

Workshop – Ontology and Metaontology

Uppsala University, November 14-15, 2017

Venue

Campus Blåsenhus, Room 12:229

Programme

Tuesday 14 November

9:45-11:00, **Benjamin Schnieder** (Hamburg), "Grounding: Partiality and Completeness"

11:15-12:30, **Lina Jansson** (Nottingham), "Aptness for Grounding Explanations"

14:15-15:30, **Thomas Sattig** (Tübingen), "Composition and Existence"

15:45-17:00, **Barbara Vetter** (FU Berlin), "Essence and Potentiality"

Wednesday 15 November

9:45-11:00, **Thomas Hofweber** (UNC), "Idealism and the harmony of thought and reality"

11:15-12:30, **Jonathan Schaffer** (Rutgers), "Ontological Realism and Ideological Pragmatism"

14:15-15:30, **Friederike Moltmann** (CNRS/NYU), "Existence Predicates and the Metaphysics of Natural Language"

15:45-17:00, **Suki Finn** (Southampton), "Quantifier Variance Dissolved"

Book of Abstracts

Suki Finn (Southampton): "Quantifier Variance Dissolved"

Quantifier variance faces a number of difficulties. In this paper we first formulate the view as holding that the meanings of the quantifiers may vary, and that languages using different quantifiers may be charitably translated into each other. We then object to the view on the basis of four claims: (i) quantifiers cannot vary their meaning extensionally by changing the domain of quantification; (ii) quantifiers cannot vary their meaning intensionally without collapsing into logical pluralism; (iii) quantifier variance is not an ontological doctrine; (iv) quantifier variance is not compatible with charitable translation and as such is internally inconsistent. In light of these troubles, we recommend the dissolution of quantifier variance and suggest that the view be laid to rest.

Thomas Hofweber (UNC), “Idealism and the Harmony of Thought and Reality”

Although idealism was widely defended in some version or other throughout the history of philosophy, these days it has all but disappeared from serious philosophical consideration. Nonetheless, there is good reason to think that idealism is true after all. In this talk I will discuss the idealist's vision and present an argument for a particularly strong form of idealism. This argument will come from a somewhat unexpected source: considerations about our own language. Prima facie no argument from considerations about our own language could support a metaphysical view like idealism. However, I hope to make clear why in this case such an argument is possible. The resulting idealism holds that in one way reality is independent of us, but in another way reality depends on us, in a sense of dependence to be spelled out.

Friederike Moltmann (CNRS/NYU): “Existence Predicates and the Metaphysics of Natural Language”

I will defend the view that existence in natural language is expressed not by quantifiers, but by existence predicates (exist, take place, is valid, obtain), conveying different ways for entities to relate to time or space. I will also address the question in which ways natural language permits conveying a univocal notion of existence (with the nominalization existence, on a non-relational use, for example), and I will suggest an explanation of what makes that possible.

Benjamin Schnieder (Hamburg): "Grounding: Partiality and Completeness"

The distinction between partial and complete grounds plays a central role in all available theories of grounding. But is it all that clear? Not quite, or so it will be argued in this paper. After examining some differences in how the distinction is treated, a proposal will be made about how it is best understood.