

# Together Forever? Explaining Exclusivity in Party-Firm Relations

Parties and firms are the key actors of representative democracy and capitalism respectively and the dynamic of attachment between them is a central feature of any political economy. This is the first article to systematically analyse the exclusivity of party-firm relations. We consider exclusivity at a point in time and exclusivity over time. Does a firm have a relationship with only one party at a given point in time, or is it close to more than one party? Does a firm maintain a relationship with only one party over time, or does it switch between parties? Most important, how do patterns of exclusivity impact on a firm's ability to lobby successfully? We propose a general theory, which explains patterns of party-firm relations by reference to the division of institutions and the type of party competition in a political system. A preliminary test of our theory with Polish survey data confirms our predictions, establishing a promising hypothesis for future research.

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IAIN MCMENAMIN  
School of Law and Government  
Dublin City University  
Dublin 9, Ireland  
Phone: + 353 1 700 8072  
Fax: + 353 1 700 7374  
iain.mcmenamin@dcu.ie

ROGER SCHOENMAN  
Department of Politics  
153 Merrill College Annex  
University of California  
Santa Cruz, CA 95064  
Phone: + 1 831 459 2391  
Fax: + 1 831 459 3125  
rschoenm@ucsc.edu

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The political influence of big business is usually divided into intentional and structural categories (Bernhagen and Bräuninger 2005, pp. 43-46; Lindblom 1977, pp. 193-194; Offe 1985, pp. 170-220). Structural influence refers to the dependence of the state on the capitalist economy. Intentional influence, which is our focus, takes the form of lobbying by business to obtain policy benefits.

A useful way of analysing lobbying is to distinguish between different actors. For example, on the firm's side, there are big differences between the lobbying activities of business associations, political consultants and the efforts of senior management themselves (Wilson 1990). On the state's side, there are similarly important differences between such actors as bureaucrats, ministers, and parliamentarians. Surprisingly, the political party remains a relatively understudied actor in business-government relations. Indeed, there is very little systematic literature on the

relationship between the two key organisations of capitalism and representative democracy: the firm and the political party. Moreover, we argue that the scant existing literature is of limited utility in understanding this vital relationship because it fails to consider a critical feature of party-firm relations: the exclusivity and duration of ties between them. Exclusivity, an enduring association between a firm and a single political party, is either ignored or examined in a parochial framework.

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## Critique of the Literature

Useful accounts of the relationship between parties and firms could potentially be found in three large overlapping literatures relating to business-government relations, corruption and political finance. Before presenting our own theory, we examine each in turn.

The bulk of the literature on business-government relations has been dominated by studies of the activities of business associations (Greenwood and Jacek 2000; Sadowski and Jacobi 1991; Schmitter and Streeck 1981) and of individual corporations (Hillman, Keim, and Schuler 2004; Martin 2000; Salisbury 1984). A

sophisticated literature concentrates on how businesses choose between or combine corporate and associational lobbying strategies (Bennett 1999; Coen 1997). Grant's work has taken parties seriously but he makes no mention of exclusivity (Grant 1993, pp. 13-18; Grant, Martinelli, and Patterson 1989).

Rose-Ackerman has summarised and set the agenda for much of the work on corruption. Her treatment of parties is not explicit, lasts only a couple of pages and does not consider the exclusivity of relationships between firms and parties (Rose-Ackerman 1999, pp. 128-132). Given the influence of Rose-Ackerman in defining the orthodox political economy approach to the study of corruption, it is not surprising that the burgeoning literature follows her in concentrating on policies and institutions rather than parties (Gerring and Thacker 2004; Gerring and Thacker 2005; Montinola and Jackman 2002; Persson and Tabellini 2003, pp. 187-202). An important literature probably subsumes parties into the variable "political competition", but such studies never explicitly treat parties, much less the nature of their relations with firms (Hellman 1998; Hopkin 1997, p. 261). Of the handful of systematic treatments of parties and corruption, one does not even mention firms (Hopkin 1997) while another makes only a passing comment to suggest that in Italy firms' relations with parties tended to be exclusive (Della Porta 2004, p. 51).

In turn, the literature on political finance somewhat compensates for the tendency of the business-government relations and corruption literatures to ignore party-firm relations. However, this literature generally also does not consider the dynamics of party-firm ties, or raise the issue of the exclusivity of relations. For example, it is not mentioned in a recent comparative review of the literature (Fisher and Eisenstadt

2004). However, many studies of political finance in the USA do explicitly test for exclusivity (Burris 2001, pp. 362-363, 378). However, this research is mostly confined to the subject of Political Action Committees, which is particular to the US context (Clawson, Neustadtl, and Weller 1998). This literature also makes no attempt to theorise beyond the singular political system of the United States. Nonetheless, its concentration on firm's calculations about the likely winners of elections shares a central intuition with the theoretical framework that we introduce in the next section.

## Theorizing Party-Firm Ties

We begin with a typology of party-firm relations. From the firm's point of view, the best relationship with political parties could conceivably be any of the following:

- *Abstinence*. In this case, firms refrain from developing an association with any political party.
- *Marriage*. Firms are associated with a single political party.
- *Polygamy*. Firms are simultaneously associated with competing political parties.
- *Serial monogamy*. Firms are associated with a single political party at a given point in time, but switch from party to party over time.

Clearly, these relationships should have important consequences for firms, which will choose the relationship most likely to deliver them benefits. Moreover, these different relationships should have important implications for public policy. If marriage is the dominant party-firm relationship, then the economy is substantially assimilated into the party system, and will be subject to massive changes every time the government changes. If serial monogamy is the dominant relationship the economy will not be

hugely affected by the electoral cycle. If polygamy is the dominant strategy, there should be even greater continuity in policy.

All other things being equal, parties should always prefer marriage. This relationship allows them the benefit of a relationship with firms, while denying these benefits to competing parties. The most obvious benefit is funding, but information, legitimacy, policy implementation, jobs, etc. can also be desirable from a party's point of view. In this article, we concentrate on the firm's perspective. We will now present a model of the basic incentives facing businesses considering relationships with political parties.

Our model consists of the interaction between the basic institutions of democracy and the pattern of party political competition. We make two assumptions that should apply to virtually every capitalist democracy. First, there must be sufficient "narrowly focused favours available for distribution by politicians" (Rose-Ackerman 1999, p. 132). While there is probably considerable variation in the extent to which such favours are available, it is hardly possible to think of a capitalist democracy where narrowly based favours are so unavailable that large firms have no incentive to develop political contacts. Clearly, however, in the event that this assumption did not hold, firms would not be associated with parties. Second, at least some members of two or more competing political parties must be willing to grant such favours. This also seems like an assumption that holds for virtually any capitalist democracy. Even in systems where one party is seen as more pro-business on broad issues, there is frequently much less, or even no, difference between parties as regards narrowly

focused favours (Burris 2001, p. 378). Of course, if this assumption turned out to be false, we expect that firms would be exclusively associated with one party.

Our first independent variable is party competition. Using the competitiveness of a party system as an independent variable is common (Grzymała-Busse 2003; Hellman 1998). Our stress on competition and predictability is less usual but does echo Rose-Ackerman's approach to bribery (Rose-Ackerman 1999, p. 132). We distinguish between predictable and unpredictable party systems. A party system is unpredictable if during an electoral campaign it is difficult to predict which party or parties will control the institutions at stake. In some systems, this is a simple matter of election results. In others, predictability also includes coalition formation. We distinguish between two types of predictable systems. If there is a dominant party, during an electoral campaign it can relatively confidently be predicted that the incumbent party or parties will win. If there is alternation, it can relatively confidently be predicted that the opponents of the incumbents will win.

Our second independent variable is the basic institutional design of a democracy. We distinguish between divided and fused political institutions. This distinction has much in common with the literature on 'divided government' (Elgie 2001), which, in contrast to our approach, does not consider territorial divisions, and the more general concept of 'divided power', which, in contrast to our approach, does not consider divisions within one institution (Lijphart 1999, p. 5). If institutions are fused, at a given point in time, there will be only one relevant partisan configuration. If institutions are divided there will be more than one relevant partisan configuration. The division of institutions can be functional and/or territorial. If functional institutions are divided then different parties or coalitions are likely to control

constitutionally separate institutions, such as the executive versus the legislature or different houses of the legislature. If territorial institutions are divided the party or parties controlling national institutions are likely to be different from those controlling significant institutions at the sub-national level. In parliamentary unitary states, institutions are usually fused. In presidential and decentralised states, institutions are usually divided.

Combinations of the three party systems and two broad institutional configurations present very different incentives for businesses seeking to interact with political parties. If there is an unpredictable party system, regardless of the configuration of institutions, businesses will choose polygamy. They will associate with all substantial political parties because all substantial political parties have a serious chance of exerting regular control over policy-making institutions. If there is a dominant party, again regardless of the configuration of institutions, businesses will choose exclusivity. One party (or coalition) has such dominance that it will usually win control of electoral institutions, regardless of differences in the timing, constituency, electoral system and purpose of elections. In the alternation scenario, institutions matter. If institutions are fused, businesses will choose serial monogamy. One party or coalition will control all important institutions at any given time. If institutions are divided, businesses will choose polygamy. Electoral dominance at a point in time, will not translate into a monopoly of institutions. The division of institutions will ensure that opposing parties or coalitions control different policy-making institutions at any point in time. Table One summarises our theory.

[Table 1 about here]



## Party-Firm Ties in Poland

The rest of this article is a ‘case study’, by which we mean an in-depth study of one country through which we aim to elucidate the relationship between firms and parties in capitalist democracies (Gerring 2004, p. 341). Using a survey of the leadership of Poland’s largest firms, we test whether our theory can correctly predict the most successful relationship for firms. Obviously, a single case study cannot confirm a theory. Nonetheless, single case studies are useful for the initial exploratory theory-generating stage of research (Gerring 2004, pp. 349-350). We argue that Poland is not particularly unusual in any sense that would affect the ability of our model to operate in other contexts. Thus, a successful test in the Polish context should establish our theory as a promising hypothesis for capitalist democracy in general.

Poland clearly fulfils the two assumptions of our theory. First, there is abundant quantitative and qualitative evidence of a plentiful supply of narrowly focused favours for business (Drag 1999; Jasiocki 2001; Kloc 1998). Second, it is clear that more than one party is willing to distribute such favours. The Polish party system has been relatively weakly structured around economic policy. Moreover, differences in economic policy have not necessarily been associated with different attitudes to business. The ‘left-wing’ Social Democratic Alliance (SLD) has also been ‘a party of business’ (Bielasiak 2001; Jasiocki 2001; Szawiel 1999). At the time of our survey, the senior partner in government was the ‘right-wing’ Solidarity Electoral Action, which was ‘pro-reform’ but also ‘pro-union’ and which quickly gained a reputation for its willingness to distribute favours to business. Its junior partner was the ‘centrist’ and firmly pro-business Freedom Union.

Next, we examine our two independent variables, political institutions and the party system. Poland's political institutions are largely fused, but there is some potential for divided institutions. Poland is a semi-presidential regime, according to Elgie's definition, in that it has a directly elected president and a prime minister responsible to parliament (Elgie 1998). The cabinet has dominated executive policy-making. This conclusion applies relatively uncontroversially to the period of the amended communist constitution (1989-1992), the "Little Constitution" (1992-97) and the current constitution (1997 onwards). The 1997 Constitution substantially decreased the president's powers (Sanford 2002, pp. 141-147; Siaroff 2003, pp. 300-307). His powers have been concentrated on defence and foreign affairs, issues which are of little relevance to party-firm relations. The exception is the power of legislative veto, which, since 1997, can be overridden by a sixty per cent majority of the lower house. The veto has been an effective instrument for the president (Wołek 2004, pp. 150-151) and business associations have lobbied for him to use it in their interests. However, the laws at stake have not constituted the sort of narrowly focused favours, which structure party-firm relations (Balicki 2001, pp. 144-146).

A divided executive under semi-presidentialism is known as cohabitation. Ambiguities regarding the party affiliation of some cabinets and the second president make it difficult to straightforwardly calculate the length of time under cohabitation in Poland. Nonetheless, we estimate that cohabitation accounts for approximately half of the post-communist period.<sup>2</sup> The period of our survey was one of unambiguous cohabitation.

Another potential source of divided government is minority government. In Poland, there have been minority governments from October 1991 to October 1993; from June 2000 to October 2001; and from March 2003 to the present. The period of our survey was one of majority government.

We do not consider regional and local institutions as a potential source of divided government in Poland. Early reforms in Poland did decentralise power but only in comparison with the hyper-centralised communist system. Some management functions were delegated but virtually no fiscal control (Thurmaier 1994). Before 1999, regional and local governments in Poland accounted for an even lower proportion of public spending than their counterparts in other East-Central European countries (Brusis 2003). There was a significant reform of local and regional government in 1999, but even after that date it is still accurate to describe Poland as a centralised state (Kerlin 2002; McMenemy 2004, p. 269). Brusis notes an increase in the proportion of public spending attributed to devolved institutions after 1999. However, this increase was almost entirely the result of a virtually simultaneous healthcare reform (Brusis 2003, pp. 158-159), in which health spending was devolved to institutions relatively independent of politicians (McMenemy and Timonen 2002, pp. 109-110).

Post-communist Poland's party system can be classified as alternating, with a significant element of unpredictability. No government has been re-elected and, although parties on the right and in the center have often been short-lived, there has been a stable division between 'center-right' and 'peasant-left' blocs. Moreover, the division of the party system has been such that a party from the left, such as the SLD,

could never form a coalition with a party from the center-right, such as the liberal Freedom Union. The results of the 1993 and 2001 elections were both predictable, in terms of the largest parties and the resulting coalition government. The 1991 election was clearly unpredictable in both party and governmental terms. The 2005 election was predictable in terms of the largest parties, but what seemed to be a relatively firmly agreed coalition deal, collapsed in post-electoral negotiations. The 1997 election was too close to call in terms of the largest parties, but given the election results, the resulting coalition was predictable. Our survey was conducted less than a year after this election.

Poland's institutions are generally fused, albeit with some level of division. Its party system generally alternates, albeit with some level of unpredictability. This general conclusion holds both for the time at which our survey was conducted and for the subsequent period. Therefore, our theory predicts that serial monogamy, where party affiliation switches over time, should have been the best relationship for Polish firms.

Having assessed Poland in terms of our model, we briefly address two general country characteristics that merit consideration before presenting our data in the next section. First, one might object that Poland's status as a 'new democracy' and a post-communist state make it an implausible case from which to generalise. However, , Poland is very close to the median age of today's democracies. More importantly, there does not seem to be any reason why newness should preclude the importance of our institutional and party-system variables. Second, it might be argued that new democracies are less predictable, but the predictability of a party system is already taken into account by our classification. Post-communist capitalist democracies are

obviously outnumbered by never-communist capitalist democracies. However, again there seems to be no reason why our institutional and party-system variables would not apply to post-communist systems. Since the post-communist context affects the behaviour of individual firms in many ways, we have included controls for the relevant aspects of post-communism in our analysis of the Polish survey data.

## Measures

The following case study is quantitative. We follow Gerring's definition of a case study as relating to single unit rather than a particular way of studying that unit (Gerring 2004, p. 342). Given the number and diversity of large businesses it would be very difficult to avoid unacceptable bias in a qualitative study claiming to represent party-firm relations at a national level. However, qualitative knowledge is prior to quantitative knowledge, in that a researcher must know what to measure and how to measure it (Sartori 1970). Thus, we will briefly present some examples of how our theory can accommodate the relationships between parties and some of Poland's biggest and best-known firms.

The most obvious example of successful serial monogamy is Jan Kulczyk. He is Poland's richest and most diversified businessman (Wprost 2004) and was closely tied to the right while in power from 1991 to 1993 and from 1997 to 2001. He repeatedly won massively lucrative contracts from them as well as favourable privatisation deals. Under the left-wing government from 2001 to 2005, he was again associated with government. A left-wing journalist dubbed the prime minister

'Kulczyk's mannequin'. Investigations into a spectacular corruption scandal under the same government uncovered an allegation that he claimed to have decisive influence with the President (Sejm Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej 2005). Ryszard Krauze of Prokom Software has brazenly shifted from left to right and back to the left again, in order to maintain his profits from public procurement, most notably the computerization of the Social Insurance Administration (Butkiewicz, Indulski, and Ryciak 2004). The battles of PGNiG and Aleksander Gudzwaty to protect their gas pipeline from right-wing politicians angered by their association with the left demonstrate the perils of marriage. Indeed, this issue has once again become a priority of the current right-wing government.

While the above evidence suggests our theory is applicable to Poland, we repeat our belief that that qualitative evidence of party-firm relations in Poland cannot generalize to the political system as a whole. In previous qualitative interviews, conducted independently of each other, but based on quite similar samples, we reached different conclusions (McMenamin 2004, pp. 671-672; Schoenman 2005). The obvious remedy is a quantitative approach. We emphasise that our quantitative analysis endeavours to take account of the subtleties of Polish business-government relations so as to provide a useful test of our general theory.

Our data comes from an elite survey carried out in Poland in the summer of 1998 by the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Wasilewski 1999). 300 presidents and vice-presidents of the executive board were selected from the lists of the 500 biggest Polish firms published by *Polityka* (quality weekly) and

*Gazeta Bankowa* (equivalent of the *Financial Times*). The response rate was 64.6 per cent.

The survey included a list of twenty-two of Poland's most powerful politicians at the time (see Appendix). Respondents were asked to rate how well they knew each of the politicians. We use these responses to construct measures of our typology of relationships. Our direct approach to personal acquaintance (Heinz et al. 1993; Kadushin 1995) has obvious advantages over the more indirect approach which looks for common past or present membership of institutions (Scott, Stokman, and Ziegler 1985). Our research reveals strategic relationships, following Padgett and Ansell's research on marriage and lending in Medici Florence (Padgett and Ansell 1993), and McLean's study of elite marriages in early modern Poland (McLean 2004). The relationships that we study are mainly instrumental and it would be difficult to argue that business leaders and political leaders become acquainted in a search for companionship. Another question in our survey asking whether respondents knew a national politician suggests that the responses to the more detailed question are reliable.

An alternative approach is to use political contributions by businesses as a measure of association. As discussed above, this has been done very successfully in the American literature on Political Action Committees, which uses official records. The validity of such a measure depends on the assumptions that data is available and that most contributions are legal. The USA is very unusual in being able to fulfill both these assumptions. It is also possible to ask about political contributions in a survey. Our survey asked such a question and it was the only one to meet with a wholesale

refusal to answer. Moreover, in qualitative interviews we have conducted with post-communist business elites in Poland and elsewhere it was frequently impossible to obtain a response on political funding. The Business Environment and Enterprise Survey conducted by the World Bank does ask such a question but the absence of information on responses rate raises questions about the validity and reliability of this data (Hellman, Jones, and Kaufmann 2000). Also, this survey does not discriminate between different political parties.

Those who did not report knowing any of the politicians were classified as abstinent. To distinguish between the other types of relationships, we created an index of 'exclusivity', which aims to distinguish those with connections concentrated on one party, or a number of parties, from those with equally good connections across the political spectrum. This measure was calculated as follows:

- The number of politicians in the left (seven), right (seven) center (five) and peasant (three) groups known by each respondent was calculated. 'Knows very well', 'knows well' and 'has had contact with' were treated equally.
- These scores were translated to percentages. So a businessperson would know 0-100% of the politicians in a certain group.
- These percentage scores were standardized, so that businesspeople who knew the same proportion of a certain group as the mean for the whole sample scored zero. Scores above and below the mean are denominated in standard deviations.
- Each businessperson's bias towards one group over another was calculated by subtracting their standardized score for each group from their score for the other groups. This produced six comparative scores.



- Finally, the six comparative scores were simply added up. The larger the score, the more exclusive, are the connections of a businessperson.

Unfortunately, this measure cannot distinguish serial monogamy from polygamy, but it can distinguish these two categories of unfaithfulness from firms following a marriage strategy. Those with above the mean scores on the exclusivity measure were classified as married and those below the mean were classified as unfaithful. This measure may be affected by the timing of the survey. In mid-1998 the mainstream right had just returned to power in the September 1997 election after four years without any parliamentary representation. Therefore, the measure may substantially underestimate the number of exclusive firms, since there are likely to be big differences between connections to the center, left and peasants on the one hand and connections to the right on the other hand. For this reason, we conducted all of our analyses twice: firstly, including the right wing, and, secondly, excluding the right wing. In the three models reported below, the exclusion of the right wing made no substantive difference.

In the previous sections, we have assumed that one relationship will be optimal for all firms and that all firms are free to choose this relationship. This was a valid simplification for the presentation of variables, which vary from political system to political system rather than from firm to firm. Obviously, a range of variables might influence the differential optimality of relationships within one political system and the freedom of firms to choose the optimal relationship. These can be divided into characteristics of the managers themselves (personal-level) and characteristics of their firms (firm-level). Firstly, we identify relevant personal-level variables. Common

educational background is a classic concern of elite studies (Mills 1959; Suleiman 1979). In the Polish context, only one institution seems like a plausible candidate for an enduring elite network, which might encompass the political and business spheres. This is the Warsaw School of Economics, known in the communist era as the Central School of Planning and Statistics. The universities are too large and provide too small a proportion of the business and political elites (Wasilewski and Pawlak 1999, p. 54)

The next two variables are staples of the sociology of the business elite, and basically aim to capture the ‘breadth’ of a businessperson’s experience and contacts (Useem 1984). Firstly, there is the number of directorships on supervisory boards held by the respondents. Secondly, there is membership of a business organization. In Poland, and elsewhere, both firms and individuals can be members of such organizations. Therefore, it can be thought of as either a personal or a firm-level variable.

The continuation and adaptation of communist-era networks is a dominant theme of post-communist sociology (Domański 2000; Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley 1998, Stark and Bruzst 1998), and an important issue in post-communist politics. Since many opposition leaders were previously members of the communist party, and since many party members joined the oppositionist Solidarity union, a more subtle measurement of “communism” is used, which considers only membership after 1981. At this time, many people left the party because of the imposition of martial law and because they felt a stronger identification with the opposition than with the regime. This variable should identify potential membership in a relatively meaningful post-communist network.

We also include membership of youth organisations. Youth organisation membership was seen as a ‘fast-track’ route into elite positions in the communist era (Kolankiewicz and Lewis 1988, p. 79). There were both communist youth organisations and an independent youth organisation founded in 1981. Finally, we include age as a control variable, since older people may well have had more opportunities to build a greater number and variety of contacts.

Our model also incorporates firm level-variables. The first of these is income in millions of Polish Zlotys. The size of a firm is a very obvious influence on its political prospects. The second is a variable that measures ownership by the State Treasury or another state institution or state-owned firm. It classifies firms with less than ten per cent state ownership as private, those with eleven to seventy four per cent state ownership as mixed and those with seventy five to one hundred per cent state ownership as state-owned. This tripartite classification has a strong theoretical and empirical basis in the literature on post-communism (Schoenman 2005; Staniszkis 1998; Stark and Bruzst 1998). Theoretically, most of the arguments focus on the opportunities for arbitrage afforded by a position in both the public and private sectors in a political economy with widely available narrowly focused favours and serious regulatory and corporate governance weaknesses.

There is no such literature on foreign ownership, which is treated as a straightforward interval-level variable. The fourth firm-level variable is policy orientation. Policy orientation distinguishes those firms, which report that contemporary state policy is the most important influence on their firm, from those which report that either the domestic or the world economy is more important to their firm’s development. This

variable is almost a direct measure of the firm's perceived need to lobby, and is therefore a very strong control for tests of the effects of certain characteristics on lobbying behavior. The final variable is again membership of a business organization. As mentioned above, sometimes businesspeople are members of such organizations, and, in other cases, the firm itself is the member.

## Data Analysis

### *Distribution of Relationships*

We find that a full **fifty per cent** of our sample was engaged in exclusive relations with a party. **Thirty six per cent** were unfaithful. Only fourteen per cent of respondents were abstinent. However, if right-wingers are excluded from the calculations, forty two per cent are exclusive, while forty four per cent fall into the unfaithful category. There were five missing cases. Regardless of whether we include or exclude right-wingers, this finding means that eighty-six percent of Polish firms in our sample have relations of exchange with a political party. Depending on whether politicians on the right are included, at least half of those firms have ties to **only** one party over time, either because this maximizes their chance of receiving benefits, they fear the possible costs of unfaithfulness, or they have no other options. Thirty-six percent of the respondents, instead, are able to align with multiple parties, at the same time or over time.<sup>3</sup>

The relatively small numbers of abstinent firms is consistent with our assumption of the availability of narrow favours. However, the figures do not clearly adjudicate between marriage and unfaithfulness. Depending on whether the right-wingers are included or not, the modal relationship is either marriage or unfaithfulness. We are

not arguing that the modal relationship is necessarily the most successful one. There may well be factors that affect the optimality of relationships and firms' ability to choose the optimal relationship. In order to investigate this possibility, we try to predict the category of relationship using personal and firm-level variables.

[Table 2 about here]

Table two shows a multinomial logit model of the distribution of relationships employing all of the personal and firm-level variables. In comparing marriage to abstinence and unfaithfulness to abstinence, the model finds only personal-level variables to be important (including the ambiguously categorized business association membership). The three significant variables are membership of a youth organization in the past, number of current memberships of supervisory boards and present membership of a business organization. Multinomial logit models are difficult to interpret directly. Therefore, in table three, we present the results of simulations designed to reveal the effects of these three variables.

[Table 3 about here]

All of the three variables drastically reduce the likelihood of abstinence. Youth organization and supervisory board membership only marginally distinguish between marriage and unfaithfulness. However, membership of a business organization, makes a firm much more likely to be married than unfaithful.

The significant variables are most effective in explaining the difference between the minority of abstinent firms and the rest, which do have relationships with politicians. It is remarkable that none of the firm-level characteristics are significant. The model suggests that none of these obvious differences between firms influence firms' choice of relationship or their ability to develop different types of relationship.

We interpret the importance of the personal-levels as significant constraints on the ability of the firms to develop relationships with political parties. Nonetheless, the significance of supervisory boards and business organizations suggests that these constraints can be overcome. Business organizations are generally open to all comers and determined and resourceful firms can buy their way into, or manoeuvre themselves on to, the boards of other firms. The importance of the youth organisation variable indicates a formidable constraint on firms, which might want to develop political relationships. Clearly, managers with a lifelong tradition of elite networking give any firm a significant head start. Unlike the other two variables, the absence of such managers cannot be remedied without drastic changes in personnel at the top of the firm. Membership of youth organizations is a particularly Polish, or perhaps post-communist variable, but it is also simply a local operationalisation of a long-standing emphasis of elite sociology. It is the equivalent of elite education or club membership in other countries.

### *Lobbying Activity*

The relationships of our typology are not important unless they have political consequences. Next, we investigate whether they can explain firms' participation in lobbying. Eighty per cent of respondents reported lobbying activity in the last few

years (nine missing cases). This time, our equation again includes the firm-level variables, but replaces the personal level ones with our typology of relationships, since it is the importance of these relationships we are testing in this article.

[Table 4 about here]

In table four, we show a logistic regression model of lobbying activity. None of the variables, including the relationships, are significant. While it might be expected that the abstinent firms, not having developed political relationships, would be less likely to lobby, this result can plausibly be interpreted in the context of the results reported in the previous section. While some firms may have chosen abstinence, others may well have been constrained in their efforts to develop relationships, by the absence of supervisory board memberships, past youth organization membership and business association membership. Such firms may have felt the need to go ahead and lobby even in the absence of relationships with party politicians.

### *Lobbying Success*

Our final equation seeks to explain the reported success of lobbying efforts. Respondents could evaluate the result of their lobbying as ‘without effect’, ‘partially successful’ or ‘successful’. Thirty three per cent reported ‘without effect’; forty three per cent ‘partially successful’ and twenty four per cent ‘success’ (twenty seven missing cases). Again, our equation contains the relationship and firm-level variables.

[Table 5 about here]

In table five, we present an ordinal logit model of lobbying success. Three variables are significant: income, marriage, and unfaithfulness. Unsurprisingly, the size of the enterprise, as proxied by income, increases the likelihood of successful lobbying. It is much more remarkable that all of the other economic variables are insignificant. These variables are staples of both the general literature on business lobbying and the literature on post-communist political economy.

The significance of the marriage and unfaithfulness variables indicates that abstinence is politically ineffective. The lower success rate of the abstinent firms bolsters the interpretation of abstinent participation in lobbying given in the last section. Abstinent firms have lobbied and failed. An important reason for this may be the constraints on developing the political relationships, which are associated with lobbying success.

The model itself does not allow a direct comparison of the effects of marriage and unfaithfulness. Therefore, in Table Six, we present the results of simulations designed to reveal the effects of different relationships. The odds ratios show that unfaithful firms are far more likely to be successful lobbyists than married firms. They are both more likely to report success than failure, and more likely to report success than partial success. The ratio of the odds of an unfaithful firm reporting success versus failure to the odds of a married firm reporting success over failure is 1.4. The ratio of the odds of an unfaithful firm reporting success versus partial success to the odds of a married firm reporting success versus partial success is 1.7. In effect, the model demonstrates that exclusivity matters in party-firm relations.



Unfortunately, however, we are unable to tell whether these unfaithful firms are serial monogamists or polygamists. Nonetheless, the equation shows that different types of party-firm relationships are highly consequential. The existing literature has not distinguished between these relationships and, consequently, has overlooked a vital element of success in Polish party-firm relations. The results are consistent with our prediction that serial monogamy would be the most effective party-firm relationship in Poland. Married firms are disadvantaged in one out of every two parliaments and are therefore less likely to report successful lobbying over the last number of years. Our general theory has correctly predicted the rank order for lobbying success of the three relationships that we can measure in Poland.

[Table 6 about here]

## Conclusions

Existing approaches to business-government relations, corruption and political finance (with the exception of the specialised American literature on Political Action Committees) elide the issue of the exclusivity of party-firm relations. Our typology captures the presence or absence of exclusive relations between a firm and parties at a point in time and over time. Making two relatively uncontroversial assumptions, we have presented a general theory that predicts which relationship should dominate in a given political system. We have conducted a preliminary test of our theory with Polish survey data. Our equation for the distribution of relationships suggested that there are significant constraints on the ability of firms to develop relationships with politicians. We did not uncover a link between the different relationships and lobbying activity. However, our data demonstrate that relationships do matter for

successful lobbying, and this is surely the most important of our models. The results for lobbying success are entirely consistent with theory's prediction. Unfortunately, however, our data is unable to distinguish between firms that switch between parties and those, which simultaneously maintain relationships with a number of parties.

We have not provided a complete model of business lobbying in Poland, or anywhere else, and, indeed, this is not what we set out to do. We have presented and justified a new typology of party-firm relations. Furthermore, we have shown that it is both measurable, and, crucially, that it has substantial consequences for our understanding of the relationships between firms and parties. Obviously, this result is based on survey research conducted in Poland and our exact selection of controls was dependent on contextual knowledge. Nonetheless, our theory is rooted in the logic of capitalist democracy, not the specificities of the Polish case. As such, we believe that we have proposed and begun to test a promising hypothesis for the explanation of a vital relationship in all capitalist democracies.

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**Table 1: Hypotheses**

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	<i>Fused institutions</i>	<i>Divided institutions</i>
<i>Dominant party</i>	Marriage	Marriage
<i>Alternation</i>	Serial monogamy	Polygamy
<i>Unpredictability</i>	Polygamy	Polygamy

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**Table 2: Multinomial Logit Model of Likelihood of Relationship**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient (Robust Standard Error)</i>
<b>Marriage</b>	
Warsaw School of Economics	0.70679 (1.06777)
Supervisory boards	1.81117 (0.48075)**
Business Organization	4.89448 (1.53434)**
Communist Party (after 1981)	-0.37432 (1.15973)
Youth Organization	2.6546 (1.0929)*
Age	-0.01456 (0.07034)
Income	0.00004 (0.00007)
Mixed Ownership	-1.74408 (1.40134)
State Ownership	0.40312 (1.36366)
Foreign Ownership	0.00645 (0.01864)
Policy Orientation	-0.16442 (1.2568)
Constant	-1.95812 (3.84975)
<b>Unfaithfulness</b>	
Warsaw School of Economics	0.42473 (1.00795)
Supervisory boards	1.80765 (0.4588222)**
Business Organization	3.11964 (1.53008)*
Communist Party (after 1981)	-0.19696 (1.13677)
Youth Organization	2.76248 (0.99206)**
Age	-0.03981 (0.06672)
Income	0.0001 (0.00007)
Mixed Ownership	-2.39927 (1.34083)
State Ownership	0.83579 (1.26737)
Foreign Ownership	0.01183 (0.01735)
Policy Orientation	-0.21311 (1.14781)
Constant	-0.85933 (3.52741)
<b>Comparison Group is Abstinence</b>	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.2768
Wald chi <sup>2</sup> (22 d.f)	55.41**
N	104
Missing	38
<i>Note: * significant at p&lt;0.05 ** significant at p&lt;0.01. 19 of 38 missing cases are missing income data. Missing income data is not significantly associated with the dependent variable in this or any subsequent model. Therefore, listwise deletion of cases missing income data does not bias the models.</i>	

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**Table 3: Effects of Variables on Probability of Marriage or Unfaithfulness**

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	<i>Abstinent</i>	<i>Marriage</i>	<i>Unfaithful</i>
<i>Youth organization</i>	0.083	1.016	1.111
<i>Business organization</i>	0.067	2.542	0.466
<i>One Supervisory Board</i>	0.167	1.008	1.002

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*Note: The figures were calculated as follows. The probabilities of each relationship for each respondent were predicted from the above multinomial logit model, as if all their characteristics were the same as in the sample, except that ALL had the characteristic mentioned in the table. Then predictions were made as if NONE had the relevant characteristic. The table contains the ratio of the mean of the two sets of probabilities.*

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**Table 4: Logistic Regression Model of Lobbying Activity**

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<i>Variable</i>	<i>Odds Ratio (Robust Standard Error)</i>
Income	1.00026 (0.00016)
Mixed Ownership	1.27115 (0.99179)
State Ownership	1.58256 (1.05372)
Foreign Ownership	1.00635 (0.00847)
Policy Orientation	2.33355 (1.55951)
Business Organization	0.77403 (0.43962)
Marriage	2.79775 (2.04056)
Unfaithfulness	1.27026 (0.90497)
Hosmer and Lemeshow chi <sup>2</sup> (8.d.f.)	7.98**
Wald chi <sup>2</sup> (22 d.f.)	6.51
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.1187
N	102
Missing	40

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*Note: \* significant at p<0.05 \*\* significant at p<0.01*

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**Table 5: Ordinal Logit Model of Lobbying Success**

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<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient (Robust Standard Error)</i>
Income	0.00012 (0.00004)**
Mixed Ownership	-0.88215 (1.02441)
State Ownership	-0.26692 (0.68491)
Foreign Ownership	-0.00495 (0.0076)
Policy Orientation	-0.02174 (0.45666)
Business Organization	0.49218 (0.54561)
Marriage	2.09941 (0.9847)*
Unfaithfulness	1.96763 (0.94353)*
Wald chi <sup>2</sup> (22 d.f.)	20.12*
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.1593
N	63
Missing	43

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*Note: \* significant at p<0.05 \*\* significant at p<0.01. 27 of 43 missing cases are missing data on lobbying success.*

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**Table 6: Comparison of Effects of Marriage and Unfaithfulness**

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<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>Success v Failure</i>	<i>Partial Success v Failure</i>	<i>Success v Partial Success</i>
Unfaithfulness v Marriage	1.419	0.804	1.68

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*Note: The figures were calculated as follows. The probabilities of each relationship for each respondent were predicted from the above ordinal logit model, as if all their characteristics were the same as in the sample, except that ALL had the characteristic mentioned in the table. Then predictions were made as if NONE had the relevant characteristic. Next, the ratio of the mean of the two sets of probabilities was calculated. These ratios formed the basis for the calculation of the odds of lobbying results for the two relationships. It is the ratios of the odds calculations that are shown above.*

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## Appendix

### *List of Political Leaders from Elite Survey*

Balcerowicz, Leszek	Freedom Union
Bielecki, Czesław	Solidarity Electoral Action
Borowski, Marek	Democratic Left Alliance
Cimoszewicz, Włodzimierz	Democratic Left Alliance
Geremek, Bronisław	Freedom Union
Goryszewski, Henryk	Peasant Party
Kaczmarek, Wiesław	Democratic Left Alliance
Kaczyński, Jarosław	Solidarity Electoral Action
Krzaklewski, Marian	Solidarity Labor Union
Kwaśniewski, Aleksander	Democratic Left Alliance
Lewandowski, Janusz	Freedom Union
Miażek, Ryszard	Peasant Party
Miller, Leszek	Democratic Left Alliance
Pawłak, Waldemar	Peasant Party
Pol, Marek	Union of Labor
Rokita, Jan Maria	Solidarity Electoral Action
Siwiec, Marek	Democratic Left Alliance
Suchocka, Hanna	Freedom Union
Syryjczyk, Tadeusz	Freedom Union
Tomaszewski, Janusz	Solidarity Electoral Action
Walendziak, Wiesław	Solidarity Electoral Action
Wałęsa, Lech	Christian Democracy of the Third Republic

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Party factions can also be important interlocutors of firms, and probably merit a separate treatment from political parties. Nonetheless, our concept and measure of exclusivity does not demand an association with a party as a whole. Our approach assumes that if a firm is associated with a faction or factions of a party, it is associated with a party. However, our approach does not help understand the situation in which firms calculate whether to form exclusive relations with one faction in a party or relations with more than one faction in a party.

<sup>2</sup> Although Aleksander Kwaśniewski formally left his party on assuming the presidency, we do not count periods of SLD/Kwaśniewski rule as cohabitation.

<sup>3</sup> We are conscious of the possible bias introduced by the use of survey data based on the level of acquaintance of prominent members of Polish politics and business. One **would** expect prominent businesspeople and politicians to know each other, and one might well expect high levels of unfaithfulness as a result. In fact, this bias underscores the importance of our findings, because the opposite is true in the Polish case. Against all expectations, there is a decisive and politically dictated pattern to the relationships of knowing.

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