

TENGIZ GUMBERIDZE

AKAKI TSERETELI'S THOUGHTS ON NIKOLOZ BARATASHVILI

The generation of the Georgian public figures of the 1860s became inspired by the literary treasures of Nikoloz Baratashvili. The poetry of the great Romanticist played a special role in instilling the optimistic attitudes and striving spirit of younger generations of the Georgian writers.

The following is Akaki Tsereteli's reflections stated in his article "*A Few Words on 'Changuri'*" in the 1865 issue of „Tsiskari”: “Baratashvili and Ilia Chavchavadze deserve to be put on the same pedestal due to their equal merit and contribution to our literature. One cannot be understood without the other. They are like Moses and Aaron of our literature.”

In this article, Akaki quite thoroughly discusses Nikoloz Baratashvili's poetry, while at the same time stating the correspondence of ideas between Baratashvili's and Ilia's literary works. According to Akaki Tsereteli, Baratashvili's poems represent an inspirational voice of the romantic poet. Even though time has passed, Akaki cannot identify anyone who could follow the path of the genius poet. He names talented poets such as Alexander Chavchavadze, Raphael Eristavi, Barbare Eristavi-Jorjadze, though “they have been busy with feasts and did not care about people”, only Ilia followed Baratashvili's steps. Ilia's every poem reflects agony and lament of the Georgian people. Akaki is disappointed that the poetry of Nikoloz Baratashvili and Ilia Chavchavadze is not consistently discussed since the relevant literary criticism has not emerged so far.