

JOVAN BABIĆ

The ethics of space: Where? What does it mean? And why does it matter?

When?

Friday 10 March 2017, 18:00

Where?

The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Campus, School of Philosophy, 4th floor, room 438.

Who?

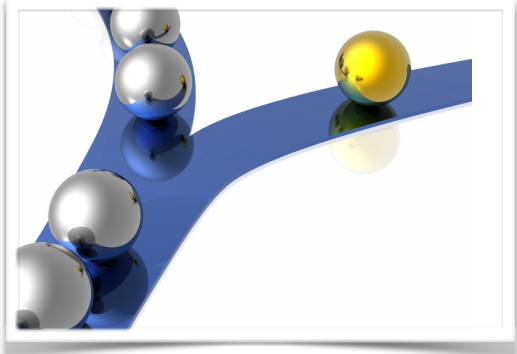
Jovan Babić is Professor of Ethics at the University of Belgrade and Visiting Professor at Portland State University, Oregon, USA. He is author of *Kant and Scheler* (1986), and *Morality and Our Time* (1998, 2nd ed. 2005), both in Serbian, and numerous articles, including: "Die Pflicht nicht zu lügen - eine vollkommene, jedoch nicht auch juristische Pflicht", *Kant-Studien* (2000); "Toleration vs. Doctrinal Evil in Our Time", *Journal of Ethics* (2004); „Self-Regarding/Other-Regarding Acts: Some Remarks, Prolegomena, (2006); *World Governance*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing (2010, Paperback 2013); "Pacifism and Moral Integrity", *Philosophia: The Philosophical Quarterly of Israel* (2013); „Reciprocal Illumination: Epistemological Necessity or Ontological Destiny?" *Rivista di estetica*, (2014), "Trust, Predictability and Lasting Peace", *Facta Universitatis*, (2015).



Abstract

After few illustration the purpose of which is to demonstrate how important and delicate, in moral and political sense, is the place or location where we do what we do and how large the impact of space in human life and history is, the presentation proceeds with some intriguing and provocative issues of the spatial articulation of our collective life. The most basic of those issues here, it seems, is that the territory is needed, or is the best frame, for the articulation of laws, legal norms defining some rules as "our laws". The idea of legal norms assumes the existence of sovereignty, a legislative will contained in a collective identity capable to issue norms with the bidding power of laws. If laws are freely decided upon then the spatial scope of their validity entails that the world is divided in parts belonging to different peoples, with different legislative wills. This means that the world, although one, is not unified in the sense in which morality is unique and





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unified. The political heterogeneity of the world is connected both with the freedom to decide what “our laws” will be (including retaining the possibility to change them) and their capacity to give us the predictability in our joint endeavors. If so then the territory belongs to those who reside there, and “where” matters in most political matters, those matters that, in Millian terms, are “other-regarding”, whether individual or collective. Starting from that point we should devise a taxonomy of norms regulating presumed freedom, or right, to move, which should be based in the principle of universal hospitality, but also restricted by the same principle, implying an asymmetry between the right to leave, which might be among natural rights, and the right to come and stay, which depends on free acceptance of those residing there from before.

