenin greatly admired the works of Alexander Blok.

His first published poem was *Birch Tree (Beryoza)*. Literary historians note that Yesenin was inspired by the poetry of Afanasy Fet while writing this work. At that time, he adopted the pseudonym "Ariston," hesitating to publish the poem under his own name. The poem was published in 1914 in the magazine *Mirok*.

Yesenin's first poetry collection, *Radunitsa*, was published in 1916. The collection also reflects elements of Russian Modernism, as by then the young poet had moved to Petrograd and begun interacting with prominent writers and poets, including:

- Sergey Gorodetsky
- Zinaida Gippius
- Dmitry Filosofov
- Alexander Blok



Radunitsa contains elements of dialect speech and numerous parallels between the natural and the spiritual worlds. The title of the collection refers to Radunitsa, a traditional day of remembrance for the deceased. This holiday coincides with the arrival of spring, when peasants sing traditional songs in celebration of nature's renewal. Thus, the collection reflects a profound connection with nature, its rebirth, and the commemoration of those who have passed away.

The last two years of Yesenin's life were spent in constant travel. In 1924, he journeyed through the Transcaucasian republics and began working on his poem *Anna Snegina*. One of his final works was the poem *The Black Man*. In September 1925, Sergey Alexandrovich visited his homeland for the last time. His native land was the highest meaning of his life and his greatest source of inspiration: "The feeling of the Motherland is the foundation of my work."

The poet was regularly subjected to criticism and accusations. He secretly arrived in Leningrad, and on December 28, 1925, he was found dead in the Angleterre Hotel. Thus ended the bright but short life of the great Russian poet Sergey Yesenin.

In March 1915, Yesenin met Alexander Blok, a meeting that marked the beginning of his literary career. In 1916, his poetry collection *Radunitsa* was published and received favorable reviews from literary critics. During this period, Yesenin became closely associated with the group of "New Peasant Poets." In the same year, he was drafted into military service.

In December 1918, Sergey Yesenin was unanimously elected to the Moscow Professional Union of Writers. At the beginning of 1919, together with a group of writers and poets, he helped establish the Imagist movement. In the early 1920s, several of his notable works were published, including *Treryadnitsa*, *Moscow of Taverns*, *Confessions of a Hooligan*, and *Poems of a Scandal-Monger*.

In 1921, the poet embarked on a journey that took him to the Ural region and Orenburg. He was especially fascinated by his travels through Central Asia, particularly his visits to Tashkent and Samarkand. The impressions he gained from these journeys later formed the basis of *Persian Motifs*, a cycle of poems belonging to his love lyrics.



In the same year, 1921, Yesenin published his dramatic poem *Pugachev*, dedicated to his close friend, the poet Anatoly Marienhof. This work is considered one of the most significant achievements in Yesenin's literary heritage and remains an important contribution to Russian literature.

Sergey Alexandrovich Yesenin was a subtle lyric poet, a master of landscape poetry, a singer of peasant Russia, and a profound connoisseur of the folk language and the soul of the Russian people. His poems, such as *In This World I Am Only a Passerby...*, *My Abandoned Land...*, *Oh, My Native Rus...*, and *I Am the Last Poet of the Village*, are known throughout the world.

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