Chapter 4

Universals and Other Generalities

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1.   Sen on Strawson

P.K. Sen's reconstruction of an account of universals – an account that is presented in various of the writings of P.F. Strawson – combines sympathetic exegesis with telling criticism. His method is one he describes as philosophical 'pruning' – cutting away the metaphysical dead wood in order to uncover a healthy and elegant theory beneath.[1] The 'prunings' Sen recommends fall under three heads:

1   a revision in the domain of entities admitted to be universals by Strawson, eliminating from the domain sets, numbers, types, facts and propositions, while bringing in relations;
2   a revision in Strawson's tripartite division of universals into the sortal universal, the characterizing universal and the feature-universal, specifically by eliminating feature-universals; and
3   a revision in Strawson's tripartite division of the so-called 'non-relational' ties into the instantial tie, the characterizing tie and the attributive tie, specifically by eliminating the characterizing tie.

These are certainly not minor alterations to the theory Strawson has put forward, and we shall have to ask if the result of any one of them, or of all taken together, is compatible with, and indeed a development of, the underlying considerations which motivate that theory, this being, I take it, the substance of the idea of a 'pruning'. Those underlying considerations are, indeed, considerably clarified by Strawson himself in certain later writings; I have in mind particularly his short but richly rewarding book *Subject and Predicate in Logic and Grammar* (Strawson, 1974), and his replies to the articles in two collections of essays on his work, both of which enjoy the name *The Philosophy of P.F. Strawson* (Sen and Verma, 1995; Hahn, 1998). With regard to the proper extension of the domain of universals, I shall have little to say, other than to observe that Strawson is willing to remark that it is only if 'we stretch the notion of a universal sufficiently' that we can bring under it types, numbers and 'mathematical entities generally' (1974, p. 134), but that he still maintains that there are nominal constructions, such as that-clauses, gerundial phrases and accusative and infinitive constructions, whose function is the 'individual specification of propositions or facts' (ibid., p. 130). I shall have more to say about the treatment of features as universals, and about the putative elimination of the characterizing tie.

The reason Sen gives for demobbing, so to speak, feature-universals, is this: a feature stands to nothing as a universal stands to a particular (this volume, p. 00). For, Sen observes first of all, the relation between a stuff-feature like gold and individual gold things is much more easily assimilable to the relation of whole to part, in this case the disconnected bits and pieces of a single, though scattered, object. Sen observes, in the second place, that features are typically introduced by feature-placing statements, and it is, of course, the whole point of such statements that they introduce neither particular nor universal.[2] This second observation is not, by itself, anything Strawson would resist, but it reminds us that, when it comes to finding a place for feature terms in a language that does introduce both particulars and universals, it is not a foregone conclusion that features are introduced as universals.

Sen's objection to the characterizing tie is motivated by considerations of redundancy. He says:

> If wisdom characterizes Socrates – or, in the converse style of saying the same thing, Socrates exemplifies wisdom – then that is so only by virtue of the twin facts, namely, that Socrates is attributively tied to his own particular wisdom, *and* that this particular wisdom is instantially tied to wisdom in general. Exactly the same thing happens in all other cases of characterization: there is a particular characteristic which belongs to a particular object, and this particular characteristic is an instance of a (sortal) universal. In view of this, it is not strictly necessary to speak of two different ties as ties binding universals to particulars. (This volume, p. 00)

The claim, in other words, is that the characterization of what Strawson calls an 'independent' particular (Strawson, 1959, p. 170) is always an indirect matter, in which a mediating 'dependent' particular (a property-particular or trope) of the characterized sort is attributively tied to the independent particular.

The clear implication of Sen's argument (and Sen himself comes very close to an explicit statement of it) is that Strawson's distinction between sortal and characterizing universals is to be replaced by a division within the class of sortal universals. Sortal universals (e.g. man, vegetable, chair, pot) and characterizing universals (e.g. wise, juicy, rickety, blue) both supply a principle for distinguishing and counting individual particulars, but characterizing universals 'supply such principles only for particulars already distinguished, or distinguishable, in accordance with some antecedent principle or method' (1959, p. 168). Some sortal universals collect under them the particulars identified by Strawson as being of 'primary' status in our conceptual scheme, namely spatially located enduring material bodies. Some other sortal universals, Sen claims, collect particulars whose status as such is 'derivative' in at least this sense: they are dependent for their individuation on another particular to which they are attributively tied. The particular wisdom that is the wisdom of Socrates is included under the general sort wisdom, but is distinguished from other particular wisdoms by way of its tie with the person Socrates. Indeed, if we think that a part of what it is to fall under the universal wisdom is to be a particular of such a sort as is attributively tied to a person, then we might say that it is in virtue of this fact that wisdom is a sortal universal of tropes, an instance of which is reidentified in part by its continued attributive tie to the same person at different times and in different places. Strawson's characterizing

universals, Sen's proposal seems to imply, are to be replaced by sorts of dependent particulars.

Sen's 'pruning' of Strawson's account has, we now see, been rather vigorous. Of the original tripartite division of universals into sortal universals, characterizing universals and feature-universals, the characterizing universals have been reclassified as sortals, while the feature-universals have themselves been reclassified as particulars. In the pared-down theory, there is just one variety of universal, one non-relational tie between universals and particulars, a distinction between independent and dependent particulars and an attributive tie between them. Among dependent particulars, we might distinguish, as Strawson does in subsequent work, between the particular qualities and characteristics of something, on the one hand, and, on the other, its particular 'undergoings', such as motions, activities and changes (cf. his distinction between 'characteristic-specifying' and 'undergoing-specifying' terms, and the distinction between nominals, adjectivals and verbals; 1974, p. 103). And then, somewhat surprisingly, we find that we have recovered a metaphysics remarkably similar to a more ancient one, the metaphysical system of classical Vaiśeṣika. In orthodox Vaiśeṣika metaphysics, six 'categories' are identified: substances, qualities, motions/actions, universals, the self-connecting tie *samavāya* (usually if not well translated by 'inherence'), and individual identifiers called *viśeṣa*, the uniquely identifying individual attributes of some particulars. The particulars in this system are the substances, motions and qualities, and particulars of each of these three kinds fall under universals, the tie between them being in every case the same, *samavāya*. Where classical Vaiśeṣika differs from the 'pruned' Strawson is, first, in seeing no distinction between the tie that binds property-particulars to particular substances and the tie that binds universals to particulars of all sorts, and second, in its curious insistence on a separate category of individual identifiers. Let us note, however, that classical Vaiśeṣika was itself subject to 'pruning' (i.e. revision in accordance with its own internal principles, in such a way as to make better manifest its inner structure) by at least two of its more original exponents, Bhāsarvajña and Raghunātha. One will insist on the redundancy of the category of individual identifiers, pointing to a destructive dilemma: either the individual identifiers need themselves to be distinguished from one another by individual identifiers of their own, or else they are capable of individuation without individual identifiers; but the first alternative generates a vicious infinite regress, while the second entails that individual identifiers are not necessary for individuation. They do not insist on a distinction between the tie binding property-particulars to substances, and the tie binding universals to particulars of all sorts, but notice instead that the attributive tie is in almost all cases itself a one–many tie, for a characteristic like blue colour 'pervades' its particular, that is, occurs in every part of it. If pervasive occurrence is indeed a typical trait of the attributive tie, then this fact points to a deeper analogy between the manners in which universals and tropes collect their instances than appears at first sight.

This convergence of the 'pruned' Strawson and the 'pruned' Vaiśeṣika seems to me to be a vindication of the programme of descriptive metaphysics, a remarkable confirmation of its ability to articulate the deepest structure of the conceptual scheme all human beings share, a conceptual scheme that is, in an important sense,

without a history. Indeed, I do not doubt that the philosophers of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika were descriptive metaphysicians in exactly Strawson's sense.

A vindication of the programme of descriptive metaphysics is not, however, a vindication of any particular description. We might indeed wonder if there is a quite different lesson to be taken from Sen's 'pruning' of the Strawsonian account. The discomfort we have found with feature universals and characterizing universals might be thought to indicate, rather, that the distinction between 'particular' and 'universal' is itself under strain. If features do not seem to fit well into the society of universals, the reclassification of them as particulars is not without difficulties of its own. Again, if the notion of a universal does not provide us with the resources necessary to distinguish what Strawson calls 'characterizing universals' from sortal universals, perhaps that is because this distinction requires richer materials.

These two observations seem to me to point in the same direction, and it is this: both features and trope-types are generalities but not universals. In the remainder of this chapter, I shall attempt to substantiate that claim.

2.   Strawson on Particulars and Universals

In the opening pages of Part Two of *Individuals*, Strawson presents the traditional doctrine of the special position of particulars among objects of reference. If 'anything whatever can be introduced into discussion by means of a singular, definitely identifying, substantival expression', then what is the special position occupied by particulars? Strawson says:

> The traditional doctrine we have to investigate is the doctrine that particulars can appear in discourse as subjects only, never as predicates; whereas universals, or non-particulars generally, can appear either as subjects or as predicates. The doctrines might be more fully expressed as follows: particulars, like John, and universals, like marriage, and what we may call universals-cum-particulars, like being married to John, can all be referred to, by the use of referring expressions; but only universals, and universals-cum-particulars, never particulars alone, can be predicated, by means of predicative expressions. (1959, pp. 137–8)

According to Strawson, the asymmetry between particulars and universals has at it source the fact that, while both particulars and universals supply principles for the 'collection' of other particulars and universals, the nature of the respective principles they supply is different (cf. the discussion of the 'category criterion', ibid., pp. 167–70). The principle of collection that a particular supplies derives from the continuing identity of the particular, where, in the primary case, continuing identity consists in spatio-temporal continuity: the enduring person Socrates collects the various universals and property-particulars to which he is instantially and attributively tied over time. On the other hand, when universals collect particulars, the principle of collection exhibits a structure not similarly exhibited by the principles of collection supplied by particulars, a hierarchy ordering. As Strawson puts it in a later book, there is

> a certain asymmetry which particulars and general characteristics of particulars have relative to each other, in respect, as I put it, of the possession of incompatibility ranges

and involvement ranges. General characters typically have such ranges in relation to particulars; particulars cannot have them in relation to general characters. For every general character there is another general character such that no particular can exemplify them both at once; but for no particular is there another particular such that there is no general character they can both exemplify. Again, for many a general character there is another general character such that any particular which exemplifies the first must exemplify the second or vice versa; but there is no pair of particulars so related that every general character the first exemplifies must be exemplified by the second or vice versa. (1974, p. 126)

This asymmetry sustains the distinction between particulars and universals, 'the distinction between particular items and the general kinds or characteristics they exemplify' (1966, p. 47), and that distinction is the reason we must also distinguish the linguistic devices of identifying reference and predication, 'such linguistic and other devices as will enable us both to classify or describe in general terms and to indicate to what particular cases our classifications or descriptions are being applied' (ibid.). Strawson argues that individually identifying reference (the introduction of a particular into the discussion) presupposes an empirical fact, the fact that there is a particular apt so to be introduced, but that predication or 'general character specification' (the introduction of a universal into the discussion) carries no comparable presupposition; at best it presupposes the logical possibility of the introduced universal's possessing instances, or, perhaps, the reality of such possession (cf. the medieval *ante rem* versus *in rebus* debate). The asymmetry between the principles of collection supplied by particulars and universals and the asymmetry between the presuppositions in individually identifying reference and predication ought, of course, to stand in some relation with one another, and the relation seems to be this: a particular supplies a principle of collection by virtue of its continuing identity, and it is likewise the continuing identity of the particular that renders possible its identification by repeated uses of the same referring expression; a universal supplies a principle of collection by virtue of its possession of incompatibility and involvement ranges, and it is this same possession that locates the universal in a logical space of inter-universal relationships, relationships that anchor it to the (possible) possession of instances.

The traditional doctrine states that 'particulars can appear in discourse as subjects only, never as predicates; whereas universals, or non-particulars generally, can appear either as subjects or as predicates'. Two parts of that doctrine have now been accounted for, the idea that particulars are introduced into discussion only as subjects, never as predicates, and the idea that universals are introduced into discussion as predicates. One element of the traditional doctrine remains unexplained: the further idea that universals are introduced into discussion as subjects. Strawson's claim is that the introduction of universals as subjects is derivative, involving as he says an 'extension by analogy' of the fundamental account of the subject–predicate distinction so far given. Thus:

The next step is to extend the sense of 'y is predicated of x', while preserving the analogies on which the primary sense is based. Thus, to allow that universals may be predicated of universals, we have to show that there are non-relational ties between universals and universals analogous to the characterizing or sortal ties between universals

and particulars. And, of course, it is easy to find such analogies. Is not thinking of different species as species of one genus analogous to thinking of different particulars as specimens of one species? Again, the tie between different musical compositions, themselves non-particulars (types), and their common form, say, the sonata or the symphony, is analogous to the sortal tie between a particular and a universal. Or again, thinking of different hues or colours as bright or sombre, thinking of different human qualities as amiable or unamiable, is analogous to thinking of different particulars as characterized in such-and-such ways. (1959, p. 171)

In later work, Strawson advances the idea that the basic case of individually individuating reference and predication is extended in two different directions, to which he gives the names 'substantiation' and 'logical subjection' (1974, esp. pp. 126–7). His mature view is conveniently summarized in the following passage, from a reply published in 1998:

Although the basic case of the reference–predication combination may, and should, be seen as that in which a single designated spatio-temporal particular is the object of reference and a general concept or universal is predicated of it, the combination in question admits of generalization, in two quite different directions, beyond this fundamental case. First, the characteristic relation between a particular and a universal of which it is an individual instance may be reproduced at a higher level; one universal may itself be an individual instance of another.[3] So designated universals themselves may, and do, figure as objects of reference and subjects of predication. If, as is widely held, to be an object of reference is the mark of an existent individual, an entity, then universals and, indeed, abstract objects generally (e.g. numbers, propositions, facts) must be recognized as such …

The above is one direction of generalization of the reference–predication combination. I call it the trans-categorial dimension, since it transcends the limitation of the basic case to reference to particulars.

The other direction of generalization is certainly less ontologically committed, and in a sense more familiar. It consists essentially in dropping the requirement of designation (i.e. of individual identification) of the objects of reference. It is more familiar because it is a feature of the grammars both of standard logic and of natural language, though in quite different ways in the two cases. In standard logic the burden of reference may be carried (some would say should exclusively be carried) by the individual variable (the ghost of the individual designation or name) under standard universal or existential quantification. In natural languages, on the other hand, a whole host of plural expressions or of indefinite singular terms may form part of the subject term and hence help to specify, more or less indefinitely, the objects of reference. If we acknowledge, as we surely must, the legitimacy of these last forms of expression, we may reasonably call the second dimension of generalization trans-logical, since it transcends the forms of standard logic. (1998, pp. 383–4)

Logical subjection, then, extends the basic case, permitting the introduction as subjects both of non-substantial particulars (smiles, runs, laughs, kisses, attacks, countries, nations, corporations) and of non-particulars such as universals, propositions or facts, numbers, and types (cf. 1974, pp. 129–35). Strawson says that such entities are 'presented' by a nominal phrase; in the case of universals, this is most often an individually identifying nominal phrase derived from substantial adjectivals, verbals or nominals: 'thus, from adjectivals we have: whiteness (and

white), sincerity, freedom, bravery, roundness, fatness, wisdom, youth; also being sincere, to be sincere, being young, to be young, etc.; from verbals: smoking, running, dying, hope, expectation, hesitation, error, forgiveness; also to err, to forgive, to run, to die, etc.; from nominals: childhood, manhood, also being a man, to be a man, etc.' (ibid., p. 129). These nominal phrases 'present' universals, meaning at least that universals are now available as potential subjects for predication. Strawson's 'demythologizing' of Platonism therefore consists in this: that abstract nominal phrases are always derived nominal phrases.

3. Deflected Predication

We have recovered the final element in the traditional doctrine of predication: universals can appear as either as subjects or as predicates. Taking this to be partly definitive of the notion of a universal, let me now ask: is there another sort of non-particular, one which typically appears neither as predicate nor as subject? I have suggested that features and trope-types might belong in this category. A corresponding claim is that feature-names and nominal phrases derived from adjectivals 'present' non-particulars without making them available as potential subjects for predication. I will argue, first of all, that there is a kind of abstract noun-phrase which, when it appears in a subject–predicate combination as the grammatical subject, deflects the predicate onto an entity or entities with which the non-particular it 'presents' is non-relationally tied, this second entity being, therefore, the logical subject of the sentence. If there is indeed such a process of, as I shall call it, 'deflected predication', and if the traditional doctrine is indeed definitive of the notion of a universal, then the non-particulars presented by such noun-phrases will be neither particulars nor universals, but non-universal generalities, and we shall have (partially) corroborated Sen's reluctance to accept features as universals, or acknowledge the independence of the characterizing tie.

My evidence for the existence of the process of deflected predication comes from the linguistics of mass-terms and bare (determinerless) plurals. Several kinds of example point to an analogy in the behaviour of mass-terms and bare plurals as grammatical subjects, and in all cases, the analogy is that predication is deflected onto a logical subject distinct from but related to the mass or collection. Individual masses and collections seem to resist predication; only with the help of contrived linguistic devices do we force them to remain in the logical subject position. Consider the following sentences:

(1) a. Gold is traded in the market-place.
     b. Gold is required in the manufacture of computer chips.
     c. Gold exists but is rare.

In each case, it looks as if the logical subject is not gold itself, thought of either as a single if scattered object or of as a universal, but rather individual samples, pieces or instances of gold. We might, of course, insist or stipulate that 'gold' refers to the distributed mass itself, but we shall then have to make a compensating assumption about the proper logical form of the predicate, stipulating for example in (1) a. that

the predicate is not 'is traded in the market-place' but 'Samples of … are traded in the market-place', and similarly for the other sentences in (1).

There is a well-documented analogy between the behaviour of mass terms and the behaviour of bare plurals. Thus consider:

(2) a.   Mangoes are sold in the market-place.
     b.   Mangoes are required in the manufacture of *āmcur*.
     c.   Mangoes exist but are rare.

One might be inclined, on the basis of the analogy in linguistic behaviour, to treat the bare plural as referring to a group or collection, whether or not one considers groups and collections to be particulars or universals. But even if we agree that bare plurals 'present' groups or collections, the logical subject in the sentences mentioned above is not the group or collection itself, but rather its members.

The analogy between mass terms and bare plurals extends to the behaviour of abstract noun-phrases derived from adjectivals and verbals, terms that specify characteristics or undergoings. Thus for example:

(3) a.   Wisdom is found in the market-place.
     b.   Wisdom is required in the manufacture of consent.
     c.   Wisdom exists but is rare.

In each of these cases, the logical subject to which the predicate is most naturally seen as applying are property-particulars, the particular wisdoms attributively tied to individual persons; the abstract type which collects such particular wisdoms is not what is found in the market-place or required in the manufacture of consent. Again, the abstract noun-phrase deflects the predication onto an entity or entities distinct from but related to the entity 'presented' by the noun-phrase. And again, one could stipulate that wisdom itself (so to speak) is the logical subject, with corresponding manipulation of the predicate, and one can also force wisdom itself to be the logical subject with the help of linguistic devices such as the one I have just used – the suffixation of 'itself', or the employment of a neologism such as 'the property of being wise'. But the enrichment of the language by means of such expressions will only lead us to other non-universal generalities which resist predication in the newly enriched language, for example the generality under which wisdom itself, sincerity itself, and so on are collected. I will say more about the use of abstraction devices such as 'itself' and '-hood' or '-kind' below.

4.   Introduction by Invocation

Strawson's analysis of the subject–predicate distinction rests, as we have seen, on the idea that there is a distinction between the way the particular and the general are introduced into a discussion: predication introduces a generality under which is collected the particular introduced by 'subjection'. Universals are introduced as logical subjects by an analogical extension of the basic pattern. In this section, I will argue that there is another, quite different, way by which generalities are

introduced, neither as logical subjects nor as logical predicates. Let us call this, as yet undescribed manner of introduction, 'invocation', and say that a generality is invoked in a discussion if it is introduced into the discussion neither by subjection nor by predication. In order to clarify the nature of the proposal, let me consider a quite different suggestion for the treatment of feature-terms, the one made by Strawson in the final section *of Subject and Predicate in Logic and Grammar*, a section entitled 'The fitting in of features' (1974, pp. 135–8). Strawson recognizes that feature–terms are hard to assimilate into the account developed in the earlier chapters of that book, differing from sortals in lacking, as he puts it, 'an arithmetic of their application', but differing too from terms specifying characteristics or undergoings. He suggests, nevertheless, that feature-terms, or at least the special case of what he calls stuff-feature terms and we have been calling mass terms, can be assimilated to substance-sortals.[4] Notice, first of all, that we distinguish the sortal term 'man' from the sortal name 'manhood' or 'mankind', the latter being derived from the former by means of the addition of an abstract suffix. The sortal term 'man' figures both in predicates, such as '…is a man', and in subject terms, such as 'a man', 'this man', 'some man'; in both cases, however, the sortal universal manhood or mankind is introduced in the same way. Suppose we now distinguish, in like manner, between mass terms and derived mass names. Thus the mass name 'gold', as it appears in a sentence such as 'gold is beautiful', is derived from the morphologically identical mass term 'gold', as it appears in the phrases 'this gold,' 'some gold', and so on. The parallel between sortal terms and mass terms is reflected in a parallel between number and quantity: we say 'some horses', 'more horses', 'a lot of horses', as well as 'some gold', 'more gold', 'a lot of gold', these expressions being respectively paraphrased as 'a number of horses', 'a greater number of horses', 'a large number of horses', and 'a quantity of gold', 'a larger quantity of gold', 'a large quantity of gold'. Indeed, once we have so distinguished between numerical ('some$_{pl}$') and quantity ('some$_{qu}$') quantification, the feature-placing sentence 'There is gold here' can be paraphrased as 'Some$_{qu}$ gold is here'. Strawson therefore says that 'the feature-names themselves are immediately available as the names of kinds or types of stuff, abstractly conceived' (1974, p. 137), just as an abstract noun-phrase such as 'manhood' is available as the name of a sortal universal.

B.K. Matilal has drawn upon Strawson's proposed assimilation of mass terms to substance-sortals in his excellent discussion of the subject–predicate distinction and the role of devices for abstraction and substantivization in Sanskrit logical theory (Matilal, 1998). Matilal, however, wants to use the parallel between mass-terms and substance-sortals brought out in this discussion in reverse, so to speak; that is, he argues for an assimilation of certain uses of substance-sortals to mass-terms. Sanskrit, we must recall, is an inflected language, and the inflection does the work of both determiner and singular/plural marker in English. The question, then, has to do with the use of a sortal nominal stem, such as 'pot-' in English or '*ghaṭa-*' in Sanskrit, a use that is both determinerless (as with bare plurals) and numberless (as with mass nouns). Sanskrit permits as grammatically well formed (and even idiomatic), the following subject–predicate sentence, in which a substantivizing suffix is attached to the nominal stem to form a derived adjectival phrase:

(4)   The ground is pot-possessing.   (*ghaṭavad bhūtalam.*)

This sentence stands in the same relation to 'Some$_{pl}$ pot is on the ground' and 'There is a pot on the ground' as the sentence 'The hill is fire-possessing' stands to the sentences 'Some$_{qu}$ fire is on the hill' and 'There is fire on the hill'. The parallel between feature-placing and what we might call 'sortal-placing' therefore consists in this: that in both cases a delimited measure (quantity for stuff, number for substance) is ascribed a place. Matilal's proposal is that we regard the nominal stem 'pot-' as designating a feature-like entity pot-feature or pot-presence, or simply pot, an entity we might describe as a 'sortal-stuff'. Strawson has said, we may recall, that 'there might be a level of thought at which we recognize the presence of cat, or signs of the past or future presence of cat, yet do not think identifyingly of particular cats' (1959, p. 205), where, however, 'the concept of the cat-feature does indeed provide a basis for the idea of reidentification of particular cats. For that concept includes the idea of a characteristic shape, of a characteristic pattern for the occupation of space; and this idea in its turn provides the core of the idea of particular-identity for basic particulars' (ibid., p. 207).[5] A sortal-stuff is ascribed a place or location, and it is also possible to form the term 'pot-absence' ('*ghaṭābhāva-*'), a term complementary to 'pot-' or 'pot-presence'. Sortal-stuffs, indeed, display the possession of incompatibility ranges and involvement ranges that Strawson claims to be characteristic of generality.

The contrast between these cases and the case in which a characteristic-specifying or undergoing-specifying term is used in the predicate position is, however, less sharp than it might at first appear. Consider, for example:

(5)   The pot is blue.   (*nīlo ghaṭaḥ.*)

Here, it is true, there is no corresponding use of the substantivizing suffix '-possessing', nor is there any role for an idea of characteristic shape. We can, nevertheless, find sentences akin to the sentences mentioned above, and standing in the same relation, if we make use of another substantivizing suffix, and say 'Some blue-particular is in the pot', and 'There is a blue-particular in the pot', where now the quantifier ranges over tropes or property-particulars. Trope-types stand to particulars as features stand to places.

The purpose of the last few paragraphs has been to bring to the fore another parallel, one which will relate what we have just been saying to the earlier discussion. Consider again the sentence 'The pot is blue'. On Strawson's original account, this sentence introduces a particular and a universal, namely the pot and the characterizing universal blueness, the particular being tied to the universal by the characterizing tie. The account we are now entertaining claims that two particulars are introduced: one, the pot, is introduced by the expression 'the pot'; the other, particular blue trope, is introduced by the expression 'blue'. This second particular is both attributively tied to the other particular, the pot, and instantially tied to the trope-type blueness. The trope-type blueness is itself introduced into the proposition, but it is introduced neither as subject nor as predicate – it is, I will say, invoked. A trope-type such as blueness is not, therefore, a universal; and that distinction is reflected in the different use of the abstraction suffixes '-ness' and '-hood'.

There is a parallel here with the behaviour of mass terms and bare plurals we noted before. In those cases, we observed, the expression introduces particulars (bits of stuff, members of a collection) as logical subjects, particulars that are tied to the mass of stuff or the collection itself. The stuff or collection is invoked into the proposition, appearing there neither as subject nor as predicate. The mass-term or bare plural deflects predication onto samples of the mass or members of the collection. According to Strawson's assimilation of stuff-feature terms to substance-sortals, the expression 'gold' in the sentence 'Gold is beautiful' names the abstract stuff, gold itself. Yet if we compare this sentence with analogous sentences involving abstract noun-phrases derived from characteristic-specifying terms, for example, 'Wisdom is praise-worthy' or 'Sincerity is highly prized', whose logical subject, we have claimed, is particular instances of wisdom or particular instances of sincerity, then the parallel encourages the different view that what the predicate '… is beautiful' attaches to are instances of gold, and not gold itself. Notice also that we can say both 'This blue is pretty', 'Many blues are pretty', as well as 'Blue (or black) is beautiful'. In both cases, there is reference to, or quantification over, blue-property-particulars. So masses or stuff-features themselves are not universals either, and this distinction is reflected in the fact that the abstraction suffix is never attached to a mass-term (unless it be in expressions such as 'snowiness' or 'wateriness', which are abstract noun-phrases derived from the derived adjectivals 'snowy' and 'watery').

The case for the parallel I am now pressing is further strengthened when we notice that the manner of 'collection' involved when a mass collects its scattered examples is not the same as the one which is claimed when we say that there is a sortal tie between a sortal universal and its instances, nor yet the one which is claimed when we say that there is an attributive tie between a property-particular and the particular of which it is a property. The tie seems now to be one of composition: a collection 'collects' the members that comprise it; likewise, a mass 'collects' the various spatially scattered objects from which it too is composed. Are we analogously able to claim that the trope-type under which tropes fall 'comprises', in any sense, the individual tropes themselves? Suppose, for example, that we collect the various particular wisdoms, the wisdom of Socrates, the wisdom of Solomon, and so on, and ask what is the relation of wisdom itself to them. Plato claimed that the relation was one of copying, the Form wisdom itself functioning as a paradigm or template, of which each of the particular wisdoms is an imperfect replica. An ontologically less committed idea is that the generality under discussion is what the Nyāya- Vaiśeṣika philosophers call an 'imposed' or 'surplus' property, an *upādhi*. Thus Matilal:

> Suppose by 'property' we mean non-universal, abstract features, or even tropes, for example, the property of being a swimmer or the ability to swim. This will be non-universal, if we believe, as we probably should, that this ability to swim varies from person to person, for there may not be a single objective property that we can talk about here. This will then be a perfect example of what the Nyāya call an 'imposed' property or *upādhi*. The use of the same expression 'ability to swim' would then be like the use of the term 'water' for water found in different spatio-temporal locations, as the river-water now is different from the water in this glass … We can conceptually integrate all the different abilities to swim that are found in various agents into a 'conceptual spread.' and

to talk about John's ability to swim, we can delimit this abstract feature, the ability to swim, by its spatio-temporal location, in this case, John. (1998, p. 25)

The idea, I take it, is that the non-relational tie that obtains between a trope-type and its individual tropes is more akin to a relation of composition than it is to the instantial tie that obtains between an 'objective property' or sortal universal and its instances. The generic 'ability to swim' is a composite of the various particular abilities collectively possessed by swimmers. Each 'flailing about in water' is an ability to swim only because it enables propulsion in water, and 'subserving propulsion in water' consists in any of the various flailings about.[6] Of course, we cannot simply merge tropes, as we can examples of a stuff-feature like gold (compare Strawson: 'Particulars such as heaps of snow could be physically lumped together to yield one particular mass of snow; but we could not lump particular cats together to yield one enormous cat', 1959, p. 205). An *upādhi* is not a sortal universal, for it will not by itself permit the reidentification of a particular falling under it as the same again.[7] The basic analogy, to repeat, is that trope-types stand to particulars as stuff- and sortal-features stand to places. The relationship is in both cases indirect, mediated in the first case by tropes and in the second case by primary particulars.

5.   Subjection, Predication and Delimitation

An object is introduced into a proposition by subjection, and an object is introduced into a proposition by predication. I have been arguing that there is yet another way by which an object is introduced into a proposition. Let me now say that an object is introduced as the delimitor of subjection or as the delimitor of predication. In either case, the object is, as I put it earlier, invoked. Invoked objects appear in the proposition neither as subjects nor as predicates. Thus the expression 'gold' in the sentence 'Gold is traded in the market-place' introduces individual specimens of gold as subject, the truth or falsity of the sentence resting on whether it is indeed specimens of gold that are traded. The same expression 'gold' in the sentence introduces the abstract mass gold itself as the delimitor of subjection. Gold itself is 'presented' by the expression 'gold', but is neither a subject nor a predicate of the sentence. It is not the subject, because the truth or falsity of the sentence does not rest on whether gold itself is traded in the market-place. It is not a predicate of the sentence, because the fact that the individual specimens in question are specimens of gold is not something that the sentence asserts. (Borrowing a phrase from Donnellan, but not all its implications, we might say that 'gold' is used referentially.) Again, the expression 'blue' in the sentence 'The pot is blue' introduces individual blue-tropes or property-particulars as the predicate, the truth or falsity of the sentence resting on whether the pot is indeed attributively tied to a blue-trope. The same expression 'blue' introduces the abstract trope-type blue itself as the delimitor of predication. Blue itself is 'presented' by the expression 'blue', but is neither a subject nor a predicate of the sentence, for the same reasons as before.

We might derive from the expression 'blue' another, namely 'blueness', and use this new expression to force blue itself into either the subject or the predicate position of a new sentence, for example 'Blueness is a variety of colour'. Such a

manoeuvre, however, does not in any way speak against the claim that blue itself appears in the original sentence as neither subject nor predicate. Similarly, beginning with the sentence 'Pot-possessing is the ground', where the expression 'pot-possessing' introduces individual pots as subjects, the delimitor of subjection might be referred to by the new expression 'pot-possessing-ness', an expression which is synonymous with the nominal stem 'pot-', picking out the generic pot sortal-stuff, but not synonymous with the abstract noun-phrase 'pothood', which picks out the sortal universal under which all pots fall.

Here we see clearly both the analogies and the disanalogies between sortals, on the one hand, and features and characteristics on the other. The feature-like entity pot or pot-possessing-ness stands to individual pots as the 'generic ability to swim' stands to individual abilities to swim. Neither supplies an arithmetic of application, or a way of identifying a given particular as the same again, and that is the difference between them and the sortal universal pothood. So trope-types are not, *pace* Sen, sortals of tropes.

Beginning with the nominal stem 'pot-', which introduces the sortal-stuff, we have three linguistic devices available to us with which to derive a noun-phrase. One, the addition of an inflection, turns the nominal stem into a sortal term. A second, the substantivizing suffix '-possessing', forces the introduction of this same sortal-stuff as a predicate. A third, the abstraction suffix '-hood', forces the introduction of the corresponding sortal universal as a logical subject. The notion of delimitation is meant to include two sorts of case. When the subject expression is definite and individually designating ('this pot', 'that pot', and so on), delimitation introduces a limit on the depth of demonstration; in particular, that it is a pot rather than a front surface of a pot or a temporal slice of a pot or a mere artifact or material thing that is designated. When (as in Strawson's 'trans-logical' generalization of the basic reference–predication combination) the requirement of individual designation is dropped, and indefinite, plural or quantified expressions ('a pot', 'some pots', 'many pots', 'all pots', and so on) are permitted to form a part of the subject term, delimitation introduces a limit on indefiniteness; in particular, it restricts the scope of quantification.

I have argued for a category of generalities that are not universals, and have claimed that it includes at least the following: stuff-features and feature-like sortal-stuffs; types to which belong characterizing property-particulars and undergoings.[8] Sen's recommendation that Strawson's tripartite division of universals into sortals, characterizing universals and features be revised is, I have argued, substantially correct. Both features and characterizing universals are reclassified under the present proposal, not indeed as particulars and sortal universals, as they were for Sen, but into a new category of non-universal generality. I would like to think that my argument for the recognition of this new category has been at least somewhat Strawsonian, and for that reason itself qualifies as a 'pruning' of Strawson's account: the argument has been that there is a manner of introduction of entities into propositions that is irreducible either to identifying reference (or, more generally, logical subjection) or to predication. I have likewise followed Strawson in permitting these entities to be introduced both as subjects and as predicates, but only derivatively so, just as Strawson's defence of the traditional doctrine of particulars and universals permits universals to be introduced only derivatively as subjects. And in developing

the argument, I have borrowed one idea from the Nyāya philosophers of pre-modern India,[9] and another from one of their most able and creative modern interpreters.[10]

Notes

1   Thus: 'These discussions have been meant to get out of the way, to remove by chipping off, the unwanted elements … and thus to reveal, and to give a clear and unobstructed view of, a doctrine which is not only comprehensive and profound but also beautifully neat' (this volume, p. 000). In the promotion of such a method as a legitimate variety of philosophical endeavour, Sen's approach bears comparison with the work of those innovative commentators of classical India, Bhāsarvajña and Raghunātha, whose revision of the traditional Vaiśeṣika system of categories was pursued in a similar vein and with similar intent. I will mention their work again a little later.

2   'The idea of a property belongs to a level of logical complexity which we are trying to get below' (Strawson, 1959, p. 203).

3   This claim is one with which the Vaiśeṣika philosophers take issue; according to them, a universal can never be instantially tied to another universal (cf. e.g. Halbfass, 1992, p. 260). But notice that in the preceding quotation, Strawson had put matters less strongly, claiming only that there is an analogy between the instantial tie between universal and particular and the tie between universal and universal. With this weaker claim, some Vaiśeṣika philosophers would have no quarrel (ibid., pp. 155 and esp. 248–52).

4   Other feature terms, such as 'raining' or 'cold', as they are used in sentences such as 'It is raining' and 'It is cold', lend themselves, Strawson claims, to an at best formal assimilation to verbals and adjectivals.

5   The role of an idea of characteristic shape (saṃsthāna, rūpa) is recognised by the Vaiśeṣika philosophers too; see Halbfass (1992, pp. 103–6).

6   We must note that the Vaiśeṣika philosophers will accept the analogy between wholes and *upādhis* but reject the disanalogy between these two and sortals; according to them, the same non-relational tie (*samavāya*) collects parts into composites as does instances into sorts.

7   Some later Vaiśeṣika philosophers, for example, consider the generic type to which all characterizing tropes belong (namely, *guṇatva*) to be an *upādhi*, something that is 'undivided' (*akhaṇḍa*) and yet 'distributive' (*vibhājaka*). Others see a distinction between the way the most general universal *sattā* ('reality') collects all and only particulars, and the way *astitva* ('is-ness') collects both all particulars and all universals; on this view is-ness is not itself a universal. Halbfass says that it 'is not listed and named among the categories, but is used to describe and analyze them. It is a second-order concept, an abstraction' (Halbfass, 1992, p. 145). That is to say, the abstract noun-phrase 'is-ness' is an artificial device, used to mention an entity that resists introduction as either a subject or a predicate, an entity, in other words, which is not itself either a particular or a universal. Existence is not a predicate; it is – to borrow the terminology of Section 5 – a delimitor, albeit a minimal one, of being-a-subject or being-a-predicate. Subject terms that fail to refer, and predicates that fail to introduce a (possibly or actually instantiated) universal are, therefore, not genuine subject terms or predicates at all.

8   This list is not meant to be exhaustive. In particular, the entities in Frege's 'third realm', the realm of senses, might well belong to this category too, as might, indeed, the regulative ideals of Kant.

9 The idea that there is a distinction, within the objects that figure in a thought-content, between *viśeṣya* (i.e. subject) and *viśeṣyatāvacchedaka* (delimitor of subjection), and between *prakāra* (i.e. predicate) and *prakāratāvacchedaka* (delimitor of predication), of which the first of each pair is an object of reference and the second an object of non-referential invocation.

10 Matilal's idea that sortal nominal stems name sortal-stuffs.

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