Translation into English: Chapter 2 - Catalogue of Errors for Both Theories of Relativity

from the German documentation of G.O. Mueller

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G: Minkowski's World / Error No. 5

An interpretation of the four-dimensional Minkowski world as physical space is impossible

In his lecture (1908, p. 55) Minkowski defines "a point in space as a point in time", as a "world point", to which he attributes the 3 space coordinates and one time coordinate. This makes altogether 4 coordinates, which he designates as four dimensions.

*According to Minkowski himself, therefore, his "world point" is clearly **no** point in space, since he would not then need to introduce a new term "world point". However, all relativists after Minkowski, when they handle his four-dimensional space-time, do so as though Minkowski's "world" is a space, his "world points" points in space, and his "world lines" paths in space, and the general public cannot, of course, interest itself in Minkowski's subtle reservations, which he only expresses through a conceptualization of his own.*

The falsification von Minkowski's "world" to "space" - namely to the world space per se - intentionally pursued by the relativists can be conclusively refuted by the challenge, given that Minkowski's four-dimensional "world" is a space, to incorporate a measurable body in it, e.g. a table with a rectangular table-top and four table legs, the size of this body and its location in the alleged space-time being unimportant.

The space occupied by the table is a rectangular parallelepiped, and when the relativists draw it into Minkowski's four-dimensional space-time, the corners of the table-top and the feet of the table legs (i.e. the corners of the rectangular parallelepiped) will belong to different times. This result is independent of the choice of the depiction. The drawing in the perspective of the time cone (with only 2 space coordinates and one time coordinate) or the level depiction (with only one space coordinate that is somehow to integrate the three space coordinates - which is completely puzzling - and one time coordinate).

Because the three-dimensional bodies of our physical reality would only reveal absurd relationships in Minkowski's space-time, which has not been confirmed by any empirical findings, Minkowski himself, in his drawings and calculations, cautiously works only with "world points", never with bodies - although he subsequently makes concrete claims relating to bodies!

All in all a peculiar world. Lots of "volumes of space", no bodies whatsoever, only "points" and "lines", and an empirically non-measurable time coordinate, because it is said to produce a negative value when multiplied by itself, something that unfortunately does not exist - instead we have four dimensions. Where can London and Paris be found in this Minkowski world and what kind of lines connect these two places?

To be fair, the criticism ought not to be directed against Minkowski's cautious formulations, but primarily against the followers and successors. Minkowski himself must, however, be confronted with the reproach that, in his 1908 lecture, he comes close to equating his "world" to space (outer space) and to suggesting this to his public; a public comprised of people who, although those attending his lecture were mainly "German scientists", generally think less (than they believe), associating instead and "presenting". And then the way from Minkowski's "world" to the familiar space of our experience is - associatively - none too far, although erroneous. All of the proofs based on this error are superfluous.

Minkowski, Hermann: Raum und Zeit : Lecture, 80. Naturforscher-Vers., Köln 1908, 21st Sept. In: Naturforschende Gesellschaft, Cöln. Verhandlungen. 80. 1909, pp 4-9. Also in: Physikalische Zeitschrift. 20. 1909, pp 104-111. Reprinted in: Das Relativitätsprinzip. Lorentz, Einstein, Minkowski. 6th edition 1958, pp 54-66.