

What is the Tree of Knowledge?

Most of what animals know is based on instinct. Instinct is best described as knowledge you are born with. Animals know how to eat and avoid being eaten. Perform necessary tasks to stay alive - and to reproduce. In some species - the parents teach certain behaviors to the young who learn mostly through observation. This learned behavior is mostly centered around how to acquire food and how to avoid becoming food for something else. Some animals have a very small tree of knowledge, but humans have a vast tree. We know how to build cars, planes, computers, networks, talk on phones, travel through outer space, and split atoms. In every moment of every day we are thinking in words of a language that we were taught to use to communicate. These words, meanings, and our technology all come from our common store of species knowledge which I am calling the Tree of Knowledge.

Tree of Knowledge depicted

as a Mathematical Fractal

Many of you are familiar with the "Tree of Knowledge" (knowledge of good and evil) in the Garden of Eden from the Bible stories. Well - that's not what I'm talking about here - except for the issue that I am ripping off the name. In the Church of Reality the use of the word "Tree" has nothing to do with a plant. "Tree" in the Church of Reality is more like a software source code tree that allows thousands of programmers to work together on a common software project. The way directories (folders) are organized on a computer is a tree. Trees are mathematical constructs and are often used to organize data and define the relationships between the data. In the Church of Reality, all knowledge is represented as not only the facts but the relationship between the facts. How the facts are stored and organized.

The Tree of Knowledge includes the way knowledge is structured - accessed - distributed - stored - shared - and the methods that allow it to be built up and maintained. In the Church of Reality the Tree of Knowledge is not a mythical plant but a real data structure that binds society together and allows us to have species knowledge and distribute this knowledge through our technological systems. As an individual - I don't need to learn how to build a car. All I need to do is learn how to drive a car. I rely on the knowledge of millions of other individuals - as well as the stored knowledge of dead people - to create cars for me to drive and planes for me to fly in - and computers for me to surf the web.

Even though I am an individual - almost everything in my life involves interacting with the accumulated knowledge of mankind. What I eat comes out of cans and is raised and killed by other people. All my "stuff" - chairs - desk - TV - bed - car - house - roads - phone - electricity - practically everything provided by other people. We are all totally intertwined with each other in a way that can be viewed as if all of the human species were a single organism - and that we are like cells of that organism - because we share knowledge - the Tree of Knowledge.