

**ISCKMC 2020  
International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****POLYMENTALITY AS A CHALLENGE TO MODERN  
CIVILIZATION**

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**Abstract**

Polymental society is one of the distinguishing features of modern civilization. As a result of processes of a cultural, political, scientific and technical nature, individual mentalities are presented in modern society and personal consciousness as coexisting and conflicting. Polymentality as a phenomenon is both at the level of social groups of various scales and as a state of consciousness of a modern individual. Within the framework of a personal worldview, its various structural elements, behavior models and value orientations are formed by various mental identities that have a social, subcultural, ethnic, religious nature. The article examines the relevance of polymentality. This phenomenon is caused by a civilizational nature related to universal trends in the development of society and culture, as well as today's problems. A number of modern social processes exacerbate the relevance of this topic and translate it into the position of one of the vital topics. Such processes are the high pace of development of information technologies, as a result of which the fact of the meeting of various mental formations and corresponding value systems has become an everyday reality. In addition, the growing popularity and importance of various socio-political models of the 20th century determines their ability to act as mental identities of a very active nature in modern world. These reasons determine the relevance of the scientific understanding of polymentality, as well as the high responsibility that is imposed on any models for solving this problem.

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*Keywords:* Culture, society, mentality, polymentality, civilization

## 1. Introduction

In modern social, cultural, political reality, the problem of polymentality and polymental society is attracting more and more attention. At the level of immanent processes occurring within social communities that form the population of almost any of the modern states, it is increasingly difficult to talk about their monolithic, unitary character. An increasingly significant role is played by their cultural, socio-psychological, value heterogeneity. As a result of this, the process of coexistence of human communities, belonging to different ways of understanding the world and systems of practice and going back to different ethnic, socioeconomic, political, and demographic conditions, becomes a task not only of abstract scientific analysis, but it is also stating the problem of the survival of humanity and man. Different spheres of scientific humanitarian knowledge are characterized by different angles of consideration of this topic, however, they all agree on the idea of its significance and relevance in relation to a balanced, comprehensive study (Magomedova & Yusupov, 2011).

## 2. Problem Statement

The relevance of understanding of polymentality is closely related to a set of tasks and goals that are in the field of theoretical knowledge and in the spiritual and practical sphere. With regard to the spiritual and practical sphere, this phenomenon is a necessary component in understanding the ways of implementing the socio-economic, political and socio-cultural development of modern Russia, as well as due to the need to build and adjust strategies for the further development of the Russian civilization space. For the Russian history of culture and the socio-political processes of Russian statehood, the process of awareness of the overlapping of various mental identities, as well as its practical implementation, is of acute relevance throughout its duration.

Such phenomena are milestones in the history of Russia. This “dual faith”, which began from the time of the baptism of Russia and, in principle, never departed from the depths of the popular worldview and everyday practice, is the coexistence of the forms of behavior and world understanding inherent in Slavic paganism and Orthodox spirituality. This is the value and cultural world of the Russian nobility, within the borders of which the cosmopolitan values, estate solidarity with the European nobility, and the hedonistic model of building life and life morality coexisted with the ideal of serving the Motherland and the highest honor in the form of the opportunity to give life for it. This is a similar antinomism inherent in the Soviet mentality, which turned out to be able to combine socialist values, which also had an international character, with the ideals of Soviet patriotism, which, starting from the period of the Great Patriotic War, had a distinct character, centered around the idea of Soviet Russia as a Fatherland and around the idea of priority of the tradition of classical Russian culture (Shambarov, 2015).

Finally, the Russian society is a special variant of polymentality in its historical stretch from the era of perestroika and the collapse of the USSR to the present. Semenov (2009), who created the theory of Russian polymentality, notes that a large social community is characterized by the presence of several mentalities that are characteristic of individual components of the social community. He identifies four basic Russian mentalities: Orthodox-Russian, collectivist-socialist mentality, individualistic-capitalist and criminal-mafia. Such a “mental bouquet”, made up of identities that contradict and often radically deny

one another, cannot but have a high degree of explosiveness, and cannot pose a threat to itself in terms of not only stability, but also its own security on micro-, meso- and macro scale. The need for understanding the relationship between individual mental identities in its conditions is largely due to the relevance and acute urgency of this topic of scientific research.

### 3. Research Questions

The reflection of polymentality of modern society accumulates research attention around the very definition of mentality. In modern Russian science, the reality of mentality is the subject of deep comprehensive analysis, within the framework of which its relationship with the processes of the history of national-ethnic cultures, the corresponding images of worldview and value systems is revealed (Romakh & Polyakova, 2004; Samoilov, 2018; Waltsev, 2012).

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the term “mindset” has been actively included in the scientific revolution in philosophy, social psychology, social history, ethnology, historical anthropology, and cultural studies. Currently, there are theoretical models, in which a distinction is made between the terms “mindset” and “mentality”. As an example, we refer to an article “Is the concept of ‘mentality’ synonymous with the concept of ‘mindset’?” by Valtsev (2012a, 2012b). A fruitful attempt to distinguish between these concepts, as well as a general analysis of the personal and value contents of the phenomenon of mentality, is the work of Kulebyakin (2015). However, in the context of the problems considered in the article, these terms are understood as synonyms. The examples of disclosing the content of mentalities of various eras and social strata on concrete historical and textual material are the works of the historians of the Annals school of M. Blok, J. Le Goff, R. Mandra, J. Duby and others, as well as the studies of historians of culture, science and art of J. Hazing, J.-P. Vernan, P. Frankstel, E. Panofsky and others. Regarding the role of representatives of the 20<sup>th</sup> century European historical science in the development of the concept and content of mentality, the assessment given by modern Russian scholar Pestrikova (2007): The innovative works of M. Blok and L. Fevre, the ideas put forward by them meant a transition to the new content of the concept of ‘mentality’. The general assessments of the mentality of representatives of various eras are the work of M.M. Bakhtin, L.M. Botkin, A.Ya. Gurevich, P.S. Gurevich, V.E. Semenov and others. Problems of mentality were considered by culturologists I.V. Gerasimov, G.D. Gachev, L.N. Pushkarev, M. Rozhansky and by psychologists V.A. Shkuratov, O.G. Usenko, I.G. Dubov, A.A. Shabunova, G.V. Leonidova, K.A. Ustinova. The work of the last three authors is a comprehensive construction of the content of the phenomenon of mentality and analysis of its relationship with the psycho-emotional and social reality (Shabunova et al., 2017). Fundamental to our study is the point of view according to which the mindset expresses not so much individual human attitudes as the impersonal side of social consciousness, implicated in language and other sign systems, in customs, traditions and beliefs. Some researchers believe that the mindset characterizes the synthesis of consciousness and the collective unconscious, a generalized way of perceiving the world, the way we feel and think, defining the mindset as something collective and unconscious. Such an orientation in determining the content of mentality is expressed, for example, by the definition given by Rozhansky (1989): The concept of *mentalité* was established in the intellectual life of the West as a twentieth-century amendment to the enlightening identification of consciousness with

reason. *Mentalité* means something more that underlies the conscious and unconscious, logical and emotional, that is, the deep and therefore difficult to fix a source of thinking, ideology and faith, feelings and emotions (Rozhansky. 1989).

Summarizing the most significant signs of mentality, Dubov (1993) gives the following psychological characteristic of this concept: Mentality as a specificity of the psychological life of people is revealed through a system of attitudes, assessments, norms and attitudes based on the knowledge and beliefs available in a given society and setting together with the dominant needs and archetypes of the collective unconscious hierarchy of values, and as result, the beliefs, ideals, inclinations, interests, and other social attitudes characteristic of representatives of a given community that distinguish this community from others.

The relevance of the study of polymentality in the modern world is due to quite a variety of factors and processes. Some of them are phenomena immanent to the very nature of civilization, the processes of the existence of culture and society, and the development of man as a social being. Because of this, these factors are relevant throughout the history of civilization and are considered, in the context of various scientific traditions and schools, through various terminologies, at various stages of the history of the world scientific tradition. However, in order for them to be recognized and raised as topics of scientific research, philosophical reflection, as well as factors that determine the significance of a particular scientific problem and its research, a certain level of development of society and public consciousness was necessary. For this, a certain level of development of the categorical and methodological apparatus of scientific discourse was also needed. And, finally, for this it was necessary that certain problems and tasks, in their significance and in the radical nature of their statement regarding the reality of man and the prospects for the development of mankind, beset with sufficient sharpness so that it was impossible to dismiss them or consider them a game of a leisure mind. Let us dwell on these factors universal for the history of civilization.

The process of the existence of culture and society, taken in its natural, immediate dynamic reality, is a state of permanent, uncontrolled roll call, competition between different identities of a worldview nature, images of a religious, value, socio-political picture of the world, various models of behavioral, activity practices that and act as sources of specific mental contents.

Another factor that determines the relevance of the response to the challenge posed by polymentality to modern civilization, is cultural and social interaction as a universal human phenomenon of mutual influence, in which individuals and groups are constantly on the level of their existence, origin and satisfaction of a wide variety of needs, as spiritual, and material nature. Throughout its history, the history of mankind is an ongoing process of dialogue, competition, struggle, the mutual influence of various cultural identities of ethnic, religious, social, worldview, ideological planes. The contradictions that arise between them, inconsistencies, or, conversely, their subsequent fruitful coexistence, which became possible solely as a result of their collision “on the same field”, is a topic that is directly related to the problem of polymentality.

However, cultural interaction accompanies, with varying degrees of intensity, the entire history of mankind, making up one of the most active factors for its development. In terms of this, it acts, using the categories of philosophical dialectics, a process of a general nature, which in its concrete course and in

the scientific knowledge of its specificity and certain functions, necessarily implies a level of special (Sheptulin, 1973). In the form of individual elements and processes that make up this level, factors that belong to the modern stage of social, economic, intellectual, political history come into play.

Modern social space on its broadest, planetary scale is characterized by radical changes in the inter-ethnic, inter-civilizational relations between ethnic groups, peoples, civilizations, demographic communities, relations between which could never be of such a massive nature before. Such changes are possible as a result of accelerating the pace of communication and simplifying it in terms of accessibility. Modern civilization, the growth of its technical capabilities, primarily the progress of information technology, are making significant shifts in the processes of dialogue of cultures, in their dynamics, acuteness, mass character and accessibility.

In the second half of the 1990s, North American political scientist Samuel Huntington put forward the concept of a conflict of civilizations. Assessed as a macro-scale, trans-ethnic, and trans-economic phenomenon in its origin and character, civilization is both the result of the overlapping of individual mental identities, and the dynamic process, the “melting crucible”. In this process individual mental identities of the “meso level” form components of the world picture and value-behavioral systems of various social and ethnocultural groups. The rivalry of the superpowers gave way to a clash of civilizations. In this new world, the most ambitious, important and dangerous conflicts will occur not between social classes, poor and rich, but between peoples of different cultural identities. ... And the most dangerous cultural conflicts are those that take place along the fault lines between civilizations (Huntington, 2017). The increasing relevance of integrations, belonging to the scale of civilizations, and Huntington’s (2017) warnings regarding their conflict determine the acute relevance of their analysis and, at the same time, consideration of the contact processes of various value-behavioral systems.

Modern society is largely the result of the collapse and fundamental transformations of former ideological dominants, the bipolar world, which determine the history of a significant part of humanity from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Bipolarity, shaken and radically changing its specific content at the beginning of the new millennium, conveys to modern humanity a number of geopolitical and civilizational binary oppositions, which for centuries divided the world in two: Europe and Asia, Eurasia and America, the metropolis and colonies, conservatives and liberals, liberals and radicals, Europeans and Slavs, capitalism and socialism, cosmopolitanism and nationalism. Each side of dichotomous pairs in its historical development, the development of natural, industrial and human resources that were under its direct or indirect control, the development of its own semantic, value, cultural, ideological code that protects and justifies not only its right to exist, but also, most often, its exceptional correctness in the formation of the reality of the historical present and future, has developed its own mental identity. One of those mental identities that compete, clash with each other and claim to dominate in modern society and in the consciousness of its individual. At the same time, the corresponding models of social practice continue to operate. Moreover, in the socio-economic, political, spiritual conditions of today, their “renaissance” and their restart are taking place. Their presence and “resurrection” in the conditions of modern society complicate its mental picture, add to it various mentalities that have a fairly high degree of passionarity and stability. Based on the fact that the mentality belongs to dominants of group behavior, as well as its connection with the field of symbols, which is

noted in the studies of many domestic authors, in particular, in the article by Khomkova (2013), the mentality has tremendous passion and activity potential. And the lack of a strict, sober rational approach in relation to its ability to influence social reality is quite capable of leading to the most catastrophic consequences.

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

The purpose of the study is to comprehend the phenomena of mentality and polymentality, to clarify this issue and its characteristic features in relation to modern Russian society. Such a goal requires substantiation of the connection existing between the universal processes of history and the transformations of socioculture and the specific conditions of modernity, which condition the coexistence of various mental identities within the boundaries of one social group. The final objective is the substantiation of the relevance of scientific research aimed at understanding polymentality.

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

In order to consider the problem posed in the whole complex of its aspects and trends, in relation to the ways of its rational and constructive solution in the procedural context of modern society, human reality and the transformation of value models, various methods of scientific and philosophical knowledge are used during the study. The analytical method in the context of this topic is to consider the processes of functioning of the structures of public consciousness and behavior, the allocation in their array of various mental models, their characteristics and components. Within the framework of these latter, the question of their genesis, formation and transformation, as a result of which these mental models have a determinative effect on the life of society and human self-awareness, is of interest in the light of which the use of the historical method gains relevance. The consideration of human life and the processes of society's existence in the entire complex of its structural components and in the whole wealth of manifestations, which seems necessary to comprehend such a multifaceted phenomenon as mentality, as well as to comprehend the relationships of various mental integrity in their empirically represented unity, involves the use of a systematic approach.

#### **6. Findings**

Public institutions and practices, the technological models that they implement, which are used to carry out the functions assigned to them, are themselves necessary, as a result of the reasons associated with the historical process of their formation and transformation, are the result of the coexistence and action of a number of mental identities, often poorly coordinated and emerging in contradiction. Every society from the very beginning is a field of interaction of various mentalities. The same applies to each of his individual representatives: an individual, his picture of the world, his system of values, his actions are a field of mutual overlapping of a number of mental identities. In relation to the processes of formation and development of society, polymentality performs an ontological function, belongs to the

processes that form its existence, ensuring the presence of static and dynamic components in it, its stability and variability. A society whose mindset would be a single, unitary monolith is utopia.

Education, culture, state ideology, domestic and foreign policy in practice are largely – the resultant of various types of mentality. Innovation is superimposed in them on the constants of traditional creation, behavior and values; the elements corresponding to different ideological systems sometimes not only coexist, but also highlight in other, “competitive” models – relevance, productivity, vitality, which might not have been noticed under the conditions of the undivided dominance of a single, isolated mental system. Under these conditions, the scientific understanding of polymethality performs an important social, state, and cultural function.

## 7. Conclusion

At the moment, polymental society is an urgent reality, and the corresponding concept is an absolutely adequate embodiment in the theoretical space of society and culture – the world in which modern man lives and acts. In addition to the general, civilizational coordinates of the relevance of its comprehension, the most insistent requirement for its comprehension is presented by the modern reality of Russian civilization. Without his knowledge through a complex combination of knowledge from various scientific fields – history, sociology, cultural theory, religious studies, the solution of many problems facing the Russian society seems to be very controversial.

The tasks of rationally resolving a situation where in the social reality of the masses of the population, as well as in the worldview of its individual representative, value and behavioral models generated by different eras, areas of social life that are different in their subjective origin – ethnos and economy, religion and historical memory – require painstaking coexist solutions.

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