In this chapter, I would like, first, to consider the logical relationship between language and what may be called external reality as such. Secondly, I take up the issue of the relationship between language and social, or rather, cultural reality. Thirdly, I considered certain issues which arose from the view that a particular language gives the culture which is native to it, a sort of autonomy which can be best described, although paradoxical, as relative autonomy, but autonomy nonetheless.

The first task at hand therefore is the attempt to seek an answer to the question: 'What makes it the case that we are able to talk about our experiences?' Or 'What are the conditions of experiences that enable one to talk about them?' But perhaps, the more instructive approach to the problem of the relation between the notion of an experience, and that of its articulation is to ask the question: 'Can we conceive of experiences which in principle, we are unable to articulate?' And this it appears, is precisely the central question of Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason.

As found in the chapter on the 'Transcendental Deduction of the Categories', Kant maintains that the minimal notion of experience is that one must be 'aware'
of certain what he calls 'representations'. One cannot, at this juncture, call them objects, as that will prematurely be accepting what is required to be proved. However, the "I" cannot be 'aware' of anything unless I place the awareness under a background of a unity of consciousness. Now the fundamental characteristics of consciousness, the very condition of its existing at all, is its unity; and until this has been recognised, there can be no understanding of the associative connection which arises under the conditions which consciousness supplies. To attempt to explain the unity of consciousness through the mechanism of association is to explain an agency in terms of certain of its effects. It is thus to explain the fundamental in terms of the derivative, the conditions in terms of what they have themselves made possible. Kant's arguments therefore, is as follows: "Representations" do not become associated merely by co-existing. They must occur together in a unitary consciousness; among the conditions necessary to the possibility of associations are, therefore, the conditions of the possibility of experience. So this 'association' cannot be a part of experience, but 'Transcendental' in nature. Hence, far from accounting for the unity of consciousness, it pre-supposes it —as determining the conditions under which it alone can come into play. In other words, representations must exist in consciousness
before they can become associated; and they can exist in consciousness only if they are consciously apprehended. However, in order to be consciously apprehended they must conform to the transcendental conditions upon which all consciousness rests; and in being thus apprehended they are set in unity to one another and to the self. They are apprehended as belonging to an objective order which is the correlate of the unity of self-consciousness. This is what conditions and makes possible their associative or empirical connection.

In A, 121-2 of Critique of Pure Reason, Kant expresses his position in a more ambiguous manner. He may seem to be arguing that a certain minimum of regularity is necessary in order that representations may be associated, and experience may be possible. But this section, in fact, reinforces the stronger and more consistent thesis:

"This subjective and empirical ground of reproduction according to rules is named the association of representations. If this unity of association did not also have an objective ground, which makes it impossible that appearances should be apprehended by the imagination except under the condition of a possible synthetic unity of this apprehension it would be entirely accidental that appearances should fit into a connected whole of human knowledge. For even though we had the power of associating perceptions, it would remain entirely undermined and accidental whether they would themselves be associative; and should they not be associative, there
might exist a multitude of perceptions, and indeed an entire sensibility, in which more empirical consciousness would arise in my mind, but in a state of separation, and without belonging to one consciousness of myself. That however is impossible. For only in so far as I ascribe all perceptions to one consciousness (original apperception), can I say in all perceptions that I am conscious of them. There must therefore be an objective ground (that is, one that can be recognised a priori, antecedently to all empirical laws of the imagination, upon which may rest the possibility, nay, the necessity, of a law that extends to all appearances...."

Kant is not merely asserting that the associableness of ideas, and the regularity of connection which that implies, must be postulated as a condition of experience. That would be merely begging the question; the correctness of the postulate would not be independently proved. Kant is really maintaining the much more important thesis that the unity of experience, that is, of consciousness, is what makes association possible at all. And since consciousness must be unitary in order to exist, there cannot be any empirical consciousness in which the conditions of association, and therefore, of reproduction are not to be found.

The fundamental characteristic of consciousness is the verified form in which alone it can exist; only when this unity is recognised as necessary, and therefore as
invariably present whenever consciousness exists at all, can the interrelations of the contents of consciousness be properly defined. Now since the unity of consciousness' conditions association, it cannot be explained as the outcome and product of the mechanism of association.

Kant entitles the unity of apperception as original; let us consider how far and in what way this title is applicable. Self-consciousness, according to Kant is more fundamental and original than consciousness of objects, in so far as it is only from the subjective standpoint which it represents that the objective deduction can demonstrate the necessity of synthesis, and the empirical validity of the pure forms of understanding. It is as a condition of the possibility of self-consciousness that the objective employment of the categories is proved to be justified. This however, is not to mean that the self has been proved to be original in an ontological sense, as though it preceded experience and through it rendered objective experience possible of achievement. It would then appear that the transcendental ego is independent of all conditions and that to its synthetic activity the various forms of objective consciousness are due. Kant does not profess to prove that it is self-consciousness, that is, the 'I think', or the transcendental ego, that ultimately renders experience
possible. The most that we can legitimately postulate as conditioning experience is that it *synthesises* in accordance with the categories. For only upon the completion of such synthesis do consciousness of self, and consciousness of objects come to exist. Of course, the consciousness of objects does indeed involve consciousness of self, since self consciousness is the form of all consciousness. But then, by the same argument, it is equally true that only in and through consciousness of objects is any self consciousness possible at all. We may hold therefore, that consciousness of self and consciousness of objects mutually condition one another. So it follows that only through the consciousness of both simultaneously can consciousness of either be obtained. Self consciousness in itself is not any more ultimate or original than is consciousness of objects. Both alike are forms of experience which are conditioned in complex ways. In the *Paralogisms*, Kant maintains that the unity of apperception must be noumenally conditioned, but it cannot be shown that in itself as *self consciousness* or *apperception* it represents any noumenal reality.

I have so far talked about the relationship, according to Kant, between consciousness, self consciousness and our experience of a world of objects, that is, of an
objective world. The three are inalienably connected, in the sense that, none is possible except in necessary conjunction with the others. What determines the possibility of each and all of them is our ability to bring what Kant calls the "categories" to bear upon what he terms "the manifold of experiences". However, we have not yet talked the role of language in all these. Kant himself however does not discuss language it seems, in any direct fashion. The nearest he comes to talking about language is when he discusses the notion of judgement and its connection with concepts. But perhaps we can safely say, that for Kant, our ability to make judgements would be essentially the same as our capacity to use language.

Now what Kant calls categories are of course concepts, although a special variety of them. If categories are essentially and necessarily involved in our experience of an objective world, the question for us to ask is perhaps: 'How are concepts related to language?' or 'Is our ability to use concepts, in any way logically connected with our ability to wield language?'

There have of course, been theories which see only a contingent link between a language and concept or what, in the Western tradition of Philosophy have been called 'ideas'.

Locke for instance, thought there is only an associative link between ideas and words, and that we ourselves are responsible for establishing this link. For him, thus, ideas are recognisable as such independently of this associative link with words, just as words are recognisable without, or independently of, this link. We find the same idea recurring in a very forceful way in the Philosophy of G.E. Moore for instance. Thus, Moore regarded an investigation into the nature of the idea of 'good' as altogether independent of any linguistic consideration about the use of the word 'good'. He speaks as though the idea of good was a special sort of entity in the mind, which have nothing at all essentially to do with any language in which the word 'good' or its equivalence might occur.

I do not intend here to embark upon the criticism of this, what might be called the 'idealists' tradition of thinking about the relationship between concepts and language. Wittgenstein in his later works provides the most brilliant and convincing criticism of this tradition. I will be content here to make a few points about what it is to have a concept at all.

We might think that animals, at least some of the higher ones, frequently exhibit the capacity to wield concepts, although we may at the same time be reluctant to
ascribe to them, on this ground alone, the capacity to use language. There are however, great difficulties in this area of Philosophy primarily owing to the fact that we have no clear conception of what it would be like for us to be, as it were, put subjectively, in the position of an animal — say a horse, or a dog. But we can at least say the following: Our inclination to ascribe the capacity to wield concepts to animals arises primarily from our inclination to say that animals exhibit a capacity to classify and recognise. Thus, we might feel inclined to say, on the basis of the observation of a cow's behaviour alone that it can distinguish between say, grass and stone, or from a dog's behaviour that it does distinguish between a bone and a piece of wood. The important thing to note however, is that an animal's capacity to 'classify' is capable of being explained in purely mechanistic terms of a more or less complex relationship between a stimulus and response. And when such an explanation is forthcoming our inclination to ascribe the capacity to wield concepts to animals would correspondingly and hence understandably, become weaker. This is, because, we think that our capacity to classify involves much more than merely, in however complex a way, to respond to a certain stimuli. Among other things it involves the capacity to respond to questions, to deny, to make general statements, to draw inferences,
and to connect the present with the past. Thus for instance, when we classify something as, say, a horse, it is assumed that, in principle, we are able to respond to the question: 'What makes it a horse?'; to deny, if the occasion arose that it is a dog; to have the thought that 'since the animal in front of me has such and such properties, it is therefore, a horse'; and to make the judgement, for example, 'this is a cow because I was told what a cow looks like'. Now I think it is possible to make out a fairly strong case for saying that all these are capacities which cannot, without some fundamental distortion to the ideas of these capacities, be explained in mechanistic terms (think of Chomsky's criticism of Skinner in this context).

Granted that the use of concepts in say, classification, is such a complex activity, what is its correlation with language? The answer seems clear enough. Asking questions and responding to them, making general statements, deducing conclusion from premises, denying that something is the case, and having thoughts about the past are activities which are inalienable from man's capacity to use language.

To look at the problem from another point of view, consider the question: 'What is it for a person to have a
a concept? I think it can be said without a danger of much controversy that the question is much the same as the question: 'How do I know that somebody, 'X' has a particular concept?'. Let us suppose we are trying to find out whether 'X' has the concept of a dog, for instance. One thing that we do not do here is to try and find out whether there is a specific mental content (e.g. idea) in 'X's' mind. This is because (1) it is neither possible for us to do this from outside even if there were such a mental content in 'X's' mind, and, (2) nor is it necessary for us to do so. For 'X' to count as, without a doubt, having the concept of a dog is not for something peculiar to go on in 'X's' mind, but for him to do certain things. And in the normal case those things that 'X' must be able to do would include: (A) 'X' can say something which is analytically true about dogs, (B) 'X' can make true synthetic statements about dogs which are both singular and general. Thus for instance, 'X' can make the analytic statement, 'a dog is an animal', and also true synthetic statements as the following: 'most dogs are domestic animals', 'some dogs have long fur while others have short fur', 'this is a dog although its tail is missing', 'dogs vary a great deal in their size, shape and colour' and so on. It seems to be clear enough that the capacity to do all these things is quite incapable of being alienated from one's capacity to use language.
Hence, indeed I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that concepts are embedded necessarily in language. We come thus to the conclusion which we had been groping towards, that our perception of reality outside us, whether they be reality of objects or the reality of human society, is in a very important way, bound by the bounds of our language. This is not however to deny that there can be reality which is beyond language, or that there can be experiences which are in some sense 'ineffable'. All that I wish to say here is that there is a logical oddity in the claim that there can be such a reality and such experiences.

From the foregoing arguments, we can claim, I feel, with some measure of confidence that man's capacity to use language is necessarily bound up with his capacity to be aware of a world. But the phenomenon of the incredible variety of human languages is rather an awe-inspiring one. We may perhaps say, tentatively at this stage that a particular language marks off a particular culture. And now think of the amazing variety of human cultures. Prima facie it seems to be a trite assertion that 'Man' may, from the point of view of physiology be the same, but yet be as culturally as diversified as, to put it rather cryptically, there are differences in culture. In contrast animals appear
to behave in a much more definitive way, a more uniform pattern that is peculiar to their species than human beings to theirs, that one can almost be certain that dogs in a particular region will behave in a way much similar to members of its species elsewhere. The choice of food, the seasons for mating, their fidelity to their masters, expressions of pain, anger and happiness and so on, may perhaps be quite rightly assumed to be more or less uniform. Against such background the expression 'this is how dogs behave' seems to make good sense. These may serve as a rough example, but definitely not as a proof, to illustrate that animals do necessarily behave the way they do. Hence, as mentioned earlier, does the word 'instinct' connote a more or less mechanistic concept? Or do animals have a language similar to the articulated human language in however rudimentary a form? It may seem that the only means available to us to determine these questions is to really enter the minds of the animal in question and see what goes on inside there. But this, however, is clearly a logical impossibility. Fortunately, there is a more helpful approach available, and this is to examine certain features of our language to see that their explanation must not be in terms which are radically different from explanation available of features of animal behaviour which might at first sight, be thought to embody a language. The following features may
be regarded as crucial to our language; our ability to use words, and combinations of them in such a way as to say things in a language which might never have been said before; our ability to present the past and the future; to make general statements and so on. With these considerations it is highly probable that animals do not have languages but are subject to mechanistic causal laws. Now according to Wittgenstein, all these features of our language cannot be explained in terms of the causal laws. It is in principle impossible.

If we want to grant to ourselves the uniqueness in being the users of language, we ought to be in a position to explain such fundamental questions as:

1) How do words acquire meanings?
2) What is the relationship between language and reality?
3) What are the features necessary to the very idea of a language?
4) In what way is language, as some thinkers believe, the embodiment of a people's culture?

It is in reference to the last question that the Anthropologists Rudolf Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf remarked: "language is not just an element of culture which interacts
with other elements; it is the very forge from which cultures emerge as they do. For the purpose of this chapter only the last two questions need to be answered.

With regard to the question whether there are any necessary features to the idea of a language, Immanuel Kant, as we have had the occasion to mention earlier appeared to have supplied an answer. He maintains that our capacity to think at all depended necessarily upon our being able to bring in concepts to bear upon our 'representations' — or to be less technical — the object of our thought. It is of course undeniably true, that all thinking must be through concepts; Kant however, was not asserting a trivial fact. What he attempted to emphasise on was the belief that the concepts through which we think about the world must include some other concepts without which no thinking — not merely about particular objects or areas of experiences — but no thinking at all would be possible. They are the concepts of 'space', 'time', 'substance', 'causality', and so on, as propounded in the 'Transcendental Deduction of the Categories', in the Critique of Pure Reason. From this consideration we may safely arrive at the conclusion that language and thought

1. Language, Harcourt and Brace, 1921, p. 233.
are logically inseparable. Hence, language is not possible without thought and vice-versa. However, to those who might find this theory too radical and may be ready to challenge its position, a weaker theory would have to be offered. This would be the thesis that, not all, thinking would be impossible without language, but that all conceptual thinking would be impossible without language. According to M. Miri, this thesis leaves open the possibility of their being a 'self conscious' experience which was such that — notwithstanding Kant's arguments of the 'Transcendental Deduction of the Categories'— no concept is brought to bear upon it, and which therefore is "ineffable". As the argument offered by Kant is based on the assumption that all thinking is conceptual in nature, the process of thinking must be via a language. It follows then that any language must necessarily have room for concepts without which no conceptual thinking would ever be possible. This is what led Kant to remark that basic concepts in all languages are shared; thereby revealing that there is a basic conceptual framework in all human thought. All what this suggests is that different languages must have a common core, namely, an essence, which Kant calls 'categories'. Thus, this view establishes a fundamental similarity among all languages — a uniformity consisting in 'sharing'
a basic conceptual framework. There may, of course, be differences in detail, but the fundamental structure must, of necessity, be similar. A good example may be the concept of time. Here, an interesting case-study reveals that the notion of time among the Hopi Indians is such that severalAnthropologists believe it to be radically different from our understanding of that notion. Whorf, of course, go so far as to say that Hopi "has no general notion or intuition of Time as a smooth flowing continuum in which everything in the universe proceeds at an equal rate, out of a future, through a present, into a past".  

This, to my mind, is an unwarranted exaggeration. The Hopi conception of time is undoubtedly different in interesting and, may be, radical ways from 'our' conception of time. But, of course, it does not follow from this that the Hopi does not have a conception of time at all. Or else, it will be meaningless to talk about, as Whorf frequently does the Hopi 'conveying' in his language what we would convey by means of the use of temporal concepts.

The Hopi, as is frequently acknowledged can without difficulty, get across what we would describe as temporal information; but this they do so without using terms that have any close correspondence to English words like 'after',

'now', 'future', 'ago', and so on. One may quite justifiably ask; 'How is it then possible for them to succeed in conveying their message at all about their experiences? According to Whorf, the Hopi employ two basic concepts — those of the 'manifested' and the 'manifesting'. This is "the realm of expectancy, of desire and purpose, of thought thinking itself out from an inner heart (the Hopi heart) into manifestation."^{3}

So by employing words belonging to these categories the Hopi can give 'temporal' information. For instance, anything which we would call future will for the Hopi, be in the realm of manifesting — that is that which can be hoped for. What is past for us, is for them in the realm of manifested — that which can no longer be hoped for. However, it must not be assumed that the Hopi talk of manifesting is at all similar to our talk of future. They do have words which are capable of, what we would call temporal information, but the words they use belong to a different group from the one to which our temporal words such as 'future' belong. The words they rely on belong to what might be called as the 'mental' group, since in conveying information about time, the Hopi thereby

^{3} Ibid., p. 60.
reveals information about mental life — about hoping, and what can be hoped for and so on. Our temporal words however, do not belong to this group. In saying that something is in the future, we are not referring anything to the mental life. The point gets clearer when one considers analogies employed by the Hopi in illustrating their notion of time.

It is interesting to note that our analogies of the notion of time are frequently spatial in character. We speak of 'rivers', 'stretches', 'lengths', and so on, of time. On the other hand, and strange to us certainly the Hopi talk of time in terms of 'tendencies', 'intensities', and so on. These terms, however, at least in the English equivalent are found to be more appropriate for talking about the mind. Roughly, therefore, the Hopi seem to conceive of time not on a parallel with space, but with the mind, which is, as though, maturing and developing.

Thus, in a sense, the Hopi can convey information about the past and the future in terms of the 'manifested' and 'manifesting' dichotomy, in a very broad sense. But how we may ask, do they talk about two past occurrences in which one occurred later than another?
For an answer to this question, one must, first of all, look at their concept of 'space'.

This notion, Whorf noticed, cannot exclude "that element of extension or existence that we call Time". They have an overall concept of distance which includes what we would call spatial and temporal elements. "The Hopi conceive time and motion in their objective realm in a purely operational sense — a matter of the complexity and magnitude of operations connecting events — so that the element of time is not separate from whatever elements of space enters into the operations."

When we speak of two events being separated by space and time, the Hopi speak of the number and complexity of the operations and activities that take place between the two events. We would speak of a place, say a school, or a market place, for example, being a long distance from home. The Hopi would convey this in a different way. They might, for instance, say that many complex operations must be undertaken in order to get from, say one's home, to the place in question; that is, following the example, the school or the market place. Since such an operation would take time, it follows that the Hopi do not speak of spatial distance except in terms that involve the notion of time, however remote the referent may be.

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4. Ibid., p. 57.
5. Ibid., p. 63.
It is still hard, no doubt, for us to understand the Hopi ways of thinking and talking about space and time. Perhaps the following consideration might assist us to apprehend their interaction with a little more ease. Much of what appear to be literal talk for the Hopi occurs to us as metaphorical. For instance, we speak of a generation gap, where we mean, not that there is actually some geometrical space between parents and children, but that communication between them is difficult. The word 'gap' therefore is used metaphorically. Again the phrase, 'the world has become a smaller place to live in since the aeroplane' simply means communication between long distances is much less difficult.

These metaphorical ways of talking in English, and most other languages, I am sure correspond quite closely to what appears to be literal talk for the Hopi. Their word corresponding to the English term 'gap' seems to have, as part of its literal meaning, reference to difficulties in communication. It may be that, just as we can say certain things by metaphorical extension from our literal ways of talking about space and time, so that the Hopi can get across 'pure' spatial and temporal information by metaphorical extension from their literal talk about manifested and manifesting, and about difficulties and operations.
It is though true, to my mind, that language embodies a people's form of life, it is self-defeating to insist that one cannot understand the concepts of another society however 'radical' the difference one might believe to be. Such judgements are uncalled for. Should the concepts of another society appear to us as unintelligible, this is not something we could ever know. One has to learn the language in question to understand these concepts. A matter of serious concern arises when one, even if not quite derisively expresses, at least genuinely feel, out of ignorance notwithstanding, that certain cultures are vague (e.g. it is widely held by most people that tribal cultures are vague and also impute these vagueness to the people about their own culture) interestingly and self-defeatingly expose their own unimaginative self-handicapping intolerance, or at best, reveal their own vagueness about their understanding of the culture under study. While dwelling on this topic, let us briefly and hurriedly examine under what conditions a notion or a concept can be considered vague: (1) An idea may be vague for someone without being vague in itself. An idea may be vague for me in that I cannot spell out the conditions of its applications; but it need not follow from this that these cannot be spelt out at all. My idea of an electron may be vague in this sense.
(2) On the other hand, there are concepts such that, from the nature of the case, the conditions of their application cannot be spelt out exhaustively. These are the concepts to which Wittgenstein's idea of 'family resemblance' has an application. Wittgenstein's multiple use of the concept of 'game' as an illustration here is instructive. However, it does not follow at all from the family-resemblance idea that the concepts to which it applies are vague. There is no vagueness about the concept of game. It is clear as it can possibly be.

(3) A concept may be vague in itself in that any attempt to spell out the conditions of its application in detail inevitably leads to confusion or incoherence of one sort or another. From this illustration it is often seen that criticising or condemning a culture as being vague usually stems from the reasons given in (1) above, and hence no criticism at all in the true sense of the term. To make a disdainful remark thus, for reasons expressed in (1) is a self-exposing ignorance. Similarly, taking the ideas from (2) and (3) the ideas of vilifying a culture from without must be really considered impertinent, since with or without one's subjective approval a 'form of life' is considered complete in itself, and hence vagueness within it cannot be an integral part of it.
It is interesting to note that in the Reconstruction of Khasi Religion, P.R.T. Gourdon claimed that "the Khasis have a vague belief in God". It is perhaps very likely that by the term 'vague belief', Gourdon is describing his own state of unclarity about U Blei (God). While it is perfectly understandable, this is of course, not what he meant. The vagueness that he talked about is supposed to be part of the Khasis's idea of his God. This is without doubt, both misleading and potentially dangerous. It may of course, be thought that the notion of U Blei is vague in the sense of (3) above, indeed much criticism of religious ideas whether of Christianity, Buddhism or any other major religion of the world rests on the belief that they involve logical confusion of one sort or another. The philosophical debate concerning this I shall pass by. I wish to make, merely, the remark that the clarity of a concept is sometimes a matter of its place in the conceptual framework of a culture. When a concept plays a role in the life of a culture, becoming clearer about it coincides with the progressive exploration of this.

Such a central role is played by the concept of U Blei in Khasi religion.
Now having discussed at some length about the irrelevant criticisms levelled usually against certain cultures on the ground that they are 'vague' or 'inadequate' or whatever, let us refer back to the 'form of life' which is considered radically different by some anthropologists, namely, the Hopi Indian way of life. As already mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs with reference to language in general, it has been established that the very basis of all human languages without which no language, since no thinking, is possible at all without them, are what Kant, as mentioned, calls the 'categories'. Therefore, however 'radical' the Hopi world-view might appear to be, yet, they too, despite what appears to us as strange, have and must necessarily have, at their centre of their concept of Time, such distinctions as 'now', 'early', 'late' and so on, if they do want to make reports of their experiences at all. Hence, Kant proclaimed that one could never talk about one's experiences in a language which did not make distinctions such as these. It follows then that basic concepts in all languages are shared. In other words, there is a fundamental unity of all languages which ensures the mutual sharability of human experience.
Wittgenstein had observed two principle characteristics of language. They are: (1) a language is essentially a rule-governed activity, (2) a language embodies a "form of life". The simplest way perhaps to explain the first point is that, the meaning of a word in language is the rule which defines its use. An important point about such rules, at least the language of our everyday discourse is concerned, is that, they are in most cases 'open-ended'. That is, the rules for use of words are not too rigidly spelt out, they do not sharply define the boundaries of the meaningful use of a unit of language — in technical terminology these rules do not lay down the "necessary" and "sufficient" conditions of the correct application of a word. Let us take a concrete example of a word with an extended meaning. The word 'uncle' is generally, at least in the English speaking countries, applied not only to one's parent's brothers but also to older acquaintances. Indeed, sometimes children are encouraged to address any male adult by that term even though there might be no blood relation at all. Now, should an outsider conclude that 'uncle' does not express a blood relationship would be making an error — for he would be failing to distinguish a central, primary sense of uncle in which only a blood relative can be one, from an extended secondary sense.
Similarly, it would be a mistake to say that the word 'brother' has no specific, genealogical role, on hearing members of a religious organisation or a trade union, address each other by that term. Terms such as these are often employed in extended sense because of analogies between how we treat our older friends and fellow-workers. Are we then justified to conclude that they are therefore, terms not essentially expressive of some single blood relationship? It would obviously be an error to assert that they do not. Again, another word which has an extended meaning employed rather frequently, at least by the Angami and Zelian Nagas, and seemingly, by other Oriental peoples as well, particularly the Chinese is 'teacher', thereby revealing and granting the highest respect, not quite at par, but certainly with almost the same reverence as one's parents, the respect due to an elder. It is, one feels a suggestion of, if not quite a testimony to, the love of learning and wisdom held in such high esteem by such people. It is also not uncommon to call someone, apart from one's actual parents of course, by the term 'father' or 'mother' with if I can employ the word, solemnity, unlike the flippancy of addressing an elder by the equivalence of the English slang 'pop'. It is also not infrequent to address the recipient of one's admiration as an 'old man', a term
I fear, that will not be taken too kindly in some societies, particularly the American and European societies. The emphasis here is not on the literal chronological age of the person under consideration, but on the wisdom rather that invariably accompanies old age. Hence, in such societies, after attaining a certain age one maintains a modest silence on being asked about their age. It may certainly amuse, if not altogether surprise, one not belonging to such a society as to why this should be so, since, as it is quite evident in certain societies, particularly the Capitalist societies where a person's usefulness, indeed one's 'worth' depends entirely on how successful he remains to acquire material wealth. This usefulness, obviously gets progressively diminished with age, and so to accord such respectability to old age might seem to them as totally unintelligible. Hence, we may safely assume that, I feel, depending on the contexts they are used in, words acquire meanings. Wittgenstein remarked in section 43 of the Philosophical Investigations: "for a large class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word 'meaning', it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language."

To get a clear picture of how the same terms or words have acquired and continuously acquire meanings other than
those already imbued to them, let us examine some of the areas of our everyday life. That is, make a study of the workings of some of the institutions of our social life, which, as it were, comprises our social reality and see how differently they might mean in different 'forms of life', or different cultures. Take for instance, the institution of 'marriage'. In most cases, the 'father' is not only the one member whose responsibility is to provide sustenance to his family, but also the one who carries on the lineage of his family, or clan, or what have you. In most cases he is considered the most 'important' member of the family, in the sense that he is, within the bounds of rationality, obeyed by all his immediate family members, such as, his wife and children. In short, his authority in the family is, in a way, never questioned. However, despite this right granted to him, the institutions of 'marriage', and 'family life' do not grant his carte blanche powers to behave wantonly. He may not, for instance, in most cases, profane the married life by being unfaithful to his wife, nor maltreat his children with impunity, nor abandon them at will. Yet, his indifference to his wife's or his children's profligacy will be considered reprehensible to society. Hence, in such a society the notion of 'fatherhood' or 'husbandhood' connotes the
ideas of reasonable 'firmness', 'gentleness', 'faithfulness', 'fairness', 'authority' and so on. The term 'father' or 'husband' therefore, besides implying the ideas mentioned above, also has a male-dominant ring to it. On the other hand, to illustrate an extreme example to the contrary, there are societies where the wife assumes precisely those rights usually conferred to a husband or a father as mentioned. In societies of this kind, it is usually observed that as a husband, he has neither any influence over his wife, in the sense of his decision prevailing over hers, nor claim, apart from the strict biological sense, the children as his (this is generally, invariably noticed in the event of a divorce). When such a form of life is also matrilineal, then, as the term suggests, the girls carry on the family lineage. In such cases the man's role is as of a drone in a community of bees, whose main task and usefulness ends after procreation. Now in such a culture, the notion of 'fatherhood' or 'husbandhood' must quite obviously, radically and expectedly be different from the notion as understood in the society mentioned earlier. We have thus observed, how pliable the use of a word is, and how the same word(s) can convey quite different meanings in different contexts. Let us draw our attention also to a very common institution of social reality, namely, the institution of politics and attempt to
understand the notion of, say, 'democracy' in the two, seemingly different senses, of which one hears so much about. In the Presidential form of Democracy as in the United States, South Korea and so on, as well as the form of Democracy practised in the Parliamentary system of Governments in countries such as India, Britain etc., the notion (of Democracy) carries with it, as it does, the idea of public participation in forming a government and formulating policies through their elected representatives. One point worthy of note here in the systems mentioned is that the idea of Democracy and its importance lies not so much in the need to abide by the majority decision, which of course, acquires legal sanction as regards its application, but I feel, more importantly, it grants the citizens the right to exercise their own opinions, by even opposing the governmental policy. This of course, may not be expressed through "disturbing public peace" and encouraging anarchism, but through the process of legislation. So, in such systems the presence of opposition political parties is not only allowed but indeed a necessary part of the process. And such political set-ups leave open to the public, the option, after the expiry of the term of office of their elected members, the liberty to choose once more, a party of their choice, which may be
such that the one in the opposition earlier might now have the mandate of the majority to form a new government. Hence, the idea of Democracy in its most literal sense, under such systems, is 'people's participation' in public affairs. This notion has been most lucidly and comprehensively stated by Abraham Lincoln in the remark: "Democracy is Government of the people, by the people and for the people". It is not surprising therefore, to refer to countries which permit the freedom of expression to its citizens as highlighted in granting them the right to dissent, as 'free countries'. On the other hand, the idea of Democracy prevailing in totalitarian States, as in the Communist countries, and Dictatorial Sovereignties such as Pakistan, has quite a significant difference. In systems such as these, there exists only one political party, namely, the ruling party. Hence, this party forms the Government and formulates all laws and policies which filters down to the masses in the form of commands, the transgression of which renders one liable to penal servitude. From this illustration alone, one gets an idea that a State has the pre-eminence and the prerogative over the people. The right of opposing the Government in whatever form, is denied. A good example perhaps is the case in Pakistan where all the opposition parties were banned.
Another instructive case is the 'solidarity' movement in Poland recently, where the leaders of the organisation such as Lech Wałęsa, and some of his fellow workers had been jailed for alleged anti-party, anti-governmental activities.

Now from these cases, we have noted how two different notions of democracy emerged as practised in what is known as the 'free countries' and the 'closed societies'. Thus this is indicative of how a word might convey different notions depending on what 'form of life' it is making a reference to. Such 'open-endedness' of words makes the language of which it is a part or a unit, a dynamic one.

I would like to conclude this part of the discussion by citing one last example of how a word might conceptually vary, quite drastically, from one culture to another. Let us, for example, take the notion of 'shame'. I have chosen this idea deliberately in the hope that the clarity of the other related notions will depend centrally on the understanding of this one. Clear enough, the concept of 'shame' is not an independent, generic concept. The conditions under which this idea makes sense must be taken into consideration. In this sense, it is not unlike the notion of 'rationality', which cannot be understood out of context.
Take Naga society for instance, from a careful analysis of the society in question, it will appear that the fundamental value underlying Naga social life is the notion of 'honour'. This is most clearly manifested in the institution of 'war'. It is considered and not just, merely worthwhile, but compellingly felt, as one's duty, even against extreme odds in being out numbered, to face the enemy. It is far more desirable to die in battle than to return home a shameful defeated man. The sense of shame in such cases weighs harder on one than to invite societal rebuke for the commitment of a crime such as, say, theft, murder, arson and so on. It is quite expected that an outsider will brand such commitments to the idea of honour as fanatical, since the mission could very well be a suicidal one, just as by Western standards, the Japanese soldiers were similarly considered. To one however, who belongs to such a culture, the devotion to the idea of honour is not at all fanatical in the sense in which it is understood usually, which has, really, a pejorative sense. But rather, an extreme devotion to a most legitimate cause. And to die in warfare is the consummatory realisation of honour.

An extension of this idea of 'shame', or conversely, 'honour', is seen in the manner of treating guests in one's home. It is frankly not the mere love of guests, but rather
the disagreeable idea of shame and embarrassment for a guest to leave one's hearth unsatisfied, that prompts a host to do well by his guests. Hence, the idea of 'miserliness' is a 'self-humiliating', contemptuous idea. In this regard, a brief mention can be made how Naga hospitality is frequently misunderstood. It is not uncommon for outsiders to remark with unconcealed surprise that Nagas are extremely affluent. In the vast majority of cases, nothing is further from the truth. Some even sneeringly, thanklessly and ungratefully proclaim with open jealousy that 'they would do the same' if similarly placed. Now such comments in the Naga form of life, particularly after having imbibed in someone's hospitality, is in itself, shameful to the extreme. It is not uncommon, indeed, it is frequently noticed, since it is expected (but never demanded) that the wealthy occasionally helps those in need with their requirements. It is an uncoerced, unspoken form of responsibility. Hence, though there exists, so far, no class distinctions as such whatsoever, on grounds of wealth or religion, such obligations 'bind' the rich to practice, what might roughly resemble the idea of Noblesse oblige.

Another instance, where words such as say, 'employer' and 'employee' might mean quite differently from what it is normally understood, is observed in the relationship between
a worker and his employer, as found in, to continue in the culture under discussion — the Naga form of life. The peculiarity lies in the fact that a worker will never ask for his wages unless extremely in need, even when it is due to him — let alone demand a higher salary. The employer, on the other hand, does not take advantage of this and violate the delicate mutual goodwill between them. It is not, of course, the case that the worker or the labourer finds his wages or the prospect of earning a higher salary undesirable, but the pride in themselves prevent them from giving evidence to their existence being dependent on anyone.

Again the employer is guided by the principle of fairness, which makes him feel that perhaps, he is not only underpaying them but very likely over-working them. Living up to the same spirit the wage earner claims inadequacy in justifying his wages, and thus commonly works far longer than mutually agreed. Thus, in such a form of life the notion of an employer as synonymous with the idea of 'exploitation' and the workers as the 'exploited' is really not felt at all. This does not mean of course, that theoretically and economically it cannot be proved thus. All I am trying to convey is that this form of business ethics is not unlike the cordiality and friendship underlying family relationships, such that, the feeling of hostility and resentment, specially on the part of the workers, is hardly ever evoked.
The employer and the employee maintains their honour by honesty and humility. So does the warrior, the host, the artisan and so on, who despite their respective skills speak disparagingly of their own activities and achievements, giving credence to their belief that 'arrogance is a negation of pride'. From these considerations, one may now get a rough idea how the notion of 'shame' must be relatable to a whole complex of other notions within the same "language-game" for one to be able to appreciate its specific meaning within a given culture — a 'form of life'.

Now, we have seen that there exists no unalterable rules which prevent words from acquiring new meanings. Hence, there is no specific boundary, no specific limit to the correct use of a word. What would constitute as a correct use is precisely the usage — which depends on a vast network of linguistic and non-linguistic activities complementing each other simultaneously to evolve, as it were, a 'pattern' designed to formulate how words are to be used. This 'pattern' as I have called, is what Wittgenstein labelled as a 'form of life'. An incorrect use of a word will arise when the custom is not followed. But this custom, or the rules of usage as mentioned is not unalterably rigid: that however is not to be taken as though rules can be altered, as it were, on the spur of the moment. In
this regard it should be hastily added, that the usage undergoes a gradual transformation. Thus the pliability of rules of language which allow the possibility of words to encompass activity hitherto excluded reflects the vibrancy or the dynamism of language. Hence, only the speakers of a language having a general idea of the 'form of life' can successfully and spontaneously follow the rules of that language and extend them.

It is therefore understandable why a language should afford a bond of unity among its native speakers. It represents a unity of activities which in some undefinable sense, lays down the bounds within which the speakers of the language seek and find through mutual linguistic interaction, their collective, as well as individual identity, for endowing the speakers with a sense of participation in a distinct 'form of life'. This aspect is frequently emphasised for political expediency and other social and economic programmes. But 'forms of life', distinctive as they may be, are again similar to the rules that govern the use of words; indeed, precisely because of these rules are not unalterably rigid but flexible and therefore, similarly, 'open-ended'.

A particular form of life may, and indeed does, undergo certain transformation without losing their original
general characteristics. Take for instance the English language as spoken now and as during the Shakespearean or the Victorian era. Certain words have either been added with more meanings and connotations or else, dropped from the present vocabulary altogether, without, however, drastically affecting the language in general. Another interesting aspect of language is that within its own form of life it can accommodate tremendous variations which in due course, emerges, in many cases, as a distinct language in its own right. Observe the form of English spoken in England by the majority of people and the kind spoken in the United States, Australia and India. The differences may not be such that a native of one finds it impossible to understand a native of another, but the fact that different dictionaries have been published accordingly, suggests a form of life peculiar to each. Now it is possibly true that languages, despite their regional differences, which are called English, are off-shoots of the language spoken in England. This, however, should not, as it often does, render the English arrogant, in the belief that their language being the original, must therefore, be superior to the others, except of course, in a narrow and trivial sense of showing some pride, in that, their language had engendered the evolution of other more or less similar languages. However, the very notion of employing evaluative
terms, or the attempt at a moral judgement at all, as regards the worth of which is the 'better' one is a totally impertinent endeavour, as that will, by implication, lead to the absurd position of determining which 'form of life' is the better one. This however, is not to support the idea that 'modesty' as widely believed, is a virtue, and so one who brags of one's merits with such flagrancy ought to be censured for ludicrous self-righteousness. The absurdity here, is the logical error involved in the use of evaluative terms. I wonder if it even makes sense to show one's preference for a language to another except in a way that is suggestive of one being more at ease in one than another for reasons of proficiency or perhaps for scientific investigations on grounds of expediency and efficiency where certain words and phrases such as 'electron', 'nuclear fission', 'implosion' and so on, may be lacking in other languages. But merely to declare one's preference for a language without reference to any context is an irrational attitude, since the 'form of life' each language encompasses is, to assert a seemingly trivial truth, best suited to it (one cannot therefore, I feel, even sensibly wish to adopt the life of a people of a different culture with its associated activities devoid of say, their linguistic aspect and vice versa). Mistakes such as the above,
what might be called linguistic chauvinism, arise out of a frequent case of ethnocentricism, perhaps unwittingly, or, for the very anti-thesis of it, that is, a feeling of inferiority. These are not in essence, different errors, but merely two variants of the same mistake, since rules that are applied to one society are, without question, being extended to another. The fact that there may be noticed certain similarities does not warrant one to apply the same yardstick appropriate to a form of life to another. Such cases of similarity may, on closer analysis, reveal quite a difference in significance. A devout Hindu bathing in a river cannot be said to be performing an activity similar to a Christian Baptism, though on the surface there may be similar traits.

Considering that language embodies a people's culture, it could be a sincere and well meant endeavour, though insufficient, to learn of an alien culture simply by grasping the syntax, pronunciation and so on, of the language of a culture in question. What results in such cases is frequently an inauthentic use of the language (this is discussed in some detail in chapter V of this dissertation.) It may appear to be a little paradoxical yet the occurrence is often observed, that a native does not usually speak his language as "correctly" as one who has
learnt it — unless of course he is teaching the language to someone. This is not to mean that the native must be usually expected to be wrong in wielding his own language. That will be an absurd idea. Not that he cannot make mistakes now and then of course, but what I mean here is that, his manner of speaking when conversing with a fellow native is in most cases not as formal and complete as he would in fact himself teach an outsider to observe the rules of his language. Of course, here one could defend the native quite easily on the ground that their everyday discourse with its cliches and short verbal expressions in fact replace some otherwise lengthy expressions, and so really cannot be imputed the anomaly of solecism. However, an over conscious faithfulness to syntax and accent somehow 'betrays' a person's identity. Learning a language based therefore only on such issues produces an artificiality of employment of the language. This is where most fail (e.g. the Christian missionaries who came to spread the Gospel among the tribals) for accepting as paramount, only the linguistic considerations at the cost of the non-linguistic activities which really form the basis of the rules for the employment of words in a language.

Now, how does one really understand another culture? This aspect of the matter has been dealt with in the
following chapters, so I will not discuss the matter here in any serious manner. Suffice it to say that the linguistic aspect alone does not help. In other words, without learning the non-linguistic behaviour one's understanding of a language cannot be 'rich' or profound enough. We find in section 206 of the Philosophical Investigations where we can agree with Wittgenstein, that to have learnt a language with all its linguistic and non-linguistic activities is to be able to continue a "pattern uniformly when told to do so. And also to continue progressions". As long as this capacity is lacking, one could not claim to have grasped the regularity of the behavioural and the linguistic correlation, which together constitute a "form of life".