

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE CONCEPTS OF SPACE AND TIME

Going home by tram this morning, after having done some shopping, I was reading a book I just bought, written by Lawrence Krauss with the intriguing title: Hiding in the mirror. I bought the book because it's about scientist thinking about realities beyond perception.

At this moment I am interested in the way humans try to picture the future. In organizations we talk about strategies and visions. I realize we build our future from the past and that we cannot build everything we would like to make. A question I ask myself in this regard is if the ideas we have of our future are more than only new combinations of elements of the past or the known. Is there something new in our future?

But the future is not the subject I want to write about at this moment. I just want to state that I have great difficulties in understanding people when they talk about space and time. It seems as if they use these words to describe two different entities in reality. That is not so, in my opinion. Time and space are words that refer to a cognitive process: the idea of getting from one object to another. In my view there exist only sets of different forms of energy and these sets, with their different characteristics, move. Krauss writes: "There are scientists today who truly expect to discover the existence of extra dimensions and perhaps even extra universes in our lifetime". A very disturbing sentence indeed: a dimension isn't a word that refers to an object in reality but a word that refers to the concept of the measurement of some characteristic of an entity (a movement, an action or an object). In my world time and space are not entities that exist in reality but are words that refer to a cognitive process: the measurement of the concept of 'getting somewhere'. So I will read Krauss' book about the mysterious allure of extra dimensions ('from Plato to String theory and beyond' – as the publisher promises) as an account of a voyage through new directions in science and fiction.