The article deals with antique motives in Valeriy Yakovlevich Bryusov’s lyrics. Poems which embody the ancient events and ideas are analyzed in the research. Particular attention is paid to the heroic images and motives, their functions and methods of creation. The role of ancient traditions and motives in the formation of the poet’s individual style and the paradigm of Russian symbolism is defined.

Throughout his creative work Bryusov successfully mastered different cultural layers which were integrated into his lyric and, transformed by the power of poetic vision, became the key features of his individual style. The problem of artistic synthesis in the writer’s works has been the study subject of many scientists (Dmitriy Maximov, Konstantin Motschulsky, Nikolai Burlakov, Nikolai Ashukhin).

However, this issue has not been entirely resolved in literary studies. In this connection, it is necessary to consider in more detail the methods and forms of development of ancient motives in Bryusov’s works. This determines the relevance of this study.

A distinctive feature of Bryusov’s poetry was the engagement of historical images and events for creation of heroic images opposed to modernity. Evidence of this interest in the distant past are the cycles «Любимцы веков», «Баллады», «Правда вечная кумиров», «Властительные тени» and other. Bryusov’s historical images are closely related to his pursuit of heroic characters, vivid passions, saturated with intensive meaning of life. He turned to the issue of national culture at various times, trying to express his understanding of the essence of «national life. He turned to the issue of national culture at various times, trying to express his understanding of the essence of «national life. He turned to the issue of national culture at various times, trying to express his understanding of the essence of «national life. He turned to the issue of national culture at various times, trying to express his understanding of the essence of «national life.

Bryusov had “antique passions” throughout his life. The poet had constant interest in the antiquity; for him antiquity had some magical power through which the real was perceived transfigured. And it was, of course, more profound.

Studying Bryusov’s creative work, we could trace antique motives from his early poetry to the late period of his literary activity.

History did not lead him away from real world; it rather brought him closer to it, deepened and explained it. The revival of interest to “эпохи перелома”, centuries and millennia changing, was due to the writer’s realization of destruction of the passing away values, feeling of “the end of the world”, eschatological mood and the need to find a way out and gain new ideals.

The poet tried to find salvation in distant past and for that purpose took a rich collection of ancient images, motives, themes from the antiquity. In his poems many mythological and historical images are used: Orpheus and Eurydice, Odyssey and Calypso, Theseus and Ariadne, Jason and Medea, Hero and Leander, Aeneas, Kirk, Helen, Garmody and Aristogiton, Alexander, Antony and Cleopatra, Julius Caesar and Brutus Pompeii, Caracalla, Nero, etc. All of these are symbolic names personifying good and evil, vices and virtues, victories and defeats, democracy and tyranny, civilization and barbarity.

Bryusov did not accept vulgarity and prosaic “midway” of reality and for that reason he tried to “compensate” the absence of greatness with his heroic figures, glorifying true heroes: great patriots and fighters for homeland (“Гарibalдь”, “Завет Святословава”). The writer poeticized not only high, human qualities of his characters, but sometimes even completely different qualities. In a number of poems Bryusov glorified figures of proud and lonely, violent and cold individualist characters. They are detached from the nation («Даите»), sometimes deeply despise it («Мойсей»), violate their civil duty in the name of anger, proud, etc.) in whom symbolist motives – loneliness found reflection, sincere suffering, alienation, etc. Some of these characters were associated with spiritual decline modern to the poet of society, with moods of disappointment and moral crisis.

Keywords: lyrics, subject, motive, image, tradition, anthology, innovation.
нное существование, лениво передвигаться по жизни от скуки до тоски, не видеть ярых красок – грустно. Поэту снятся “северные владыки”, времена викингов, войны и борьба; даже “дикие крики” предпочтительнее медленного шевеления в пыли” [5, p. 41]. Offering the editor of “Вопросы жизни” journal his poems, Brusov said: “Это античные образы, оживленные, однако, современной душой” [2, p. 767].

Brusov’s focus on the “old centuries” had a great importance in his poetry. A lot of his poems are completely anthropological, that is built upon materials of ancient cultures. However, antiquity and modernity were closely integrated in the poet’s artistic perception/consciousness. In the article “В.Я. Брюсов” (1924) [11, p. 140-141] D.P. Sviatopolk-Mirsky revealed a mixture of an ancient myth and modern mythologies in the poem “Тезей и Ариадна” (1904). In Theseus’ speech to Ariadne the main plot motives of a Greek myth are reproduced (Daedalus, Labyrinth, Minotaur). The two last lines (“the author’s notes”) are full of symbols:

«И над водною могилой
В отчий край, где ждет Этей,
Векот черные ветрила –
Крылья вестника скорбей.
А над спящей Ариадной
Слово сонная мечта,
Бог в короне виноградной
Клонит страстные уста». [3, p. 390]

In the poems of cycles “Любимцы веков” (“Третья Стража” collection), “Правда вечная кумиров” (“Венок” collection), “Властственные тени” (“Зеркало теней” collection), “В маске” (“Семь цветов радуги” collection) stories, known in history and in culture are developed. For example, the biblical legend of Adam and Eve, the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, a well-known episode of Anthony and Cleopatra. These texts often contain characteristics of people of the ancient world, drawn in many cases as their monologues. However, this characteristic is often saturated with some contemporary matter as well.

The boundaries of the poetic world of the past created by Bryusov are broad. He raised the culture of the ancient East, the myths of Greece and Rome, the Scandinavian epos. The contrast between the high level of civilization and inevitable decline attracted him in particular. The poet’s interest in antiquity, especially in the era of ruin of the ancient times, was obviously based on the mental crisis of the modern era. In understanding the patterns of history Brusov went his own way, he was attracted not by mystical and religious aspects of ancient culture, but by its heroic ideals. In his creative work there is pathos of history and the idea of the mankind moving forward through disasters of all centuries.

Describing the tragic destiny of ancient civilizations’ people, V. Brusov was looking for analogies with modernity in the destinies of those people. He always compared modern life and the modern world with ancient civilizations.

Critic, theorist of literature and a close friend of V. Brusov, M. Voloshin repeatedly reported on his work: «Мне памятна одна беседа с В. Брюсовым... Один области прошлого раскрылись, а другие замкнулись, – сказал В. Брюсов. – Египет мне совершенно чужд. А вот Ассирия очень близка. Совершенно закрыт для меня мир Библии. Из этой области я не написал ни одного стихотворения... Для меня. Рим ближе всего. Даже Греция близка лишь постольку, поскольку она отразилась в Риме» [6].

V. Brusov often drew parallels between characters of ancient and modern world, introducing in his poems the names of gods, kings, commanders and other strong personalities. The poet was attracted by strong characters given not only with distinction, human valuable qualities. There are poems, in which he poetized the proud and cold, angry, furious indifferent to people or dispose them heroes and mythological figures. Those are the king Assargardon, Bajazet, the spirit of darkness Loki, a bloodthirsty Medea, deprived by Brusov of those human feelings, which Euripides saw in her, Swedish martial king Carl XII, cruel and sophisticated Roman dictator Sulla. These characters were raised over bourgeois civilization aesthetically, in brightness and power, but they were not certainly opposed to it by its fullness of spiritual nature [8, c. 94]. V. Bryusov was always looking for answers for the difficult questions of existence in the ancient world.

In 1901, Gorky wrote to Brusov, trying to awake in young talented poet the desire to join the protest of Russian intellectuals against the autocratic government despotism: «Если вас, сударь, интересуют не одни Ассаргадоновы надписи да Клеопатры и прочие старые вещи, если вы любите человека – Вы меня, надо думать, поймете <…> Вы, мне кажется, могли бы хорошо заступиться за угнетаемого человека, вот что» [7, c. 152-153]. However the Brusov’s protest against modernity was expressed in other ways – through a retrospect.

In a cycle of poems «Правда веченная кумиров» the beautiful characters are depicted – ancient figures, carved of brilliant marble words. The poet serves as the sculptor of artistic speech: his characters are figurable like the ancient bas-reliefs. «Идолы» of the poet are before the readers: Demeter, Orpheus and Eurydice, Medea, Theseus and Ariadne, Achilles, Orpheus and the Argonauts, Cleopatra and Antony.

From the impressive expression of the dialogue, «Adam and Eve» dialogue, and the same dialogic poem of Orpheus and Eurydice V. Brusov moved to specific history figures. And in all that variety of themes the single principle was felt – the motive of willful craving, pride, strength, valour and promethean revolt.

The cross-cutting motive of the cycle is the motive of permanence, eternal passion constancy, which is the same for slaves and Pompeian, for Antony and Cleopatra and for Adam and Eve, and for the northern Loki, and for the heroes of Greek mythology. In «Третья страха» the main poet’s idea was to identify the most common in of Brusov’s opinion, moments of world history [10].

Some other heroes of the cycle should be noted, they are Clytemnestra and Faust, they are not commanders or government leader, but they are strong personalities, possessing an unusual temperament. V. Brusov believes that very passionate
personalities are equal to great historical figures in their inner strength.

Clytemnestra, the sister of the Spartan Queen Helena (according to the one of the myth variants, they both were the daughters of Zeus), the wife of the Argos king Agamemnon (Atrides, son of Atreus), who is the Greeks leader in the Trojan War. At the beginning of the campaign, Agamemnon sacrificed to the gods his daughter Iphigenia. During the absence of her husband Clytemnestra became closer with Egist, who according to her feelings killed Agamemnon on the day of his return. Clytemnestra tried to justify herself in matricide telling that was a revenge for her daughter Iphigenia.

N. S. Burlakov wrote in the monograph «Valeriy Brusov. Creative essay» (1975) that «poet продолжает считать тему сильной страсти высшей темой поэзии. Рисуя неукротимую в своих стремлениях человеческую личность, V. Brysov не ставит перед собой задачи полного, всестороннего изображения героя: он выделяет в человеческом характере лишь одну черту и доводит ее до апогея» [5, с. 144].

The passion does not calm down in Clytemnestra’s soul. Envy to Helen, because of which the Trojan War took place, where Atrides was killed, makes the young widow embittered and hate, and the poet justified the impulsion of his heroine: «Сестра царит в надменной Трое, Сестре – немолчный гимн времен... А я – отвержена, забвена, Мне – прялка, вдовья участь мне...»[4, с. 71-72]

Using the method of «poetic reconstruction» of the poet «enlivens» the characters of Hellas, giving them a modern features (Orpheus, Eurydice, Odysseus, Calypso, Ariadne, Theseus, Jason, Medea, Daedalus, Icarus, and others.).

In the Silver Age significant moves were made in studying and recreation the Hellenistic poetry colouring, in this respect in Russian literature the richest experience was accumulated and stable traditions were created. And Bryusov’s contribution in this area was huge: the stylistic decision in themes and characters development he found, was adopted in the modernist poetry of the 1900s, and he grand in intention cycle «Sny chelovechesvta» (1909-1911) became the unique without any analogues in the world of poetry [8, с. 28-29].

V. Bryusov dreamed of creating a poetry anthology «Sny chelovechesvta », in which he would include the ancient poets of India, China, Japan, Persia. All of these countries, their history and culture, he studied in his youth and in the end he decided to embody his grand intention of creading a book entitled «Sny chelovechesvta».

In the draft manuscript of the planned book cover, its name is: «Sny chelovechesvta. Liricheskii otstavleniya vseh stran,vseh narodov vseh vremen» . In the first draft of the foreword to the supposed publication he outlined his task as following: «Пред-