

### Mordvin beer

Beer played an important role in the lives of peoples living along the Volga and Kama. It was not only a popular drink in day-to-day life, but it also played a role in sacrificial celebrations. For example, during wedding ceremonies a cup of sanctified beer was given to the newlywed couple; during wakes they brewed beer and poured some of it on the grave; when offering a sacrifice to the water spirit, they poured some beer into the water.

I have collected 14 lexemes with the meaning of ‘beer, type of beer’ from various Mordvin dictionaries. The most well-known with the most general meaning is *nu6o* which is of Russian origin. This word can be found in all Slavic languages and in several languages in Russia. Another word, *6paza* ‘weak, home-made beer’ is also of Russian origin and it also exists in Eastern Slavic languages (Hungarian borrowed the Ukrainian *braha* word form).

Turkic languages had a major influence on the Finno-Ugric languages along the Volga. In Mordvin, *poza* is a Tartar loanword. It also exists in several Turkic languages. In Hungarian (*boza*) it is a Cuman loanword. It was also borrowed by many other Balkan languages from Turkish. *Pur6e* was borrowed from Volga Bulgar into Mordvin, and also in the form *pura* into Mari.

There are, of course, some among the lexemes with the meaning ‘beer’ which developed language-internally through transfer of meaning. Examples for this are *6apamo ved’* ‘sour water’, *olgo-ved’* and *6u6er-ved’* ‘straw water’, *6u6-ved’* ‘barley water’.

It is interesting that a cognate of the Vedic Sanskrit *s6r6* never appeared in Mordvin, unlike in the other languages of the Volga region, cf. Mari *s6ra*, Udmurt *sur*, Komi *sur*, Mansi *s6r6*, *sor*, *sur*. This word first appeared in Hungarian in the form *s6r* before the conquest of the Carpathian Basin through influence from an Eastern European language.

*Keywords: Mordvin, Wanderwort, Russian and Turkish loanwords*

SÁNDOR MATICSÁK