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**NEW READING OF TOPIC OF EXILE OF THE KALMYK**  
**PEOPLE: "UNBROKEN" STORY**

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### Abstract

The paper analyses the story of Vyacheslav Ubushiev “Unbroken. Steppe true story”. The tells of a fate of a particular person, left alone with a common and personal misfortune in his native steppes. The author continued the traditions of Russian, Soviet-Kalmyk literature: the story has a bright and free narrative, a clear literary language and a distinctive style. The author showed the psychology of time and the tragic psychology of his hero in an artistic form. He was the first to open the veil of secrecy over the things, what many people knew about, but were afraid to tell. This is a bold move towards not only truthful, but also new coverage of the issues of deportation, the tragic fate of a single person and nation. In the story, this is reflected in the topic of empathy, complicity in each other's destinies of people of different nationalities – Kalmyks, Russians, Kazakhs. The range of problems and topics outlined in the story is quite wide. This is the honesty with which the hero defends his homeland, this is an indestructible belief that they cannot do this to your people. There is another problem stated in the story – this is the self-determination of people who went through the war and lost their loved ones. The paper outlines the semantic contours and the formulation of the humanistic view on the value and infinite uniqueness of each individual person in the aspect of the problem of moral formation.

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## 1. Introduction

The deportation of an entire nation is a sad period in the history of the USSR in the 1930s–1950s of the last century. When war breaks into the peaceful life of people, it always brings grief and misfortune to families and violates the usual order of things. The topic of deportation in Kalmyk literature arose almost immediately, from the moment the people were deported. This inhuman event found a response in the works of national poets and writers.

The story of Ubushiev “Unbroken. Steppe true story” is not only a talented literary embodiment based on real events that happened in the Kalmyk steppe in the 1940s and 1950s. This is also a bold historical statement of what happened. The story allows learning the tragic fate of a particular person, left alone with a common and personal misfortune in his native steppes. The author continued the traditions of Russian, Soviet-Kalmyk literature: the story is notable for the novelty of its coverage of the chosen topic, it brings a new look to modern Kalmyk literature at the tragedy of an individual as a representative of the exiled people.

## 2. Problem Statement

In modern Kalmyk literature, art searches related to the processes of human awareness develop in complex ways. The disclosure of the tragic circumstances of the deportation of the Kalmyks at the same time deepens and acquires a more powerful context with a display of war and human heroism. The topic of deportation in Kalmyk literature arose almost immediately, from the moment the people were deported (Eldyshev, 2020). Humanistic views on the value and infinite uniqueness of each individual person are stated in the literature. Literature should answer the vital issues concerning the fate of the repressed peoples. However, all literature published before the deportation of the Kalmyks, and not only fiction, was withdrawn from public circulation, destroyed, hidden in archives and special stores.

In the literature that was published later, the Kalmyks with their history, life, daily routine and art were deleted or replaced by others. They were removed from the memory of people, encyclopaedias, reference books, textbooks, scientific papers and statistics (Sandzhiev, 2013). David Kugultinov very clearly expressed the problem of attitude towards the exiled peoples in his poem “I did not renounce the truth”, written in 1956 and which is also one of the first on the topic of deportation: For the fact that I dared to judge in verses cruel arbitrariness, I did not receive any money, no bonuses, I did not gain wide fame ... At that time, unjust, wild anger Suppressed us ... And the light went out for us. And even the very word “Kalmyks” was afraid to be spoken aloud by people (Kugultinov, 2002).

## 3. Research Questions

Nowadays, in Kalmyk literature, both of the Soviet period and modern, there are many works devoted to the topic of deportation. Their authors are poets and writers of different generations. The first are those who were exiled with their people and did not stop writing in places of exile. The second are those who were born in the places of deportation and retained memories of the hard life of the exiled people. The third were born after the return of the people from Siberia. The first post-war works by

Kalmyk writers about the heavy fate of the people were published in the 1960s and early 1970s. These were the works of Alexei Balakaev “Three Drawings” (1963), Andrey Dzhimbiev “When it is difficult for a person” (1991), Alexei Badmaev “Gold in the sand will not get lost” (1990), Morkhadzhi Narmaev “Happiness does not come by itself” (1964). In 1982, Andzhi Tachiev's story "The Smell of Wormwood" was published (1986). In the early 1990s Bosi Sangadzhieva's story “The happiness of an orphan is in her bosom” (2018), Balakaev's novel “Thirteen days, thirteen years” (1995), poems “Open wide doors, Kalmyks!”, “Exodus and Return” Egor Budzhalov (1997), later Timofey Bembeev's story “Days turned into night” (2004) were published.

Later, a galaxy of modern authors appeared who continued to write about this important topic. These are Erdni Eldyshev, Rimma Khaninova, Valentina Lidzhieva, Grigory Avdzaev, Valery Hotlin, Tatiana Mandzhieva and others. In these works, the action mostly takes place in Siberia, in places of exile of the people and the main characters are always children, women and the elderly people. The exile of the entire people has become an unhealed wound, which aches and haunts the descendants of those unjustly deported people. Therefore, any appeal to this topic always deserves attention.

Later a new work appeared in Kalmyk literature - the story “Unbroken” by Ubushiev. Criticism immediately identified it as a completely new reading of the topic of deportation. The works of Ubushiev can be put on a par with the work of the great Kalmyk prose writers. True, they are all from the past, Soviet times, and Nadvidovich presented a galaxy of writers of new time, the well-known journalist Elena Abushaeva (Abushaeva, 2019) noted in her review to the story (Bembeev, 2004).

Lyubov Shashkova, a Deputy editor-in-chief of the literary and the Prostor art journal, of the society of the Writers' Union of Kazakhstan, notes in her letter to the author's e-mail: “... your story is wonderful, written at a high professional level, it has a good Russian language, a strong plot, dynamic dialogues, and even short-lived characters have their own character, they are easy to remember... And of course, the very topic of the Kalmyks in the Great Patriotic War, the expulsion of people from their own lands, including to the Kazakh steppes, is very important and significant for us. I guess this topic is raised for the first time on the pages of our magazine. We will gladly give you a review of the story "Unbroken". We will publish it in the Commonwealth section.

Professional writer, a Deputy Chairman of Moscow City Branch of the Union of Writers of Russia, a Secretary of the Union of Writers of Russia, a Vice-President of the Petrovsky Academy of Sciences and Arts, an Academician of the Academy of Russian Literature Ivanov-Tagansky in his preface to Ubushiev's novel “The Song of the Lark”, noting his acquaintance and friendship with the Kalmyk writer, emphasizes: “This happened not only under the influence of the prose read – bright, imbued with national colour, characteristic, for example, of Aitmatov – but also due to some kind of human feature of the author, his extremely bold writing assessment of many “famous events”, which are shown in the texts of Ubushiev surprisingly fearlessly and honestly. Frankly speaking, first I read his story “Unbroken” in translation with great interest. It is obvious that in addition to a personal acquaintance, the writer Ubushiev also became an additional discovery for me as a talented writer” (Ivanov-Tagansky, 2021). The image of the protagonist, Bembeev, who never bowed his head to the enemy and courageously endured all hardships, is clearly expressed. “For two and a half years, Bembeev had a chance to participate in tank

attacks, hand-to-hand combat, throws at German bunkers and in night sorties for “language” (Ubushiev, 2020).

However, due to tragic circumstances, Basang becomes a loner fighter, who personifies a symbol of courage and perseverance, a symbol of faith in justice. Yes, at the beginning of the story he is an honest warrior who survived three serious wounds .... But further events, namely, the deportation of the Kalmyks dramatically changes the life of a soldier. He does not believe in what is happening: it would seem that the front needs good fighters. The Kalmyks have always been considered excellent warriors, if we recall the past wars of Russia with the Turks, Swedes, French, with the same Germans, in which the Kalmyk cavalry was often considered a striking force ... So why is it now not considered necessary to call Kalmyks into the army? Something is incomprehensible and suspicious...”, Basang argues to himself (Ubushiev, 2020).

Not believing that the whole nation could be a traitor, Basang, who had already tried military dash, admitted that the war could do anything, even betrayal. Perhaps this could have happened, but not all of them were traitors. Is it possible to call traitors all the collective farmers with whom Bembeev had worked. There were no accomplices of the invaders among them – Basang could say that for sure. Of course, deserters and those who managed to "distinguish themselves" in atrocities were hiding somewhere in the steppe. To be honest, there were some people like this. However, these were offended by the Soviet government during the years of the Civil War and after it, during the years of collectivization and the struggle against religion, when hundreds of Buddhist temples and monasteries were destroyed, and the clergy were mostly shot or sent to camps. Basang remembered how in the streets, liberated from the Germans, Cossack villages and Ukrainian villages, people’s bodies hung. It turned out that they were executed policemen. These, apparently, also had their own account with the Soviet government, but they were not lucky, they did not enjoy revenge for long ... (Ubushiev, 2020).

Even the title of the story “Unbroken. (Steppe true story)” already anticipates that everything in the story is true, but when you see all the horror of all days that the people have experienced, you understand that you would never want such truth and all this to ever happen again.

The range of problems and topics reflected in the story is quite wide. These are the qualities of people, such as kindness, compassion, and mutual assistance. This topic is discussed in the story: the topic of empathy, complicity in each other's destinies of people of different nationalities – Kalmyks, Russians, Kazakhs. This is the honesty with which Basang defended his homeland, this is an indestructible belief that they cannot do this to your people. There is another problem stated in the story: the self-determination of people who went through the war and lost their loved ones. The essence of the question is: how to live on if your relatives died and if your house was destroyed? Basang did not see his parents again, they passed away without waiting for their son from the war.

Unfortunately, such a fate awaited all the deported peoples: the loss of loved ones, acquired property and even their home. A. A. Karimov, a resident of the Chechen Republic, recalled how he and his brother and parents returned to their homeland in the spring of 1957: "The house where in 1943 their family celebrated a housewarming party and which they left on February 23, 1944, was destroyed" (Karimov, 2022).

In conclusion, we note that the story really allows thinking about a lot and rethinking once again what happened to our and other peoples.

The language of the story is very colorful, due to the use of folklore and mythological motifs, interspersing genres of folk art in the text: Kalmyks respected wolves, considered them smart and dangerous predators. Therefore, many Kalmyk clans bear wolf names – such as Ik-chonos, Bag-chonos, Mu-chonos, Sharnut-chonos, and dozens of others. Nevertheless, the steppes loved to hunt these animals. In the old days, hunting for a wolf with only one whip. Using it a horseman hit a beast on the head or jumped from his horse onto the back of an animal distraught with horror and took him alive. This was considered a special chic for a daring man.

Basang, rooted in this land, knew and felt all the sounds well and distinguished the voices of the inhabitants of the steppe... But can this thoughtful winter nature now be called Kalmyk? Can it be called the land of Steppe people, who lived for hundreds of years on this Volga land, defending these hills, ravines and plains with weapons in their hands, who now were sent to distant lands by the will of one person? Who is this person? An ordinary mortal, not the Lord God, but he decides the fate of entire nations. Basang was tormented by an unanswered question (Ubushiev, 2020).

War and personal grief do not remove the ability to love and be loved from the soul and heart. The topic of a short but bright love between Basang and the Kazakh girl Altynai, who believed in the pure and noble soul of her chosen one, is poignant. However, happiness is not destined to come true: the hero dies. This is how our Basang fought all these years, it turns out, with Stalinism, with the policy of the state. He died proving his case. He lived according to a Kalmyk proverb that says: "The death of a brave man is in the depths of the steppe. A very correct proverb (Ubushiev, 2020).

This topic torments and haunts us, the descendants of those who survived the monstrous tragedy. Pain is passed from generation to generation, and hence the memory of our ancestors. It is preserved and transmitted thanks to the work of writers, poets, film directors, theatre figures, artists, sculptors, who are not indifferent to this topic. For the sake of the memory of those people who innocently experienced this terrible grief.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the paper is to designate the semantic contours and formulate the humanistic view of the story “Unbroken. Steppe true story” regarding the value and infinite originality of each individual in the aspect of the problem of moral formation.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study was presented by the works of literary critics and historians. Literary criticism concerning the studied issues was analyzed. We used a descriptive method, a comprehensive analysis of the texts of works of literature on this topic.

## 6. Findings

The author of the story showed the psychology of time and the tragic psychology of his hero. He was the first to open the veil of secrecy over the things, what many people knew about, but were afraid to tell. This is a bold step towards not only truthful, but also new coverage of the issues of deportation, the tragic fate of a single person, as a representative of the exiled people. The deportation of an entire nation is a sad period in the history of the USSR in the 1930s–1950s of the last century. When war breaks into the peaceful life of people, it always brings grief and misfortune to families, violates the usual order of things.

The topic of deportation in Kalmyk literature arose almost immediately, from the moment the people were deported.

This inhuman event found a response in the works of national poets and writers. The story of Ubushiev “Unbroken. Steppe true story” is not only a talented literary embodiment based on real events that happened in the Kalmyk steppe in the 1940s and 1950s. This is also a bold historical statement of what happened. The story allows learning the tragic fate of a particular person, left alone with a common and personal misfortune in his native steppes. The author continued the traditions of Russian, Soviet-Kalmyk literature: the story is notable for the novelty of its coverage of the chosen topic, it brings a new look to modern Kalmyk literature at the tragedy of an individual as a representative of the exiled people.

## 7. Conclusion

A famous scientist – a historian, one of the first researchers of the Kalmyk deportation issues, Ubushaev notes that Ubushiev’s work is already being talked about in the republic, it does not leave anyone indifferent. The obvious modernity of his artistic style, the bold going beyond the chosen topics is surprising, since, for example, none of the Kalmyk writers dared to write about our Kalmyk collaborators. This desire to replenish and enrich the artistic arsenal of their national literature is quite in the spirit of the sons of the Kalmyk people. I am convinced that over time, the prose of Ubushiev will be studied in the schools of the republic (Ubushiev, 2020).

Ubushiev is a prominent representative of modern Kalmyk literature. He has a creative talent. He writes equally talentedly in both the Kalmyk and Russian languages. The author wrote the novel “Song of the Lark” in two languages, the documentary story “Life to Live” – about his father, a well-known journalist in Kalmykia, publicist, an expert in oral folk art, and now he writes the wonderful story “Unbroken. (Steppe true story)” (Ubushaev, 2017).

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