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The Types of the Mordvin Settlement Names

During the millenia of its history the Volga-Oka river basin has served as a home for several peoples and ethnic groups. In the early ages of the history of the region Iranian and Baltic influences can be revealed apart from the influences of the Volga–Oka tribes of an unknown ethnic origin. The traces of this contact can be found, besides the loan-words, in the most ancient stratum of hydronyms.

Among the hydronyms of Mordovia we can separate a stratum that shows marked similarities with certain types of hydronyms of the European territory of Russia. On one hand, these names are not transparent etymologically, cannot be derived from any of today's known languages, on the other hand, morphological homologies connect them: the suffixes that can be separated in these names have a CV form, and they end in *-a* (the only exception is *-im*). The large zone of names that seem to be morphologically similar extend from North Russia through Yaroslav, Kostroma, Nizhnij Novgorod and Ryazan as far as to the southern border of Mordovia. Among the hydronyms of Mordovia, on the basis of morphological criteria, the following probably belong to this ancient stratum: *Amorda*; *Juzga*, *Luńga*, *Ožga*, *Văžga*; *Aťma*, *Čašeľma*, *Lośma*, *Luhma*, *Ľastma*, *Pirma*; *Aľza*; *Šadim*, *Kuldim*, *Urľedim*. A serious debate unfolded in the 1950s and 1960s about the origin of this seemingly ancient hydronymic stratum, and the different opinions crystallised principally in MATVEEV's and SEREBRENNIKOV's theories. MATVEEV considered these names as of an ancient Finno-Ugric origin, while SEREBRENNIKOV attributed them to an unknown Volga–Oka population (MATVEEV 1964, 1965, 1967, 1969, SEREBRENNIKOV 1955, 1966, 1970, and KUKLIN 1995a, 1995b, 1996, POSPELOV 1965, 1968, SMOLITSKAYA 1973).

Besides the known loan-words, certain hydronymic resemblances seem to support the Mordvin–Baltic linguistic contacts. Hydronyms of Baltic origin in the Central Volga region may be the following: *Cna* < Baltic, cf. Old Prus. *tusnas* 'quiet'; *Lama* < Baltic, cf. Latvian *lama* 'puddle, splash', Lithuanian *loma* 'ebb'; *Vop*, *Vopša*, *Upa* < Baltic, cf. Latvian *upe*, Lithuanian *ūpė*, Old Prus. *ape* 'river', and *Karnaj* ~ Baltic *Karna*, *Karnupe*; *Oka* ~ *Akis*, *Akys*, *Ace*; *Vad* ~ *Vet*, *Vit*; *Veša*, *Viša* ~ *Viša*, *Vieša*, *Viešetė* (GORDEEV 1966: 104–105, 1967: 181–183, TOPOROV 1988: 156–157).

Several loan-words also support the Mordvin–Iranian relations. However, I have found only two hydronyms in Mordovia that may be considered of



Iranian origin: *Rudńa* < ? Iranian, cf. Old Persian *rautah* 'river', Sogd *rwat* 'id.' + *-ńa* diminutive suffix; *Śivĩń* < ? Iranian, cf. Av. *siyāh* 'black', *-ĩń* diminutive suffix (GORDEEV 1967: 189).

The Mordvin population, which had been strongly influenced on one hand by the Turkic ethnic groups, on the other hand, by the Russian settlers, settled onto this multi-layered substratum later. The traces of these population movements can be clearly shown in the toponyms, of course.

In spite of the fact that the Mordvin people are in minority in their own republic¹ they have preserved the original Mordvin toponymic stratum well: a significant part of the settlement names with a known etymology are of Mordvin origin.

The Mordvin toponymic system does not show a homogeneous picture. On one hand, the Mordvin ethnos, which was formed here, also borrowed some (mainly hydronymic) elements, on the other hand, and it is a more significant factor, it had a strong Russian influence which lasted for centuries: the Russian toponymic system practically transformed the Mordvin system completely, and shaped the Mordvin geographical names in its own likeness. The original Mordvin names have survived in the system of the internal or non-official names, in more or less unchanged forms.

In this study I deal with the settlement names of Mordvin origin in Mordovia, and I try to describe briefly the onomastic clusters of the settlement names. In the etymological analysis I use the Erzya appellative forms. I do not pay special attention to the separation of Erzya and Moksha in my study, because, on one hand, this paper does not aim at separating the two dialects, on the other hand, the reconstruction of the centuries old forms existing at the time of the formation of settlement names would encounter serious difficulties due to the lack of the sources of linguistic history and archives. I give the Erzya and Moksha forms separated by '/' where necessary. Where the starting point is definitely Moksha, I mark it with 'M'. I give the settlement names and common words of Mordvin, Russian and Turkish, etc., origin in Latin characters.

My etymological analysis is mainly based on three sources: on INZHEVATOV's (1987), TSYGANKIN's (1993) and KAZAEVA's (2001) works. I gave

¹ Less than a third of the Mordvin people live in the republic named after them. My statistics (on how many percent of the respective Finno-Ugric peoples/ethnic groups live inside the borders of their own republic or autonomous region) based on SUIHKONEN's data (1987: 218) clearly shows their negative position: Vogul 87%, Zyryan 86%, Permyak 81%, Votyak 69%, Ostyak 58%, Karelian 58%, Cheremiss 50%, Mordvin 29%. (On the topic also cf. LALLUKA 1982: 189, MÉSZÁROS 1989: 143, NAGY—ZÁICZ 1998: 137.)

the meanings of Mordvin appellative data mainly on the basis of PAASONEN's dictionary (MdWb.). In this paper I do not provide the bibliographical data of the different etymologies, these can be found in my earlier work (MATICSÁK 1995).

1. Settlement names of appellative origin

A significant part of the names of Mordvin origin has two members, that is they can be described by the complement (anterior constituent) + the basic constituent (posterior constituent) structure.² The other names are homogeneous, that is they either include a basic constituent only, or an element with a semantic content (mainly denoting a characteristic) in accordance with its complement function. The settlement names having one constituent have been created either in a metonymic way from the names originally having two members (that is lexically having two constituents), a typical example of which is the settlement name having one constituent created from a river name with the *l'ej/l'äj* complement having two members; or appellatives lexically also having one constituent have become settlement names.

1.1. Names of two members formed by grammatical construction

Thus, those names of two members can be found in this cluster whose posterior constituent is a geographical appellative; in the Republic of Mordovia the *vel'e/vel'a* 'village' and *bije, bijo, bujo* 'clan, tribe (their abodes)' basic constituents appear in great numbers.

a) *Vel'e/vel'a* 'village'

This geographical appellative is common all over the territory populated by the Mordvin people. At the same time, its usage shows certain duality: it is the most common constituent among the non-official (internal) names, while among the official names or names that underwent Russification you can scarcely find one. This phenomenon reflects the relationship between the original inhabitants of the Central Volga region and the settling Russian population: the original, Finno-Ugric settlement name model (the second member of which is a geographical appellative) was gradually replaced

² This construction type does not only characterize the Mordvin, but other Finno-Ugric (and Turkic) languages, too. Some examples of determinants meaning 'river': Hung. **jó* (*Berettyó, Sajó*), Vogul *ja* (*Ńerpja, Šunja, Vorja*), Ostyak *jogan* (*Harjogan, Ńešjogan, Tromjogan*), Zyryan *ju* (*Rasju, Uzju, Vidžju*), *va* (*Jušva, Sozva, Šakva*), Cheremiss *ejer* (*Muzejer, Solejer*), Finnish *joki* (*Aurajoki, Kalajoki, Kemijoki*), LappK. *jok* (*Limtajok, Nałmjok*) (SEREBRENNIKOV 1959: 38, TURKIN 1989: 13–14), and Turkish *čan* (*Karačan*), Azerb. *šaj* (*Selenčaj*), Uzbekh *saj* (*Aksaj, Širsaj*) (DONIDZE 1969: 165–168, MURZAEV 1973: 190–192).



during the centuries by the Russian name structure type, and receded into the sphere of the spoken (non-official) language.

This process ended by the end of the last century, and there are not any settlement names with the *vele/velä* component. In the light of this, today's situation hardly seems surprising: in the territory of the Republic of Mordovia there are only two official names (*Od vele*, *Värvel*) which contain this determinant, what is more, one of them, *Od vele* 'new village' was created in the 30s of the twentieth century, thus, from the point of view of the original name giving model it can be considered as an artificial name. In another part of the original Mordvin populated territory, in the territory of today's Nizhnij Novgorod there is only one official name, *Kardaviľ*, that can be classified into the cluster.

The origin of this word has long been the scientists' concern. BUDENZ searched its etimon, and he compared the Finnish *paljo* 'many', the Cheremiss *püla* 'id.', the Vogul *paul*, *pajl*, 'village', the Ostyak *pugät*, *pegäl* 'id.' with it, leaving out of consideration the problems of phonological development (FU *p- ~ Mordvinian v-), as well as the semantic difficulties ('many' > 'village'). AHLQUIST, following a similar way to a certain extent, looked for the kinship of the Finnish *kylä*, and the Hung. *falu* 'village' words. The most plausible etymological explanations of the word are ascribed to UOTILA and ITKONEN. UOTILA finds it possible to compare the Cheremiss plural marker KB *-velä*, *-welä*, B *-wlak*, *-blak*, *-bälak* forms to the word. ITKONEN connects the *vele/velä* forms to LpN *välve* 'pack of wolves; pack of hounds' words. About the semantic development cf. 'flock, pack, lot' > LpN 'pack of wolves'; Mord. 'group' > 'village' (ITKONEN 1944: 363–364, KERESZTES 1986: 150, 166, 184–185, UEW 822, UOTILA 1946: 30–31). Various new etymological attempts (MOSIN 1968, VAVILIN 1975: 188–190) failed.

In the overwhelming majority of the cases (according to my calculation in about two thirds of the cases) an anthroponym of Mordvin origin attaches to the *vele/velä* posterior constituent, and the two constituents form an unmarked possessive adjective structure, e.g. *Alka vele* (officially *Alkino*) < *Alkin*, *Armej vele* (*Armejevka*) < *Armej*, *Boraž vele* (*Baraševo*) < *Boraš*, *Botužeľe* (*Batuševo*) < *Batuš*, *Kapazeľe* (*Kapasovo*) < *Kopas*, *Kočkur vele* (*Kočkurovo*) < *Kočkur*, *Kolaž vele* (*Kalaševo*) < *Kolaš*, *Konak vele* (*Podgornoje Kanakovo*) < *Konak*, *Kuraj vele* (*Kurajevo*) < *Kuraj*, *Mařež vele* (*Boľšoje Mařeševo*) < *Mařeš*, *Norad vele* (*Narovatovo*) < *Norat*, *Nosak vele* (*Nosakino*) < *Nosakaj*, *Polaj vele* (*Palajevka*) < *Polaj*, *Povod'eľe* (*Povod'imovo*) < *Povod*, *Sudož vele* (*Sudoševo*) < *Sudoš*, *Tustat vele* (*Tustatovo*) < *Tustat*. Some examples of a Russian or Volga Turkish anterior



constituents: *Andréle* (*Andréjevka*) < *Andřej*, *David vele* (*Mordovskoje Davidovo*) < *David*, *Ignadvele* (*Boľšoje Ignatovo*) < *Ignat*, *Ivan vele* (*Ivanovka*) < *Ivan*, and *Mokšeň Kara vele* (*Mordovskoje Kořino*) < *Kara*, *Sabančele* (*Sabančejevo*) < *Sabanči*, *Šugur vele* (*Šugurovo*) < *Šugar*.

The anterior constituent can refer to the character of the settlement (*Od vele* < *od* 'new', *Sire vele* < *sire* 'old', *Pokš vele* < *pokš* 'big'); can be a plant name (*Pičevele* < *piče* 'pinetree', *Poju vele* < *poju* M 'poplar', *Säli vele* < *säli* M 'elmtree'); can express place relations: *Alo vele* < *alo* 'lower', *Värvel* < *vär* M 'upper'; and can rarely be a name of river: *Vad vele*, *Isa vele* and *Survele* settlements bear the names of three bigger rivers of the region, Vad, Issa and Sura.

The geographical spread of the non-official settlement names of the Republic of Mordovia with the *vele/velä* posterior constituents corresponds with the area of the settlement names of anthroponymic origin, and this ancient name giving type characterises mostly the settlement names in a part of the original abodes of the Mordvin people, the Atyashevo, Kovylkino and Temnikov districts.

While examining the toponyms with *vele/velä* constituents phonologically, two phenomena deserve our attention:

- a) The terminal voiceless consonants of the anthroponyms as anterior constituents become voiced (independently of the existence of *v* after them): *š* > *ž*: *Araš* > *Orašele*, *Batuš* > *Botužele*; *ś* > *ź*: *Mařeś* > *Mařež vele*, *Pileś* > *Piležele*, *Sudoś* > *Sudož vele*.
- b) The initial *v* of *vele/velä* is often dropped (whether it is preceded by a consonant cluster or not): *Andréle*, *Botužele*, *Kapazele*, *Kobele*, *Orašele*, *Pardele*, *Parinzele*, *Povodele*, *Sabančele*, *Sajnele*, *Valgapele*, etc.

The question of spelling as one word or not can be neglected, because we are talking about non-official forms, in general, forms of the spoken language. Among the names we can find examples of both ways of spelling.

In the great majority of the cases (in about three quarters) the non-official names became official, (names undergo Russification) by those phonetic and grammatical adaptations which characterise the Russian language, e.g. *Botužele* > *Batuševo*, *Sudož vele* > *Sudoševo*, etc. In several cases the new name was created by mirror translation: *Od vele* > *Novaja Ďerevnia*; *Pičevele* > *Barki*, *Sosnovka*. In other cases the non-official name refers only to the age, the location, and the size of the settlement: *Alo vele* (offic. *Nižnije Borki*), *Od vele* (*Novaja Pičemorga*), *Pokš vele* (*Boľšoje Mařeševo*), *Sire vele* (*Staraja Pičemorga*). But in some occurrences there is no connection between the old and the new names: *Od vele* ~ *Kulikovka*, *Pičevele* ~ *Kičatovo*, *Survele* ~ *Sabajevo*, *Säli vele* ~ *Velmajevo*.



b) *Bije, bijo, bujo* 'clan, tribe (their abodes)'

The Erzya-Mordvin names with *bije, bijo, bujo* posterior constituents are used in a comparatively small area, contrary to the semantically related *ve-le/velə* constituent: their main area is a north eastern area of the Republic of Mordovia, inhabited by the Erzya. We can find toponyms with this posterior constituent beyond the borders of the Republic, in the south of the Nizhnij Novgorod area, and in Lukoyanov district, e.g. *Tašto Ivańbijo* (*Staroje Ivančevo*), *Od Ivańbijo* (*Novoje Ivančevo*), *Aťańbijo* (*Aťingejevo*), *Salmańbijo* (*Salmanovo*). The constituent can only be substantiated among the non-official names.

The *bije, bijo, bujo* forms etymologically correspond with the Erzya *bujo, pijo* 'boy', and all of them can be traced back to the Ancient Mord. **pujə/pijə* < **pūjə* form, which can be connected to the Hung. *fiú*, Zyryan-Votyak *pi*, Cher. *püerye*, Fi. *poika* (< FU **pojka* 'boy, son') words. The initial *p-* was voiced in certain phonetic positions (in compound words) (cf. *tov* 'seed' + *šuro* 'seed' > *tovšuro* 'wheat'; *jon* 'side' + *tol* 'fire' > *jondol* 'lightning'; *Oržan* anthroponym + *pije* > *Oržanbije*; *Kečeń* anthroponym + *pije* > *Kečeńbije* (KERESZTES 1986: 122, MOSIN 1976: 173–174, UEW 390).

The meaning of *bije, bijo, bujo* changed when attached to the anthroponymic stem: 'boy' > 'head of a family, of a clan, leader of a joint family' > 'clan, tribe'. This phenomenon can be observed today, based on TSYGANKIN's data (1983: 164): *Mitřanbuje* 'all those who belong to the family of the man called Dmitrij'; *Ohremeńbuje* 'those who are members of Yefrem's family'. This word adopted the meaning 'the clan's, the tribe's abodes'. In the same way, the Zyryan *pi* can also be attached to toponyms: *Illapi* 'Ilja's son' (it is the name of a road, act. Ilja's son's road), *Kaťpi* 'Catherine's son (the name of a lake); and *pijan* serves as a definition of a group of the population: *izmapijan* 'those living at the Izma River', *jevmapijan* 'those living at the Yemva'. We cannot accept VORONIN's etymology, according to which the word can be traced back to the Tartar *buje* 'country, zone' (cf. Russian *оуѣ* 'country, boundaries'), and originally meant 'the boundaries separating the Mordvins from the Sergach Tartars' (TSYGANKIN 1969: 178, 1983: 163–164, VAVILIN 1975: 190–191), because of semantic difficulties.

Only anthroponymic anterior constituents can join to this posterior constituent as the data collected by myself demonstrate: *Kečeńbije* (offic. *Kečuševo*) < *Kečeń*, *Kuľäsbije* (*Kuľasovo*) < *Kuľäs*, *Ordańbuje* (*Ardatov*) < *Ordań*, *Orozbije* (*Urusovo*) < *Oroz*, *Oržańbuje* (*Aržad'ejevo*) < *Oržań*, *Siřeźbuje* (*Mordovskije Siřeši*) < *Siřeś*; and *Tarasbuje* (*Tarasovo*) < Russian *Taras*.

c) Basic constituents denoting other settlement types

I could classify only a few names into this cluster:

morgo/morga 'new settlement' (< 'tree; cleared woodland') – *Novaja* and *Staraja Pičemorga* < *piče* 'pinetree'; *Novaja* and *Staraja T'erizmorga*; *t'eľim* 'winter quarters' – *Novij* and *Starij Šuks't'eľim*; *Starij T'est'eľim*; *Ver'-t'eľim* < *veře* 'upper'.

1.2. Names having one member

1.2.1. Settlement names formed in a metonymic way (originally having two lexical constituents)

a) *Lej/läj* 'river'³

There are two geographical appellatives in the Mordvin language meaning 'river': *lej/läj* and *jov*, *jav/jevas*, *javas*. The areas of their usage are significantly different. The *jov*, *jav/javas*, *jevas* have Uralian origins (cf. Fi. *joki*, Old Hung. *jó* < PU **joke*; UEW 99). The Uralian etymological dictionary considers the Mordvin form as being doubtful because it appears only in geographical names. The only form listed in the dictionary, the *Jov* denotes the Mordvin name of the river Moksha. However, more words with this constituent can be found among the Mordvin hydronyms (*Javas*,

³ Settlement names are most often formed from hydronyms in a metonymic way. The hydronym and the settlement name are the same in this semantic name formation because the new place toponym is created without any change of the morphological structure. The morphematic construction is also relatively common in the Russian language area, the settlement name takes an -sk suffix: *Angarsk* < *Angara*, *Bijsk* < *Bija*, *Irkutsk* < *Irkut*, *Iževsk* < *Iž*, *Kursk* < *Kur*, *Omsk* < *Om*, *Orsk* < *Or*, *Tomsk* < *Tom*, *Uralsk* < *Ural*. — In a superficial overview we can find several 'name pairs' that seem to originate from the same etimon. Nevertheless, in a significant part of them there is no organic connection between the hydronym and the settlement name, the village was not built where a stream bearing a similar name can be found, etc. The fact that we can find such name pairs manifests only the same name giving motive. A great many settlements and waters can receive their names, often independently of each other, after a plant native at the water-side or in the confines of the settlement, e.g. *Lepjevka* (hydronym) ~ *Lepjevo* (settlement name) < *lepe* 'alder', *Pičajevka* (hydronym) ~ *Pičevka* (s. n.) < *piče* 'pinetree', etc. (My examination of hydronyms excludes these data.) Using data found in Mordovia, I found 137 data pairs where we can suppose a hydronym > settlement name genesis, thus about 10% of the settlement names of the Republic of Mordovia can be considered of hydronymic origin. More than two thirds of them were formed by metonymic name extension, this means that the structure of the hydronym having one constituent and the settlement name, similarly having one constituent, are isomorphs: *Arga*, *Aľma*, *Čapamo*, *Insar*, *Karnaj*, *Loľma*, *Puľta*, *Veľga*, etc.

Javļejka, *Jevļejka*), and on the basis of these I believe the Mordvin form can be listed without a question mark (it is similar to the Old Hungarian word *jó* found only in hydronyms, cf. *Sajó*, *Hejő*, *Berettyó*).

The Mordvin *jov*, *jav/jevas*, *javas* have only survived in geographical names, and their appellative meaning disappeared during the times, and they were replaced by another word meaning 'river', by *ļej/ļāj* (similarly to the Hungarian *jó* ~ *foljó* word pairs).

Different theories have been published on the origins of the *ļej/ļāj*. VASMER identifies it with the Turkish *li* adjectival suffix meaning 'being provided with sg.', KORNILOV found a connection with the Chuv. *jej/jaj* 'overflow; flood' words, and GORDEEV traced the relationship with the Lithuanian *liėti* 'flow, overflow', *liejikas* 'flood' words. The recent technical literature finds correspondence in some Lapp dialects (~ LpN *lække* 'valley, basin', LpL *liekkē* ~ *lähkē* 'a valley stretching far between two ridges', LpKo, LpNot *liekkē* 'valley' < FW **lākā* 'river valley, depression') (GORDEEV 1967: 183, KORNILOV 1973: 98–99, UEW 685).

The *ļej/ļāj* is a "full member" of the Mordvin vocabulary, it forms compounds (e.g. *ļej-pra* 'spring') and derivated words (e.g. *ļejne* 'stream') (MdWb. 1100).

The *ļej/ļāj* occurs in almost 200 names in the database of about fifteen hundred Mordvin hydronyms, compiled by me, thus it is the most common determinant of Mordvin names having two members. This "most Mordvin" determinant can be a great help in drawing the ethnic map of the Mordvin people, since *ļej/ļāj* occurs not only inside the borders of today's Republic of Mordovia, but in the neighbouring areas, too, and can be recorded even in more remote areas as a hydronym and as a settlement name with a hydronymic origin, as well. e.g. *Bukaļej*, *Čuvarļej*, *Iñeļej*, *Išļej*, *Kavļej*, *Kudļej*, *Lipeļej*, *Močaļejka*, *Ñeļej*, *Tumļej*, *Varmaļej*, *Vešeļej*, *Vodoļejka* (the district of Nizhnij Novgorod); *Čuvarļej*, *Išļej*, *Javļej*, *Tomļej*, *Veļeļej* (Chuvash Republic); *Karmaļej*, *Lepelējka*, *Semiļejka*, *Trusļejka* (the district of Simbirsk), *Kargaļej*, *Pičiļejka*, *Urļejka*, *Viļejka*, *Višļej* (the district of Penza); *Balikļej*, *Lipļāj*, *Ošļāj*, *Pičelāj*, *Šavirļāj* (the district of Tambov); *Pokaļej* (the district of Tula), *Lāj*, *Lājkuŗa* (Komi Republic), *Balakļejka* (Ukraine) (BARASHKOV 1974: 21–22, DANILINA 1974: 116, MOROZOVA 1971: 208–209, TRUBE 1967: 244, TURKIN 1975: 222). According to L. L. TRUBE's research (1975: 211–212) the highest number of names containing the *ļej/ļāj* determinant beyond the borders of today's Republic of Mordovia can be found in the southern part of the Nizhnij Novgorod district, mainly in Lukoyanov and Sergach areas, that is, in the ancient Mordvin populated



area. I found 58 settlement names with the *lej/läj* constituent in the census book of Penza published in 1894 (Справочная книга по Пензенской губернии на 1894 год. Список населенных мест Пензенской губернии. Пенза). Projecting them onto a map, we can clearly see that most of the names occur in the northern dialects, and their number is gradually decreasing towards the south. This frequency data and the spread of this name type, which can be projected onto a map, clearly match the borders of the original Mordvin populated territory.

The hydronyms with the *lej/läj* posterior constituent can often become settlement names. I found 65 settlement names that contain this geographical determinant on the basis of INZHEVATOV's dictionary. This is about 5 per cent of the fifteen hundred settlement names, thus we can regard it a significant name type.

It is not worth publishing exact figures here because of the relativity of the open corpus I studied, but the indicators, and proportions make possible the description of certain tendencies. The etymological distribution of settlement names supports a significant Mordvin prevalence, I have found the Mordvin common word for 90 per cent of the names that can be etymologized, and only few are of Russian or Volga Turkish origin.

The anterior constituents of the names containing the *lej/läj* determinant belong to diverse semantic groups. (When giving the linguistic belonging of etimons I mark only the Russian origin, but not the Mordvin.) The most common anterior constituents of the corpus are the plant and animal names, e.g. *Kamišlejka* < Russian *kamiš* 'rush, cane'; *Kuzlej* < *kuz* 'spruce'; *Leplej*, *Leplejka* < *lepe* 'alder'; *Pičelejka* < *piče* 'pinetree'; *Pišla*, *Pišlāj*, *Pišlājka* < *pekše/päšə* 'lime-tree'; *Tumalejka*, *Tumolej* < *tumo* 'oak'; and *Ćipizlāj* < Russian *čibis* 'lapwing', *Kargoļej* < *kargo* 'crane'.

Furthermore, the anterior constituent can refer to the following:

- the colour of the water: *Śijalej*, *Śijalejka* < *śija* 'silver'
- the temperature of the water: *Kimlāj* < ? *keľme* 'cold'
- the water being potable: *Śemilejka*, *Śimilejka* < *śime-* 'drink'
- its sound: *Turlejka* < *torno* 'plash, gurgle'
- the size of the river or stream: *Īnelej*, *Īnelejka*, *Īnelāj* < *īne* 'big'
- the water output: *Solaslej* < *sola-* 'melt'; *Tundalejka* < *tundo* 'spring' (actually 'the water coming alive in spring, at snowbreak')
- the form of the water: *Videlej* < *vid'e* 'straight'
- the material of the waterbed: *Čuvarlejka*, *Šuvarlāj*, *Šuvarlej* < *čovar* 'sand'; *Kevlej* < *kev* 'stone'

- the location of the water: *Ikļej* < *ikele* 'being in the vanguard', *Trusļejka* < *troks, turks* 'across' (actually 'the stream flowing across the village')
- the economic activities along the water: *Kardalēj* < *kardo* 'stable, pen'; *Navļa*, *Navļej*, *Novokļejka* < *nava-* 'immerse, ret (hemp)'; *Pāngeļej* < *peŋgə* M 'firewood, log'
- a building at the water: *Sed' ļej* < *sed'/sed'* 'bridge'.

The anterior constituent can also be an anthroponym (*Kanakļejka* < *Kanak*, *Samozļejka* < *Somaj*) and a geographical appellative referring to a hydronym (*Javļejka*, *Jevļejka* < *jov* 'river, water'; *Šengilejka* < *šango* 'tributary, branching'; *Vetļāj* < *ved'* 'water').

The hydronyms with the *ļej/lāj* posterior constituent take part in the adaptation processes, that is in the Russification of Mordvin names. The Russian hydronyms, because of the conformity with the gender of *peka*, *во-да*, are feminine in general, and the non-Russian names also submit to this constraint. The simplest way of the Russification of the *ļej/lāj* is the adoption of the *-ka* diminutive suffix (which could originally refer to the size of the water, but it has completely lost its diminutive function by now, and we can find names with the *-ka* constituent in a high number among the names of bigger rivers). The names with the *-ļejka/-lājka* posterior constituent can become settlement names by metonymic extension in an unchanged form (e.g. *Javļejka*, *Kamišļejka*, *Kanakļejka*, *Lepļejka*, *Samozļejka*, *Šengilejka*, *Tumalējka*).

Very rarely is the *ļej/lāj* a victim of phonological changes, and I found only two *ļej/lāj* changes in the corpus (*Navļa*, but *Navļej*; *Pišļa*, but *Pišļāj*). The reason for this could probably be the above mentioned taxonomic constraint, the "feminisation", but we cannot exclude the possibility of errors coming from the Cyrillic transcription.

b) *Kužo/kužə* 'clearing'

A relatively small number of toponyms belong to the cluster of settlement names containing the *kužo/kužə* constituent. This geographical appellative can be traced back to the Finn-Permian basic language; cf. Zyryan-Votyak *kuž* 'clearing' < FP **kuš3* 'barren, bare; barren place'. The word has undergone a 'barren place' > 'clearing' semantic change in the Mordvin and Permian languages (KERESZTES 1986: 74, UEW 678).

In the names I have substantiated, the anterior constituent is always of Mordvin origin, e.g. *Kamakuža* < *kalmo* 'cemetery', *Kaŋguši* < *kaŋśl'* 'hemp', *Pičinguši* < *piče* 'pinetree', *Řepakuši* < *řepe* 'area prepared for sowing', *Šajguši* < *šāj* M 'moorland, reeds', *Širinguši* < *šire* 'edge, side, border', *Verakuši*



< *veře* 'upper'. (The word has survived in the Mordvin settlement names in *-kuši*, *-guši* versions because of the phonetic and grammatical adaptation.)

This determinant can appear in settlement names without an anterior constituent, as we said in the chapter on (plain) geographical names becoming settlement names, in official (*Kuženka*, *Kuški*) and non-official names, *Kužo* (offic. *Novaja Poľana*), *Mokšeň Kužeňa* (*Mordovskaja Poľana*), *Valda Kuža* (*Jasnaja Poľana*), as well.

c) Other geographical appellatives

There are several names among the settlement names containing a Mordvin geographical appellative which can be substantiated in only few names. I treat these in the same cluster for the sake of organization. These settlement names cannot be classified in different categories on the basis of the etymologies of their anterior constituent, because the anterior constituent is always of Mordvin origin in the case of each known etymology.

erke/ärkä 'lake' – *Imerka* < *E iñe* 'big', *T'eľimerki* < *teľim* 'winter dwelling'
latko/latka, *lotka*, *leťke* 'depression, gap, small valley where a stream runs'
 – *Kažlodka* < *kaž* 'bad', *Šuželatka* < *sužij/suži* 'capercaillie'

nal 'grove' – the *nal* is a collective noun in the Moksha dialect, as well: *kuz-nal* 'pine-wood', *tumanal* 'oak forest', *pojunal* 'trembling poplar forest';
nal has only survived in geographical names, in a collective noun meaning, in other fields of the vocabulary it has been replaced by *pulo* 'grove' – *Načenali* < *načko* 'wet, misty'

ieř/näř 'cape, promontory, estuary' – *Ingeňer*, *Ingiňär* < *ingel/iñgoľe* 'the one in the front, nearer'

pando/pandā 'height, hill' – *Pičpanda* < *piče* 'pinetree'

pulo 'grove' – *Pičepolonga* < *piče* 'pine'

šāj M 'moorland, reeds' – *Kargonžej* < *kargā* 'crane'; *Kľemeščej* < *keľmā* 'cold'

ur 'hill' – *Pičeuri* < *piče* 'pine'

viř 'forest' – *Pičeviř* < *piče* 'pine'.

1.2.2. Names having one constituent

a) (Plain) geographical names becoming settlement names. This genetic category is not too significant among the names of Mordvin origin, a few dozen names can be classified here. The appellatives as starting points of settlement names can be classified into three main semantic clusters:

– names belonging to the hydronymic semantic field, e.g. *Arga* < *arga* 'stony stream'; *Đerganovka* < *teřge* 'moorland, swamp'; *Junki* < ? *junge*



'stream, gully'; *Letki* < *let'ke* (~ *latko*) 'depression, gap, small valley where a stream runs'; *Šongar'* < *šonga'ra* 'moorland'; *Ved'anci* < *ved'* 'water';

– names denoting natural environment, e.g. *Koprń* < *kopor'* 'ridge, spine'; *Kuški*, *Kuženka* < *kužo* 'clearing'; *Lašma* < *lašmo* 'depression, gorge'; *Moda* < *moda* 'land, surface'; *Sańf* < *sańf* M 'virgin land, cleared land: a cleared but still unbroken area';

– names describing the location and the character of the settlement, e.g. *Morga* < *morgo* 'cleared land; new settlement'; *Pot'ma* < *potmo* 'the interior, the depth of something; heart of the woods'.

b) Names denoting a characteristic. Names created by plain name-giving, and elliptic construction belong to this cluster. The *lambamo latko* 'fresh stream', *Sal l'isma* 'salty spring', *Saltomo lej* 'saltless river', etc., two-member structures characteristic of the Mordvin language lose their basic constituent in certain cases. Thus, the process can be described like this: *Čapamo lej* (a name having two members created by syntagmatic construction) > *Čapamo* (a name having one constituent, formed by ellipsis). We can count with an ellipsis if the antecedent of the name having two members also can be substantiated, and this is a hard task in Mordovia, because of the lack of charters, and centuries old documents. Very often a derivative constituent (of Russian origin) points at the geographical nature of the first constituent remaining after the ellipsis, e.g. *Lepjevo* < *Lepe lej* (< *lepe* 'alder', *lej* 'river'); *Pičevka* < *piče lej* (< *piče* 'pine'). The settlement names that can be classified into this cluster were created from hydronyms in a metonymic way in each case, and dropping the basic constituent serves for differentiating the two name types.

Because of this, it is not surprising that the anterior constituents belong to the semantic categories most characteristic of hydronyms. They can be plant names (*kal'* 'willowtree' > *Kališa*, *kuz* 'spruce' > *Guzinci*, *lepe* 'alder' > *Novoje* and *Staroje Lepjevo*, *pekše* 'lime-tree' > ? *Novoje* and *Staroje Pšeńevo*, *piče* 'pine' > *Pičevka*, *Pičalovka*, *poju* M 'trembling poplar' > *Mordovskaja* and *Russkaja Pajevka*, *Pajevo*), they can refer to the character or some features of the water (*ašo* 'white, clean' > *Akšov*, *čapamo* 'sour' > *Čapamo*, *vežña* 'small' > *Važña*), to the quality of the ground (*čubar/šubar* 'sand' > *Šuvari*), or to the economic activity at the water (*kurta-* 'scorch, burn' > *Kurtaški*, *levš* 'lime-tree bark' > *Levža*, *Levženskij*), etc.

1.3. Summary

I would like to highlight three aspects summarizing the chapter on Mordvin settlement names of an appellative origin: one is the situation of the official and the non-official names, the other is the question of the origin of the



anterior constituents, and the third is the characterisation of the typological classes.

The relations of the official and non-official names. It is difficult to define the category of non-official names, because there can be significant differences between the numbers of the recorded and the really existing (spoken language) data, but the two tendencies can be outlined well, in spite of their relativity. The prevalence of the official names among the names having one constituent, and among the names having two, where *lej/läj* and *kužo/kužə* are the basic constituents, is clear, that is, the original Mordvin names still remain members of the Mordvin–Russian toponymic system after the Russian borrowing and adaptation. Contrary to this, the names with *bije*, *bijo*, *bujo* and *vele/velə* posterior constituents have completely receded into the non-official (Mordvin spoken language) sphere, and they have been replaced by the names having one constituent and undergone Russification. This change involved only the names with an anthroponymic anterior constituent, and with a possessive adjective structure, while the names with a qualifying adjective structure (whose anterior constituent usually refers to the environment, the character of the settlement) have been included in the system of the official names, though adapted and transformed. The fact that the elliptic construction, which is alien to the Mordvin language originally, can hardly be substantiated among the non-official names, deserves special attention.

Etymological clusters of the anterior constituents. The anterior constituents of the compounds are also of Mordvin origin in the overwhelming majority of the settlement names containing a geographical determinant of Mordvin origin, that is there are very few “mixed” compounds from an etymological point of view (non-Mordvin anterior + Mordvin posterior constituent). The mixed compounds of official names occur only in the group of *lej/läj* which is known in a wide area. Contrary to this, the mixed compounds of non-official names can be substantiated in the possessive adjective structures: Russian or Turkish anthroponym + *vele/velə*; *bije*, *bijo*, *bujo* constituent; but the anterior constituents of Mordvin etymology prevail here, too.

Typological classes of settlement names. Structurally the largest cluster of settlement names of a Mordvin appellative origin consists of the names having two members, created by grammatical construction, and containing a geographical appellative; in contrast, the proportion of names of one constituent is much lower. While examining the names of Russian origin of the region we can find a completely different picture: more than 60% of the names have an elliptic structure (MATICSÁK 1995: 107–108). There can be



certain tension observed between the two typologically different systems: the Mordvin names of two members entering the Russian settlement name system are often adapted, and have an elliptic structure (cf. e.g. *Boraž vele* > *Baraševo*, *Kočkur vele* > *Kočkurovo*, *Norad vele* > *Narovatovo*, etc.).

2. Settlement Names of Anthroponymic Origin

The names created from an anthroponym play an important role in the Mordvin settlement name system, besides the names of appellative origin. There are some districts where the proportion of Mordvin anthroponymic settlement names exceeds 50% (the districts of Temnikov, Atyashevo), or exceeds 40% (the districts of Kovylkino, Ardatovo). A methodological remark is needed here: I did not deal with the (non-official) *Armej vele* type names here, among the settlement names of an anthroponymic origin, I treated them as names formed by grammatical construction. Here I only survey the official anthroponymic settlement names without a geographical appellative, and having one constituent. It is a fact that there can be such contradictions originating from the differences of the onomastic and grammatical classifications, that the *Armej vele* settlement name appears in the previous chapter, and *Armejevo*, created from the former, appears in this part. However, I regard the most important organising principle of my paper the classification following onomastic categories.

The appellative settlement names originally communicate some information about the character, the location, the creation, the linguistic or ethnic belonging, and the environment, etc., of the settlement. The anthroponyms as settlement names communicate some completely different information. First, they usually inform about the linguistic belonging of the geographical name, provide a starting point in the chronological definition of the beginning of the place: on one hand, by the data existing in historical sources and almanacs about the owner of the settlement, on the other hand, the dominant name giving type of the region can be defined by onomastic analysis. Secondly, these anthroponyms inform us about the ancient anthroponymic system (the overwhelming majority of pre-Christian Mordvin names can only be found in toponyms), and about the migration of the population, too (because the new settlement bears the name of the founder of the old village very often, with or without a distinguishing adjective).

The Mordvin anthroponyms (family names) have become settlement names taking Russian suffixes. The family names always derive from the father's name, and not directly from the Mordvin appellatives or first names. Thus e.g. the *Venčakov* surname was not created from the *Venčak* first name, and even less from the word *venč* 'boat'; in the same way, the direct starting



point of the name *Kird'ajev* is not *kird'i* 'patient', and of *Inževatov* not the *inže* 'guest' appellative. So, the way of family name formation is: appellative > first name > father's name > family name. The last step in the process is a change belonging to another category, to the formation of settlement names.

The settlement name suffix of Russian origin is the second (maybe the third) suffix already in the given name type because the family name itself also contains a suffix of Russian origin, and most often we can find a Mordvin suffix in the Mordvin first names, too: *Kočkur* (Mordvin first name) > *Kočkurov* (father's name, family name) > *Kočkurovo* (settlement name). Thus here the *-ov/-jev*, *-in*, *-kin*, etc. suffixes are joined by the *-o*, *-a*, *-i*, etc. suffixes. Sometimes *-ovo*, *-jevo*, *-ino*, etc. can analogically be attached to the Mordvin name directly.

The overview of the role of the anthroponyms in the toponymic system needs a brief description of the formation and development of the Mordvin anthroponymic system.

Basically two tendencies characterised the Mordvin anthroponymic system in its several centuries long history. One is the gradual eclipse and extinction of the original Mordvin names, and at the same time, the spread of Russian (Christian) names. The other tendency (which also meant the gradual adaptation of the Russian system, at the time already articulate) resulted in the extinction of the names having one constituent, and the gradual spread of names having two, later three members (имя, отчество, фамилия).

The names of one constituent were used by the Mordvins before the Russian settlement. Today's Mordvin family names can be traced back to three sources: the Mordvin names before the Christianity (e.g. *Parovat*); the canonized names used by the Eastern Church (e.g. *Afo'inkin*); and the names (actually of Russian origin) formed from Russian common words (e.g. *Kuz'ecov*) (NIKONOV 1988: 128–129).

Here I deal with names belonging to the first point, of course. The majority of these pre-Christian names go back to an appellative origin, and the Mordvin suffix is added to the appellative. They represent various semantic categories, and I would like to describe some of them. (I list today's family name, or the one-time Christian form, next to the Mordvin common word and its meaning; apart from this, there were, and may be other variants, too.) I made the classification mainly on the basis of MOKSHIN 1961, 1969, 1973, MOSIN 1984, NAD'KIN 1971, NIKONOV 1980, 1986, 1988, POPOV 1972, TSYGANKIN 1983, 1989, VECHKANOVA 1985.

- Physical, psychical features: *aržo* 'scar; hare-lip' > *Aržajev*, *ašo* 'white' > *Ašajev*, *iňe* 'big' > *Iňevatkin*, *Iňemas*, *kaštan* 'proud' > *Kaštanov*, *mazij* 'beautiful' > *Mazajkin*, *od* 'new' > *Odoškin*, *paro* 'good' > *Paroškin*, *Parovat*, *Paranza*, *taza* 'healthy, clean' > *Tazin*.
- Kinship, sex: *ava* 'mother' > *Avaškin*, *pije* 'boy' > *Pijanjin*, *pola* 'wife' > *Polatov*, *t'et'a* 'father' > *T'et'uškin*.
- Parts of the body: *keď* 'hand' > *Keďin*, *pile* 'ear' > *Pilukšev*, *Pil'eš*, *polda* 'ankle' > *Poldomas*, *Poldaska*, *sudo* 'nose' > *Sudos*, *sur* 'finger' > *Surajkin*.
- Animal name: *aťakš* 'cock' > *Aťakšev*, *numolo* 'rabbit' > *Numolov*, *ovto* 'bear' > *Ovtođejev*, *Oftań*, *šeške* 'mosquito' > *Šeškin*, *tuvo* 'pig' > *Tuvajkin*, *varaka* 'crow' > *Varakin*.
- Plant name: *kuz* 'spruce' > *Kuzankin*, *lepe* 'alder' > *Lepajev*, *suro* 'millet' > *Surođejev*, *tumo* 'oak' > *Tumod'ejka*.
- Place of birth: *kudo* 'house' > *Kudutkin*, *Kudašev*, *nar* 'meadow, grass' > *Naraj*, *oš* 'town' > *Ošin*, *Ošaj*, *pakša* 'field' > *Pakševatkin*, *Pakšäj*, *t'inge* 'barn' > *T'ingajev*, *T'ingovat*, *vir* 'forest' > *Viřaskin*.
- Date of birth: *isak* 'yesterday' > *Isaš*, *nuje-* 'harvests' > *Nujat*, *Nujakšov*, *pivse-* 'threshes' > *Pivcej*, *valgo-* '(the Sun) sets' > *Valgomaš*.
- Order of birth: *karma-* 'start' > *Karmajev*, *kavto* 'two' > *Kavtođejev*, *kolmo* 'three' > *Kolomasov*, *Kolman*.
- The parents attitude to their child: *inže* 'guest' > *Inževat*, *kaže-* 'present' > *Kažej*, *učo-* 'expect' > *Učevat*, *večke-* 'love' > *Večkomas*, *Večkan*.
- Objects: *keče* 'scoop' > *Kečajkin*, *Kečemasov*, *nal* 'arrow' > *Naletka*, *očko* 'trough, tub' > *Očkaj*, *piks* 'rope, string' > *Piksajkin*, etc.

These clearly illustrate that there were a number of variants of the anthroponyms (*Kečaj*, *Kečak*, *Kečat*, *Kečevat*, *Kečemas*, *Kečemasko*, *Kečko*, *Kečuńa*, *Kečuš*; *Kiřd'an*, *Kiřd'anko*, *Kiřd'evat*, *Kiřd'uš*; *Učaj*, *Učes*, *Učesko*, *Učevat*, *Učevatko*), and the father's name was formed from the form used exactly there and exactly at that time.

We can observe several Mordvin suffixes in these anthroponyms, the most frequent are: *-Vj*, *-Vš*, *-at/-ad*, *-Vš*, *-ka*, *-d'ej/-d'äj*, *-mza/-nza*, *-ak*, *-Vn*, *-al*, *-mas*, *-pa*, *-Vs*, *-man*. The majority of these suffixes could originally be an adjectival suffix, a diminutive suffix, or a vocative ending. They first became anthroponymic suffixes, then topoformants entering the toponymic system. With the adoption of the Russian topoformant, i.e. with adaptation, these Mordvin suffixes got into an infix position, and both their anthroponymic suffix and their topoformant meanings have become dim by now. Some examples of the Russification of the Mordvin anthroponymic settlement names: *Adaš* (act. *Ad'aš veľe*) > *Adaševo*, *Anaj* > *Anajevo*, *Bolda* > *Boldovo*, *Kalaš* > *Kalaševo*, *Kamaj* > *Kamajevo*, *Kargaš* > *Kargašino*,



Kočemas > Kočemasovo, Kočun > Kočunovo, Kolomas > Kolomasovo, Kopas > Kapasovo, Narovat > Narovatovo, Parađej > Parađejevo, Permej > Permejevo, Polaj > Palajevka, Sudoś > Sudoševo, Tumas > Tumasovo, Turdak > Turdakovo, Tustat > Tustatovo, etc.

Almost four hundred of the fifteen hundred settlement names of the Republic of Mordovia can be considered of Mordvin origin. About a half of the four hundred are of appellative, and the other half of anthroponymic origin. The anthroponymic settlement names occur in the highest proportions in the eastern-north-eastern, and the north-western regions of the Republic, at the same time there are hardly any Mordvin anthroponymic settlement names in the central part of the Republic.

K. INZHEVATOV points at the fact that we can observe some correlation between the time of the Mordvin settlement, the character of the place, and the number of the anthroponymic settlement names. Several settlement names are of Mordvin origin in one of the oldest Mordvin populated regions, in the eastern–north-eastern part of the Republic (in the Ardatovo and Alatyr districts of the former Simbirsk governorship). This area was covered with forests at the time of the settlement, too, and the traces of this can be followed in the way of the settlement name giving. The names of different trees and groves, etc. (*Tumaļejka, Pičevka, Pičpanda*) have a less distinctive role in the woodlands, so in areas like this, the settlements were named after the patriarchal-clannish unity, the founder, or the leader of the village. We can mention names like *Ardatovo, Aťaševo, Batuševo, Čamžinka, Kabajevo, Kapasovo, Kočkurovo, Kuľasovo, Siřeši*, etc. from this region (INZHEVATOV 1971: 210–214, 1973: 210–215).

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