The Research of Funeral Rituals through the Questionnaire Method in Folklore in the Interwar Period. From B.P. Hasdeu to I. Muşlea

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This study aims to circumscribe the extent of the application of B. P. Hasdeu's suggestions in indirect inquiry, which regard the issue of funeral rituals, carried out by Ion Muşlea and Petru Caraman in folklore in the interwar period.

Before looking at what the questionnaire inquiry method means, as developed by B. P. Hasdeu, we have to specify that its precedents in Western Europe date back to the early 20th century. In the *Foreword* of the second edition of *Tipologia folclorului din răspunsurile la chestionarele B.P. Hasdeu* ['The Typology of Folklore according to the Answers of the B. P. Hasdeu questionnaires'], written by Ion Muşlea and Ovidiu Bârlea, and revised by Ioan I. Muşlea (Taloş 2010), professor Ion Taloş reviews these precedents in the Italian, German, Spanish and Swiss areas. It seems that the first research of this kind was carried out on Italian territory, requested by the Napoleonic government in 1811, but the biggest folkloric collection in this area, which has been only partially valorised, dates to around the turn of the 20th century and belongs to one of the most important modern philologists, Michele Barbi (Taloş 2010: 12–13; Cocchiara 2004: 403–406). In the Germanic countries, the method of collecting data by questionnaires is linked to Jakob Grimm, who launched a vast project of this kind in all German-speaking areas in Europe in 1812 and in 1815. This project targeted all the etnographic and folkloric phenomena "from songs and legends, to fairy tales and anecdotes, to superstitious representation, judicial customs, beliefs and traditions, dances and puppet theatre, proverbs and sayings" (Taloş 2010: 6). The inquiry lead to no noteworthy results, reason why its initiator limited both the area of research (to the region of Westphalia) and the researched issue in 1822, but, once again, the plan didn't reach its goal. Grimm's model was reshaped by Wilhelm Mannhardt, who, in an attempt to elaborate the *Monumenta mythica Germaniae*, designed a questionnaire containing 35 questions that focused on the issue of beliefs and agricultural customs regarding harvests (Taloş 2010: 7–8; Cocchiara 2004: 308–314), which was to be, between the years 1930-1935, the starting point for *Atlas der*

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deutschen Volkskunde[1]. Moreover, in the interwar period, indirect inquiries were conducted in all of the institutions of the German folk culture treasury. In the regions of France and in the French-speaking regions the same kind of collection of poetry was entrusted to Jean-Jacques Ampère (Cocchiara 2004: 193), in the sixth decade of the 19th century, while the Swiss folk songs drew the attention of Arthur Rossat. An inquiry of huge proportions was carried out by Ramón Menéndez Pidal, with the help of correspondents, in all the Spanish-speaking regions, regarding the lyric-epic genre called "romance" (Cocchiara 2004: 406–409; Taloş 2010: 13–14).

What characterizes all these attempts to research folklore? They are all large-scale in terms of the researched areas and sometimes even in the terms of the researched issues. They have been initiated by specialists of the field who design more or less extensive questionnaires accompanied by instructions on how to complete them and which are mostly distributed through official means to rural intellectuals living in the investigated regions, who, in turn, carry out the task and send back the answers. In terms of the valorisation of the studies conducted in this manner, as the study carried out by Ion Taloş shows, it appears to be disproportionate when compared to the vastness of the resulting material. It was only used by the promoters of the inquiry when writing papers on the various folkloric genres, and only rarely and partially has it been collected in typologies and corpora.

In regard to Romanian folklore, the method of inquiry with the help of correspondents appears to be quasi-synchronous with the European projects since its roots can also be found in the second half of the 19th century, in the collections compiled by some scholars, especially Transylvanians[2], with the help of their students, and also in the calls for research by At. Marian Marienescu[3]or in those by Ion Pop Reteganul. All this research was small compared to B. P. Hasdeu's monumental endeavour, who, elaborated and sent two questionnaires to the teachers and priests in a number of Romanian villages at the initiative of G. Chiţu, Minister of Public Instruction: *Obiceiele juridice ale poporului român*. *Întrebări asupra legăturilor sătesci, casnice şi de lucruri între ţărani* (1878) ['The Judicial Customs

[1] For the history, methods, structure and stage of valorisations of this research instrument's results see Ignat 2010: 191−197.

[2] Timotei Cipariu, Ioan Micu Moldovan, Andrei Bârseanu, Ioan Petranu, Alexiu Viciu, Constantin Pavel, Traian Gherman, etc.

[3] From the calls for researching the various aspects of folk culture by Atanasie Marian Marienescu, I only mention the *Epistolia deschisă către ddnii protopopi, preoţi, învăţători şi către literaţii români* (1870), regarding which Ovidiu Bârlea says the following in his *Metoda de cercetare a foclorului*, (Bârlea 1969: 26): "The call is actually the first questionnaire embryo put forth in written form in which the methodological criteria for collecting data are presented in the alphabetical order of the researched «obiects». Although conceptual, on the whole, these exhaust the issue of customs, because Marienescu insists in the 7 methodological points that the «mythological essence» of the custom should be studied, or, in other words, the core of the custom's substance, then the description of the custom in stages, from beginning to end, followed by the accesories of the custom: «hops and games», «the lyrics...traditions», «the offerings or foods», «the herbs» that are gathered at that time of the year, «weddings » etc., and, at the end, the opinions of the person who collects the data about the «motifs of the celebration, of the traditions and to make remarks». Marienescu predicts, on this occasion, collective research, organized in teams of 3–6 people, which also represents an important novelty in the history of research methodology".

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of the Romanian People. Questions about the Relationships between Villagers, about the Domestic and about Matters of the Peasants'], and *Programa pentru adunarea datelor privitoare la limba română* (1884), ['The Program for Collecting Data Regarding the Romanian Language']. The mere names of these questionnaires tell us that their author wanted to capture the investigated phenomena in their national dimension, and the folk products were considered, from the point of view of their documentary function, for the research of linguistic and judicial aspects.

When designing the first questionnaire, Hasdeu looked at the similar endeavours of Jakob Grimm (with his *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer Göttingen*, 1854), at those of V. Bogisich (the author of a questionnaire regarding the judicial customs of the Slavs, in 1865) and at those of Efimenko and Matviev (1877), the researchers of the Slavic space being criticised for

> forgetting that they are addressing a people and, as a consequence, for them to be understood by, and not scaring in the eyes of a people who have no business with scientific methodology, they have to get rid of anything that is theoretical, acting as if they weren't jurists, as if they never saw a law book, as if they knew nothing more about law than a simple ploughman or shepherd, or as if they knew even less, since they are looking for answers from these people, and it is in man's nature to answer with good cheer when he thinks that he is cognizant (p. 8).

Hasdeu avoids the judicial terminology, using for his 400 questions, a "folk division par excellence", into three big sections: *The Village*, *The House*, and *The Things*. He only touches upon the subject of funerals, with three questions (No. 127, No. 286 and No. 287)[4] that look at the causes of suicide and the reaction of the community to it, declaring death and the rules of mourning, differentiated by type, or the judicial situation of the heirs. The answers to the first questionnaire come from only 37 villages, but in the case of the second questionnaire the number of villages rises to 701, due to their distribution under the aegis of the Romanian Academy, and to the growing popularity of Hasdeu among the respondents[5], on one hand, and due to reducing the number of questions to 206, on the other hand. Focusing on funeral rituals again, we note that two of these questions look at the view on the after-world: one looks at the mythical creatures that govern the funeral sphere (the ghoul), while burial is only investigated on a lexical level[6].

Both questionnaires were accompanied by methodological comments. Thus, in 1877, the respondents were asked to localize the information, to "show the names,

[4] Hasdeu 1878: Question No. 127 "Does it happen, in those regions, that someone takes their own life? (– what urges them? – and how do the people see a deed like this?"; Question No. 286 "In what way and for how long do people mourn the death of a spouse, child or relative? (– how do men mourn? – and how do women mourn?), and Question No. 287 "How do they verify that a person is really dead, not only numb or bearing the signs that appear after death?

[5] Cf. Bârlea 2010: "In 1884, Hasdeu was famous in villages, too. [...] It can be felt that the collectors try their best to bring their modest contribution to the grand building that they saw being built due the charm that Hasdeu enveloped them in".

[6] Hasdeu 1884: Question No. 133 "What are the words used with reagrd to burials in those regions?; Question No. 135 "Are there different words for the death of a man and the death of a beast?"; Question No. 149 "What do the people say about ghouls and ghosts, and how are these beings different from each other?"; Question No. 200 "What belief do the people hold on Heaven and Hell?"; Question No. 206 "What do the people believe about the afterlife?"

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marital status, as well as the age" of the respondents, to verify the information and to be honest, omitting "those questions that they cannot answer precisely" and to capture – as we would put it today – the dynamics of the custom:

> always ask the villagers not only how things are done today, but also what they remember about how things were done in the past (Hasdeu 1878: 16).

The instructions for completing the *Programa pentru adunarea datelor referitoare la limba română* ['The Program for Collecting Data Regarding the Romanian Language'] are less ample and omit the information regarding the respondent, but suggest phonetic transcription.

Without detailing the issues regarding the distribution, contents and differences of value[7] of the almost 20,000 pages of answers grouped in 19 volumes, we consider that it should be mentioned that some of Hasdeu's correspondents reach a kind of professional level because we can find them in some journals of those days as authors of articles, mostly of a descriptive nature, about the sequence of the burial ceremony, or as collectors of funeral texts. This is the case of Mihail Lupescu from Broşteni-Suceava (XII 298-306), Sofroniu Liuba from Maidan-Caraş (XVIII 134−221) or that of Tit Bud from Şugatag-Maramureş (XVIII 222−237). Here we deal with the massive formative influence of this indirect inquiry on the teachers and priests in the rural environment, who, as Ovidiu Bârlea noted, "have become folklorists driven by Hasdeu's questionnaire" (Bârlea 2010: 68).

The respondents of B.P. Hasdeu's and Nicolae Densuşianu's questionnaires include Gheorghe Buruenescu from Vârlezi, Petru Caraman's first master; we cannot rule out the possibility that, in case the teacher discussed some of the answers given to the questionnaire, as professor I.H. Ciubotaru supposes (Ciubotaru 2008: 37–38), this might have been the first link making an unknown connection between Hasdeu and Caraman. They will be likened to each other, and also distinguished from others, not only by their encyclopaedic formation, comparatism and language studies but also by the fact that they used methods of indirect inquiry of cultural traditions. From the three questionnaires[8] designed by Petru Caraman between the years 1932–1935[9], one looks at the subject of funerals, but not at all of its aspects, as Muşlea or as Constantin Brăiloiu did in his Research Plan; it only looks at one of the aspects, i.e. the funeral of inexperienced young people. The goal of the elaboration was to collect data for a comparative study, that focused on *Alegoria morţii în folclorul poetic al popoarelor din Orientul Europei* ['The Allegory of Death in the Poetic Folklore of the Eastern European Peoples'], but the subject was later reduced to Romanian and Polish regions. Published posthumously in five issues of „Revista de Istorie şi Teorie Literară" ['The Journal of History and Literary Theory'], issues No.2, 3, 4/1983 and No.1, 2/1984, the study has not caught the attention of specialists due to the vague title suggested by the editor: *Un motiv alegoric în*

[7] This was carried out by Ovidiu Bârlea, in his study called "B.P. Hasdeu şi folclorul" (Bârlea 2010).

[8] *Obiceiuri din perioada sărbătorilor de iarnă*, *Înmormântarea tinerilor nelumiţi* and *Antroponime şi zoonime*.

[9] The following two are added to them in the 1950s: *Răzbunarea colindătorilor* and *Chestionar onomatologic*.

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folclorul românesc şi cel polonez [‘An Allegoric Motif in Romanian and Polish Folklore’]. Only in 1988, in the second volume of *Studii de folclor* [‘Folklore Studies’], revised by Viorica Săvulescu, with an introductory study and chronologic table by Iordan Datcu, published in Bucharest at Minerva Press, pp. 54-89, the title is the one which was given by the author: *Alegoria morţii în poezia populară, la poloni şi la români* [‘The Allegory of Death in Polish and Romanian Folk Poetry’] (Ciubotaru 2008: 472, n. 61).

Chestionarul folkloric [‘The Folklore Questionnaire’] (Caraman 1982b) published by the professor from Iaşi had two sections. The first one was called *Cum se face înmormântarea unui flăcău* [‘The funeral of a Lad’], and it contains 25 issues, each having a number of questions that aimed to circumscribe the traditional ritual in a case like this, insisting on the people who carried out the funeral ritual and on the roles that are parallel to those of a wedding entourage, and also on the beliefs and stories that accompany and justify it. The only methodological indication is to describe every detail and to make sketches whenever possible:

> All kinds of superstitions regarding the death and the burial of a lad should be written down; nothing should be left out from what the people believe in such circumstances (as compared to other kinds of deaths) (Caraman 1982b:XXXII).

The second section, called *Cum se face înmormântarea unei fete mari* [‘The Funeral of a Maiden’], doesn’t contain any questions, it only mentions that:

> for the collection of folkloric material regarding this subject, take the questionnaire for the funeral of a lad as a relative example (Caraman 1982b: XXXIII).

The answers of his collaborators, who were selected from the students of the Seminar of Bucharest, but also from other high schools from the country (Tulcea, Galaţi, Fălticeni, Rădăuţi etc.), and who were joined by some teachers and priests, are to be found in the manuscripts No. 559−790, of the documentary collection “Petru Caraman”, at the Folklore Archives of Moldova and Bucovina (Ciubotaru 1982: VII, XI). Some of the funeral texts (19 dirges, 3 wake songs, 2 variants of dirges sung at daybreak the day after the burial) (Caraman 1982a: 141–162) sent by the correspondents were selected by Ion H. Ciubotaru for the anthology *Literatură populară* [‘Folk Literature’], the texts of which were chosen from Petru Caraman’s collections.

Also in the 1940s, at Cluj, the method of indirect inquiry was in use at the Museum of the Romanian Language, at the Ethnographic Museum of Transylvania and at the Folklore Archives of the Romanian Academy. Ion Muşlea, as a reader of the Archives, is faced with the situation of arguing for the necessity of institutionalizing folklore research and for sketching their theoretical and methodological outlines. This is visible both from the documents of establishment – *Învăţătorii şi folclorul* [‘Teachers and Folklore’] (1928), *Apel către intelectualii satelor* [‘Call to the Intellectuals of Villages’] (1931), *Culegeţi folklor!* [‘Collect Folklore!’] (1931), and from the self-evaluative text *Din activitatea mea de folclorist* [‘My Activity as a Folklorist’], which remained only a manuscript until 1980. Seeing folklore in the way that the Brit School did, which was, in part, the point of

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view of the German School and that of the Philological School of Bucharest[10], Muşlea thought that studying folklore was the duty of all intellectuals, not only for national and political reasons (expressed in the terms of the necessity of understanding the people, of saving folkloric elements and adding them to the treasury)[11], but mainly for scientific reasons (folklore underlies some of the comparatist, historicist and philological endeavours). Here, he meets, without a doubt, Hasdeu and Caraman.

The director of The Archives at Cluj thought of a research on two levels. On a first level, the aim was to make up a network of the institution's correspondents with the help of rural intellectuals (Muşlea 2005: 99–107) (teachers, priests and students (Muşlea 1932) of teacher-training schools), who were recommended because they were local residents and also because of their proximity to peasants and ease of communication with them[12]. On a second level, the collection by the means of awarded scholarships was projected, which were to compile regional micro-monographs as a result of field research that Muşlea wanted to take place in the regions which had recently become part of Romania, and also in the regions inhabited by Romanians outside the country's borders.

The outlining of textual moulds into which the ethnographic information was to be "cast" was done by providing ready-made work instruments (questionnaires) and some "guidelines for collecting data and giving response" that are included in two of the articles already mentioned[13], and also in the first two questionnaires, with minimal change[14]. Because, as Ion Mărcuş noted in 1942, "a very serious impediment" that arose from the beginning was the "training of correspondents to have at least minimal knowledge that is absolutely necessary". Muşlea provided clear guidelines regarding the criteria for choosing the respondents and getting their identification data (name, profession, age, place of origin vs. place of information registration), and also regarding the way in which a custom was to be observed, the method of formulating the answer to the questionnaires, the

[10] For this purpose, Muşlea considers that the definition given by I.A. Candrea to folklore is one of the most comprehensive: "the sum of interpretations given by the people to the natural phenomena, and, as a general rule, to all things they see, hear or feel, that move their rich imagination, that find a way into their simple souls and that their naïve brain registers and twists, exteriorizing them as words and songs, as customs and traditions". Quote from Ion Muşlea, "Culgeţi folklor!" (Muşlea 2005: 129).

[11] "Let's save, then, until we have time, the treasury of beliefs, customs and literature of the people, a treasury whose national and scientific importance is obvious!", in „Învăţătorii şi folclorul" (Muşlea 2005: 99).

[12] „For this endeavour of rescue, teachers are the most recommended! Recommended primarily because of the fact that they are the closest to the people, having daily contact with them, so they don't have to travel to collect the data! They are also recommended because they are among the lucky ones trusted by the people, in the company of whom people talk more readily, and whom the people tell what they are thinking or what they know from their elders. They are recommended because their presence doesn't surprise or upset the people, who are completely used to them" (Muşlea 2005: 99). Sanda Ignat says that the ideas about the importance of teachers in collecting folklore, the way in which the questions were formulated, the guidelines for gining answers and the pedagogical importance of discipline come from the works of the Austrian scholars F. Kaindl and M. Haberlandt (Ignat 2010: 240).

[13] We refer to „Învăţătorii şi folclorul" and „Culegeţi folclor!".

[14] At the beginning of Questionnaire I. *Calendarul poporului român pe lunile ianuarie-februarie* and at the end of Questionnaire II. *Obiceiuri de vară*, cf. Muşlea 2005: 279–291.

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requirement for visual representation[15] and even the way notes should be made[16]. In addition, also regarding the generic templates of ethnographic writing, an important role is played by the fact that, until the elaboration of answers to the questionnaires, there have been various journals or publications in which the correspondents could read ethnographic information, and hence they could write *à la manière de*...[17] Furthermore, as we have said, some of the correspondents were trained by Hasdeu's school of questionnaires.

From the questionnaires designed by Ion Muşlea, the ninth one, called *Moartea şi înmormântarea. Obiceiuri şi credinţe* ['Death and Burial. Customs and Beliefs'] (1935) (Muşlea 2005: 316–320), was answered by 62 people, out of which 36 were teachers, 8 were students of teacher-training, 7 other students, 3 priests, 2 ploughman, 2 educators and 2 graduates. They gave extremely interesting answers, both from the viewpoint of the factual information they contained, and from the viewpoint of the way these answers were formulated.

The questionnaire opens with some guidelines for the collectors, in which the director emphasizes the necessity of "observing in person" the ceremony that is to be described, having respondents who are some sort of professionals of the funeral ritual ("those who wash the dead"), and writing down, every single time, the reasons behind a given practice ("why the respondents think that the thing has to be done that way").

The guidelines are followed by 47 questions, each of which has sub-questions to provide guidelines, so that the respondent can provide a detailed and complex ethnographic description. The first 32 points of the questionnaire regard the logical sequence of the funeral ceremony, from the preparations for death, to the first signs of death, the practices that make passing away easier, announcing the death of a person to the community, washing the departed, the vigil and the funeral, digging the grave and the alms. The next questions look at dirges, the particular rituals in case of those who have committed suicide, or in the case of unbaptized children, brothers who were close, or best buddies. The last 8 questions document the rituals of defending oneself against the dead who return in the form of ghouls, and also the stories, ballads and legends that underlie this motif. By introducing the

[15] „If you are able to draw or to photograph, please add the drawings or photographs, no matter how blurry they are, to the descriptions of customs" (Muşlea 2005: 282).

[16] „ If possible, please write down things exactly as the villagers, who gave you the information, said. If you think that a word does not exist in standard Romanian, put it between «inverted commas» and explain them in brackets. Regarding the trascription of the sounds of the dialect, don't use special signs, but make use of standard letters. Your writing should be legible, written in ink, on notebooks or sheets the size of a quarter of a page, if possible, and written only on only one side of the paper" (Muşlea 2005: 282).

[17] Gleaning from *Dicţionarul etnologilor români*, volume III, compiled by Iordan Datcu and published in Bucharest, Saeculum I. O. Press, 2001, we can compile a partial list of folkloric publications or publications that contain folklore sections, that were published up till 1935: "Adevărul Literar şi Artistic", "Albina", "Analele Dobrogei", "Anuarul Arhivei de Folklor", "Arhiva pentru Ştiinţa şi Reforma Socială", "Arhivele Olteniei", "Boabe de Grâu", "Buciumul", "Comoara Satelor", "Convorbiri Literare", "Culegătorul", "Dacoromania", "Doina", "Familia, "Făt-Frumos", "Foaia poporului", "Grai şi Suflet", "Ion Creangă", "Izvoraşul", "Satul", "Şezătoarea", "Tudor Pamfile", "Vieaţa nouă" etc. To these, we can add the 39 volumes published in the collection "Din viaţa poporului român", edited by The Romanian Academy between the years 1908–1929.

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distinction between "dead ghouls" and "living ghouls", Muşlea repaired the ambiguity that Hasdeu created in *Programa pentru adnunarea datelor referitoare la limba română* ['The Program for Collecting Data Regarding the Romanian Language'] by loosely formulating question No. 149: "What do the people say about ghouls and ghosts, and how are these beings different from each other?"

Although two of the questions from Muşlea's questionnaire look at the funeral of maidens and lads who were to be married, we don't know whether he was aware of Petru Caraman's questionnaire, with whom, as their remaining correspondence shows, he had been in touch since 1930, when he invited Caraman to become a collaborator of the *Anuarul Arhivei de Folklor* ['The Folklore Archives' Annual']. Whatever the case, Caraman's questionnaire isn't part of Ion Muşlea's collection, which was included, thanks to the his family's good will, in the collection of manuscripts at the Romanian Academy's Folklore Archives, under the reference number 1653 b. Analysing these documents – the questionnaires of André Varagnac, G. Fl. Gomme, John Meier, Karl Plenzat etc. – we note that, in general, the manner in which the indirect inquiry instruments were designed, and especially the manner in which the instruments for funeral research were designed, seems to be influenced in the case of Ion Muşlea, besides, of course, by the Hasdeu model, by the *aide-memoire* provided by G.Fl. Gomme in 1890, in his *Handbook of Folklore* (Gomme 1914) and mainly by the many questionnaires designed by Karl Plenzat in the German regions between the years 1920–1930. In a booklet written by Karl Plenzat, called *Das Volkskundliche Archiv der Pädagogischen Akademie Elbing* (1928), Muşlea underlined and annotated, seemingly in the year 1930, ideas as follows: the necessity of collaboration between rural intellectuals during inquiries, the ground rules of organizing an archive and the resources that were needed, the stages of the archiving process (dissemination of questionnaires, cataloguing answers, copying the material on individual sheets etc.) Beside the fact that he had access to almost 40 thematic questionnaires, Muşlea seems to have been inspired by Karl Plenzat in the designing of circulars – *Rundfrage* – instruments of inquiry intended to document a precise issue. Of course, the Gomme and Plenzat questionnaires were used only as a rough guide for designing questionnaire IX. *Moartea şi înmormântarea. Obiceiuri şi credinţe* ['Death and Burial. Customs and Beliefs']. The director of the Cluj Archives set out to accomplish it starting from the realities of Romanian ethnography, from the monographs dedicated to Romanian funerals written by Vasile Popp, Teodor T. Burada, S. Fl. Marian.

In conclusion, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu had a great influence on the works of Ion Muşlea and Petru Caraman. Both men made their debut in the research of traditional culture in the interwar period, and both men were treated unjustly and forsaken by the decades of communism. If Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu was pioneer in comparative folklore, and Muşlea gave this perspective a try in some of his studies in his youth – here we would like to mention, also as a link with the scholar from Iaşi, *La mort mariage: une particularité du folklore balcanique* (Muşlea 1972), a study from 1925 – Petru Caraman was the one who obtained the most results in comparative research. If, just as B.P. Hasdeu did in editing *Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae*, Petru Caraman used indirect inquiry as a method of providing a documentary basis for one of his own works, Ion Muşlea transformed this method into an institution, capable of documenting the works of folklorists from all around

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Europe, who are interested in a given subject. What unites them, however, to the highest degree, is that all three scholars left posterity an immense cultural heritage, works of art that still await readers, researchers and people to continue them[18].

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[18] Translated from Romanian by Andra Diana Ciufu.

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Abstract

The Romanian folkloristic research method using correspondents appears to be synchronous with the quasi-European projects since its roots can be located in the latter half of the 19th century, namely within the chrestomathies accomplished by Transylvanian scholars helped by pupils. Thus, there should be mentioned Timotei Cipariu, Ioan Micu Moldovanu, Vasile Bologa and others. Moreover, there were At. Marian Marienescu and Ion Pop Reteganul's appeals. Nevertheless, all those researches had reduced dimensions compared to B. P. Hasdeu's monumental approach. Hasdeu sent two questionnaires to priests and teachers from some Romanian villages: *Obiceiele juridice ale poporului român. Întrebări asupra legăturilor sătesci, casnice şi de lucruri între ţărani (1878)* ['Legal Habits of the Romanian People. Questions on Affinities between Villages, Domestic Connections and Matters between Peasants'] and *Programa pentru adunarea datelor privitoare la limba română (1884)* ['Schedule for Gathering Data Regarding Romanian Language']. The replies concerning the first questionnaire came from 37 villages, whereas the second one gathered a number of 701 answers. On one hand, it was due to their dissemination under the aegis of the Romanian Academy and due to Hasdeu's growing popularity among the respondents, and, on the other hand, it was due to the reduction in the number of questions to 206, two of which were related to the imaginary of the after-world: the mythological beings that govern the funeral sphere (*Strigoiul*), whereas the funeral was analyzed

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