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Per Fr. I. Pharo

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On the author

Per Fredrik Ilsaas Pharo is Director of the Section for defence policy and planning in the Norwegian Ministry of Defence. He holds a degree in history from the University of Oslo on a dissertation on US test ban policy 1958-1963.

Pharo's publications include «A Precondition for Peace: Transparency and the Test-Ban Negotiations, 1958-1963», *The International History Review*, vol. XXII, no 3, September 2000; «Norge på Balkan 1990-1999–Lessons Learned», *IFS Info* 3/2000; «Mellom Pest og Kolera: NATO og Kosovo-krisen», *Internasjonal politikk* 1/2000; and «Necessary, Not Perfect: NATOs War in Kosovo», *IFS Info* 1/2000.

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Introduction

Breakthroughs in international negotiations are intriguing phenomena, challenging both historians and international relations theorists: Why do breakthroughs happen? And why at a given time? Realist scholars of international relations, of course, would point to the merging of interests as the overriding explanatory factor. Such an answer, however, begs the question of why common ground materialized at that given time. More recent approaches have thus offered alternative explanations, discourse theorists offering the most radical alternative understandings, emphasizing the limitations and opportunities inherent in cognitive and lingual factors.

As a contribution to what will certainly be a continuing debate, this article evaluates the explanatory power of two theoretical approaches–emphasizing 'knowledge structures' and 'world views' respectively–regarding one case–the Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) in 1963. On the basis of that case study/theoretical comparison are offered some tentative general conclusions regarding the analysis of international negotiations.

The analytical starting point will be the arguments introduced in the article 'The Limited Test-Ban Agreement: Emergence of New Knowledge Structures in International Negotiation',[1] published in *International Studies Quarterly* a few years ago. Here, G. Matthew Bonham of Syracuse University and Victor M. Sergeev and Pavel B. Parshin of the Analytical Center on Science and Industrial Policy in Moscow, argue that the emergence of new knowledge structures facilitated agreement between Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev and US president John F. Kennedy on the LTBT in 1963. They have reached this conclusion through the construction and analysis of cognitive maps of exchanges between Kennedy and Khrushchev on the test-ban issue during the years 1961-1963; as agreement came closer, the two were found to adjust their representations of reality in a way that indicate a change in basic knowledge structures, which again made agreement possible.

The main focus of Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev is not the test ban-negotiations, but the cognitive mapping approach. They emphasize language, the way the actors' use of language reveal their 'pre-understandings' of the world, and the way these factors determine policy, rather than the substance of the test-ban negotiations. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to evaluate their theoretical approach on the basis of the insights it produces, and compare their conclusions with those achieved through an alternative approach. Focus here will thus be on the approach as applied to the test-ban negotiations by these authors, not the approach as such.

The basic argument below is that a more nuanced interpretation of the test-ban

negotiations–which also fits better with the available evidence–can be constructed through emphasizing the impact of world views[2]–basic features of political actors' perceptions and opinions of the world–and the manner in which these influenced the way political actors evaluated the issue at hand and thus how they defined their countries' interests. The approach is somewhat similar to realism in its focus on interests, but tends towards discourse theory in its insistence that actors' definitions of their interests–far from being objectively or rationally determined–can only be explained by reference to the basic features of actors' understanding of the world in general. The approach also draws on the discipline of diplomatic history in its insistence that thorough empirical investigation–in addition to theoretical insights–is essential to explain concrete events.

Such an approach help generate explanations both for why agreement was reached on a limited test ban in 1963, for why agreement was not reached on a comprehensive test ban during the 1958-63 period, as well as for why the arms race continued for another twenty plus years despite the shared interest in arms control that the LTBT signified.

Cognitive mapping and the limited test ban

Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev claim that the traditional explanations for why the LTBT was achieved in 1963 have emphasized the hard work of the negotiators and the intense personal commitment to arms control of Khrushchev and Kennedy in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis (215). They find that these explanations "provide little insight about how the negotiators worked [...] to bridge their differences and reach an agreement." (216)

Unhappy with this historiographical state of affairs, they look for alternative explanations. They try to illustrate the impact of deep-seated cognitive structures through the utilization of cognitive mapping–"a specialized technique for portraying causal and quasi-causal thinking with respect to general situations or specific issues that are treated in a text". The authors have analyzed and compared "[c]ognitive maps of Soviet and American officials in the talks leading to the Limited Test-Ban Treaty [...] Soviet negotiators, including Premier Khrushchev, were hypothesized to use 'processual' representations, while U.S. negotiators, including President Kennedy, were hypothesized to use 'procedural' representation. [...] comparisons of the negotiations over time were expected to reveal the emergence of new knowledge structures that may have helped to facilitate an agreement on nuclear testing [...]" (216)

The authors point out that recent research–some of it their own[3]–have suggested that representatives of different cultures tend to comprehend the world in fundamentally different ways. Therefore–in international negotiations–"[n]ew knowledge structures may have to emerge before participants are able to understand the positions of negotiators from another culture." (217) 'Knowledge structures' are deep-seated mental patterns that determine how people order their perceptions and thereby determine their 'pre-understanding' of the world, which again determines how they represent the world through language. Knowledge structures, pre-understandings, and modes of

representation are communal, that is, shared among representatives of a culture or culture area.

The authors isolate two types of pre-understandings, which in turn leads to two different modes of representation, as relevant to the test-ban negotiations: a *holistic* pre-understanding–which leads to a *processual* representation of reality, whereby "a change of a political situation is seen in terms of continuous processes, without any intermediate steps" (217-8); and a *structural* pre-understanding–which leads to *procedural* representation "that takes into account patterned relations between objects [and] relations between states of affairs are described [...] in terms of causal linkages" (219).

The process of cognitive mapping and the methodology of the authors' will be studied in greater detail below. For now it suffices to say that the authors found what they were looking for: Kennedy used mostly procedural representation throughout the negotiations; Khrushchev used processual representation but, as the negotiations progressed, he at times used procedural representation. The early differences were hypothesized to have hindered agreement, the subsequent merging to have facilitated it. Moreover, in the weeks leading up to agreement the two leaders were found to have translated each other from procedural to processual representation, and vice versa (238). Intercoder reproducibility–presumably a guarantor of verifiability and objectivity–were established, as the findings were similar for all the people involved in the mapping process–the authors and a graduate assistant that did not know the purpose of the coding (225).

According to the authors, then, the "changes in representations over time provide evidence for the notion that the success of international negotiations is related to the degree to which the parties can construct a shared discursive space, which amounts to their building a shared reality" (238). As to the test-ban issue, somewhat simplified, this happened when the mutual apocalyptic experience of the Cuban missile crisis led Khrushchev's and Kennedy's understandings of the perils of the arms race to merge, which facilitated agreement on the LTBT.

If substantiated, these findings would constitute quite a breakthrough for the cognitive mapping approach as a tool for explaining the development of international negotiations. Significant objections can, however, be raised, both regarding the authors' understanding of the substance of the test-ban negotiations, and regarding the theoretical merits of the cognitive mapping approach.

A presumption of Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev's argument is that the LTBT constituted a seminal change in the basic policies of the United States and the Soviet Union. This seminal change they hold to be due to the emergence of new knowledge structures in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis. This presumption is disputable, however. Rather than seeing the LTBT as the successful culmination of the negotiations taking place from 1958 to 1963, this article will argue that it should be regarded partly as an admission of failure in the quest for an inspected and comprehensive test-ban treaty, and partly as a general gesture of good will that did not necessitate substantial compromises. Moreover, it is argued that the Cuban missile crisis did not change US and Soviet 'knowledge structures' or 'pre-understandings', as is evident in the fact that the arms race continued for twenty plus years after 1963, and that grave mutual

suspicions remained in place until the fall of Soviet style communism.

In other words, both the general argument of the authors–that new knowledge structures emerged–and their specific argument–that this led to agreement on the LTBT–are modified.

To substantiate the above claims, a short summing up of the relevant round of the nuclear test-ban negotiations–which took place during the years 1958-1963–is necessary. Several analyses of the test-ban negotiations have been published,[4] and the factual basis of the version presented below is uncontroversial. As to the 'world view' approach applied as an explanatory tool, it will be discussed in the subsequent section on theory.

The test-ban negotiations 1958-63: an overview

The test-ban negotiations were initiated in late 1958, mainly as a result of massive pressure from public opinion due to concern over the health hazards of radioactive fallout from testing in the atmosphere. Progress in the negotiations was rather slow, however. There were several obstacles to agreement: The most important and ultimately decisive dispute pertained to the inspection of suspected underground nuclear tests; inspecting against suspected atmospheric and sub-oceanic tests was considered relatively simple, while space testing was considered incredibly complicated and prohibitively expensive.

Inspecting against underground tests was a rather complex, three-step affair.[5] The first step was to consist of seismic detection stations spread throughout the world registering above-normal seismic disturbances. Once this had been accomplished, data concerning the nature and location of the disturbance had to be analyzed to determine whether it should be identified as a suspicious event; almost any seismic disturbance could with some justification be classified as such. Once a suspicious event had been identified through a mix of guesswork and analysis, one more step remained–verification through on-site inspection. The approximate location of a suspicious event having been determined, an inspection team was to be dispatched to the area and collect earth samples to determine whether above-normal levels of radioactivity were present.

Its theoretical simplicity notwithstanding, there were significant technical problems attached to the on-site inspection. First, the area that would have to be inspected in each instance would be rather large–according to US treaty proposals at least 500 square miles. Secondly, the area throughout which radioactivity would spread after an underground explosion was quite limited, possibly as small as 150 square feet. Thirdly, the method of inspection was quite cumbersome, including drilling to significant depths to check for radioactivity. Thus, the on-site inspection would be a complex and rather tedious affair. Still, some kind of method with the potential to collect proof of transgressions had to be included in a treaty. The on-site inspection, for all its faults, was the only means to achieve this.

Agreement on the number and modalities of these inspections to be allowed for under a treaty did not materialize in this period, however, and thus no comprehensive test ban was agreed upon. US policy-makers, ever suspicious of the Soviets, would not accept an inadequate inspection system as the basis for a treaty, since such a system would

potentially allow for clandestine Soviet testing, and sustained secret testing was seen to have the potential to lead to an elimination of US nuclear superiority. This was considered unacceptable, as US nuclear superiority was seen as the main defense against an ideologically driven aggressive Soviet-led communist bloc that enjoyed a substantial advantage in conventional weaponry. Moreover, and equally important, US decision-makers wanted a test-ban treaty to serve as a meaningful precedent for more substantial arms control and disarmament. This again was preconditioned upon the inclusion of provisions for the verification of compliance, since it was out of the question during the cold war, as it is today, to base arms reduction treaties upon trust. Consequently, US negotiators throughout the 1958-1963 period demanded that quite extensive on-site inspections be part of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

We know less about Soviet than about US rationales regarding inspection; no primary source based works have been published on the subject. We do know, however, that the Soviets in public denied the need for uninhibited[6] inspections and would not agree to include provisions for them in a treaty.[7] It is probable that this was because of the role secrecy played in their general national security policies. Possibly the desire to catch up with the United States in nuclear weapons technology provided an added rationale, since that could not be achieved without testing, and denying the need for inspection was guaranteed to block any agreement on test limitations while not giving the impression that the Soviet Union was an obstacle to arms control.

The disagreement over inspection seems to have been a fundamental one, and was not resolved. There was progress in one sense, as the parties adjusted the number of on-site inspections they would accept. The basic point, however, is that the Soviets at no point accepted uninhibited international inspection on their territory, and while they did at times accept up to three on-site inspections, those were to be controlled and restricted by the Soviets themselves. The Americans on their part at no point were willing to accept less than five or six uninhibited inspections, officially no less than seven. The Soviet demand that they should be allowed to control on-site inspections, was seen by the Americans as the negation of the very idea of international control.

The essence of the disagreement – seen from the US side – was not about numbers, but about the degree of transparency necessary for credible arms control. For the Soviets, the basic point was probably how to get a treaty a) without loosing the national security edge granted them through their closed society, and possibly b) without ending their effort to catch up with the United States in nuclear weapons technology.

The parties' definitions of interests – as defined through their respective world views – thus hindered agreement on a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the 1958-1963 period. The question of why there was agreement on a limited test-ban treaty in 1963 remains, however.

Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev argue that the Cuban missile crisis led to changes in Kennedy's and Khrushchev's knowledge structures, and thereby their thinking on issues of arms control, thus making them more willing to compromise on the test-ban issue, ultimately leading to the LTBT (221-2).

Explaining the development of the test-ban negotiations by reference to the Cuban missile crisis is not a novel idea; to a greater

or lesser degree, most analyses of the issue credit that crisis with the progress of negotiations in 1963.[8]It will be argued here, however, that the impact of the crisis has been overrated, both regarding progress towards a comprehensive test-ban treaty, regarding the achievement of the LTBT, and regarding the emergence of new knowledge structures.

As to the comprehensive treaty, both parties did indeed show renewed interest in such a treaty in the aftermath of the missile crisis. Neither side, however, showed any inclination to compromise on basic positions; agreement on a comprehensive test ban thus moved no closer.[9] This in itself casts doubt upon the idea that the missile crisis led to a general breakthrough in the negotiations, or a general change in the parties' mindsets, given that a comprehensive test ban and the inspection system it required was what the negotiations so far had stranded on.

As to a limited treaty, the United States had proposed such a treaty in 1959, 1961 and in August of 1962, the latter being almost identical to the LTBT, but the offers were rejected by the Soviets. There thus was no change in *US* policy on this issue as a result of the missile crisis; the change of mind that did occur was on the Soviet side. It is possible that Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev's explanation – that Khrushchev's knowledge structures changed as a result of the Cuban missile crisis – is correct. That explanation, however, raises questions far more difficult than the one it answers: Why, having discovered nuclear weapons to be so dreadful, did Khrushchev not compromise on a comprehensive treaty, a step that could really have had an impact? The limited treaty, after all, would allow the arms race to continue almost unabated, and the Soviets moved to accelerate their program of nuclear development in the following years. This observation leads to the essential question of why the arms race continued for another twenty plus years, given that a "shared reality" (238) had now presumably emerged? Knowledge structures, after all, are supposed to be communal and deep-seated, and are thus not well suited as elements of *ad hoc* explanations.

Until Soviet archives are investigated, we will not know for sure why the Soviet leadership changed their minds regarding a limited test ban. Given the caveats pointed out above, however, a more plausible hypothesis than that furthered by Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev can be formulated. It is probable that only in 1963 did the Soviets attain a significant underground testing capacity.[10] Because of this, they could continue testing under the terms of a limited ban, and agreeing to an atmospheric test ban thus no longer implied the risk of the United States increasing their lead in nuclear weapons. This explains why the Soviets no longer resisted a limited treaty. If that is correct, all that was needed for the Soviets to agree to the LTBT in 1963 was a powerful incentive. That incentive was provided by the need to score propaganda points against China in the wake of the full Sino-Soviet split, and the need for some course of action that would both allow continued testing – to reduce or eliminate the US lead in nuclear weapons, which was seen as the main reason for the Soviet humiliation during the Cuban missile crisis – and put an end to nuclear fallout – to cater to the demands of especially neutral countries that the nuclear contamination of the atmosphere be stopped. In other words, given their general world view – which included both

the notion that both capitalist United States and Maoist China constituted threats, and the idea that one key to the ultimate victory of communism was to win the hearts and minds of third world peoples – a limited test ban was now seen by its leaders to be in the interest of the Soviet Union.

The strength of this explanation is that it places the achievement of the LTBT squarely within the general run of Cold War superpower politics, and is consistent with the fact that more substantial arms control and disarmament did not follow. It also makes the LTBT fit in with the subsequent Soviet build-up in nuclear weapons. The treaty was probably seen to provide the best of two worlds; both the public relations scoop of being party to the first nuclear arms control treaty, and the opportunity to catch up with the United States in nuclear weapons technology. The explanation of Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev, meanwhile, presupposes a change in the knowledge structures of Soviet decision makers, which seems to be unfounded given the subsequent development of Soviet policy.

The basic point is that the negotiations 1958-1963 had focused predominantly on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. During these negotiations, inspection was the key issue, and on this there was no progress towards agreement, despite the shock of the Cuban missile crisis. To ensure adherence to a limited test ban, meanwhile, no inspection was necessary. The LTBT thus did not imply a general breakthrough in negotiations, since it did not necessitate intrusive inspection procedures. Moreover, the nuclear powers were allowed to continue their nuclear weapons development through underground testing. Agreeing to the LTBT was thus – once the Soviets had attained an underground testing capacity – a win-win situation for both parties.

The LTBT was certainly a laudable achievement; it ended nuclear fallout and constituted the first arms control agreement of the Cold War. In no way, however, can the treaty be said to have implied a paradigmatic shift in the thinking of Soviet and/or US decision-makers. The treaty was simply in the interest of both parties, that 'interest' being defined by their respective Cold War world views – or pre-understandings, if you will – and taking into account the given geopolitical situation, the perceived demands of the arms race, and the level of technological development – as outlined above.

The version of the test-ban negotiations presented by Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev, then, is incomplete to the point of being misleading.[11] It postulates a breakthrough that did not happen, and a paradigmatic change in knowledge structures which is held up neither by the test-ban negotiations nor by the subsequent development of the Cold War. Wherein lie the roots of this problem? To answer this question, a look at their theoretical starting point is in order.

The cognitive mapping approach to international politics

The essence of the cognitive mapping approach is the substitution of signs for groups of words, thereby indicating general patterns in the way the speaker/writer of the phrases 'mapped' represents reality. These differences in representation are hypothesized to be caused by differences in pre-understanding – general conceptions of how the world works. Two such representation/pre-understanding pairs are

relevant to the Bonham, Parshin and Sergeev's analysis of the test-ban issue.

Processual representation, based on a holistic pre-understanding, holds that "results are the outcomes of processes, and, as such, are vague and often conveyed metaphorically, for example, 'the victory of communism'; 'processes are general'" (224). Individual actors "can 'participate' in a process by making positive contributions to intensify the process or negative contributions to inhibit the process" (224). When coding processual representation, "[a] political or social process is portrayed as a vertical arrow from an *Initial Point*, which might refer to an event or a series of events, such as the October Revolution or the Great Patriotic War, to a *Result*." Influences, positive or negative, are listed alongside the lines, with pluses or minuses added to show whether their influence is intensifying or inhibiting the given process (224).

The 'holistic' pre-understanding is claimed to be typical for, among others, important parts of Russian and Marxist intellectual tradition (218). As to the test-ban negotiations, the authors illustrate how Khrushchev, when discussing the issue, places it in the context of a general process towards peace and general disarmament. This process Khrushchev argues to be furthered by Soviet efforts to lessen international tensions, and hampered by the Western unwillingness to make concessions. Inspection, meanwhile, is not accepted as a relevant issue – it is held to be a decoy employed by the West to prevent agreement; i.e., a negative influence on the process towards peace. Western attempts to establish a causal connection between agreement on an inspection system and agreement on a treaty are rejected.

As to maps constructed from procedural coding – *procedural representation being based on a structural pre-understanding* – "the concepts of an author are described by nodes and the causal links are shown by arrows. An arrow with a plus sign indicates a positive causal link or a quasi-causal relation [...] and an arrow with a minus sign denotes a negative causal link or quasi-causal relation [...] a zero indicates the denial of any causal linkage [...]" (223). This pre-understanding and mode of representation is claimed to be typical of representatives of Western political culture (219); the authors illustrate how president Kennedy represents reality in this way, for example when drawing a causal connection between the Soviet demand for a veto on on-site inspections and the lack of progress towards arms control and disarmament (233).

Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev, however, go further than pointing out these trends; they lend them explanatory power. They argue that because of the differences in Kennedy's and Khrushchev's knowledge structures, pre-understandings, and modes of representation, they were unable to reach agreement on a test ban. In this, they play down the idea of politicians as rational and independent actors, emphasizing instead that policies are determined by cognitive structures so deep-seated that politicians are not even aware of them, far less able to control them.

Significant objections can be raised to the cognitive mapping approach as such, and will be at a later point. For now, however, its basic ideas will be accepted for the sake of argument. Given that the cognitive mapping approach lend differences in modes of representation explanatory power, the litmus test of its value in a given case should be whether the patterns of

speech observed can be shown to have hindered mutual understanding of negotiating positions, which in turn has the potential to hinder the emergence of agreement even where common ground do exist, or – even more profoundly – whether they hinder the emergence of common ground.

Pointing out lingual patterns, in other words, is not sufficient for the cognitive mapping approach to serve the purpose Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev claim that it aspires to. The explanatory power of the cognitive mapping approach rests upon its ability to illustrate a lack of understanding between parties that employ different 'representations' of reality. It must be demonstrated that a person representing reality in a 'processual' manner is unable to comprehend the position of a person representing reality in a 'procedural' manner, and – as a corollary – that one person can only communicate in one mode or the other, not both. If this is not established, the significance of the differences must clearly be downgraded: first, if a lack of understanding is not established, it is hard to see through what mechanisms the lingual patterns impact on negotiation results; second, if the modes of representation are not mutually exclusive, they can not have been absolute barriers to understanding. The lingual patterns would still be of interest, but would not have the explanatory power that the cognitive mapping approach invests them with.

It is not clear that Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev have demonstrated that Khrushchev and Kennedy communicated in only one mode of representation. On the contrary, both Khrushchev and Kennedy are shown to communicate in both modes. As to Khrushchev, the authors themselves note that he employs procedural representation towards the end of the negotiations (238). They hold this to be due to the shock of the Cuban missile crisis, which established new knowledge structures in him. That is conceivable, but the interpretation does raise the question of why Soviet policies – and representations of reality – seem to have been otherwise unaffected. One could solve that paradox by postulating a momentary shock as a result of the Cuban missile crisis, from which Khrushchev later recovered, or by claiming that the Soviet leaders that replaced Khrushchev in 1964 did not share his experience. The problem, however, is that knowledge structures are supposed to be both enduring and communal. The cognitive mapping approach is thus not compatible with *ad hoc*'ery.

More important, Khrushchev had at an earlier point employed something that looks very much like what the authors would term 'procedural representation'. Witness, for example, this extract of his remarks at the Khrushchev-Kennedy summit in Vienna in June 1961:

> *[I]f there is a single chairman of the control commission [...] he will be able to set the policy. [...] The people of the Soviet Union would never accept such a situation and if the United States wants him to be fired then it should pursue this line. [...] Referring to the number of inspections, Mr. Khrushchev said that three inspections a year would be sufficient. A larger number would be tantamount to intelligence, something the Soviet Union cannot accept.*[12]

This seems to be an example of the cause-effect kind of reasoning that Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev argue to be an attribute of procedural representation.[13] To argue that a change in Khrushchev's knowledge structures–as revealed through his capacity to communicate through

different modes of representation–resulted from the Cuban missile crisis, is thus problematic. Other examples abound. As to Kennedy, Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev themselves note that he used processual representation as early as in 1961 (228-9); in other words, that he used the two modes interchangeably.

The idea that there is a unique connection between pre-understanding and mode of representation thus seem to whither away.

Neither do the authors show that different modes of representation can erect insurmountable barriers to understanding. Even given the limited number of sources they utilize, it seems clear that Khrushchev and Kennedy understood each other quite well–more on that below.

A general point should be made here. What the cognitive mapping process is about is converting language into signs, generalizing it in the process in order to illustrate modes of communication rather than the communication of a specific message. In essence, this is a form of translation or transcription.[14] Which, however, unavoidably raises the question of why, if this form of translation/ transcription is possible for researchers, it is not possible for politicians? This basic assumption is unreasonable, and the authors imply as much when observing that Kennedy and Khrushchev, as agreement on the LTBT neared, started 'translating' each other from processual to procedural representation, and vice versa (237-8).

Given that it is possible for one person to communicate in both the procedural and the processual mode of representation, how are the differences between the two modes, and the choice of one or the other in a given situation, to be explained? One possibility is that it is the subject matter under discussion – and what the speaker has to say–that determine mode of representation, and that politicians choose subject matter and mode of representation according to which message they want to communicate. This would imply, for example, that Kennedy and Khrushchev, as they approached common ground, found it in their best interest to represent the others statements in as favorable a light as possible, thus the "translations" observed by Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev. It would also imply that the modes of representation are not necessary reflections of mental structures, but are rather lingual tools employed in the manner that the speaker deems most suited to achieve the object in the pursuit of which he is speaking.

In one example utilized by the authors–Khrushchev states that the West "have chosen the diplomatic approach: without refusing to directly take part in negotiations, they at the same time will not agree to accept concrete proposals on disarmament [...] A complete system has been worked out to prevent the attainment of the goal, to make sure that the problem of disarmament ends in an impasse" (226). According to the alternative understanding of representation introduced above, Khrushchev is very well aware of his mode of representation here. His goal, meanwhile, is not to convey his understanding of the test-ban negotiations, but to make it clear that the Western powers were to blame for their failure. By presenting disarmament as a process whose success is dependent mainly on the parties' good will, he is able to avoid a discussion of the possible merits of the US position on inspection, representing it instead as a mere hindrance to the process of disarmament.

It should be remarked that the statement also illustrates the rather fine line that

separates 'processual' from 'procedural' representation; the last half of the quote could well be seen as an example of cause-effect reasoning. As a general observation, it seems that neither the characteristics of nor actors' use of different modes of representation are nearly as absolute as implied in the cognitive mapping approach.

It is possible, then, to argue that Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev's explanations of the existence and significance of different modes of representation are open to dispute, and moreover serves to confuse rather than clarify the test-ban issue. Which, of course, implies that the existence of pre-understandings and knowledge structures as presupposed by the cognitive mapping approach, is not demonstrated in their analysis.[15]

The "world view" appraoch and the test-ban debates

This is *not* to say that the manner in which Kennedy and Khrushchev viewed the world had no impact upon their approach to the test-ban issue. On the contrary, it is–as illustrated above–probable that their world views were the determining factor regarding Khrushchev's and Kennedy's test-ban policies, as implied in the above narration of the test-ban negotiations. That, however, was because their world views were fundamental in determining how Khrushchev and Kennedy defined the interests of their country, and thus their policies, not because they were unable to communicate or unable to understand each others' positions.

When agreement was reached, moreover, that was because those interests–as a result of certain external developments–converged regarding the prohibition of atmospheric, space, and sub-oceanic nuclear testing. As the subsequent twenty plus years of arms race illustrates rather well, however, the treaty implied no great concession, for either party.

There are two basic differences between the world view approach and the cognitive mapping approach as applied to the test-ban issue. First, the world view approach holds that the cognitive factors that determine policy are deep-seated, to a large extent shared within a community, and only change rather gradually. Single events, even seminal ones like the Cuban missile crisis, only rarely, and not in themselves, have such an impact. In fact, seminal events tend to be interpreted within the framework of the actors' world views. US decision makers, for example, took the Cuban missile crisis as a confirmation that communists were not to be trusted–for example to adhere to an uninspected comprehensive test ban, rather than concluding–as have several historians later–that agreement on nuclear disarmament had to be found at any cost to avoid similar situations.

Policies, however, can change even when world views do not. The point is that world views determine how circumstances are interpreted and policies formed. Thus, if circumstances change, policies can change even if world views remain constant. The point seems obvious, but should not therefore be overlooked. This aspect of the world view approach makes it more useful than the cognitive mapping approach in explaining a conflict like the Cold War, where 40 years of general enmity and widely divergent conceptions of interest must be explained through an approach that also allows for the achievement of a series of limited but quite real agreements.

A second difference is that the world view approach rejects the notion that

language is a function of world views only, and thus that only people sharing world views can communicate efficiently through language. In fact, the world view approach presupposes that language can be used to communicate even when the cultural backgrounds and general outlook of actors differ. It is quite possible for these actors to understand each other's policies, potentially even to understand the world views behind them. That actors are able to understand each other's policies, however, does not necessarily imply that they are willing to make concessions to them.

The third and possibly most fundamental difference seems to be that the terms 'world views' and 'pre-understandings' do not refer to the same phenomena. 'Pre-understandings' are general, almost abstract, ways of ordering the world–for example "development occurs through processes". Because of variations in the way of ordering the world, disagreements on specifics is held to be unavoidable. 'World views', meanwhile, refer to perceptions regarding concrete aspects of the world–for example "US nuclear weapons superiority is a precondition for world peace". Given that decision makers hold different opinions of this kind, and combined with a given set of circumstances, disagreement will sometimes be unavoidable, as in the test-ban negotiations 1958-63.

The cognitive mapping approach seems to be based on a somewhat deterministic view of the workings of the human mind: it presupposes that although all humans hold the potential for both a 'holistic' and a 'structural' pre-understanding, they do not themselves control which one, and thus neither their way of thinking and speaking. The world, accordning to this approach, is ordered either this way or that way. The world view approach, meanwhile, holds that while representatives of different cultures certainly have a tendency to order the world in different ways, they are still able both to order it in other ways at times, and certainly able to comprehend how other actors order the world. Regarding the test-ban negotiations, this is clearly illustrated by the acute intellectual understanding the two parties show of each other's negotiating positions.

A fourth difference is that the world view approach puts far greater emphasis on empirical investigation as a necessary basis for the analysis of concrete events. Two basic flaws in their approach to the empirical aspects of their subject weaken Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev's analysis of the test-ban issue: first, the purpose of all the texts they have chosen to analyze was to communicate and justify a negotiating position, either to the negotiating partner or to the general public[16]–as a result the texts are propagandistic in nature and contain various forms of rationalization for policies, rather than elaborations on the basic issues or the actual rationales behind policies;[17] as to their approach to the texts, the authors seem satisfied to demonstrate that Khrushchev and Kennedy employ different modes of representation at any given time, and seem to regard those demonstrations in and of themselves to have explanatory power–their approach thus takes for granted the validity of aspects of the very theory they should be testing.

The history of the nuclear test-ban negotiations is certainly open to various interpretations, and much of what has been written is open to contention. A study of one or two basic works, however, for example a cursory reading of Glen Seaborg's *Kennedy, Khrushchev and the*

Test Ban–which is listed in the bibliography–and Robert Divine's *Blowin' on the Wind*–which is not, would have indicated to Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev that their understanding of the test-ban issue is in need of elaboration, and that many of their conclusions stand in stark contrast both to established interpretations and to any reasonable interpretation of easily available empirical evidence. That realization could conceivably have led them to make a more thorough investigation of available sources, engage the available historiography, and, presumably, reflect over the implications this would have for the validity of their thesis and their theory.

To sharpen the argument against the cognitive mapping approach, the approach seems to tend towards both determinism and *ad hoc*'ery: determinism in the sense that deep-seated mental structures are held to explain all aspects of political behavior; *ad hoc*'ery in the sense that all that the authors have to do to explain actions that do not fit with those knowledge structures, is to postulate a change in them. The only evidence of the existence of these knowledge structures, meanwhile, is lingual practices which at closer scrutiny seem to vary independently of the knowledge structures of which they are argued to be symptoms. In this sense, the explanation that the cognitive mapping approach generates regarding the test-ban negotiations is circular: agreement is held to be impossible because of divergent knowledge structures; then there is agreement, and a change in knowledge structures is postulated to explain it; the only concrete evidence of that change in knowledge structures, however, is the very event that the authors wanted to explain in the first place.

Conclusion

For a theoretical approach to be useful, it should, as a minimum, add to the general understanding of the subject it is applied to. It is unclear whether the cognitive mapping approach as presented by Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev has the potential to do so on any subject. It is quite clear that the insights it yields regarding the test-ban issue in the early 1960s are unsustainable.

As applied in the article analyzed above, the process of cognitive mapping bear more resemblance to transcription or translation than analysis, and fails to illustrate the one point that would lend it explanatory power: that differences in pre-understandings and modes of representation precluded mutual understanding and thus agreement. Even given the limited collection of texts analyzed by Bonham, Parshin and Sergeev, it seems clear that the problem during the comprehensive test-ban negotiations were not a lack of understanding, but a lack of common interest. As to the LTBT, it was caused not by changes in pre-understanding, but by a convergence of interests. Interests were in both cases defined in the nexus between actors' world views and their evaluation of the given circumstances.

The difference between the cognitive mapping approach as applied to the test-ban issue by Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev, and the world view approach advocated by this author, can be summarized as follows: According to the cognitive mapping approach, different cultural or sub cultural groups have different pre-understandings of the world. Resulting from this, they also represent reality in different and often incompatible ways. This tends to hinder

agreement in international negotiations. For agreements to be reached, new knowledge structures must thus emerge – the parties must construct "a shared discursive space [...] a shared reality" (238). Unless such a shared reality emerges, meaningful communication–not to mention agreement–is impossible. These factors are discovered through the analysis of texts, and it is the structure of the texts–not their content–that reveal the true nature of things.

The world view approach, meanwhile, holds that different perceptions of reality is most certainly an important factor in determining how actors form interests. Hypothetically, different perceptions of the world may hinder agreement where room for agreement–for the 'uninterested observer'–may seem to exist. However, the world view approach also accepts that people holding different worlds views are able to communicate through language, and do at times come to agreement, even when no change in either party's world view has taken place, because interests–as the actors define them–sometimes do converge as a result of developments exogenous to–and in spite of differences in–world views. This openness to changing circumstances and emphasis on empirical investigation lends the world view approach a flexibility, and an ability to explain incremental changes in policy, that the cognitive mapping approach lacks.

As to the test-ban negotiations 1958-1963, it seems that a theoretical approach emphasizing the importance of actors' world views as well as their interaction with other factors in determining actors' interests, paints a picture which both gives a better fit with the empirical evidence than does the cognitive mapping approach and–as opposed to the conclusions of Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev–places the test-ban negotiations squarely within the general development of the Cold War.

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Notes

[1]*International Studies Quarterly* (1997) 41, 215-240.

[2]The 'world view' approach does not constitute one coherent theoretical school. Contributions that lend important insights as to the importance of world views to decision making abound, however. See for example: Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton 1976); several of the contributions to Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge 1991); Edward Rhodes, "Do Bureaucratic Politics Matter? Some Disconfirming Findings from the Case of the US Navy", *World Politics*, vol 47, no 1 (October 1994); and Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (London 1993).

[3]See for example: Bonham, G.M., and M.J. Shapiro (1988) *Cooperative Research on International Negotiation and Cognitive Process.* Final Technical Report to the National Science Foundation (Grant no. INF-8413271). For further titles, see their bibliography, Bonham et al., pp 239-240.

[4]For detailed narratives of the test-ban negotiations, see: Robert Divine, *Blowin' on the Wind: The Nuclear Test Ban Debates 1954-1960* (New York 1978); Glenn Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev and the Test Ban*, (Berkely 1981); Kendrick Oliver, *Kennedy, Macmillan and the Test Ban Debates, 1961-1963* (London 1998).

[5]For a nuanced outline of the technicalities of test-ban inspection and the ebb and flow of negotiations over on-site inspection, see: Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev...*

[6]'Uninhibited' should be read as 'uninhibited within a given geographical area, the location of which was to be determined by seismic investigation'.

[7]See: Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev....* As to the general Soviet mentality, see for example: Vladimir Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (London 1996).

[8]For extreme versions, see: Geir Lundestad, *Øst, Vest, Nord, Sør* [East, West, North, South] (Oslo 1996) 86-7; Michael Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Question: The United States and Nuclear Weapons, 1946-1967* (Cambridge 1976), 167, 179; *The Making of America's Soviet Policy* (New Haven 1984), ed. Joseph Nye, 'Congress', I.M. Destler, 56; John Ranelagh, *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA* (New York 1987). For more moderate versions, see: *Nuclear Rivalry and International Order* (London 1995), eds. Olav Njølstad/Jørn Gjeldstad, John Lewis Gaddis, 'Nuclear Weapons and Cold War History', 49; Herken, *Cardinal Choices*, 140; Reeves, *President Kennedy*, 439; Glenn Seaborg with Benjamin S. Loeb, 'Approaching a Comprehensive Test Ban: A United States Historical Perspective', *Disarmament: A periodic review by the United Nations*, xvi (1993), 37. In addition to this, Robert Divine in the epilogue of his thorough study of the test-ban issue during the Eisenhower years refers to the Cuban missile crisis as the main explanatory factor for why the LTBT was signed (Divine, Blowing. 323).

[9]Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev argues that the Soviets "renewed interest in a test ban was reflected at the bargaining table in a series of Soviet concessions on the control issue" (221). That is at best disputable, see: memorandum of conversation on nuclear testing, 9 January 1963, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, volume vii, Arms Control and Disarmament, p 628-9; memorandum of conversation on nuclear testing, 10 January, 1963, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, volume vii, Arms Control and Disarmament, 630; premier Khrushchev letter to president Kennedy, 8 May 1963, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, volume vii, Arms Control and Disarmament 696-8.

[10]Boston, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Papers of President Kennedy, National Security Files, Dept./Agn. Series, points to be covered in preparation of forthcoming July 15 mission of Governor Harriman to Moscow, 6.20.63, boxes 268-270, folder prep-Harriman trip to Moscow, pt III.

[11]See for example the section termed "The Limited Test-Ban Negotiations" (220-22), which

deals with the negotiations at large, and contains no elaboration on inspection and the distinction between a limited and a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

[12]Memorandum of Conversation, meeting between The President and Chairman Khrushchev in Vienna, June 4, 1961, Boston, John F. Kennedy Library, Papers of President Kennedy, Presidential Office Files, Countries box 126, folder USSR-Vienna meeting, Memos of conversations (1), 7.

[13]The statements are taken from a US summary of the talks, but there is little reason to think that it is not accurate, as the summary was classified 'secret', and moreover was probably to be used for internal deliberations later, in which case accuracy would be paramount.

[14]The authors imply this point themselves; that intercoder reproducibility can be achieved in the mapping process (224-5), illustrates clearly the fact that language has a quite specific meaning, and that phrases can be categorized according to this meaning.

[15]It could be argued, of course, that differences in 'pre-understanding' hinder the emergence of common ground, quite apart from the lingual variations postulated to result from the pre-understandings. It is also possible to argue that while the differences of modes of representation do not erect insurmountable barriers to understanding, they can still lead to misunderstandings. Neither seems to be the argument of Bonham, Parshin, and Sergeev, however. Moreover, the viability of either argument would have to be demonstrated–they cannot be postulated.

[16]According to the authors, they have analyzed the following texts: Radio-television address by President Kennedy on the Vienna meeting, 6 June 1961; radio-television address by Premier Khrushchev on the Vienna meeting, 15 June 1961; United States note to the Soviet Union regarding the nuclear test-ban negotiations, 17 June 1961; Soviet note to the United States regarding the nuclear test-ban negotiations, 5 July 1961; statement by Premier Khrushchev regarding the proposed ban on atmospheric tests, 9 September 1961; statements by President Kennedy on nuclear tests, 2 November 1961; letter from Premier Khrushchev to President Kennedy, 19 December 1962; letter from President Kennedy to Premier Khrushchev, 28 December 1962; address by President Kennedy at The American University, 10 June 1963; interview of Premier Khrushchev with *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* editors, 15 June 1963; statement by Premier Khrushchev at Berlin, 2 July 1963; radio-television address by President Kennedy, 26 July 1963; and interview of Premier Khrushchev with *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* correspondents, 27 July 1963.

[17]Not one of the texts chosen by Bonham, Sergeev, and Parshin are from intra-administration discussions, even though such material is easily available on the US side. This makes it hard to figure out what constituted the essence of the two parties' negotiating positions. For such sources, see for example: *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, volume VII, Arms Control and Disarmament; and the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Collection* and *The Nuclear History Project* at the National Security Archives (located at the Gelman Library, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.).

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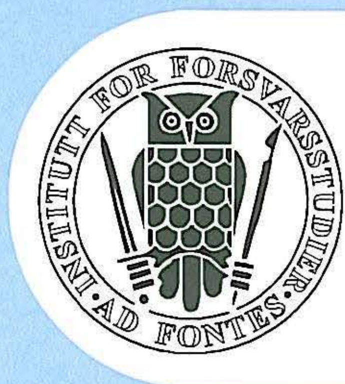


Institutt for forsvarsstudier
Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies

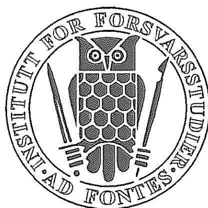
IFS Info 1/2003

Per Fr. I. Pharo

Institutt for forsvarsstudier
Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies

Oslo mil/Akershus
N-0015 OSLO
Norway

Tlf: +47 23 09 31 05
Fax: +47 23 09 33 79



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