

Abstract

Peter Coleman's (2011) Attractor Landscape Model (ALM) is a promising new framework for analysing and tackling intractable conflicts: conflicts that are highly destructive and highly resistant to conflict resolution. However, this thesis suggests that Coleman's ALM may be based on unreliable assumptions about homogenous group psychology. The aim is to test the reliability of the ALM from this perspective, and to suggest ways to successfully operationalise the ALM.

The reliability of the ALM is tested using the case study of professional negotiators in the Israel-Palestine Track-I peace process 2007-2011. 12 interviews are conducted with negotiators from four key actors: the EU, the US, Israel and the Negotiation Support Unit (NSU). The transcripts of these interviews are coded for patterns of 'behaving' and 'thinking', and tested against five hypotheses derived from negotiation theories and the Conceptual Integrative Complexity Scoring Manual (Baker-Brown et al., 1992).

It is concluded that the case study of the Israel-Palestine Track-I peace process 2007-2011 generally provides support for the attractor landscape model. However, negotiators from the NSU stood out as a significant exception. This suggests that future studies using the ALM should investigate potentially significant differences in group socio-psychology and integrate this within the model if applicable.