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ON IDEOLOGICAL AND AESTHETIC PROGRAM OF "HERALD OF LITERATURE AND ART" OF NIKOLAY ADONTS*

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Among the first literary-and-art magazines of the late XIX – early XX centuries, which had played a noticeable role in nurturing aesthetic tastes of educated Armenians, one should name "Բանբեր գրականության և արվեստի [Herald of Literature and Art]" (Saint-Petersburg, 1903-1904) under the editorship of the outstanding Armenian historian and philologist Nikolay Adonts (Nikoghayos Ter-Avetikyan, 1871-1942).

The ideological and aesthetic program of "Herald" was of a pronounced decadent nature, and this was declared both in the editor's introductory note, signed by Nikolay Adonts, and in his article "Literary Essays: Decadence and Symbolism". The same position was also held by the anonymous commentator of the art album, concluding the magazine, where, along with the works of such masters of Western European and Russian visual art as Dante-Gabriel Rossetti, Eugene Carriere, Arnold Böklin, Franz Stuck, Hans Thoma, Friedrich Kaulbach, Leon Bakst and others, paintings by Armenian artists were reproduced as well. However, only the works of E. Carriere's pupil Arminia Babayan and F. Kaulbach's pupil Vardges Surenyants could stand the proximity to the Europeans. Vardges Surenyants participated in selecting illustrations for "Herald", too, giving preference to the Munich school of Jugendstil, with the early examples of which he had become acquainted in his student years in the Bavarian capital. The same spirit of Munich Jugendstil marked the graphic design of the magazine.

The ideological and aesthetic program of Nikolay Adonts's "Herald" was close to a number of foreign and Russian art editions, such as "La Revue blanche" and "Art et décoration" in France, "Pan", "Jugend", "Ver Sacrum", "Insel" in Germany and Austria, "The Yellow Book" in England and particularly – "Mir iskusstva [World of Art]", coming out in Saint-Petersburg from 1898. It ceased to exist in 1904, the same year as Nikolay Adonts's magazine.

Key words: Armenian art press, Nikolay Adonts, "Herald of Literature and Art", Saint-Petersburg, decadence, symbolism, visual arts.

Introduction

In the late XIX and early XX centuries, following quite a few socio-political and Armenological newspapers and magazines of a wide scope, in various countries

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across the world, in areas with high concentrations of Armenians or in active centers of national culture (Tiflis, Constantinople, Moscow, Saint-Petersburg, Venice, Vienne, Paris, etc.), the first literary-and-art newspapers, weeklies and magazines in the Armenian language or sometimes bilingual came out, such as "Araks", "Geghuni", "Ardzaganq", "Taraz", "Zvartnots", "Kochnak", "Husharar", "Mehyan", "Byuzandion", "Shant", "Gegharvest", "Tzaghik", "Anahit", "Krunk", and several others, which mostly contained black-and-white, monochrome and, in individual instances, color reproductions.

A conspicuous role in formation of the Armenian art press, in nurturing and orientating the aesthetic tastes of educated Armenians played, among others, the Armenian-language "Herald of Literature and Art" («Բանքեր գրականության և արվեստի») magazine, published in Saint-Petersburg under the editorship of the outstanding Armenian historian and philologist Nikolay Adonts (Nikoghayos Ter-Avetikyan, 1871-1942).

Unlike such relatively long-standing magazines, as "Araks", "Anahit", "Geghuni" or "Gegharvest", "Herald" did not live long. It was a semi-annual edition, and as such, is only remembered by two books, the first of which came out in mid-1903, and the second – in the beginning of 1904. Thereafter, the magazine ceased to exist.

Presentation of the basic material

"Herald of Literature and Art" was supposed to consist of three sections, equal in value and length: literary, literary critical and arts. Yet eventually, mostly due to the scarcity of sufficient amount of materials in the editorial portfolio and the lack of professional literature and art critics among the staff and correspondents, the last issue of "Herald" proved to be not so informative. Limited by the framework of visual arts, it reached the readers as a small "appendix" – a humble album of blackand-white reproductions with brief annotations.

The section of literature looked more impressive¹. The oeuvre of Eastern and Western Armenian poets, prose writers and playwrights was presented by the names of Rafael Patkanyan, Arpiar Arpiaryan, Ioannes Ioannisyan, Avetis Aharonyan, Hovhannes Tumanyan, Levon Shant, Yervand Otyan, Ruben Zardaryan, Avetik Isahakyan, Vahan Teqeyan, Siamanto and others; in the literary critical section, along with Nikolay Adonts's article on contemporary literature of Western Armenians, the same author shared his thoughts on the problems of Armenian writing rules, actual to date. "Herald" also published literature, translated from German and French into Armenian, such as Hans Bethge's and Henry de Regnier's novels, Albert Samain's selected sonnets.

¹ The content of the literary and literary critical sections of the magazine are presented in detail in the article of the historian of Armenian periodic press, PhD in Philology Margo Mkhitaryan "«Բանբեր գրականության և արվեստի» հանդեսը" [6, p. 107-120], while the art section of "Herald" is touched in passing.

The ideological and aesthetic program of the magazine was of a pronounced decadent nature, and this was clearly declared both in the editorial introductory note, signed by Nikolay Adonts, and his own article "Literary Essays: Decadence and Symbolism". Speaking from the standpoint of neo-romanticism and the aesthetics of neo-idealism, Nikolay Adonts regarded excessive intellectualism and "common sense", i.e. positivist consciousness as the major flaw of contemporary literature. "Positivist worldview', he wrote, 'having perked up on the crest of the unprecedented progress of natural and applied sciences, has corroded the foundations of ideality, cut off the threads, connecting us with "the heavens", in full confidence that the surrounding world is an abode not for flesh only, but also for spirit, and that common sense has nothing to do with abstract metaphysical issues... Yet there are questions, which require satisfactory answers. We need to know about the essence and meaning of life, about the mystery of death, about the prime cause and expedience of the world. These questions are whispered into our ears by reason itself, and reason itself evades answering, thereby admitting own impotency" [2, p. 157].

In Nikolay Adonts's opinion, literature and art can get out of the captivity of "common sense" and restore the destroyed bonds with "the heavens" only through preaching individualism and subjectivism, by way of denying intellectual (rational, governed by reason) understanding of the world and substituting it with intuitive, i. e. utterly "disinterested" creative contemplation. As the main object of his criticism, he declared literary-aesthetic school of "naturalism and positivism", thereby doubting the theory of mimesis as such. He followed neo-romanticists and symbolists in claiming that creation is not imitation of life, since it speaks about something "that does not exist". Identifying the aesthetics of positivism with the method of artistic realism, the editor of "Herald" opposed to them the aesthetics of decadence and the method of symbolization of the artistic image.

From the same position of struggling against not only academic naturalism, but the realism of Gustave Courbet and the theory of imitation as a whole, for the freedom of creative imagination, for the impressionistic perception and symbolistic interpretation of nature spoke also an anonymous author (possibly, Nikolay Adonts himself?) of the above mentioned explanatory notes to the art album of the magazine. Along with this, as guiding examples, he pointed out the oeuvre of English pre-Raphaelites, French "followers of Edouard Manet", and the large group of international artists (from Alfred Agache to James Whistler), who, although worked in different manners from salon academism to impressionism and Art Nouveau, still pursued a common goal – to break with the traditions of "banal realism" and begin creating in accordance with the mysterious and exciting "soul of music", on which Arthur Schopenhauer reflected and which inspired Paul Verlaine's poetic genius.

² This calls to mind the well-known lines of one of the iconic figures of the Russian literary decadence Zinaida Gippius, "I want what does not exist in the world, what does not exist…"

"Herald's" art critic sounded particularly complimental about such masters of Western European and Russian visual arts as Dante-Gabriel Rossetti, Eugene Carriere, Arnold Böklin, Franz Stuck, Hans Thoma, Friedrich Kaulbach, Leon Bakst and others, who, he thought, most consistently and distinctively marked the traits of decadent, predominantly pessimistic world perception in their oeuvre, even though next to the above named artists, not only neo-impressionist Henry Martin or the Spanish neo-romanticist Ignacio Zuloaga were named, but also Peredvizhnik Nikolay Bogdanov-Belsky, who had "slipped into" this company in some mysterious way.

Compared to the Europeans' works, the Armenian section looked much more eclectic. The works of Emmanuil Mahdesyan and Arsen Shabanyan - seascapes and views in romantic moods, painted in a rather traditional manner, somewhat influenced by I. Aivazovsky - did not imply any "excessive meaning", so typical for symbolistic poetics and aesthetics. Manuil (Emmanuil) Alajalov's painting - a melancholic autumnal landscape, bringing forth associations with Isaac Levitan's canvases - was also far from decadent world perception. The lucid, impressionistic by its freshness female portrait in Yeghishe Tadevosyan's landscape lined up with "Autumn Bouquet" by Ilya Repin, or with the well-known portrait of Maria Simonovich by Valentin Serov. Panos Terlemezyan's student study of a nude figure seemed completely out of place there. So were Edgar Shahin's etchings, not fitting either in the figurative, or in the stylistic stream of symbolism. Their appearance on the pages of the decadence-prone magazine could be only vaguely explained by the fact that, in the second book of "Herald", next to Nikol Aghbalyan's review of Avetik Isahakyan's collection of poems, the French writer, poet and art critic Gabriel Murray's translated from English article about the Armenian etcher was published [1, p. 199-203].

Among the Armenian "exhibits" in the magazine, only the works by Eugene Carriere's pupil Arminia Babayan (married name Carbonelle) and Friedrich Kaulbach's pupil Vardges Surenyants could stand the proximity to the Europeans. Arminia Babayan's "Woman Reading" (Yeghishe Tadevosyan's painting was named similarly) was first shown at the exhibition of National Society of Fine Arts in Paris (1903) and was a success. If not for the signature under the reproduction, it could be easily confused with her maître Eugene Carriere's works, placed close by: the same subdued darkish color, the same immersed in gloomy dusk interior, the same blurred outlines of an almost fleshless figure of the dressed in dark woman, the same atmosphere of a profound, meaningful silence, which imbues the works of Carriere and many other symbolist artists.

Vardges Surenyants's works – the triptych "White Castle" (based on Firdousi's poem "Rostam and Sohrab") and diptych with the faces of Christian maidens, virgin martyrs Hripsimeh and Gayaneh, albeit devoid of a symbolistic subtext, nonetheless were resolved up to the canons of the Jugendstil, favored by decadents; this was apparent first of all in the character of the employed manner of artistic stylization and deliberate aestheticization of the formal language.

The scarcity of identical works in the Armenian section of "Herald's" art album was due to the belated and rather faint interest in the stylistics of decadence and the poetics of symbolism in Armenian visual arts in the middle and the second half of the 1900s. Let's remember Harutyun Shishmanyan's "Nocturne", Yeghishe Tadevosyan's series of pictorial sonnets, Martiros Saryan's "Fairy Tales and Dreams", Avagim Mihanajyan's oriental phantasies, Vahram Gaifejyan's decorative compositions...

As for Vardges Surenyants, his collaboration with the magazine of Nikolay Adonts did not confine just to sending in "business cards". There are reasons to believe that he personally took part in making the art album of "Herald", and in doing this, clearly gave preference to Munich Jugendstil, with the early examples of which he had become acquainted in his student years in the Bavarian capital. This is no coincidence that, in the editorial note to the second, concluding book of the magazine, none but Surenyants was recommended as future head of the art section, which could hardly happen even if "Herald" continued to be published further. In fact, Vardges Surenyants left Petersburg for Moscow in 1904 on the invitation of the founder of the Art Theater Konstantin Stanislavsky to do the stage design to one-act plays by the Belgian symbolist Maurice Maeterlinck. A characteristic detail: addressing Surenyants's stage set for the play "The Blinds", a contemporary researcher wrote that the artist "created a generalized symbolistic image of nature", and that "the feeling of emptiness and loneliness he strived to render through... a combination of natural corporeality of individual forms with conditional decorative monumentality in the spirit of Munich Jugendstil" [7, p. 228].

In the same vein of Munich Jugendstil, the design of "Herald" was carried out. There were no head ornaments or vignettes in the magazine; the entire artistic decoration was placed on the cover page, where, through an intricate cobweb of lines, in the whimsical pattern of floral forms one could trace a stylized female image. Executed in the technique of three-color xylography engraving, this typical example of graphical Jugendstil resembles other known to us experiments of Vardges Surenyants in the field of book design, in particular, Alexander Tsaturyan's collection of verses, Oscar Wilde's philosophical fairy tales, the French aestheticist and art critic Robert Cizerin's book on contemporary English painting, music collections of Alexander Spendiaryan and Romanos Melikyan, collected works of Selma Lagerlef, etc.

Incidentally, a recent graduate of the Petersburg Academy of Arts, refined connoisseur of art and gifted draftsman Garegin Levonyan could have been involved in the design of "Herald", too. At all events, it is worth paying attention to the illustrated literary-and-art magazine "Գեղարվեստ" ("Art"), founded by him in Tiflis in 1908, whose design was performed in the same manner of stylized graphic art.

Interestingly, in the very first issue of his magazine, in the survey article "Armenian Art Press Before «Gegharvest»", Levonyan spoke very respectfully about Nikolay Adonts's magazine. "By its literary merits," he wrote, "Herald" stood

incomparably higher than "Araks", yet, despite this, it did not find friendly reception from readers. It had not been understood. Its symbolistic orientation, its illustrations proved to be beyond the public's comprehension, who had a better appreciation of images of churches and architectural ruins" [5, p. 84].

Garegin Levonyan's article is worth attention not only because it reveals the author's acquaintance with Nikolay Adonts's magazine, but also because it points out the exact causes for such a short existence of "Herald" – insufficiency of funds and conservatism of the readers' artistic tastes. Nikolay Adonts's editorial, which opens the second book of the magazine, is quite eloquent about miscomprehension of the ideological, aesthetical and literary policy of "Herald" by the majority of subscribers. In response to their objections and negative feedback, Nikolay Adonts brings up the following arguments: "Our artistic views..., our tastes arise from the art we have seen and which is habitual for us. When artists enter the arena, who wish to express something new, their artwork cannot be judged by traditional measures. It is not tastes that give birth to art, but art educates tastes. One should not confuse creation for the public with high art..." [3].

In the quoted statement, Garegin Levonyan juxtaposes Nikolay Adonts's magazine with "Araks" – yet another art edition in Armenian, which came out in Saint-Petersburg in 1887-1898 under the editorship of Simon Gulamiryan. It is noteworthy that, despite the equally high level of the printing quality and artistic design of "Herald" and "Araks"³, there was a deep fundamental difference between them. Unlike decadent "Herald", "Araks" held the standpoint of neo-classicism and "academic realism", publicizing the oeuvre of both the Old European Masters (like Correggio or Murillo), and the representatives of pseudoclassic art – Nathaniel Sichel, Eduard Bisson, Josef Ober, Franz Lefler, and others.

Conclusion

By its ideological and aesthetic program, Nikolay Adonts's magazine had no precedents in Armenian reality, but instead, it was close to quite a number of foreign art editions of the late XIX – early XX centuries, such as "La Revue blanche" and "Art et décoration" in France, "Pan", "Jugend", "Ver Sacrum", "Insel" in Germany and Austria, "The Yellow Book" in England, and the like. However, the closest analogue of "Herald" was the organ of the representatives of Russian modern art – "Mir iskusstva" – under the editorship of Sergey Dyagilev and

³ The academic journal "Bazmavep", the organ of the Mekhitarist Armenian Catholic Congregation in Venice, along with other Armenian editions responded to the tenth anniversary of "Araks" and, having expressed their regret about the possible cessation due to financial reasons, wrote that the printing level of S. Gulamiryan's magazine "is not only unequalled in the Armenian press, but can rival the most luxurious European editions". Further on, to confirm what was said, "Bazmavep" cited "The Echo" of London, which it says that "Araks", "distinguished by high artistic taste and progressive line of thought, is an equal to the first-class western magazines" [quoted from: 4, 14].

Alexander Benua. It came out in Saint-Petersburg from 1898 and ceased to exist in 1904, i. e. concurrently with the Armenian magazine. The principal cause of closure of these magazines was, in our view, neither the financial collapse, nor the conservative attitude of the reading public, but the overall crisis of decadent mentality in Russia due to the just started Russo-Japanese War and closeness of the First Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution of 1905. The ideals of pure aestheticism and art, fenced from life with dead walls and "ivory towers", had lost their actuality even among their recent followers. True, in the second half of the 1900s, the ideals still did sprout and bear fruit, but they were fed by the more liberal Moscow, not Saint-Petersburg artistic milieu. Whatever, there, too, they exhausted themselves pretty soon, since the rushing era of machine civilization, instead of whispers and sobs and aesthetic gormandize, demanded form art "noise and fury", onslaught and pressure. The first cinema theaters were opening, the first beats of jazz were being played, the first automobiles were rushing along the streets of large cities, the first aeroplanes were taking to the sky, Picasso was already making himself at home in Paris, and Marinetti was drafting the theses of the futuristic manifest...

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ՆԻԿՈՂԱՅՈՍ ԱԴՈՆՑԻ «ԲԱՆԲԵՐ ԳՐԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ԱՐՎԵՍՏԻ» ՀԱՆԴԵՍԻ ԳԱՂԱՓԱՐԱԿԱՆ ՈՒ ԳԵՂԱԳԻՏԱԿԱՆ ԾՐԱԳՐԻ ՄԱՍԻՆ*

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Հղման համար. Աղասյան, Արարատ։ «Նիկողայոս Ադոնցի «Բանբեր գրականության և արվեստի» հանդեսի գաղափարական ու գեղագիտական ծրագրի մասին»։ *Արվեստագիտական հանդես*, N 1 (2022)։ 179-188. DOI: 10.54503/2579-2830-2022.1(7)-179

XIX դարի վերջում և XX դարասկզբին երևան եկած ու կրթված հայության գեղագիտական ճաշակի ձևավորման մեջ նկատելի դեր խաղացած առաջին գրական-գեղարվեստական հանդեսներից է նաև հայալեզու «Բանբեր գրականության և արվեստի» հանդեսը (Սանկտ Պետերբուրգ, 1903-1904 թթ.)՝ հայ ականավոր պատմաբան ու բանասեր Նիկողայոս Ադոնցի (Նիկողայոս Տեր-Ավետիքյան, 1871-1942) խմբագրությամբ։

«Բանբերի» գաղափարական և գեղագիտական ծրագիրը կրում էր ցայտուն դեկադենտական բնույթ։ Դա արտահայտված էր ինչպես Ն. Ադոնցի ստորագրած հակիրճ խմբագրականում, այնպես էլ նրա «Գրական նշմարներ. դեկադանս և սիմվոլիզմ» ընդարձակ հոդվածում։ Այդ նույն դիրքերից էր հանդես գալիս նաև ամսագիրը եզրափակող գեղարվեստական պատկերագրքի անանուն մեկնաբանը։ Պատկերագրքում, ի թիվս արևմտաեվրոպական և ռուսական արվեստի անվանի վարպետներ Դանթե-Գաբրիել Ռոսետտիի, Էժեն Կարիերի, Առնոլդ Բյոկլինի, Ֆրանց Շտուկի, Հանս Թոմայի, Ֆրիդրիխ Կաուլբախի, Լեոն Բաքստի և այլոց, վերատպվել են նաև հայ արվեստագետների նկարները։ Սակայն հանդեսում տեղ գտած հայրենական «ցուցանմուշներից» եվրոպացիների հետ «հարևանությանը» դիմանում էին թերևս միայն Էժեն Կարիերի աշակերտուհի Արմինիա Բաբայանի և Ֆրիդրիխ Կաուլբախի աշակերտ Վարդգես Սուրենյանցի աշխատանքները։ Վերջինս մասնակցել է նաև «Բանբերում» վերատպված նկարների ընտրությանը՝ նախապատվությունը տալով Մյունխենի մոդեռնի դպրոցին, որի վաղ նմուշներին ծանոթացել էր Բավարիայի մայրաքաղաքում

^{*} Հետազոտությունն իրականացվել է ՀՀ գիտության կոմիտեի ֆինանսական աջակցությամբ՝ 21T-6E077 ծածկագրով գիտական թեմալի շրջանակներում։

^{* &}lt;< ԳԱԱ արվեստի ինստիտուտի գիտական ղեկավար, սփյուռքահայ արվեստի և միջազգային կապերի բաժնի վարիչ, << ԳԱԱ թղթակից անդամ, << արվեստի վաստակավոր գործիչ, արվեստագիտության դոկտոր, պրոֆեսոր, instart@sci.am, հոդվածը ներկայացնելու օրը՝ 20.04.2022, գրախոսելու օրը՝ 27.04.2022, տպագրության ընդունելու օրը՝ 20.05.2022:

ուսանելու տարիներին։ Այդ նույն մյունխենյան մոդեռնի ոճով էր լուծված նաև հանդեսի գրաֆիկական ձևավորումը։

Իր գաղափարական ու գեղագիտական ծրագրով Նիկողայոս Ադոնցի «Բանբերը» մոտ էր արտասահմանյան և ռուսական մի շարք գեղարվեստական հանդեսների՝ "La Revue blanche" և "Art et décoration" հանդեսները Ֆրանսիայում, "Pan", "Jugend", "Ver Sacrum", "Insel" հանդեսները Գերմանիայում և Ավստրիայում, "The Yellow book" հանդեսն Անգլիայում և, հատկապես, «Արվեստի աշխարհ» («Мир искусства») հանդեսը, որը լույս էր տեսնում Սանկտ Պետերբուրգում 1898-1904 թվականներին և դադարեց հրատարակվել Ն. Ադոնցի հանդեսի հետ միաժամանակ։

Բանալի բառեր՝ հայկական գեղարվեստական մամուլ, Նիկողայոս Ադոնց, «Բանբեր գրականության և արվեստի», Սանկտ Պետերբուրգ, դեկադանս, սիմ-վոլիզմ, կերպարվեստ։

ОБ ИДЕЙНОЙ И ЭСТЕТИЧЕСКОЙ ПРОГРАММЕ «ВЕСТНИКА ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ И ИСКУССТВА» НИКОЛАЯ АДОНЦА^{*}

АРАРАТ АГАСЯН*

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К числу первых литературно-художественных журналов, появившихся в конце XIX – начале XX столетия и сыгравших заметную роль в деле воспитания эстетических вкусов образованного армянства относится и армяноязычный журнал «Вестник литературы и искусства» (Санкт-Петербург, 1903-1904 гг.) под редакцией выдающегося армянского историка и филолога Николая Адонца (Никогайос Тер-Аветикян, 1871-1942).

Идейно-эстетическая программа «Вестника» имела выраженный декадентский характер, что было заявлено как во вступительной редакционной заметке за подписью Николая Адонца, так и в его программной статье «Литературные очерки: декаданс и символизм». С тех же позиций выступал и анонимный комментатор завершающего журнал художественного альбома, в котором, наряду с произведениями таких мастеров западноевропейского и русского изобразитель-

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ного искусства, как Данте-Габриэль Россетти, Эжен Карьер, Арнольд Бёклин, Франц Штук, Ханс Тома, Фридрих Каульбах, Леон Бакст и другие, репродуцировались и картины армянских художников. Однако среди отечественных «экспонатов» журнала соседство с европейцами выдерживали, пожалуй, лишь работы ученицы Эжена Карьера Арминии Бабаян и ученика Фридриха Каульбаха Вардгеса Суренянца. Последний участвовал и в подборе иллюстраций для «Вестника», отдавая при этом предпочтение школе мюнхенского модерна, с ранними образцами которого он успел познакомиться в годы учебы в столице Баварии. Тем же духом мюнхенского модерна было отмечено и графическое оформление журнала.

По своей идейно-эстетической программе «Вестник» Николая Адонца был близок целому ряду зарубежных и русских художественных изданий, таких как "La Revue blanche" и "Art et décoration" во Франции, "Pan", "Jugend", "Ver Sacrum", "Insel" в Германии и Австрии, "The Yellow book" в Англии и особенно – журнал «Мир искусства», который издавался в Санкт-Петербурге с 1898 года и прекратил свое существование в 1904 году, одновременно с журналом Николая Адонца.

Ключевые слова: армянская художественная пресса, Николай Адонц, «Вестник литературы и искусства», Санкт-Петербург, декаданс, символизм, изобразительное искусство.