

Enrico Terrone (University of Turin): “The Band of Theseus. Social Ontology and Mental Files”

Abstract. Suppose that Theseus is the singer of the rock band ‘The Ship’, which he started together with a guitarist, a bassist, a drummer. After a while the guitarist leaves the band and is replaced; then, also the bassist and the drummer are replaced; finally, Theseus himself is replaced. Furthermore, Theseus and his former partners decide to start a new band called ‘The Shop’. I shall argue that The Shop is a new band which is distinct from The Ship, in spite of the fact that the members of The Shop were the former members of The Ship. I shall explain this by using of the notion of a mental file, understood as a mental particular that functions as a vehicle of singular thought. I shall conclude that there are two bands in this community, namely The Ship and The Shop, because there are two distinct public mental files about them.