

**Øystein Linnebo and Agustín Rayo**  
**Higher-order logic and set theory: some Gödelian thoughts**

In a 1933 talk Gödel claimed that Zermelo Fraenkel set theory is “nothing else but a natural generalization of the theory of types, or rather, it is what becomes of the theory of types if certain superfluous restrictions are removed.” This is a remarkable claim. Type theory is a generalization of higher-order logic, which is widely regarded as profoundly different from set theory in motivation, interpretation, and philosophical status. Where set theory describes an ‘ontological hierarchy’ of independently existing sets, higher-order logic—and, more generally, type theory—makes available an ‘ideological hierarchy’ of stronger and stronger expressive resources. The aim of this paper is to develop a clearer understanding of Gödel’s remark and the surrounding philosophical terrain. After reconstructing and defending the remark, we will discuss the claim that there is no significant philosophical difference between the ‘ontological hierarchy’ of sets and the ‘ideological hierarchy’ of type theory, and argue that there is much to be said on its behalf.