

# ***‘Alignment, not Alliance: The Shifting Paradigm of International Security Cooperation’***

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## **Introduction**

The concept of alliance - or preferably ‘alignment’, as I shall explain below – is central to the conduct of international politics, and thus the discipline of International Relations (IR). Duffield et al. (2008: 291) identify that ‘Alliances are one of the most significant phenomena in security studies and world politics more generally’, while Modelski (1963: 773) considers them ‘one of a dozen or so key terms of International Relations’. These views are widely accepted on account of the vast empirical and theoretical bodies of literature dedicated to their study, ranging across the Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist schools of IR, and including both qualitative and quantitative approaches [\[insert literature sample\]](#).

As Snyder (1997: 2) argues ‘Any interaction between states, friendly or hostile, no matter how minor, may create expectations and feelings of alignment or opposition or both.’ This is evident as far back as the 3rd BCE in the writings of the Indian scholar Kautilya (Chanakya). Alignment is a crucial aspect of inter-state relations in the international system and is also fundamental to our understanding of such related areas of enquiry as ‘security architecture’ and ‘coalition warfare’ (Tow [FIND/DATE](#); Wilkins 2006; 2007; 2008). Furthermore, it has been suggested that alignment may provide the ‘missing link’ between the structure of the international system and the processes of unit behaviour, that the discipline seeks to bridge (Snyder: 32). Therefore alignment permeates all aspects of IR, in both its empirical and theoretical dimensions.

Before we proceed further however a fundamental definitional and conceptual distinction must be made. As Snyder (1997: 3) notes, ‘The protean character of alliances and alignments makes a clear definition essential.’ Unfortunately ‘Alliance’ and ‘alignment’ are often employed as synonyms: this is erroneous. Let us be clear: according to Osgood (1968: 17) an alliance is ‘a formal agreement that pledges states to co-operate in using their military resources against a specific state or states and usually obligates one or more of the signatories to use force, or to consider (unilaterally or in consultation with allies) the use of force in specified circumstances.’ More will be said upon the definitional problems of alliance below. While, properly employed, ‘alignment’ refers to ‘a broader and more fundamental term...defined as expectations of states about whether they will be supported or opposed by other states in future interactions’ (Snyder: 6). An alliance is merely one, albeit prominent, form of alignment. After all, Morgenthau reminds us (2005: 194) that ‘Not every community of interests, calling for common policies and actions also calls for legal codification in an explicit alliance.’ An alliance merely adds formality and precision to such collaborative arrangements.

This was a crucially important distinction made at the time of Snyder's ground-breaking study *Alliance Politics*, but one that seems to have gone largely unheeded. Thus, Snyder (1997: 123) notes that we 'must not be limited to formal alliances ... What we really want to understand is the broader phenomenon of "alignment" of which explicit alliance is merely a subset.' Regrettably, lexical confusion continues to prevail in existing scholarship. According to Ward (1982: 14) 'Much written work uses the three different orientations – alliance, alignment, and coalition – as though they were identical.' They are not. Alignment is a covering concept for all the others, as this chapter will seek to demonstrate.

Not only is this distinction fundamental to theorising the phenomenon of alignment and alliance study (sometimes known as *Foederology*, from the Latin 'Foederis': to ally), but it better reflects the empirical reality, contemporary *and* historical. As Khanna (2008: 324) identifies, we now live 'In a world of alignments, not alliances'. Indeed, we always have, with the dominance of the Cold War formal military alliance paradigm an aberration that temporarily distorted our perception of the phenomena. A good example of this misapplication of alliance, where alignment would have been the operative descriptor, is in quantitative analyses, such as the ATOP (Alliance Treaty Obligations Project) or COW (Correlates of War) datasets ([INSERT refs](#)). All manner of historical alignments – alliances, coalitions, non-aggression pacts and ententes – are grouped under the umbrella term of 'alliance' in the ATOP, when clearly they would fall short on many aspects of the typical alliance definition above/below, if subjected to greater scrutiny.

That such misclassification continues to occur and the fact that few scholars have systematically addressed this discrepancy is a cause for concern for the discipline. Providing clear distinctions, greater conceptual clarity, and a concise taxonomy of different alignment types becomes all the more pressing as the familiar Cold War alliance system recedes into the past, with the Warsaw Pact extinct and NATO virtually changed beyond all recognition from its 1949 origins. On this basis Menon (2008) predicts that we are entering an era in which US foreign policy will experience an 'end of alliances'. He posits that a 'paradigm shift' away from formal military alliances such as NATO, and the US-ROK and Japan bilateral agreements, is occurring in which more flexible and less binding allied arrangements will become the preferred tools of American statecraft. He contends that '*alignment* is a supple and creative mode of statecraft; *alliances*, by contrast, can become rigid – and limiting as a result' (Menon: xii). We should not be surprised to witness this, since 'Alignments constantly change with changing patterns of power, interests, and issue priorities' (Snyder:7). We should not however, ignore it. Not only are new forms of alignment such as the 'strategic partnership' model emerging, but the very nature of 'alliance' itself is undergoing metamorphosis, as will be shown below.

A broader conception of alignment, and even sub-types of alliance, is necessary to comprehend the empirical realities of the contemporary world and reconsider distorted notions of the past.

This chapter does not attempt to address the larger task of theorising alignment/alliance; there is no space to probe the internal and external dynamics of each form of alignment here. There exists a vast body of work employing Realist, Liberal-Institutionalist and formal modelling approaches to alliance theorising, with Walt (1987), Snyder (1997), and most recently, Weitsman (2004), the most exemplary

of these. Rather, I aim to differentiate and outline the key attributes, with examples, typical of each sub-division of alignment enumerated here.

There are many gaps in our knowledge of alignment, a dedicated effort at a conceptual taxonomy salient among them. Because of the deficiencies in our understanding of the phenomenon of alignment, coupled with the paradigm shift away from the dominant Cold War alliance model, it is timely to re-examine and rejuvenate the concept. I therefore aim to contribute a working taxonomy which identifies the variations across the phenomenon of alignment and classify these into a logical order, in the spirit of Carl Linnaeus. I recognise that while all forms of alignment share the property of being cooperative security endeavours, they display considerable differentiation *between* types and structural variation *within* types. That is, every 'coalition' or 'strategic partnership', for example, will be unique with regard to purpose, membership, formalisation, scope, cohesion, capabilities, and duration.

To accomplish these objectives, the chapter will examine four prominent archetypes of alignment, including first and foremost, 'alliances', followed by 'coalitions', 'security communities', and 'strategic partnerships'. Before concluding it briefly considers other less prevalent types of alignment (*ententes*, non-aggression pacts, 'spheres of influence' (?)).

## A Taxonomy of Alignment Archetypes

### 1. Alliance:[1150]

I commence with the discussion of the 'alliance' archetype for several reasons. First, it is the most salient and significant of all the forms of alignment, empirically, and in the literature base. Second, it is the type of alignment that the reader will be most familiar with, and third, it further helps to address the definitional *problematique* to examine this archetype first, in order to compare it with the following alignments (2-4).

Osgood's definition of alliance was advanced during the introduction, and is very similar to that proffered by Snyder (1997:4): 'Alliances are formal associations of states for the use (or non-use) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own membership.' This is the most precise and best-crafted definition we have of alliance, among myriad contenders. It is to be greatly preferred to the definition of Walt (1987: 1 (subsequently revised)): 'a formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states' or Weitsman (2004: 7): 'bilateral or multilateral agreements to provide some element of security to the signatories.' These definitions are so loose as to be capable of comprehending just about any security-related communication between states (for example the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922, OPEC, or the superpower *détente* of the 1970s – arrangements no one would seriously dub an 'alliance'), and should therefore be rejected. However, they do inadvertently stand as very serviceable definitions of 'alignment'.

In order to give just consideration to the other lesser-studied forms of alignment below I will not provide an exhaustive examination of the alliance archetype, notwithstanding discussion of new variations of alliance that follow. Briefly stated; alliances may be unilateral (where a strong power commits to serve as protector for a very small/weak power, without reciprocity, for example: US security

guarantees to Taiwan), bilateral, or multilateral groupings of states designed for offensive or defensive military collaboration. They are customarily enshrined in a treaty outlining the mutual expectations and *casus belli* of the parties. This treaty may be succinct leaving contingencies and commitments vague and open to multiple (and differing) interpretations, or may be extraordinarily detailed, so as to give in-depth provisions for each and every possible contingency. This certainly does not mean that all treaties signify alliances however, as the ATOP has apparently inferred.

Alliance theorists have reached a general consensus that alliances are about capability aggregation and form to counter-balance powerful states (Waltz); ones perceived as threatening adversaries (Walt). They are assumed to dissolve when such a threat is dissipates or is eliminated. There are challenges to this long-held orthodox logic however. Wallander (2000) argues that institutional momentum can prolong and preserve the life of an alliance absent the threat it was created to counter, highlighting NATO as a prime example. Weitsman adds the interesting caveat that alliances may form without a 'clear an present danger' ('hedging'), while Schroeder (1976) contends that states may form alliances in order to restrain their putative adversaries, for example the US-Japan alliance(?). Allying with one's adversaries is the condition of *pacta de contrahendo* (Schroeder) or 'tethering' (Weitsman). The Triple Alliance and Triple Entente began in such a fashion, according to Weitsman (2004).

For the Cold War, in which this type of alignment – the formal military alliance with treaty – dominated both the actual geopolitical landscape and the scholarship of Strategic Studies, the exemplars have been NATO and the Warsaw Pact. To understand these organisations is to understand how the formal military alliance is characterised and classified. As Weitsman recognises, the Triple Entente (later the 'Allies') and the Triple Alliance (later the 'Central Powers' or '*Mittelmächte*') are also good examples of treaty-based military alliances, defensive in purpose, but capable of offensive action if provoked/attacked. It is highly debatable if either of the World War II opposing blocs could be categorised as an alliance, since many of the trappings, de jure or de facto, of alliance were lacking. In particular, the Western allies (the British Empire and the US) fought independently from the Soviet Union. Other than the famous 'Grand Alliance' diplomatic summitry that occurred, there was a near-absence of treaties (the defunct Anglo-Soviet Treaty notwithstanding), and practically no joint operational planning or intelligence sharing was entered into. It would in the circumstances be better perhaps to consider this an example of 'coalition warfare' (see below), rather than an alliance at war, given that there were no prior security arrangements of note between the powers *antebellum*. Perhaps we need to rethink our blanket classification of historical alignments as 'alliances'; a feature attributed to the fact that virtually all IR scholarship on these was conducted during the time of the Cold War, and thus historical case studies were filtered through this prism.

Having elucidated in sufficient depth for our purposes, the traditional formal military alliance archetype, it is now apposite to contemplate how this model is being transformed in the post Cold War world. It should be remembered that bipolar Cold War alliance system – the empirical linchpin for Waltz's (1979) theorising of balance of power, may be never-to-be-repeated circumstances. Snyder affirms that 'The large alliances of the post-1945 period, such as NATO...are exceptions, associated with the brief bipolar structure of world power' (Snyder: 12). Moreover, Campbell (153) argues that 'Conclusions of a demise or indisputable irrelevance of alliances are

premature...The More relevant question then is not whether alliances are dead but rather how they are adapting to new exigencies and conditions.'

It is with this in mind that we turn to 'new' permutations of the orthodox alliance model. Cossa et al. (2009: 32) note 'As instruments of national policy, alliances are dynamic elements that are in a constant process of evolution, adjusting roles, missions, and capabilities to adapt to an ever-changing international environment.' Let us examine the latest evolutions, particularly from a US-perspective, given the ample empirical data on the world-wide network of Washington's allies. The first of these new sub-sets of alliance is what Cha dubs the 'quasi alliance'. This takes the form of an alliance in which 'one in which two states remain unallied but share a third party as a common ally' (Cha: 3). This concept is largely propounded upon the US-Japan-ROK case study, but it has gained reasonable traction to describe other alignments; as Campbell (155) points out might apply to Washington's relations with the Gulf States. Secondly, Cossa (1999) coined the term 'virtual alliance' to describe the same trilateral relationship, but the conceptual complexion of this was left largely undeveloped. Fortunately, Morgenthau (193) steps in to the breach, having defined the essence of such a concept many years before: 'It occurs when their interests so obviously call for concerted policies and actions that an explicit formulation of these interests, policies and actions in the form of a treaty of alliance appears to be redundant.' Other good empirical examples are the US-UK 'special relationship'; one that demonstrates properties of collaboration stronger than most formal alliances, and the US-Japan-Australia Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) arrangement, through which these powers coordinate allied policy toward the Asia-Pacific region.

In summary, Campbell asserts that 'Alliances will look and act differently than they used to, but they are not dead yet.'(Campbell: 162).

## 2. *Coalition: [665]*

When examining the coalition archetype of alignment, we are once again confronted with a thorny definitional problem. Nitze (1976: 22) notes that 'Historically the words "coalition and "alliance" have been used interchangeably.' Though often conflated by scholars and practitioners alike, the phenomena are not strictly identical despite a number of ostensible resemblances (see below). Perhaps the most succinct definition is provided by Pierre (2002: 2): 'Reduced to its essence, a coalition may be defined as a grouping of like-minded states that agree on the need for joint action on a specific problem at a particular time with no commitment to a durable relationship.' An empirical example serves well to distinguish coalitions from alliances. According to Silkett (1993: 75) 'The 1990-91 Gulf War provides the most recent example of a substantial and successful coalition...NATO, on the other hand, provides the most recent, most enduring example of an alliance.'

Coalitions and coalition warfare have been immutable features of the international system from at least the time of Thucydides and the Peloponnesian Wars (C5th BCE) to the present day, and yet the decades following the break-up of the bipolar alliance bloc system in 1989, have reawakened the usage of the concept. Woodman (1997: 81) detects that since the early 1990's 'there has been a shift away from formal alliance structures based on military force to more transient marriages of convenience on specific issues.' Coalition-building and participation form major features of the defence strategies of the US, UK, Australia and Japan, to name but the

more prominent examples. Alliances and coalitions often overlap as Pierre (ix) testifies: 'Coalitions have not replaced our traditional alliances but instead they draw heavily on the capabilities of our alliance partners, in combination with regional actors in the crisis area.' Thus, Thomas (1997: 11) asserts that 'All of the major Allies recognise the importance of coalitions to their ability to use military power.'

As with alliances, all coalitions will evince unique characteristics. Neilson and Prete (xii) identify that *coalitions* are a phenomenon easily observed but awkwardly characterised.' If we can make some general observations about their attributes, many of these are evident in their contra-distinction to alliances. Pierre (2) specifies that 'Coalitions are, by definition, ad hoc and temporary. This distinguishes them from relatively permanent, treaty-based alliances or standing international institutions. Sheehan (1996: 59) observes how 'Alliances are based around states with a certain number of common interests. Coalitions tend to be based on a single common interest, but one of sufficient importance to override their differences on other issues.' Thus Rice (1997: 152) notes that 'Unlike alliances, which have an enduring element to them, coalitions are ad hoc, short term, and established for a specific objective.' In this sense, coalitions are *immediate* alignments rather than *contingent* ones. Alliances are when a future threat is clearly identified and planned for (a 'specific threat'). Coalitions form when this threat has not been foreseen and states are caught by surprise (a 'non-specific' or 'unexpected' threat). What is more coalitions have adapted to address new military tasks, as the continued counterinsurgency operations and 'nation-building' efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq testify. Pierre (1) discerns how 'Coalitions are also irreplaceable for dealing with post conflict political and economic reconstruction.'

Though they should never be conflated with alliances, since coalitions deal with multilateral military cooperation they are susceptible to many of the same tools of analysis, though sometimes with modifications. Detailed study of coalitions was initiated by the Soviets during the Cold War. The study, *Koalitsionnaya Voina*, involved

an investigation of what precisely constitutes a coalition – an effective coalition – not to mention the composition of coalition armies, the problem of military effectiveness, the aspect of what might be called the military "division of labour," and the co-ordination of decisions (Neilson & Prete: xii).

While this and Neilson and Prete's *Coalition Warfare: An Uneasy Accord* serve as exemplars of coalition warfare analysis on the empirical plane, much of the 'alliance' literature, with an without adaptation, has been usefully employed to theorise coalition behaviour. One of the major caveats in applying theories and frameworks designed to explain alliance behaviour, usually in peacetime, is the fact that coalitions are primarily war-fighting alignments. Weitsman is one of the few to try to bridge this gap, though dedicated studies of coalition warfare do exist, the most notable being Pierre, Starr (1972), and the author (2006).

### 3. *Security Community*[735]

A relative newcomer to our repertoire of alignment archetypes is the 'security community'. This concept was identified by Deutsch (1957) in his study of the North Atlantic area and refers to the creation of a peaceful comity of states through gradual

confidence building and integration. *Prima facie* it might seem that the concept of security community better belongs to analyses of collective security, while alliance and coalition are clearly collective defence/offence institutions. Nevertheless, it conforms to our definition of alignment as a multilateral organisation that provides some element of security to its members and mutual expectations of support in their future interactions (above). Just like alliances and coalitions, Pouliot (2006: XX) reminds us that ‘security communities are vehicles of international order.’ One interesting facet about the security community concept is the way that it has served as a political driver for alignment in the empirical world as much as a theoretical template for analysis of pre-existing phenomena (as in the case of alliances and coalitions). This is illustrated by the stated intention of ASEAN to develop itself into a fully-fledged security community, discussed below.

Deutsch (1957: 5) defines the condition of a security community as ‘the attainment, within a territory, of a sense of community and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure, for a “long” time, dependable expectations of peaceful change’. Thus, states align together to eliminate the use of violence as a recourse of action within their designated political community, and work together to change intramural perceptions to forge a common identity (or ‘we-feeling’). Space does not permit a thorough examination of all of the attributes, permutations and debates regarding the concept. Some of the key aspects of Deutsch’s original approach include the important distinction between ‘pluralistic’ and ‘amalgamated’ security communities. If the states remain separate entities this is denoted as a ‘pluralistic’ security community, like ASEAN, if they surrender a measure of their national sovereignty to the security community’s supra-national institutional apparatus, it becomes an ‘amalgamated’ security community, such as the United States (after the American Civil War).

Though all security community scholars pay homage to Deutsch, as neo-realists do to Waltz, this has not prevented fierce debate on interpreting and reinterpreting his writings. Constructivist scholars Adler and Barnett (1998) build upon Deutsch’s concept, further refining it to consider ‘shared identities, values, and meanings’, many-sided direct interactions, and reciprocal long-term interests. They advance a theoretical framework to consider the evolution of security communities through their nascent, ascendant and mature stages. New permutations of the security communities approach, as well as challenges to it, are emerging, as the work of Collins (2000) and Bellamy (2004) demonstrates. It is important to note here that the security community concept is relatively novel – still a ‘work in progress’ lacking the rich theoretical and empirical base of the former alignment archetypes. For example, serious theoretical questions regarding this alignment type remain to be answered. Wæver points to the difficulties inherent in measuring the existence of a security community (whether it is ‘illusionary’), questions of how security communities may disintegrate (Wæver: 76 ‘potentially unravelling factors’), and whether (Wæver 1998: 74) ‘the study of security communities should focus on those regions that constitute security complexes’.

Any theoretical limitations and deficiencies in the model have not prevented its widespread application to a number of empirical case studies. The North Atlantic Community, the EU and ASEAN have attracted the most attention from scholars. Firstly, the North Atlantic Community, Deutsch’s original exemplar, has generated fierce debate on the continued existence and nature of the community, as the work of Risse-Kappen and exchanges between Cox (2005) and Pouliot (2006) illustrate. Secondly, Wæver (1998) considers Western Europe an ‘comprehensive’ security

community (though he prefers the descriptor: ‘non-war community’); something in-between the pluralistic and amalgamated categories. Those involved in advancing and analysing the European project have been greatly influenced by the security community model. Lastly, Acharya (2001) and others have analysed ASEAN as a ‘nascent’ security community and sparked discussion over the applicability of the European model to South East Asia. The influence of Track II dialogs upon regional governments can be witnessed by the official adoption by the organisation of this very concept. The ASEAN Secretariat announces its objective of creating an ASEAN Security Community by 2020, noting that ‘The ASC promotes an ASEAN-wide political and security cooperation in consonance with the ASEAN Vision 2020 rather than a defence pact, military alliance or a joint foreign policy.’ [\[ASEAN Website\]](#)

#### 4. *Strategic partnership [701]*

The so-called ‘strategic partnership’ is the most recent addition to the repertoire of alignment archetypes. The term first entered the security lexicon when employed by Moscow to denote its upgraded security relationship with Beijing in 1996. Since then the term has been regularly employed by Russia and China in their official discourse and has been widely emulated to describe security alignments among such varied dyads as Japan-Australia, US-India, Israel-Turkey, and NATO-EU, to name but a sample. Once again, this alignment appears connected to the trend of an international system in flux. Kuchins (2001: 2) argues that ‘The proliferation of strategic partnerships on the part of Russia and other powers (including the United States)...reflects an international system in transition.’ Despite the prevalence of the term in international politics, its precise definition and meaning remains unclear. Kay (2000) raises the question of ‘what is a strategic partnership?’ The author will seek to provide an answer by examining this new form of alignment further in this section.

Analysts have pondered whether the term ‘strategic partnership’ is really a tangible alignment form or just a rhetorical device – yet another abuse of the term ‘strategy/strategic’. The first thing to make clear is that strategic partnership is not a synonym for an alliance or coalition. There is no agreed definition in IR at this present time. The author (Wilkins 2008: **XX**) has advanced the following description of ‘strategic partnership’ as:

structured collaboration between states (or other ‘actors’) to take joint advantage of economic opportunities, or to respond to security challenges more effectively than could be achieved in isolation. Strategic partnering occurs both in and between the international and domestic sectors (‘levels’). Besides allowing information, skills, and resources to be shared, a strategic partnership also permits the partners to share risk.

A strategic partnership exhibits the following properties (Wilkins 2008). First, it is organised around a general (security) purpose known as a ‘system principle’ (such as championship of a multipolar world), rather than a specific task, such as deterring or fighting a hostile state. Strategic partnerships are therefore based primarily on common interests and are not always underwritten by shared values in a way typical of more entrenched alignments. Second, strategic partnerships are primarily ‘goal-driven’ rather than ‘threat-driven’ arrangements. Following from this, no ‘enemy’ state is identified by the partnership as a ‘threat’, though the partnership

may be concerned with joint security ‘issue-areas’ – such as terrorism, separatism, or religious fundamentalism, for example. Third, strategic partnerships tend to be informal in nature and entail low commitment costs, rather than being explicitly formalised in a specific alliance treaty that binds the participants to rigid courses of action. This permits partners to retain a greater degree of autonomy and flexibility, thus mitigating the ‘entrapment’ dynamic common to orthodox alliances. This certainly does not preclude issue-specific bilateral declarations and other confidence building measures (CBMs) though. Fourthly, perhaps due to the term originating from the business world, economic exchange appears salient among ‘functional areas’ of cooperation and is one of the key drivers of the partnership, alongside security concerns. Thus, while there definitely are some congruities with the phenomena of alliance, coalition, and security community, none of these notions truly captures the distinctiveness of a strategic partnership.

The novelty of this form of alignment means that little in the way of conceptual or theoretical development has occurred in IR. This author and others that have touched upon the subject indicate that since the term’s provenance was from the business world and the affiliated discipline of Organisation Studies, that this body of literature could be usefully employed to explain and understand it. There is a strong case for employing Organisation Studies to explain security questions, as the well known works of Allison and Zelikov (1999), and Sagan (1995) testify. So far the author is one of the few to make a distinctive theoretical contribution. This was founded upon the writings of Organisational Theorists Bergquist et al. (1995), Steward (1999), Roberts (2004), and others. I posit that security cooperation between states (or a ‘network’ of states) can be explained much as a business enterprise, with relations evolving upon a ‘collaboration continuum’ from formation, through implementation, to evaluation; thus getting at the core dynamics of alignment behaviour (Wilkins 2008).

## **Pre-conclusions/other alignments?**

Before concluding it is worth taking stock of some of our findings and recognising some unavoidable limitations of the study. First, there are a range of other less prominent forms of security alignment, such as the ‘non-aggression pact’, the ‘entente’, and the ‘concert’, among others, that this chapter has not had space to examine. This is a productive avenue for further research in order to make our understanding of alignment more comprehensive. Second, this chapter has eschewed burdening the main analysis with an intrusive range of caveats and qualifications, or other related *problematiques*. Unfortunately, when considering the phenomenon of alignment these are abundant. One of the most significant is the problem of empirical and theoretical ‘overlap’. Not only are there overlaps in definition and usage of the alignment archetypes enumerated here, but the theoretical tools of analysis also evince some close congruities, if not outright replications. Not all empirical referents, NATO for example, neatly fit the pattern of alignment illustrated above, rather they exhibit properties from two or more archetypes. Consider how NATO was born from the residue of the allied coalition that fought Germany in the western theatre of World War II, this later became a formal military alliance during the Cold War opposed to the Warsaw Pact, while since the demise of its erstwhile rival, many have described NATO’s process of adaptation or even reinvention in the post-Cold War period as a shift to a security community (Williams & Neuman 2000). Thus, alignments may

alter or evolve across archetypes or may display the characteristics, and thus be susceptible to analysis with the appropriate tools, of multiple archetypes. Likewise, the theoretical perspectives fabricated to explain each archetype are far from discrete. Many of the tools employed to analyse coalitions are based upon alliance study, while security communities are not impervious to realist concepts such as balance of power/threat to account for their formation, contrary to the internal focus of the constructivist literature.

## **[provisional] Conclusions**

This chapter has made the case that it is alignment (not alliance) that should be our paramount theoretical concern in IR. ‘If the theory is to cover informal as well as formal varieties of alignment, as it realistically must, then any relationship other than outright indifference falls within its purview’ (Snyder: 2). Though this chapter has largely concentrated upon a survey and review of forms of alignment, much of which is disseminated elsewhere, the point has been to recalibrate and reorder our understanding of the phenomenon of alignment, particularly with regard to its troublesome relationship with ‘alliance’. Let it be reiterated one final time: ‘Formal alliances are simply one of the behavioural means to create or strengthen alignments. (Snyder???)’ Moreover, the increased priority in establishing alignment as the paramount concept is driven by the changing nature of international security cooperation in the contemporary world. As the formal military alliance blocs of the Cold war give way to a new constellation of security alignments, including a transfiguration of Cold war era alliances, we need to reconsider the appropriate tools of analysis.

## **References [to be formatted]**