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Author: Dea, Shannon
Title: A House at War Against Itself: Absolute Versus Pluralistic Idealism in Spinoza, Peirce, James and Royce
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Abstract: In this paper, I elaborate affinities between Peirce, Spinoza and Royce, in order to illuminate the division between Peirce's and James's expressions of idealism. James contrasted Spinoza's and Royce's absolute idealism with his and Peirce's pluralistic idealism. I triangulate among Peirce, Spinoza and Royce to show that, contra James's view, Peirce himself was more at home in the absolutistic camp. In Section 2, I survey Peirce's discussions of Spinoza's pragmatism and of the divide within pragmatism Peirce perceived to obtain. In Section 3, I elaborate two early twentieth-century accounts (one of them by James) of the idealistic division within pragmatism, and James's criticisms of absolute idealism in Spinoza and Royce. In Section 4, we turn our attention to Peirce's discussions of the absolute, and to the role of the absolute and the infinite in the thought of Spinoza, Royce and James. In the classification of pragmatist idealisms, I argue, James stands on one side; Peirce stands on the other with Royce and Spinoza.
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