

## LELA CHOGOVADZE

### ILIA CHAVCHAVADZE AND AKAKI TSERETELI ON OLD GEORGIAN EULOGISTS

The epochal turns and changes in the Georgian public opinion in the 19th c. were linked with the names of Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli. They put forward a number of views in literary criticism and publicism, which retain urgency to the present day.

In the 19th c. when the publication of Georgian literary heritage began, specimens of old Georgian literature became the centre of attention of the then criticism. Among these were *"Tamariani"* by Chakhrukhadze and *"Abdulmesiani"* by Ioane Shavteli. The opinions of I. Chavchavadze and A. Tsereteli differed concerning the evaluation of the literary skills of old Georgian eulogists. I. Chavchavadze, not belonging to thinkers, who trace and focus only upon favourable moments in history, criticized Chakhrukhadze's style of writing, where, in his view, the sense was replaced with rhetoric, emotion with insincerity, and the twenty-syllable verse also seemed overburdened. A. Tsereteli adhered to a totally different opinion. He likened Chakhrukhadze to Rustaveli, and regarded his verse as equal to *"Vepkhistqaosani"* (The Knight in the Panther's Skin). A. Tsereteli was one of the first to advance the correct view that David, praised in *"Abdulmasiani"* is David Soslan, husband of Queen Tamar. He also offered an original interpretation of the term *"Chakhrukhauri"* and considered that *"Abdulmesiani"* was written by the author of *"Vepkhistqaosani"*.