

Technology mirrors humanity: (1) Harvey's discovery of our heart-as-pump circulatory system was, he said, feedback from observing the earliest modern irrigation, which was pumped outflow of water for agriculture (now, with farm ponds, we have actual recycling of water; and the heart analogy is complete); (2) MIT's Minsky says we didn't know we're computers till the computer mirrored the information--as we didn't know we're animals till Aristotle's inclusive category *ta zoa*; and as A. said we're more, viz., *rational* animals, so M. says we're more, viz., *feeling-thinking* computers: more than straight-line storage-retrieval *transistors* (which is all computers are), we have *synapses* which, in addition to being each a transistor, are each also a complete microprocessor with functions far beyond "computation")...."Technology mirrors humanity" is my category, not Minsky's: I extended it backward as far as Harvey, and the point of this thinksheet is to extend it about a million years farther back than Harvey: PROVERBS ARE THE MOST ANCIENT MEMORY-BANK AND ARE SYNAPTIC BOTH INTRAPSYCHICALLY AND SOCIALLY.

1. As you can see, Charlie Brown's computer has the garbled-retrieval problem, a phenomenon Minsky attributes to the dual function (transistor/synapse) of brain-mind: besides "clearing" our computers, our forgetter frees us for value-memory, planning, dreaming, storing/responding to sensory input (for which functions we use terms such as "soul," "spirit," "heart," even "psyche"). But note that Charlie has remembered to remember that proverbs are to be remembered for life-long wisdom-functions (viz., guidance, "cooling it" when passion has swamped reason, trying to teach and guide others; to use a psychosociological term, proverbs are "controls" and "sanctions").

PEANUTS



2. Noah Dzobo (houseguest of ours, who is the executive for our UCC "sister church" in Ghana) has published four books of African proverbs because (he said to me) "proverbial wisdom is black Africa's oral scripture; life is lived by its texts, so teaching and preaching--no matter what other resources are used---do not neglect the power of the proverb." I observed (and he agreed) that since proverbs have everywhere and always a stoic quality, black African theology will have a strong stoic streak. A curious feedback: Noah's work has implications for hermeneutic "structuralism": proverbs are formulaic.

3. Proverbs are poetic-memorable words promoting principles: they are categorical reflections on the hazards and hopes of human existence. They tradition a community's way of making sense of life and the world. (Just out, 1983: THE CONCISE OX. DICT. OF PROVERBS, J.A.Simpson.) By contrast, aphorisms lack proverbs' guiding power: they are individuals' dissent from the proverbial mentality, yet often in the proverbial genre. (Also just out, 1983: THE OX. BOOK OF APHORISMS, Jn.Gross.)