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DEFENDING KANT: THE AXIOMATIZATION OF PERCEPTIVE SPACE

Abstract

The axiomatic method introduced by Patrick Suppes plays a double role in saving Kant's *a priori* from some accusations based on geometry. First of all, it replies to some accusations directly coming from neo-positivistic philosophers (e.g. Carnap). Furthermore, there's another kind of help.

In defending Kant's *a priori* from certain vague accusations coming from the discovery of the *non-euclidean* geometries, some may say the teaching of Kant about geometry is to be applied to the everyday space, while the space of *non-euclidean* geometries regards to astronomical spaces.

Nevertheless, we know that also in the perceptive space there are some elements of hyperbolical and elliptical geometry.

That kind of defence of Kant's *a-priori* may become a danger for Kant himself. We may say perceptive space is the space of Kant's aesthetic (pure intuition) after imagination has made some prehensions on the "pure" indefinite space. Those prehensions (lines, planes, other simple geometrical elements) are made by means of categories in the form of postulates.

If perceptive space were exclusively euclidean, we could say the only categories permitted are those related to euclidean postulates. At an higher categorical level, of course every geometry would remain legal as a deductive system of propositions, but still there would be a kind of dangerous privilege of euclidean geometry.

To avoid this danger we should demonstrate perceptive space is not univocally axiomatizable. Suppes does it by examining some Foley's experiments.