

PART ONE

POSITIVE KNOWLEDGE

CHAPTER IV

SOME FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTIONS

12. PRELIMINARY REMARKS In order to prepare the reader for a treatment of the Tungus psychomental complex first I must introduce some general and fundamental conceptions found among the Tungus. In this introduction it will be impossible to give an exhaustive treatment; this will be done, in so far as possible, in special chapters.

The fundamental Tungus ideas are here represented in a systematic manner, which is not that of the Tungus. The facts and inferences are much more fragmentary amongst them than it is in my schematization based upon an investigation of several Tungus groups, and many individuals forming these groups. A formulation of their ideas meets with the difficulty of distinguishing between what is not essential in the system, and what is essential, what is common opinion and what is individual opinion, what can be adopted by all Tungus, and what may be adopted only by some of them. This is the work of the investigator and I must show how I arrived at my generalization.

Regarding the problem of fundamental ideas it must be emphasized that not all Tungus are interested in these problems the discussion of which is a privilege so to say of mentally superior individuals. The average Tungus receives his education not in philosophical formulations but in the form of accumulation of knowledge regarding the facts of milieu taken one by one and always in the light of the existing philosophical conception. Indeed, there are some Tungus who are unable to form any general conception, so they accept a "vulgarization" presented to them by people whom they trust. This is true of highly differentiated groups as well: if one confines one's work to the farmers and factory workmen, one cannot naturally find out which are the essential elements of the psychomental complex of the European ethnical groups as a whole.

Moreover, amongst different Tungus groups there are some differences as to the details of these conceptions. For this reason I do not now give details, observed amongst different groups, but I confine myself to the general formulation of this system which may be admitted by all Tungus groups. It is true, I was sometimes unable to check up, directly amongst all groups investigated, conception of "*animus*" as it is here presented. So, for instance, amongst the Kumarčén I was able only indirectly to check up in the particular cases analysed. Since the conception was found to be valid in particular cases and since no signs of other general conceptions have been found, I have considered it safe to spread my formulation over the psychomental complex of the Kumarčén.

In my further treatment of the psychomental complex

of the Tungus, I will follow the same method. When the fact is referred to the Tungus it will mean that it is referred to all Tungus groups either as perceived by them as such or as lying at the basis of their system. In case there are special references to particular groups it will mean that I can make no generalization, either because of the lack of facts or because of existing differences, which will be pointed out.

The objection which may be raised at once is that it will not be the complex described and analysed in the individual, but a concentrated and condensed picture. However, my intention is not to give the mentality of an individual Tungus, but to give a description of the mechanism of the psychomental complex which may help to understand the behaviour with included ideas of an individual and groups of individuals in the ethnical units.

It has now become usual that instead of general formulation of phenomena investigated and described authors give rough material, almost untreated. In my particular case I might do the same, i.e. to bring up all individual cases, ideas and attitudes, and confine my effort to the publication of these facts. However, I think this cannot be done when the material is too voluminous and it is useless when the formulation of general conclusions is possible; rough material is published in case the investigator wants to publish something but is not sure of being able to draw conclusions or is not considered able to do it by his readers. Some time ago the same situation existed in the field of anthropology when the anthropologists were not yet familiar with the methodology and used to publish only individual measurements and the work of critics chiefly consisted in checking up arithmetical calculations. With the improvement of methodological training the need of publishing individual measurements disappeared, which by that time had become so numerous that their publication was practically impossible. This is true of "some humanities" in which the methodological training is still in its childhood; investigators are not trusted and therefore they have to publish their original data. Sometimes this way is stated to be a genuine scientific method; actually it shows that science does not yet exist, but there exists some data the collectors of which ought to be checked at their every step.

There are, thus, reasons for my considering useless and impossible the publication of all the data I have, and I shall now confine myself to the description and analysis of inferences without reproducing here the total amount of facts gathered. In further chapters when necessary facts will be given.