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Respect, Restorative Justice and the Oslo 1993 Talks

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## Respect, Restorative Justice and the Oslo 1993 Talks

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#### **Abstract**

Does respect have any value – substantive or instrumental – in international relations? This paper posits that it does. It examines the role and significance of respect by using the context of mediation. It argues that respect, conceptually and practically, has significant influence on conflict parties when they are willing, and have decided to end their violent confrontations. By employing qualitative methods (process tracing, qualitative content analysis) a taxonomy of respect is provided, explicating its role and significance. Empirical support for this is provided by the 1993 Israeli/Palestinian Oslo Talks. Subsequently, it heuristically builds on recent debate on the value of respect

"Respect comes in two unchangeable steps: Giving it and receiving it."

— Edmond Mbiaka

Respect plays an ubiquitous role in daily life. Its ubiquity is also being debated in political science, particularly the field of international relations, albeit not to a degree that parallels its ubiquitous presence in foreign policy decisions. Admittedly, most decisions are largely determined by economic and military interests, the success of such ventures like the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

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(NATO) provide strong evidence for these interests. However, it is worth considering the nature and the conditions of the deliberations and negotiations that produced these ventures. Leaders of the various States seeking better or stronger ties, inevitably have to court one another with respectful behavior. Basically, they have to give respect and they also expect to receive it. Notwithstanding, there are other scenarios, which show disrespectful behavior. For example the hostile rhetoric between US-Iran displayed allegations from each side as lacking of mutual understanding and respect (The Economist 2009; Wolf 2010, p. 2). The challenge with understanding respect (or disrespect) in international relations lies in the ability to identify and measure its manifestations. This essay operationalizes this ability with the Oslo 1993 Israeli-Palestinian peace process, specifically the Oslo Talks that that preceded the 1993 Peace Agreement and Signing. The Oslo Talks are particularly apt for "analyzing the ways respect is secured or lost...[as well as]...the benefits of mutual respect and the risks inherent in acts of disrespect" (Wolf 2008, p. 29). According to authoritative accounts there was an "Oslo Spirit" that guided the negotiations, which subsequently contributed to the 1993 Agreement (Corbin 1994; Lundberg 1996, pp. 3–31; Savir 1998, p. 11). Through the conceptual framework of restorative justice (RJ); a qualitative content analysis method (Schreier 2012); a working definition of respect (Wolf 2011); instances of respect (and disrespect) are identified. Furthermore, RJ and its idea of respectful engagement is used to explain the ubiquity of respect and it presence in policy decisions.

In different situational contexts of conflict, and efforts at its resolution, it is not uncommon to learn of parties remaining entrenched in their positions due to perceived acts of disrespect. Studies of conflicts in criminal justice (Maxwell and Morris 2001; Umbreit 1988; Umbreit et. al 2005; 2007), community planning (Ball, Caldwell, and Pranis 2010), or public disputes (Susskind and Cruikshank 1987, pp. 89-93; Cormick et. al 1996) reveal opposing parties as largely frustrated and marginalized with the resolution processes in which they participate. Arguably, they do not experience respect. In RJ contexts words like acknowledgement, apology, restoration, and honor have distant relations with the concept of respect. These words, in concept, often suggest attempts of mobilizing emotions from previously negative states to more positive ones. Restorative justice approaches and their advocates argue that RJ, with its values-laden principles, offers a remedy to prevailing resolution processes in the criminal justice contexts (Pranis Stuart and Wedge 2003; Sherman and Strang 2007; Umbreit et. al 2007) and possibly beyond (Braithwaite 2002; McEvoy and Newburn 2003). In considering the relevance of RJ to contexts beyond the criminal justice system, this research identified international conflict resolution practices, particularly mediation, as a context where the values-laden principles of RJ could be beneficial. Furthermore, these principles coalesce around the concept of respect. Zehr – a leading proponent - argues that because RJ focuses on promoting participation and

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Anecdotal illustrations from mediator accounts allude to these claims (Jukić 2014; Peuraca 2014; Weiss 2014).

engagement, its approach is subsequently respect-based (2002, pp. 24–36). Accordingly, he argues *respect* is a one-word summary of RJ. A model of RJ particularly suited for international conflict resolution is the peacemaking circle (PMC). More than any other model, the PMC has design elements which structure the space and interactions within it, inclining participants to engage in respectful behavior. It is these design elements that make it a useful theoretical and methodical map in identifying the instances of respect in the Oslo Talks. It is also these elements that make it easier to observe perceived acts of disrespect and address them.

Employing the PMC model as quasi-evaluative tool for the Oslo Talks can also provide the basis for understanding the relevance of RJ philosophy and practice to international relations. German political scientist, Reinhard Wolf, offers a working definition of respect that operationalizes the relevance of RJ. According to Wolf (2011), respect in social contexts – and arguably, the social international context – is "an attitude we expect others to show us by the way they treat us" (p. 112). Within the Circle model, a critical part of initiating and implementing its process is, indeed, how participants treat each other. "[R]espect has to manifest itself in behavior towards us" and "adequate consideration" of what such behavior should be was better facilitated through Circle (Pranis 2014; Wolf 2011, pp. 112-13). It employs its (circular-)physical and aesthetic structure to condition dialogue and interaction within its circular frame. For example, within Circle, participants discuss expectations through the Guidelines phase – which serve to communicate the attitude in which all participants want to be treated. Discussion of expectations and adherence to said expectations is certainly one facet of identifying presence of respectful interactions. And respectful interactions, if maintained can communicate, to oneself, attitudes expected of and by others. It is, however, important to delineate respect, in a given context, from polite behavior. For instance, most actors in conflict situations would argue that they are generally polite individuals, but are choosing to be disrespectful in a given conflict-ridden situation in order to assert forms of power over the Other or dissatisfaction with the situation. Subsequently, Wolf qualifies his definition with six dimensions in which international actors "seek adequate consideration" while striving for respect (Ibid). They are displayed in Table 1, alongside the elements of the PMC. Here PMC is more than a quasi-evaluative tool, it is also a respect provider uncovering the pathways to respect and disrespect. Thus, if these actors choose to show continuous positive treatment<sup>2</sup> to the Other, it communicates an affirmation, of varied implications,<sup>3</sup> for the Other, which can often lay the groundwork for future cooperative behavior in that given context.

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This is linked with adequate consideration, as the One who is striving for respect must deem such treatment adequate – undeniably this is subjective (Wolf 2011, pp. 113–14). As noted, Circle is used to measure this adequate consideration, while Wolf's recommendation (p. 114, para. 1) on respect impact is highlighted by 'Respect' discussion (part III) that contrasts Madrid/Washington Talks with Oslo.

Wolf argues that while respectful treatment might have its benefits, unintended consequences such as disadvantageous effects on foreign and domestic policies of the state engaging in respect (2011, p. 135, cf. Kelman 2008, p. 178).

TABLE 1: Respect Dimensions and Providers

Wolf Respect Dimensions	RJ-PMC Respect Providers	Oslo Excerpts
Physical Presence	Keeper/Facilitator; Ceremony; Guidelines	We all tried to break the ice by showing friend- ship we had for each other and recalling memo- ries of our previous meetings. This seemed to relax Savir somewhathe took out his notes and we all settled down to listen to his opening statement. -> Addressed by Ceremony; Guidelines
Social Importance	Keeper/Facilitator; Ceremony	{Larsen} intended to take the Israeli to meet Abu Ala first, in order to establish the Palestinian's stature within the channel Larsen was concerned that Abu Ala show Savir his warm, charming and intelligent side – not spout the old-style PLO propaganda, which he was quite capable of doing. Larsen wanted Abu Ala to like Savir, and to be liked in return.  — > Addressed by Keeper/Facilitator; Ceremony
Ideas & Values	Guidelines; Balance/Medicine Wheel	Then Abu Ala, in his typical, rather formal, style, launched the proceedings with a carefully prepared speech in Arabic. Hirschfield understood a fair bit of Arabic and listened attentively to the words and then to the English translation provided by Maher  -> Addressed by Guidelines
Physical Needs & Interests	Keeper/Facilitator; Guidelines	Only a few days laterwe returned once more to OsloWe had all become anxious about the lax attitude to confidentiality shown at the last roundso this time both sides had told the Norwegians we needed a more isolated location. Larsen had done his homework  -> Addressed by Keeper/Facilitator
Achievements, Efforts, Qualities & Virtues	Keeper/Facilitator; Storytelling; Balance/Medicine Wheel	It's necessary for the negotiations that I regard you as my enemy. But in another situation we would be friends. We will always have our differences but now I know our struggle in the future will be a struggle undertaken together.  -> Addressed by Storytelling
Rights	Keeper/Facilitator; Ceremony; Guidelines; Balance/Medicine Wheel	Don't you realize that if you go on like this you'll be destined to be occupiers for evermore and we will have to continue the struggle against you! After his outburst there was silence.  -> Addressed by Guidelines

This given context is when parties have consented to resolve their conflict through third-party assistance, particularly mediation, like in the Oslo Talks. Such delineation of context allows for a unique analysis where PMC elements, 4 capturing instances of respectful behavior, can identify how the introduction of respectful attitudes facilitated and sustained successful pathways to the Oslo Accord. Presumably, objections or questions on the feasibility or relevance of juxtaposing RJ within international mediation may arise, which is why a brief note on sources and methods is beneficial. On objections, the opening paragraphs argue that respect is the convergent variable of study, thus, the question how it was studied arises. Firstly, after the identification of Oslo by a "theoryoriented process tracing" method (George and Bennett 2005, pp. 206, 211), an in-depth qualitative content analysis (QCA) informed by "a very systematic" segmentation and coding method was used (Schreier 2012, pp. vii). This is very useful when engaged with large amounts of convertible-to-texts forms of data (Schreier 2012, ch. 1). The data sources were based on specific accounts which document private exchanges of key actors - Palestinians, Israelis, and Norwegians - who were present and interacting as the Group charged with creating the 1993 Oslo Accord. Focus is exclusively on the negotiations that happened in Norway, as these provide a concrete basis on which to observe instances of respect. This is provided by five key autobiographical and biographical accounts<sup>5</sup> due to their first-hand documentations, as well as other supporting sources which include academic journal articles, journalistic essays, public speeches, an American Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) documentary and other public accounts. No new private documents were uncovered, however, a biographical account, by the Palestinian chief negotiator Ahmed Qurei, a more recent source, is largely missing from previous analyses of the Talks. <sup>6</sup> The prevailing analysis of these sources is that the Talks produced an exceptionally-sincere, though surprising, camaraderie amongst the actors. There are, however, some analyses that question this sincerity. One, in particular, by Norwegian Historian Hilde Henriksen Waage highlights a disturbing issue about specific, classified files detailing key periods, May to August, of the Talks (Waage 2008). Waage argues that these missing files demonstrate how Norway was less a facilitator-mediator and more a manipulator-mediator in favor of the Israelis. Important it may be, concerns over the sincerity of the camaraderie appear misplaced, especially as the Palestinian autobiographical accounts provide effusive praise for the Norwegians. These sources produced a reconstructed 36-page transcript – with all verbal and physical interactions between the Israelis, Palestinians

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These were modified from the structural and relational elements of the Circle (Pranis, Stuart, and Wedge 2003, ch. 3; Pranis 2005, ch. 6; Ball, Caldwell and Pranis 2010, pp. 100-2). A Coding Frame used with the qualitative content analysis (QCA) outlined by German empirical methods scientist, Margit Schreier, was used for data analysis and interpretation (2012). The Coding Frame is available upon request.

These, briefly, are: Gaza First (arguably the Norwegian perspective), The Process and Making Peace (from Israeli), From Oslo to Jerusalem and Through Secret Channels (Palestinian).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> For example the 1997 Special Issue on the Oslo Talks of *International Negotiation*, volume 2, did not use this account.

and Norwegians – analyzed with QCA through MAXQDA software. It is from these sources that respect is identified, along with a critical finding: respect precedes trust.

The dominant focus in international conflict resolution, especially within the study of micro-processes, is trust (Fisher 1990; Kelman 1997; 2005; 2007; Booth and Wheeler 2007). For instance, Zartman - whose Ripeness concept is the prevailing theory in mediation - concedes that ripeness could only explain the onset of the Talks, and not its outcome (1997). He offers the explanation of a "constructed process" initiated through a "central element (but not an overarching formula)" providing perceived and concrete reciprocity which manages the differences in negotiations (p. 200). Zartman uses the language of "working trust," another popular concept developed by Kelman (1997, 2005). However, right within Zartman's explanation: "in which each concession both responds to and calls for concessions from the other side, until the 'space' of the agreement is covered and the two "piles" of concessions are equalized;" also lays another micro process (p. 200). Although Zartman uses language of concessions, it readily becomes apparent that the actors are seeking, what Wolf will argue as, "adequate consideration" or respect for presence, importance, needs, achievements, and rights, five of the six prerequisites of Wolf's respect dimensions (2011, p.112). This is not to invalidate the importance of trust, and the excellent research available (Seligman 1977; Axelrod 1984; Hardin 2002), it is, however, to outline the space between "emergence of new ideas and the development of mutual trust" as the space of "reassurance and encouragement" (Kelman 1997, p. 192, emph. added). In other words, respect. The first of its kind, this essay's use of qualitative methods guided by RJ philosophy provides yet another contribution to the Oslo case – which is something of an outlier – by highlighting the significance of respect.

The sections that follow describe the background of the formation and characteristics of the Oslo Talks while providing an explicative respect analysis (I). The Talks are then compared with the RJ-PMC process, demonstrating that – though an episode of international mediation – the Oslo Talks were invariably a restorative process (II). Finally, I discuss the significance of respect (III) and conclude with some brief recommendations.

### It was called the "Oslo Spirit" (I)

Many have written about the chemistry, <sup>7</sup> if you will, of the political actors who produced the historic 1993 agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, <sup>8</sup> also known as the Oslo-Israeli/Palestinian Accords of 1993. Many have also attributed this chemistry as the problem that produced an incompetent agreement. There are merits

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> This term, used in the widely-acknowledged account of Jane Corbin (*Gaza First*), refers to solidarity that was achieved between the actors in Oslo. Informal it may be, it does convey the unexpected positive and constructive behaviors of the actors.

See Lundberg 1996 for a simplified account of the Accord.

to the arguments of both camps; however, the merits or non-merits of the Accord are not the focus of this section, but chemistry itself. This chemistry can also be described as the prevailing conditions of the Oslo Talks, something also referred to as an "Oslo Spirit" (Corbin 1994, p. 100). In the words of Uri Savir, one of two chief negotiators for Israel, the Oslo Spirit was a group of "people...charged with crafting the agreements and, in the course of doing so, developed new and surprising relationships" (Savir 1998, p. x). And the many who have written on Oslo's process always have this Oslo Spirit with which to contend, regardless of the conclusions drawn. Few, however, are yet to systemically examine how the "new and surprising relationships" were "developed," and how this development affected the process of "crafting the agreements." This section's proposal is an examination of the how through the concept of respect. By focusing on Oslo's background and the profiles of its actors, in Oslo, it will become more apparent how forms of adequate consideration for all involved were integral to developing the Oslo Spirit.

## **Background of the Spirit**

The Norwegians, through Terje Rød-Larsen and Mona Juul spearheaded the Talks. David Makovsky, a Jerusalem Post reporter, describes their efforts in the following way:

The role of this Norwegian husband-and-wife team as backchannel facilitators cannot be overstated. They devoted at least a year to the Israel-PLO talks and were largely responsible for holding the Oslo channel together. On the most basic level, they ensured that the talks were discrete and the atmosphere amiable and offered continuous encouragement to both sides (1996, p. 22).

Their sincere devotion set the background of respect for the talks – something all Oslo actors would acknowledge. With insights from Circle, I shall outline three ways the Larsen-Juul approach developed an Oslo Spirit of respect. Starting with the first Oslo Encounter in January, a respect-as-modeling-behavior through "personal charm and warmth and the all-important physical details" (Corbin 1994, p. 48; Pranis 2014). Larsen, more so than Juul, introduced a personal and informal element to the Talks. He achieved this by letting the parties know that "nothing was ever too much to ask of him" (Ibid.). Sources claim that it was Larsen's intellectual curiosity and his insider network, built through field research in the Occupied Territories, that made him focus his role on simply building "a feeling of trust and even relaxation by getting to know the individuals and helping them to know each other" (Ibid). However, before trust is built, there is a transitory period where parties – either in conflict or just ordinary situations – have to decide to trust each other. This transitory period often has a respect dimension, where individuals or groups interacting with each other are carefully watching and observing the attitudes portrayed and communicated to determine if they are respectful or disrespectful. An example of this transition is observed in Abu Ala's January arrival, from two perspectives:

[A] furious Abu Ala threatened to go straight home. Larsen was solicitous and conciliatory. He explained that in order to maintain strict secrecy they could not be

given any special treatment ... It was a humbling experience for Abu Ala, a man who sets great store by rank and expects to be accorded proper respect. He had visited Norway several times before, but always officially, with red carpet treatment. Abu Ala was not convinced that Larsen's approach was the best way to handle things but decided to keep his criticisms to himself for the time being – after all, he reflected, the Norwegians were just learning the business of international negotiations. (Corbin's interpretation, pp. 43–44)

We had assumed that our hosts had made suitable arrangements and that entry permits would be waiting for us. In the event, chaos reigned! ... [Larsen] expressed his regrets with all the kindness and politeness he could muster, explaining that what had happened was the inevitable result of the need for complete secrecy. I accepted his apology... [W]e indicated our willingness to get down to business, and so did the Israelis. This improved atmosphere, after the bad start at the airport, as also did the efforts of the Norwegians to generate a congenial atmosphere, and a more amicable spirit began to emerge... (Qurei's perspective, pp. 54–55, 57).

Observably, Qurei, also known as Abu Ala, had become upset by what he judged as an unsuitable way of handling the Palestinian delegation's first visit. Exasperated after hours of waiting and what he judged as unbecoming of his status, Abu Ala threatened to return to Tunis (Qurei 2008, p. 55). He reluctantly changed his mind in large part to Larsen's overt mollifications. This snapshot represents the "short-term dynamic effects of respectful behavior" following an instance of perceived disrespect (Wolf 2011, p. 114). It is also a source of respect, and not of trust. First, Abu Ala felt, and showed, his experience of disrespect over the Immigration issue. But it was swiftly met by a "solicitous and conciliatory" attitude from Larsen. Then Abu Ala, reluctantly appeared, reconsidered his emotional outburst and decision to leave. Larsen's attitude modeled a respectful stance that Abu was inclined to follow. At this initial juncture - even before the Talks could start - trust is yet to be established. What, however, is being established (or deepened, see part II) is respect. Larsen modeled the (respectful) consideration that mediated Abu Ala's negative emotional reaction to a more positive one, even if it appeared reluctant. Furthermore, Abu Ala acknowledged to feeling better mollified through continuous acts of consideration by the Norwegians and even by the Israelis that night, before their meeting the next day. The Oslo Talks continued to feature instances where Larsen's modeling-behavior became a dominant attitude taken-up by those present. 9 The respect-as-modeling-behavior functions to push conflict actors towards being constructive (or destructive). As one of QCA-coded categories, it demonstrates a critical pathway to building trust, wherein a mediator's intentional attitude of respect towards conflict actors induces cooperative behavior or the very least compliance. It also reveals the importance of a mediator that can serve as a facilitator, a role quite similar to the PMC's Circle Keeper.

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One of which is Larsen's oft recommendation that the conflict parties take walks together. One of these was between two actors, Hassan Asfour and Joel Singer, who reportedly clashed bitterly. Depiction from these sources (Corbin and Savir) is a clear indication of how respectful behaviors can be modeled, even for enemies.

Second, the Larsen-Juul approach involved a respect-as-balance element. Here the use of balance is two-fold. One aspect is consideration of tangible tactics that will mitigate extremism or inflexibility; and the other is the intangible tactic of balancing treatment<sup>10</sup> of both parties. Larsen's preliminary assessment was that the politics of the public and international negotiations in Washington D.C. were forcing each side, especially the Palestinians to retain an inflexibility that was detrimental to the progress of negotiations. He judged the public scrutiny of Washington played a destructive, rather than productive role, causing "sterile posturing and formulaic insults" (Corbin 1994, p. 39). In attempt to balance these extremist tendencies, Larsen provided sequestered and unassuming locations which were particularly instrumental in focusing the attention of the conflict parties on being constructive (Kelman 1997, p. 190). Both Israelis and Palestinians were particularly appreciative of the efforts the Norwegians undertook, as it communicated a level of significance the Talks could have. More importantly, though, the balance served to create conditions for more respectful interactions to occur. That is, by eliminating the high stakes factor of public scrutiny which was also inducing disrespectful behavior in DC, the Norwegians balanced it with privacy resulting in a lessened need for disrespectful posturing. The function of this pathway is captured by Uri Savir and Abu Ala's exchanges in their first encounter together. A brief snapshot is below:

[Abu Ala:] where are you from? [Savir replies:] Jerusalem, [Ala countering:] So am I. Where is your father from? [Savir:] He was born in Germany. [Ala:] Mine was born in Jerusalem and still lives there. [Savir, angrily:] Why don't you ask about my grandfathers and their forebears? We could go back to King David ...I'm sure we can debate the past for years and never agree. Let's see if we can agree about the future. [Ala mumbling:] Fine. We had arrived at our first understanding. Never again would we argue about the past. This was an important step, for it moved us beyond an endless wrangle over right and wrong. (Savir 1998, pp. 14–15, emp. added).

[From Oslo] I quickly agreed to his suggestion, in order to return to the subject that we had to come to Norway to discuss. I felt that if we continued to speak in this vein at this point, we could have destroyed any chance of trust between us... (Qurei 2008, p. 147, emp. added).

This snapshot follows opening statements, posturing, by both sides, an attempt to assert power by both actors. In DC, this interaction would have escalated. In Oslo, balanced with an "atmosphere of privacy," <sup>11</sup> a source of respectful consideration for the Talks, both actors redirected their emotions towards constructive behavior. In separate preparatory talks with both men, Larsen had "attempt[ed] to shatter

Most mediators, including those interviewed for this project, highlight this key issue of balancing treatment of the conflict parties. However, the prevailing language is fairness, equality or "treating them the same," as opposed being neutral (See Cobb and Riftkin 1991 on Neutrality).

This echoes the quiet diplomacy of former UN Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjöld. He had a "belief in personal talks...an atmosphere of privacy...protected from public debate...[a] show [of] personal integrity and honesty in...demands as well as empathy for the other and desire to save the latter's face when it came to solutions" (Marin 2010, p. 40 cf. Fröhlich 2002).

stereotypes" (Savir 1998, p. 11). He hoped the private sphere and his unconventional approach might induce respectful behavior between both principals. It appeared to work. The other aspect of this respect-as-balance approach was implemented in preplanned Norwegian protocols for hosting the two sides. These were "ground rules ... each group would be treated with scrupulous equality regarding accommodation and even who would meet and accompany them between the airport and their destination. ... [The Norwegians] would swap drivers so that neither side would feel it was somehow less important" (Corbin 1994, p. 58). This balance in treatment would serve to eliminate further psychological stumbling blocks the parties would carry into the negotiations. For instance in the Washington Talks the Palestinians – even as they acquiesced to US demands - continued to protest that the balance was largely in favor of the Israelis. Noticeably, the Palestinian Spokesperson for the Washington Talks, Hannan Ashrawi, succinctly made this point as well (see Wanis-St. John 2001, p. 128, quoting Ashrawi). They chose to block the talks due to the disrespect they experienced with the Israelis and the Americans. In Oslo, although there were occasional negative outbursts of imbalance, it did little to block the Talks, as the Norwegians had established a respectful balanced treatment in earlier rounds between both sides.

Thirdly, the Larsen-Juul approach featured a respect-as-shared <sup>13</sup> -experience element. Similar to the balance pathway, it is two-fold: joint engagement and mutual engagement. From the first Encounter the actors, particularly the Palestinians and Israelis, undertook acts together (joint engagement) in a manner that very much suggests norm-abidance highlighting experiences of respect (or disrespect in non-valuing). For example, one of the strongly-encouraged ground rules – proposed by the Norwegians – was that everyone would eat together, go on walks together, and share the same accommodation. While this was not strictly followed, it did happen more times than not, producing experiences of respect with each side communicating adequate consideration. Arguably, conflict actors are particularly sensitive to norm-abidance or none by the Other, as it may signal trustworthiness – allowing for the development of trust (Hardin 2002, ch. 2). In selectively-given contexts, like Oslo, shared experience of any kind allows each side to assess trustworthiness and credibility. And a key way to make this assessment is a willingness to respect the Other –

Balance is a more suitable term as equality might incorrectly suggest that conflict parties always need or desire to be treated as equals by their third-parties. Wolf would argue that it is more important to the weaker party to be treated fairly or in a balanced way which still conveys respect. Of course this was a tricky issue particularly with the Palestinians (see Savir 1998, pp. 14-15, 46; Ibid at fn. 9).

In Circle, the concept of "shared" or "sharing" refers to a given context where participants jointly engage in acts wherein they may <u>or</u> may not experience reciprocity (Pranis, Stuart and Wedge 2003, pp. 37-39; Pranis 2014). For example, a key joint engagement act in Circle is the creation of guidelines governing behavior (Pranis, Stuart and Wedge 2003, pp. 103-15; Boyes-Watson 2008, pp. 114-122). While the Storytelling phase, more salient for instances of reciprocity, is a <u>mutual</u> engagement act (Pranis, Stuart and Wedge 2003, pp. 137-40; Boyes-Watson 2008, pp. 104-8; Pranis 2014).

something previously unexperienced by the conflict actors. Akin to a continuum, the joint and mutual engagement oscillates through guidelines (valuing or non-valuing). See Figure 1. Moving from joint to mutual engagement, acts undertaken together either strengthen or weaken the experiences of respect. For instance, Encounter 1 noticeably revealed a "listened attentively," act while Encounter 5 – upon Israeli official upgrade – also reveals "duly" during Rounds of deliberation (Corbin 1994, p. 46; Savir 1998, p. 12). Both acts occurred during instances of shared experience – particularly during joint engagement. Listening attentively is viewed as an imported act, while the word duly meaning 'as expected.' They, and others like them, suggest that these actors did have expectations of how they felt they should be treated by the Other.

Furthermore, in this move towards mutual engagement is the sharing of personal stories. A more salient measure, <sup>14</sup> the excerpt below demonstrates how such shared experiences can provide clear assessments of trustworthiness and a condition (respect) on which trust was built. Using another instance from Encounter 5 – Abu Ala and Savir's first meeting, we see this at work:

[The Process] [Next day, on a short walk in the woods] As we set down a narrow path, Abu Ala told me that he had spent the rest of the night on the phone with Tunis, reporting his satisfaction with our meeting and his impressions that our intentions were serious. As a result, Arafat and Abu Mazen had accepted our demand that East Jerusalem be excluded from the autonomy – though it would certainly be raised again in the talks on the final settlement. I was surprised by this quick and definitive reply. It convinced me all the more that the Tunis leadership wanted to move ahead. Their other answers reinforced this impression. ....

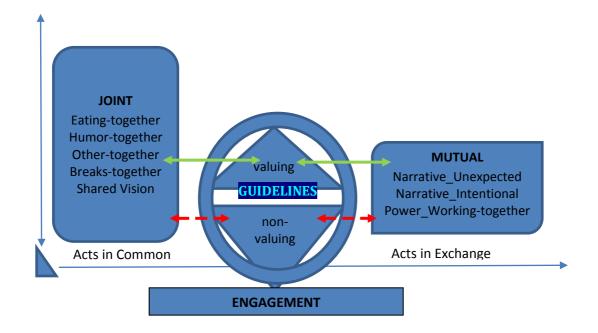
Then we talked about ourselves [– the personal]. [From Oslo] Savir told me about himself and about his family... In return, I told him about myself, about my town of Abu Dis, about Jerusalem seen with Arab eyes...my wife and five children... We chattered about small things, about Norway, the house where we were staying, and the food. We began to make jokes, and filled the air with our laughter. I recall one thing Savir said as we walked through this fine forest, which aroused in me feelings of appreciation and respect for him. ... [This] changed my earlier assessment of Savir, and caused me to revise the impressions of him I had gained at first, especially when he had opened the first session of negotiations the day before with such stubbornness. (Savir 1998, p. 19; Qurei 2008, p. 150, emph. added).

This scene follows the previous one employed for the Balance approach. A subtle factor, provided by Balance, was the willingness to abide by the norms of "no dwelling on past grievances" (Makovsky 1996, p. 22). Joint engagement from the earlier round during this Encounter facilitated the experiences of respect that Savir and Abu Ala experienced above. For Savir, his respect for the Palestinian side, particularly, Abu Ala grew with the Palestinian's adequate consideration of his ideas and needs discussed the previous night, as well as the commitment to norm-abidance. Whilst for Abu Ala,

Although occurring less often, coded segments of 'personal narratives' are more salient than 'shared vision' in that they directly link to stronger experiences of respect.

Savir's personal narrative about his views on their conflict caused Abu Ala to experience a deeper respect for him. For example, in Savir's account of this walk, he makes mention that Abu Ala referred to him "for the first time...by my first name" (p. 28). A poignant recollection by Savir which reveals a respect-mutuality manifestation, based on shared experience, between the two principals.

FIGURE 1: Respect as Shared Experience



The previous paragraphs identified and described three respect pathways that were present within the Oslo Talks. These pathways are based on select, combined categories from MAXQDA coded segments of the Oslo transcript. In employing Oslo's context, this section reduced the challenge of understanding respect (or disrespect) in international relations. The section also highlighted how respect precedes trust – discussed in more detail in Respect (III) part of this essay. While there were also several instances of disrespect, those of respect were either higher or more salient in sustaining conditions for cooperative behavior that forged the agreement achieved by the Oslo Talks. The next section discusses the profiles of actors within the Spirit and demonstrates certain characteristics that were unique to respectful behavior.

## Oslo Club within the Oslo Spirit

Another important facet for discussing respect manifestations within the Oslo Spirit is the various actors themselves. Larsen attempted to reassure Hirschfeld about his decision to meet Abu Ala. "Don't worry, you'll get along just fine. I'm sure there'll be a personal rapport between you, he's that kind of man;" 'this kind' is someone who gives and expects respect in at least one of the 6 dimensions highlighted by Wolf (Corbin, 1994, p. 30, emph. added). See, again, Table 1. And in this instance – between Abu Ala and Hirschfeld – it was for two dimensions: ideas and values, qualities and

virtues. Prior to meeting in Oslo, all three key actors from the three sides met separately in London and concluded that they each shared dissatisfaction with the Washington Talks (Elon 1993, p. 79; Corbin 1994, pp. 30–32; Qurei 2008, pp. 41–44). And more importantly they also shared a willingness to explore options to improve the Talks. However, a contributing factor that provided the opening for subsequent interactions in Oslo was Abu Ala and Hirschfeld's respectful attitude with each other. They had met twice in one day, and although Abu Ala would describe their first encounter that day as being dominated by caution and reserve (p. 41), he found Hirschfeld reasonable and open to his ideas – adequate consideration for ideas and values. And Hirschfeld received the same adequate consideration from Abu Ala for his qualities and virtues. Although these two forerunners of the Oslo Club were not actively striving for respect they, however, found themselves recipients of it because of an open respect pathway - respect-as-shared-experience, joint engagement. With adequate consideration to each's ideas and values, and qualities and virtues, it is readily evident why both men were open to continuing the informal exchange. They realized that they could and did get along just fine, as Larsen had predicted. This evidence is summarized by Table 1 and Figure 1 which demonstrate Circle as a respect provider and the various elements that address the respect dimensions. It is also worth highlighting that no trust had been established between the men (Elon Ibid; PBS 1998, Oslo [Hirschfeld] section), they knew very little of each other, except from a 2-time meeting spanning 3.5 hours that day. This snapshot suggests the substantive and instrumental importance of respectful attitudes and behavior between actors on opposing sides of a conflict. In the absence of trust, such respectful behavior signals the possibility of achieving mutual interests, through identification of common interests. In successful restorative justice conferences, perceptively positive interactions at the beginning tend to end in transformative outcome, or at least a satisfactory one (Rossner 2008, pp. 2-13). Advocates argue that this is in large part due to a valuing of respectful treatment<sup>15</sup> between the participants (Buntix 2014; Pranis 2014; Zehr 2014). Admittedly, not all RJ conferences are successful, but a key differentiating factor are the kind of people that can get along. These individuals are willing to show adequate consideration for a range of things the Other might consider important, not least ideas and values, virtues and qualities.

Starting with the Palestinians, I will offer a profile of the characters that were "dubbed the Oslo Club" while highlighting how their decision to be respectful or disrespectful affected the Oslo Spirit (Savir 1998, p. 30). Abu Ala, who served as the Lead, is described in most accounts as personally charming, but quite sensitive. A senior PLO official, and the oldest in the Oslo Club, with five adult children, it was clear that he more than all others, be shown deference and respect, even from the Israelis (Corbin 1994, pp. 81–82). Although he clearly commanded respect in the Club, Abu Ala was also aware that he also had to give respect to others, particularly the

Respectful treatment varies in RJ conferences, but it usually coalesces around what parties have agreed to abide by in the preparatory talks conducted by a mediator/facilitator, which practitioners emphasize as necessary to ensuring respectful behavior occurs.

Israelis and Norwegians, as he knew that his show of respectful behavior, despite his disrespectful experiences would facilitate progress of the Talks, which was paramount. Hassan Asfour was the second Palestinian who, along with Abu Ala, was a veteran of the Talks. In contrast to Abu Ala, accounts describe him as less charming and more hardline. His English was limited and he seemed more willing to insist on what the Other was not doing, however, his stern demeanor is useful to assess the significance of respectful behavior on differences and difficulties. Finishing off the delegation, at various times, were Maher El Kurd from Encounters 1 to 7, and Mohammed Abu Koush from 8 to 12. Both men are described as easy-going, and appear to the most courteous and modest of the Palestinians (Corbin 1994; Savir 1998, pp. 12, 45).

On the Israeli side, Encounters 1–4 was led by Hirschfeld – described as amiable, less sensitive than Abu Ala - who possessed an ability to give more respect than he demanded. 16 He was accompanied by Ron Pundak, another easy-going individual, "full of unnecessary compliments and humour;" and initially distrusted by the Palestinians because his physical appearance seemed to suggest military or intelligence experience (Qurei 2008, p. 57). Presumably, Pundak's stature, in contrast to his Israeli counterpart's jolly, almost Santa-Claus-like, frame fed the air of previously-held suspicions by the Other. However, by all accounts on Oslo, Pundak was of the same amiable disposition as Hirschfeld, though 10 years younger. Uri Savir, arrived some five months later (Encounter 5), easily assimilating into the well-established norms of informality and rigour of the Oslo Club. Israel's youngest director-general of the Foreign Ministry, it appeared that Savir was pre-selected for this position to continue Oslo Talks on a discrete official level. Savir, although serious in his countenance, was the charming son of a diplomat, and was acutely aware of the need for persuasion and decorum which he initially feared his later counterpart Joel Singer did not possess (p. 33). Singer, almost a direct complement to Asfour's non-amiable disposition, appeared in the following Encounter. All the Oslo accounts agree that Singer made no attempt to be respectful. A former military lawyer with a distaste of vagueness of international politics, Singer was not so much mean, just preferring to show "niceties" when he deemed it was warranted (Corbin 1994, p. 104). This he did in the following round, after assessing the seriousness of the Palestinian side (Savir 1998, p. 35; Qurei 2008, pp. 165-68). Fortunately, the Palestinians, especially Abu Ala, accepted his apologies, although it would take a few more rounds for Singer to be socialized into the Club.

The Norwegians who served as the non-threatening honest-brokers insisted on being facilitators, although their role later reflected a complex evolution into

This may of course be due to the fact that unlike Abu Ala, Hirschfeld did not occupy any official position which would give him subsidiary negotiating power. Hirschfeld did have an influential status from his peace efforts—which is the reason why Ashwari recommended him to Abu Ala (Ashwari 1996, p. 220; Qurei 2008, pp. 39-41). It appears that his amiable disposition kept him from feeling that he be accorded respect for the social importance he occupied due to his influential network.

mediators.<sup>17</sup> Highlighted earlier through the efforts of Larsen and Juul, they were repositories of respectful attitude and behavior. From the start, they saw themselves facilitators for the peace efforts between the two sides and initially refrained from giving their input, unless asked. Very similar to the function and role of the Circle Keeper, the Norwegians continually monitored the atmosphere of the Club. They kept the Talks afloat when both sides experienced disagreement exacerbated by inadequate consideration. Of the three groups, the Norwegians, with no conflict with which to contend, unsurprisingly seemed to have an endless supply of respect with which they treated both sides. As the Keeper of the Oslo Spirit, their respectful treatment of each member of the group was critical to development and establishment of trust that soon followed in the later rounds. This treatment was still sustained in the challenge of disrespectful behavior not just between the conflict parties themselves, but also at the Norwegians (Corbin 1994, pp. 127, 139). They, particularly Larsen, believed that a particular setting would facilitate cooperative behavior between the two parties, but that only certain 'kinds of people' would be most amenable in such settings. He had initially thought Asfour and Singer as non-ideals for the Talks, but was proved wrong in later rounds which revealed both men to be particularly beneficial for the Club.

This suggests a critical learning from Circle: the kinds of people that can get along are likely to be those who are willing to learn and abide by norms (when convened), and less those who refuse or reject the norms. In Circle contexts, the outset is marked by respectful behavior and attempts by the Circle Keeper to determine values that would govern the group. In choosing to commit to these values (guidelines), participants signal their willingness to "[sit] with differences" (Pranis 2013). This is the key trait that Abu Ala and Hirschfeld displayed in their London meeting and carried into the Oslo Club. Given the diverse characters that make up the Club, this ability to sit with differences is a common trait they all share. It is also a trait that is salient for communicating respect. The next part (II) discusses the restorative justice peacemaking circle (RJ-PMC) with a focus on three peculiarities—the Circle Keeper, the Circle Space and its Quality of Relationships—that demonstrate an evaluative significance of respect in Oslo.

## Oslo Spirit as a Restorative Process (II)

Within the RJ-PMC process use of ephemeral language such as 'nurturing the spirit of the Circle' and 'being your best self' is rather common (Boyes-Watson 2008; Ball, Caldwell and Pranis 2010). Such language is often used in interpersonal conflict contexts, and would seem inappropriate for conflict on the international level. However, as detailed above, widely-acknowledged accounts also employ similar

See Wilkenfeld et al 2003, for a good overview of these complex roles, their significance, and when best to use.

language when describing the "spirit of Oslo" (Corbin 1994; Savir 1998). Examined further, the function of such language serves to communicate the level of engagement and commitment conflict parties demonstrate towards the process. Furthermore, the function also reveals similarities with Zehr's notions of the three pillars - engagement, needs, and obligations - of restorative justice and its guiding principle of treating all participants with respect (2002). Admittedly, restorative justice cannot simply be transplanted into international contexts, at least not the way they are practiced in criminal and community justice settings. However, there are other alternatives for understanding the relevance of a restorative practice to the international context. One is the individual application of RJ features: the third-party facilitator/mediator; space of the meeting and the quality of relationships (see Ball, Caldwell and Pranis 2010, pp. 98–108). In accounts of the Oslo Talks three things are often highlighted when describing the informal atmosphere. These are the Norwegians, who served as third-party mediators, location, and the solidarity of the conflict parties. Oslo, being an episode of conflict resolution, particularly in mediation, suggests that the convener, along with a peculiar environment contributes to rapprochement or new understanding between conflict parties. It also suggests that the pattern of interaction in such peculiarity is significant (Corbin 1994; Thornberry 2004; Schirch 2005). All these are not new, credible literature exists on the impact of thirdparty mediators (Bercovitch 1989; Zartman and Touval 1989; Moore 2003, chs. 2) and what style is arguably most successful (Bercovitch and Houston 2000) or most ideal in select conflicts (Bercovitch and Gartner 2006; Beber 2012). And on solidarity, the literature largely attributes its achievement to trust-building and trust (Moore 2003, ch. 7; Kelman 2005), but little, except for passing reference (Moore 2003, pp. 153-56), exists on location. It is within this gap that RJ relevance come to fore. As a theoretical roadmap, RJ highlights the significance of respect as a concept and as practice in international conflict resolution and where precisely it is present. To this end, the following sections provide parallel analyses of the three features shared by Oslo and Circle.

## **Circle Keepers: Norwegians as Repository of Respect**

As a credible neutral party to the conflict, the Norwegians assumed their third-party mediator role as a facilitator (Egeland 2001, pp. 543–44). This is also the term Pranis uses interchangeably with the keeper of the Circle process (2005, p. 36).

Norway has no stick and too small a carrot to threaten or bribe the parties to accept a controversial compromise. Neither does it have the skilled teams of mediators that intergovernmental organizations are able to muster. However, the smaller country can discreetly, flexibly, and effectively seize new opportunities ... [and] facilitate bridges between parties ... that are ready to seek a compromise (Egeland 2001, pp. 544).

The keeper in a Circle is not responsible for finding solutions or for controlling the group. The keeper's role is to initiate a space that is respectful and safe, and to engage participants in sharing responsibility for the space and for their shared work.

The keeper helps the group access its individual and collective wisdom by opening the space as the group proceeds (Pranis 2005, pp. 35–36).

The juxtaposition of these two excerpts allow for a simple conclusion that Norwegians were in fact Keepers of the Oslo Talks. To further demonstrate the presence and the relevance of respect, it is important to draw-upon these similarities. As these similarities are established, instances of respect are identified, further demonstrating the Norwegians as repositories of respect. For example, a year before the Hirschfeld-Abu Ala London meeting, Larsen and Juul met with Abu Ala in his Oslo hotel room to follow-up on earlier meeting with Jan Egeland, the Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister at the time. This hotel room meeting is one of few instances in Abu Ala's account of the Talks that also demonstrates how several of the respect dimensions were met.

I took away from this meeting a good impression of Terje Larsen. He was well-intentioned as well as humble, and his interest in the Palestinian cause was sincere. The effect was to bring into being a good relationship between us, which was the foundation of our later personal friendship and future cooperation. [Larsen] gained my respect and appreciation when he offered his friendship to the Palestinian people, as well as to me personally, and made a promise to use the resources of Fafo to provide every possible support for the Palestinians. Of course, none of us were aware at the time of this meeting that a seed which led to the Oslo process had been sown (Qurei 2008, p. 38, emph. added).

But more importantly it highlights the traits which a third-party mediator should possess when attempting to effect cooperative behavior between opposing parties. At the beginning of a conflict process, the mediator may not need to focus as much on neutrality as they should on respect because of what it could produce later. This hotel room meeting not only established the Norwegians as repositories, it also endowed them with leverage and legitimacy with which to monitor and steer the Talks when they were in danger of derailment, as was the case in Encounter 10. In addition, because keepers are excellent purveyors of respect, a mediator that assumes the role of the facilitator could capitalize on a respect approach (like RJ-PMC) to jump-start a conflict resolution process.

### The Space of Talking and Solidarity While Talking

Admittedly not all spaces (locations) and levels of solidarity (relationships) contribute to cooperative behavior amongst conflict parties. The criterion considered for space and solidarity is clear intent that discreet, as opposed to indiscreet, settings and informal interactions could prove beneficial for conflict parties to achieve rapprochement (Marin 2010, p. 40 cf. Fröhlich 2002). This intent is often displayed by a neutral third-party, serving as a mediator between conflict parties (Corbin 1994, p. 24; Abubakar 2014; Pranis 2014). It is communicated as an offer that would – as mentioned above – meet the needs of conflict parties who are willing to talk with each other, but have justifiable concerns on how to navigate their hostility. Thus, the space and solidarity would be unique to the conflict parties and their third-party mediator. The space would serve a as container conditioning the parties into a frame

of mind amenable to constructive negotiations by its elimination of distractions.<sup>18</sup> Correspondingly, the interactions – if characterized as respectful – within this space could form a level of solidarity useful for changing attitudes between the conflict parties and contribute to cooperative exchanges. On a basic level the reason why respectful behavior was significant in Oslo was its unique space and the quality of relationships arising from it.

#### Space

Not unlike the restorative justice peacemaking circle (RJ-PMC), the "relaxed Norwegian atmosphere" ushered the conflict parties into a different reality that permitted them to talk freely and explore opportunities for building an understanding and a working trust (Abbas 1995, pp. 139–40; Kelman 1997). The simplicity of activities undertaken was provided by the unique setting in which the conflict parties found themselves. Consider the setting of the first encounter:

"The visitors awoke to find themselves in a beautiful old Norwegian wooden mansion called Borregaard... [it] was to prove an extremely successful setting for the Oslo Channel. An ambiance envelops the house which, although large and comfortable, is not ostentatiously luxurious or grand. ... Many of the brainstorming sessions actually took place in the wintry landscape, under the trees surrounding the house. All the participants sometimes accompanied by Larsen, took long walks in the woods, arguing and discussing as they went" (Corbin 1994, p. 49, emph. added).

The visible aesthetics of the RJ-PMC, structured through its circular arrangement and ritual ceremony serves as a container within which conflict parties interact. These aesthetics are quite similar to nature of the Oslo rounds within each Encounter. Just like the Circle process, the Oslo process was "[a]n attempt...to provide a setting conducive to human contact, conviviality, and solidarity of effort" (Perry 1994, p. 266). The space for the Talks was very important and the contrast in interactions and results between the parallel encounters of Washington D.C. and Oslo are proof. "[Larsen] believed that the relaxed Norwegian atmosphere would have an osmotic impact on the talks..." (Savir 1998, p. 11). An impact – osmotic, and of real significance – to the nature of the talks was what Terje Larsen was hoping to, modestly, contribute to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict when he offered Oslo. Described as "a social scientist and serious intellectual" Larsen and a few other Norwegians sought to operationalize a simple thesis: can the provision of a safe, secret, sequestered location be conducive to mediation efforts involving embittered parties in violent conflict? With the success 19 of the Oslo talks - moving from an exploratory phase to serious negotiations, and subsequent agreement between the official parties and the international community,

In an interview with the former Nigerian President and the mediator of the Accra Talks that ended Liberia's conflict, President Abubakar highlights the need to eliminate such distractions that could arise from the general responsibilities of particular side to insecurities about safety, or inflexibility on staunch positions (2014).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> The Oslo Accord, itself, which is distinguished from the Oslo Talks, was not successful. The Talks, and not the Accord was the focus of analysis and thus the adjectival use of successful as a description.

it appears the answer is yes. The respect-as-balance approach provides further evidence that the space of negotiations can be effective in producing a constructive atmosphere. Leading social psychologist, Herbert Kelman, characterizes the Oslo location, and its settings, as:

"The remoteness and isolation of the setting and the informal and relaxed atmosphere in which the talks were conducted also contributed to their success. They provided a context in which participants felt free to listen to each other, to enter each other's perspective, to re-examine difficult issues over time, and to develop a mutually reassuring language. The development of a personal relationship and the humanization of the other that such a setting makes possible do not in any way dispense with the difficult political issues that must be negotiated and resolved at their own level. What they do is to enable parties to access each other's needs, fears, and constraints, and to engage in a joint process of creative problem solving to resolve the political issues in ways that are responsive to both side's concerns" (1997, p. 190).

Kelman argues that on a micro-processual level, the unique setting proved to be an important element in the how (location) and what (solidarity) of creating optimum conditions for conflict parties to reach agreement.

#### Solidarity

The achievement of solidarity through respect is revealed by Savir's unique characterization:

"We felt like a club of secret agents. And as time went on, outside the negotiating room – at meals, during breaks, and on walks together – we jelled into a group...dubbed the "Oslo Club." ... As a secret fellowship, we soon developed a private lexicon that harked back to memorable jokes and other remarks. An outsider would have been at a loss to fathom much of our banter" (Savir 1998, pp. 30–31).

The creation of this Club and its prevailing Spirit certainly did not come easy or materialize out of a simple meeting of empty talks. Each round of talks, although comprising no more than 2–3days at a time, were packed with elements of intense emotion, ritual, ceremony, and guidelines; distinguishing each round from the usual orthodox manner of negotiating. Not unlike the Circle process the Oslo talks operated as a series of ritual ceremonies buoyed by earlier agreed-upon guidelines. Aesthetically, the restorative similarities of Oslo comes from its use of a unique space and the norms it instituted to facilitate cooperation among its participants. Other similarities that the Oslo Club and the Circle have in common are displayed in the following table below.

TABLE 2: Paralleling Oslo to Circle

## Paralleling the Oslo Club to the Peacemaking Circle

### Conceptual

#### Oslo like the Circle:

- Keeper as repository of respect
- Happened in a unique space
- Presence of unique solidarity
- Both produce resiliency in participants; instilling a sense that "things will fly" meaning agreements reached in the group could work outside of the group

#### Methodical

Both exhibit patterns of interactions that can be studied through:

- Delineating an Outer frame; such as a unique space that fosters egalitarianism and focuses the attention of participants on the problem at hand
- Delineating an Inner frame; such as forms of building solidarity through emergent relationships and varied narratives

#### Respect Measure

Start of the processes marked by:

- Collective creation of values and guidelines
- Symbolism
- Attention to (Wolf) respect dimensions

The presence of an Oslo Spirit highlights the significance of the nature of understanding and respect that marked the quality of relationships present. As the physical setting had been set, the actors were now unhindered (by distractions) to determine how to reach common ground with each other. With each Encounter, the Club developed and crystallized a ritual of respectful exchanges. While these exchanges are often described as trust-building instances, the present analysis reveals that it is more apt to describe them in terms of respect. For example, in Figure 1, the joint engagement box displays acts that are less about trust or trust-building and more about decorum - respect. Consider the 'eating together' code. It is the most frequentlyoccurring code (4%, N=225) within the joint engagement grouping, and the only code to co-occur with the 'valuing' code which has the highest overall code frequency (12.89%). What this suggests is that respect – although a component of trust when it has been established - can occur irrespective of trust, especially when it is manifesting as joint engagement. The acts in the joint engagement grouping arise out of an inclination to be respectful and abide by a set of guidelines. The abidance to these guidelines produces an element of continuity and substance which then give way to mutual engagement which is where a peculiar quality of relationships begins to form solidarity. As Kelman would argue conflict actors start out with a distrust of each other (2005, pp. 640, 644), but achieve working trust through "trust-related concepts in order" (Ibid at 644). Two of these trust-related concepts - successive approximations of commitment and reassurance; mutual reassurance – are arguably similar to respect pathways earlier described, particularly shared experience. Following Kelman's reasoning, for the achievement of working trust, interactions will have to start out with respect, and it is respect that gives way to solidarity.

According to Pranis, solidarity actually starts around the personal narratives, particularly the unexpected ones.

In the middle of the first negotiating session at Halvorsbole, at 3:00 a.m., Joel Singer and Hassan Asfour had taken a long walk by the dark shore of the fiord. Singer was angry and disillusioned. He appealed directly to Asfour to tell him what the Palestinians were trying to achieve by their demands. Asfour reassured him that it would all work out in the end. [Asfour, honestly:] It's necessary for the negotiations that I regard you as my enemy. But in another situation we would be friends. We will always have our differences but now I know our struggle in the future will be a struggle undertaken together. What we are doing is for our families, our own people – the Palestinians. And in the end it is for peace itself. ... (Corbin 1994, p. 142, emph. added).

This excerpt, from Encounter 10, demonstrates what Pranis terms the "shared human struggle" (2014). Coded under "personal narrative/unintentional," it is a manifestation of respect-as-shared experience pathway. Here we see the two hardline actors of the Oslo Club privately experiencing a form of solidarity through mutual engagement. Pranis adds that when interactions like these occur, although not guaranteed, it is more likely that conflict can be resolved (Ibid), which is what in fact happened in the remaining two rounds. In paralleling the similarities between Circle and Oslo, the relevance of RJ to international relations is not only established, it sets the stage for the final and third part of this essay, which is to discuss the significance of respect not just for the Oslo Talks but also for the Washington and Madrid Talks – the former being analogous, while the latter a precedent.

## Respect: its Role within the Oslo Spirit (III)

"Collaboration begins with mutual understanding and respect."
(Astronaut Ron Garan)

Cooperating, working together or collaboration begins with mutual understanding and respect. Garan makes no mention of trust. Certainly trust is a necessary factor in conflict resolution efforts, and leading literature demonstrates the effectiveness of working trust to facilitate cooperation and achieve agreement (Kelman 2005). However, what is largely missing is literature on the phase before trust is present. The previous parts have highlighted this phase, showing that in the absence of trust, what brings actors to the negotiating table is respect. From the MAXQDA analysis, experiences of respect were either near or followed by decision-making actions to continue rather than derail a peace agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis. Recall part I and Abu Ala's decision to stay in Oslo. What makes Oslo an especially useful case study of respect is the fact that it was part of ubiquitous efforts to

achieve an agreement between the two sides. Oslo was initially convened in hopes of reviving the faltering Washington Talks - which were initiated a year earlier, but produced scant progress. And these same Talks were the result of the seminal 1991 Middle East peace conference in Madrid. However, the auspices of both these meetings were public (private) experiences of disrespect for the Palestinians, particularly those with official affiliation to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) (Qurei 2008, pp. 60, 106-7). In fact, the Madrid conference was bemoaned as an "indignity" as Palestinians were not full-partners, but part of the Jordanian delegation (p. 209). And although, the subsequent Washington Talks acknowledged the Palestinians as partners, it refused the widely-acknowledged leadership of the PLO, which was another sign of disrespect from the outset. An assertion of power by the Israelis – who were also suffering from a denial of recognition by the PLO – and the retaliatory behavior of the Palestinians had escalated to the point of stalemating the Washington Talks (Corbin 1994, pp. 105-6). While several factors had produced the ripe moment to orchestrate and produce these two meetings, it appears that the negligence of monitoring and managing disrespectful behavior was a significant contributing factor to the stalemate.

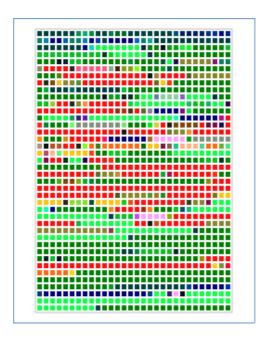
In light of this ubiquity, the role of respect was made significant in two ways. First it signaled an opportunity for substantive and instrumental talks, which is evident from the Hirschfeld-Abu Ala London meeting till Encounter 4. Second, it sustained the opportunity till an agreement was initialed in Encounter 12. Oslo Talks, in contrast with Washington, demonstrate how substantive respect can be. In London, the substantive exchanges quickly moved from what was not working in Washington to possible exploration of ideas in a suitable setting like Oslo. Arguably, this quick positive assessment of each other was due in large part to their respectful exchange as they had only discussed general subjects. Once in Oslo, respectful interactions continued, along with a healthy dose of suspicion since it was, after all, a meeting of opposing parties. Unhindered by public pressure - provided by the modeling behavior and balance respect pathways - the Oslo Talks quickly became instrumental in some four short months. This does not mean that both camps did not encounter difficulties. Figure 2 shows the first quarter (Q1) of the Talks revealing experiences of disrespect even as respectful ones were present.<sup>20</sup> The second (Q2) and third (Q3) quarters display a high density of disrespect, but are also experiencing specific respect provisions, especially Q3. And although, Q4 is largely a respect (and trust) period, it still shows instances of disrespect. Another explanation is that it reveals the "uneasy coalition," required for being politically effective when each side is back in their home constituencies (Kelman 2005, pp. 647-48). Ultimately, in being respectful with each

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A matrix of 1,200, 40 rows by 30 columns, the various colors signify the activities that occurred: dark green for positive gestures; light green for positive-context-specific gestures of respect; blue for the elements akin to the process, orange for the undecided reactions within the process, red for the negative reactions, purple for specific mention of the respect concept, and pink for the miscellaneous aspects. The other colors are variations of the colors for segments coded more than twice. However, this current portrait does not reflect a color code for trust, which largely occurs in the final quarter.

other, in that crucial London exchange, Abu and Hirschfeld signaled their willingness to jointly seek a solution in good faith (Corbin 1994; Zartman 1997). The communication of respect from the Other cannot be seen as arcane. Not only is the Other giving respect for what is to be expected – within that context – it also introduces elements of substance and possible continuity (Wolf 2015). And a lack of this continuity can subsequently produce feelings of disrespect, as was the case in Encounter 4, in which Abu Ala threatened to end the Talks if the Israeli side did not upgrade their representatives, mirroring official efforts of the Palestinians.

FIGURE 2: MAXQDA-generated Document Portrait of the 12 Encounters used for Analysis



The second significance of respect is its potential to influence and sustain mediation efforts. Abu Ala's threats not only revealed his understanding of the respectful efforts undertaken, it forced the Israelis to officially commit to the Talks. This commitment sustained the Talks. With the Talks upgraded by the Israelis, Encounter 4 and 5 demonstrate how a conflict actor's respect-striving for social importance was introduced, addressed and rewarded. Abu Ala's respect-striving may have betrayed his sensitivities to not being adequately considered for his status, but it also revealed him as a credible partner, thus influencing the mediation efforts. In addition, his emergence as a credible partner, within and for the PLO, also sustained the Talks. Furthermore, the tone of the Talks had become less constructive so Larsen, as Keeper, stepped in to address the need. He used the respect-as-balance approach to mitigate Abu Ala's desire to end the Talks, and urged the Israelis to accord due respect to the Talks. In essence, as a repository of respect, Larsen also sustained that Talks. There were also other instances where the opposing sides, themselves, used displays of respect (and requests for it) to sustain the Talks. For example, Oslo-QCA analysis reveals Encounters 6, 7, and 10 to show key actors consciously choosing to

show respect for the Other. These acts of adequate consideration – even at near humiliation for the actor giving respect – served to sustain the opportunity, the ripe moment. For example, in Encounters 8–10, both sides are recorded as experiencing strong inadequate treatment for their needs, interests, and rights. The following excerpt – an example of a unique show of deference – demonstrates reveals this significance of respect:

[Gaza First] Savir was the one who now physically made the move, in deference to the older man. ... [The Process] I walked over to the library and found Abu Ala seated by a window. ... Never had I seen him look so grim. [Savir, simply:] How are you? [Ala:] The situation is very bad. Both sides are now stubborn and don't understand the importance of this juncture. I can't go on like this. His distress sounded genuine. [Gaza First] For two hours they stayed in the room. Both men were honest with each other, and talked about the personal and political difficulties they faced, back home, in trying to sell the deal. That such admissions could now be made without being interpreted as signs of weakness showed the closeness of the two men's relationship, the sense of kinship between them. Then Savir put forward his two proposals. (Corbin 1994, p. 135; Savir 1998, p. 49, emph. added).

Upon this instance of adequate re-consideration, with particular emphasis on Abu Ala's importance, the Talks moved from its crisis mode to a more constructive one. From Encounter 10, and at the beginning of Q4, this excerpt does display Kelman's concept of working trust. However, what served to jumpstart the utility of this trust, was Savir's act of deference to Abu Ala which clearly demonstrated his respect for his adversary's needs and sense of importance. In turn Abu Ala was persuaded to reconsider his resignation and refocus efforts on reaching agreement sensing, through this interaction with Savir, that the desire to sustain the efforts was mutual. It is beneficial to add that in contrast to Washington - or Madrid for that matter - the significance of respect would remain unrealized. In Madrid, even as the geopolitical realities of the Middle East provided a ripening of the conflict, the conference participants disappointed their hosts (US and Russia) by engaging in mutual recriminations<sup>21</sup> of each other. Given such context – particularly its public nature – any act of respect from either side would have been met with vitriolic pressure, making it impossible to signal any consideration for an opportunity to make concrete steps towards agreement. In Oslo, although mutual recriminations were present, they were quickly stemmed by one party's realization that it would be destructive for cooperation. In Washington, admittedly a step forward from Madrid, with Palestinians and Israelis officially engaging in direct talks, this inability to sustain the talks was also evident. Each side not only lacked the necessary authority to negotiate concrete issues and lacked the mandate to be respectful, they lacked a third-party mediator that could function as a Keeper. Thus, the Madrid and Washington contexts would render respect insignificant, and costly (Wolf 2011, pp. 135–36).

See "The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs, Part 2," The Madrid Peace segment, YouTube video, 2:26:28, a PBS/WGBH/BBC documentary aired in January 1999, posted by "sopmodm4," June 13, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtLorIXCcz4.

This paper outlined an approach and method to address the challenge of understanding respect and its significance in international relations. It could only provide a sketch of "detailed investigations of respect effects on foreign policy decisions" that arose from the result of the Oslo Talks (Wolf 2011, p. 133). Employing the philosophical framework of restorative justice and a working definition of respect, it provided three pathways of respect. With a combined methodology of process tracing and qualitative content analysis, it used these pathways to argue for a different perspective on the current state of art: respect brings and keeps actors at the table, it also precedes trust. This perspective will benefit from more empirical studies of content analysis on past and present conflict resolution efforts, with a focus on qualitative methodology. It will then be possible to undertake a mixed methods approach that allow for the quantitative analysis of a respect factor in international relations. In time, this perspective — a critical finding — can be part of efforts contributing to reducing the respect challenge in international relations.

In sum, a relevant attribution of this paper's argument is the success of the recent P5+1 Talks which sees the possible end to the half-century hostile relations between the United States and Iran. An account of these Talks highlights how the top diplomats from both nations – John Kerry and Mohammad Javad Zarif – were on a first name basis, and experienced more interactions together that with than other diplomats involved in the Talks:

We were both able to approach these negotiations with mutual respect, even when there were times of heated discussion. And—he would agree with me—at the end of every meeting we laughed and we smiled and we had the conviction that we would come back and continue to process," Mr Kerry said (AfP/The Telegraph 2015, emph. added).

This echoes the interaction between Savir and Abu Ala,<sup>22</sup> where after a shared experience they, too, informalized their relationship by addressing each other by their first names. It is probable that respect-as-shared experience pathway was one of the conditions present in the formation of the Kerry and Zarif relationship. As Laurent Fabius, the French Foreign Minister, said: "You know in foreign policy, I think you lose nothing in being respected" (Nouri 2015).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> See p. 9.

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