

## LIES AS A LIFE-PURPOSE VALUE OF MODERN WESTERN WORLDVIEW

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The most significant results and conclusions of the concepts of lies and deceit in modern Western culture are considered. It is shown that most of these concepts advance an idea of the value of lies and deceit for the formation of the person, the achievement of political, economic and cultural hegemony of Western civilization. The denial of lies and deceit as existential values is proclaimed only in religious philosophy or confessional-coloured humanitarian knowledge of the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Key words: lies, deceit, values, culture, Western civilization.

### **[E.E. Несмеянов Ложь как смыслобизненная ценность современного западного мировоззрения]**

Рассмотрены наиболее значимые итоги и выводы концепций лжи и обмана в современной западной культуре. Показано, что большинство этих концепций проводит идею ценности лжи и обмана для становления личности, достижения политической, экономической и культурной гегемонии западной цивилизации. Отрицание лжи и обмана как экзистенциальных ценностей провозглашается только в религиозной философии или конфессионально-окрашенном гуманитарном знании XX – XXI вв.

Ключевые слова: ложь, обман, ценности, культура, западная цивилизация.

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Over the past thirty years (starting from the 90<sup>s</sup> of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), the hybrid confrontation between Russia and Western countries has intensified, which generated a surge in various forms of false information, "fake news." Information opposition, and then information war, were associated with an attempt to impose existential values unnatural for the cultures of peoples of the Russian Federation. This led, ultimately, to disastrous processes in political, economic and socio-cultural relations, up to military actions.

At the same time, there is an increase in scientific research on the phenomenon of lies, as a multifunctional tool that allows achieving the development of the intellectual abilities of the individual, contributing to the political, economic and cultural hegemony of Western civilization.

Works proving the immanence and value of lies for the modern society have appeared. The actual justification was the facts taken by scientists from politics, economics, art and practice of ordinary relations of people. This is not the first time we have seen such an outbreak of interest in understanding lies and deceit. A similar process took place in Russia and in the West at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century during revolutionary upheavals and military showdowns of states that affected the lives of many people. In the European intellectual community, theoretical constructions of the essence and features of the phenomena of lies and deceit of both "secular" and religious and philosophical plans arise. An incomplete

list of prominent scientists who dealt with this problem in the 20<sup>th</sup> century includes the names of K. Jaspers, E. Fromm, A. Koyré, Fr. Polan, N.A. Berdyaev, I.A. Ilyin, V.V. Zenkovsky, Luka Voyno-Yasenetsky and many others.

Today, we are witnessing a similar situation. Many scientists note the "global crisis of European morality" associated with "an increase in the critical mass of deceit" (according to D.I. Dubrovsky) when new forms of social networks generate new forms of deceit. The opportunities of spreading false and extremely dangerous, provoking information in the shortest possible time that leads to catastrophic consequences up to large-scale hostilities have appeared. The ongoing information war for the promotion of "correct spiritual values" in the world community generates a significant number of popular scientific works on recognizing lies, countering deceit and at the same time creating plausible illusions and the successful use of lies in vital situations. They teach "to lie beautifully," survival through deceit, manipulation of people's minds and so on, and so on. The names of such "works," published in significant editions, speak for themselves. The largest number of studies of lies and deceit that meet the criteria of scientificity are associated with the psychological and pedagogical processes of character education [1; 2; 3; 7; 9]. A large number of scientific works are associated with the analysis of political, economic and managerial phenomena and processes. Lies and deceit served as a theme of many works in the field of art, especially in fiction, etc.

The author does not set as his mission the listing of a large number of scientifically diverse works. The task of these theses is to show the most significant conclusions from the ideas of modern thinkers expressed by them on the problem of lies and deceit in a fairly generalized form. At the same time, we rely, first of all, on the domestic school for the study of lies and deceit, created in the late 20<sup>th</sup> - early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. These are: R.G. Apresyan, G.C. Gusseyinov, D.I. Dubrovsky, V.V. Znakov, S.G. Kara-Murza, A.G. Myasnikov, V.I. Svintsov and many others. The foreign authors are: J. Adamson, R. Bandler, H. Weinrich, K. Warvelde, A. Maslow, R. Merton, L. Nernfidge, L. Fry, G. Frankfurt, E. Fromm, P. Ekman, S. Harris, S. Bock, K. Korver, R. Howard, R. Trivers, G. Hartley etc.

The conclusions on the problem of lies and deceit are clearly formulated or present "implicitly" in the works of these scientists:

1) Lies and deceit are intrinsically inherent in modern Western society (immanent). Lies penetrate all structures of society and are recognized as a necessary value, an element of socio-cultural life of Western civilization. Society constantly generates new forms of lies and deceit and ways of manipulating public consciousness. Since society is always false, it is always treacherous, unjust and inhumane, full of evil. Hence, the hope of building a truthful, just, humane society has no real basis or it is a religious utopia. There was not such society in history. There is not such society and there won't be.

2) Lies and deceit are values of modern Western society, as they act as a factor in the organization and self-organization of any society. The "amount of lies" can be reduced in society, but cannot be eliminated. In the real life of the state, lies and deceit are a "fastening force" and an unrecoverable factor in social self-organization" (D.I. Dubrovsky). That is, without lies, the state and society as a whole cannot "organize themselves" or "organize." But then without deceit, society does not exist, like the state. Various phrases about "factors" and "fastening forces" simply mask the reluctance to say this frankly and publicly. Of course, the recognition of the value of lies and deceit in its "virtuous" forms, in the works of modern scientists, in no way denies honesty, truthfulness and justice, which are also "bonds" of society. It is usually about a measure of "virtuous deceit" directed to the benefit of the state and its existing institutions, as well as to the benefit of the individual. Hence, in a number of works, the ideas of "ranking lies," highlighting their "steps and forms" according to the criterion of "harmfulness" (evil) or "goodness" (good), which determine the degree of value of deceit, appear.

The denial of any lies as a value and the impossibility of its moral justification are extremely rare in non-religious philosophy. Such an understanding of lies, associated with Immanuel Kant's position, provokes a tough pushback from adherents of the need for lies and deceit in its "virtuous form" [5].

3) Lies are a constant of personality (as is truthfulness). A person who doesn't lie is the rarest exception. The personality of the modern man of Western culture includes the ability to lie as an inherent quality. Moreover, the ability to deceive, and not truthfulness, acts as a condition for the successful development of intellectual abilities and a criterion for adapting the person to society. Most scientists agree that lies arise along with the emergence of consciousness. The ways and techniques of using and spreading lies change with age and the gained life experience. However, a person lies at all stages of mental development from childhood to death. The presence of professions is often noted, which representatives should have a special tendency and developed ability to deceive: diplomat, politician, businessman, artist, intelligence officer, etc.

In general, the value of truthfulness of personality is not denied and even encouraged. The desire for fidelity, truth, justice is promoted. They are recognized as important components of spiritual life of man and society, but at the same time the recognition of the value of lies and deceit diminishes the value of truthfulness. Lies and deceit, albeit not equivalent, but justified qualities of the spirituality of man and society. Among the latest works of the secular plan containing such ideas we should distinguish the monograph by Sam Harris "Lies. Why telling the truth is always better?" [8]:

1) The author understands lies as a situation that arises when a person believes in one thing, but says completely different.

2) Harris shares I. Kant's opinion of "virtuous lies" or "white lies," i.e., "lies out of compassion," ... "this is still deceit. And it entails all the problems caused by our insincerity... White lies are nothing more than a denial of existing reality."

3) At the same time, Harris recognizes the need for lies in Western culture. "They have penetrated all aspects of life and most people don't even think about what reality can be without them ... We are talking about the culture completely poisoned by lies, about the culture that is in dire need of change" [8, p. 15, 26-29, 112].

The American philosopher's understanding of the essence of lies is very close to the theory of lies of Blessed Augustine in essence, but is not a religious concept.

4) Most researchers note a new phenomenon, consisting in the inability to clearly and unambiguously distinguish false information in the fields of modern politics, economics, artistic culture, etc. A provision is put forward on the extraordinary complexity and diversity of social life of modern society, which exceeds all existing forms of false fabrications. "The truth of life" turned out to be richer in the content than lies and deceit. This leads to the conclusion that a much deeper scientific analysis is needed than before to separate lies from truth. On the other hand, scientific analysis of socio-cultural phenomena does not guarantee the truth. At the same time, the theory of "paradigms" in the science of Thomas Kuhn, the works of Imre Lakatos and, especially, Paul Feyerabend are referred to. The theory of "epistemological anarchism" of the latter, indeed, contains provisions on the inevitable application of lies and deceit in the struggle of scientists for recognition, money, administrative resources. In general, based on the concept of modern philosophy of science, the conclusion about relativity and "paradigmality" of scientific truths is made. That thing that is the truth of science in a certain era is later declared a delusion. The recognition of scientific knowledge falsity, at least its limitations, is also facilitated by the theory of irreparability of scientist's emotions in the process of creativity, which is proved by the well-known works of Michael Polanyi. Science has always recognized the possibility of a "conscientious" delusion, overcoming which leads to the truth; but over the past 50 years, concepts have emerged in the philosophy of science that recognize lies and deceit in science as the inevitability of its organization and

self-organization.

5) Theories that categorically deny the value of any deceit, the usefulness and the need for any modifications of lies are also worth mentioning. These are theological works of Christian thinkers and religious and philosophical teachings, the beginning of which was laid by Blessed Augustine [3].

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