Abstract for *The Language of Ontology*, Dublin, September 8-10, 2017

**Objecthood and Semantic Roles**

Friederike Moltmann

There are different roles that entities can play in the semantic structure of sentences. First of all, entities can act as semantic values of referential terms (which for Frege was even the criterion for being an object), and they can act as the things natural language quantifiers range over. But entities can also act as implicit arguments of predicates, as referents of demonstrative expressions that themselves are not referential (*so,too, that way*), as parameters of evaluation, and as truthmakers. There are views, often left implicit, that entities playing those different roles do not enjoy the same ontological status. Thus, entities playing the role of parameters of evaluation or truthmakers are generally considered having a lesser ontological status than those that are semantic values of referential terms, whereas those acting as implicit arguments have a sort of status inbetween. Yet referential terms may also convey a lesser degree of being, being able to stand for merely intentional (nonexistent) entities and being able to introduce highly derivative entities (in virtue of a complex construction). I will discuss the criteria that could justify attributing different ontological status to different semantic roles and what that means for the ontology implicit in natural language (as opposed to ontology as such) and for the notion of a mode of being.