Hayek: Postatomic Liberal

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**Abstract:**

Hayek’s anti-rationalism is founded upon a revival of Scottish Enlightenment scepticism combined with a compelling account of psychology that rejects a correspondence between our categories that impose order on experience and an external reality. Despite the resulting austere epistemic standpoint, Hayek argues humans can harness their capacity for pattern recognition to generate and sustain cooperative social orders through non-rational processes of trial and error. Institutions that allow this cooperative order to persist include centrally private property, voluntary contract and the rule of law. Hayek’s politics is less reliant on fundamental normative claims than those based on utopian ideals and is compatible with a cosmopolitan order made up of people with varied conceptions of morality.