

The Three Pillars of Liberalism: Freedom, Markets, and Morals from the Enlightenment to the Present

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The author:

Alan S. Kahan is currently Professor of British Civilization at the Université de Versailles/St. Quentin-en-Yvelines in France. His most recent books include *Tocqueville, Democracy, and Religion: Checks and Balances for Democratic Souls* (Oxford University Press, 2015); *Liberal Moments: Reading Liberal Texts* (Bloomsbury, 2017) *Mind vs. Money: The War Between Intellectuals and Capitalism* (Transaction, 2010); and *Alexis de Tocqueville* (Continuum, 2010). He has also translated Tocqueville's *The Old Regime and the Revolution* (Chicago, 1998). His current project is a history of liberalism with the working title *The Three Pillars of Liberalism: Freedom, Markets, and Morals from the Enlightenment to the Present*.

The paper:

The paper outlines the introduction to Kahan's upcoming book, which aims to reorient historical and contemporary debate about liberalism through an historical account of two discourses within it. One argues that political freedom and free markets can only endure if they are based on some set of moral and frequently religious beliefs. The other tradition suggests that in order for liberalism to endure, governments and markets need to be entirely emancipated from any particular moral and especially religious views. Kahan argues that this "republican vs. liberal" divide is real, but anachronistic for the 18th and even the 19th century; that the two languages start out together in Adam Smith (among others); that they start to separate over the course of the 19th century and have moved further apart since; and that now is the moment for their rapprochement.