

NATO NIKABADZE

EDUCATIONAL AND PATRIOTIC DEMOCRATISM OF THE MEN OF THE SIXTIES (TERGDALEULEBI) (ILIA CHAVCHAVADZE)

Enlightenment in Western Europe had its origin as early as the 18th century. It has developed in its classic form in France and later spread all over the Europe and Asia. The formation of the worldview of Georgian enlighteners has had significant influence of both French and Russian enlighteners.

A new phase of the Georgian Enlightenment starts with the commencement of public activity of the Tergdaleulebi including I. Chavchavadze, A. Tsereteli, I. Gogebashvili, G. Tsereteli and N. Nikoladze. They are famous as a Group of Patriotic Democrats.

Ilia contributed to the new level of development of the National-Liberation Movement's ideology elaborating it in the form of a certain political program and integrating it into his creative work. Lelt Ghunia's words ("In those days for evil or for good we belonged to ourselves") explicitly state the idea of National Liberation.

Ilia raised the autonomy demand for Georgia, further published in media for the first time on March 9, 1905.

Ilia was a revolutionary democrat enlightener; together with other progressive-minded people of his time he enlightened and ideologically prepared people for the then approaching democratic revolution.