

Title	Existence, Reality, and Fact.
Sub Title	
Author	沢田, 允茂(Sawada, Nobushige)
Publisher	三田哲學會
Publication year	1958
Jtitle	哲學 No.34 (1958. 1) ,p.A20- A21
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	Abstract
Genre	
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=AN00150430-00000034-0338

慶應義塾大学学術情報リポジトリ(KOARA)に掲載されているコンテンツの著作権は、それぞれの著作者、学会または出版社/発行者に帰属し、その権利は著作権法によって保護されています。引用にあたっては、著作権法を遵守してご利用ください。

The copyrights of content available on the KeiO Associated Repository of Academic resources (KOARA) belong to the respective authors, academic societies, or publishers/issuers, and these rights are protected by the Japanese Copyright Act. When quoting the content, please follow the Japanese copyright act.

Existence, Reality, and Fact.

Nobushige Sawada

There are, among others, four expressions which bear some resemblance to each other though they are not identical. They are: 'There is', '. . . . exist', '. . . . is a reality' and '. . . . is a fact'. The expression '. . . . exist' to which the term "existence" is a corresponding noun has some ambiguities: sometimes it is used to mean 'There is', another time to mean '. . . . is a reality'.

The expression 'There is' is quite popular and sound. Existence in this sense is neutral, that is to say, it has no particular ontological commitment; it is rather a matter of linguistic decision. From a linguistic point of view (and from a view-point of formal logic also) we can talk about anything—about physical objects as well as about numbers and imaginary things). Problems of "ontological commitment" or "abstract entities" which have recently been widely discussed by logicians like Quine, Carnap etc. have, in fact, nothing to do with the so interpreted use of (Ex) of the contemporary formal logic.

What is then the linguistic decision of the expression 'There is'? The expression is used either 1) to make ourselves assured that the thing we are going to state is worth while (minimum evaluative presupposition or pragmatic motive of our linguistic activities) or 2) to make others pay attention to and to "assure them" of the fact that the thing they are going to be told is worth while (appeal to others). The use of 'There is' is not purely cognitive one; it is rather performatory. What *is said* to be existing is what is referred to by "x" in 'There is x.': physical objects, theoretical constructs, numbers or imaginary things as well—not the *existence* of these things is said to be existing. Existence itself, though it has a fact-stating aspect in each particular instance of its use (like "good" in "good apple" and "good automobile" has its

descriptive aspects, in each case in a different sense), can not be conceived as meaning something like an independent object of our cognition; only objects of our cognition are the things said to be existing. Nor can we talk of "existence in general" as an object of ontological arguments because what we can generalize is nothing but a universality of that assuring activity itself.

The concept "Reality" will be interpreted as meaning "true existence" and thus not as referring to any cognitive object but rather as an appraisal of a certain kind of things as well as the assurance of its being worth while. The adjective "true" as appraisal has a role of selecting, according one's own preference, a certain kind of things as more valuable to talk about than any others. The question of what is reality, therefore, depends upon one's own preference rather than upon anything cognitive. The expression '.....is a reality' is, then, a stronger way of ascertaining whatever that is said to be existing than that of merely saying that there is such a thing.

While expressions like 'There is.....' or '.....exist' are used to give assurance of the thing we are going to state, the expression '.....is a fact' is used to mean something about what is stated already. Hence it bears something cognitive comparable with truth and falsity of statements. The fact has its structure which is expressed in the common expression like 'the fact that.....'. What is, then, the nature of this structure? The situation is very much similar to the problem Kant had once pointed out when he talked of our experiences being constructed by some a priori principles. The difference is that we regard these principles not as of an a priori nature but merely of a linguistic one. The structure of fact is determined by a collaboration both of the structure of the objects and of that of the language we talk about these objects.

August, 1957

Nobushige Sawada, Keio University Tokyo.