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The social ties that bind: the role of social relations and trust in EU intelligence cooperation
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Chapter 3

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework

Unravelling the Role of Social Relations and Trust in International Intelligence Cooperation[1]

3.1. Introduction

'Often characterized as sinister, the realm of intelligence is instead perhaps the most human of all aspects of government and consists to a large degree of personal relationships. The universal currency is trust.'[2]

As seen in chapter 2, scholarly interest in the mechanism of international intelligence cooperation continues to increase. Ever since the start of this increasing interest, in the wake of 9/11, scholars have tended to approach it from a perspective of competition and rivalry. They suggest that cooperation is counterintuitive to intelligence services that only cooperate out of necessity, when they feel unable to counter a threat or when they lack information and resources. When examining the conditions under which international intelligence cooperation takes place, many of these scholars stress the difficulties in this particular field. They focus on Machiavellian constructs such as formal power and hierarchy or highlight functional restraints on cooperative behavior.[3] Nevertheless, from this perspective it is hard to explain the increasing depth and breadth of international intelligence cooperation, especially in established multilateral settings. Recently, a small group of scholars has started to advocate a more sociological perspective to fill this research gap. Their relational approach to intelligence cooperation even led some to suggest that intelligence services come close to an international brotherhood.[4]

Trust is often mentioned as an important social facilitator for international intelligence cooperation. As stated in the opening quote, Aldrich even sees trust as the universal currency in the intelligence domain. In a similar fashion, former director of GCHQ, Sir David Omand, recognizes mutual trustworthiness 'as the most valuable attribute of any successful

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1   An earlier version of this chapter has been published as peer-reviewed article: Pepijn Tuinier, Thijs Brocades Zaalberg, and Sebastiaan Rietjens, 'The Social Ties That Bind: Unravelling the Role of Trust in International Intelligence Cooperation', International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence, 2022.

2   Aldrich, "US–European Intelligence Co-Operation on Counter-Terrorism," 124.

3   See for example: Guttmann, "Turning Oil into Blood"; Vestermark, "International Intelligence Liaison in the Afghan Theatre of War"; Walsh, *The International Politics of Intelligence Sharing*; Sims, "Foreign Intelligence Liaison"; Lefebvre, "The Difficulties and Dilemmas of International Intelligence Cooperation"; Müller-Wille, "EU Intelligence Co-Operation. A Critical Analysis."

4   See for example: Hoffmann, Chalati, and Dogan, "Rethinking Intelligence Practices and Processes"; Ben Jaffel, "Britain's European Connection in Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Cooperation"; Nolan, "A Sociological Approach to Intelligence Studies"; Maras, "Overcoming the Intelligence-Sharing Paradox"; Bigo, "Sociology of Transnational Guilds"; Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*.

[intelligence] partnership'.[5] Despite its importance, we know little about the underlying conditions shaping trust among intelligence services and personnel. Due to the neorealist presumption also noted in the last chapter, trust has hardly been conceptualized in relation to intelligence studies. This runs the risk of the debate on international intelligence cooperation getting stuck in oversimplified dichotomies like 'friends or foes', 'collaboration or competition' and 'trust or distrust'. This chapter argues that these dichotomies contribute to the mystification of the intelligence profession, but are not very helpful in understanding the nuanced workings of international intelligence cooperation. Without conceptualization, the notion of trust becomes a clincher rather than an analytical tool.

This chapter will provide the conceptual framework that will be used in the empirical section below to study social relations and trust in intelligence cooperation. It clarifies the concept of trust in a relational setting, uncovers the underlying conditions and factors, and systematically unravels their potential in bolstering cooperative behavior. The chapter first answers why international intelligence cooperation is a problem in the first place. Section 3.2 shows that it poses a dilemma. Cooperation is a potentially beneficial, yet uninviting activity. In addition, intelligence organizations often cooperate without being able to rationally calculate the outcome or control the risks involved. Subsequently, the chapter introduces the role of trust in dealing with these problems. Section 3.3 answers how trust is able to foster cooperative behavior, despite the inherent vulnerability attached. Trust supports reasonable expectations where rational ones are inefficient or ineffective. Finally, section 3.4 conceptualizes trust in international intelligence cooperation. Coming from a sociological perspective it acknowledges the interaction between agents and the social structure in which behavioral decisions are embedded. In addition, it emphasizes the relational nature of trust. Trust is nothing in or by itself, it is related to a specific context and to the partners involved.

Taking a relational approach to trust, the conceptual framework constructed in this study starts from the one introduced by Mayer, Davis and Schoorman.[6] They use perceived trustworthiness to conceptualize trust between partners and identify ability, integrity and benevolence as conditions. These three conditions will structure the rest of this research, most notably in discussing the results in chapters 6 to 8. Compared to Mayer et al. this research takes an additional step by operationalizing their conditions for use in a critical examination of trust in international intelligence cooperation. More elaborate handles are needed to engage the empirical data. Taking the elements discussed by Mayer et al. as a starting point, this chapter complements them with relevant insights from sociological literature on interorganizational relations and trust. For each of the three conditions already

5   Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 168–69.

6   Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 716–20; Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust."

identified, it ascribes underlying factors. It clarifies the collective structure in which trust is built and within this structure the main entity and process at work. For example, subsection 3.4.3 shows how perceptions of integrity (condition for trust) are formed within institutions (social structure) through principles (entity) and categorization (process). It leads to the construction of the conceptual framework for this study that is depicted in figure 8 at the end of this chapter. A framework that is well-suited to examine social relations and trust in EU intelligence cooperation.

3.2. The Dilemma of International Intelligence Cooperation

3.2.1. The Reciprocal Benefits of Cooperation

Cooperation is commonplace between organizations in business, public administration as well as in intelligence. Two or more actors work together to achieve 'promotively interdependent goals'.[7] Goals that, once reached by one of the participants, have beneficial effects for all. International intelligence cooperation is equally common and can take many forms.[8] Its appeal is relatively straightforward; two can simply achieve more than one. Cooperation is rewarding as it increases resources and adds valuable expertise. It is widely suggested that cooperation is an essential capability for intelligence services, helping them to face a highly complex and demanding security environment.[9] On the one hand, the current threats are increasingly transnational and non-state. Instead of being adversaries, national services now often win or lose together. On the other hand, notwithstanding their competitive nature, intelligence services need each other to fulfil their national tasking. Alone, not even the joint effort of all US intelligence services, presumably one of the largest and technically most advanced intelligence communities in the world, will be sufficient to deal with the diverse and interdependent range of security threats facing them. For this reason, when confronted with the need for regional intelligence on the Afghan-Pakistan border in their War on Terror, the CIA cooperated with a variety of partners. It represented 'a cost-effective way of increasing Human Intelligence (HUMINT) capabilities' by trading information from technical collection for 'local expertise and resources, expensive to acquire and difficult to maintain'.[10]

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7   Smith, "Human Cooperation," 402; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 2.

8   See for example: Hoffmann, "Circulation, Not Cooperation"; Cross, "The European Space and Intelligence Networks"; Aldrich, "International Intelligence Cooperation in Practice"; Sims, "Foreign Intelligence Liaison"; Rudner, "Hunters and Gatherers"; Westerfield, "America and the World of Intelligence Liaison."

9   Bigo, "Shared Secrecy in a Digital Age and a Transnational World," 384; Degaut, "Spies and Policymakers," 31; Treverton, "The Future Intelligence: Changing Threats, Evolving Methods," 27–30; Tucker, *The End of Intelligence*, 13; Shiraz and Aldrich, "Globalisation and Borders," 266–67; Aldrich, "Global Intelligence Co-Operation versus Accountability," 162.

10   Clift, "The Evolution of International Collaboration in the Global Intelligence Era," 213; Reveron, "Old Allies, New Friends," 456; Wirtz, "Constraints on Intelligence Collaboration," 248.

Cooperation is distinct from pure altruism. Whereas both concepts encompass a form of helping others, altruistic behavior usually implies doing so regardless, or in spite of, the cost this action befalls on oneself. Cooperation, although it inflicts costs, ultimately refers to the achievement of mutual benefit; there is a reciprocity in the relation.[11] Although there is some evidence that people tend to be altruistic by nature, unconditional altruism is quite rare between organizations or states. This does not mean that altruistic features are absent in international intelligence cooperation. Especially in long-standing arrangements between organizations with a history of interaction, 'feelings of interpersonal attachment, sympathy or relational commitment' may very well influence the establishment or maintenance of cooperative behavior.[12] For example, Ben Jaffel's work on Counter Terrorism and Extremism Liaison Officers (CTELO's) in Anglo-French cooperation mentioned in chapter 2, shows that intelligence liaison officers can be a successful personal bridge between differing systems and uphold trust perceptions.[13] Nevertheless, on closer inspection, many apparently altruistic forms of exchange are in fact based on expected benefits in the future.[14]

Expectations of reciprocity are at the heart of international intelligence cooperation. Intelligence services will behave cooperatively based on the expectation that their partner will do the same in return. This cooperative behavior appears easy when it confers direct benefits on all participants in achieving a common goal. The well-known adage of 'Quid pro Quo (QPQ)' in international intelligence cooperation represents this direct, simple, and mutually beneficial exchange. Yet, when the contributions of both partners differ in quality or quantity, or when a return is not (immediately) guaranteed, this mutualism is asymmetric and imposes relative costs upon one of the partners.[15] Many, if not most, forms of international intelligence cooperation constitute of such postponed and asymmetric arrangements. These arrangements are based not on direct QPQ, but on the more indirect 'Do ut Des' principle; to give with the expectation of receiving a return in the future.[16] Conferring a benefit on another with an expectation of, but not an immediate, return is prominent in cooperation.[17] This can be qualified as a risky business.

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11   Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 8, 202; Rathbun, *Trust in International Cooperation*, 35; Lehmann and Keller, "The Evolution of Cooperation and Altruism – a General Framework and a Classification of Models," 1367; Nooteboom, "Introduction," 11–12.

12   van Lange et al., *Social Dilemmas: Understanding Human Cooperation*, 73; Alós-Ferrer and Garagnani, "The Cognitive Foundations of Cooperation," 72.

13   Ben Jaffel, "Britain's European Connection in Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Cooperation," 9, 11.

14   Mathews, "Gift Giving, Reciprocity and the Creation of Trust," 95–96; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 52; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, vii, 4, 7, 74, 87, 110–12; Bowles and Gintis, "22 Origins of Human Cooperation," 429–44; Smith, "Human Cooperation," 402–13.

15   de Vos and Wielers, "Calculativeness, Trust and the Reciprocity Complex: Is the Market the Domain of Cynicism?," 84–88.

16   Belgian Standing Intelligence Agencies Review Committee, "Activity Report 2018," 31–32; Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 174; Sims, "Foreign Intelligence Liaison," 197–200.

17   Walker and Ostrom, *Trust and Reciprocity: Interdisciplinary Lessons for Experimental Reserach*, 4, 9; Nooteboom, *Trust; Forms, Foundations, Functions, Failures and Figures*, 72–74.

3.2.2. The Risk of Not Being Rewarded

Competition between intelligence services seems to be at odds with cooperation. Intelligence is often seen as a harsh and goal-driven activity aimed at competitive advantage for national decisionmakers. As a result, intelligence services constantly strive to outsmart their opponents. In many cases intelligence services are even perceived as rivals. Instead of only 'wanting to be first', actions are aimed at damaging the rival itself.[18] This strive was clearly evident in the fierce (counter)intelligence battle fought between opposing Eastern and Western services during the Cold War. Yet, in a weaker form it can be seen elsewhere as well. It is common knowledge that intelligence services of relatively close allies also spy on each other for strategic and economic purposes. For example, French and American intelligence services are known to have been spying on each other's economic activities for years.[19] Seeking competitive advantage, services are inclined to pursue relative gain for themselves rather than absolute gain for all. Information and knowledge are seen as commodities and treated as property; hard to acquire, precious to poses and valuable to trade. As a consequence, secrecy, autonomy, and 'a culture of wanting to be first' are important obstacles to intelligence cooperation.[20] Moreover, given the secrecy in methods, the uncertainty of results, and the difficulties in assessing the objective value of information, one can seldomly be sure that a partner will be returning the favor in kind. Defection is hard to detect, especially in the case of information sharing, and might be committed totally unwilling. For example, the way unreliable single-source intelligence on the alleged Iraqi biological weapons program found its way through German services to uncritical US decision-makers in the period 2000 to 2002, shows the serious vulnerability attached to international intelligence cooperation, even in dealing with reliable partners.[21]

Following the logic of competitive advantage, international intelligence cooperation is a beneficial activity that increases capacity. However, it also seems uninviting as defection by partners is tempting and relatively easy. Intelligence services therefore appear to have no choice other than to discount a partner's deliberations and each pursue their own short-term selfish gain. Some even claim that intelligence services are characterized by a particular organizational culture of distrust, in which 'risks of sharing information [...], by any rational

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18   Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 178; Deutsch, "A Theory of Co-Operation and Competition," 130–32.

19   Matey, "From Cooperation to Competition," 154–57; Clarke and Johnston, "Economic Espionage and Interallied Strategic Cooperation," 415–18.

20   Treverton, CSIS Strategic Technologies Program, and Center for Strategic and International Studies (Washington, "New Tools for Collaboration"; Maras, "Overcoming the Intelligence-Sharing Paradox," 189–91; Bures, "Intelligence Sharing and the Fight against Terrorism in the EU," 57–66; Müller-Wille, "EU Intelligence Co-Operation. A Critical Analysis"; Bossong, "The Eu's Mature Counterterrorism Policy – a Critical Historical and Functional Assessment"; Richelson, "The Calculus of Intelligence Cooperation," 307–23.

21   Reveron, "Old Allies, New Friends," 458; Reveron, "The Impact of Transnational Terrorist Threats on Security Cooperation," 34.

calculation, far outweigh the potential benefits'.[22] The larger the number of partners included in an arrangement, the greater that risk is. As benefits of cooperation are indivisible and non-excludable, sharing with many, by definition, means putting aside ambitions of relative gain.[23] In addition, more participants means that it becomes harder to assess the origin of information and makes it is increasingly difficult to monitor whether or not everyone is contributing. Free-riding, behaving selfishly by parasitizing on the cooperative efforts of others, is a strong temptation in multilateral intelligence cooperation. Moreover, the risk of defection is multiplied in these larger groups. The chances of a group member putting to use the intelligence in a manner not agreed upon, or even leaking it to a third non-participating partner, seem omnipresent.[24]

Intelligence services, trying to minimize risk and maximize their own cost-benefit ratio, tend to shirk from full collaboration, for example by only sharing second-class information.[25] This will prevent them from reaping the full potential benefits of cooperation. Unwillingly, and apparently unavoidably, they reach a suboptimal equilibrium.[26] This cooperation dilemma is by no means exclusive for the field of intelligence.[27] Similar problems have been noted in many fields, between organizations as diverse as American, Japanese and Korean car producers, between Polish tourist firms and among Italian healthcare institutions.[28] Despite their differences, these organizations share a situation of interdependence where a non-cooperative course of action is tempting (as it yields superior, often short-term, outcomes), but if all pursue this non-cooperative course of action, all are worse off than if they had cooperated fully. From these cases it becomes clear that organizations can circumvent these difficulties, managing to cooperate despite a degree of conflicting interest, being competitive and cooperative at the same time.

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22 Marenin and Akgul, "Theorizing Transnational Cooperation on the Police and Intelligence Fields of Security," 115–16.

23 Boyd and Richerson, *The Origin and Evolution of Cultures*, 137, 160; Axelrod, *The Complexity of Cooperation; Agent-Based Models of Competition and Collaboration*, 41; Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation*, 7–8, 36, 43, 58.

24 Alós-Ferrer and Garagnani, "The Cognitive Foundations of Cooperation," 71; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 11, 64; Bensahel, "A Coalition of Coalitions"; Lefebvre, "The Difficulties and Dilemmas of International Intelligence Cooperation"; Ostrom, "Toward a Behavioral Theory Linking Trust, Reciprocity, and Reputation," 20.

25 Aldrich, "Transatlantic Intelligence and Security Cooperation," 3.

26 The most famous game-theoretical model describing this situation is probably the Prisoners Dilemma as put forward by Robert Axelrod. It shows how two rational egoists faced with uncertainty will both choose to defect from full cooperation, their (lack of) cooperative behavior balancing them in a sub-optimal outcome. Nevertheless, the dilemma exists for sequential transactions as well. See for example: Buskens, Cortens, and Snijders, "Complementary Studies on Trust and Cooperation in Social Settings: An Introduction," 2.

27 van Lange et al., *Social Dilemmas: Understanding Human Cooperation*, 3–9; Nowak, "Evolving Cooperation," 1; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 7–9; Kydd, *Trust and Mistrust in International Relations*, 6–12; Ostrom, "Toward a Behavioral Theory Linking Trust, Reciprocity, and Reputation," 20–21; Diekmann and Lindenberg, "Cooperation," 1–3; Heckathorn, "Sociological Rational Choice," 275–78; Nowak and Sigmund, "Cooperation versus Competition," 13–14; Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation*, 2–3, 9.

28 Czernek and Czakon, "Trust-Building Processes in Tourist Coopetition," 380–94; Dyer and Chu, "The Determinants of Trust in Supplier–Automaker Relationships in the US, Japan, and Korea," 10–27; Barretta, "The Functioning of Co-Opetition in the Health-Care Sector," 209–20.

3.3. Overcoming the Dilemma

3.3.1. Trying to Reduce the Risk: Rational Calculations and Control

Scholars struggle to understand the conditions under which cooperation is chosen as the preferred strategy. After all, it 'entails the risk that others will not reciprocate, leaving the co-operator in the unrewarding position of being exploited'.[29] Two distinct models, or - in critical realist terms - generative mechanisms, can be discerned for achieving cooperative behavior; the mechanism of control and the mechanism of trust.[30] Both mechanisms are ways to deal with uncertainty about a partner's behavior and the resulting risk that comes with it. The first mechanism has a transactional focus and sticks closely to the dominant cost-benefit approach in intelligence. From this perspective, the most obvious way to increase cooperation, is to ensure a partner's returns. That is, to decrease the risk that a partner will defect unexpectedly. In this mechanism, rational calculations can lead to cooperative behavior when they are sufficiently reliable. The degree of control exercised over the exchange empowers this mechanism. Introducing control as an insurance against defection, for example by using contractual safeguards, aims to mitigate risk in order to support rational expectations. This mechanism is depicted in figure 6. Control can be achieved in various ways, for example by introducing formal contracts or by monitoring of the partners.
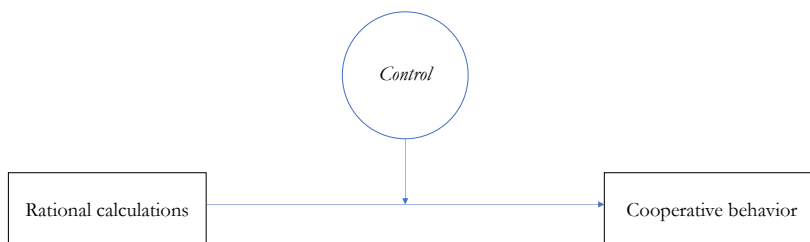

Figure 6; The mechanism of rational calculations and control in cooperative behavior

29 Alós-Ferrer and Garagnani, "The Cognitive Foundations of Cooperation," 72; van Lange et al., *Social Dilemmas: Understanding Human Cooperation*, 58–68; Henrich, "Cultural Evolution of Human Cooperation," 251–52; Riolo, Cohen, and Axelrod, "Evolution of Cooperation without Reciprocity," 441; Nowak and Sigmund, "Cooperation versus Competition," 14; Axelrod, *The Complexity of Cooperation; Agent-Based Models of Competition and Collaboration*, 15.

30 Vlaar, Van den Bosch, and Volberda, "On the Evolution of Trust, Distrust, and Formal Coordination and Control in Interorganizational Relationships"; Möllering, "The Trust/Control Duality"; Bachmann, "Trust, Power and Control in Trans-Organizational Relations"; Nooteboom, "Introduction," 11; Das, Teng, and College, "Between Trust and Control: Developing Confidence in Partner Cooperation in Alliances," 493–97.

Control as a condition for cooperative behavior under circumstances of distrust is a well-known concept in publications on international intelligence cooperation. Especially the concept of hierarchy, introduced by Walsh, often figures as a condition for cooperative behavior between intelligence services. A strong hierarchy between partners can ensure partner compliance as one service has extensive power over the other. It allows the dominant partner to directly manage and oversee the other's intelligence process.[31] As these minor partners are forced into obedience to the wishes of the principal, the chances of them violating expectations are minimized. These expectations can concern the expected outcomes, or include the way these outcomes are reached. The deferential position of the STASI in relation to the KGB during the Cold War is an example of such a strong hierarchy, part of an 'imperial intelligence system centered on the KGB Centre in Moscow'. At some point, the first was seen to serve the interests of the latter completely, even keeping a check on their own government for them.[32] Nevertheless, in international intelligence cooperation, these absolute one-sided relations are rare. The junior partner in many cases is able to hold on, or gain, a degree of self-determination, lessening the control of the principal partner.[33] For example, whereas the former Dutch internal security service BVD was seen to accept considerable financial backing from the CIA during the early years of the Cold War, the first was never a 'timid partner' in that relationship, sometimes even flatly turning down requests or proposals by the latter.[34]

Inviting as the mechanism of rational calculations and control might be for the competitive world of intelligence, it has practical flaws with regard to cooperation. First, the presumption of rationality implies that intelligence services are able to fully grasp the indirect and asymmetric cost and benefits of cooperation, and adjust their behavior accordingly. Yet, in practice, this rationality is limited. Social interaction is seen to be affected by incomplete information, cognitive biases, imperfect memory and an inability to fully analyze the complexities of the environment.[35] As noted in section 3.2, uncertainty stands at the heart of intelligence and intelligence cooperation. Second, seeking control always comes at a cost for the intelligence services involved. To control an exchange relation, it is necessary to dedicate valuable resources in obtaining information not only on targets, but on partners as well.

31   Walsh, "Defection and Hierarchy in International Intelligence Sharing," 161.

32   Popplewell, "The KGB and the Control of the Soviet Bloc: The Case of East Germany," 255–57.

33   See for example: Bolsinger, "Not at Any Price: LBJ, Pakistan, and Bargaining in an Asymmetric Intelligence Relationship"; Kadıoğlu and Bezci, "Small State Intelligence," 5–28; Odinga, Markovitz, and City University of New York. Political Science, "Looking For Leverage: Strategic Resources, Contentious Bargaining, and US-African Security Cooperation."

34   Graaff and Wiebes, "Intelligence and the Cold War behind the Dikes," 44–47.

35   van Lange et al., *Social Dilemmas: Understanding Human Cooperation*, 60–61; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 68–70, 76; Bachmann and Zaheer, "Trust in Inter-Organizational Relations," 537; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 11–12, 17–18, 140; McCabe, "A Cognitive Theory of Reciprocal Exchange," 149, 160; Ostrom, "Toward a Behavioral Theory Linking Trust, Reciprocity, and Reputation," 9–10, 23; Nooteboom, *Trust; Forms, Foundations, Functions, Failures and Figures*, 20–22; Nowak and Sigmund, "Cooperation versus Competition," 15–16; Simon, "Bounded Rationality in Social Science," 25–29; Axelrod, *The Complexity of Cooperation; Agent-Based Models of Competition and Collaboration*, 6–7, 14–15, 47; Williams, "Formal and Social Reality," 4.

Distinguishing among partners and remembering which ones have delivered in the past requires a costly and detailed bookkeeping about one's partners, for example by External Relations branches.[36] Moreover, getting close to a partner in cooperation, requires costly counterintelligence and security measures.[37] These measures have to prevent that a partner exploits his privileged position beyond the scope of the agreement or even provides dubious intelligence. In practice, it is hard to imagine a situation in which an intelligence service can have total control over a partner and the environment in which the cooperation takes place. It appears that rational calculations and control alone are insufficient as an explanation for efficient or sustained intelligence cooperation. Even more so, a calculative approach to the expected reciprocity can lead to obsessive demands for control with dysfunctional consequences for cooperation.[38] Constantly 'asking how well you are doing compared to others is not a good standard [for behavior] unless your goal is to destroy the other player'.[39] 'Being nice', at least applying a 'somewhat forgiving' tit-for-tat-strategy, greatly helps successful and sustained cooperation.[40]

3.3.2. Accepting Vulnerability: Social Relations and Trust

Models of rational calculations do not perform well in situations of greater complexity where their predictions are 'repeatedly shown to be empirically false'.[41] In these situations, uncertainty is a key characteristic for the interaction and exchange. As a consequence, cooperative behavior always involves a degree of vulnerability.[42] Intelligence systems, with their many participants interacting interdependently at different levels and in different settings simultaneously, qualify as situations of greater complexity.[43] Based on rational calculative considerations alone, international intelligence cooperation is thus fragile and can even be seen to 'drive up distrust and defensive positioning, even among relatively close allies'.[44] Rationality is unable to mitigate the risk of being (unpleasantly) surprised.

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36   Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, 91.

37   Reveron, "Old Allies, New Friends," 457.

38   Williamson, "Calculativeness, Trust, and Economic Organization," 52.

39   Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 110–11.

40   Axelrod, 5–44; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 59; Fehr and Fischbacher, "Social Norms and Human Cooperation," 186; Nowak and Sigmund, "Cooperation versus Competition," 17; Axelrod, *The Complexity of Cooperation; Agent-Based Models of Competition and Collaboration*, 34–35.

41   Ostrom, "Toward a Behavioral Theory Linking Trust, Reciprocity, and Reputation," 23–25; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 9–10.

42   Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 22–23, 88–89, 92; Boyd and Richerson, "Culture and the Evolution of Human Cooperation," 3283; Boyd and Richerson, *The Origin and Evolution of Cultures*, 135; Ostrom, "Toward a Behavioral Theory Linking Trust, Reciprocity, and Reputation," 38–39; Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation*, 62, 85, 105.

43   Svendsen, "Contemporary Intelligence Innovation in Practice," 106–9; Van Buuren, "Analysing International Intelligence Cooperation: Institutions or Intelligence Assemblages?," 84–89; Aldrich, "International Intelligence Cooperation in Practice," 1, 24–25.

44   Crawford, "Intelligence Cooperation," 2; Ballast, "Merging Pillars, Changing Cultures," 735; Müller-Wille, "EU Intelligence Co-Operation. A Critical Analysis," 73–74; Johnson and Freyberg, "Ambivalent Bedfellows," 175.

To explain durable cooperation between intelligence services, a more resilient mechanism is needed. One that enables participants in the cooperation to expect reciprocity and 'rely on each other, despite the presence of uncertainty and risks of partner opportunism and misappropriation'.[45] Social relations provide such a mechanism. It is depicted in figure 7.

Like rational calculations, social relations can invoke cooperative behavior. Yet, they do so on an entirely different basis. Social relations can lead to cooperative behavior when partners accept to be vulnerable in their dealings with a specific counterpart or exchange network. This mechanism thus operates in a far simpler and efficient way than with rational calculations, as it dodges the need for hard-to-achieve rational prediction and costly objective control measures like monitoring and sanctioning. Social relations are embedded in subjective beliefs and perceptions that enable quick interpretation of a situation and guide the appropriate behavior.[46] These beliefs and perceptions help partners achieve reasonable - not necessarily rational - expectations about each other. Being reasonable, they consist of more than mere emotion or intuition. They are an 'active sediment of [the] past that functions within [the] present' and reflect best practices for fulfilling expectations of reciprocity.[47] In many, if not most, cases international intelligence cooperation does not occur in a vacuum, nor is it a one-shot 'all-or-nothing' exchange. Intelligence services interact not once, but frequently, and they do so in in various settings and arrangements. These arrangements open new possibilities for cooperative behavior. Repeated interaction not only increases the number of chances for reciprocity, it enables a relation; taking a partner's character and behavior in account when deciding how to act. Studying the guiding beliefs and perceptions on partners in a community can help explain how cooperation works and develops in these settings.[48]

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45   Raza-Ullah and Kostis, "Do Trust and Distrust in Coopetition Matter to Performance?," 2; Todeva and Knoke, "Strategic Alliances And Corporate Social Capital," 23; Yang and Maxwell, "Information-Sharing in Public Organizations," 169; Kollock, "The Emergence of Exchange Structures: An Experimental Study of Uncertainty, Commitment, and Trust," 189–90, 195.

46   Schulz, "Logic of Consequences and Logic of Appropriateness," 1–9; Cohen, "Genuine, Non-Calculative Trust with Calculative Antecedents," 52–53; Malmendier, te Velde, and Weber, "Rethinking Reciprocity," 364; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 4, 9, 12, 32–35, 89; Dyer and Chu, "The Role of Trustworthiness in Reducing Transaction Costs and Improving Performance: Empirical Evidence from the United States, Japan, and Korea," 207–25; Williamson, "Calculativeness, Trust, and Economic Organization," 65–73; Cook, Hardin, and Levi, *Cooperation without Trust*, 52; Bachmann, "Trust and Power as Means of Coordinating the Internal Relations of the Organization: A Conceptual Framework," 59–62; Möllering, "The Nature of Trust: From Georg Simmel to a Theory of Expectation, Interpretation and Suspension," 403, 409–10; Smith, Carroll, and Ashford, "Intra- And Interorganizational Cooperation: Toward A Research Agenda," 17–18; Todeva and Knoke, "Strategic Alliances And Corporate Social Capital," 21–22.

47   Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 1992, 52–65; Alós-Ferrer and Garaganani, "The Cognitive Foundations of Cooperation," 72; O'Mahoney and Vincent, "Critical Realism as an Empirical Project," 2–3; Bachmann and Zaheer, "Trust in Inter-Organizational Relations," 538, 541–44; Barnes, "Practice as Collective Action," 25–26; Crossley, "The Phenomenological Habitus and Its Construction," 85; Schatzki, "Practice Theory," 12; Archer, "Realism in the Social Sciences," 196; Porpora, "Four Concepts of Social Structure," 339–54.

48   Bengtsson and Raza-Ullah, "A Systematic Review of Research on Coopetition," 28–29; van Lange et al., *Social Dilemmas: Understanding Human Cooperation*, 64–65; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 22–23, 59; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 12, 59, 102–3, 187–88; Cook, Hardin, and Levi, *Cooperation without Trust*, 188; Diekmann and Lindenberg, "Cooperation," 1, 4–5; Molm, "Theories of Social Exchange and Exchange Networks," 269–70; Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation*, 31, 62, 85; Smith, Carroll, and Ashford, "Intra- And Interorganizational Cooperation: Toward A Research Agenda," 17, 18, 34.

Trust is generally accepted as a central belief conditioning social relations in cooperation.[49] Cooperation is seen as the most proximal outing of a trusting relation. Interorganizational relations rely heavily on trust, especially in diffuse multilateral settings and among organizations operating in secret.[50] It develops incrementally from small acts to big reliance in an upward spiral of trust. On a micro-level, repeated interaction can lead to the development of particular trust between people. This can serve as a 'ratchet' for cooperative behavior. On a macro-level, repeated patterns of successful behavior can in turn lead to a more generalized form of trust between groups, 'slow to emerge and decay'.[51] The existence or absence of trust is one of the overarching themes in the literature on international intelligence cooperation as well. Numerous articles name trust as one of the most important determinants of cooperative behavior in the competitive world of intelligence.[52] They point at the importance of 'trust in, and respect for, other agencies' as foremost when deciding upon the extent of intelligence sharing arrangements.[53] Gill for example finds mutual trust the premise on which 'the whole structure of intelligence cooperation is built'.[54] Most take a pessimistic stance though, emphasizing the limitations on cooperation caused by a lack of trust between the partners.[55] Moreover, despite its importance, the notion of trust remains a very murky concept within studies on international intelligence cooperation. Notwithstanding some notable exceptions like Martin-Brûlé's recent article on the role of trust in UN intelligence, it has seldomly been defined or conceptualized in the context of intelligence cooperation.[56]

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49 Reiersen, "Drivers of Trust and Trustworthiness," 2; van Lange et al., *Social Dilemmas: Understanding Human Cooperation*, 63; Ferrin, Bligh, and Kohles, "It Takes Two to Tango," 161; Hardin, "Gaming Trust," 80; Smith, "Human Cooperation," 10–11; Walker and Ostrom, *Trust and Reciprocity: Interdisciplinary Lessons for Experimental Reserach*, 18.

50 Lewicka and Zakrzewska-Bielawska, "Interorganizational Trust in Business Relations: Cooperation and Coopetition," 155–57; Kostis and Näsholm, "Towards a Research Agenda on How, When and Why Trust and Distrust Matter to Coopetition," 1–15; Parker, "Secret Societies," 109; Rathbun, *Trust in International Cooperation*, 2, 4; Yang and Maxwell, "Information-Sharing in Public Organizations," 169; Macke et al., "The Impact of Inter-Organizational Social Capital in Collaborative Networks Competitiveness," 3–4, 10; Bachmann and Zaheer, "Trust in Inter-Organizational Relations," 536–37; Cook, Hardin, and Levi, *Cooperation without Trust*, 51; Möllering, "The Nature of Trust: From Georg Simmel to a Theory of Expectation, Interpretation and Suspension," 404, 407–10.

51 Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 177; Reiersen, "Drivers of Trust and Trustworthiness," 4; Bachmann and Zaheer, "Trust in Inter-Organizational Relations," 538; Ferrin, Bligh, and Kohles, "It Takes Two to Tango," 171–75; McKnight, Cummings, and Chervany, "Initial Trust Formation in New Organizational Relationships," 128–34; Todeva and Knoke, "Strategic Alliances And Corporate Social Capital," 25; Nooteboom, *Trust; Forms, Foundations, Functions, Failures and Figures*, 63–65; Nedelmann, "The Continuing Relevance of Georg Simmel: Staking Out Anew the Field of Sociology," 67–72; MacFhionnlaoich, "Interorganizational Cooperation : Towards a Synthesis of Theoretical Perspectives," 4–5; Ring and van de Ven, "Developmental Processes of Cooperative Interorganizational Relations," 101–5.

52 See for example: Ballast, "Merging Pillars, Changing Cultures"; Fägersten, *For EU Eyes Only?*; Bures, "Informal Counterterrorism Arrangements in Europe"; Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, 14, 91, 102; Reveron, "Old Allies, New Friends"; Aldrich, "Transatlantic Intelligence and Security Cooperation"; Lander, "International Intelligence Cooperation"; Shpiro, "The Communication of Mutual Security: Frameworks for European-Mediterranean Intelligence Sharing."

53 Lefebvre, 'The Difficulties and Dilemmas of International Intelligence Cooperation', 528–29.

54 Gill, "Rendition in a Transnational Insecurity Environment," 74.

55 See for example: Jasper, "U.S. Cyber Threat Intelligence Sharing Frameworks"; Treverton, CSIS Strategic Technologies Program, and Center for Strategic and International Studies (Washington, "New Tools for Collaboration"; Protopapas, "European Union's Intelligence Cooperation: A Failed Imagination?"; Sims, "Foreign Intelligence Liaison."
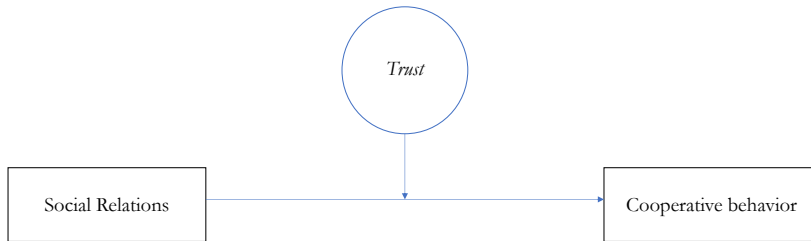
56 Martin-Brûlé, "Competing for Trust."

Figure 7; The mechanism of social relations and trust in cooperative behavior

3.4. Conceptualizing Trust in International Intelligence Cooperation

3.4.1. Relational Trust based on Perceptions of Trustworthiness

Trust between intelligence services is a form of interorganizational trust, a much-studied concept in sociology and interorganizational relations. It is commonly defined as the extent to which members of one organization hold a collective trust orientation towards one another.[57] Its workings are similar - or at least connected - to interpersonal trust. Based on various authoritative publications on this topic, this study brings back the definition of trust introduced in chapter 1 to 'the intentional and behavioral suspension of vulnerability by a trustor on the basis of positive expectations of a trustee'.[58] It is seen to hold three dimensions. First, it involves a decision to act in a relational exchange. Without the possibility of action, trust would degrade to mere hope. Second, it involves a degree of vulnerability. Trust enables actors to suspend their vulnerability, not because they are not aware of being vulnerable, but because they believe that their partner will not (overly) exploit this situation. Third, the good reasons underlying these beliefs are based on subjective perceptions of a partner's trustworthiness. Contrary to predictive confidence, trust is not about knowing but about interpreting.[59] It requires a 'leap of faith'.

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57 Zaheer and Harris, "Interorganizational Trust," 170.

58 Oomsels and Bouckaert, "Studying Interorganizational Trust in Public Administration," 578–84; Ferrin, Bligh, and Kohles, "It Takes Two to Tango," 174; Vlaar, Van den Bosch, and Volberda, "On the Evolution of Trust, Distrust, and Formal Coordination and Control in Interorganizational Relationships," 5–6; Walker and Ostrom, *Trust and Reciprocity: Interdisciplinary Lessons for Experimental Reserach*, 6; Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness*, 1–27; Hoffman, "A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations," 376–77; Nooteboom, *Trust; Forms, Foundations, Functions, Failures and Figures*, 36–61; Möllering, "The Nature of Trust: From Georg Simmel to a Theory of Expectation, Interpretation and Suspension," 404, 412–13; Rousseau et al., "Not So Different After All," 394–95; Ring and van de Ven, "Developmental Processes of Cooperative Interorganizational Relations," 93; Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 712–14.

59 This explicitly leaves out 'calculative trust', a form of trust mostly mentioned in economic scholarship. In this concept, trust is ideally based on prediction and objectively decreases vulnerability. It is based on negative expectations about a partner; from a sociological perspective qualified as distrust. It resembles the mechanism presented above depicting rational calculations and control. Although calculative trust is shown to affect cooperative behaviors, it is distinct from the social-

From a sociological perspective, the perception of trustworthiness is fundamental for trust and therefore the key determinant of cooperative behavior.[60] Trust is nothing in or by itself. Whereas many psychological studies at the interpersonal level focus on the individual trust propensity, at the organizational level trust is not considered 'trait-like' or unidirectional.[61] In cooperation, trust is based on the belief that a partner will do the right thing. It involves the trustors' belief that their trustees have a responsibility, or even an obligation, to fulfil the trust placed in them. It is relational and reciprocal, requiring interaction with the partner to evolve. Although trustors can begin trusting relationships by a willingness to be vulnerable, it is 'trustees [who] determine the success of these relationships'.[62] Moreover, trust works two ways. The roles of trustor and trustee rest simultaneously with both partners. Reciprocal trustworthiness creates a complex system of interdependent relations where 'your own behavior is echoed back to you'.[63] For a positive expectation of behavior, partners both look at each other's characteristics and interpret why the other would be worthy of trust. This can be the case in particular relations between people or organizations, but can concern the trustworthiness of the network as a whole as well. It is for this reason that social relations and trust must be approached as parts of a generative mechanism instead of separate concepts with a unidirectional connection. They have an interplay and work in conjunction to facilitate cooperate behavior.

Trustworthiness provides handles for conceptualizing the phenomenon of relational trust. It is spelled out by scholars in a variety of ways. Despite their differences, most include three related conditions for partner trustworthiness that are based on a much-quoted article by Mayer et al. Trustworthiness is based on perceptions of ability, integrity and benevolence.[64] First, partners need to perceive each other as being able of fulfilling the expectations placed upon them. Knowing a partner's reputation is paramount in this, both for achieving operational results and for building and sustaining effective cooperative ties. This is largely cognitive. Second, partners need to perceive each other as integer. Recognizing a

relational concept of trust here. The latter is seen to have its own, separate, effect on cooperative behavior. In intelligence studies both concepts are often used intermingled and without distinction, adding other terms like 'confidence' and 'reliability'. This diffuses the clarity of the mechanisms at work.

60 O'Neill, "Linking Trust to Trustworthiness," 293–95; Reiersen, "Drivers of Trust and Trustworthiness," 3–4, 11; Ashraf, Bohnet, and Piankov, "Decomposing Trust and Trustworthiness," 204; Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness*, 29–32.

61 Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 344–45; Rathbun, *Trust in International Cooperation*, 39; Hardin, "Gaming Trust," 295.

62 Hoffman, "A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations," 381.

63 Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 121–22; Hardin, "Gaming Trust," 92–95; Walker and Ostrom, *Trust and Reciprocity: Interdisciplinary Lessons for Experimental Reserach*, 8; Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness*, 21–22.

64 Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 716–20; Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust"; Reiersen, "Drivers of Trust and Trustworthiness," 4–5; Schilke and Cook, "Sources of Alliance Partner Trustworthiness," 277, 283, 289–90; McEvily and Tortoriello, "Measuring Trust in Organisational Research," 4–5; Ferrin, Bligh, and Kohles, "It Takes Two to Tango," 163; Colquitt, Scott, and LePine, "Trust, Trustworthiness, and Trust Propensity," 909–11, 918; Seppänen, Blomqvist, and Sundqvist, "Measuring Inter-Organizational Trust—a Critical Review of the Empirical Research in 1990–2003," 250–56; Hardin, "Gaming Trust," 83–84; Yang and Maxwell, "Information-Sharing in Public Organizations," 169; Nooteboom, *Trust; Forms, Foundations, Functions, Failures and Figures*, 85–89.

partner's principles as acceptable, or even sharing them, is regarded a strong indication that his behavior will not include unpleasant surprises and that his frame of reference will be understandable. This is largely normative. Third, partners need to perceive each other as benevolent. Having a positive attitude produces goodwill towards a partner, caring for his welfare and encapsulating his interests. This is mainly affective. These conditions for trustworthiness are seen to work separately, as well as in conjunction, to determine the intensity of cooperation based on trusted relations.[65] As stated above, interorganizational trust holds a collective orientation towards these conditions. In such a collective view they are 'larger than the participants who are in them', based on perceptions of what a collective must be able to achieve, how this ought to be done and what is stands for.[66] From this point of view, intelligence services work together best when they know, recognize and value each other.

This study takes the conceptualization of trustworthiness and its conditions by Mayer et al. as the basis for constructing a conceptual framework fit for analyzing the role of social relations and trust in EU intelligence cooperation. Recognizing there is a difference between the two concepts, taking a relational approach meticulously ties trust to trustworthiness; the degree of trust based on beliefs and perceptions between partners. Therefore, for clarity's sake, this research hereafter will speak only about trust as an overarching term for both concepts. Starting from the concepts identified in the model by Mayer et al., the mechanism of social relations and trust needs to be further elaborated to provide handles for researching it in the context of intelligence. In the next subsections each of the conditions for trust is unraveled in underlying factors. For this, the research turns to relevant literature in sociology and interorganizational relations, as well as specific publications on trust. Based on these additional insights, it constructs a complemented conceptual framework for studying social relations and trust that is depicted in figure 8. Each of the conditions for trust is connected to a social structure and the process and entity for trust-building in this structure are clarified. For example, the next subsection shows how perceptions of ability (condition for trust) are formed within networks (structure) through reputations (entity) and familiarization (process).

3.4.2. Perceptions of Ability

The first condition for trust identified by Mayer et al. is for partners to have a favorable perception of each other's ability to perform. In their specific discussion of this

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65   Schilke and Cook, "Sources of Alliance Partner Trustworthiness," 280–83; Lotia and Hardy, "Critical Perspectives on Cooperation," 369; Colquitt, Scott, and LePine, "Trust, Trustworthiness, and Trust Propensity," 922; Hatch and Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," 989–1015; Hatch and Schultz, "Relations between Organizational Culture, Identity and Image," 356, 360–62; Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 717–22.

66   Rathbun, *Trust in International Cooperation*, 39, 25–26.

condition, they mostly limit themselves to stating that ability is about the competencies and characteristics that enable a party to have influence in a specific domain. These competencies and characteristics are domain-specific.[67] However, they say little about the way perceptions of ability are built or communicated nor do they differentiate between types of domains. Nevertheless, from the factors for trust-building mentioned in the remainder of their insightful publication and in other sociological publications on interorganizational relations and trust, it is possible to operationalize perceptions of ability further. Perceptions of ability are about reputation; an image of 'an organizations features, actions, achievements and overall standing'. Reputation is seen as one of the hallmarks for trust and cooperation; 'a universal currency for […] social interaction'. It refers not only to the core business of that organization, but also to 'its niche in its environment and its interrelationships with other organizations'.[68] In intelligence, reputations are seen to influence the level of cooperation. For example, SIGINT cooperation between Axis-partners Germany and Finland flourished up to and during World War 2, as the Germans held Finnish codebreakers at large in high esteem. At the same time cooperation with the Italians was limited as German officers held the Italians in contempt and qualified them as 'temperamentally unfit for serious crypto analysis'.[69] More recently, the United Nation's reputation for poor information security and lacking professional intelligence standards was found to discourage partners from sharing information, like in the case of the UN Mission to Mali (MINUSMA).[70]

A positive reputation is based on previous successful cooperation and helps future cooperation.[71] It attracts new partners or helps to maintain ties with current ones and can help solve the dilemma in (multilateral) public goods games.[72] Organizations with good reputations in a network are seen to be committed to cooperation and unlikely to behave opportunistically, as the latter would destroy their advantageous position. Moreover, as the use of their good reputation is dependent on the network, they tend not only to uphold trust themselves, but also between others.[73] The effect of reputations on continued cooperation, both on an organizational and on a personal level, can be seen in many professional fields

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67   Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 717–18.

68   Gioia, Hamilton, and Patvardhan, "Image Is Everything," 133–34; Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 345–46, 350; Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 717–18; Hatch and Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," 990, 994–95.

69   Alvarez, "Axis Sigint Collaboration," 4–9.

70   Martin-Brûlé, "Competing for Trust," 506–7; Rietjens and Baudet, "Stovepiping Within Multinational Military Operations: The Case of Mali"; Norheim-Martinsen and Ravndal, "Towards Intelligence-Driven Peace Operations?," 457–61; Dorn, "The Cloak and the Blue Beret," 416–17.

71   Számadó et al., "The Language of Cooperation," 2.

72   Milinski, "Reputation, a Universal Currency for Human Social Interactions," 4.

73   Rand and Nowak, "Human Cooperation," 417–19; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 31–32; Ostrom, "Toward a Behavioral Theory Linking Trust, Reciprocity, and Reputation," 43; Todeva and Knoke, "Strategic Alliances And Corporate Social Capital," 5–6; Hoffman, "A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations," 390; Nowak and Sigmund, "Cooperation versus Competition," 20; Dasgupta, "Trust as a Commodity," 53; Good, "Individuals, Interpersonal Relationships and Trust," 38.

where uncertainty and complexity are common, and where there is some competition, like in the case of expertise-sharing networks between firms.[74] It is also present in secretive groups where (law) enforcement is absent among a variety of anonymous actors with doubtful intentions, like in the dubious example of the crypto market for illegal drugs.[75] Reputations are the result of a familiarization process that evolves over time. Valuations of numerous individual encounters, on different levels and in varying circumstances, lead to more generalized views about the partner organization as a whole and are transmitted to others.

Knowing a partner's reputation requires a basic familiarity with their 'professional skills, competencies, and characteristics'.[76] It is seen as the 'first prerequisite of having anything to do with each other'.[77] Direct feedback, either from own experience or in a tight network, can foster trust perceptions between professionals as they provide a proof of ability that is otherwise difficult to observe'.[78] For example, in the case of multilateral intelligence cooperation like in NATO, 'some good-natured naming and shaming' can counter free-riding behavior.[79] Likewise, intelligence services can achieve or maintain a good reputation by directly communicating themselves about their ability to cooperate successfully. A possible case of such direct signaling, could be seen in 2018, when the Dutch MIVD openly communicated about a successful counterintelligence operation against Russian spies allegedly trying to breach into the systems of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).[80] This rare public statement of operational results by an intelligence service was made alongside British and American partners, making it clear that international cooperation had been crucial for the result achieved. Put this way, it signaled not only their competence in counterintelligence to a broad audience, but made visible their normally unobservable traits as a trustworthy ally as well. Yet, these direct forms of communicating ability are rare and can be part of deliberate branding. Often direct experience is simply lacking. In these cases, a judgment of ability needs to be based on reputational information

74   Svare, Gausdal, and Möllering, "The Function of Ability, Benevolence, and Integrity-Based Trust in Innovation Networks," 598; Chen, Dai, and Li, "A Delicate Balance for Innovation," 145–76; Luo, "A Coopetition Perspective of Global Competition," 129–44; Tiwana and Bush, "Continuance in Expertise-Sharing Networks," 85–101.

75   Przepiorka, Norbutas, and Corten, "Order without Law," 752–64.

76   Schilke and Cook, "Sources of Alliance Partner Trustworthiness," 280, 290–91; Hardin, "Gaming Trust," 92–93; Nooteboom, *Trust; Forms, Foundations, Functions, Failures and Figures*, 12–15; Todeva and Knoke, "Strategic Alliances And Corporate Social Capital," 24; Volk, "The Evolution of Trust and Cooperation in Diverse Groups. A Game Experimental Approach," 79.

77   Hardin, "Gaming Trust," 92; Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies," 441.

78   Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 71–72; Yang and Maxwell, "Information-Sharing in Public Organizations," 165; Gulati, "Does Familiarity Breed Trust? The Implications of Repeated Ties for Contractual Choice in Alliances," 167–69, 185; Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, 150–51; Smith, "Human Cooperation," 414; Gulati, "Does Familiarity Breed Trust? The Implications of Repeated Ties for Contractual Choice in Alliances," 105.

79   Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 170.

80   Bijleveld, "Russian Cyber Operation, Remarks Minister of Defence, 4 October in The Hague."

that is transmitted indirectly.[81] Trusted partners are used to acquire reputational information amongst themselves to assess the trustworthiness of unknown others. In international intelligence cooperation gossip reinforces relational bonds.[82]

The intelligence field seems to provide ample opportunity for partners to get familiarized and exchange reputational information. Its patchwork of connections holds numerous interactions in which members of intelligence services come together, in various settings and at various levels. Interagency personal contacts are fostered in collective education, regular meetings and standardized communications. Together, they create a diverse network of personal relations between key officials that can be an underpinning for trust. Often this seems to be about leadership. For example, the periodical meetings of European Heads of Domestic Services in the Club de Berne are thought to have been an invaluable fundament for later operational counter-terrorism cooperation in Europe.[83] Likewise, the regular encounters between numerous Heads of Services in NATO's military intelligence committee can provide fertile ground for operational cooperation. Although perhaps too large a setting to offer direct operational opportunities, they can be of service in 'the mutual confidence and understanding and the personal friendships they bring'.[84] The importance of personal ties between senior executives of partnering firms for cooperation is well-known in the field of business cooperation. For example, in the Taiwanese travel industry personal ties are often the start of horizontal strategic alliances.[85]

Networks provide useful leads for scrutinizing perceived ability in EU intelligence cooperation. They are social structures for familiarization and they hold information on reputation.[86] For example, network properties like density and centrality are strongly linked to reputations. The way a partner is embedded in a network of linkages both determines how much he will know about the others and gives strong indication about how well-perceived he is himself. Concerning familiarity, overlapping network ties 'typically generate a lot of

81 Przepiorka and Berger, "Signaling Theory Evolving," 13–18; Wu, Balliet, and Van Lange, "Reputation, Gossip, and Human Cooperation," 352–54.

82 Brown and Farrington, "Democracy and the Depth of Intelligence Sharing," 68–84; Számadó et al., "The Language of Cooperation," 2–5; Wu, Balliet, and Van Lange, "Reputation, Gossip, and Human Cooperation," 354; Malmendier, te Velde, and Weber, "Rethinking Reciprocity," 365; Rand and Nowak, "Human Cooperation," 414–15; Kramer, "Trust and Distrust in Organizations," 576–77.

83 Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 169–71; Guttmann, "Combatting Terror in Europe," 159; Pleschinger, "Allied Against Terror: Transatlantic Intelligence Cooperation," 55–67; Shpiro, "The Communication of Mutual Security: Frameworks for European-Mediterranean Intelligence Sharing," 21, 35.

84 Lander, "International Intelligence Cooperation," 489; Ballast, "Merging Pillars, Changing Cultures," 724; Gruszczak, *Intelligence Security in the European Union*, 105; Aldrich, "Transatlantic Intelligence and Security Cooperation," 18–19.

85 Tsaur and Wang, "Personal Ties, Reciprocity, Competitive Intensity, and Performance of the Strategic Alliances in Taiwan's Travel Industry," 911–28; Hu and Korneliussen, "The Effects of Personal Ties and Reciprocity on the Performance of Small Firms in Horizontal Strategic Alliances," 159–73; Schlump and Brenner, "Firm's Cooperation Activities: The Relevance of Public Research, Proximity and Personal Ties - A Study of Technology-Oriented Firms in East Germany."

86 Giardini et al., "Four Puzzles of Reputation-Based Cooperation," 52; Borgatti and Lopez-Kidwell, "Network Theory," 40; Yang and Maxwell, "Information-Sharing in Public Organizations," 167; Diekmann and Lindenberg, "Cooperation," 6–7.

knowledge relevant to trusting any particular partner within this network'.[87] In social networks, information - for example functional gossip - can flow from node to node along paths of consisting ties interlocked through shared endpoints.[88] In chapter 6 the entity of reputation and the process of familiarization will be examined within the network structure present in EU intelligence cooperation. It will include the complexity of the network as a whole, the position of the relevant actors within it, and the connectivity between them. The tighter the network, the more trust is able to influence cooperative behavior. The other way around, a sizeable and diverse network can make familiarization difficult and hamper favorable reputations. For example, in intelligence the functional divides between services can be the cause of insufficient familiarity, conflicting principles and incompatible traits; setting the stage for lacking mutual understanding, hampering interoperability, controversy, conflict and sometimes even rivalries.[89]

3.4.3. Perceptions of Integrity

The second condition for trust identified by Mayer et al. is for partners to perceive each other as having integrity. They do not focus on how this perception of integrity is formed nor do they dwell on the underlying entity that drives this process. Yet, from the elements that are being mentioned in their article and from other sociological publications on interorganizational relations and trust, it is again possible to elaborate further. Perceptions of integrity are about the idea that a partner will behave properly; abiding to a code of conduct that sets the rules of the game.[90] Similar, or at least acceptable, principles provide a clear and recognizable frame of norms and standards. These principles influence 'all aspects of how an organization deals with its primary purpose, its various environments, and its internal operations'.[91] They limit uncertainty by enabling partners to categorize each other in terms of expected behavior and compare this with what they think is appropriate in a given domain or situation. What the principles for appropriate behavior are, and which of them carry the most weight, depends on the specific (sub)community of practice, the circumstances at hand and the backgrounds of the organizations involved. For example, although mendacity is considered a faux pas in the relation between intelligence services and their political masters or oversight bodies, it can to some extent be acceptable behavior

87   Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness*, 21–23; Raub, Buskens, and Corten, "Social Networks," 670–71.

88   Buskens, "Social Networks and the Effect of Reputation on Cooperation," 2; Borgatti and Lopez-Kidwell, "Network Theory," 43.

89   Aldrich, "Dangerous Liaisons," 51; Wirtz, "Constraints on Intelligence Collaboration."

90   Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 719–20.

91   Schein and Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 6, 9–11; Schilke and Cook, "Sources of Alliance Partner Trustworthiness," 279; Yang and Maxwell, "Information-Sharing in Public Organizations," 166; Boyd and Richerson, *The Origin and Evolution of Cultures*, 206; Drake, Steckler, and Koch, "Information Sharing in and Across Government Agencies," 69, 81; Ostrom, "Toward a Behavioral Theory Linking Trust, Reciprocity, and Reputation," 40–41; Hatch and Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," 996–97.

in the intelligence community itself. In 2013 it became evident that the British GCHQ had breached the infrastructure of the Belgian telecommunications provider Belgacom to use it for their own advantage. The Belgian services were reported not to be involved or notified. The Belgian oversight committee concluded that clear norms were breached and that at the international level trust had taken a blow. They considered it '[no longer clear] who can be considered to be friendly services'. Yet, at the organizational level, the Belgian General Intelligence and Security Service (ADIV) pointed out that 'reverting to isolationism would not be the right response' and that cooperation had to be maintained.[92] Apparently, a degree of mendacity was considered the norm in the secretive world of intelligence, even in the relation between cooperating intelligence services, and could be forgiven.

In cooperation, clear and acceptable principles are helpful in preserving some order and expectation of reciprocity between partners, even in the face of deep faultlines. This set of principles is often tied to 'culture'.[93] Culture is even considered 'one of the most significant relational properties of security networks' and drives in-group/out-group dynamics.[94] A degree of 'value congruence' or 'cultural fit' is needed to limit uncertainty to a predictable and acceptable range of behaviors.[95] Partners will be 'most comfortable with others who share the same set of assumptions and very uncomfortable in situations where different assumptions operate because [they] will either not understand what is going on, or, worse, [...] will misperceive and misinterpreted the actions of others.'[96] Cultural differences are seen to be the cause of significant communications problems and conflict, for example in alliances between US pharmaceutical and biotechnology firms. Fundamental differences between their engineering and science cultures on how knowledge is understood and used, leading to diverging normative ideas on research centralization, negatively hampered alliance performance. When partners are being seen to reject or violate some of the culture-

92 Belgian Standing Intelligence Agencies Review Committee, "Activity Report 2014-2015," 32–39.

93   Almandoz, Marquis, and Cheely, "Drivers of Community Strength: An Institutional Logics Perspective on Geographical and Affiliation-Based Communities," 192–97; Chudek, Zhao, and Henrich, "Culture-Gene Coeveolution, Large-Scale Cooperation, and the Shaping of Human Social Psychology," 438, 424–44; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 90; Hofstede, "Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context," 20; Barretta, "The Functioning of Co-Opetition in the Health-Care Sector," 217–19; Hartmann and Gerteis, "Dealing with Diversity," 223; Henrich, "Cultural Evolution of Human Cooperation," 253; Nooteboom, *Trust; Forms, Foundations, Functions, Failures and Figures*, 64–65; Möllering, "The Nature of Trust: From Georg Simmel to a Theory of Expectation, Interpretation and Suspension," 406; Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation*, 23; Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies," 445–46, 462.

94 Whelan, "Security Networks and Occupational Culture," 114, 117–18; Lindenberg, Wittek, and Giardini, "Reputation Effects, Embeddedness, and Granovetter's Error," 118–20; Schein and Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 18; Williamson, "Calculativeness, Trust, and Economic Organization," 66.

95   Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 719–20; Kramer, "Trust and Distrust in Organizations," 579–81; Axelrod, *The Complexity of Cooperation; Agent-Based Models of Competition and Collaboration*, 145, 151–52; Cameron and Freeman, "Cultural Congruence, Strength, and Type: Relationships to Effectiveness," 24–25, 52; Douma, "Strategic Alliances," 581.

96 Schein and Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 21–22; Good, 'Individuals, Interpersonal Relationships and Trust', 44–45.

based principles in a community, this will damage their perceived trustworthiness.[97] For example, Cartmell shows that in intelligence disclosure of classified information by one of the partners - or their political masters - to third parties in the general public or to oversight committees can have detrimental effects on cooperation.[98]

Recognizing a partner's principles requires a process of categorization and comparison of their cultures; their frames for understanding and sensemaking. Social categorization divides the outside world in several groups according to their perceived similarity, reducing the complexity of information and comparing it to the self. The resulting categories are believed to hold information on what can reasonably be expected from a partner in that group. A process in which 'intra-group similarities and inter-group differences are accentuated'.[99] This cultural comparison is based on the more articulate elements of culture, mainly on championed norms and standards. Norms are a behavioral reflection of the guiding values and assumptions in a given community. Professional standards reflect this norm on 'what is right or wrong, what will work or what will not work'. They are often explicitly and repeatedly being articulated to guide members in their behavior, especially when confronted with uncertainty. Although sometimes reflected in formal rules, these standards are often informal. They are part of an intangible frame; a durable and recognized pattern of shared practices.[100] Many professional communities have occupational cultures that span the different organizations within it. For example, although cooperating competitors in the very formalized and controlled industry of Polish Aviation seldomly identified culture as a leading factor in their cooperation, many implicitly mentioned dissimilarities in norms, standards and ethics as barriers for sustained relationships.[101]

The intelligence community seems to have common principles that reflect the norms and standards in this occupation and enable recognition of a partner's integrity. They can provide a basis for trust-based cooperation.[102] Regarding shared principles, Simmel notes that organizations culturally defined by their ordination to be secret, display social restraint and

97   McGill and Gray, "Challenges to International Counterterrorism Intelligence Sharing," 77–81, 84; Hertzberger, "Counterterrorism Intelligence Cooperation in the EU," 62–63; Sirmon and Lane, "A Model of Cultural Differences and International Alliance Performance," 306–19.

98   Cartmell, "Long Term Intelligence Sharing," 426–27.

99   Schruijer, "The Social Psychology of Inter-Organizational Relations," 422–23.

100   Schein and Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4, 19; Reiersen, "Drivers of Trust and Trustworthiness," 6; Buzan, *From International to World Society?: English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation*, 166, 181; Herepath, "In the Loop," 859–60; MacFhionnlaoich, "Interorganizational Cooperation: Towards a Synthesis of Theoretical Perspectives," 12–13.

101   Klimas, "Organizational Culture and Coopetition," 91–102.

102   Guttmann, "Combatting Terror in Europe," 159; Svendsen, "Developing International Intelligence Liaison Against Islamic State," 260–61, 268; Svendsen, *Understanding the Globalization of Intelligence*, 91; Aldrich, "US–European Intelligence Co-Operation on Counter-Terrorism," 126.

formality to the outside world, mirrored by informality and lack of control on the inside.[103] Common norms and standards can become manifest in shared professional language and modus operandi, like a compatible view of the intelligence cycle, shared technical expertise, a standardized lexicon of qualifying words or agreeable definitions of intelligence topics.[104] The intelligence community is seen to 'harbor deeply embedded institutional and cultural legacies, preferences and biases that favor time-tested tradecraft and practices that they perceive to be the global gold standard'.[105] For example, adhering to established principles, like 'need-to-know', 'third-party-rule' or 'originator-control' can be powerful binding principles.[106]

Institutions provide valuable pointers for scrutinizing the role of perceived integrity in EU intelligence cooperation. They are highly important social structures for principles, categorization, cultural comparison and identity formation.[107] Institutions are - often informal - frames of reference and understanding for making sense of the world.[108] As such, they harbor the more readily observable part of culture. The underlying assumptions in cultures are seldomly articulated and 'so taken for granted' that group members will simply find any other premise inconceivable. They stay hidden. Institutions are based on cultural beliefs and assumptions, but they become visible through organizations; constellations for socially restricted behavior based on 'performance scripts'. These constellations can be more structural like a corporation, or more intangible like an occupation. What they have in common is an emphasis on membership.[109] Membership does not need to be formal to exert authority and in practice people are members of multiple communities adhering to multiple institutional frames and principles. The place where these communities meet is an interesting one. The resulting confrontation, contestation and conformation are likely to give valuable insights into the role of integrity perceptions in cooperation in a specific domain. In chapter 7 the entity of principles and the process of cultural categorization and comparison will be examined in the setting of the EU intelligence system. It looks at the preferred behavior of the intelligence community there, and the way its institutional membership is defined and understood. Again, this will be done in a qualitative in-depth

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103 Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies," 470–73, 482; Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," 20; Soeters, *Sociology and Military Studies*, 58.

104 Salmi, "Why Europe Needs Intelligence and Why Intelligence Needs Europe," 3; Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 163–67; Nomikos and Symeonides, "Coalition Building, Cooperation, and Intelligence," 684.

105 CSIS Technology and Intelligence Task Force, "Maintaining the Intelligence Edge," 6.

106 Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 173; Balzacq and Puybareau, "The Economy of Secrecy," 897–99; Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies," 445–46, 462; Hofstede, "Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context," 20.

107 von Billerbeck, "Sociological Institutionalism," 1–6.

108 These social institutions entail a broader concept than the institutions often used in liberal institutionalist theory. The latter is mostly about the consciously designed, formal organizations for dealing with various problems in international affairs. For this research, these organizations are merely one manifestation of informal social institutions.

109 Jepperson and Meyer, *Institutional Theory*, 39, 46; Franke, "Inter-Organizational Relations: Five Theoretical Approaches," 3–7; Franke and Koch, "Sociological Approaches," 174–77.

analysis. It will unveil more refined institutional dynamics and tendencies of the mechanism of social relations and trust in EU intelligence cooperation.

3.4.4. Perceptions of Benevolence

The third and final condition for trust identified by Mayer et al. is for partners to perceive each other as benevolent. Benevolence is the 'extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor, aside from an egocentric profit motive.'[110] On a group and individual level benevolence is known to be commonplace. It implies a caring attitude, or in the words of Mayer et al. 'a positive orientation of the trustee towards the trustor'.[111] They use the example of attachment in the paternalistic relationship between a mentor (trustee) and a protege (trustor). The mentor wants to help the protege, even though he is not required to do so and there is no extrinsic reward in it for him. Mainstream theories of international relations so far make little use of the concept of benevolence and realism is seen to discard it as 'nonsense' or at best a 'useful mask'.[112] Yet, there is increasing recognition that even in international relations benevolence plays a significant role. Even from a very transactional point of view, it is admitted that people sometimes 'act in accordance with a principle of sympathy. That is, they are able and willing to take into account the roles of their interaction partners and identify with their respective interests'.[113] Benevolence can alleviate fear of a partner's potentially opportunistic behavior and bolster a reasonable expectation of helping behavior. In international intelligence cooperation, it can preclude defection and stimulate burden sharing. Yet, to operationalize what a caring attitude means as an entity in cooperative behavior and to clarify the process of attachment that underlies it, it is necessary to elaborate further.

In cooperation, positive attitudes among partners create favorable expectations about the degree of solidarity in a particular relation or group. It means that partners see each other as the 'object of belonging and commitment, [sufficient] to [...] create meaningful relationships'.[114] They are thought to care for each other's well-being and interests are considered to be encapsulated. This encapsulating of interests does not omit the reciprocity on which cooperation is built or dismiss vulnerability, as it still recognizes 'the autonomy of

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110 Hatch and Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," 996–1001; Kohtamäki, Thorgren, and Wincent, "Organizational Identity and Behaviors in Strategic Networks," 36–43; Schultz, Hatch, and Larsen, "Scaling the Tower of Babel: Relational Differences between Identity, Image, and Culture in Organizations.," 9–35.

111 Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 719.

112 Ramel, "Overcoming Misrecognition," 4–5, 16–17.

113 Voss, "Institutional Design and Human Motivation: The Role of Homo Economicus Assumptions," 15.

114 Turner and Reynolds, "Self-Categorization Theory," 3–6; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 35; Rathbun, *Trust in International Cooperation*, 38–39; Schruijer, "The Social Psychology of Inter-Organizational Relations," 419; Cook, Hardin, and Levi, *Cooperation without Trust*, 4–5, 85; Hardin, "Gaming Trust," 82–83; Kramer, "Trust and Distrust in Organizations," 577–78; Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation*, 153; Ashforth and Mael, "Social Identity Theory and The Organization," 21–23.

the other and its capacity to act'.[115] Yet, it implies a degree of sociological merging, a sense of 'we' instead of 'you and I', ascribing 'group-defining characteristics to the self, and to take the collective's interest to heart'.[116] It creates cohesion and commitment in a community and allows for cooperation even in the face of competition. This process is seen in many upcoming industries as well as in more established and enduring alliances.[117] For example, in the case of the American artisanal beer craft industry, identification with traditional production first served as a way to contrast (and compete) with large-scale companies like Budweiser, but later became more of a 'special way of life' and gradually evolved into a collective trait of character. In the end, cooperation, even between competing firms, had become a core value of what was perceived as a tight-knit community with a collective identity and common sense of purpose.[118] For international cooperation and public administration, similar processes in international bureaucracies have received considerable scholarly attention.[119]

Encapsulating a partner's interests requires a process of attachment and bonding. It distinguishes likeable in-groups, where partners care for each other's welfare, from out-groups where this is less the case. Affective ties create solidarity to a specific group that can be witnessed in high degrees of cohesion and commitment.[120] They form a powerful basis for trusting behavior in cooperation, going beyond mere cognition and normative concerns.[121] Actors with identical dispositions are seen to form increasingly frequent relationships, compared with those who do not perceive to share characteristics. Experiences in homogenous groups tend to be perceived as less demanding, more agreeable and more efficient (although not necessarily more effective). This tendency of similarity-attraction is also known as the notion of 'homophily' in social networks. In interorganizational relations, patterns of homophily, comfortably sticking to what is known, are remarkably robust.[122] Soeters and Goldenberg note that in information sharing, people 'have a tendency to connect

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115 Ramel, "Overcoming Misrecognition," 6.

116 van Knippenberg and Sleebos, "Organizational Identification versus Organizational Commitment," 572; Yang and Maxwell, "Information-Sharing in Public Organizations," 167; Tomasello et al., *Why We Cooperate*, 57–58; Colquitt, Scott, and LePine, "Trust, Trustworthiness, and Trust Propensity," 911; Cook, Hardin, and Levi, *Cooperation without Trust*, 42–43; Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman, "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust," 718–19; Deutsch, "A Theory of Co-Operation and Competition," 149–50.

117 Fine and Holyfield, "Secrecy, Trust, and Dangerous Leisure: Generating Group Cohesion in Voluntary Organizations," 391–92, 399, 405.

118 Mathias et al., "An Identity Perspective on Coopetition in the Craft Beer Industry," 3086–3115.

119 Biermann, "The Role of International Bureaucracies," 248–53.

120 Fine and Holyfield, "Secrecy, Trust, and Dangerous Leisure: Generating Group Cohesion in Voluntary Organizations," 387.

121 Volk, "The Evolution of Trust and Cooperation in Diverse Groups. A Game Experimental Approach," 16–17; Hatch and Schultz, "The Dynamics of Organizational Identity," 1006–10; Ashforth and Mael, "Social Identity Theory and The Organization," 31–33.

122 Soeters, *Sociology and Military Studies*, 52; Aksoy, "Effects of Heterogeneity and Homophily on Cooperation," 339–441; Lozares et al., "Homophily and Heterophily in Personal Networks. From Mutual Acquaintance to Relationship Intensity," 2658; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 3, 24; Schruijer, "The Social Psychology of Inter-Organizational Relations," 427–28; Bowles and Gintis, "22 Origins of Human Cooperation," 437–38; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook, "Birds of a Feather," 416–17, 428–29; Riolo, Cohen, and Axelrod, "Evolution of Cooperation without Reciprocity," 441, 443.

to others who are like them'.[123] Yet, it can be the other way around as well. In intelligence, Byman names conflicting sense of purpose as an important barrier for cooperation between services that are primarily focused on regime survival and those that derive their raison d'être from supporting decision making in foreign affairs or defence.[124] Moreover, in the secretive and closed world of intelligence in-group dynamics can have positive effects on cooperation, but can also reinforce cognitive biases and hamper cooperation with the outside of the community.[125]

Caring attitudes and attachment seem concepts far away from international intelligence cooperation. Affective ties and solidarity relate poorly to the traditional view of national organizations striving for national gains. A much-quoted adage on international intelligence cooperation is that intelligence services have no friends.[126] Yet, longstanding arrangements for intelligence cooperation can provide platforms for attachment and bonding, ultimately creating a shared sense of purpose and collective identity. Moreover, caring attitudes and feelings of attachment are not beholden to formal structures. In fact, they may grow within any 'system of cooperative effort and coordinated activities', such as a work group, profession or 'other ensemble of individuals in more frequent social interaction than with others'.[127] Informal communities of practice, based on 'daily, routinised, or patterned production and the extent of shared value, interest and habit', are seen to develop a sense of belonging, shared identity and goodwill towards other members that enables them to cooperate and derive resources on the basis of a generalized expectation of reciprocity for that group.[128] The informality and decentralized character of these communities are often practical reflections of an evolved trust-based relation that enables a high level of risk-acceptance and in-depth cooperation. For example, the CTG provides an intimate and closed locus for cooperation between organizations, centered around a certain shared purpose and common understanding. They operate through a notion of 'shared secrecy', where information is exchanged easily between this small group of participants, while being selectively shared

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123 Soeters and Goldenberg, "Information Sharing in Multinational Security and Military Operations. Why and Why Not?," 40.

124 Byman, "US Counterterrorism Intelligence Cooperation with the Developing World and Its Limits," 145–60.

125 CSIS Technology and Intelligence Task Force, "Maintaining the Intelligence Edge," 6; Soeters, *Sociology and Military Studies*, 57–58; Costas and Grey, "Bringing Secrecy into the Open," 1436–38; Georg Simmel, "The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies," 486, 489.

126 Lowenthal, *Intelligence*, 163–78; Aldrich, "Dangerous Liaisons."

127 Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 48; Smith, Carroll, and Ashford, "Intra- And Interorganizational Cooperation: Toward A Research Agenda," 8; Powell and Oberg, "Networks and Institutions," 346–47.

128 Almandoz, Marquis, and Cheely, "Drivers of Community Strength: An Institutional Logics Perspective on Geographical and Affiliation-Based Communities," 192; Koops, "Theorising Inter-Organisational Relations," 329–31; Powell and Oberg, "Networks and Institutions," 447–48; Græger, "European Security as Practice," 481; Bowles and Gintis, *A Cooperative Species*, 169–70; Greenwood et al., "Institutional Complexity and Organizational Responses," 346–47; Wenger, Trayner, and de Laat, "Promoting and Assessing Value Creation in Communities and Networks: A Conceptual Framework," 63; Wenger, *Communities of Practice : Learning, Meaning, and Identity.*; Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation*, 23; Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," 3, 26; DiMaggio and Powell, "The Iron Cage Revisited," 148–54.

with others like EUROPOL and EU INTCEN.[129] Davis Cross argues that, when it comes to explaining the potential Europeanization of intelligence, these informal relationships among intelligence professionals tend to be neglected.[130]

Identities provide valuable leads for scrutinizing perceived benevolence in EU intelligence cooperation. These identities form the social structure for caring attitudes in a community and the basis for attachment and bonding. A collective identity is the result of the repeated activities of a diverse set of organizations, the emergence of clear patterns of interaction, mutual awareness of participants that they are in a common enterprise and, eventually, a degree of acculturation. It refers to a homogenization of how partners perceive and understand who they are and what they stand for as an organization. In extremis, caring attitudes and attachment within a collective identity lead to a situation in which continuing the relationship becomes as important as its outcome. However, in practice, cooperative arrangements are seen to preserve a dynamic set of multiple sub identities that together form the collective identity and shape cooperative behavior.[131] The prime example of benevolence in international intelligence cooperation is the UK-US relationship, the backbone of the Five Eyes intelligence community. It provides a clear example of encapsulated interest and collective identity. In this community, the enduring belief 'in defending the freedom of democracies' is considered a powerful foundational value. A shared sense of purpose and 'a culture of cooperation' that is 'handed on from generation to generation' sustains cooperation.[132] In its 70-year existence, despite occasional strategic and operational differences, the partnership proved remarkably resilient.[133] In chapter 8 the entity of attitudes and the process of attachment and bonding will be examined in the setting of the EU intelligence system. It looks at affective ties and the commitment, cohesion and solidarity they cause. Although perhaps not as strong as in the case of the Five Eyes community, that chapter will unveil identity dynamics that provide a fresh insight in the mechanism of social relations and trust in EU intelligence cooperation.

129 Bigo, "Shared Secrecy in a Digital Age and a Transnational World," 379–80; Labasque, "The Merits of Informality in Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation," 493, 495; Bakker, "The Importance of Networks and Relationships," 32; Schaefer, "Intelligence Cooperation and New Trends in Space Technology"; Fägersten, *For EU Eyes Only?*, 2; Lozares et al., "Homophily and Heterophily in Personal Networks. From Mutual Acquaintance to Relationship Intensity," 2658; Crawford, "Intelligence Cooperation," 20; Volk, "The Evolution of Trust and Cooperation in Diverse Groups. A Game Experimental Approach," 15; Müller Wille, "The Effect of International Terrorism on EU Intelligence Co-Operation"; Lau and Murnighan, "Demographic Diversity and Faultlines: The Compositional Dynamics of Organizational Groups," 17; Abrams et al., "Knowing What to Think by Knowing Who You Are," 97–119; Ashforth and Mael, "Social Identity Theory and The Organization," 20, 22, 26.

130 Davis Cross, "The Limits of Epistemic Communities," 391.

131 Ungureanu et al., "Collaboration and Identity Formation in Strategic Interorganizational Partnerships," 17–19; Volk, "The Evolution of Trust and Cooperation in Diverse Groups. A Game Experimental Approach," 37, 68; Swann et al., "Finding Value in Diversity: Verification of Personal and Social Self-Views in Diverse Groups," 16–22; Ashforth and Mael, "Social Identity Theory and The Organization," 22.

132 Omand, *How Spies Think; 10 Lessons in Intelligence*, 163, 168.

133 Wells, *Between Five Eyes; 50 Years of Intelligence Sharing*, 135, 202–3.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter explored the conditions for cooperative behavior in intelligence and introduces a sociological approach. It demonstrates that unravelling trust provides a valuable, complementary perspective that nuances our understanding. The mechanism of rational calculations and control may be important in collaboration, but it insufficiently explains efficient and sustained international intelligence cooperation over time. The mechanism of social relations and trust seems to provide a valuable complement. It enables actors to cooperate, despite the uncertainty and vulnerability inherently present in the process. The conditions for trust that are known from sociological publications on interorganizational relations are found applicable to the 'special', secretive world of intelligence as well. The practical art of intelligence might differ from other domains, and therefore the exact setting and valuation of trust, but conceptually their relations appear to resemble those between organizations and professionals in other fields.

At first sight, cooperation on the basis of social relations and trust seems rare in the international intelligence arena. Trust may be considered important, but intelligence services are seldomly thought of as holding one, shared identity or to encapsulate each other's interests. Many institutional divides exist between them, both national, functional and structural. However, on closer inspection the intelligence community offers a potential basis for trust that can overcome conflicting faultlines. Known reputations, recognized principles and caring attitudes can socially bind intelligence professionals together, allowing them to bridge divides like nationality and even conflicting interests. Moreover, social relations include sources of non-material-reciprocity that can be just as important for competitive advantage as material gain. In practice, services and their professionals often cooperate in long-standing arrangements without being able to rationally calculate the outcome or control the risks involved. Arrangements that seem to favor social relations and trust-building.

By departing from a purely material approach, a more nuanced understanding of arrangements for intelligence cooperation comes within reach. Intangible social relations enable partners to cooperate despite vulnerabilities attached, even allowing to be simultaneously competitive and cooperative. Trust is a key mediator in this. By conceptually unravelling the conditions for trust, it becomes possible to study this phenomenon in depth and examine the role it plays in achieving reasonable expectations in cooperation. From this perspective, particular traits of the intelligence community that are often mentioned as obstacles for cooperation, like pragmatism, secrecy and informality, can very well be the ties that bind in this diverse community of practice, bolstering cooperative behavior through connected networks, shared institutions and collective identities.

This chapter constructs a viable conceptual framework for examining the mechanism of social relations and trust in international intelligence cooperation. It is depicted in figure 8 below. Starting from the model by Mayer et al., it identifies perceptions of ability, integrity and benevolence as conditions for trust. Subsequently, it complements these conditions with insights from sociological approaches to interorganizational relations and trust. Based on a wide range of publications, it adds the entities, processes and structures at work. This theoretically informed framework on social relations and trust will be used to critically examine the case of the EU intelligence system in chapters 5 to 8. Not to measure the degree of cooperative behavior there or predict future outcomes. This would not suit the post-positivist stance and critical realist approach of this research. Moreover, part of the mechanism 'may exist unexercised or be exercised unrealized'.[134] The aim is to better understand the working of social relations and trust in shaping preferences for cooperative behavior in intelligence. Before stepping into the empirics, the next chapter will first clarify the design and methods to achieve this aim and answer the research question.
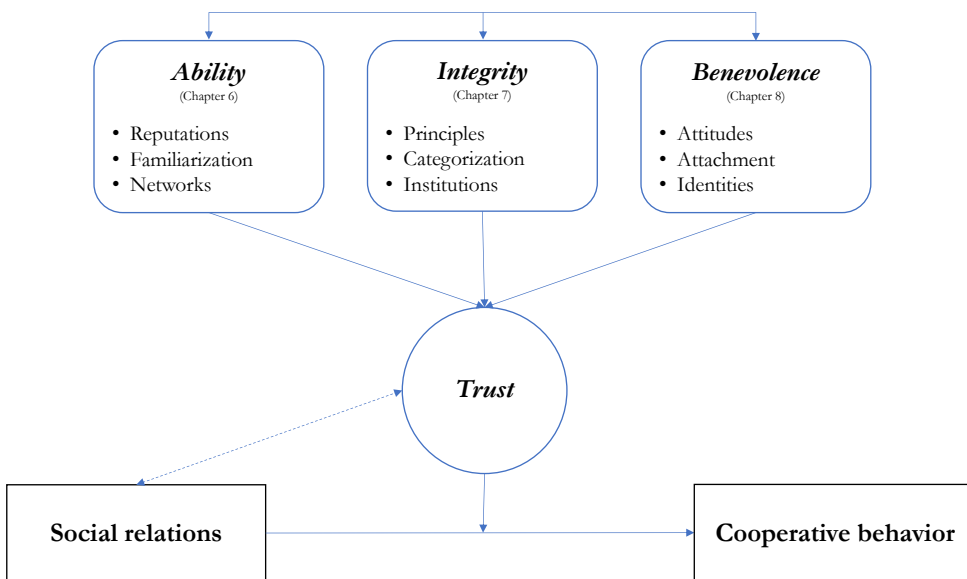

Figure 8; The conceptual framework for examining social relations and trust in cooperative behavior

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134 Danermark et al., *Explaining Society: An Introduction to Critical Realism in the Social Sciences*, 113, 136–39, 142–43; Bhaskar, *The Possibility of Naturalism*, 10; Archer, "Realism in the Social Sciences," 190.