

**LIVIU BRĂTESCU\***

GHEORGHE ASACHI'S STATUE. A FOUNDER'S REHABILITATION  
(Summary)

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The practice of setting in stone various historical personalities from more remote moments of the past or more recent (the 19<sup>th</sup> century) decisively contributed to constructing a historical, but primarily social and collective memory that a young society undergoing a national consolidation so profoundly required. The case of Gheorghe Asachi's statue fits into the specifics of the time through numerous elements, i.e., the involvement of civil society, public subscription, festivities of inauguration, and legitimation. However, it differentiates from the usual path of erecting modern statues by elements such as the negligence of local authorities and lack of interest of the national ones. We also note the tense relationship between the committee and the Romanian artist selected (among the few such occasions for Romanian sculptors), the challenging path from project to reality, and the disputes concerning the artistic solutions and the aesthetics of the monument. Not least, we note changing the place for the statue twice. Despite all these challenges, a group of intellectuals, supported by a civically and intellectually involved professional category (i.e., teachers) and the involvement and wish of a relevant Romanian artist, managed to provide Iași with a new statuary monument in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The new statue, majestically overlooking the primary urbanistic path of the Moldavian capital, talked to the new generations about patriotism, erudition, and commitment.

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\* Cercetător științific gradul II, Institutul de Istorie „A. D. Xenopol”, Academia Română – Filiala Iași;  
e-mail: bratescu@gmail.com.