

SECTION 4. SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY; PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL WORK

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4.1 The psychology of lies: research of ethno-cultural determinants

The psychology of lies belongs to the sections of psychology that are now intensively developing. To understand the various aspects of this phenomenon is important given the fact that lying by at least one of the participants in a group activity creates a high risk of failure of this activity. Each social group (including ethnic) has its own set of reasons that cause differences in the production and perception of lies. Therefore, for the purposes of successful proceeding of group activities, it is important to know the circumstances, about each ethnic group, that shape mendacity and the areas of life in which lying can happen more often. This knowledge is also important for each member of group interaction (whether it is an person in a group of individuals or, for example, an ethnic group being in international interaction). This is important for every conscious subject, because the awareness of a negative quality enables him or her to work purposefully on eliminating the defects.

The following aspects have become the subject of modern ethnopsychological studies of the phenomenon of mendacity: recognition of lies in different cultures [51], cultural differences in deception [52], perception, acceptability of deception in different cultures [53–56]. Knowledge about the psychological aspects of lying and mendacity is obtained using psychometric methods. These methods provide important, although incomplete, information on the nature of mendacity in different ethnic communities. Mendacity is one of the components of character (it belongs to a group of traits that relate to the subject's relationship to other persons or groups). Therefore, in order to actualize other possible ways of researching this property (in an individual or in a human community), it is advisable to take a closer look at the character in general, and particularly the conditions of its formation.

In the process of development of the subject (person or group), successful forms of behavior are fixed. The more this or that form of behavior is confirmed by success, the more stable the psychological feature becomes. In such a case, in order to find out

the degree and reasons for the presence of a certain feature of the character, it is necessary to investigate the following: whether there are any circumstances at the current moment of time and in the previous period that contribute to the corresponding form of behavior. When it comes to the character trait (mendacity) of a community, in particular an ethnic community, it is necessary to investigate whether there were in the past and whether there are currently any circumstances that contributed/contribute to the use of lies. This idea expands the arsenal of the existing psychological methods, since our method of studying the character components is qualitatively different from psychometric methods.

The purpose of the study is to analyse the history of cultural practices during the development of the ethnic community in the context of the problem "whether any persistent forms of ethnic behavior contribute to the need to lie." Russians were selected as the ethnic community studied. (It would be interesting to conduct a similar research in relation to other communities, including Ukrainians, to which the author of this publication belongs).

Since this study was carried out during the Russo-Ukrainian war, there may be a caveat regarding its objectivity. (If I am a representative of ethnic community A, researching some signs of community B, which commits aggression against members of community A, there is a risk of research bias.) The guarantee of research objectivity is the use of reliable empirical facts and correct analysis procedures. All this is subject to verification both at the stage of pre-publication examination and at the stage of familiarization with the published results of scientific research.

Before examining the history of cultural practice of Russians in order to identify systematic circumstances that contribute to mendacity, we will present arguments regarding the high degree of manifestation of this trait of character in them. One of the sources of such information is the testimony of visitors to this country in the past. Visitors to Russia often noted that Russians possessed a high degree of mendacity, distrust, and suspiciousness attitude. (If there is no reason for mistrust, suspicion, jealousy, then these signs are also a reason to assess the subject as a mendacious –

because people often generalize their own properties to others). Let us consider what eyewitnesses wrote about the analysed topic.

Diplomat of the Holy Roman Empire Siegmund Freiherr von Herberstein (1486–1566), who visited the Grand Duchy of Moscow in 1517 and 1526, noted the following: "The people of Moscow are more cunning and deceitful than all others, their honor being especially slack in business contracts, – of which fact they themselves are by no means ignorant, for whenever they trailick with foreigners, they pretend, in order to attain greater credit, that they are not men of Moscow, but strangers." [57, P. 7].

Giles Fletcher, the Elder (c.1548–1611), English ambassador to Muscovia in 1588–1589, also noted that "As for the truth of his word, the Russe for the most part maketh small regard of it, so he may gaine by a lie and breache of his promise. And it may be saide truely (as they know best that have traded most with them) that from the great to the small (except some fewe that will scarcely be founde) the Russe neither beleeveth any thing that an other man speaketh, nor speaketh any thing himselfe worthie to be believed. These qualities make them very odious to all their neighbors, especially to the Tartars, that account themselves to be honest and just in comparison of the Russe." [58, P. 152].

George Turberville (circa 1540 – circa 1610), an English diplomat, secretary of the English ambassador in Moscow, spoke about Muscovy of the 16th century in the poem "To Parker": «The cold is rare, the people rude, the prince so full of pride... the men so full of guile, ... the customs are so quaint, As is I would describe the whole, I seare my pen would faint. [59, R. 390].

Georg Tectander von der Jabel (circa 1570 – circa 1620), was a member of the embassy sent in 1602 by the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II to Persia. About his visit to Muscovy in 1604, he noted in his report that "These people are naturally prone to lies, deception and all kinds of vices"; "they are such gluttons, godless and liars that it is impossible to describe, as we have sufficiently convinced ourselves after living among them for six months" [60, R. 12].

The French professional soldier Jacques Margeret (circa 1565–1619), who had been in Moscow military service since 1600, noticed that Muscovites were the most

distrustful always inclined to suspect nation in the world. He defined them as rude and liars [61].

The Swedish diplomat and historian Peer Peersson of Erlesunda (pen name Peter Petreius) (1570 – 1622) left Sweden in 1601 for a four-year reconnaissance trip to Muscovy. In 1607–1608, he visited Moscow again as a diplomat and noted in the "Muscovitska chronika" that Muscovites are mostly distrustful, that they easily guarantee, but do not fulfill their promises; there no one will believe another without a pledge and surety; the father does not believe the son, and the son does not believe the father without a pledge, receipt or surety. In his opinion, Muscovites are the most mendacious in the world, who fool both the fellow tribesmen and foreigners regardless of their guaranty [62].

The French diplomat Foy de la Neuville, who visited the Tsardom of Muscovy in 1698, noted that "To tell the truth, the Muscovites are barbarians. They are suspicious and mistrustful, cruel, sodomites, gluttons, misers, beggars and cowards" [63, P. 57].

The French traveler Marquis de Custine also noted an extreme distrust and mendacity of Russians. In particular, he noted the following: "I do not admire minds which hold the truth thus cheaply." [64, p. 32] ; "So much caution shows the bad faith that exists in the country; for as, hitherto, the Russians have had little personal intercourse with foreigners, they must have taken lessons in wariness from themselves alone. Their experience is only such as their position with regard to each other can teach them. These men will not allow us to forget the saying of their favorite sovereign, Peter the Great, "It takes three Jews to cheat a Russian" . » [Ibid , p. 212] ; "In Latin countries, a promise is a sacred thing - a pledge to the giver as well as the receiver. Among the Greeks, and their disciples the Russians, the word of a man is nothing better than the false key of a robber – it serves to break into the interests of others." [Ibid , P. 360].

Richard Chancellor (died 1556), who was in the Tsardom of Muscovy in 1553–1554 and in 1556, also spoke about the mendacity and suspiciousness of Russians in the period from the 16th to the 19th centuries; French writer, poet and translator of the

16th century. François de Belleforest (1530–1583); Albert Schlichting (died after 1570), who, after being captured, was an assistant to the personal physician of Ivan IV; the Danish diplomat Jacob Ulfeldt (1535–1593), who visited the Tsardom of Muscovy in 1578, and many others.

Visitors of Muscovy, the country which has constantly changed its name from its inception to the present, left many testimonies not only about the deceitfulness and suspiciousness of Muscovites. Many testimonies contain information about the high degree of deceitfulness of their merchants and the various methods of dishonest trade they practiced; about treachery; about the high degree of their mendacity in both foreign and domestic politics; that they perceive lying as a norm, and even as a virtue.

A lot of different types of evidence of the mendacity of Russians can be given in relation to the period of the Soviet Union. The revolutionaries promised in 1917 that there would be no more exploitation by some people of others, but they created the most centralized system of exploitation; they promised that they would transfer the factories to the ownership of the workers, but nothing of the kind was done; the peasants were supposed to get land, but on the contrary – it was taken away from them by creating collective farms as a form of ownership, subordinated to the totalitarian political and at the same time economic hierarchy; the peasants were promised bread, but instead they got starvation; the people were promised peace, at the same time Muscovites, who renamed themselves Russians (to appropriate the history of Ruthenia) during the entire period of the existence of the Soviet Union, engaged in exporting the revolution, conducting and provoking wars all over the world; on the eve and during the mentioned revolution of 1917, the peoples of the Russian Empire were promised equality, but they were destroyed in wars, assimilated with the help of a large arsenal of different methods. Throughout the entire history of the Soviet Empire, they lied about all these topics, and in order not to enable critical thinking, they isolated the country with an information fence. Elements of freedom of information in Muscovy throughout its history existed only in two short periods - during the transition from capitalism to socialism in 1917, and during the period of the so-called glasnost or openness (when the possibilities of accessing true information became greater). The

empirical material on the mendacity of Russians is so large that it should be the subject of a separate monographic study.

Let us consider the features of Russian culture throughout its historical development in order to identify those features that can contribute to mendacity. First of all, let us briefly consider the main periods and features of the political history of Russians.

Russian history can be divided into the following main stages:

1. The period from the creation of Slavic colonies (the end of the 9th century) on the territory where a group of Finno-Ugric meryans lived (these are modern Rostov, Suzdal, Vladimir) until 1169, when the state entity formed on this territory for the first time in history ruined Kyiv, and when the head of this state entity, Andriy Bogolyubskyi, took possession of Kyiv not with the aim of seizing the throne of Kyiv, as his father Yuriy Dolgoruky did three times, but with the aim of robbery (as some countries rob other countries). Thus, Andriy Bogolyubsky perceived the lands outside his Volodymyr-Suzdal principality as alien. After that, the accomplices of this attack on Kyiv recognized Andriy Bogolyubsky as the Grand Duke. (The Grand Duke is the title of the main ruler of Rus' times; in the 11th-13th centuries, the mentioned title belonged mainly to the Kiev princes). After that, Andrii Bogolyubsky stayed in Vladimir, and the Principality of Vladimir began to be called the Grand Principality of Vladimir.

In this first period, the Meryans, whose main occupations were hunting, fishing and crafts (an appropriative type of culture), in the process of mutual assimilation with representatives of the Slavic colonies, created a new ethnic community (which today is called Russians). During this period, there was formed a Russian language on the basis of the synthesis of the Slavic language of that time and the language of the mentioned group of Finno-Ugric people – meryans. At the same time, the main features of the meryans proper remained at the basis of the mentality of this new ethnos – because the natural environment was more suitable for hunting or fishing than for farming. One of the main components of the mentality of hunters is the ability to outwit the beast, the ability to create a trap. (In some places where meryans lived, there were

favorable conditions for agriculture, but this was more the exception than the rule). Hunting still plays a special role in Russian culture today (about 25–30 million Russians are directly or indirectly related to hunting).

2. The period after 1169. This is the period during which hunting skills were transferred to interactions with surrounding communities. Previous forms of appropriating economy were supplemented by another form of hunting - hunting for people, that is, war. This method of management is the main one until today, since the Russians are busy not with mastering the vast expanses of the territory they conquered, but with the conquest of new territories and new resources.

The practice of cheating during hunting and during war proved to be successful. No one stopped Russia. New and new expansionist wars often passed unpunished for her. Successful practice is fixed as a stereotype of activity, as a component of character.

Another circumstance that greatly contributes to the formation of mendacity is the imperial status of the state. From the period of its foundation, Russia was never a non-empire, it constantly conquered neighboring state entities. This was always accompanied by the extermination of a significant number of the conquered ethnic groups, as well as mass resettlement and dispersion of the conquered ethnic groups. As a result, the mentality of the metropolis was imposed on the captured ethnic groups, and their mentality was gradually transformed into the Volodymyr -Suzdal mental type. At the same time, this land empire (that is, an empire in which the colonies are adjacent to the metropolis) took as its basis the tactics of concealing the processes of absorption of the colonial ethnos by the metropolitan ethnos. This is done in order to minimize the resistance of the assimilated ethnic group to the assimilation processes. To do this, members of the subjugated ethnic group are made to believe that they have the same identity as the metropolitan one. In this case, when the members of the colonial ethnic group begin to identify themselves as belonging to the metropolitan ethnic group, they will cease to exist as a separate ethnic group, they will lose their identity. In the Soviet Empire, for this purpose, a "new historical community – the Soviet people" was fabricated, that is, one had to stop feeling that one belonged to some ethnic group, to stop feeling one's self as a Ukrainian or a Georgian. This goal can only be achieved by

total lies about the history and culture of the conquered ethnic group. It is necessary for them to distort history by removing from it the knowledge about the facts of the struggle of the conquered ethnic group for their freedom. They need to inspire the subjugated ethnic group with the myth of age-old friendship with the metropolitan ethnic group. They intend to gradually deform the language of the colonial ethnos in such a way that, minimizing the difference between it and the language of the metropolitan ethnos, first declare it a "dialect", and then lead to the conclusion that communication in such close languages is neither prestigious nor economically rational (so colonial languages are something of yesterday, which is time to give up). In order to reduce the ethnic immunity, it was necessary to form an inferiority complex so that members of colonial ethnic groups wanted to renounce their identity. All these areas of assimilation activity required total lies combined with informational isolation. All this was done in the empire called the Soviet Union, supplemented by famines, executions, mass deportations to hard labor. (Not every land empire uses concealment tactics, for example, this was not the case in the Austrian Empire – accordingly, no one will accuse the Austrians of mendacity.).

On the basis of the given analysis, we can draw a conclusion about one more circumstance that contributes to mendacity. If the country is an empire and it hides its imperial policy regarding the destruction and assimilation of the conquered peoples, this leads to the emergence of many spheres of social life in which lies become a norm.

Based on the analysis of the political history of Russians, one more circumstance can be found that contributes to the formation of cowardice. Muscovy, from the period of its emergence until today, has never been a democracy (democracy created an opportunity for the conquered ethnos to be freed). Moreover, the entire history of this country is characterized by extreme manifestations of despotism and centralization of power. In such conditions, when people do not have an opportunity to realize themselves in a legal way, they have to disregard the law and deceive others; if their fate is completely determined by the favor of the boss, then they must love flattery and hypocrisy. Therefore, the greater the centralization of power is, the more favorable are the conditions for acquiring the trait of mendacity.

The above analysis makes it possible to single out at least three features of social life that can contribute to the increased deceitfulness of the ethnic group that stays in these hard circumstances:

1. If some form of life activity is successful, and the implementation of this form of activity is associated with the use of deception (for example, hunting, war), then this form of behavior is fixed as a successful stereotype that adapts the subject to the environment.

2. The need to lie arises during such an interaction of the conscious subjects, in which one of them hides the conflictual nature of the relationship between these subjects (regardless of whether the subject is a person or a group of persons). This is when one of the subjects uses the other to his advantage. In this case, he or she does not want their interaction to stop, because a person is interested in continuing the process of using that other person or a group of people. At the same time, a person may be interested in minimizing the opposition of the other party by concealing the fact that the relationship is actually conflictual. In case the country is a land empire, in which the fact of destruction and assimilation of the conquered ethnic groups is hidden by methods of psychological manipulation, then this contributes to the establishment of mendacity as a norm of behavior, and later as certain properties of character.

3. In totalitarian countries, that is, in the countries with a high degree of centralization of power, we can observe that the higher is the degree of the mentioned centralization, the more favorable are the conditions for the emergence of the phenomenon of mendacity.