

For George Lindbeck:

Scriptural Logic: Diagrams for A Postcritical Metaphysics*

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*The Israelites were groaning under the bondage and cried out; and their cry for help from the bondage rose up to God. God heard their moaning . . . and God took notice of them. (Ex. 2) An angel of the Lord appeared to [Moses] in a blazing fire out of a bush. . . . And the Lord continued, " I have come down to rescue [My people] . . . Come, therefore, I will send you to Pharoah. . . .But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharoah . . . ? " And He said, *ehyeh imach*, "I will be with you." . . . Moses said to God, "When I come to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they ask me, *mah shmo* ? "What is His name?" what shall I say to them?" *Vayomer elohim el moshe, ehyeh asher ehyeh*: "God said, I will be what I will be . . . Thus shall you say to the Israelites, *ehyeh* sent me to you . . ." (Ex 3)^{1*}

You ask if metaphysics is possible after modernity, or after Barth and Wittgenstein and Derrida and the critique of foundationalism? May I invite you, by way of response, to listen in on a conversation? It is a dialogue between what I will call a postcritical philosopher ("P") and a postcritical scriptural theologian — I'll label the latter a "textualist" ("T"). What I mean by "postcritical" would be displayed as the pattern of inquiry traced by this dialogue. I take the term "postcritical" from George Lindbeck,² whose theological work is described by his commentators as more properly "textualist" rather than "philosophic." I believe my usage is, however, true to Lindbeck's discourse. This means that one of the arguments of this essay is that there is a mode of philosophic inquiry proper to the postcritical orientation in theology that we may associate with such Christian theologians as Hans Frei, etc., as well as Lindbeck.³ A second argument, offered indirectly, is that there is a family of Jewish thinkers whose work may also be labeled "postcritical" on the model of these Christian thinkers, and that this Jewish postcritical theology would also be displayed in

dialogues between philosophic and textualist tendencies.⁴ A third argument is that, if we listen in on the philosophic side of any of these dialogues, we will hear a postcritical philosophy. By philosophy, I mean primarily logic, defined as an inquiry that examines problematic rules of reasoning and recommends testable ways of correcting them. Secondly, philosophy includes metaphysics, defined as an inquiry that, for the sake of assuring people about the reliability of a given logic, constructs pictures of the world whose existence would warrant this logic. We need not assume either that logic and metaphysics can be conducted only in the manner of modern and scholastic foundationalism, or that non-foundationalist theology must be "textualist" in a manner that excludes any philosophic generalization. I will argue that there are, indeed, non-foundationalist ways of conceiving of both logical and metaphysical inquiry and that these ways contribute to the dialogic activity of postcritical inquiry.⁵ As a part of this activity, postcritical textualists will challenge the attempts of postcritical philosophers to identify logical rules for postcritical inquiry and to construct corresponding metaphysical pictures. These challenges are not delegitimizing, however. They raise questions that contradict the philosophic claims only in the way that, in collections of classical rabbinic *midrash*, the scriptural interpretations of a given passage by one rabbinic sage contradict those given by another sage. The rabbinic reading of this passage is not interrupted by such contradictions, but is, rather, displayed *by way of* them. The textualists' challenge will be met by another philosophic claim, then another textualist challenge, and so on. I will be arguing that postcritical inquiry is displayed by way of these exchanges *and* that the exchanges display a "way" or pattern that can be diagrammed as a rule of reasoning, or logic.

* Before continuing, let me illustrate what I mean about rabbinic readings and their contradictions. The relatively late collection of rabbinic *midrashim*, *Exodus Rabbah*, redacts together the following readings of the Scriptural passage that you will find at the head of this essay:

*When I come and say the God of your fathers has sent me (Ex. 3.13) Moses thereupon desired to be enlightened with regard to his future course, afraid that they might ask him, 'What is His name?' . . . R Abba b. Mammel said: God said to Moses, "You want to know My name? Well, I am called according to My work... When I am judging created beings, I am called *elohim* (God) When I suspend judgment for someone's sins, I am called *el shaddai* (Almighty God)... and when I am merciful towards my world, I am called *yod-he-vov-he*, which*

refers to the Attribute of Mercy, as it is said in Ex xxxiv.6: The Lord, the Lord, God, merciful and gracious. Thus, EHYEH ASHER EHYEH in virtue of my deeds."

R. Isaac said: God said to Moses: "Tell them that I am now what I always was and always will be, for this reason the word *ehyeh* is written three times."

Another explanation of EHYEH ASHER EHYEH is offered by R Jacob b. Abina in the name of R. Huna of Sepphoris: God said to Moses: "Tell them that I will be with them in this servitude, and in servitude will they always continue, but I will be with them!" Whereupon Moses said to God: "Shall I tell them this? Is the evil of the hour not sufficient?" God replied, "NO, thus shall you say to the Children of Israel: I am has sent me to you. To you only do I reveal this (suffering), but not to them. . . ."6

The three readings may be read as contradictories. One says God's name refers to the specific character displayed on this occasion. The other says the name reveals something about God's very being or essence. The third says the name communicates a particular message of comfort to these people at this moment. Which reading is true? Some later Jewish commentators attempt to select one over the other, as if one's truth excluded the others'. Most Jewish commentators, however, read them all as resources for comprehending what the Scriptural passages will reveal on what occasion. I am suggesting that postcritical philosophers and textualists contradict one another in the latter fashion.*

The contradictions are of different sorts, however. The postcritical philosopher (P) is moved to *interrupt* what appears to be the postcritical theologian's (T) intratextual and intracommunal reading of scriptural narrative. T offers this reading as a means of bringing Christian or Jewish theologians back to the scriptural word, after the failed onto-theological ventures of scholasticism and modernism. T's reading displays the commanding voice of the scriptural narrative to some community at some time. P's interruption speaks for the uncertainty of some type of would-be reader before the scriptural text in its postcritical reading: as if to say, "here, from where I stand, I do not understand how this text can command me the way you say it does. On what basis does this text command this way? Can you, that is, display the Rule that warrants your reading from that text to that command?" Independently of this interruption, P perceives T's work as, at once, participating in, observing and helping to nurture the dialogue that joins some community of readers to the scriptural text as the

performance of God's commanding word to the community. P thus perceives the interruption as a way of stopping the dialogue, as it were, for an *augenblick*, reducing it to the way it would appear in a moment's snapshot. I am labeling this snapshot a "diagram" of the dialogue: or an icon, or a *graph*. According to P, possessing such a diagram would not bring a skeptic or questioner *into* the dialogue as a participant, but it would reveal, *in terms already meaningful to the questioner*, something crucial about what I will label "the real possibility" of participating in that dialogue. The difference between P and T is characterized, for one, by different evaluations of such a real possibility. According to T, to speak of the *possibility* of dialogue with the scriptural text is to put the cart before the horse, the idea before the actuality and, thus, to return in some manner to the old onto-theological ventures. According to P, however, reading as a theologically significant activity means a transformative reading, and transformative reading means reading by one for whom the scriptural word is not yet known in the way it will be known. To receive the text as "not yet known" is to receive its voice with uncertainty and, thus, to question this voice. To question it is to ask it to introduce itself in terms that would lead the questioner from uncertainty to the possibility of reading. For P, this introduction is what I am calling a "diagram" of the scripture's dialogue with its reader, and postcritical philosophy represents what I will label the "diagrammatic moment" of postcritical inquiry.

T, of course, would object to P's claim, asking postcritical philosophy to display real warrants for its questions — not diagrams, but what we will later call either "existential" or "textual" warrants for reasoning a given way. T's objection would mark an appropriate point for us to begin to listen in on the dialogue. * Before we begin, let me explain that I may intrude from time to time as a third voice, along with T and P. One form of intrusion will be to offer additional comments on that passage from Exodus. The purpose of the comments — marked with asterisks (*) — is gradually to develop one illustration of the Scriptural logic about which T and P will be theorizing. The way Moses questions God's commands interests me as a prototype of the way P questions T's intracomunal and intratextual readings. Over-against the angelic image of Israel's doing first what God bids at Mt. Sinai and asking about it only later,⁷ Moses' asking for God's name is to question God's commands *before* carrying them out. To question them is, perhaps, to diagram them first, which would make Moses seem on this occasion more like the philosopher than the textualist. But let us see how T objects. *

T: Your project of diagramming would falsify scriptural inquiry, by reducing the reading of scripture to terms brought in from outside scripture.

P: Yes, but this is necessary falsification, since scriptural inquiry finds its purpose in its transformational consequences; to transform one's practice is to change according to some rule or standard of practice; and to display a rule of practice is to *diagram* it. Diagrams always introduce terms "from outside" the practices they diagram, and they are in that sense always inadequate. That inadequacy is, however, a sign of the very reason *for diagramming* : which is to bring the practice to someone not *in* the practice — or not yet in.

T: But a practice can only be taught by way of itself.

P: You speak as if the practice already possessed its self-identity *independently* of what it would be on this occasion for this person. If so, your model of learning a new practice is probably learning a language that is *new for some person*, but which is otherwise not new, but already formed in all its significant details.

T: Yes, and I am thinking of Wittgenstein's attempt, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, to describe how this kind of learning takes place. Consider this example of his:

A writes series of numbers down; B watches him and tries to find a law for the sequence of numbers. If he succeeds, he exclaims, "Now I can go on!" (151)... [In this case,] "B understands the principle of the series" surely doesn't mean simply: the formula " $a_n = \dots$ " occurs to B. For it is perfectly imaginable that the formula should occur to him and that he should nevertheless not understand. "He understands" must have more in it than: the formula occurs to him. (152). . . It may now be said: "The way the formula is meant determines which steps are to be taken". What is the criterion for the way the formula is meant? It is, for example, the kind of way we always use it, the way we are taught to use it. (190)⁸

Thus, to learn something is to learn how to practice it. Suppose we identify "formula" with what you call "diagram." If one learns a formula that signifies that practice, it does not mean that the formula itself displays, before the fact, how the practice will go. It means that the formula will signify this practice *to those for whom it signifies this practice*. To signify it "to these people" means to signify it *with respect to some regular use*. This "regular use" is what Wittgenstein calls a "custom" (*eine*

Gepflogenheit). So, to learn a formula is to learn it with respect to some custom, and there is no way to reduce that custom itself to formulae. If the words of scripture, for example, were read as formulae for the practice of "walking in God's way," then we would say that these formulae display their meaning with respect to what, after Hans Frei, Kathryn Tanner has called the "plain sense" of scripture: its customary use in the life of the Church.⁹

So, it is in this way that one of your "diagrams" would be said to diagram a practice only by way of the practice — that is, of the customs of some community. The benefits of drawing diagrams would be modest: like a shorthand, they would help some members of the community remember certain complex rules of practice within the community.

P: If we were, in this way, to label the texts you have cited "formulae" of Wittgenstein's theoretical practice, then I would not dispute the formulae, but I would read them according to a custom that may differ from yours. I would say he is describing the way languages are learned when those languages come to the learner ready-made. It is this sense that you might speak of the Bible's "absorbing the world," rather than being absorbed by it. You might interpret that phrase to mean that learning the Bible is *just* like learning a language that already exists: being socialized into its grammar, so that the one who learns has to be fully absorbed into what already is. I do not, however, believe that learning the Bible is just like learning a language that already exists. I believe that claim has heuristic value in the context of Frei-Lindbeck's critique of extra-linguistic models of scriptural theology, for which learning the Bible means learning to feel a certain way or to think a certain thought. Once, however, we have situated scriptural theology within the activity of reading scriptural language, *then* we need finer distinctions. The language of the Bible is not simply learned the way most other languages are learned. Learning the Bible requires a degree of literacy whose acquisition is like the acquisition of any language, but that literacy is not *sufficient*. It does not account for the *transformational* dimension of Bible learning, which means, for one, the way in which the Bible's language implicates the reader in its reading — the reader, that is, in her particularity, which means in her place somewhere outside the Bible as well as in it. As also outside it, she is not asked merely to come to the Bible; the Bible also comes to her: this is the dialogically performative — and thus

transformative — dimension of Biblical language. This dimension cannot be reduced to the terms of a given grammar, because it brings some particular grammar into question.

T: Then it would seem, all the more so, that it could not be reduced to the terms of a diagram. You cannot diagram the negation of some grammar. It seems, furthermore, that your interests are paradoxical. On the one hand, like a postmodernist, you want to interrupt scriptural reading on behalf of a reader outside the text and thus interrupt a particular use or custom of reading: as if even to speak of a grammar of scriptural reading is too much, since the grammar may be challenged and transformed. On the other hand, you want to claim that this interruption is an occasion for diagramming the scriptural reading, and you intimate that this diagramming may glimpse something critically important about the reading. In this case, like a modern foundationalist, you intimate that the diagramming may offer us something *more* than the grammar — some depiction of how the scripture reaches beyond the custom of a particular community of readers. You seem at once to want more and less than a grammar of scriptural reading, and this seems paradoxical.

P: You have found me out, indeed. I want to call the diagram a logic of scriptural reading.

T: So you do want to return to foundational and onto-theological practices: to substitute some finite set of icons for the complex customs of a community of reading!

P: No, I am envisioning a postcritical and thus non-foundationalist logic. To do this, I begin with Charles Peirce's pragmatic and neo-scholastic understanding of "logic" as, on one level, the context-specific standard of reasoning that is implicit in any activity of reasoning and, on a second level, the explicit standard of reasoning one adopts in order to correct faulty reasoning on the first level. With regard to the first meaning of logic, Peirce writes,

Now a person cannot perform the least reasoning without some general ideal of good reasoning.... Every reasoner, then, has some general idea of what good reasoning is. This constitutes a theory of logic: the scholastics called it the reasoner's logica utens. (2.186)¹⁰

Postmodernists would have no concern about logic practiced on this level. The trouble comes on the next level. If one is convinced his reasoning is bad, then he may turn elsewhere for help — assuming that his *logica utens* is no longer of any use and that he must, instead, import or construct some altogether new standard for correcting his own reasoning. After Richard Bernstein's suggestions, I

will label this assumption the "foundationalist anxiety."¹¹ Susan Haack attributes something like this anxiety to Descartes: an excessive skepticism about inherited reasonings, which stimulates an excessive optimism about some new reasoning that is supposed to repair all the perceived failings in the old.¹² Foundationalism *per se* comes with this optimism: if our inherited reasonings no longer offer reliable standards of judgment, then the newly constructed or imported standards must be *self-legitimizing*.

Peirce's alternative to foundationalism is not to abandon logical inquiry.¹³ It is, instead, to offer up this alternative model:

It is foolish to study logic unless one is persuaded that one's own reasonings are more or less bad. Yet a reasoning is essentially something which one is deliberately convinced is good. There is a slight appearance of contradiction here, which calls for a little logic to remove it. . . .

You may recognize that your habits of reasoning are of two distinct kinds, producing two kinds of reasoning which we may call A-reasonings and B-reasonings. You may think that of the A-reasonings very few are seriously in error, but that none of them much advance your knowledge of the truth. Of your B-reasonings, you may think that so many of them as are good are extremely valuable in teaching a great deal. Yet of these B-reasonings you may think that a large majority are worthless, their error being known by their being subsequently found to come into conflict with A-reasonings. It will be perceived from this description that the B-reasonings are little more than guesses. You will then be justified in adhering to those habits of reasoning which produced B-reasonings, by the reflection that if you do adhere to them, the evil effects of the bad ones will be mainly eliminated in course of time by opposing A-reasonings, while you will gain the important knowledge brought by the few B-reasonings that are good; whereas, if you were to discard those habits of reasoning which produced B-reasonings you would have nothing left but A-reasonings, and these could never afford you much positive knowledge. This imaginary illustration will serve to show how it might be that you should, with perfect consistency, hold your existing [logic] to be excessively unsatisfactory, although you are perfectly justified in adhering to it until you are in possession of a better system. (2.189: 1902)

As an alternative to foundationalism, the suggestion here is to regard all of one's faulty reasonings as only B-reasonings and *assume* that one's A-reasonings remain intact, as reliable if imperceptible

standards for correcting B-reasonings. More precisely, faulty B-reasonings will be corrected by as yet reliable B-reasonings, and what guides ones reasoning from one to the other are the A-reasonings implicit in whatever you do.

In terms of this thought-experiment of Peirce's, the error of foundationalism would be to attempt to adopt a standard for correcting given B-reasonings by *diagramming* A-reasonings; the error of radical postmodernism would be to construct an alternative thought-experiment in which *all* our reasonings were B-reasonings. According to Peirce's model, the foundationalist attempt is errant, because every diagramming makes some hidden pattern visible only by way of a given B-reasoning. Every diagram is thus hypothetical and fallible, but the foundationalist needs the diagram to bear the weight of infallibility — or at least functional indubitability — that only an A-reasoning can bear. The radical postmodernist attempt is weak, if not simply errant, because there is no more reason to suppose that all our reasonings are hypothetical than that some are not. To assume on a priori grounds that all are hypothetical is to make a foundationalist judgment. It would be acceptable to offer this assumption on *hypothetical* grounds, but then we would need good reasons for doing so.¹⁴ The context of Peirce's thought experiment is our being faced with the fact of failed reasonings and, thus, of the need for a standard for how to go about correcting those reasonings. For the sake of guiding this correction, the radically postmodern option is the weaker, since it would be the option more likely to stimulate anxiety about our inabilities to correct problems and, with the anxiety, the possibility of dogmatic compensations.¹⁵ Postmodernists may claim that their option guards against foundationalist attempts to diagram A-reasonings; this is true, but the fallibilism of Peirce's option offers the same protection, without the other perils of anti-logicism.

**If* we were to interpret them without the aid of a postcritical logic, then medieval Jewish philosophers' commentaries on our Exodus passage would appear to illustrate the "foundationalist" way of reading A-reasonings. Maimonides' interpretation of God's name is prototypical. He says that Moses' question was not about a name to be pronounced, but about a proof of who it is who spoke.

God made known to [Moses] the knowledge ... through which [the Israelites] would acquire a true notion of the existence of God: this knowledge being: *I am that I am*. This is a name deriving from the verb *to be* [*hayah*], which signifies existence, for *hayah* indicates the notion : he was. . . . The whole secret

consists in the repetition in a predicative position of the very word indicative of existence..... Accordingly Scripture makes, as it were, a clear statement that the subject is identical with the predicate. . . . This is what demonstration necessarily leads to: ...there is a necessarily existent thing that has never been, or ever will be, nonexistent.¹⁶

God's thus appears to be the essential attribute of necessary being or substance. Nahmanides' critique of this reading is prototypical of medieval Judaism's textualist alternative: not radically sceptical, but anti-philosophic and linguistically particularistic. Nahmanides argues that Maimonides' reading violates the narrative context of our passage, since the Israelites would hardly be of a mind to consider proofs of something they did not already recognize. Moses needed no rational proofs, since the very mention of the [divine] Name to [the elders of Israel] [would] be the proof, sign and token on the matter Instead, . . . Moses asked only by what divine attribute he was being sent: by *El-Shaddai* as known to the patriarchs, or by the higher attribute of Mercy "with which You will perform signs and wonders that will be new phenomena in creation." God told him he was being sent "with the attribute of justice, which is within the attribute of mercy" [as unified in the one Name].¹⁷

Peirce's study of A-reasonings would correspond to the philosopher's quest to understand some general truth disclosed in God's name, *but* without resorting to essentialist definitions and only by way of the rhetorical context of that disclosure in Scriptures. *

T: Peirce, I recall, warned against make-believes, among which he included Kant's notion of a "thing in itself." Peirce said that notion had no philosophic value, since it referred specifically to what we could not know — and, thus, to what remained make-believe. How can he avoid the charge that his "A-reasonings" are comparable make-believes?

P: I believe one of the major preoccupations of his later, "pragmaticist" writings is to address your concern. The most direct response comes in his 1906 "Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmatism," where he proposes "a System of diagrammatization by means of which any course of thought can be represented with exactitude" (4.530). This is what he calls his system of "existential graphs," a method for writing the basic rules of logic not in algebraic formulae, but in pictures — a language of spots, loops and colors drawn on a page. He defines "mathematics" as the activity of generating any such system — not only a pictorial one, but an algebraic or linguistic one as well. For

him, the invention of quantitative systems is only one form of mathematical thinking: more generally, mathematics means the activity of inventing universes of pure possibility. If inventive, this mathematical activity is also "necessary" reasoning, because one invents, he says, by imaginatively drawing some picture and then tracing out in the imagination all the consequences that seem to follow necessarily from that drawing.¹⁸ A given drawing may lead to any of a multitude of subsequent drawings. By "imaginatively drawing," however, Peirce means drawing out of some impulse to draw — according to what he calls a "hidden precept." The initial mark drawn in response to this precept is arbitrary, as is any single mark drawn in response to any other. But what shows itself not to be arbitrary is the whole system of marks one comes to draw on some finite occasion or some linked series of occasions in response to a precept. There is no necessity in the individual mark, but some kind of necessity emerges in the way the marks are linked together: the kind of necessity that painters, sculptors and composers describe as leading them from one line or cut or color or note to the next. Peirce calls the kind of reasoning that leads the artist — or mathematician — from one mark to the next "acritical inference" — meaning an inference that is *functionally* indubitable because, for the one who makes it, it is not subject to any rule — or source of criticism — other than that which it is expressing. The rule is otherwise hidden, but is made manifest by way of the reasoning — or drawing — that it stimulates.

Now, when Peirce proposes a system of diagramming *any* course of thought, I take him to mean "*even* the A-reasonings that modernist logicians failed to diagram because they either claimed the status of A-reasonings for diagrams of B-reasonings (in the reductive fashion of foundationalists), or else disclaimed any hope of diagramming A-reasonings (in the fashion of either modernist or postmodernist skeptics)." How, you may wonder, could Peirce diagram A-reasonings without risking foundationalist reductions? I believe the answer is that *he understood his process of diagramming itself — rather than any particular depiction — to be a diagram of A-reasoning*. That is, he took the mathematician's activity as a paradigmatic moment of what the inquirer does when, in order to correct some faulty B-reasoning, she appeals to the A-reasoning that "underlies it," so to speak. In this case, the construction of any particular diagram would constitute a B-reasoning, but the *process* or pattern of reasoning that leads the mathematician-cum-artist to move from one diagram to the next would

constitute, we might say, a signature of the A-reasoning. In this way, otherwise hidden, indubitable rules of reasoning could be diagrammed. This does not mean that *any* mathematical system diagrams A-reasoning, only that *some* systems would and that, according to Peirce, his system of existential graphs is one of them.

T: If you take us now through the details of such a system, I fear the relation of your argument to scriptural reading will seem even more remote than it is now.

P: The rabbinic collection of midrash called the *Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael* asks why the revelations to Moses and Ezekiel were made "outside the [holy] land." You may grow impatient with the fact that our discussion remains to this point outside the place of Scripture. But that is in keeping with my assumption that Scriptural dialogue is diagrammed only when it is encountered outside its place. In this case, the context of encounter is the context of postcritical theology itself, which is *not* only some intratextual event, but *also* a development *in* the western sciences that were applied to the study of scripture. Postcritical theology emerges as a critique of the use of historicist, rationalist and emotivist modes of reasoning *as* modes of reading scripture. Our use of Peirce's approach to logic is a way of formulating what is problematic in those modernist modes of reasoning and, thus, what may be done to repair them. If scriptural reading is to repair them, then scripture will have to come *to them*, perhaps in the way the Jewish theologian Abraham Heschel said that God seeks *us*. In terms of our discussion of A- and B-reasonings, this is to say that, if scriptural reading is to serve as the A-reasoning that repairs these burdens of modernism, *then scriptural reading must somehow be rediscovered as that which always already underlies modernist reasoning and therefore has the capacity — and authority — to correct it*. The alternative is to say that this A-reasoning must be imported all-at-once from outside modernist reasoning and that, with respect to this reasoning, it must be self-legitimizing. To claim that scriptural reading, or that revelation itself, is self-legitimizing is to replay the same logic of foundationalism against which Frei offered his critique of Heideggerian ontologies of self-presence. If revelation, or scriptural reading, is not to be self-legitimizing, then it must come to us where we are.

But, listen to how Peirce characterizes his process of diagramming, and you may see what it means for scriptural theology to enter even the province of the mathematician. In his 1906 "Apology,"

he labels his first "convention" for constructing existential graphs "The Agency of the Scripture," defined as a collaborative activity between a "graphist," who "scribes each original graph," and an "Interpreter," who transforms it (4.552). In Peirce's usage, "Scripture" refers here only to the product of "scribing," but I am of course also led to think of the Biblical prototype. Peirce's convention provides a convenient diagram of the activity through which a revealer-God discloses ("scribes") words ("original graphs") to a prophet ("interpreter"), as well as the activity through which the prophet's words (as Scripture) discloses meanings to a community of interpreters. Peirce's second convention is to characterize this graphed Scripture as a symbol of "*The Truth*, that is, of the widest Universe of Reality" (4.553). Consistent with this convention, Peirce had earlier, in 1903, characterized his existential graphs as a collaborative activity among a "grapheus, [who] creates the universe by the continuous development of his idea of it," a "graphist [who] is occupied during the process of creation in making successive modifications . . . of the entire graph," and "an interpreter," for whom the modifications have the meaning they have (4.431). This usage leads me to think of the activity of a creator-God who creates worlds by speaking some words, which acquire their meaning through the ways they are received or interpreted. Placing the two conventions together, I am led to think that, in addition to whatever else they do, Peirce's graphs may diagram as homologous processes three activities narrated in the Bible: creation, revelation (Torah), and the redemptive activity through which Torah is interpreted and enacted.

Without burdening you with too much formal detail, may I illustrate how we could possibly make use of Peirce's graphs to diagram these activities? Peirce proposes that, to graph the meaning of any idea or any activity is to graph an assertion about some instance of it. His existential graphs, therefore, diagram generalities only as they are exemplified in, or predicated of individual entities or individual acts of assertion. In this way, Peirce's graphs serve as appropriate icons for diagramming the Bible's claims that the universe is a **creation** with intrinsic meanings or values, rather than a meaning-neutral world to which meanings can be attached. Making use of what he calls a *logic of relations*., Peirce diagrams assertions as ways in which certain relations are exhibited in certain individual instances — rather than as ways of attributing certain qualities to certain subjects. This way, if *we* were to describe the *words* God uses to create the world as certain fundamental *relations*,

then we could, following Peirce, diagram assertions about the world as ways in which these words were exhibited in individual cases. We would not be forced, in the terms of a propositional logic, to portray the words as if they were either primary substances in the world (named by the subjects of our assertions) or else secondary and in that sense non-essential attributes of such substances.

Peirce's technology is to locate all of an assertion's informative material, or meaningfulness, in the *predicate* of some proposition whose *subjects* would indicate where this material would be located in the world. He diagrams predicates as letters or words scribed onto a sheet and the subjects as blanks attached to those letters: for example, ___G (referring to "___gives") or ___A___R___ ("___gives___to___"), where the blanks would be filled by names of whatever individuals in the world would complete the assertion. Peirce argues that all possible predicates may be reduced to any one of three kinds of relation. One-part relations serve as signs about simple qualities, such as ___ R = "___ is red." Two-part relations signify discrete actions, such as ___H___ = "___ hits ___." Three-part relations signify relationships or rules, for example, the basic way in which a symbol means what it means: which is for "something to mean something to someone," or ___ M ___T ___. To diagram the world as created world would be to collect graphs of these three kinds of relation, so that actual individuals enter the world by *filling* blanks attached to the graphs. Such a diagram would illustrate what Martin Buber took to be the Bible's claim that we enter the world already in certain relations to others.¹⁹ It does not, however, underwrite the essentialist's claim that individuals are reducible to a priori relations, because relations are diagrammed only as the predicates of particular assertions about the actual world. Individuals may exist only in relation, but relations appear to us only as they would be individuated. The concept of "loving," for example, might be diagrammed as the particular way some individuals would relate to some others in some context: ___ r ___ for ___. Since the blanks may be filled by an indefinite number of sets of individuals in the world, "loving" would then appear as the character of an indefinite set of relations, ABC

In Peirce's technology, a blank may be replaced by a dot, and a line drawn to connect dots (or blanks) indicates the identity of the individuals signified by the dots: •———•. This technology enables Peirce to offer a visual diagram of the non-essentialist claim that concepts or relations are inter-related only only by way of the domains of individuals of which they are predicated. For

example, to inter-relate the concepts of "giving" and "receiving," we would have to diagram the combination of "___gives" (•G) with "___receives" (•R) which is possible only by drawing lines that connect the places of the blanks: G•_____•R. This graph inter-relates the concepts by indicating, for example, that "the one to whom is given is the one who receives." As Peirce reads it, the graph also indicates something more: *that concepts inter-relate only with respect to their respective points of indefiniteness or vagueness*. Here, the indefinite points are to whom is it given? and from whom is it received? *The inter-relation therefore helps mutually define the concepts*. The graphs show Peirce that the same phenomenon applies to each case of inter-relation: subjects combine with predicates because subjects (___) are indefinite with respect to predicates (R) and vice-versa (4.572) — or, in short, subjects and predicates need one another! Were we to defined "dialogue" as "an activity of mutual definition," we might conclude that Peirce's *logic of relations* entails a *logic of vagueness* and a *logic of dialogue*. Peirce's graphs would then diagram Biblical views about the incompleteness of creatures and of words and of their mutual needs: individuals appear only by way of relations; as signs of relations, words appear in the world only by way of individuals; and, as indefinite signs, words need other words to complete their definitions.

According to Peirce's *logic of sign interpretation* ("semeiotic"), it will not do, however, to say simply that some entity X needs some entity Y. *That X needs Y* is a *claim* made with respect to some "interpretant" —some context or rule of interpretation. Thus, for example, a subject (___) needs, or is indefinite with respect to, some predicate (R), *only with respect to some proposition* (___R) that asserts that this subject and this predicate mutually define one another. The proposition is thus also the *rule* that *brings* the two into mutual definition: their needs are met, we might say, by way of this rule, which we might now label R_{XY} . Peirce calls such rules "genuine symbols." In these terms, we may say that X, with respect to the symbol R, is a sign of Y (or of the need for Y).

Having, with some anthropomorphic imagination, introduced the word "need" as a logical term, we have prepared the way for a more conspicuous move to a Scriptural logic *per se*. This is to define a sub-class of "need" called *suffering* and a sub-class of "definition" called *redemption*. We may say that entity X *suffers* when, for some rule R_{XY} , X entails (or "is a sign of") R^t_{XY} : where R^t is a token of the rule R; Y complements X ($x = -y$); y^t fails to complement x ($x \neq -y$); and, therefore, R^t

contradicts R ($R^t \neq R$). In this case, with respect to R_{XY} , X needs to be defined by Y , but is presently defined by Y^t : the need is a *suffering*, because X is not merely indefinite (undefined by its complement, Y), but also *errantly* defined. Note that we do not say simply that "X suffers," but that "For some rule R_{XY} , X suffers." This condition indicates that suffering is a sign offered *with respect to some interpretant*; otherwise, for example with respect to R^t_{XY} , X does *not* appear to suffer.²⁰ This is the pragmatics of suffering and of need in general: to exist *as such* only with respect to some interpretant and not with respect to some other. We may say that the interpretant according to which X does not suffer either "ignores X's suffering," "disbelieves or contests X's suffering," or "is the cause of X's suffering" — as in the case of R^t_{XY} , which, according to R_{XY} , is the rule that informs X's suffering. We may then say that the interpretant, R_{XY} , according to which X does suffer is the **redeemer** of X — or at least will show itself to be X's redeemer if, with respect to it, X is successfully redefined by Y and thus, according to R_{XY} , no longer suffers. In this case, we might label Y "X's helpmeet or agent of redemption."

According to the pragmatic logic that informs this exercise in anthropomorphism, to claim that X suffers is to define X's suffering not only with respect to R_{XY} (as both interpretant and redemptive rule), but also with respect to some *world* in which R_{XY} could function this way. Our exercise discloses two worlds that allow R_{XY} to function in this way: the world of "creation," as depicted in the Bible, and the world of logical relations that is constructed by any existential graph, as depicted in Peirce's "Apology." According to our exercise, the latter world may be read as a diagram (or icon) of the former. In the graphic world of logical relations, any indefinite term is complemented by some defining term and is also a *sign* of the Rule that brings one term to the other. This graphic world may therefore serve as an icon of the created world, in which the suffering of any creature is complemented by the redemptive agency of some other creature and is also a *sign* of the redemptive Rule that would bring one to the other. According to Peirce's accounts in 1903 and in the 1906 "Apology," the graphs are in fact constructed in a way that diagrammatically imitates the Bible's creation account as it, in turn, imitates the Bible's account of revelation: graphs are "scribings" of the creative work of some "grapheus." In this way, graphs are themselves "**revelations**" as well as "creations." It is only by way of such a graph that *someone* constructs a world in which X is a sign of R_{XY} , so that the constructed

world is itself a sign of the Biblical world of creation. In these terms, we may say that the Bible reveals three levels of "good news" about this creation: first, that the universe is created as a universe of entities in which the suffering of any one creature is met by the complementarily redemptive agency of some other; second, that there is a way for any entity in need to inquire after its complement; and, third, that the Biblical text reveals such a way.

T: By claiming that a creature's suffering is a sign of its redeemer only in the world in which its redeemer lives, you appear, after all, to have accepted my Wittgenstinian account of intertextuality — that,

to learn something is to learn how to practice it If one learns a formula that signifies that practice, [then] the formula will signify this practice *to those for whom it signifies this practice*²¹

The Bible constructs a world in which we learn to practice attentiveness to those who suffer.

P: I claimed earlier that you have accounted for the way one acquires *literacy* in the Bible, but not "for the *transformational* dimension of Bible learning." To this point, however, you could say the same to me. I have yet to offer an account of how the Bible may open its readers to recognize sufferings that they do not recognize now. In my earlier response to you, I claimed that we need to consider how "the Bible's language implicates the reader in its reading — the reader, that is, in her particularity, which means in her place somewhere outside the Bible as well as in it." In terms of our present account, this would mean outside the *world* constructed by the Bible or diagrammed in an existential graph. How can we speak of what lies outside those worlds? Reapplying the pragmatic logic that informs our account, we may begin by asking something we have yet to ask: if the Bible *speaks of* redeeming someone's suffering, or if the graphs diagram ways of responding to suffering, *where is the actual suffering that stimulates this speaking or this diagramming ? Where is the actual sufferer, and where is the actual redeemer?*

As pragmatist, Peirce argues that inquiry is a response to suffering (or "doubt," as he calls it, but see below) and has as its end the cessation of suffering. Different kinds of suffering stimulate different kinds of inquiry: nursing for flesh wounds; medical science for problems with our methods of nursing; logic for problems with our methods of reasoning; — and the construction of existential graphs? Following clues in the "Apology," we may say that this is for problems with our methods of

logic, which means problems with our ultimate rules of reasoning. We might diagram the work of graphing as follows. For any inquiry stimulated by some suffering, X, the cause of suffering may be diagrammed as R_{XY}^t (as defined earlier) and the response to suffering as R_{XY} . For any such inquiry, however, we may also suppose that what appears to be R_{XY} may *fail* to repair the suffering. In this case, we would conclude that what we took to be R_{XY} was itself another errant token (R_{XY}^{t-1}) of a more general rule of reasoning. By the same logic, we might suppose there to be a series of such unhappy discoveries, leading us to redescribe each of an indefinite series of potentially redemptive rules as yet another errant token of some more general rule. The limit case, R_{XY}^{t-n} , would represent our experiencing generalized, or ultimate doubt: the belief that there may be no reasoning that could possibly repair this case of suffering. Earlier, we labeled such doubt "the foundationalist anxiety," since the belief that all our reasonings could be wrong tends to stimulate foundationalist efforts to locate some one reasoning that could not possibly be wrong. Within Peirce's work, the failures of foundationalist efforts themselves appear to have stimulated a pragmatic alternative: the construction of existential graphs as an ultimate response to the possibility of ultimate doubt.

In his logic of "A-reasoning," Peirce offers a logic of ultimate responses of this kind. His claim is that sufferings stimulate corrective B-reasonings; the failures of B-reasonings stimulate corrective B reasonings; but that the limit case of any indefinite series of such failures — B^{t-n} — stimulates what is no longer a B-reasoning, but an ultimate or A-reasoning. The difference between foundationalism and Peirce's pragmatism may be diagrammed as the difference between two notions of ultimacy. The foundationalist identifies ultimate doubt with an indefinite series of doubts, stimulating an indefinite series of failed B-reasonings. In theory, the foundationalist is simply a sceptic, who allows for no other kind of reasoning than B-reasoning. In practice, however, the foundationalist adopts some finite collection of B-reasonings *as if they were* ultimate, or more than B-reasonings. The pragmatist identifies ultimate doubt with some actually ultimate judgment: a final judgment that all of an indefinite class of reasonings are inadequate to some task, while some as yet unidentified class of reasonings is not inadequate. If severed from any subsequent response, this judgment would not generate scepticism, but, rather, an as yet unfulfilled expectancy. As displayed in his "Neglected Argument," the judgment stimulates Peirce to a revelatory abduction. He describes this

as "musement" about the real possibility of God's creating our universes of experience, but we might also identify the abduction with the activity of constructing existential graphs. The point is that the construction is redemptive, because it discloses possible alternatives to the series of failed B-reasonings, and because the alternatives are informed by an ultimate, or A-reasoning. This A-reasoning could not be exhibited in any particular graph, but it is diagrammed by the activity of graphing itself.

In Peirce's accounts of existential graphing, the graphist (or, in some accounts, the grapheus) is thus one who responds pragmatically to the experience of ultimate doubt. The graphist's response is not to diagram the suffering that originally stimulated this doubt, for the suffering has reparative meaning only as a stimulus to repair (or what Peirce calls a "dynamical object"), but not as a separate subject of study (what he calls an "immediate object"). The response is to diagram only the reasoning that might redeem the suffering, which includes reasoning about the cause of the suffering. If, in graphic terms, we diagrammed this suffering as "X," then the activity of graphing would be represented by "R_{XY}" — where _x represents the suffering, _y represents particular diagrams of rules for repairing X, and R represents the activity of graphing as a whole. If, in Biblical terms, we relabeled _y "X's agent of redemption" and relabeled R "X's redeemer," then we might also relabel the graphist "R's creator." While "X's redeemer lives," the graphist would then belong *outside the graphic world*, even if present in it through the redemptive work of graphing. X's suffering would itself belong outside the graphic world, while present in it as the dynamic stimulus to the graphist's activity of creating such a world. While, consistent with T's Wittgenstinian account, both creator and sufferer would remain outside the graphic world per se, they would also both be present in it, by way of their acts and effects. The graphic world would itself be a living symbol of their co-presence: the place of dialogue between the one who suffers and the one who creates (or authors) redeemers. The story of this dialogue is told as Scripture. The pragmatic logician redescribes that story as the A-reasoning that would, in response to our indefinite suffering, guide the repair of our B-reasonings. A-reasoning would, then, have a visible diagram in Scripture, and the logic of A-reasoning would be the logic of Scripture.

* A postcritical logician could *see* this logic portrayed in a way of reading our Exodus passage. The occasion for God's making manifest to Israel the hidden name (*yod-he-vov-he*) is nothing

other than Israel's indefinite suffering in Egypt, when Israel's cry goes up to God — the foundationalist's anxiety writ large. On this occasion, Israel could place its hope on some false god (foundationalism) or despair of any hope (radical scepticism). Instead, God assures Israel that the God of their fathers is always already present to them, even in what appears to be this God's absence. "By what name?" asks Moses. By a name, answers God, that makes God's presence visible to this place of absence. In R. Abba's words, the hidden name displays the Attribute of Mercy, which comes only in time of need. In R. Jacob's words, *ehyeh* tells them that God will be with them in their servitude: this is God's means of assuring them. In R. Isaac's words, *by this name*, God is eternally present. This eternity is the necessity Maimonides spoke of, but it is not predicable the way essence is predicated of substance. Restated in terms of a postcritical logic, Maimonides' *meaning* is that God's character of Mercy is made visible as the subject-like character of an indefinite class of predicates that appear differently with respect to different occasions of suffering: each predicate is diagrammed *by way of* the A-reasoning that guides repair of this suffering. Nahmanides' meaning is that the general name is known to the elders, but that the specific character of mercy is revealed in the way that name is uttered or *performed* on each occasion.

There is, in fact, a *postcritical Jewish philosopher* who offers a reading close to this one. Although he is not usually labeled "postcritical," Martin Buber merits the term, because it could be shown that his method of reading Hebrew Scriptures belongs in the family of postfoundational methods that includes Christian postcritical readings of the New Testament.²² The contemporary Bible scholar, Moshe Greenberg, says he shares with Buber a "holistic" method of reading Scripture which, while informed by documentary and other forms of historical-critical analysis, discloses dimensions of the redacted (or final) text of Scripture that are omitted from such analyses.²³ In his reading of Exodus 3, Buber uses historical-critical methods to argue that Moses' question to God cannot be about God's name *per se*, but only about the character by which He is known on this occasion. Drawing suggestions from archaeo-anthropology, Buber reasons that the name may derive from something like the dervish cry *yah-hu*, "O he!" Perhaps the Semites preserved the elemental cry itself as a name, which would then have "an entirely oral character and really require ... completion by some gesture, as for example, the throwing out of an arm."²⁴ If so, the name may represent words to

be *performed* : in the process of which performance, alone, a relation is enacted with God.²⁵ I take this to mean that, for Buber, the verbal performance of the name, *ehyeh*, "I will be there," constitutes God's being-there, and that God's "being" is always *there*, where you are in your suffering and thus your need of God.

While it need not necessarily, Buber's reading *can* be diagrammed by our postcritical logic of Scripture. Displaying the *pragmatic* context of this logic, Buber explains that the hidden name is disclosed in *response* to Moses' "objections" and that the objections express "the negative experience that the enslaved people had had with this God of theirs."²⁶ God thus reveals the hidden name *for the sake of assuring* this people that the commands (privileged B-reasonings) they are about to receive are *from the God hidden in their midst* and *will thus redeem them* (they diagram A-reasoning). *It is the name itself, as performed, that reveals this "good news"* : the rule of "I will be there" is generalizable *but only by way of itself AS a performance*. There is no onto-theological reduction here, because *ehyeh* is not generalized by substituting for it *some other philosophic term*. Rather, the *name generalizes itself through its performance*, which can be reiterated an indefinite number of times: on the occasion of any indefinite suffering, that is, " Call on Me (this very NAME) and I will be there for you." Buber's performative reading is therefore philosophic, because it identifies a *reiterable rule of reasoning* that is displayed in the text but is not *only* limited to it. But the reading also remains *in dialogue with a textualist reading*, because the reiterable rule is the rule *as* it appears in the text.

If this were a dialogue, T would now ask me to offer assurances that Buber's reading is textually plausible. This is where Moshe Greenberg comes in. Sharing the basic methods of postcritical reading with Buber, he represents the *textualist* in dialogue with whom Buber's *philosophic reading* displays a postcritical inquiry. By dialogue, I do not mean a face-to-face dialogue, but one that is redacted by placing together Greenberg's and Buber's readings of Exodus. With the caution of a textualist, Greenberg argues that the textual evidence allows for two possible readings: consistent with the medieval philosophic reading, Moses and the Israelites may have indeed forgotten God's name; or, consistent with the medieval textualist reading, they may simply have inquired about the specific character by which God is to be known in this case.²⁷ Greenberg suggest that the most likely meaning of God's response (*ehyeh asher ehyeh*) is in line with the second reading.

According to the 11th century French exegete Rabbi Samuel ben Meir, the name *ehyeh* is an ellipsis, "I will be *with you*," — "a heartening message," Greenberg adds, "to those who heretofore felt forsaken by God."²⁸ The Tetragrammaton (*yod-he-vov-he*) is the version of the name that Israel *is to perform in order to invoke God*. This is the *third person* future form of the first person verb *ehyeh* : appropriately adapted for the purpose, that is, from the "I will be" that God says of himself, to the "You will be" that Israel is to say of him.²⁹ Greenberg adds, however, that, in line with the first reading, it is also possible that God's name meant "I will be what I will be," as in the midrashic claim "I am named after my acts" or in Driver's reading, that "My presence will be as something undefined, which as my nature is more and more unfolded by the lessons of history ... will prove to be more than any formula can express."³⁰ Greenberg thus amplifies and provides textual warrant for Buber's reading, at the same time that he more cautiously preserves the text's vagueness and, thus, its capacity to warrant other readings on other occasions. The text itself will be there as it will be there. Peirce's logic is thus compatible with a Jewish postcritical reading of Exodus 3. *

T: From what you claimed earlier, Peirce offers a logic of scripture, meaning scribing or diagramming. Is there warrant, however, for reading this "scripture" as "Scripture," or Bible?

P: There is no explicit warrant in his Apology. Consistent with his definition of mathematical activity, in fact, he presents his entire system of existential graphs as a product only of imagination, with no particular referents in the universe of existing things, including existing texts and text traditions.

T: In his terms, this means that any term he uses in the Apology is *vague* with respect to its existential referents, the way he says a predicate is vague or indefinite with respect to its subject. So when he refers to "scripture," it may or may not refer to Scripture.

P: By the rules of his own logic of dialogue, however, his vague diagrammatic reasoning should find its complement in what we might label an "existential" reasoning that isolates subjects independently of their predicates. If so, the existential and diagrammatic systems would display complementary vaguenesses, to be resolved only by way a dialogic relation between the two forms of reasoning. Now, in fact, there is in Peirce's later writings an "existential" account that may complement the mathematical account of the Apology. I am referring to Peirce's 1908 "A Neglected

Argument for the Reality of God,"³¹ where he derives the premises of his logic of science from an actual meditation, or "musement," about the reality of God. Allow me to describe only as much of this Neglected Argument as we might need to locate a possible complement to his vague account of "scripture."

In the Neglected Argument, Peirce re-describes his logic of science, pragmatically, as the logic of inquiry — a set of paradigmatic rules for making hypotheses about how to solve certain problems (rules of "abduction"), and for designing and then conducting experiments to test those hypotheses (rules of "deduction" and "induction," respectively). In the terms I introduced earlier, this is a logic for correcting faulty B-reasonings. The proof of such a logic would come only in the long run, through observations of its successes and failures in guiding actual attempts to repair such faulty reasonings. Short of the long run, however, how do we know *now* that it is worth our while to invest time and energy testing this logic? The Neglected Argument displays Peirce's concern to find immediate assurances for trusting in the reliability not only of this logic, but of any logic of corrective inquiry. His concern therefore speaks to postmodern scepticisms about the possibility of non-foundationalist rules of reasoning. It also speaks to our own questions about the vagueness of his diagrammatic reasoning. Diagrams display their validity in the long run: "truth," say the rabbis "is the seal of God,"³² that is, the signature. To ask about the possible existential referents of some diagrams is to ask for some assurances *now* of their reliability and, thus, some reason for waiting for the long run. Any signs Peirce offers for trusting in his logic of inquiry may also apply, therefore, to his logic of scripture.

Peirce's assurance is that, while offered *as* an hypothesis subject to future testing, a logic of inquiry derives its premises from a process of reasoning that is *acritical*, or beyond the reasoner's control and thus doubt, and is, in that sense, as reliable as everyday perceptions of the world. Peirce describes this process as "musement," in John Smith's reading,

a kind of 'pure play' of the mind which, on the one hand, is guided by the object of contemplation, and, on the other, progresses in accordance with the 'attentive observation' of the muser and the direction which his internal conversation assumes.³³

In this case, the musement is of a phenomenological sort: musings about the ultimate categories of the world of everyday experience. Peirce calls these categories the three universes of possible experience (universes of mere ideas, of brute facts and of the signs which connect objects from all universes together). Observing variety, then homogeneity and, finally, the single fact of *growth* common to all universes, the muser enters "certain lines of reflection which will inevitably suggest the hypothesis of God's reality,"³⁴ which is God's presence, not as brute fact, but as *Ens necessarium*, "the ultimate, purposive ground of each universe."³⁵ In the 1860's, Peirce characterized this ultimate ground as the source of the ultimate hypothesis that there is "reason in the nature of things," an "absolute law in all its detail and unity to which the universe is subjected."³⁶ In his 1910 "Additament" to the Neglected Argument, he characterizes this as "pure mind [which] as creative of thought, must, so far as it is manifested in time, appear as having a character related to the habit-taking capacity."³⁷ To contemplate this mind is *ipso facto* to trust that the world has the kind of order which would warrant logical inquiry: it is to practice this inquiry both with the conviction that the inquiry has an ultimate purpose and with the character of mind that enables the practitioner to contribute to that purpose. In sum, the process of musement brings the logician to a direct *perception* of the reality of God, and it is this perception that gives the logician reason, in the short run, to trust in the reliability of inquiries that will be tested only in the long run of experience.

I have not in this short space given you time to contemplate what Peirce might have meant by observing "growth" in the three universes that correspond, in his phenomenology, to the three domains of experience — domains of "Firsts" (mere ideas), "Seconds" (brute facts), and "Thirds" (symbols or relations). But you may, at least, have gotten the idea that Peirce believed his logical enterprise was warranted by the disciplined contemplative's experience of God's presence — and that this presence made itself known, ultimately, through processes of *corrective reasoning*. In terms of the discussion of A- and B-reasonings, I take this to mean that a logic is a species of B-reasoning that corrects other, faulty B-reasonings, *and that finds its warrant in an A-reasoning*. I take Peirce's "musement" to be a process of *A-reasoning, which means a direct perception of God's presence that is made visible only in the B-reasonings that it generates*. B-reasonings are "of this world," one might say, but there is a sub-species of B-reasonings in which inquirers may place a more than wordly trust. These are the

rules of corrective logic, which may be defined as B-reasonings that are adopted for the sake of guiding the repair of other faulty B-reasonings *and* that are adopted as a consequence of the contemplative processes and rigors of A-reasoning. These are the reasonings I referred to earlier as "processes of diagrammization" which, *as* processes, diagram A-reasoning.

There is a vagueness in Peirce's account, however, that complements the vagueness in his Apology. Peirce's assurance is to show — point to — the *actual* process of logical reasoning, which itself points to an *actual* experience of God's reality. The pointing assures, because it is beyond the control of any critical faculties: it is a direct mark or trace of what it points to. But *what* does it point to? Peirce can assure us *that* there is a reality there, but not that it must bear the name, "God." The name predicates the experience and, in that sense, diagrams it. Peirce cannot claim that the pointing and the naming are identical, for that would be to reproduce the foundationalism he criticises: claiming, in other words, that there is some self-legitimizing, or self-naming, experience. Another alternative is scepticism: to claim that, well, we don't know how the name attaches to the experience, and we can judge *only* by the long range consequences of naming. But this kind of agnosticism would defeat Peirce's purpose of offering us some assurance in the short run. The third alternative is the postcritical one, which is consonant with Peirce's logic of dialogue. This is to claim that Peirce's Neglected Argument is indefinite with respect to predication (the source of names for his actual experience), his Apology is indefinite with respect to existential reference (the subject for his logic of diagrams), and that some third reasoning is needed to bring the other two to mutual definition. This reasoning would show how Peirce's meditative experience of God's reality may be the subject diagrammed by his system for drawing existential graphs. The reasoning would, on the one hand, redescribe his Apology as an attempt to diagram the art that links A-reasonings to particular B-reasonings. This is the art that makes visible the hidden: you could call it the art of revealing, and you could call its product "scripture." The reasoning would, on the other hand, redescribe his Neglected Argument as an attempt to identify this scripture with the writing or diagramming that reveals the reality of God *per se*. Now, I could not now say explicitly what this third reasoning "is," since each saying would present it by way of some particular argument (such as the Apology), which is defined only with respect to a correlative argument (such as the Neglected Argument). But I could say

explicitly what the third reasoning would do, with respect to some particular argument. With respect to this reasoning, for example, the logic of scripture described in the Apology would be a theo-logic: God would be revealed to the postcritical philosopher by way of an activity of diagramming, and the logic of this activity would be the logic of vagueness, the logic of dialogue, the logic of pragmatism, and so on. In the Neglected Argument, furthermore, the logic of pragmatism would appear as the logic of problem-solving — the logic of "science," but with an expansive understanding of "science." This means that the logic of problem-solving would be a theo-logic: a rule for reasoning that emerges from a direct perception of the reality of God.

T: Your reading would be interesting, *if* you could *assure* us that it would have any validity as a reading of Peirce.

P: OK, but to respond to your question would be to invoke the logic of dialogue once again. You refer implicitly to some "true reading of Peirce," which would function as the hidden, A-reasoning, "behind" the particular claims I have made about Peirce. Unless we resort to either foundationalist or sceptical approaches to this particular A-reasoning, we would have to conclude that every claim about it would constitute another particular claim (a B-reasoning). Wittgenstein referred to this phenomenon as the paradox that

no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule.... Hence, there is an inclination to say: every action according to the rule is an interpretation.³⁸

His response is instructive:

It can be seen that there is a misunderstanding here from the mere fact that in the course of our argument we give one interpretation after another; as if each one contented us at least for a moment, until we thought of yet another standing behind it. What this shows is that there is a way of grasping a rule which is *not* an *interpretation*, but which is exhibited in what we call "obeying the rule" and "going against it" in actual cases.³⁹

Peirce's version of Wittgenstein's solution is his Neglected Argument: that any *particular* reasoning *does in fact start somewhere*, with a direct or acritical perception of the reality *of which it is a diagramming*. To be more precise, this means any particular reasoning *that results from a process of musement*. Peirce does not have mind any old reasoning performed any old way, nor only one general

form of reasoning performed only one way. He means to say that we have procedures for nurturing the characters and disciplining the practices of reasoners, so that they *could* directly perceive the realities that are articulated by way of their reasonings. These perceptions would not be foundational — that is, they would not reveal their meanings independently of the reasonings that accompanied them; they would simply offer assurances to some reasoners that there is sufficient reason to invest time and energy testing the validities of some particular reasonings.

That is what I am attempting to do in this reading of Peirce: not to prove that this is necessarily how to read Peirce's vague texts, but only to offer assurances *to some particular community of readers* that this reading is worth testing. This means that it is a reading which the information available to us allows and that, among the other readings that are also allowed, *this* is the one that would most compel this particular community, because it would speak most directly to what they need to hear. Assurance is closely related to need, which is why assurances are offered to some one or some ones in particular. In this case, the community I am addressing is your community of postcritical theologians, and the need, as I have suggested, is to locate ways of diagramming their practices of reading.⁴⁰

To warrant my reading of Peirce's logic, the postcritical community would ask for detailed textual and genealogical information that I can provide only on another occasion.⁴¹ This information shows how Peirce's late, "pragmaticist," writings *could* display a scriptural logic and how Peirce *could have* read that logic into a series of antecedent philosophic theologies that links his work with scholastic and patristic prototypes. For now, by way of our dialogue, I am offering only an illustrative diagramming of how, if it were otherwise warranted, Peirce's scriptural logic could speak to the postcritical community.

T: If so, your diagramming is still inadequate. From what you have said so far, the reasoning that joins together Peirce's two arguments produces only what we might call an *onto-theo-logic* of scripture: a diagram of scripture *as* the way God's reality appears to the individual philosopher — the one who "muses" about the world and its Creator. In Lindbeck's terms, your diagram remains a *propositional* depiction of an *expressivist* perception of God's presence. We still do not see the connection with Scripture.

P: That is very the reason that I am engaged in dialogue with *you*. While Peirce says his pragmatism formalizes Jesus' injunction "that you shall know them by their fruits," and while he claims that the subject of his metaphysics is "Christian love,"⁴² he does not offer his pragmatism in the context of any identifiable *community's* reading of Scripture. My argument is that, in the absence of his reading, *your* community's reading of Scripture discloses a reasoning that would bring his two vague arguments to mutual definition. His logic of scripture would, then, *become* a logic of Scripture for your community.

T: In other words, you want to bring his vague logical argumentation into dialogue with our explicitly theological enterprise.

P: Yes, in which case the dialogic relation between his diagrammatic and existential arguments would anticipate the dialogic relation between his *philosophic* inquiry in general and your *textual* inquiry. *Your* community's reading of Scripture would represent the existential subject whose predicate is diagrammed by his logic. His logic, in turn, would provide a diagram of your community's Scriptural reading *as* an A-reasoning. On the one hand, the stimulus for such a logic comes only from one whose place outside your community leads him to ask what you do ("what is your name?"). On the other hand, the same question would be asked by anyone inside the community for whom any of its rules of reading appeared problematic, or for whom any of its rules also *called* for such a question (as I argued previously, postcritical theology entails a logical activity, since it reforms modernist rules of theological inquiry). For outsiders, Peirce's Apology could be said, selectively, to diagram your community's process of Scriptural reading *as* a corporate rule of reasoning: for example, as a way of isolating certain characters of the Christian life (such as "___ cares for the poor") which could be predicated of various persons in various, context-specific ways (attaching individual names to the predicate). For questioning insiders, Peirce's Neglected Argument could be said, selectively, to diagram the *way* in which your community's Scriptural reading serves *as* an A-reasoning *for* any *individual* member of your community: for example, as a rule for repairing some experience of indefinite suffering or uncertainty. But these diagrams would be of assistance to your community only if and when you were to re-present them in the context of specific Scriptural inquiries.

* To continue the dialogue, T would then raise questions or objections on the basis of specific Scriptural readings. But where, then, would metaphysics enter the discussion? Postcritical metaphysics would describe the existential subjects whose predicates are diagrammed by postcritical logic. If, however, postcritical logic diagrams ways of replacing failed rules of reasoning with plausible alternatives, then this metaphysics would have to describe subjects that do not yet fully exist: rules of reasoning that are as yet only recommended! This is, indeed, why metaphysics has become so problematic. Assuming that, as yet, these rules do not at all exist, foundationalists believe that to describe them is to invent them, and radical sceptics believe that either such inventions are empty or merely subjective, or that no describing is possible. For the postcritical philosopher, however, the rules both exist (at least as A-reasoning) and do not yet exist (as the new B-reasoning that is to be located). For now, I know of no better way to characterize this postcritical alternative than by way of our reading of Exodus. For all the Jewish commentators I have mentioned, God's names exist and exist as indubitable (because acritical) but vague (because in some sense context-specific) predicates of God's presence. For the postcritical commentators, furthermore, the name *ehyeh asher ehyeh*, introduces a performance that both characterizes and initiates the process through which some failed reasoning is repaired. In the performance of the name, therefore, the repair is both not-yet-here (but promised) *and* already-here (since the performance is the first, actual mark of what is to come in fact, but what is already here, as hidden rule). The performance is thus both logic (as promise) and metaphysics (as description). What the metaphysics includes in detail would be the existential referents, for whoever asks to know them, of all that the logic includes.

* An earlier version of this paper was presented as "The Logic of Scripture, Philosophy's Role in Rabbinic Inquiry," at the *Yale Jewish Studies Tribute to George Lindbeck*, New Haven, December, 1993. I am grateful to David Ruderman for his encouragement and to George Lindbeck for extensive remarks. This version is informed also by general discussions with Kathryn Tanner, Steven Fraade, Garrett Green, Todd Driskill, William Elkins and Robert Gibbs.

¹ English translation from *Tanakh*: Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1985.

² He uses the term "postliberal" in *The Nature of Doctrine*: Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1984, but later "postcritical," as in "Dulles on Method," in *Pro Ecclesia* I #1: 53-62.

³ I make the claim at greater length in "An Introduction to Postcritical Scriptural Interpretation," in P. Ochs, ed., *The Return to Scripture in Judaism and Christianity* : Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1993: pp. 3-51, and comments *passim*. Among the postcritical Christians, I also mention David Kelsey, Kathryn Tanner, Garrett Green, Stanley Hauerwas, Bruce Marshall, et. al.

⁴ Cf. *Ibid.* and also P. Ochs, "A Rabbinic Pragmatism," in *Theology and Dialogue*, ed. Bruce Marshall: Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1990: pp. 213-248; and "Max Kadushin as Rabbinic Pragmatist," in *Understanding the Rabbinic Mind, Essays on the Hermeneutic of Max Kadushin*, ed. P. Ochs (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1990), pp. 165-96. Among the postcritical Jewish textualists, I mention Steven Fraade, Michael Fishbane, David Weiss-Halivni, Moshe Greenberg, et.al., and among the philosophers, Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, Emanuel Levinas, Max Kadushin, along with recent scholars David Novak, Eugene Borowitz, Norbert Samuelson, Robert Gibbs, et. al.

⁵ For a related effort of this kind, see Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge, Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*: New York, Harper & Row, 1964. See also the theological use to which this is put in Avery Dulles, *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System*: New York, Crossroad, 1992.

⁶ Trans. S.M. Lehrman, in *Midrash Rabbah* III: London, The Soncino Press, 1961.

⁷ *naaseh v'nishmah*: "we will do and then we will understand," Ex. 24.3, as cited in B. Talmud *Shabbat* 88a.

⁸ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe: The MacMillan Co., 1953.

⁹ Kathryn Tanner, "Theology and the Plain Sense," in *Scriptural Authority and Narrative Interpretation*, ed., Garrett Green: Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1987: pp.59-78.

¹⁰ "Why Study Logic" (1902) in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, eds., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934-35, Vol. 2, Par 186. Future references to this collection will be to *CP* followed by volume and paragraph number and, where pertinent the date of original publication.

¹¹ Cf. his descriptions of "The Cartesian Anxiety," in Richard Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism* : Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983: pp.16-25, *passim* .

¹² Susan Haack, "Descartes, Peirce and the Cognitive Community," in *The Relevance of Charles Peirce*, ed. Eugene Freeman, La Salle, Illinois: The Monist Library, 1983: p. 254.

¹³ To abandon it is to assume that the only alternative to X is Y, defined as the logical contrary of X, where X+Y constitute the entire universe of real possibilities. In that case, the contrary of seeking logical foundations would be to seek no foundations. Foundationalist reasoning is, however, informed by a logic of contrareity, which applies the law of excluded middle to all cases of negation. To seek an alternative to foundationalism, one must also find an alternative way of seeking, which means an alternative to using the logic of contrareity. One alternative is to define alternatives as simple negations, or logical contradictories: where -x means any of an indefinite series of alternatives, a,b,c ... in the indefinite universe of real possibilities [x,a,b,c,....]. In this case, the alternative we choose to logical foundationalism will be only one among many possible alternatives. Its validity will not therefore be self-evident, but at best probable, which means we will have to enlist all sorts of argument on its behalf and, even then, we will have to keep testing and refining it.

¹⁴ We would then find ourselves in a position like William James' when he asked us to consider the relative merits of two contrary, hypothetical options: for example, that

either materialism or theism is true. His standard of judgment in such cases was pragmatic: without a priori reasons to choose either one, let us "know them," as Peirce said citing Matthew, "by their fruits." James concluded, for example, that, all else equal, theism gave us better reason to live. Cf. "Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results," *The University Chronicle* (Berkeley), Sept., 1989. Repr. in *The Writings of William James*, ed., John McDermott: Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1977: pp.345-362.

¹⁵ Furthermore, continuing Note 13, this option fails to challenge the foundationalist logic of contrariety and therefore need not, but might indirectly reinforce foundationalist patterns of thinking.

¹⁶ Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed* I. 63, trans. Shlomo Pines: Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1963: pp. 153-56.

¹⁷ Moses ben Nahman, Commentary on Exodus 3.13.

¹⁸ On imagination in philosophical theology, see Garrett Green, "'The Bible As....,' Fictional Narrative and Scriptural Truth," in *Scriptural Authority*, 79-96; and "On Seeing the Unseen: Imagination in Science and Religion," *Zygon* 16 (1981): 15-28.

¹⁹ The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber offers a comparable diagram in his classic study, *I and Thou*. He claims that "in the beginning was the relation," so that individuals appear to us with respect to either one of what he considered the created world's *two* fundamental relations: I-Thou (which brings to mind Peirce's three part relation, where I would be someone for you in some way) and I-It (which brings to mind Peirce's two part relation, where what I am would be reduced to what I am for you here). See *I and Thou*, Walter Kaufmann, trans.. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970).

²⁰ I am grateful to Adi Ophir, Edith Wyschogrod, and Robert Gibbs for drawing my attention to Jean-François Lyotard's work on a related notion of suffering. Lyotard asks us to "imagine the case where the plaintiff is divested of the means to argue [accuse]

and becomes for that reason a victim" (*The Differend Phrases in Dispute*, trans. George Van Den Abbeele, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988: par #9; cited in E. Wyschogrod, review of *Renewing the Covenant*, by Eugene Borowitz, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, forthcoming). Lyotard identifies the victim as one whose suffering is not recognized within a given language system ("phrase regimen," he calls it; a kind of "interpretant" in Peirce's terms): thus, "it is in the nature of a victim not to be able to prove that one has been done a wrong" (*Ibid.*, cited in A. Opir, "Victims Come First," unpub.). I am also grateful to Kathy Hull, a graduate student at Drew University, who has raised, and is now beginning to respond to, the question of how Peirce might account for our perceiving or not perceiving the suffering of others.

²¹ Above, pp. 7ff.

²² See Note 4.

²³ The reference to Buber is made in conversation. For an example of Greenberg's holistic method, see his "The Vision of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 8-11: A Holistic Interpretation," in James L. Crenshaw and Samuel Sandmel, eds., *The Divine Helmsman: Lou H. Silberman Festschrift*, New York: Ktav, 1980: pp. 143-64.

²⁴ Martin Buber, "The Burning Bush," in *On the Bible*, ed. Nahum Glatzer, New York: Schocken, 1982: pp.44-62 (p. 57). Repr. from *Moses*, trans. I.M. Lask, Oxford: East and West Library, 1946: pp.39-55. Orig. *Moshe*, Jerusalem, 1945. Buber cites the theory of Bernard Duhm.

²⁵ If so, Buber says, "it is necessary to remember Egypt as the background of such a revelation: Egypt where the magician went so far as to threaten the gods that if they would not do his will he would not merely betray their names to the demons, but would also tear the hair from their heads as lotus blossoms are pulled out of the pond" (*Ibid.*, p. 60). Against the burden of that tradition of magic, the name "I will be that which I will be" comes, says Buber, first to assure Moses that there is no need to

conjure God, for I will be present with you always, without conjuring. But it also comes, second, to warn Moses that it is in fact impossible to conjure God, for I will be present only as I WILL BE present (pp. 58-60).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52, 57.

²⁷ Moshe Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus I*, New York: Behrman House, 1969: pp. 67-107.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

²⁹ Substituting *waw* for *yod*, as in *Kohelet* 2.22: *Ibid.*, p. 81n2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83, citing Samuel Driver.

³¹ *Hibbert Journal* 7 (1908): 90-112, in *CP* 6.452-485.

³² B. Talmud *Shabbat 55b*, *Genesis Rabbah* 81.2

· John E. Smith, *Purpose and Thought, The Meaning of Pragmatism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978: 179-80.

· 6.465.

· *Ibid.*

· An unpublished sequel to Peirce's 1866 Lowell lectures (MS 359), cited in Donna Orange, *Peirce's Conception of God, A Developmental Study*, Peirce Studies No. 2 (Lubbock, Texas: Institute for Studies in Pragmatism, 1984), pp. 21-22.

³⁷ 6.490.

³⁸ *Philosophical Investigations* 201. I am grateful to Todd Driskill of Drew University for explaining the relevance of Wittgenstein to this study of Peirce.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

· For those who can tolerate the detail, this procedure for reading Peirce can be restated in terms of our discussion of the logic of pragmatism:

P: I am imagining Peirce's two vague arguments (the Apology and the Neglected Argument) to function like two vague B-reasonings, B^b and B^c. This means that I am imagining their mediating, third-reasoning to be the A-reasoning that would guide a

reparative dialogue between these two. We cannot diagram this A-reasoning, per se, but we can see its trace in any of the more definite B-reasonings, [B^d, B^e, B^f.....], that would be the products of this dialogue. This set corresponds to what I called the set of readings which the information available to us allows. The one I choose (B^d) is the one that speaks most directly to this community of postcritical readers.

T: But then the way you predicate a given B-reasoning, B^d, of the A-reasoning will remain as hidden an art as the way Peirce predicated the name "God" of his experience of musement.

P: Yes, in absolute terms, the sceptics win, because there is no complete display of this art in the short run and, thus, no complete assurance. In their own terms, however, they do not win, because they renounce absolute assurances in favor of context-relative assurances, and those we *can* supply. The force of an assurance is relative to the one who asks for assurance and thus to her particular way of understanding and interpreting rational claims. Even though the art of predicating some particular claim (B^d) of an ultimate reasoning (A) remains partly concealed behind the terms of such claims (the way folks understand B^d), nonetheless, it is the character of this claim (B^d) that assures the questioner and not the character of some un-mediated revelation (A). The claim is no substitute for the revelation, but only a source of assurance for this questioner that there is reason to wait for future assurances.

⁴¹ In a forthcoming study, *Reading Pragmatism : Peirce's Pragmatic and Pragmaticist Writings*. Some of the detailed textual analyses are anticipated in "A Pragmatic Method of Reading Confused Philosophic Texts: The Case of Peirce's 'Illustrations,'" Transactions of the C.S.Peirce Society, XXV. No.3 (Summer, 1989): 251-291. And in "The Sentiment of Pragmatism: From the Pragmatic Maxim to a Pragmatic Faith," The Monist, 75 #5 (1992): 551-568. The genealogical study points in particular to

Augustine's semiotics as prototype for Peirce's Scriptural logic. Cf. Ralph Markus, "St Augustine on Signs," *Phronesis* 2 (1957) : pp.60-83.

⁴² Cf. such claims as these from Peirce: "The Gospel of Christ says that progress comes from every individual melting his individuality in sympathy with his neighbors" (6.294: 1893); "the belief in the law of love is the Christian faith" (6.442:1893); his notion of the evolutionary principle of *agapasm*, or evolution by creative love (6.302) and, as mentioned earlier, his claim that the Pragmatic Maxim " is only an application of the sole principle of logic which was recommended by Jesus: 'Ye may know them by their fruits,' and it is very intimately allied with the ideas of the gospel" (1893: 5.402n2). For generally sympathetic approaches to Peirce's Christianity, see John E. Smith, "Pragmatism and Religion," in *Purpose and Thought*, pp. 159-182; and Michael Raposa, *Peirce's Philosophy of Religion*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1989.