

Semantics and Strategies for the Level Playing Field

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1. Thinking in a simple binary of religion versus secularity only confuses on what is happening on the political landscape (states of affair) and changes in the political landscape (reform). Behind the simple binary of religion versus secularity are also too simplistic binaries, e.g. idealism versus realism.
2. The confusion of a simple binary is a political device to deliberately confuse the public away from understanding political options intelligently.
3. The State needs to act as a level playing field, treating all substantive belief systems fairly, even as the society may be preferential in the shifting tides between worldviews.
4. The option of a prevailing political worldview is never a simple binary but as follows (contemporary scholarly description):
 - a. **Established Tradition:** which is resistant to reform, e.g. Hobbes' Leviathan, Burkean conservatism, Buckley's neo-conservatism (although neo-conservatism is more reactionary);
 - b. **Utopian:** a movement to a singular ideal system, e.g. Marx's end of state, anarchism;
 - c. **Liberal:** with a presumption for the level playing field, and there are several options theorised:
 - i. *tabula rasa and tolerance*, i.e. Locke;
 - ii. *utilitarian choice and scientific neutrality*, i.e. Mill, and Rawls (added the principle of veiled ignorance on all identities);
 - iii. *closed constitutionalism with the fixed choice of perceived origins of the people (res publica)*, i.e., Jefferson, Hamilton, Lincoln;
 - iv. *open constitutionalism, negotiated in periodical reform between relevant worldviews for common grounds*, i.e. Habermas' dialogical approach.

5. The last option (iv. open constitutionalism) delivers, for most of the society and the political health of the state, the best case of a level playing field. The dialogical approach works from removing the privilege status for any grouping.

6. Understanding the best option (iv. open constitutionalism) means moving away from any singular binary that confuses the conversation for reform. This is the insight of Habermas' communicative action.