Robust Scientific Institutions as a Solution to Fact/Value Entanglement

Julian Reiss, Durham University

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✤ I am going to propose a number of procedural innovations that aim to create scientific institutions that are (more) robust in the light of uncertainty about fundamental values and certain factual claims
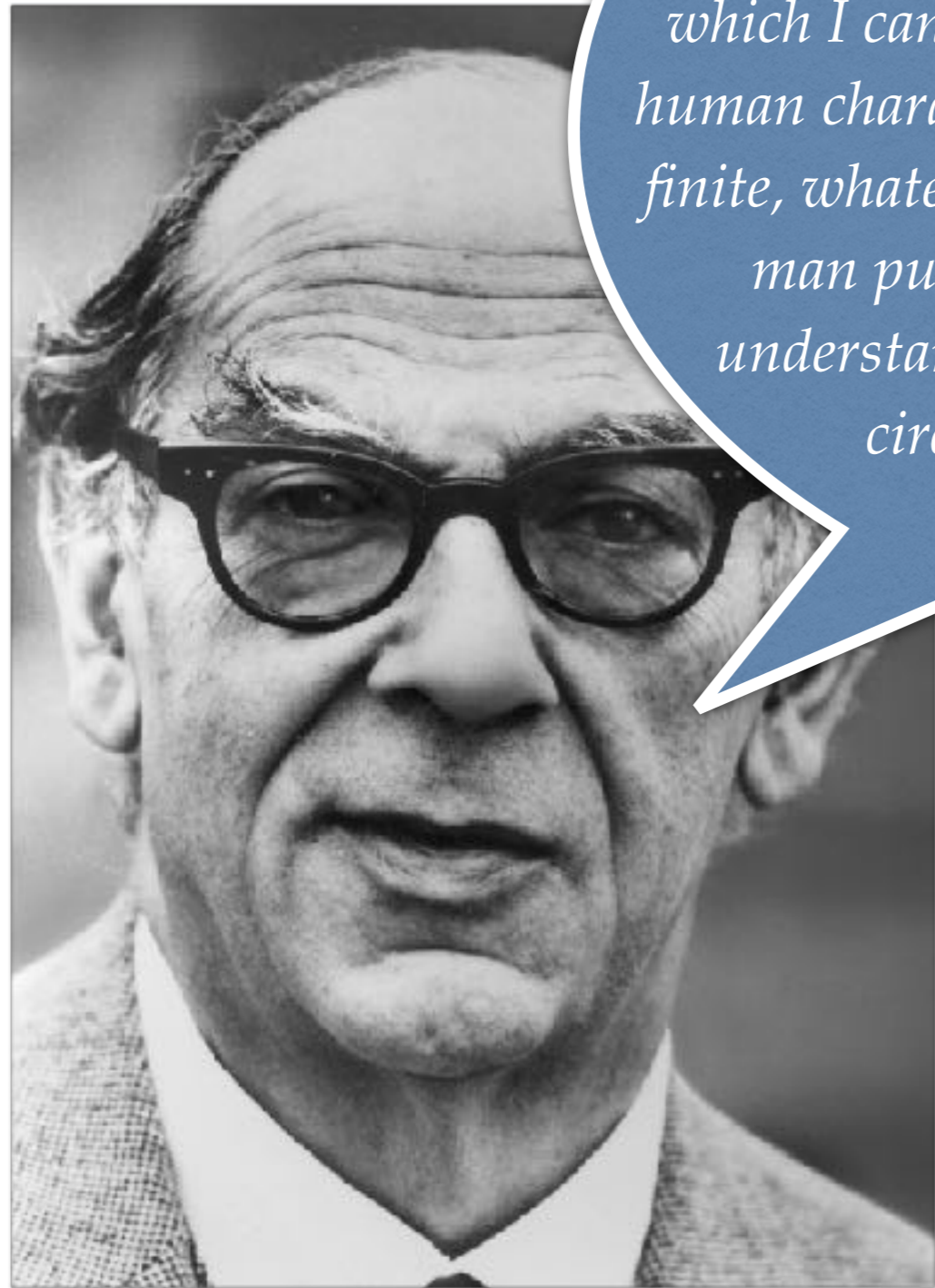
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✤ I support this by means of some theoretical considerations and some empirical work

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  ✤ Progressivism vs conservatism boils down to the importance of harm relative to other values (as we shall see in a moment)

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✤ Thus, disagreement concerning any more concrete moral issue will prevail even in the most advantages situations

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✤ It is this last claim that is most relevant here

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  ✤ Classical liberals/libertarians care mostly about liberty/oppression and another dimension of fairness/cheating
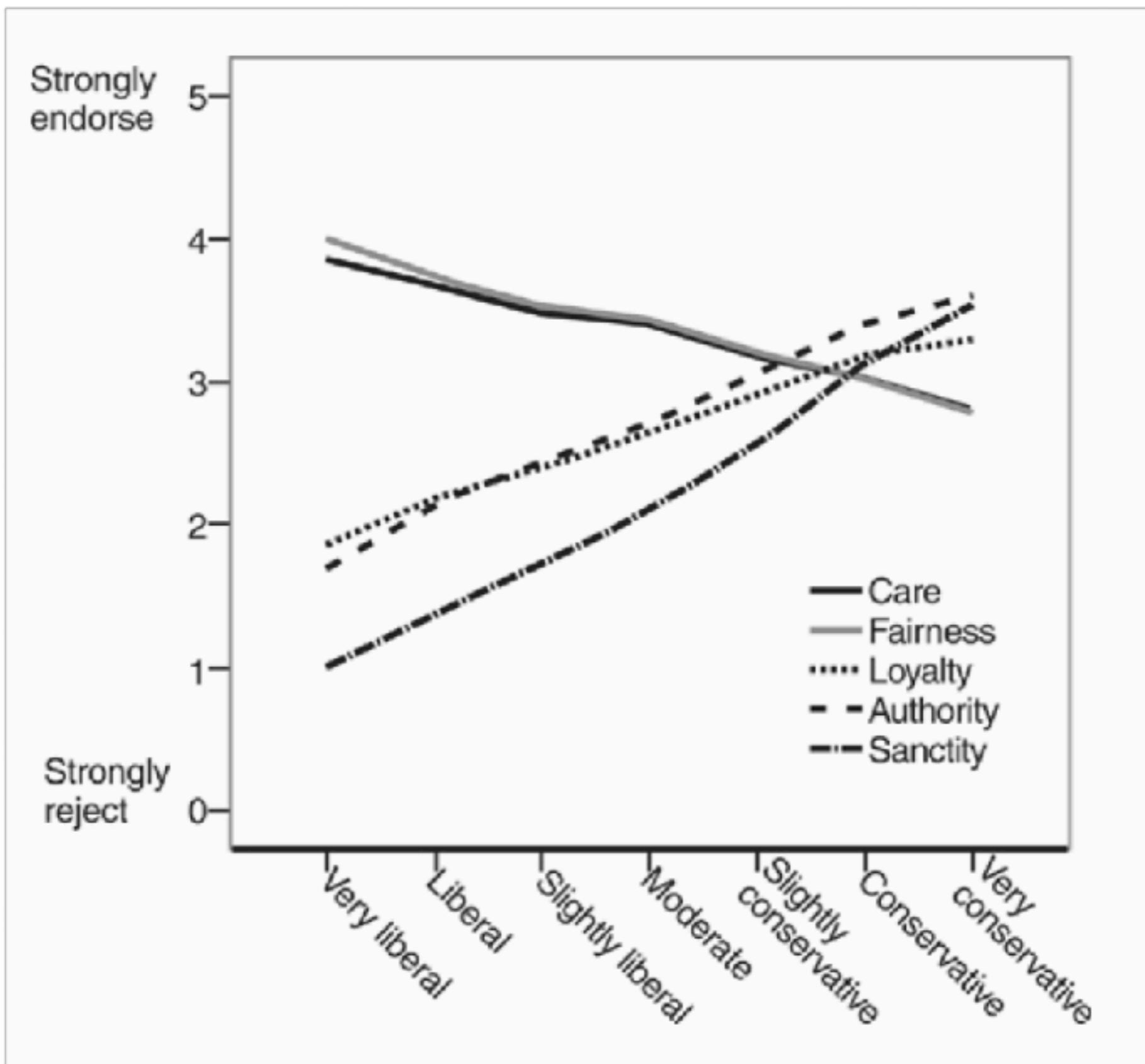
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✤ Disagreement about what constitutes the 'good society' are thus at least partially genetic

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✤ The point is that: two individuals may both possess the best available evidence, be rational, and yet disagree about what the facts are

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> *The ideal of socially responsible science that [my] book puts forward, in fact, maintains that sound social values as well as sound epistemic values must control every aspect of the scientific research process, from the choice of research questions to the communication and application of results.*

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    - Some changes in the regulatory environment

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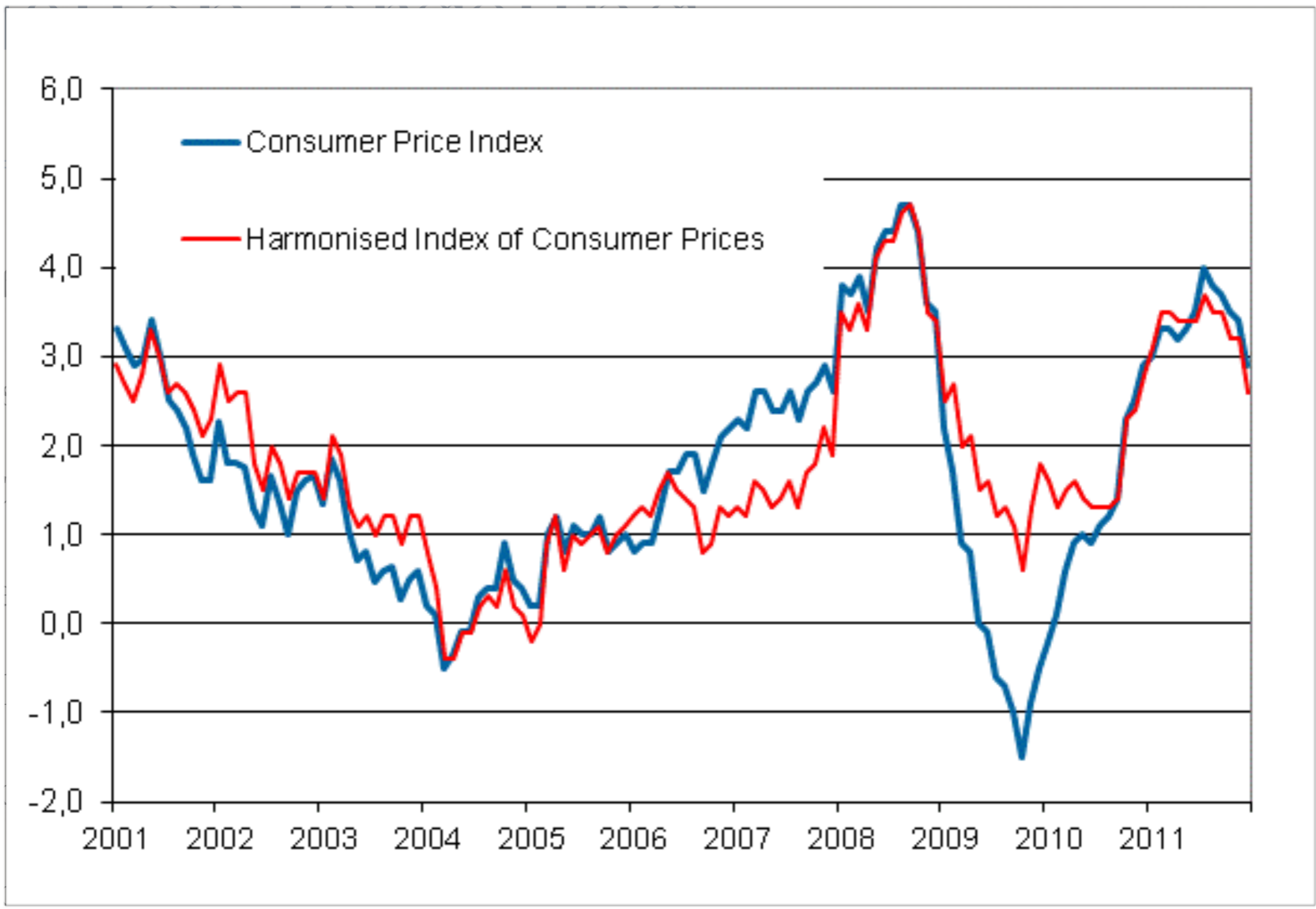
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✤ A more robust institution: stable monetary growth

Bank regulation

✤ Values enter science through idealisations

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The main cause of the crisis was the behavior of the banks—largely a result of misguided incentives unrestrained by good regulation.

Credentialed Accomplices

There is one other set of accomplices—the economists who provided the arguments that those in the financial markets found so convenient and self-serving. These economists provided models—based on unrealistic assumptions of perfect information, perfect competition, and perfect markets—in which regulation was unnecessary.

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✤ This does not imply a race to the bottom

Conclusions

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✤ Science should respect that rational individuals may disagree, and a science that does so I have dubbed R^{3}I

✤ What R^{3}I amounts to differs from case to case and I have made proposals for concrete strategies in some contexts

Conclusion

> *Rationality and substantial justice do not consist in a consensus and a harmony of belief in the soul and state from which all conflict has been eliminated, which is Plato's picture of the soul and state. On the opposing and Heraclitean picture, every soul is always the scene of conflicting tendencies and of divided aims and ambivalences, and, correspondingly, our political enmities in the city or state will never come to an end while we have diverse life stories and diverse imaginations.*

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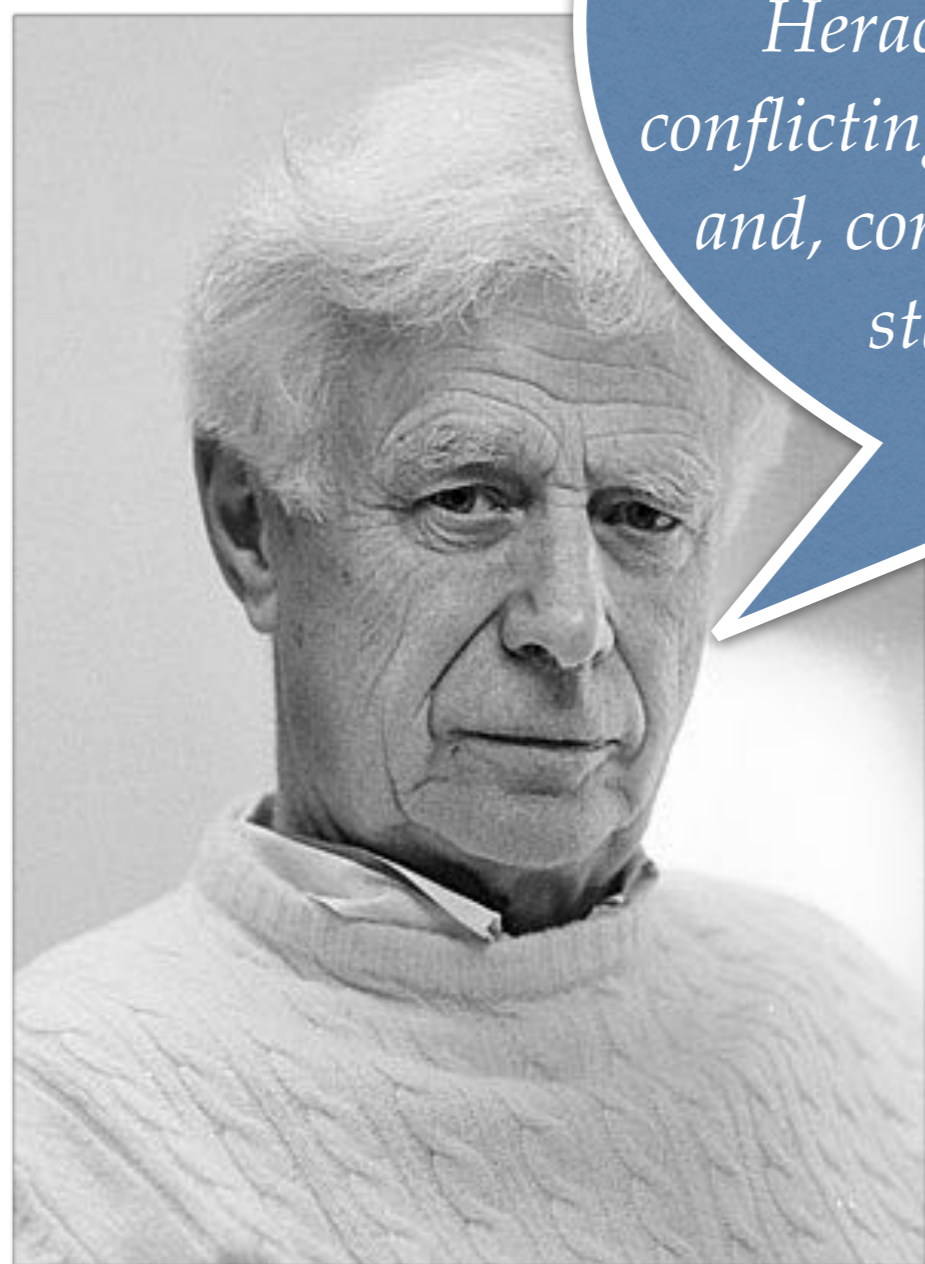
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