

# CHARM INDEXES: PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES

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## *Introductory remarks*<sup>1</sup>

In the past twenty years, interest in the study and the publication of verbal magic texts has increased considerably. Quite a number of collections of Byelorussian, Bulgarian, Czech, French, German, Hungarian, Romanian, Russian, Serbian and Ukrainian charms have been published. But the more that new texts in various countries have been published, the more difficult it is to see the overall picture. The problem consists not only in the language barriers which prevent scholars from using charms from other traditions, but also in the differing ways of understanding problems and methods of research. This last point is largely determined by professional preferences and the divergent scholarly traditions developed in different countries during the past one and a half centuries. For this reason the situation in the field of charm research can be considered, without exaggeration, to be at a crisis point.

The resolution of this situation, as it seems to us, has been outlined in the research and organizational work of the English folklore specialist Jonathan Roper. He proposed an international index of charms (Roper 2004a, pp. 139–41), and created a database of English charms and on this basis wrote a book (Roper 2005). With support of the Folklore Society and the Warburg Institute, Jonathan Roper also organized several international conferences dedicated to charms in the different countries of Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Our proposals can be regarded as an attempt at a further development of Roper's ideas. At the same time we have to emphasize that we are relying mainly on our own experience of dealing with charms and the problems of their systematization: that is, the description of the subject matter of East Slavic charms, research into Russian manuscript charms of the 15th to 19th centuries (see Agapkina and Toporkov 1990; Agapkina 2002; Toporkov 2005; Agapkina 2006; Agapkina 2010; Toporkov 2010), field work over a long period into the traditions of word magic in the Russian North, in Belarus' and in Ukraine. The

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2 The materials of the first conference (2002) were published in (Roper 2004b). The second book is (Roper 2009).

first time that the authors encountered live charm traditions was during expeditions to Polesia in the late 1970s and early 1980s. We published an edition of the material (Agapkina, Levkievskaia and Toporkov 2003). Together with the Nizhnii Novgorod charms (Korovashko 1997) and the Russian charms of Karelia (Kurets 2000) it is one of the few annotated editions of East Slavic charms.

In general approach our project considers also the experience of composition of other folklore indexes which dealt primarily with folktale and non-folktale prose. In this connection we would cite the newest edition of Antti Aarne's and Stith Thompson's index of folktale motifs, revised by Hans-Jörg Uter (Uter 2004), H. Jason's book, dedicated to the theories and practice of composition of folklore indexes (Jason 2000), and also the collection of papers dedicated to problems of composition of folklore indexes published recently in Russia (Rafaeva 2006).

At the same time we should note that the problems of composition of a charm motif index in many respects lie in quite another plane from that of folktale and non-folktale prose. As is known, charms are categorized (in Russian) as belonging to the so-called minor folklore genres, in relation to which the terminological and taxonomic devices available to modern folklore scholarship can be used to a limited extent. This is connected, first of all, with such apparently "technical" points at the length of charm texts, which generally is far smaller than, for example, that of folktales and memorates or mythological narratives, and secondly, with the evident heterogeneous character of the charm corpora, which has assimilated a whole series of cultural traditions (oral and written) and genre forms, and which as a result combines what are, strictly speaking, very different texts from a genre point of view: very simple narratives, charm formulas and other kinds of magic texts. In many cases the explication of the underlying motif of these texts involves certain difficulties.

### *The index of East Slavic charms*

General reflections. As has already been mentioned, in the last fifteen years (after a break of more than half a century) new collections of Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian charms have been published. Besides L. N. Maikov's compilation (Maikov 1869/1992), books by G. I. Popov (Popov 1903) and N. F. Poznanskii (Poznanskii 1917/1995) were republished; two manuals by V. L. Kliaus and A. V. Judin (Kliaus 1997 and Judin 1997) were published; there were review works on East Slavic charm traditions, on Baltic-Slavic connections, and on the

Russian manuscript tradition (Kharitonova 1992; Levkivskaia 2002; Toporkov 2005; Zav'ialova 2006; Toporkov 2010; Agapkina 2010; etc.). All this taken together has materially changed the source base of the East Slavic charm tradition and enables us to raise the question of preparing an index reflecting the richness and variety of Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian charms.

When speaking about source base of the index, we would in particular emphasize the importance of the careful preliminary study of little known and hard to obtain publications, for the most part in the Russian pre-revolutionary periodical press. The fact is that modern researchers have a conception of the composition and extent of motifs of individual national and local traditions of the East Slavic charm continuum and its peculiarities which unfortunately can hardly be considered adequate or satisfactory at the present time, and judgements formulated on this subject demand, as a rule, correction based on a wider range of sources. Among such judgements, in particular, is the view that the tradition of a southern part of the East Slavic territory (primarily the Ukrainian tradition) noticeably differs from Russian and Byelorussian traditions by the inclination to short texts (Kharitonova 1992, p. 13). In R. A. Ageeva's opinion, these brief Ukrainian spells are the most archaic form of charms; they have less undergone Christian influence, there is no almost epic element in them, spatial objects remain nameless, etc (Ageeva 1982, p. 137). Such a view of the Ukrainian tradition, in our opinion, is due to the regrettable fact that until very recently the basic source for Ukrainian charms was the widely known book by P. S. Efimenko (Efimenko 1874) which did indeed include for the most part short charm texts. At the moment we are working with almost fifty sources, but in preparing the index it will certainly necessary to enlarge the source base of the Ukrainian charms, and the picture will look absolutely differently and the Ukrainian charms – from the point of view of size and variety of motifs – will appear quite comparable with Byelorussian and Russian charms.

For the most part the proposed index continues to a considerable extent the Russian tradition of regional indexes, of which the Comparative Motif Index (Barag and others 1979) is the best known and most usable. We regard the principles formulated by the authors of the index of folktales almost thirty years ago to be still viable. They stated: "The present index should resolve two problems simultaneously. On the one hand this is, as it were, three national indexes, defining the motif repertoire of Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian folktales; on the other hand it is the first attempt at a regional motif index. The authors have joined forces to give a comparative description of the East Slavic historic-ethnographic region

– an ethnic area of settlement of three closely-related peoples, in close contact over many centuries, and speaking in languages which facilitate an active mutual exchange of texts and mutual influence in the area of motifs, stylistics, variations, and the creation of a common base of narrative formulas, etc.” (Barag et al. 1979, p. 13).

Our proposal differs from this and other attempts to compile subject indexes (Russian and East Slavic) in that, among other things, we do not take into consideration records of charms made outside Ukraine, Belarus’ and the European part of Russia. This restriction is primarily aimed at revealing the “dialect” (regional) divergences of charm traditions among the East Slavs, and secondly, with an unwillingness to consider texts with an obvious imprint of non-Slavic cultural influences, such as are inevitable in particular in the multi-ethnic Siberian traditions.

In his index published in 1997, Kliaus considered more than 3000 texts from 80 publications of the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Kliaus 1997, p. 13). The index has served its purpose in systematizing Slavic charms and has shown their real variety and richness of tradition. At the same time the index has a number of features which do not allow us to base our work on it (i.e. to work as it were in continuation of already available results): the classification of charms proposed there has a very fragmented character; and their number (981!) is obviously overstated. We believe that there will be no more than 100 to 150 motif types in our index, and we intend, as has already been said, to limit ourselves to the charms of the East Slavs, avoiding for the moment any involvement of other Slavic traditions. Kliaus has grouped texts on the basic action which is described in them; he has called this action a “motif theme”, rejecting any larger units of motif partitioning; moreover he did not consider the functionality of the charms. Unfortunately, the index does not give an objective idea of the repertoire of East Slavic charms, about quantitative structure and geographical distribution of single thematic groups and motif types (For more details see Toporkov 1999). Motifs and their versions in Kliaus’s Index, divided on the basis of “motif themes” do not compare well with the classification units applied by scholars in other countries (Holzmann 2001; Roper 2005).

The structure of the charm corpora.

As the basis of our index we intend to use a hierarchy assuming a separation of thematic and functional groups and motif types. While taking into consideration the work of our predecessors, we hope to develop constructive indexing principles so that in the future there

will be an opportunity to compare it with indexes or large collections of other ethnic traditions.

Empirical examination of Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian and some other charm traditions shows that the most natural structure of a charm corpus would be based on a functional principle. Yet the most numerous and least contentious part of the corpus consists of medical charms (against a toothache, a fever, bleeding, different illnesses, etc.). To these may be added the generally less numerous groups: agricultural/trade (cattle-breeding, beekeeping, etc.), social charms (pronounced before the court or authorities), love charms, etc. Since charms belonging to one or another group are united by a general theme (illness, love, household, relations with authorities etc.), we shall call such groups of texts thematic groups.

We do not intend to include in the index other kinds of magical texts, such as texts which accompany economic and household tasks (in Russian *prigovory*), „ritual salutations” (addressed to the people who are carrying out one or another kinds of domestic and everyday tasks), or texts addressed to natural objects or phenomena to exert of magic influence on them or to achieve some concrete pragmatic purpose (such, as, for example, *zaklichki* of rain or a ladybird).

In general the approach proposed here is similar to that which is used in the study of folktales, where texts are first subdivided into the genre types, and then into motif types (Nekliudov 2006, p. 33). For example, “East Slavic folktale prose is usually rather arbitrarily divided into tales on animals, fantastic tales (fairy tales and legends) and tales of everyday life (short story and humorous)” (Barag and others 1979, p. 15).

The difference from folktales is explained by the fact that in case of charms the principles of the grouping of texts are at first sight outside the charm tradition. However, the function of charms is important for their content. In spite of the empirical character of similar groupings, in general they do allow us to organize the corpus of charms in the definite system which we can see in numerous collections of magical texts. This arises from the fact that one of the most important characteristics of charms as a certain kind of text, as we have already said, is their function. We can hardly confuse the charms for stopping bleeding with a “binding spell”, or charms for “beauty” with charms against hernia. If we ignore the functional principle, as some our predecessors have done, we deprive ourselves and future users of our index of a reliable compass in the vast sea of charm texts.

At the initial stage of work we propose first of all to concentrate on medical charms, since they are the most commonly used and can be fairly easily and more or less precisely classified. In its turn the thematic group of charms is subdivided into separate functional groups: charms for stopping bleeding, against a toothache, a fever, a wakeful child, snake-bite, etc.

In our intention to divide medical charms into functional groups we realize perfectly well the difficulties with which we shall inevitably be confronted. And one of the most fundamental is the necessity to identify illnesses, for which the popular names (in three national and several more large local traditions) are quite varied and not always clear from the point of view of their internal form. From past experience in most cases we shall have to ignore the dialect varieties of names, combining illnesses or their sub-varieties which are different in name, but similar in symptoms, in one functional group under a general name.

In East Slavic traditions, cases when practically the same charms are applied to the treatment of different illnesses are very characteristic. The East Slavic charm universe, though mainly uni-functional, includes a considerable number of motif types which have a multifunctional character, i.e. “serving” several functional groups. One of the best known of such motif types “In the mythological center (in the open field, in the blue sea and on a white stone) is somebody (the Virgin/tsar/old man, etc.) who treats X or in some other way helps him to get rid of some illness”. Probably multifunctional charms of this kind should be described in special articles in the index.

At the next level we can separate out types (we shall name them also charm types or motif types). So, for example Ebermann (Ebermann 1903), working on the German magical tradition has established 14 types of charms against wounds and bleeding to which he has given the following type-names: *Der zweite Merseburger Zauberspruch, Jordan-Segen, Drei*

*Sanguis mane in te, Adams Blut, Der Blutsegen von den drei Frauen, Drei Blumen, Ein Baum, Der ungerechte Mann, Scherzhafte Wundsegen [The Second Merseburg charm, Jordan charms, Three good brothers, Longinus-charms, It (blood)*

*ms about three women, Three flowers, Tree, The unjust person, Comic charms against a wound.* (Ebermann 1903).

From 15 to 20 subject types of charms for stopping bleeding can be identified in the East Slavic tradition (Agapkina 2010).

Within the framework of one motif type the charms are linked by the character of the basic events described in them. At the same time these charms can differ one from another in the list of personages, details and attributes of action. Charms can be contracted, losing some episodes or, on the contrary, they may grow by attaching additional episodes. They can be contaminated by the charms of other motif types or functional-thematic groups.

In formulating the ‘motif type’ we do not take into consideration such text elements as the opening and closing formulas of prayers, other opening formulas or binding formulas (the so-called *and* ), which play no part in the motif of the charm. We generally ignore “formal” distinctions between separate texts, believing that the same motif type can be realized in the texts in the form of an imperative or a wish, narrative or dialogue, etc.<sup>3</sup> The charm type possesses a semantic, but not a formal stability.<sup>4</sup>

As a result the general scheme of partitioning of the corpus of charms can be presented in the following way:

<i>Levels</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Example 1</i>
Level 1	Thematic group	Medical charms
Level 2	Function group	Charms for a toothache
Level 3	Type	“As X does not have a toothache, so may XX not have a toothache”
Level 4	Version	Description of 4 basic versions, see below.

*Structure of an entry.* The charm type can be defined by a headword or a word-combination and described by the invariant. Usually one of the keywords or word-combinations of charms is used as a heading. It is desirable that it should directly relate to the content of the text and be easily identified. It should not use as heading casual or obscure word-combinations.

The invariant represents the formalized record of the sequence of the most important events described in charms. This is the content base which is followed through a number of texts and allows them to be isolated from the general continuum of charm tradition, i.e. it performs a search and identification function. The invariant has to catch the significant elements of the charms and the relationship between them: for example, in charms for

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3 About the speech genres applying charms texts, see Tolstaia 1999, pp. 155–6.

4 About contraposition of semantic and formal stability see: Nebzhegovskaia-Bartmin’skaia 2004, p. 258.

stopping bleeding of the *Jordan-formula* type there are elements such as “river Jordan”, “to stand” and “blood”, connected by specific syntagmatic relationships.

Within the framework of types separate versions which have essential motif distinctions can be denoted, but they still keep within the framework of the general motif type (in particular, they can differ both by the development of separate episodes and presence or absence of them). It is desirable that the formalized description of the invariant should reflect that common factor which links versions with each other, and their basic distinctions. It would also be desirable that identified versions should be characterized geographically. It is possible to accompany the description of one or another version with specific characteristic text examples.

Since the index is to include charms from three national traditions, the list of sources is given in the following order: Russian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian. This method of presentation of material (by separate traditions) is accepted in “the Comparative index of motifs” of East Slavic folktales, which in this case we follow, having changed, however, the order of sequence of traditions. In arranging them in this sequence we have simply followed the relative numbers of charm texts known to us at the present time. Russian charms are the most widely published, there are substantially fewer Byelorussian charms and even fewer Ukrainian charms. The sources (in lists of sources by separate ethnic traditions) are given according to their publication date. In the future this order will make it easier for researchers to identify secondary reprints of charms previously published but which carried no reference

We consider it obligatory to indicate in a separate sub-entry in what form the motifs are known – oral, manuscript or mixed. This is important both in itself and from the viewpoint of studying the history of one or another motif type, and also the study of the geographical distribution of East Slavic charms. An indicative example: the situation of the charm popular in a sizeable part of East Slavic territories for curing a dislocation (of the 2nd Merseburg type: “Let stay a bone to a bone, meat to meat, a vein to a vein ...”). In the oral tradition of North and Central Russia there are practically no charms for a dislocation, and this type of charm in particular is unknown. At the same time in the manuscript tradition of the Russian North such charms are found, which seems to testify to different sources of oral and manuscript traditions, and also that each of them has its own dynamic in East Slavic territory (Agapkina 2010, pp. 653–72).

The entry in the index describing one or another motif type should include also the chronological characteristic of known charms, i.e. an indication of their chronological range as a whole, and also of the earliest, often manuscript, and the latest records, or even information on these (for example, unpublished fieldwork data).

A separate sub-entry in an entry is the description of the areal picture of motif type distribution within the three East Slavic traditions. This last point is especially important since revealing the geographical “projection” of the East Slavic charm traditions seems to us to be one of the predominant tasks of the future index as a whole. Here we must emphasize that partitioning the East Slavic region into three national traditions does not reflect at all the real dialect structure of the East Slavic charm tradition. Thus, in researching the charms of the Polesia region we have noticed, for example, that South Russian charms are much closer to those of Ukrainian and Byelorussian Polesia, rather than to those of North Russia, which in turn (together with Central Russia) form a separate independent motif tradition. On the basis of index data it will be possible to make a list of the basic motif convergences uniting different traditions within the East Slavic ethnodialectal continuum. The problem of studying the East Slavic charm tradition in areal projection seems to be accomplishable insofar as we have collected a considerable number of charm texts from different regions.<sup>6</sup>

When the charm motif goes back to canonical or non-canonical Christian texts, it is also desirable to include data on the origin of the motif type in the description.

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<sup>6</sup> About the representation of material as necessary condition to the study of folk dialects, see Iu. A. Novikov’s comments on the experience of geographical study of Russians bylinas undertaken by S. I. Dmitrieva (Dmitrieva 1975; Novikov 2000, pp. 152–75).

A separate sub-entry is proposed to indicate the functionality of one or another motif type – the basic and also any additional ones.

East Slavic charms, being, as we have already mentioned, „minor” folklore forms, they are fairly widely contaminated by each other, which leads to a variety of textual realizations of motif types. In a separate subentry we intend to explain common contaminations (both inside the given functional group and at the level of the thematic set, and, if it is necessary, at the level of the charm corpus as a whole). In addition, in the source list in future it is proposed mark contaminated variants in some way (for example, \* ‘an asterisk’).

### *The layout scheme of an East Slavic index entry*

We propose to use as the headword of an entry a conventional sign of motif type in Russian. Each entry could contain the following headings:

1. Formalized description of type (invariant);
2. Chronology of fixing including the earliest and latest records;
3. Geography of fixing;
4. List of sources of the three East Slavic traditions (Russian, Byelorussian, Ukrainian);
5. Information on the origin of the type (mainly for charms related to the Christian manuscript tradition);
6. Mode of functioning of the texts (oral, in the manuscript tradition, mixed);
7. Versions of motif type;
8. Functions of the text and their changes in local use;
9. Contaminations with other types of charms;
10. Features of the given type of charms in separate ethnic and local traditions;
11. Basic research on the given type.

### *Problems in creating an international charm index*

The proposed scheme is of course provisional and is open to discussion. We propose also to discuss the possibility of applying the method of our East Slavic index project to other

traditions (first of all European), and to an international index of charms. In other words, the question arises of whether it is possible to construct indexes on a similar basis for other national traditions, and thereafter a comparative index of charms. We are not suggesting that the scheme of East Slavic index should be applied to indexes of other nations, simply that a particular algorithm or system of description should be used.

At this point in our work we think it would be unprofitable to argue about the concept of *charm*, or the typology of magic texts, or the relationship between *charms*, *spells*, *prayers*, etc., but prefer to concentrate mainly on the problems of the systematization of charms.

It is desirable that the repertoire of any charms tradition should be adequately and fully described by the index, to ensure future transition from the national index to the international index and further – to other national indexes.

Undoubtedly, sets of thematic groups and types of charms differ in different traditions. Only a part of the types known in one tradition can be found in other national traditions. We propose in the first instance to include in the international index those types which have the international distribution.

Partitioning charms corpora in an international index can be based on the principles developed earlier for the East Slavic index:

Levels	Name	Example 2
Level 1	Thematic group	Medical charms
Level 2	Function group	Charms for stop-bleeding
Level 3	Type	Jordan-segen
Level 4	Version	Description of two versions, see below

Systematization of charms by their functional-thematic attribute was common in editions of Russian charms in the 19th century, following L. N. Maikov's 1869 collection. Obviously this method of systematization is not unique. For example, the German research tradition is characterized by the use of medieval charm records as a base. It involves such rubrication as *Type of the 1st Merseburg charms*, *Type of the 2nd Merseburg charms*, etc. This method is impossible for the East Slavs: on the one hand the fixing of charms began in Russia for the most part only in the second quarter of the 17th century (up to that point there had been only separate brief magic texts in birch-bark documents and texts like prayers in manuscript collections), so in fact there are practically no medieval charm records; on the

other hand, the East Slavs have a great many charms; they are rather disparate, and hard to fit into strictly defined types.

Perhaps one day an index of German charms will be made according to a system of “case texts”; but that is a matter for Germanists (compare: Holzmann 2001). In this case the general classification the texts in a German index will be different from the East Slavic, but the possibility of comparison of texts at the level of separate types will be maintained.

Other national traditions also need similar specific decisions. But it is desirable that the description of types in different national indexes should correspond to a defined model.

Working on the charm index it is important to remember that the index represents not just an end in itself, but also a tool for the future research. As a result we propose to include not only information on versions and variants of charms, but also data on their geographical distribution and chronology of fixings. This will provide future researchers with valuable material for the establishment of the geographical distribution of separate motif types in the European cultural area and their historical development during the Middle Ages and modern times.

The scheme of an article in the international index concerned one or another type can correspond to the offered above scheme, though with the certain modifications.

We propose to use as the entry headword a conventional indicator of motif type in several languages (for example, Latin, German, English and Russian) according to existing tradition or at the discretion of researchers.

Each entry in the international index may include following headings:

1. Formalized description of type;
2. Chronology of fixings (in particular, the earliest and latest records);
3. Geography of fixings;
4. Sources by different traditions (names of traditions are made in alphabetic order);
5. Information on an origin of type (if they are available: for example, translation from Latin or Greek, etc.);
6. Form of functioning of texts (oral, hand-written tradition, mixed);
7. Versions of motif type (the description of versions with text examples);
8. Functions of the text (change of functions of the text during it practice);
9. Contaminations with other types of charms;
10. Features of the given type of charms in separate national traditions;

## 11. The basic researches on the given type.

### *The research programme (problems for discussion)*

The comparative index of charms is envisaged by us as the result of an international collaboration of scholars. Each of them should work primarily with the materials their own tradition or the traditions impinging on their professional interests, but keeping within the overall plan.

At the present stage of it would be unwise to propose compiling a national index with the intention of later using it as the basis of a future international index. Obviously an international index must be based on bringing together different traditions and not on any one tradition, however rich it may be.

The opposite approach, to create an international index and attempt to impose on individual national traditions would also be unwise. It is clear that there are many things in individual national traditions which simply could not fit into our international index.

We therefore propose a procedure, which, firstly, envisages a multi-stage, step-by-step programme of research and systematization of data; and secondly, which avoids the extremes of, on the one hand isolationist, and on the other, over-centralizing approaches.

We propose the following plan of action:

1. The development of general principles of description of charm traditions in collective discussion (structure of the text corpora; headings, entries, etc.).
2. Researchers from different countries work on national charm indexes. They describe the corpora of charms of different ethnic traditions using previously developed common approaches.
3. At the same time we work on individual entries of an international index.
4. The result would be, firstly, a charm index for selected European traditions and, secondly, an international index of European charms or of their essential fragments.

The ideal would be a system of indexes with the International index of charms types at the centre, with the national or regional indexes around it, compiled according to the same or a similar system. The International index may be continuously expanded and amplified, mainly by involving new national traditions.

This is more or less the way in which the study of folktales evolved: the index by A. Aarne (in 1910) stimulated the development of national indexes of folktales (including

Russian); further supplemented editions followed (see: Uter 2004). Researchers in the subject of charms are now in the same situation as folktale researchers were before A. Aarne's index. It depends on us whether to follow this tested path forward, or to simply stand still.

The first phase of the International Index we think could be restricted to the charms of European peoples (in particular those in the Indo-European language families: Germanic, Slavic, Baltic and Romance), and to concentrate primarily on medical charms.

It would be advisable to prepare, by common efforts, a specimen publication devoted to a single functional type of charm. Charms for stopping bleeding, in our opinion, are the most convenient for such research, because of the level of existing research (special monographs by O. Ebermann (Ebermann 1903), V. Mansikka (Mansikka 1909), and F. Ohrt (Ohrt 1930, pp. 269–74), the considerable number of charms published in different languages, the wide distribution of this charm type among different peoples in Europe, the early fixing of such charms in the medieval tradition.

### *Test entries*

We further envisage two test entries: the first is for the regional (East-Slavic) Index, and the second is for the international (European) one. In the first case we selected the charm, which is widespread in all three East-Slavic traditions, but is not really known outside East-Slavic region; it has a folklore character and occurs most of all in oral performance.

In the second case we have a charm which is wide represented in different European traditions; it has a bookish origin and is connected with the Christian heritage.

We have in mind to show that the supposed type of Index not only allows us to give a formal structural-semantic depiction of the type, but also gives a key for studying its history and geography in the European cultural space.

### *Index of the east Slavic charms*

#### Section: Charms against a toothache

I. As N doesn't have a toothache, so may NN not have a toothache

1. "(Somebody asks, if the teeth of N are suffered. As it turned out, the teeth of N are not suffered.) As the teeth of N (a dead man / Adam / Antipa / etc.) are not suffered, so may the teeth of NN are not suffered". For description of the versions, see item 7.

2. The earliest record dated to the 2nd quarter of 17<sup>th</sup> century (Toporkov 2010, p. 123, no 82). The most recent records dates to the end of 20<sup>th</sup> – beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century.
3. The charm is widespread in each of the East Slavic traditions.
4. The sources: see in note.<sup>7</sup>
6. The charm is known predominantly in oral tradition.
7. There are 4 main versions, which are differ upon their form: the 1st includes the dialogue, the 2nd includes the preceding narrative (the action is located often in the mythological centre), the 3rd includes the formula of the impossible and the 4th includes the quomodo-formula.

7.1. The dialog: “The moon (Adam, Antipa), where had you been? – In another world. – Did you see dead men? – Yes, I did. – Had their teeth suffered? – No, they had not suffered. – As their teeth have not suffered, so may the teeth of NN not suffer”. This version is widespread in all East Slavic traditions everywhere.

7.2. The precedent narrative: “There is a blue sea, a stone is in the sea, a church is on the stone; in the church lies a dead man (dead body, dead head, Adam’s head), who does not have a toothache. So let the teeth of NN not suffer”. This version occurs predominantly in Northern Russian tradition.

7.3. The formula of the impossible: “When the dead man stands up from the coffin, when he walks, works, speaks, thinks, eats, feels pain, at that time NN will have a toothache”. This version is widespread predominantly in Ukraine

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<sup>7</sup> *Russian*: Maikov 1992, nos 62, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 72, 73, 79; Mazhn

and Belarus’.

7.4. The quomodo-formula: As a dead man don’t have toothache, so may NN not have toothache”. The version is often included in the dialogic charms, and concludes them, but it may also function independently. It is known in Russian and Byelorussian traditions.

8. The charm is used commonly against toothache.

9. The charm combines often with other charms against toothache, most of all with the type “When three brothers (tsars) meet each other, at that time the teeth of NN will suffer.”

11. Literature.<sup>8</sup>

### *Index of European charms*

#### Section: Charms for Stop-bleeding

##### I. Jordan-segen / Flum Jordan / Stan' krov' v rane, kak voda v Iordane

1. “Christ is baptized in the Jordan / he goes across the Jordan; Christ orders the Jordan to stop / the Jordan stops; as the river Jordan stops, so let the blood stop in the wound.” The invariant consists of the narrative and the incantational fragments; the last may function as a separate charm (for example, in East Slavic tradition).

2. The charm was known from the 11–12<sup>th</sup> century up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest records: Vulgar Latin (manuscript from the Vatican library Hs 5359, fol. 30v, the boundary of the 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries); Old High German (*Bamberg incantation for stopping bleeding*, 11<sup>th</sup> century) and Middle High German (*Milstet incantation for stopping bleeding*, 12<sup>th</sup> century). The most recent records: in Byelorussian Polesia in the 1980–1990s (Agapkina, Levkievskaia and Toporkov 2003; Novak, Shteiner 1998), in Lithuania in Polish in 1991 (Zowczak 2000).

3. The charm is widespread in Central, Western, North and Eastern Europe: in Byelorussian, Czech, Dutch, English, German, Lettish, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Ukrainian languages.

4. The sources<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Agapkina, Levkievskaia and Toporkov 2003, no 475, comments of A. Toporkov; Agapkina 2010, pp. 454–484.

<sup>9</sup> *Byelorussian*: Shein 1893:539, no 29; Bartashevich 1992, nos 478, 481, 507; Novak, Shteiner 1998, no 139; Agapkina, Levkievskaia and Toporkov 2003, nos 283, 286, 288, 290, 293, 294;

6. The charm is known both in manuscript and oral tradition.

7. There are 2 main versions, which differ in the content of the narrative part:

7.1. Christ with John or an apostle comes to the Jordan and orders it to stop; the motif of Christ's baptism is absent. The first record was made in Vulgar Latin (the boundary of 9th–10th centuries): “Christus et sanctus Johannes ambelans ad flumen Jordane, dixit Christus ad sancto Johanne: «restans flumen Jordane». Commode restans flumen Jordane, sic restet vena ista in homine isto. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti. Amen.” [Christ and Saint John were walking by the River Jordan. Christ said to Saint John: “River Jordan, rest!” Just as the River Jordan stood still, so may this vein in this man stand still. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen] (Ebermann 1903, p. 24).

7.2. John baptizes Christ in Jordan; before this there may be an announcement about Christ's birth in Bethlehem. The earliest record is in a Middle High German manuscript from Vienna (*Milstet incantation for stopping bleeding*): “Der hêlîgo Christ wart geboren ce Betlehem, dannen quam er widere ce Jerusalem. Dâ ward er getoufet vone Jôhanne in demo Jordâne. Duo verstuont der Jordânis fluz unt der sîn runst. Also verstant dû, bluotrinna, durch des heiligen Christes minna: Du verstat an der nôte, alsô der Jordân tâte, duo der guote sancte Jôhannes den heiligen Christ toufta. verstan dû, bluotrinna, durch des hêlîges Cristes minna.“ [The Holy Christ was born in Bethlehem, from

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*Czech*: Velmezova 2004, nos 178, 183, 221, 246, 248;

*Dutch*: Ebermann 1903, p. 31;

*English*: Hunt 1990, p. 87, nos 23, 25-26; p. 93, nos 53, 55; p. 96, no 76; Ebermann 1903, pp. 24-31 (10 texts); Forbes 1971, p. 300, no 61; Davies 1996, pp. 20-21, nos 1, 3, 4, 6; Schulz 2003, p. 89 (2 texts);

*German*: Ebermann 1903, pp. 24-31 (35 texts); Toporova 1996, pp. 132-133; Holzmann 2001, pp. 226-238 (23 texts); Schulz 2003, pp. 81-91 (16 texts);

*Latin*: Ebermann 1903, p. 24 (=Schulz 2003, p. 79); Schulz 2003, pp. 80, 89 (3 texts);

*Lettish*: Treiland 1881, nos 290, 292, 620 (=Zav'ialova 2006, pp. 211-212; with a translation into Russian);

*Lithuanian*: Mansikka 1929, no 29 (with a translation into German; = Zav'ialova 2006, p. 210; with a translation into Russian); Zav'ialova 2006, p. 210 (with a translation into Russian);

*Netherlandish*: Ohrt 1931/1932, p. 767;

*Norwegian*: Ohrt 1931/1932, pp. 767, 769;

*Polish*: Udziela 1891, p. 215; Biegeleisen 1929, p. 94; Zowczak 2000, p. 297 (=Zowczak 1994, p. 15) (4 texts, written in Lithuania); Zav'ialova 2006, p. 210 (written in Lithuania);

*Russian*: Mazhnikov 1893, p. 130; Kharlamov 1901, p. 31; Anikin 1998, nos 1672-1674;

*Swedish*: Ebermann 1903, pp. 30, 33 (3 texts);

*Ukrainian*: Efimenko 1874, no 43; Rokosowska 1900, p. 460; Podbereski 1880, p. 79; Agapkina, Levkievskaia and Toporkov 2003, no 297;

there he came again to Jerusalem. Then he was baptized by John in the Jordan. Then the River Jordan and its current stood still. So, bloodflow, be still!, through the Holy Christ's love. You must needs stand, as did the Jordan, when the good Saint John baptized the Holy Christ. Bloodflow, you be still!, through the Holy Christ's love] (Schulz 2003, p. 81).

8. The charm was used mainly for stopping bleeding and against a bloody wound, but from the 15th century in different traditions it functioned also as a charm against other illnesses.

9. The charm combines often with other charms for stopping bleeding: *Longinus-formula* and *Blood and water from the wound*.

10. The peculiarities of the charms in different traditions:

*Byelorussian*: the spread of the charm in East Slavic traditions (first of all in Byelorussian) is connected with a Polish Catholic influence (Zowczak 2000, pp. 298–9); in Byelorussian (and also in Russian and Ukrainian) the charm consists of the quomodo-formula, and the narrative part is absent;

*Czech*: the charm is used against snakebite, against conflagration, against consumption; it is not used for stopping bleeding;

*English*: the most popular type in England; it amounts near 1/12 of the whole corpus of English charms. There are 42 English texts in J. Roper's database; the earliest example was from the 15th century; the latest 1929; 23 records belonged to the 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> centuries, and 18 to the period from 1800 to 1929 (Roper 2005, pp. 104–9).

*Russian*: the charm is known in a few records only in the south of Russia and it is not at all known in the centre and north of Russia; the earliest text was in a 17th-century manuscript herbal translated from Polish and compiled in Lithuanian Rus (Pushkarev 1977, p. 115).

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<sup>10</sup> Ebermann 1903, pp. 24–35; Jacoby 1913, pp. 200–9; Poznanskii 1995, pp. 61–3, 219–22; Ohrt 1930, pp. 269–74; Ohrt 1931–1932; Zowczak 1994, pp. 15–9; Davies 1996, pp. 20–1; Zowczak 2000, pp. 297–304; Holzmann 2001, pp. 116–9, 94–6; Agapkina, Levkievskaia and Toporkov 2003, p. 176, no 283; Schulz 2003, pp. 79–93; Arnautova 2004, pp. 288–9; Roper 2005, pp. 104–9; Agapkina 2006, pp. 63–8; Zav'ialova 2006, pp. 210–5.

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