

On Not Being Oneself

TITO MAGRI

Abstract: I discuss two attempts (one by Nagel, the other by Williams) to affirm and, respectively, to deny that first person personal identities formed with a proper name (“I am TM”) can be contingent. Against a Kripkean background, I hold that there are no good arguments for each of these positions. This aporetic conclusion, which is not wholly limited to the arguments proposed by Nagel and Williams, should encourage us to explore with more attention the semantics and the metaphysics of the first person.

Keywords: First person identities, Contingent identities, Saul Kripke, Thomas Nagel, Bernard Williams.

notizie di POLITEIA, XXXV, 135, 2019. ISSN 1128-2401 pp. 54-61