CHAPTER IX

SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS
1. **On Defining Universals and Particulars**

Throughout this essay, there was no attempt at defining universals and particulars, not because the definition is difficult but because we will have to give a number of definitions. Or else, there will be a sweeping generalisation in the name of 'one definition'. Such is the nature of the problem. Not only this but some definitions will have to be 'allowed' under the heading 'types of definitions'. Now, when the concept of definition itself suffers such factions, it is too much to expect a unique definition, especially of universals and particulars. Thus, it may be contended in brief that the definitions of the words universals and particulars are numerous - and their examination under each individual theory and author.
would itself form another topic of discussion.

During the discussion, we have emphasised the influence of the contexts, which gives different shades to the words. Despite this variety, we have been aware of a very intricate point: It is this: we have not applied them at random. Somewhere, has it been said that 'one cow' is a universal. We have of course agreed with those who have called it a particular, and it passes unchallenged. May be that the lack of doubt shows the familiarity with the understanding that it cannot be universal. 'One cow' cannot be called a universal, because 'one cow' is a particular by the standards most fundamental.

Now, the above discussion has an important point to make. It is the simplicity that surrounds the words universals and particulars in ordinary language. It is difficult and strenuous for common sense, not to accept universals as abstractions and particulars as concrete entities. This naive account however is not thoroughly rejected by the technical discussion: the slight improvement wherever observable, is due to the definite meanings which are given to these words. Of course, any account on universals and particulars, whether in ordinary language or otherwise, does follow a definite pattern. The differences may be explained as those which persist because there are different principles of classification. In some cases, it may be obvious;
in others, it may be complicated. Often, it may not be easy
to trace how the principle has evolved. But, in the following
example, we may try to trace it thus.

The new-born baby, may be called 'particular', since it
is absurd to call it universal for no reason whatsoever. In
the absence of strong case or serious doubt, it may quite
harmlessly be called a particular. But the moment a second baby
is born to the same mother, a concept of 'children of the mother'
will have automatically evolved, and then, the two children may
be called particulars. Here, the principle of classification and
the universal may be looked upon as coinciding, or they may even
be looked upon as different. This will be decided by the words
'children of the mother' which is the principle of classification
and the abstract noun 'childhood', which may be called universal.
But, once it is decided that the two babies are not 'universals',
or that they are particulars, other considerations regarding
their possibilities of classification should be dropped. The
moment we decide either way, that is universal or not, or
particular or not, we may stop. For, other classification may
sound artificial, like calling two babies, as universals.

Perhaps the opinion that 'beauty', 'all', 'goodness',
'tableness' etc. are universals, is not seriously challenged,
due to the implicit recognition of the reasons we mentioned in
the example just now.
Still, there are a few cases which may be called borderline cases. For example, those who call 'a cow' particular and 'cowness' universal, will hesitate to classify centaurs. (The entire context in which the word centaur is used, will first have to be considered as illusory before we can apply the nomenclature of the real world.) Those who can easily classify the beautiful objects as particulars (because they are the instances of universal beauty), will hesitate to classify the 'moon', on the same pattern. Where is the question of evolving 'moonness' when 'moon' is the only object which is unique in its own right as the satellite of the earth?

Still further, those who call 'all relations as universals' will hesitate to classify 'inherence'. It is alright to hold that relations are universals because they are recognised by all - or no communication would be possible. Those who call 'relations' universals, and 'the individuals related' as particular, will be at a loss to explain the place of inherence by the standard of their own argument. (The traditional argument regarding the nature of inherence is well-known).

Of course, those who consider universals and particulars as having only linguistic origin will not be encountering acute borderline problems. It is because of the flexible nature of the linguistic context, that each word finds an accommodation as a member of the context. An instance may be given thus:
'Potty is a chittu girl'. How, the word 'chittu' is given a meaning in the context which is at least understood as accepted between me and the hearer. If the hearer does not already know the meaning of the word 'chittu', then I tell him and he understands. Thus, my attempt to convey the meaning of 'chittu', is over.

The word is accommodated in the context; its range of application may be anything. Linguistically speaking, its communication value may range anywhere between zero and cent-percent. But, whether anyone grasps the meaning, or whether no one does, or whether all do - is immaterial to its position in the context.

We may thus contend that we shall not be entitled to give one definition of universals and particulars each. But this does not affect the understanding of their importance in philosophical discussion.

For A. J. Ayer (to give but an outstanding representative of analytic trend) even to pose the question, 'Are there universals' is truly speaking, 'a request for the definition of universal'¹ - no matter what similarity it holds with other sentences.

Thus, if we should decide to define universals by linguistic convention, then any assertion that we make about universals within

the linguistic framework of the accepted convention would be a necessarily true proposition. He gives this instance, 'Relations are not particulars but universals' - is not on the same par as 'Armenians are not, Muslims but Christians'. The latter is an empirical hypothesis; the former merely records the fact that relation-symbols belong by definition to the class of symbols for characters, and not to the class of symbols for things.

And it is necessary, only because we happen to use the relevant words in a particular way.

2. General Approaches

Various approaches to any problem of definition or otherwise may be differentiated on the following general grounds.

i) Nature of presupposition

ii) Methodology.

To question the spatio-temporal or existential priority of presuppositions and the disciplines which engage them, would be as absurd as 'which came first, the egg or the hen?' That apart, but even logical priority cannot be decided very easily. Some degree of imagination must 'substantiate' the 'logical skeleton'. Some inseparable metaphor does interfere, whether it is recognised and detected, or not. For example, if we say that the concept of 'zero' is logically prior to mathematics, then it is quite evident that the presupposition must have undergone the
regular mental activity of imagining the system first, which is then 'imagined' as void of everything - and 'zero' is accepted as the first principle.

Again for instance, the laws of logic (or thought) will have to be formed not in void, but with the help of some imagination of a system which follows a regular pattern 'ideally' if not 'really'. There may be some introspection, observation and inference. But the outcome, which is the first principle, must be above the challenges from the bodies which make up the process. And then, the tendency to compare 'thought' to a 'complex' that may be analysed as in empirical sciences, creeps in - and we talk of logical analysis, thought analysis, etc.

Thus, the instances have been just touched to bring home the non-decidability of the logical priority of the first principles, that is, the presuppositions, and the disciplines in which they are formed.

The presuppositions and the discipline in which they are formed, together decide the nature of the context and hence, the nature of the approach too. It is customary to speak of these, as the metaphysical approach, the epistemological approach, the logical approach, the linguistic approach and the psychological approach. This list could be multiplied, but it is not necessary here. Our interest in taking a note of these variations in the discipline is chiefly to drive at the thesis that the words are contextually coloured.
ii. The nature of the discipline then, will also suggest the method of approach. The attempt of this essay is to give a pattern along which some of the outstanding views on the problem have been forwarded. It may be called a methodology if we accept that a methodology is an analysis of the special ways in which the general structure of theory finds its application, in particular, scientific disciplines. Variations to any extent are allowed. Moreover, methodological arguments, are 'existing-conditions oriented' and not 'ideal' oriented. Recent view accepts methodology as analytic rather than prescriptive.²

The metaphysical approach³ (which is typical to the problem because the words have a metaphysical base) presupposes an ontology with different views on reality. It follows then, that universals and particulars herein will have some ontological status too. However, even if we dislike the traditional words like, 'real', 'ideal', 'material' or 'transcendental' theories, one point is certain. It is this; that there are sufficient reasons to emphasise any one approach. Any system that is initially formed, can be traced back to 'experience' for its inception. So can the metaphysical and incidentally, the metaphysically tinged universals and particulars. Herein, the obvious experience with more or less similar objects, ideas and observations lead to the postulation of 'one something' — that is universal.

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2 Encyclopaedia 'PHILOSOPHY' Book 7. P. 339
3 The instances have been already discussed in first chapter.
Speaking in Modern language, universals and particulars must have referents, either concrete or non-concrete. Of course, thinkers like Quine, and those who refrain from ontological commitments cannot strictly be called metaphysicians. Nevertheless, the variables do people some realms of thought, even if arbitrarily. This much is enough to say that they have referents. For Quine, the distinction between universals and particulars is only conceptual. He has shown the difficulties that are encountered when abstract entities are treated as the semblance of concrete particulars, and confusing these abstract entities with concrete wholes which are the result of the semblance of concrete particulars. Perhaps such a view is the result of the break-down of the concrete theory of universals. It may work for some words, but not all.

Strawson too had adopted a safe zone similar to the above position. He said that universals are logically apprehended. And a particular may have a maximum proximity to another particular, as in the case of two identical billiard balls. So, the criterion of distinguishing the universal and the particular is non-concrete. Rather, it is only conceptual.⁵

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⁴ Cf. the semantical formula, 'To be, is to be the value, of the variable', in his article 'On that there is' in his book 'From a Logical Point of View'.

⁵ On my remark that the conclusion is rather mild, he said that it is better to be mild and truthful, than ... 'Wild and untruthful', I added. To this, he readily agreed. (From my discussion with P.F. Strawson at World Conference in Philosophy, Delhi, Dec. 1975).
But that was an individual opinion which is definitely based on some principle of classification. (And I may hint that it is the existence, or non-existence, as may be the way of putting things).

Coming back to the point of universals and particulars being referents, we have said that they must at least be referents. They may not have designation. For, in order that they have designation, they must satisfy some linguistic expectations at least. At times they may do more than mere linguistic job, by incorporating some concrete aspects too. (But this is a different issue which has been touched under linguistic and non-linguistic frameworks). Here, the minimum expectation is the linguistic adequacy.

Now, every symbol need not have designation in the above sense, but it may yet be a referent. In the formula \( p \cdot q \), \( p \) and \( q \) may not be said to have designation as long as not given the linguistic interpretation, but they do refer to propositions which are capable of being interpreted. Thus, they are referents.

3. Designation

There is negligible difference between a referent and a designate. 6

while considering the ontological status of universals

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6 The word 'designata' is used by some philosophers, e.g. Carnap and Tarski, as the noun-form of designation.
and particulars in metaphysical approach, we have said that the word should at least be a 'referent'. That is to say that it must be an 'individual' in some universe of discourse, concrete or non-concrete.

A referent may be anything; a well-formed word, a noun, or any part of speech. It may be a class-name like 'cowness' or a spatio-temporal spread like 'red', or a relation 'sooveness', or a demonstrative 'this pen', or a proper noun 'Baroda', or the preposition 'in', or the adjective 'little' or the adverb 'very quickly' or the definite article 'the', the indefinite articles 'a' and 'an', pronouns 'he, she and it', or verbs 'are' 'is' etc. To put in brief, referents have a contextual place.

Where as designation is comparatively definite because the words which are designated must satisfy some standards that are required to explain existence. Of course, it is obvious that the concrete objects alone will exist, and hence it is trivially true that they have designation; but non-concrete entities may not have it, unless they satisfy some other standards (if not spatio-temporal) to enter an ontology, and occupy their own peculiar position in it.

All meaningful words have references even when they are presented outside the context. But to know whether they also have designation, a context must be conveyed somehow, either in language, or without it. Obviously, universals and particulars
being meaningful words, are referents, at least.

Most of the referents, since they are used definitely in a context, have designations too. It is important to note here that referents (as words) when they are not equivocal, vague or ambiguous, but are definite and carry a fixed meaning in a particular context, then they also have designation.

Universals and particulars, so long as they have communication value as generally the words have, they must of course, be referents. But their being mere 'referents' is not the sufficient condition for calling them universals or particulars, unless they also have their designation.

Now, the designations may differ widely due to the nature of the context. It may be anything like a number, a symbol, a logical subject or predicate, or a copula, etc. — to put this in a nutshell, it may be said that all the nomenclature that is familiar as well as typical to that discipline. These words then, may be called universals or particulars by the standards peculiar to that theory.

4. Criterion for calling a Designate, Universal or Particular

A particular approach to the problem in a particular context, and presented in a language which may be called

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metaphysical, logical or ordinary, the words must have designations.

Now, when an ontology has for its entities (designates) some 'existents', then we have already hinted that the traditionalists may call it a realism or a platonism, or still recently, it may be called a logicism. The entities which people this ontic world may be called universals or particulars on the basis of

1) their being class names like 'man', or
2) abstract or general names like 'cowness' or 'red', or
3) fictitious entities like centaurs or
4) abstractions like 'beauty'

All these instances, no matter under which heading they fall, are all non-particulars.

Particulars are the instances of some principle, either abstract or concrete. 'Cows', 'men', 'right-side', 'top-of-the mountain', 'woman', 'number-six', 'sherlock holmes', 'this mermaid', 'the Prime Minister' - are all instances of the principle, and hence may be called particulars. Of course, it is though not necessary to look for any principle, especially when we wish to detect the particulars. Their distinct existence itself is sufficient conviction. As I have stressed before, some problems arise because we look for the so-called 'counterparts' of universals and particulars.
But whenever some conclusions are 'arrived at', the general phenomenon or the process of arguing is the inference. For instance, to 'arrive' at the suggestion that there may be 'beauty', because there are beautiful objects, is a kind of inference. For that matter, even if inferences differ in kind they do not affect the nature of the conclusion, which is 'arrived at' due to some deliberation.

Universal in ontology is such a conclusion.

(a) In Epistemology

Words have definite designations in knowledge-situation. They will be holding some relation with the 'knowing' subject. Now, if I use the traditional mode of discussing this aspect of the problem, it is because I do not find any noteworthy change, or a different approach in the modern thought. It views the problem as an 'interaction' between the 'speaker' and the 'hearer', or between the 'situation' and 'subject' or between 'the environment' and 'respondent'. These words then, are designates on the same par as the traditional mode of calling them subject - the knower and predicate - the object of knowledge; or for that matter, it corresponds even to the linguistic and the grammatical dualism.

Accepting minimally the inevitable dualism in theory, or the interaction between the 'field' and the 'perceipient', it is possible to understand in their own language, their contention
of universals and particulars.

(b) The Criterion

The 'grounds', on the basis of which the 'knower' understands the situation, are themselves not the objects of perception. They are, nevertheless, designates, because they are said to have a place in the knower's psychology. They are the concepts which are formed as a result of repeated experiences in the similar situations. They are a sort of 'concentrated' experiences for the ready reference, for the fresh experience to get interpreted.

Much has been said in the history of philosophy regarding the formation of the words and their conceptualisation. The conceptualists who call universals as concepts and particulars as percepts, have attempted to relate them, and then landed up with the fresh responsibility of explaining their relationship, sometimes called 'inherence'. They could not decide whether the ground which relates the present percepts - the particulars to the well-formed concepts - the universals, are themselves universals or particulars.

The reason for this set-back should be quite clear to us now. 'Inherence', or the 'psychologically-tinged', 'ground' may be a referent, because it refers to a possibility of a context wherein percepts and concepts may be related. But it does not designate anything, because it does not have a place in any
definite context. And that which cannot have a place in any context, that which does not have a fixed designation in some context, cannot be considered for universality or particularity. (All the difficulty that is accompanied by the ambiguous and vague words, or the open-texture and 'incompleteness' of the words can be detected thus).

Thus, the general principle of classification that the words (which communicate) should be designates in order to be universals or particulars, was seen to have taken some modification in metaphysical approach; that of incorporating ontological status too. And then, these criteria are used by the realists to explain minute variations in their approach and called their theories 'realistic theories', some well-known instances like resemblance and similarity are already mentioned before. In epistemological approach, it incorporated some extra qualification psychological in character, e.g. the psychology of the knower affected the status of the word on the whole, though it remains unaffected technically. Thus, designates may change their designation from context to context.

Because of the modifications and changes in the principle of classification, a designate may be a universal in one context but particular in the other.

No need to exemplify this point, since it has been done before.
To generalise then, it may be said that everything that is intelligible is a particular; and a class name, or a collection of particulars, which is then qualified by the signs like 'ness', showing the abstraction, is a universal.

As a matter of fact, there is no problem as regards particulars. We are acquainted with them and encounter them every moment. The problem is as regards universals, because we are neither familiar with them nor do we encounter them any time anywhere like particulars. Nor is there any future possibility of this. This is the fundamental difference between universals and particulars. Our expectations regarding their behaviour are different. And it is mainly due to the standard behaviour of some particulars that invited the philosophers, to create universals if not actually, at least in theory.

Current fashion is to ask the question in the language of logic thus, 'Are universals inferred from particulars, or are they implied by the particulars?'.

Since ontology presupposes some first principles, hence, it is more appropriate to hold that the universals are 'inferred'. It is otherwise a matter of pure convention, that whenever an ontological neutrality is suggested by the use of 'If such a man as Socrates exists, then he is wise', then the distinction between inference and implication is pointed out by bringing out the difference between formal and material mode of speech.
Since there are various branches of logic, we shall be quite justified in dealing only with their general headings. The general headings are formal logic and informal logic. They may include disciplines varying in technique and sophistication right from the abstract, mathematical logic down to the more applicable ordinary-language logic. It is in logic that the strictly logical questions of inference and implication could be raised. Though of course, we have said just enough for the purpose of the essay.

(d) The Criterion

Universals and particulars are not the words which are used in logical syntax, but some such expressions like individual expression (for particular or its idea) and predicate expression (for universal or its idea). The individual expressions and the predicate expressions in symbolic form are at least referents. When expressed in language, they may be called designates by virtue of their positions in the linguistic framework in particular, and the context in general. This point may be applied to other constants and variables which may seek interpretation in language. Till then, the principle of classification may be disguised as the rules of logical syntax. These rules may also be called as deep-rules, or in case of their rules in turn, they may be called metalogical rules. In brief, they are the fundamentals of logic.
In informal logic, the principle of classification gets incorporated with structure and function of the proposition. The structure and the function together will form the criterion that distinguishes a universal from a particular. (There should be no argument over the meaning of the proposition on technical grounds. We accept that behind every logical rule, there is a linguistic rule. And hence, behind every proposition, there is at least a linguistic context).

5. **Form and Matter**

The distinction and similarity between form and matter, their relative difference and their final merging, are only several of the philosophical puzzles which surround the concepts even today. But the logician is quite clear when he uses them for his purpose, in order to state regularity and uniformity of procedure; the procedure would be the form. To subject the constituents of this 'form' to suitable interpretation would be 'matter'.

They have a metaphysical context too. Aristotle's theory of causation is the first instance that leaps to the mind. Now, when form and matter are seen to have designations, they may be examined for their universality or particularity. Often, form is taken to be universal, and matter, as particular. It depends, in this case, on the range of applicability. Form has

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8 of 'Logical Theory' by Strawson, esp. p. 47

(London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.)
a wider range compared to matter - and it is obvious.

whereas the constituents of the 'form' may be symbols, their interpretation has to be in the world of applicability. Or it remains just form, which has no range of applicability. For example in

\[(\rho \rightarrow \psi) = -\psi \lor -\rho\]

'\(\rho\)' and '\(\psi\)' may be interpreted as true or false propositions. If '\(\rho\)' stands for 'Today is Friday', and it is a Friday as a matter of fact, then '\(\rho\)' may be called a true proposition. Else it is false. This is material mode of speech.

Now, it is quite possible that today is not Friday and yet '\(\rho\)' as given a truth value 'true'. But then, we have also decided that not-\(\rho\) will have a truth-value which is false. It is because we follow the 'formal' pattern wherein '\(\rho\)', if it has a truth value 'true', it logically implies 'not-\(\rho\)' as having a truth-value, 'false'.

In informal logic, which may also be the logic of ordinary language, there is now very little to add. (Because 'form' plays a rather secondary, flexible, and not fixed role, here, 'informal logic' is quite the right expression). The function of the form instead of being rigid and general, is now to maintain the consistency of the particular argument; at the same time, it has
to maintain the contextual balance. In other words, if the context is purely linguistic, then logic should be flexible enough to 'keep-in-step' with the language; and at the same time, not be 'out-of-step' with its own discipline. Such a balance is very delicate and ticklish. Hence it is vulnerable to excessiveness. And hence the empiricist's criticism of logical rigidity and the logician's criticism of the empirical interruptions are commonplace matters in philosophy.

But this can be avoided. It has been already suggested that 'consistency', both internal and external, may be understood as the only moderator that keeps the world of thought and matter, a going.

Over and above the consistency of form and matter, the informal logic has an added adjunct; that of language. With language then, go all the designates which the language incorporates. Therefore, the problem of universals and particulars becomes very wide, since each designate has to be understood in its own context. And then it is to be tested by the principle of classification, which will also vary from context to context.

As a result, so many words will come to be called universals despite their disparity. Of course, the words being called particulars despite disparity, is by no means an information. As a matter of fact, particulars are so called because of their peculiar characteristics which are unique to them.
But we should accept them as universals according as they satisfy or not our laid-down conditions.

i) of recognising consistency

ii) of accepting that units or individuals should be 'referents' or still precisely 'designates' in order to be called universals.

iii) of maintaining the contextual balance, and

iv) of accepting the principle of classification after appropriate analysis of the context.

This methodology has not been worked out arbitrarily, but it is discovered while dealing with the historical problem of universals and particulars.

It has also enabled us to think in the light of unanimity of some sort, structural or functional. The unanimity is suggested by the similarity of designation of the individuals (which may be words or things) in their respective contexts.

And their disposition is so fortified by the context itself, that they are not open to the challenges from the other contexts of other disciplines. There is of course, no challenge from the same context.

If solving the problem means declaring a single answer to numerous questions, or solving the problem means exposing the futility of it (according to Wittgenstein, 'dissolving it') then
I think, we cannot 'solve' or 'dissolve' this problem. At the most, we can analyse it, understand it and appreciate its worth in philosophy.

However, if we are called upon to give the opinion— not in the spirit of viewing universals and particulars as problematic, but simply deciding their character, it may be said that universals are logical designations, that are allotted to some process of abstraction. Particulars are at least units of any system. Hence, we have considered universals and particulars as systems in themselves and not in relation to each other. For, it is this latter consideration which creates problems. Otherwise, it is possible to talk in terms of 'theory' rather than 'the problem'.

**A Note on the Principle of Classification**

A precise definition of this phrase may not be desirable because it may not do justice to the multi-dimensional character of the principle. But we have come across such phrases like 'logical principles', 'Law of logic', 'definition', 'meaning', 'abstraction', 'metaphysical principle', 'ontological commitment'— for that matter, the first principles, the basic postulations or presuppositions of any system or theory. The above-mentioned phrase however, has been used, because we aim at pointing out some strong undercurrent of thought. We had referred to the phrase, 'principle of classification while discussing infinity
and universality.' He argued that it is a positive principle which is not only metaphysical, only epistemological, only logical, only psychological or only conventional. However, it may be said that all disciplines may fall under one principle, that of consistency - and hence non-contradiction.

Different instances will have different degrees and ranges of consistency. For instance, the consistency of '5' may be called identity; between '5' and '5', equality; between '5' and '3', similarity; between '5', '5' and '5', repetition.

Consistency of a symbol is different than the consistency of a proposition, of a statement or of a sentence. A proposition is inevitably expressed in language and hence, it is called a statement. Though this need not be the case, we do not know of any instance in which a proposition is expressed otherwise. A symbolic expression of a proposition is a formula, and when interpreted, it may be called a statement.

Despite this intimacy, the consistency in each case differs in degrees. It demands a more flexible ground for a sentence to be consistent than a statement. It is because the rules which back then have different complications. On the basis of sufficient reason, we accept their authority and hence, authenticity.

To consider the formulation and propriety of the grounds
of the principles is beside this issue. We are interested in holding the position that the development of the inter-disciplinary relation, or to put it differently, the possibility of communication is achieved because of the principle which we have called 'consistency'. It cannot be designated like some concrete instances. e.g. cow. It cannot be abstracted like beauty. It cannot be predicated like redness. It cannot be enumerated under one collection. It cannot be suggested even by a group.

And yet, it lurks behind each of them, in the form of structure, form or rules. Any questions must be answered, keeping in view these principles of consistency at large. In particular, they may be answered from the point of view of the specific principle of classification. Due to this dual-possibility of studying the problem, some doubts, to the extent of questioning the genuineness of the issue, are often raised.

But it is not a pseudo-problem. Every attempt to say something on it, adds to the recognition of one more dimension of the problem. No labour would ever be lost in attempting it over and over again, since the thinkers would be hitting upon one of the infinite approaches to it. We have given the names of some prominent thinkers and theories. Even if each theory is examined elaborately, much could be said on it.

The 'types of universals' give an inexhaustible quota for
But interestingly enough, all these 'types' would remain mere aggregates, were it not for consistent thinking.

(a) *Ita qualifications*

We shall consider very briefly the application of the principle of classification in the fields which we have chosen to exemplify.

In metaphysics, ontological commitments were taken into account. For example, the concretes and the non-concretes were distinguished. The principle of classification was qualified by existence, generality of language, collectivity, and economy of usage, which gave rise to classness and collective names. These were called universals, their members, particulars.

In case of non-concrete contexts, abstractions were called universals on the basis of their range of applicability.

In epistemology, universals and particulars were distinguished conceptually too. That is, on the grounds which were responsible to communicate to the percepient.

In logic and language, the principles of formal reasoning and the general principles of language and convention, qualified the principle of classification.

This principle is variously qualified in the disciplines
which do not use the words universals and particulars; but accept them implicitly by using similar words.

We shall have to come to terms with one point: it is this. The qualifications, for example, the numerical majority, more or less resemblance, similarity, quantification, collective names, range of reference, range of application in epistemology, and the rules of logic in formal and informal logic — all of them bear testimony to systematic communication.

Any insistence on the unanimous answer to this multi-coloured problem should then be met with this undercurrent of approach — an attempt to communicate.

However, a search for 'metaphysical universal' may be answered by the concept of 'natural class'. But then, natural-classes are so special that they do not fit in any system. And then, there are the problems of deciding the parameters of natural classes. Hence, natural classes are better recognised by this expression, by those who want to retain them as 'irreducible.' Also, calling them universals will set a standard which cannot be applied anywhere else.

But philosophers have called many words and things, universals. And their account has to be appreciated at least, even if not acceptable totally.
Moreover, if natural classes are called universals, then what is the principle behind calling them universals? 'Commonness'? 'Womanhood'? But these words themselves are on unsure footings. Firstly, they are open to challenges as much as any theory on universals. Secondly, they would call upon us to multiply standards, instead of stopping appropriately.

A metaphysical search for universal is the search for the semblance of existents or concepts, in order to smoothen the communication, or to make it elegant.