

# Chapter 2

## Universal as Real

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In philosophical discussion the word 'Universal' seems to be used broadly in two senses (1) Realist sense - where universal means - 'a common quality of existing things'<sup>1</sup> and (2) Nominalist sense - where universal means-'a concept'<sup>2</sup>. These two senses are very different from each other. The first exist in nature while the second in thought and discourse only. But the question is - "*Can one ponder over the existence of universal in either realist sense or nominalist sense or both?*" In order to answer this question, we will first of all discuss realist theory of universal (maintained by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā) and then we will go on to nominalist (held by Buddhists) theory of universal (both with special reference to Śāntarakṣita's examination of universal in his *Tattavasamgraha*). But here in this chapter we are concerned only with realist sense and we will discuss nominalist sense in the next chapter.

### **The Original Position of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika**

The basic standpoint of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is realistic and pluralistic. The world, according to it, is constituted of real objects existing independently of cognizing mind. The proof for the existence of such a world is the experience itself.<sup>3</sup> There could be no knowledge, if there was no universal- external to us. All knowledge begins in experience and its total content (reality) is derived from experience. And whatever we experience must exist, as we conceive it to be, as illustrated by saying - *whatever is, is knowable and namable*<sup>4</sup>, that is, we describe the reality of a thing in accordance with the way we conceive of it. Thus, realist holds words to be an adequate expression of reality. Now, the question is - *what is the relation between reality, knowledge and languages?*

According to realist, knowledge contains reality as its content and in order to make the knowledge comprehensible to the hearer, we use language, that is, language illuminates the knowledge and it's content (reality) to the hearer. Thus, knowledge and language deal directly with reality (R=K=L).

Moreover, in order to explain the reality of the universe, realist divides all the phenomena among seven categories. Categories are *Padārtha*, the object of possible types of expression that are classified by an analysis of language that reflects the way in which the element of reality is put together. These seven categories are: Substance, Quality, Action, Generality, Particularity, Inherence

and Non-existence. The first six categories are called positive entities (*bhāva*) and the last category as negative entity (*abhāva*). Universal subsists only in the first three categories namely - Substance, Qualities and Actions, through the relation of inherence. Even amongst the first three there are some substances that cannot have universal, such as ether, time, and space, which are eternal and one in number.

But, the question is - *'Why do we need universal in our discourse?' or 'What is the necessity of introducing universal?'*

According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, external world reveals both diversity and unity. The variety of our cognitions necessarily implies the plurality of the reals and the very possibility of cognitions implies the fact of unity. If things were absolutely disparate without having any bond of unity, their comprehension would have been beyond the capacity of human intellect. Hence, things must be admitted to possess common features, which enable us to classify them and give them a common designation. These common features are what Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika calls *sāmānya* or universal. In this way, in order to explain Commonality/ Identity/Unity in our discourse, we need universal. Moreover, it is the basis of naming process; that is-how we call all individual cows as 'cow' because they possess universal 'cowness'. Further, a general feature of language is made possible only when words are connected with universals. Thus language acquires its general applicability. If words acquired their

meaning only in relation to individual things, then language would be just a nomenclature of sound events, or written signs pointing directly to a given object. There would be no way to say the same thing at different times or to refer to an object in its absence. It also would be impossible for different people to say the same thing. Therefore, Naiyāyikas and Vaiśeṣika continue to insist that neither language nor inferential reasoning could operate without universal. Our whole conventional behaviour will be impossible.

### **Realist theory of Universal and Particular as given in the *Tattvasaṃgraha***

#### **(i) Definitions of Universal by different Realist Thinkers**

Here are different definitions given by various Nyāya authors:

- (a) Gautama defines the universal as what produces similar cognition.<sup>5</sup>
- (b) Praśastapāda, Śrīdhara, Udayana and Śaṅkara Miśra define universal as that which is one, eternal and inheres in a plurality of particulars.<sup>6</sup>
- (c) According to Vātsyāyana, sāmānya is a Pure universal, like being, which assimilates only, without differentiating, while a *jāti* is an ordinary property like potness or cowness, which both assimilates and differentiates.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, from the above definitions the universal is said to have three essential characteristics, namely (1) Eternality (2) Commonness and (3) Inherence.<sup>8</sup> And in the absence of any of these qualifications,

the definition of the universal will be too broad. The First qualification is necessary to prevent conjunction (*saṃyoga*) from being included in the definition, which possesses the other two characteristics, but it is not eternal. The second qualification is necessary to exclude the dimension (*parimāṇa*) of *ākāśa*, which is both eternal and inherent, but not common. And the third qualification is indispensable to avoid the inclusion of absolute non-existence (*atyantābhāva*), which is eternal and common but not inherent in anything.

### **(ii) Relation Between Universal and Particular**

According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika universal is absolutely different from particular because its cognition is distinct from that of the latter. The former has distinct characteristics like eternality and commonness, while the latter is non-eternal and non-common. But this difference between the two is not a bar to their intimate relationship. The things might be different and yet be intimately or inseparably related. And the fact that they are never found separately because the cognition of the universal depends upon the cognition of particular, it proves that they are intimately related by a relation, which is technically called *Samavāya*.<sup>9</sup>

### **(iii) Types of Universal<sup>10</sup>**

The Universal is classified by the Naiyāyika's into three kinds:

(1) *Para-sāmānya* (widest extension)

(2) *Apara-sāmānya* (least extension)

(3) *Parapāra-sāmānya* (intermediate extension)

***Para-sāmānya***: It is the widest and highest universal, which forms the basis of a comprehensive notion of commonality in regard to all its three substrata, namely - substance, quality and action. It is technically known as *sattā* (existence).

***Apara-sāmānya***: It is the narrowest and lowest universal. It is an inferior type of *sāmānya*, because it subsists in the lowest level of reality. For example - cowness, potness, tableness etc. are *apara-sāmānya* because there are no universal of lesser extension under them.

***Parapara-sāmānya***: In between these two *sāmānya* there is *parāpara-sāmānya*, which is wide as well as narrow. It is *apara* as compared to *para* but *para* as compared to *apara*. For example, substance hood, quality hood and action hood are *apara* or narrower in comparison to *sattā*, but *para* or wider in comparison to cowness, tableness, etc. Moreover, it has two functions of creating (1) the notion of commonality (*anugata-pratīti*) and the notion of differentiation (*vyāvṛtti-pratīti*). Śāntarakṣita in his *Tattvasaṃgraha*, does not mention this third kind of *Sāmānya*.

#### (iv) Definition of Particular<sup>11</sup>

In the *Kārikā*-711, Śāntarakṣita authentically presents the definition of particular, according to realist, which states that - *Viśeṣa* (particularities) are ultimate factors of individual identity. They

reside exclusively in the eternal, non-composite substance, that is, in the individual atoms, souls, and mental organs. Unitary substances like ether, time and space and they account for the ultimate distinctiveness of these Fundamental ingredients of the universe. Moreover, to distinguish and differentiate eternal substances from one another, *Viśeṣa* is established. It is also 'self-differentiating'. In this way, particular is the root cause of differentiation and universal is the cause of both differentiation and commonality as discussed above, according to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. Thus, there is a confusion, argues Śāntarakṣita, in this position.

#### **(v) Proofs for the Existence of Particular**

Śāntarakṣita presents the realist explanation which try to prove the existence of particular on the basis of mystics experience and by means of inference, in the *Kārikā*-712 and 714 respectively. Śāntarakṣita states, in the *Kārikā*-712<sup>12</sup> that, just as we ordinary mortals have relatively differentiating notions (*vyortti-pratiti*) by which we distinguish a cow from a horse, in terms of particular shapes, qualities, actions, and constitutes, so yogi's have the ability to distinguish one atom, or self, from another. Here an objection may arises - why yogi's could not have this ability without the being capacity in the things to differentiate. The answer is that even yogi's cannot correctly cognize something that is not there.<sup>13</sup> So without this ability, even accomplished yogi's would not be able to identify individual atoms. In the *Kārikā*-714 Śāntarakṣita states that, according

to realist, the existence of particular is cognized by means of inference also, that is, distinctive notion must be due to a different cause. In short it means: the difference in concepts or cognitions of various sets of particular is due to difference in universals inherent in these particulars. This is the reason why generic commonality like *guṇatva* is cognized in *guṇas*, *dravyatva*, in *dravyas*, cowness in cows and horseness in horses. This means in order to explain the difference in cognition there must be presupposed something, objectively given outside, as cause, which is, 'Universal'. Thus, on the basis of different cognition and cognitions we infer different causes in the form of properties, which are different universals.

**(vi) Proof for the Existence of Universal**

In the Kārikā-71315, Śāntarakṣita mention, the realist arguments, which try to prove the existence of universal through direct perception as well. According to realist, the cognition of the universals such as Being, cowness and the like arises only when the functioning of the sense-organs is completed (*akṣavyāpāraṣadbhāve*). Moreover, in commentary of this Kārikā, Kamalaśīla explains the existence of universal through Mīmāṃsā's cause-effect relationship, that is, "*kāryānukṛtānvayavyātareki kāraṇam*".

The functioning of sense-organs is the cause and cognition of the concept of being etc. is the effect. Now if this is so, then latter is dependent upon the former - then why not latter is created by the former?



Here Kamalaśīla criticizes realist position, but we will discuss this, in the next chapter.

In explaining realist position Śāntarakṣita mention the views of three realist thinkers, namely-Bhāvivikta, Uddyotakara and Śaṅkarasvāmin on the concept of universal, in his *Tattovasamgraha*.<sup>16</sup>

**(vii) Bhāvivikta as presented by Śāntarakṣita in the**

**TS 715 to 717**

- (1) Universals are the causes of names and concepts of things and not of their physical structure like body and shape.<sup>17</sup>
- (2) The names and ideas of cow, elephant, etc. are different from the names and ideas of body, convention, etc., which are just like peculiar names and ideas relating to the same animals. For example, 'the cow with the calf (*savatsā gauḥ*) 'the bullock with the load' (*bhārākanto mahisaḥ*), 'the boar with the dart' (*sasalyovarāḥ*), 'the elephant with the goad' (*sānkusomatang-aḥ*) and so forth.<sup>18</sup>
- (3) The qualifying clause (while appertaining to the cow etc.) has been added for the purpose of excluding the 'hare's horn' (which also has a distinct name and idea relating to it) and such other non-entities. The name and idea of the other things (i.e. relating to body etc.) are the corroborative instance per dissimilarity.<sup>19</sup>

**(viii) Uddyotakara as presented by Śāntarakṣita, in TS 718-719**

- (1) The basis of naming process is universal and not convention etc. because it appears like a differentiator, like the idea of the blue and the like.<sup>20</sup>
- (2) The cognition of universal cow is different from the cognition of individual cow, because they are the object of different idea, like the idea of the colour and other qualities (touch) of the same cow, also because the universal is spoken of as belonging to the particular just as the horse is spoken of as belonging to *chaitra* and as something as different from *chaitra*.

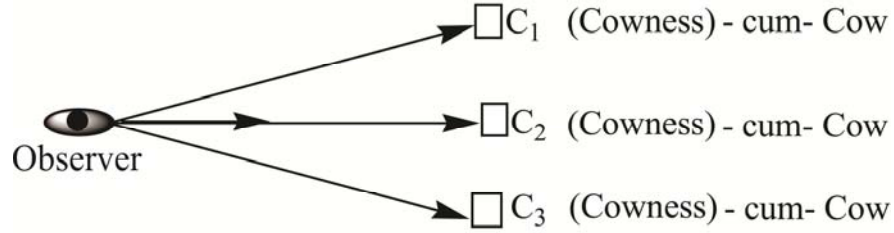
**(ix) Śāṅkarasvāmin as presented by Śāntarakṣita in the TS 739**

Śāṅkarasvāmin<sup>22</sup> opines that the universal are not amorphous entities, but they have the same perceptible qualities, form and colour etc., as the individuals. The universal of 'blue' has the feature of the individual 'blue' and so the different individuals are referable to one category.<sup>23</sup>

**(x) Similarity between Bhāvivikta's view and Uddyotakara's view**

According to both, the basis of 'naming process' is universal. A thing is called by a certain name because it instantiates a certain universal, therefore, universal is the basis of the notion of sameness/identity. It can be explained through a diagram.

## Universal is the basis of the Notion of sameness



C<sub>1</sub>, C<sub>2</sub>, C<sub>3</sub> = One class, because they Possess Cowness

This shows that notion of sameness among C<sub>1</sub>, C<sub>2</sub> & C<sub>3</sub>, are because of their possessing cowness.

Epistemologically, an observer sees different cows (C<sub>1</sub>, C<sub>2</sub>, C<sub>3</sub>) through the prism of universal 'cowness' because of which we put these cows in one certain class, that is of cow.

### (xi) Difference Between Uddyotakara's view and Śāṅkarasvāmin's View

According to Uddyotakara, there is a difference between universal cow and individual cow, whereas according to Śāṅkarasvāmin there is no difference between the two, like in between universal blue and individual blue.

Not let us consider some important questions referring to one and the same point.

- (1) Does everything in the universe possess a universal? or
- (2) Can there be universality without a universal? or

- (3) Can there be universality without ontological correlate? or
- (4) Is universal-less universality possible?

Udayana, the great Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosopher, appears to have been the first to embark upon a systematic treatment of the issue of universal-less universality by six impediments or *jātibādhakas* or restrictive conditions, called “*upādhis*” or pseudo-universal or mediate universal.

Śāntarakṣita, also talk about *upādhi* in his *Tattovaṣaṅgraha*, in the *Kārikā*-743, while answering the question of the opponent-“*Is there any padārthatva of padārtha?*” and also in the *Kārikās*- (749-753), (765-787) and (788-794) while answering the question of the opponent- “*Is there any Universal in the case of the cook, the teacher, the imaginary things and the dead and unborn person?*” at great length. We will, deal with this issue in the next chapter. Here we are required to discuss these *jāti-bādhakas* in brief. So that the above question is answered satisfactorily.

#### **(xii) Restrictive Conditions/*Jāti-bādhakas*/Upādhis<sup>24</sup>**

Here is a brief discussion of the *Jāti-bādhakas*:

- (1) *Singleness of the Individual (vyaktyabheda)*: For example, the physical space, which is only a single individual, has no universal, no spaceness. Likewise time and ether also have no universal because they are one in number.
- (2) *Co-existensiveness (tulyatva)*: If two terms denote the same object, then there cannot be two universals in respect of these terms.

For example, Jar (*ghaṭa*) and Pitcher (*kalaśa*) denote one and the same individual, hence they have only one universal, call it jarness (*gaṭatva*) or pitcherness (*kalaśatva*), it is the same universal.

- (3) *Cross-division* (*saṅkara*): Physicality (*bhūtatva*) and corporeality (*mūrtatva*) are not universals because they involve cross-division. In the monad there is corporeality and in the physical space, physicality while in the earth and the other three material substances - air, fire and water, there are both. How can one and the same substance be possessed of two overlapping universals?
- (4) *Infinite Regress* (*anavasthā*): A universal cannot have a universal universalness (*sāmānyatva*), otherwise that second universal will require a third and the third a fourth and so on ad infinitum.
- (5) *Abandonment of Nature* (*rūpa-hani*): Differentials though innumerable, cannot have a universal like differential-ness (*viśeṣatva*), for the simple reason that they are ex-hypotheses antithetical to the notion of universal.
- (6) *Absence of Relation* (*asambandha*): Inherence cannot have a universal like inherence-ness (*samavāyatva*). Inherence is the relation that holds between universal and particular, what is there to relate the relation itself to its universal? If another inherence, then it leads to infinite regress.

Thus, an important feature of this theory is that it does not recognize all general characteristics as universal, only permanent features like cowness, tableness, redness, potness etc. are universals and not adventitious features like cookness, tallness, blindness etc., as the latter are *upādhis* and not universals.

But, the cardinal questions, are - *why do we need Universal in our language or discourse? What are its sources, needs and importance?*

**(xiii) Sources of Universal**

- (1) The first source of the postulation of universal is the necessity of explaining the existence of natural kinds.
- (2) A second source of the notion of Universal comes from the necessity of deciding what it is that a common noun name.

**(xiv) Needs and Importance of Universals**

- (1) The main contention of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is that knowledge and causal relation between things cannot be explained if the reality of universals is not recognized.
- (2) The universals provide an objective bases for the classification and generalization of natural objects.
- (3) They constitute the ontological foundation, which makes conceptual cognition possible.
- (4) They justify the significant use of general words.

In this way, by its theory of universal the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika seeks to explain the systematic and intelligible character of the world

of experience from its own pluralistic and realistic point of view. But this theory also gives rise to important questions such as:

- (1) Whether universal arises immediately after the functioning of sense- organs or through convention?
- (2) If universal is an independent ontological category, then whether the whole of the universal or only a part of it is present in the individual?
- (3) Is the universal all-pervasive or is it confined to individuals belonging to the same class?
- (4) What happens to the universal, when the individual in which it is present dies? Is the universal destroyed along with the individual?

These and other related questions are actually raised by the opponents of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika realism and the Naiyāyika also had tried to defend his position. Although, the Naiyāyika had the right intuition of the problems, but he did not give, in our opinion, a right answer to it. The weakness of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika doctrine would become more and more apparent as we proceed through our discussion. We shall be concerned with this discussion in the next chapter.

Till now, we have discussed Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika realism, now we move on to Mīmāṃsā theory of universal. Śāntarakṣita discusses Mīmāṃsā realism (specially Kumāṛila's arguments) only in *Kārikā-797* in his *Tattovasaṅgraha*. Therefore, it is important to discuss the

basics of Mīmāṃsā realism in brief, here in order to understand Śāntarākṣita's criticisms against Kumārila's argument, which will be elaborated in the next chapter.

### **Mīmāṃsā Theory of Universal**

The closest of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika realism is the Mīmāṃsā, which staunchly defends the reality of universals. Both the schools of Mīmāṃsā - the Kumārila and the Prābhākara - advocate the reality, eternality and the pervasiveness of universals. The Prābhākara School agrees with Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika realism almost on all points, except one. The former regards, unlike the latter, the relation (*samavāya*) between the universal and particular as non-eternal because if the relation between them is eternal then the universal should be perceived even after the particular is destroyed, but the fact is that it is not so perceived. According to Prābhākara, the destruction of *samavāya* following the destruction of the individual is the cause of the non-perception of the universal, while according to Nyāya, the destruction of the individuals alone is the cause of the said non-perception. There is a fundamental difference between Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Kumārila' on the question of the relation between the universal and particular. The latter replaces the relation of *Samavāya* by Identity-in-difference (*bhedābheda*), because absolute difference between universal and particular is contrary to experience. As a matter of fact the two are always felt as both identical and different. When we cognise individual with class-



nature, the two are apprehended as identical and when we cognise the universal in its individual instances, the two are apprehended as different, that is, universal is a unity in itself, but it is also diverse in the forms of its individual instances.

**Kumārila's Argument, as Understood by Śāntarakṣita, in *Kārikā-196***

Śāntarakṣita criticizes the above arguments, which will be discussed in the next chapter. Here we will mention Kumārila's arguments in favour of the reality of universal as understood by Śāntarakṣita in TS, *Kārikā-196*:

- (1) We call all individual 'cows' as cow because it possesses a single entity in the shape of the universal 'cow', which manifests the individual cow and is of one form, just as the notion of cow manifests a single individual cow.
- (2) The idea of cow cannot be based upon the individual black cow, because it is present even when the individual is not present. Further, according to Kumārila, the ground or source of the notion of commonality among diverse particular cows is universal 'cowness'.
- (3) Even though the universal subsists in each individual, yet it is only one, because it is cognized as one even among many individuals. In other words, there is one cowness among many cows.

(4) The notion of 'one-ness', which arises from universal oneness cannot be regarded as wrong, because there is no incompatibility between them.

The above discussion shows that the Mīmāṃsā theory of universal is as realistic as that of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. According to both, one is compelled to accept the existence of universal in realist sense. But the difficulty inherent in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika realism is well exposed by the Buddhist nominalist, who denies the existence of the universal altogether. We may proceed to consider the Buddhist criticisms in the next chapter. In this chapter, we have tried our level best to expound the realist concept of universal as presented by Śāntarakṣita in his *Tattvasaṃgraha*.

### Notes and References

1. An example of universal in the first sense (supposing for the moment that such exist) is the common colour of these followers before me. Here are three daffodils which appear to share precisely the same shade of yellow, a shade we may name  $y^1$  to distinguish it from other shades of yellow,  $y^2$ ,  $y^3$  and so on. The shade  $y^1$  is a common quality belonging to the three objects and is in that sense a universal. The universality of  $y^1$  is an objective natural fact, which the mind may or may not, discover.
2. As an example, we may take the universal man. There may be some quality 'm', common to all men and 'm' would then be the same kind of universal as  $y^1$ . But the universal man is not 'm' that is to say; it is not a common quality.
3. *saṃvideva hi bhagavatī vastupagame raḥśaranarp* - *Upaskāra* of Śankara Miśra on VS, III ii. 26.
4. *astitva jñeyatva abhidheyatva* - quoted in potter, *Indian Metaphysics*, p.48.
5. *sāmānprasavāmikājātiḥ* - NS, 2.2.71.
6. See Arjun Mishra's article '*Universals in Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy*', p. 641-642.
7. See *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy*, Vol .II, p. 135.
8. *nityatve sati anekasamavetatvam* - NSM, p. 55.

9. It is defined as the relation between inseparable things standing to one another as the support and the supported and as the cause of the idea 'this is in that'.

*ayutasiddhānām ādhāryadhāra bhutānām yaḥ sambandhaḥ  
ihapratyayahetuḥ sa masavāyaḥ - Padārthadharmasamgraha or  
Prasātapāda, p.14.*

10. *tatrayaṃ dvividha jatiḥ parair abhyupagamyate /  
sāmānyam eva sattākhyam samasteṣu anuvṛttitaḥ // TS 708  
draḅyatvādi tu sāmānyam sadviśeṣo ' bhidhiyate /  
svāśrayeṣv anuvṛttasya cetaso hetubbāvataḥ //  
TS 709 vijātibhyaś ca sarvebhyaḥ svāśrayasya viśeṣaṇāt /  
vyāvṛttibuddhihetutvaṃ teṣāṃ eva tataḥ sithatam // TS 710*
11. *viśeṣā eva kecit tu vyāvṛttter eva hetavaḥ /  
nityadraḅyasthitā ye 'ntyā viśeṣā iti varṇitāḥ // TS 711*
12. *yad balāt paramāṇvādaḥ jāyante yogināṃ dhiyaḥ /  
vilakṣaṇo 'yam etasmād iti pratyekamśāritāḥ // TS 712*
13. For detail see, *Prasātapāda's Padārthadharmasamgraha* - where *Prasātapāda* says that, an another objection may arise that - since the individuator of atom 'a' must be different from the individuator of atom 'b' why not just hold that a and b are self-differentiating? Answer - the atoms have the same nature as each other, and need something else to differentiate them. Furthermore a thing never brings about judgment itself but

always about other things. E.g. a lamp brings about cognitions of a jar, but not of itself, nor of another lamp.

14. *anumānabalenāpi sattoamāsām pratīyate /  
viśeṣapratyayo yena nimittāntarabhāvikaḥ // TS 714*
15. *pratyakṣataḥ prasiddhās tu sattoagotvādirijātayaḥ /  
akṣavyāpārasadbhāve sadādiratyayodayāt // TS 713*
16. This writer is mentioned in a Buddhist work of the 8<sup>th</sup> century by Śāntarakṣita
17. *gavādsābdaprajñānaviśeṣā gogajādiṣu /  
samayākṛtipiṇḍādivyatiriktārtha hetavaḥ // TS 715*
18. *gavādiviśayatve hi sati tac chabda buddhitaḥ /  
anyatvāt tad yathaiṣv eva savatsānkusadhūdhvāi // TS 716*
19. *śaśaśṅgadvijñānair vyabhicarad viśeṣanam /  
tatsvarupabhidhanarp ca vaidharmyena nidarśanam // TS 717*
20. *gavadiṣu anuvṛttam ca vijñānampindato 'nyataḥ /  
viśeṣakatvan nīladvijñānam iva jayate // TS 718*
21. *gotattvārthāntaram gotvaṃ bhinnadhīviśayatvataḥ /  
rūpasparśadivat tasyetyukteś caitraturangavat // TS 719*
22. Śāṅkarasvāmin is another old Naiyāyikas of whom we hear much from Buddhist and Jain writers. According to him, universals have colour and form and are perceptible.
23. *sāmānyasyāpi nīlādirūpatve guṇato 'sya kaḥ /  
bhedo nānugataś caiko nīlādirūpalakṣyate // TS 739*
24. *vyakterabhedastulyatvam sankarothānavasttitiḥ /*

*rupahām sambandho jātibādhaka sangrahaḥ // Kirāṇavālī p.33.*

25. According to Kumārila, the universal is *akṛti* i.e. by which the individual is specified or characterized. It is the common nature (*sāmānya*) determining the identical cognition of different individuals. He also maintained that universal cannot be identified with similarity, because in our cognition of things as cow, horse etc., we cognise different individuals as ‘the same’ and not as ‘similar’. Besides, similarity presupposes identity, which is a universal.