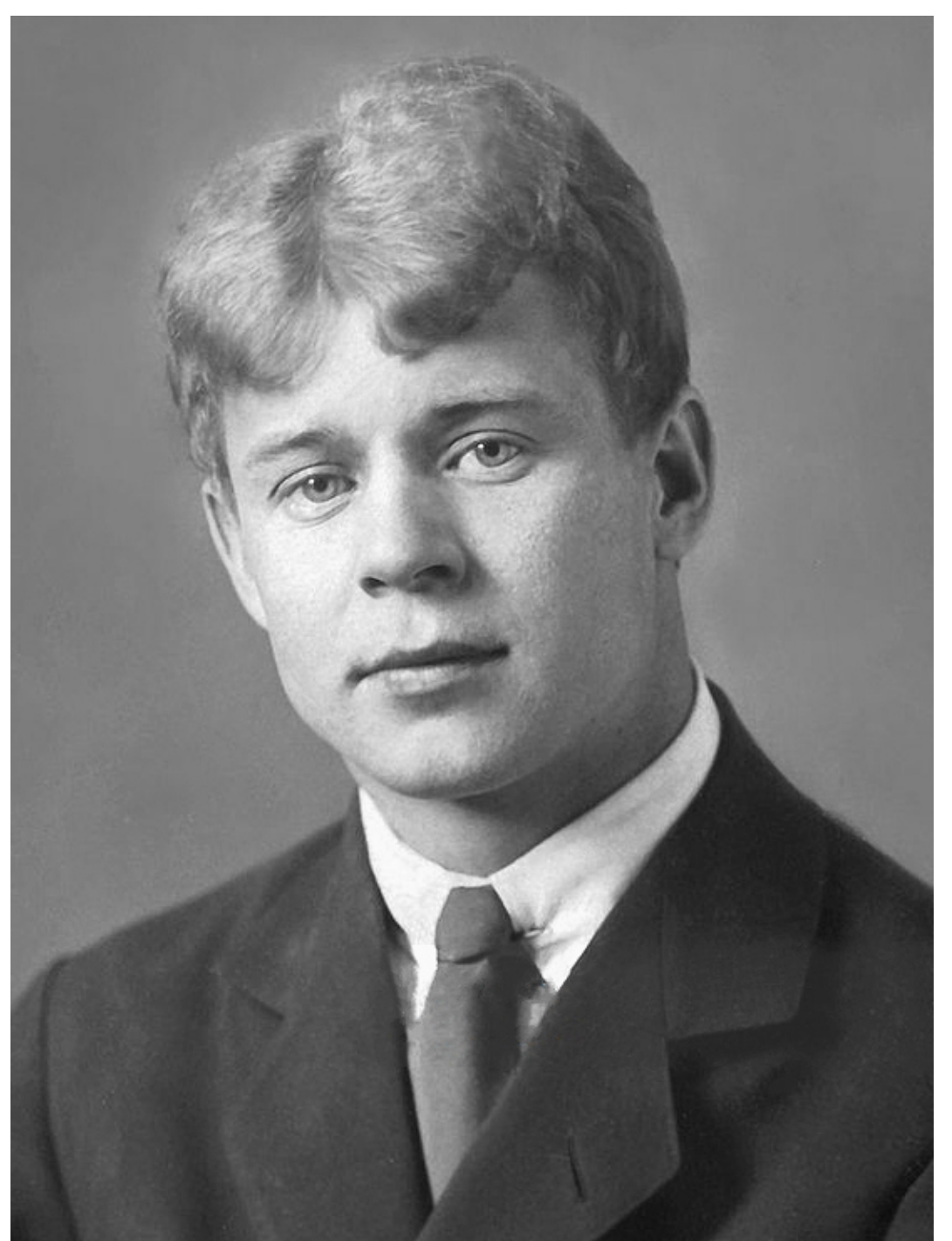




Using MAPRR (Mapping Imagined  
Geographies of Revolutionary Russia) in  
the Undergraduate Literature Classroom:  
Esenin, Russia, and Rus'

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The course: A senior-level undergraduate literary seminar and survey of Russian literature.

The students are majoring or minoring in Russian.

The fall-semester course covers prerevolutionary literature. In Fall 2021, I will be using MAPRR in “Russia, Rus’, and Rodina: National Identity in Pre-Revolutionary Russian Literature.”

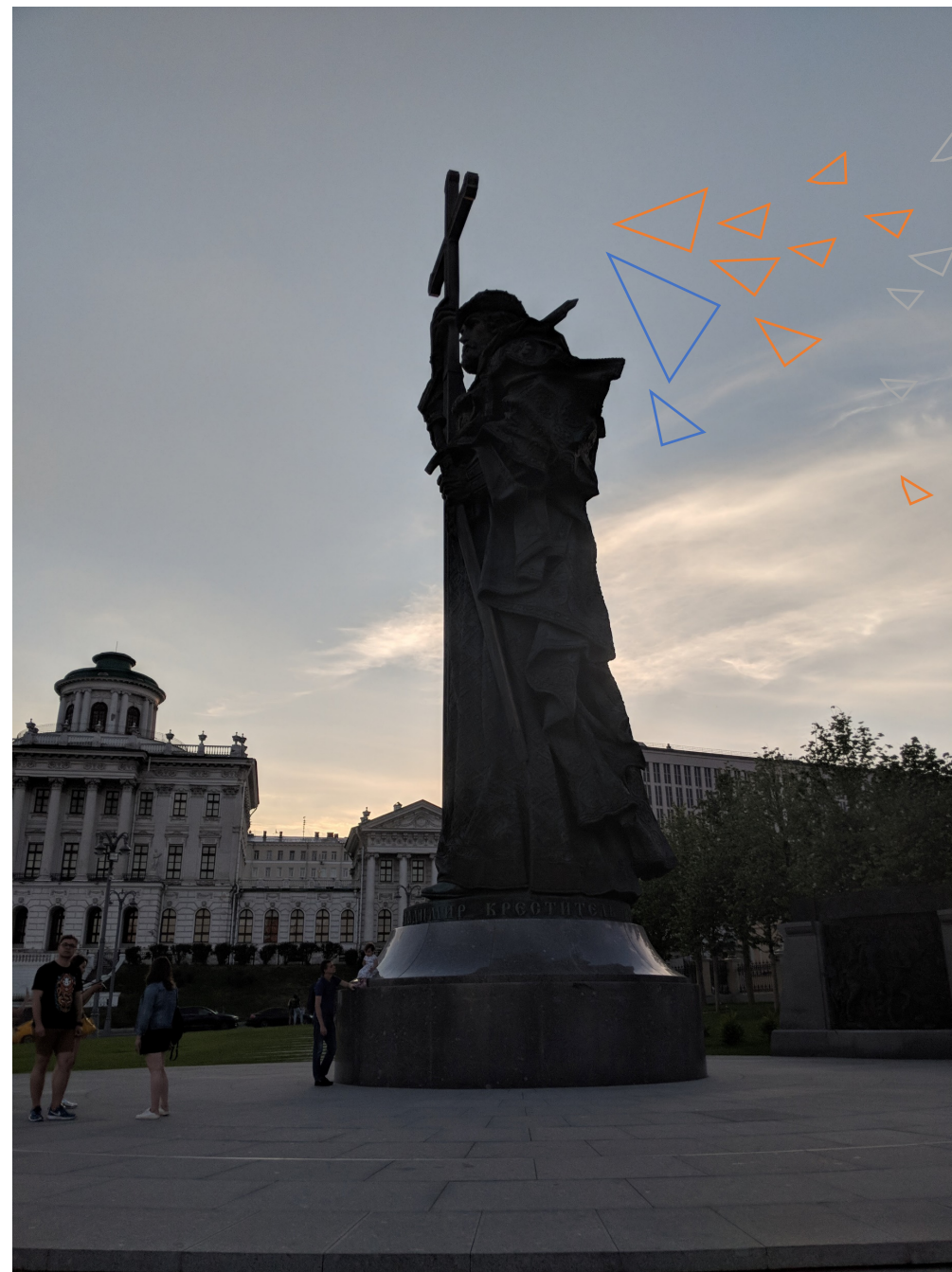
Students read shorter works in the Russian and longer works in English translation. Course discussion and lectures are in both languages.

Although the course is a literature survey, I incorporate film, music, art, and food into the course.



The context: After a discussion of the Moscow monument to Vladimir (2016), we will read early works set in Rus' (byliny, *the Primary Chronicle*, *The Lay of Igor's Campaign*) and will then discuss how 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century authors envision concepts of Rus', Russia, Russianness, and the homeland [rodina] and how these concepts evolve. We will pay special attention to the geographical space that the homeland occupies.

We will conclude the course on the cusp of the October Revolution with Esenin and will use MAPRR to identify the meaning of these concepts in his poetry.





Prior to day 1:  
Watch a video on Canvas that I will have  
prerecorded and posted.

Learn vocabulary needed for  
«Гой ты, Русь, моя родная».

Objectives of the module:

To familiarize students with Esenin's poetry  
through a dynamic medium.

To enable students to visualize the lasting  
significance of the concept of Rus'.

To introduce students to MAPRR and to  
prompt them to think about how digital  
humanities can deepen our understanding  
of target material, in this case, Russian  
geography, imagined space, and  
conceptualization of the homeland and the  
meanings of "Rus'."



Day 1:  
Vocab quiz.  
Introduction to Esenin  
Read «Гой ты, Русь, моя родная» at home

Although I will have introduced the site in a video posted to Canvas, I imagine that most students will need additional help navigating the site. At this point, I will include instructions to help the students find the specific work:

<http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/authors>.

“Go to the ‘Authors’ tab to find the index of authors → scroll down to Esenin → open Esenin's author page and find «Гой ты, Русь, моя родная» in the list of his works.

## Mapping Imagined Geographies of Revolutionary Russia 1914-1922

Home Agents Authors Place Based Concepts PBC Components Works Locations Multivalent Markers Analysis

View Information About This Work Display Textual Elements ▾

### PBC 204: LOVE OF HOMELAND

- Русь [mm339]
- родину [mm346]

### PBC 249: LOVE OF HOMELAND

- Русь [mm339]

### PBC 26: YEARNING FOR PARADISE

- раю [mm375]
- рая [mm375]

Сергей Есенин  
Untitled

Гой ты, Русь, моя родная,  
Хаты - в ризах образа...  
Не видать конца и края -  
Только синь сосет глаза.

Как захожий богомолец,  
Я смотрю твои поля.  
А у низеньких околиц  
Звонно чахнут тополя.

Пахнет яблоком и медом  
По церквам твой кроткий Спас.  
И гудит за корогодом  
На лугах веселый пляс.

Day 2:

Read «Гой ты, Русь, моя родная» together in class.

Discuss how Esenin is constructing his Rus' and which literary devices he uses.

Look at Esenin and the poem together on MAPRR, noting place-based concepts and multivalent markers.

Find definition of Place-based concepts here:  
[http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/place\\_based\\_concepts](http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/place_based_concepts)

Find definition of multivalent markers here:  
[http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/multivalent\\_markers](http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/multivalent_markers)



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И гудит за корогодом  
На лугах веселый пляс.

## Homework:

Go to multivalent marker 339 "Rus" and scroll down to Esenin.

Choose two poems published in 1917 or before and sign up for them in our canvas discussion.

Provide written responses to the following questions for the next class period:

What place based concepts are associated with Rus'?

Are the words "Russia," "Russian," or "homeland" [Rodina] included in the poems?

If so, what placed-based concepts are associated with them?

Are there other multivalent markers or place based concepts you would like to discuss in class?



### Mapping Imagined Geographies of Revolutionary Russia 1914-1922

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#### Русь (Rus)

##### Basic Information

###### Terms

- Russian Term: Русь
- English Term: Rus

##### Textual Data

- [Esenin, Goi ty, Rus', moia rodnaia...](#)
- [Esenin, Ia pokinul rodimyi dom...](#)
- [Esenin, Inoniia](#)
- [Esenin, Khuligan](#)
- [Esenin, Kobyl'i korabli](#)
- [Esenin, Na pletniakh visiat baranki...](#)
- [Esenin, Ne rugaites'! Takoe delo...](#)
- [Esenin, O Rus', vzmakhni krylam...](#)
- [Esenin, O pashni, pashni, pashni...](#)
- [Esenin, O veriu, veriu, schast'e est'...](#)
- [Esenin, Oktoikh](#)
- [Esenin, Otchar'](#)

Day 3: (third to the last meeting of the semester)

Based on homework assignments, what conclusions can we draw as a class about what Rus' means to Esenin?

Anything about Russia and homeland?

Reflecting on the course as a whole: how does Esenin's poetry show continuity or a departure from other works we read?

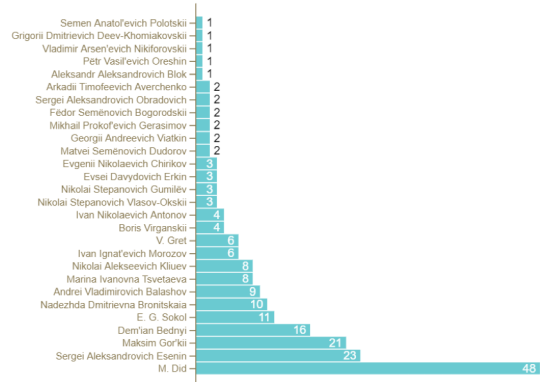
Go to the Rus' multivalent marker (339): [http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/multivalent\\_markers/339](http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/multivalent_markers/339)

Together, we will scroll down to the visualization graph related to Rus' to get a sense of the frequency of "Rus'."



Visualizations:

Instances by Author





Go to the Rus' multivalent marker (339):  
[http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/multivalent\\_markers/339](http://maprr.iath.virginia.edu/multivalent_markers/339)

After looking at the visualization graph and thinking about how prevalent Rus' is in Esenin's work, we will look for other authors whom the students might recognize or who refer to Rus' relatively frequently.

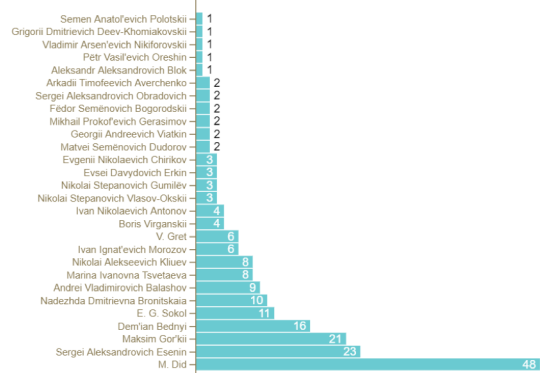
Then we will scroll back up to choose authors together.—perhaps based on frequency—or Blok or Gorky, whom some of the students will remember from our 20<sup>th</sup> century survey.

We will look at some of the PBCs associated with Rus' in these authors' poems.



Visualizations:

Instances by Author



Follow-up assignment:  
50% of the student's final exam

After looking at the PBCs as a class, explore three that differ from Esenin's PBCs in more depth.

Were there several authors, one author, or many authors who published works using these PBCs?

Read a poem related to each PBC—note words that authors use to describe Rus.

When were these works written?

What did you learn about the authors from MAPRR?

Come to some conclusions about what Rus might mean more broadly in 1914-1924.



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### PBC 71: DREAD OF ANARCHY

- Россия [mm337]

### PBC 5: MOCKERY OF TSARISM

- Святую Русь [mm339]

Александр Блок  
«Двенадцать»

1  
Черный ветер.  
Белый снег.  
Ветер, ветер!  
На ногах не стоит человек.  
Ветер, ветер —  
На всем Божьем свете!  
Завивает ветер  
Белый снежок.  
Под снежком — ледок.  
Скользко, тяжело,  
Всякий ходок  
Скользит — ах, бедняжка!