Punctuation of the Romanian rhymed couplets has been kept to an absolute minimum. Capitals indicate lines. Periods are the major linguistic unit and set off the couplets, or triplets when expanded. In the latter case, two-line phrases that are not couplets can usually substitute for the second line of a couplet; also, the first line of the couplet may be introduced by a formulaic. No transcription conventions for performative analysis (such as pause, intonation, prosody) are used. In keeping with performative style, however, vocatives are not highlighted by commas. (The substitution of names and terms of address is determined by context and the performer.) In the wedding shouts, optional formulaic nonreferential phrases have generally been deleted. For example, hai hai dorule hai or e hai și iară hai can introduce or close a couplet, thereby bracketing it. This occurs infrequently for individual lines. In funeral laments, lamenters customarily repeat each line in the construction of the couplet.

The Romanian and English lines correspond, although their punctuation differs. In the interest of conveying meaning and feeling, the translation is not literal, nor have I attempted to produce the poetry in rhyme. Here, I borrow from J. Massey, who translated Feuerbach’s *Thoughts on Death and Immortality* (1980). Feuerbach, like his romantic predecessors, believed poetry to be the “language of the heart.” In his translation, Massey noted that he did not “reproduce the heavy beat or the rhymes of the doggerel,” arguing that the poetry is more significantly “a didactic attempt to clothe philosophical ideas in aesthetic form” (1980, xlii).