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# Political homophily in cultural reputational networks

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## ABSTRACT

The cultural field is characterised by constant struggles for recognition, because resource allocation depends on the reputation of cultural actors. Using a logistic regression quadratic assignment procedure (LRQAP), we first identify the existence and pattern of political homophily in the distribution of cultural reputation. Then, we use interview data to reveal the potential mechanisms that underlie the association between political homophily and reputation. We construct the reputational network of an exemplary national cultural elite (Hungary) based on peer nominations from survey data. Our analysis shows that cultural actors with leftist political orientation are more likely to recognize the achievement of those actors who belong to the same political camp. This is also the case amongst actors with a rightist political orientation, but the most recognized leftist actors are recognized by the rightist camp as well. Based on our interview data, we argue that political polarisation of the cultural elite contributes to the existence of political homophily through creating institutional and interpersonal cleavages. Cleavages are maintained by the symbolic capital gained from political cluster membership and peer pressure for camp mentality; and reinforced by governmental cultural policy distributing resources based on political loyalty. Our findings highlight the importance of the wider social and political context in the empirical study of cultural reputation.

## 1. Introduction

*Similis simili gaudet*, birds of a feather flock together, *madarat tolláról, embert barátjáról*.<sup>1</sup> All these proverbs express the well-known fact that similarity between people raises the chance of attraction and interaction (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1978). Similarity does not only influence who we befriend and with whom we spend our time, it also affects with whom we collaborate and who we reward. Sociology calls this phenomenon homophily and assigns great importance to it in the organisation of communities, social networks, and institutions (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001; Murase, Jo, Török, Kertész & Kaski, 2019). Homophily is observed based on various characteristics: individuals “flock together” with others of similar age, gender, ethnicity, and status, but they also take into account attitude and value similarity, including cultural world-views and similarities (Basov, 2020; Vaisey & Lizardo, 2010) and political values and attitudes (Boutyline & Willer, 2017; Colleoni, Rozza & Arvidsson, 2014; Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1995; Knoke, 1990).

For a long while, cultural sociology has been investigating sociological factors that affect and bias the distribution of reputation. We argue that political homophily plays a considerable role in the distribution of cultural reputation. Cultural reputation is not solely

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<sup>1</sup> Birds are recognised by their feathers and people by their friends (Hungarian proverb).

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based on individual cultural achievement; instead, reputation is a relational and dynamic concept which is formed in a field where actors and positions are interrelated. It is created through a critical discourse and constant struggles within the cultural field and in the wider social field (Bourdieu, 1983, 1996). Cleavages in the wider social context thus contribute to the division of the cultural field, influencing the distribution of recognition, prestige, and the allocation of resources. One of the most significant cleavages in the wider social field is political polarisation. While the structural role of political division in cultural (especially in academic) life is increasingly thematised (see (Langbert, 2018; Mariani & Hewitt, 2008; Zipp & Fenwick, 2006), the role of political attitudes in reputation distribution is understudied. Gallotti and Domenico recently revealed the effect of political homophily in the nomination and selection of Nobel laureates, an award with the highest reputation possible (Gallotti & Domenico, 2019). However, they treated the political homophily of Nobel Prize nominators and nominees at the country level (e.g. their countries were allies in World War 2) rather than at the individual level.

In this paper, we first aim to identify *whether political homophily exists* in dyadic reputational nominations amongst cultural elite members. Based on peer nominations collected in a survey,<sup>2</sup> we construct the reputational network of the Hungarian cultural elite and analyse it using a logistic regression quadratic assignment procedure (LRQAP). We define the cultural elite as actors who occupy unique strategic positions in a cultural field (Anheier & Gerhards, 1991; Cattani, Ferriani & Allison, 2014). After we quantitatively identify the presence and pattern of political homophily in cultural reputational networks, we use interview data to reveal the potential mechanisms that underlie the association between political homophily and reputation. That is, we concentrate on the question *why do we find political homophily* in the reputational nominations. We find that political polarisation of the cultural elite contributes to the existence of political homophily through creating institutional and interpersonal cleavages. Cleavages are maintained by the symbolic capital gained from political cluster membership and peer pressure for camp mentality; and reinforced further by governmental cultural policy distributing resources based on political loyalty.

The paper is structured as follows: in Section 2, we outline the theoretical framework on the significance of reputation in cultural sociology. In Section 3, we review the literature that highlights the mechanisms that might underlie political homophily in reputation distribution. In Section 4, we introduce the Hungarian context. After a Data and Methods section, we present our quantitative results: the description of the reputational network and the identification of political homophily in the LRQAP model. Then, we investigate the mechanisms underlying homophily with the help of semi-structured interviews with cultural elite members from the literary field. The last section contains our conclusions.

## 2. Reputation in the cultural field

The most general definition of reputation often used in economics is the prediction of future behaviour based on past behaviours (Brennan & Pettit, 2004). However, for the purposes of sociological enquiry, the definition of reputation should be supplemented with a role-theory perspective, where the prediction of future achievement is based on how past performance meets *the role expectations of a particular position in a social field* (Jensen, Kim & Kim, 2012). This position-based evaluation significantly affects the career advancement of actors in a given field. When individuals exceed the role expectations regarding their current status, “*they rank higher within their reference group*” [i.e. the other actors in the same career phase], “*which makes them more likely to move to a higher status with different role expectations and a reference group*” (Jensen & Kim, 2020:3).

In the cultural fields, actors struggle for the goods of recognition, renown, and artistic prestige. As such, the reputation of an artist is measured by his or her position within a social field (Bourdieu, 1983, 1996).<sup>3</sup> Bourdieu regarded accumulated recognition as symbolic capital, rooted in the other forms of capital (in the cultural field, predominantly cultural capital) that an actor might possess (Bourdieu, 1990). Compared to other forms of capital, symbolic capital is more subjective, even if it might be objectified in awards and prizes. In Bourdieu’s understanding, symbolic capital helps legitimise power relations in the cultural field (Bourdieu, 1990).

The importance of reputation in the functioning of the cultural field is highlighted by a strong research tradition (Barker-Nunn & Fine, 1998; Becker, 1984; Dubois & François, 2013; Lang & Lang, 1988; van Dijk, 1999; van Rees & Vermunt, 1996). Reputation is particularly important in markets where the quality of a product cannot be evaluated *a priori*. Cultural production is arguably one of those markets (Keuschnigg, 2015). Consequently, reputation is an essential requirement for a proper functioning of cultural fields, because it helps evaluate and predict achievement by giving information on the record of the cultural actor (Martindale, 1995; Nooy, 2002). The actual distribution of reputation shows how much recognition a cultural actor had earned from their peers with her earlier cultural performance and forms the status hierarchy in the field. Without the orientating role of reputation, cultural achievement in the particular field could not be interpreted.

In this study, reputation is regarded as a relational concept: Every actor in the cultural field has a perception of other actors’ reputation. The relations between cultural actors based on the recognition they show toward each other’s cultural achievement form a network in the cultural field. We call this network a cultural reputational network. We argue that the structure of this reputational network does not solely depend on the cultural achievement of the actors. Literature on reputation emphasises that a similar level of achievement does not always lead to a similar level of recognition in the cultural field. Various mechanisms interfere in the process of

<sup>2</sup> Participants were asked to nominate the five ‘greatest figures of contemporary Hungarian culture’.

<sup>3</sup> Though Bourdieu did not focus on networks in his field analysis, many studies inspired by his work used network analysis to map the structure of a particular cultural field, such as literature (Anheier et al., 1995; Anheier & Gerhards, 1991; de Nooy, 1991, 2003, 2002), theatre (Serino et al., 2017), classical music (Bae et al., 2016) or punk music (Bottero & Crossley, 2011). Recently, several researchers argued convincingly that social network analysis could be harmonised with field theory (Bottero & Crossley, 2011; Serino et al., 2017).

how cultural achievement is recognised.

### 3. Political homophily in the cultural field

In this paper, we investigate whether political homophily can be observed in the dyadic reputational nominations amongst the members of the Hungarian cultural elite. Furthermore, we aim to identify the mechanisms that result in political homophily in the cultural reputational network.

Political homophily might be present in the cultural reputational network due to political polarisation in the elite and the wider social field. In several countries, both the elite and the public is highly polarised (Fiorina, Abrams & Pope, 2010; Iyengar et al., 2012; Körösenyi, 2013; Levendusky, 2010), and this polarisation permeates social relations in every sphere of life. We argue that the political cleavage within a particular society, exposed at the level of individual relationships, contributes to the division of the cultural field, influencing the distribution of recognition and prestige and the allocation of resources.

From the point of view of the struggles for reputation within the cultural field, political polarisation is an external factor. As Bourdieu argues, internal struggles for reputation in the cultural field are influenced by external status hierarchies and cleavages in the wider social field encompassing it (Bourdieu, 1983). He claims that *“the field of cultural production produces its most important effects through homologies between the fundamental opposition which gives the field its structure and the oppositions structuring the field of power and the field of class relations. These homologies may give rise to ideological effects which are produced automatically whenever oppositions at different levels are superimposed or merged”* (Bourdieu, 1983:325).

Polarisation might permeate the production of reputation in several ways. Pathways leading to reputational positions are tightly bound to the institutions of the cultural field; the production of reputation is the result of interactions between individuals and institutions. Career trajectories usually consist of a sequence of institutional positions (Dubois & François, 2013; Ekelund & Börjesson, 2002; Giuffre, 1999; van Dijk, 1999). Each field has its special formal and informal institutions (journals, publishers, museums etc.) that are responsible for the production of reputation. Political polarisation might result an institutional cleavage in the cultural field: actors with different views might cluster around different formal and informal institutions.

Recognition is guarded by so-called “gatekeepers”, i.e., actors who supervise institutional access and networks (Bielby & Bielby, 1994; Foster, Borgatti & Jones, 2011; Hirsch, 2000). Several studies highlight the role of gatekeepers and a network of prestigious institutions in a given field, where a strong predictor of success for an artist is the early recognition (not necessarily a positive one) by these gatekeepers (Ekelund & Börjesson, 2002; Fraiberger, Sinatra, Resch, Riedl & Barabási, 2018; Jensen & Kim, 2020; Keuschnigg, 2015).<sup>4</sup> In a politically polarised cultural field, gatekeepers might be biased against artists who are perceived to have different views and this can affect their evaluation. This also could lead to political clusters in recognition.

Further on, the accumulation of cultural reputation has a generational logic (Bourdieu, 1996). Career advancement is affected by the reputational ranks within cohorts who enter the cultural field. Individual achievement is evaluated in comparison with others in similar career stages (Jensen & Kim, 2020). Reputation is confirmed and reproduced through tournament rituals, i.e., the achievement of awards, scholarships, and positions (Anand & Watson, 2004; Gemser, Leenders, & Wijnberg, 2008; Ginsburgh, 2003) and the process of selective matching amongst peers and institutions with similar reputation levels (Dubois & François, 2013; Podolny, 2010). In a polarised field, new generations of actors might find that they advance more easily in their careers by winning tournaments if they join to political clusters. This may reproduce polarisation.

The above-mentioned mechanisms might explain why people tend to give more recognition in reputational networks to others who hold similar political views. Due to preferences and opportunities, people with similar (polarised) political attitudes are closer to each other in the field, personally as well as institutionally, and may recognise each other’s work more. Furthermore, in a polarised field, one might deliberately join a political community to benefit from certain material and symbolic resources. Political clustering therefore provides symbolic capital, which is not primarily based on cultural achievements but still helps to raise one’s own recognition amongst the members of the cluster. In the reputation contest, expressing appreciation toward a member of the same political community, i.e. political homophily, is a contribution to the symbolic capital accumulation of the group. It is also a form of participating in the group’s exchange mechanisms that reinforces membership and group boundaries (Bourdieu, 1986).

Some other explanations might also underlie political homophily in cultural reputation. On the one hand, others with whom we associate influence our political views and preferences (Lazer, Rubineau, Chetkovich, Katz & Neblo, 2010). This phenomenon is called social contagion or social influence (Aral, Muchnik & Sundararajan, 2009; Steglich, Snijders & Pearson, 2010) and suggests that cultural actors might be influenced by the political attitudes of respected others. On the other hand, it is also a possibility that political homophily emerges from a taste for culture (e.g., actors belonging to one political camp do not like cultural products made by actors belonging to the other camp) or simply unawareness (e.g., actors belonging to one political camp do not know actors belonging to the other camp or their cultural products because they do not have the opportunity to meet each other regularly). Analysing the interview data, we shed light on whether political polarisation or some of the alternative explanations like social contagion or taste difference underlie political homophily in the cultural reputational network.

<sup>4</sup> In the course of reputation building, originally slight dissimilarities in talent and opportunities are strengthened by the Matthew Effect of accumulated advantage (Barabási, 2018; Merton, 1968).

**Table 1**  
Left-right self-placement in the cultural elite (scale 1–9), percent.

	Left (1–4)	Centre (5)	Right (6–9)
2001	39	37	24
2009	47	24	29
2018	40	26	34

Source: Elite surveys, Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

#### 4. Political polarisation and political homophily of cultural elites in Hungary

We examine whether political homophily is present in the distribution of reputations by analysing the reputational network of a national cultural elite. The mechanisms behind political homophily are then explored with the help of interviews with members of that elite. We define the elite as cultural actors who occupy unique strategic positions in a given field (Anheier & Gerhards, 1991; Cattani et al., 2014). The elite, as we understand it, is not a social entity.<sup>5</sup> Rather, it is relationally constructed by the members of the field (Anheier & Gerhards, 1991:822). Due to their strategic positions in reputation hierarchies, members of the elite have a strong influence on deciding whose achievement is recognized and whose is not (Anand & Jones, 2008; Anheier & Gerhards, 1991; Anheier, Gerhards & Romo, 1995; Giuffre, 1999; Kristóf, 2013). If the elite is polarised politically, political clustering may emerge in the reputational structure as well.

The Hungarian cultural elite operates in a social context that is highly polarised politically compared to other European countries (Patkós, 2017). In line with this high level of political polarisation in Hungarian society, researchers have observed a growing political homophily in interpersonal (Angelusz & Tardos, 2011; Bene, 2017) and also in business networks (Stark & Vedres, 2012). Political homophily is understood in terms of self-placement on the left-right scale, which is an extensively used proxy for measuring political preferences in the European (and American) context. It is a valid scale that correlates well with political preferences, especially in the case of highly educated respondents (Coughlin & Lockhart, 1998; Lesschaeve, 2017). This is also by far the best proxy for political preferences in Hungary (Kmetty, 2014; Körösenyi, 2013). The left-right axis assigns a clear political division, though it refers to party identification rather than coherent differences on policy issues (Tóka, 2005). Political networks in Hungary are structured mainly by the left-right division; the liberal-conservative axis shapes them only weakly (Kmetty, 2014). Political homophily has been found to have a stronger effect on interpersonal networks than gender, age, education, or religion (Angelusz & Tardos, 2011).

This high level of homophily is attributed to the growing polarisation of political attitudes (Angelusz & Tardos, 2011; Enyedi & Benoit, 2011; Körösenyi, 2013). During the first decade of the 21st century, with the emptying of the centre, a growing U-shaped distribution of citizens' preferences was observed on the left-right scale. However, movement from the centre to the poles was not symmetrical: the preference scale of Hungarian society has swung to the right (Enyedi & Benoit, 2011).

Similarly to the research results on political polarisation in the United States (Fiorina et al., 2010; Levendusky, 2010), political polarisation is a top-down phenomenon in Hungary as well, in which a polarised elite polarises the voters (Körösenyi, 2013). Data from elite surveys show a growing polarisation in the elite and in this process, “*ideology-producing intellectuals, especially by international comparison, played an unusually prominent role, which, though varying in intensity, remained constant throughout the period*” (Körösenyi, 2013:14). Polarisation causes a ‘camp-mentality’ on the opposing sides of the left-right spectrum, with consequences that overreach the sphere of party politics. Stark and Vedres showed, using longitudinal data, that party polarisation has caused ‘political holes’ in the structure of business networks, with probable negative consequences for the Hungarian economy (Stark & Vedres, 2012).

The swinging of the ideological-political spectrum to the right, facilitated by a successful right-wing party elite (Viktor Orbán and the Fidesz party) also affected the cultural elite. Traditionally, this is a social group that is more dominated by left and liberal attitudes than the whole population (Brym, 2010; Lipset, 1959; Shils, 1958). This holds true for the Hungarian cultural elite as well (Bozóki, 1999; Kristóf, 2013). Cultural life in Hungary has traditionally been strongly divided politically since at least the beginning of the 20th century (Gyurgyák, 1990). Table 1 shows that, according to survey data, political polarisation proceeded in the first decade of the 21st century and endured in the second while the leftist dominance slightly decreased.

Previous qualitative studies (Kristóf, 2013, 2017a, 2017b) indeed show that a left-right division marks the borders of two ideological camps in the cultural elite. These two camps overlap present day party preferences (left-liberal opposition vs. nationalist-populist government) to a certain degree but they could be traced back to the earlier historical cleavages. In the public discourse, the metaphor of *Kulturkampf* is often used to describe political clustering and the struggle for material and symbolic resources in culture (Kristóf, 2017b).

In the meantime, the authoritarian turn in Hungarian politics after 2010 (Bozóki & Hegedűs, 2018; Kornai, 2015) has had several consequences on the cultural field that had been divided already. The ruling illiberal Orbán government has favoured its own loyal cultural elite, and tried to eliminate existing cultural structures with the goal of redistributing cultural positions and resources. This goal is implemented by attempts to rewrite the cultural canon, exercising political patronage over cultural positions and the founding of new cultural institutions and positions, thereby creating or strengthening parallel structures in the cultural field (Kristóf, 2017a). As

<sup>5</sup> Though, in some empirical cases, they can form a group connected by interpersonal ties in a form of an artistic movement or an intellectual circle (Kadushin, 1974).

a result, two academies of arts, two societies of writers, and two societies of theatres exist in parallel and the government supports loyal institutions by various policy measures.<sup>6</sup> Cultural policy measures of the government are accompanied by a strong anti-liberal rhetoric that serves as a narrative framework for centralisation and homogenisation in culture. The authoritarian power-exercise of the Orbán-government in the cultural field (such as the force of liberal private university CEU into moving to Vienna from Budapest) even led to the reproving of Hungary under [Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union](#) by the European Court for breaching EU values (Kristóf, 2021).

Political polarisation could not only be shown as an institutional and ideological division in the Hungarian cultural field. Through the mechanisms described in [Section 3](#), it might also affect the distribution of cultural reputation. To investigate this possibility, we first examined reputational relations in the cultural elite by asking its members to nominate their peers as ‘the greatest figures in contemporary Hungarian culture’, thus creating a reputational network amongst them. We expect that similar political orientation between the nominator and the nominee raises the chance of nominations for being one of the greatest cultural actors (political homophily). Moreover, we assume that political homophily does not appear consistently all over the political spectrum (left, centre, right) as a general case of value homophily. On the contrary, based on the earlier empirical results on the politically divided structure of the Hungarian cultural elite, we assume that political homophily is closely connected with the polarised two-camp-structure of the cultural field. Consequently, we expect that political homophily appears only on the left and right side of the political spectrum and not in the centre. To investigate whether political homophily in the reputational network is indeed caused by political polarisation and to reveal the underlying mechanisms behind this association, we analyse semi-structured interviews with members of the literary field.

When studying the distribution of reputation in the Hungarian cultural elite, we can build on some earlier empirical results. A quantitative study detected several factors that affect the distribution of cultural reputation (Kristóf, 2013). In this study, age positively correlated with reputation, in line with Bourdieu’s considerations on the arduous accumulation of field-specific cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1996). Owning a degree from the most prestigious universities in Hungary was also positively correlated with reputation. This study also found that an arts degree positively correlated with reputation due to the fact that the renown of artists is more extensive than that of scientists or cultural managers. Furthermore, it has been found that featuring in the national media positively correlated with reputation. (Kristóf, 2013). In this present study, we test the presence of political homophily controlling for these factors.

## 5. Data and methods

### 5.1. Sampling procedure

On the one hand, our study is based on a survey amongst the members of the Hungarian cultural elite ( $N = 411$ ) conducted in 2018 using face-to-face interviews recorded on computer.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, we conducted 20 semi-structured interviews with members of the literary field.

In the survey, the elite was operationalised broadly as actors who are influential in the process of cultural production; either because of their strategic position, cultural reputation, or market success. Hence, a person could be included in the elite sample in different ways.

The composition of the sample is described in [Appendix Table A1](#). Fifty percent of the sample was part of the *positional elite*. This is the most accepted way to operationalise the elite of a social sector (Hoffmann-Lange, 2017). The *leaders* of universities, scientific and cultural institutions (museums, theatres, libraries, research institutes etc.), and the media were included in the positional sample. *Members* of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and the two Academies of Arts were also included in the positional sample, because these are the most prestigious institutions in the cultural field. Membership of these academies is a demonstration of a long scientific or artistic career and provides a considerable life-annuity and new members are elected by the existing ones.

Positional sampling is well supplemented with *reputational* sampling in elite studies (Hoffmann-Lange, 2017), especially in the cultural field, where elite membership is often based on formal and informal reputation. Numerous classic elite studies combined positional and reputational (snowball) sampling (Higley & Moore, 1981; Higley, Hoffmann-Lange, Kadushin & Moore, 1991; Kadushin, 1974, 1995) in order to catch the elite of a structurally less formal field, such as intellectual circles (Kadushin, 1974) or policy decision networks (Larsen & Ellersgaard, 2017). Reputational methodology, as Hoffmann-Lange warns, usually provides a smaller and more closed power elite than positional sampling would do (Hoffmann-Lange, 2017). If the two methods are combined, a centre-periphery structure might emerge (Larsen & Ellersgaard, 2017), as occurred in the classic study by Anheier, Gerhardt and Romo (Anheier et al., 1995). Thus, 35 percent of our sample was included according to two different forms of reputational criteria. First, individuals’ reputation was measured by their *awards*: the living recipients of the highest cultural state awards were included on our list. Second, members of the cultural elite participating in the survey were asked to nominate a maximum of five persons they

<sup>6</sup> Government funding of sport, leisure and the arts is higher in Hungary (in terms of share of GDP) than any other EU country. However, the scale of corporate sponsorship and number of private ‘Maecenases’ is far lower than in Western Europe or the USA (Kristóf, 2017a, 2020). Therefore, the cultural field is highly dependent on public support.

<sup>7</sup> Usually studies on reputation examine the relations within one artistic or scientific field (Dubois & François, 2013; Serino et al., 2017; Verboord, 2003) while our data include actors from various cultural fields. This cross-fields nature of our data might be a constraint because the mechanisms of reputation production might be different according to respective fields. However, our hypothesis on political homophily is a general one; it is not related to any specific cultural field. The clustered structure of the cultural elite can be controlled during hypothesis testing.

**Table 2**  
Independent and control variables of the analysis.

	Homophily effect	Sender/Receiver effect
<i>Independent variables (political attitudes)<sup>1</sup></i>		
Rightism	1 if both actors are rightist (values 1–4 on the right-left political spectrum), 0 otherwise	–
Leftism	1 if both actors are leftist (values 6–9 on the right-left political spectrum), 0 otherwise	–
Centrism	1 if both actors are centrist (value 5 on the right-left political spectrum), 0 otherwise	–
<i>Control variables</i>		
Gender	1 if actors have same gender, 0 otherwise	1 if the sender/receiver of the nomination is male, 0 if female
Age	The absolute value of age distance between actors	The age of the sender/receiver
Place of birth (Budapest/countryside)	1 if actors have the same place of birth, 0 otherwise	1 if the place of birth of the sender/receiver is Budapest, 0 if it is the countryside
Arts degree	1 if both actors have an artistic degree or neither of them have, 0 otherwise	1 if the sender/receiver of the nomination has an artistic degree, 0 if not
Media activity <sup>2</sup>	1 if both actors gave an interview or neither of them did, 0 otherwise	1 if the sender/receiver of the nomination gave an interview, 0 if not
Elite university <sup>3</sup>	1 if both actors attended an elite university or neither of them did, 0 otherwise	1 if the sender/receiver of the nomination attended an elite university, 0 if not
Field <sup>4</sup>	1 if the actors belong to the same cultural field	–
Being incumbent <sup>5</sup>	1 if both actors are incumbents in the cultural elite or neither of them are, 0 otherwise	1 if the sender/receiver of the nomination is an incumbent in the cultural elite, 0 if not
Being a leader of a cultural institution	1 if both actors are leaders or none of them are, 0 otherwise	1 if the sender/receiver of the nomination is a leader, 0 if not
Owner of a major cultural award <sup>6</sup>	1 if both actors are owners of a major cultural award or none of them are, 0 otherwise	1 if the sender/receiver has received a major cultural award, 0 if not

*Notes.*

<sup>1</sup>For measuring self-placement on the right-left political scale, a scale of 1–9 was applied, which was later recoded into three dummy variables: rightist dummy (1 if 1–4 on the scale, 0 otherwise); centrist dummy (1 if 5 on the scale, 0 otherwise); leftist dummy (1 if 6–9 on the scale, 0 otherwise).

<sup>2</sup>Have you given an interview for the national media, television, or radio in the last year?.

<sup>3</sup>Corvinus University of Budapest, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Eötvös Loránd Science University, Semmelweis University, University of Theatre and Film, Liszt Ferenc University of Music, The Hungarian University of Fine Arts and Hungarian Dance Academy.

<sup>4</sup>Media, literature, fine arts and architecture, theatre and film, music, sports, academia (science, social science and the humanities).

<sup>5</sup>If the respondent had been a member of the cultural elite before 2010 according to the relevant sampling criteria.

<sup>6</sup>Kossuth Prize (highest Hungarian state award for the arts) and Széchenyi Prize (highest Hungarian state awards for sciences).

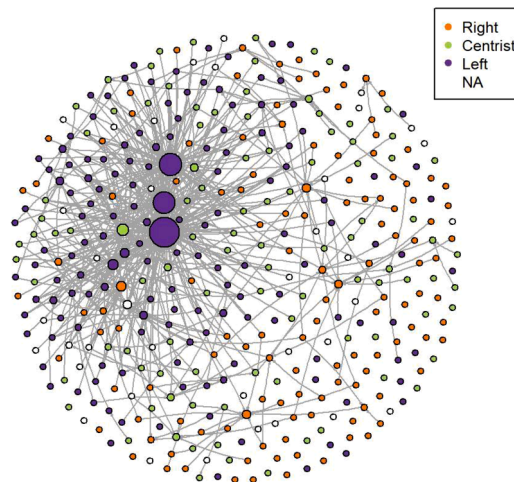
considered as ‘*the greatest figures of contemporary Hungarian culture*’. The most often nominated individuals, if they had not been in the sample already, were also included in the sample of the Hungarian cultural elites (snowball sampling, five percent) and could nominate the five greatest actors of the cultural elite as well. Finally, a small proportion of bestselling authors and music performers were also included in the cultural elite sample, based on the criteria of market success (10 percent).

## 5.2. Quantitative data and analytical strategy

Every survey respondent was asked to nominate a maximum of five persons they considered as ‘*the greatest figures of contemporary Hungarian culture*’. These nominations were turned into an adjacency matrix format showing whether or not a nomination exists between actors in the reputational network (1 indicates that individual *i* nominated individual *j*, 0 otherwise). Nominated individuals who were not part of the sample, and therefore, no individual-level characteristics were available for them ( $N = 342$ ), were left out from the matrix. The *dependant variable* of our model is this directed reputational network ( $N = 411$ ).

Data were analysed using a logistic regression quadratic assignment procedure (LRQAP). The analysis was carried out with the UCINET program (version 6.627, (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002)). LRQAP is a statistical model for network data, which estimates the associations between a dyadic dependant variable (e.g., the adjacency matrix of a network) and multiple dyadic independent and control variables. Dyadic independent and control variables can either be networks or dyadic attributes measuring the similarity or dissimilarity of actors on a given attribute. It can also be examined how the attributes of the sender or the receiver of a nomination are associated with the existence of a tie in the dependant variable. LRQAP models take into account that network ties are not independent from each other, which cannot be handled by traditional regression analysis: the models control for the structure of a given network and use a nonparametric technique for assessing the statistical significance of the parameter estimates by randomly permuting the rows and columns of the matrix (Krackhardt, 1988). Parameter estimates in LRQAP can be interpreted in a similar way as those of a standard logistic regression model. Because some of the variables contain missing data, 346 actors of the total 411 were included in the analysis.

The *independent and control variables* are summarised in Table 2. To test our hypothesis on political homophily, we build a model that contains political attitudes as the focus of our enquiry while controlling for other relevant sociological characteristics that may affect reputational nominations. Various kinds of empirical indicators have previously been revealed to correlate with reputation, such



**Fig. 1.** The reputational network of the Hungarian Cultural Elite *Notes*: Number of actors = 411, total number of nominations = 577. The size of the nodes is proportional to the number of incoming nominations. The direction of nominations is marked by the head of the arrows (from  $\rightarrow$  to). The color of the nodes represents the actors' self-reported placement on the right-left political spectrum coded into three categories (right, centrist, left). Actors who are not connected to the network voted for people not included in the survey.

as place of birth (Ekelund & Börjesson, 2002), education (Anheier et al., 1995), age, and gender (Gallotti & Domenico, 2019; Kadushin, 1974; Kristóf, 2013). Based on these results, we controlled for the nominators' and nominees' gender, age, elite university education, arts degree, leader position, and media activity (*sender and receiver effects*). We controlled for how long the individuals had been regarded as a member of the cultural elite (incumbent effect) and for the past cultural performance of the actors (owner of a major cultural award). Furthermore, we controlled for *homophily effects* for every included characteristics. We also considered the Bourdieusian concept of artistic fields (Bourdieu, 1996), assuming that actors of the same cultural field are more likely to nominate each other.

For the analysis, all sender, receiver, and homophily effects have been converted into adjacency matrix format as required for the LRQAP model. All actors are listed in both the rows and the columns of the adjacency matrices. The homophily effect means that if the actor in the row  $i$  has the same attribute as the actor in the column  $j$ , the cell  $ij$  takes the value 1 and 0 otherwise. The sender effect means that in row  $i$ , all cells take the value of the attribute of actor  $i$ . The receiver effect means that in column  $j$ , all cells take the value of the attribute of actor  $j$ .

In the case of the political attitudes, a different procedure was applied. We are not only interested in homophily in political attitudes in general (i.e., individuals with similar political orientations are more likely to nominate each other), but also in whether there are differences between the leftist, rightist, and centrist groups regarding the presence and extent of political homophily. Therefore, as independent variables, we separately included covariates for leftist, rightist, and centrist homophily, whereas the reference category captures nominations between actors with different political attitudes. (As a robustness check, we estimated models including parameters for the left-right and right-left dyads as well.) The sender and receiver effects were excluded for the political attitude measures, because the specific coding of the political attitude homophily variables used with sender and receiver effects might have raised the problem of collinearity.<sup>8</sup>

### 5.3. Qualitative data

The quantitative data were supplemented by 20 semi-structured interviews to help interpretation. We selected a specific cultural field, literature, and snowball-sampled its elite using an initial set of respondents that represented the political spectrum (Tansley, 2009). Interview text was coded and analysed using the Maxqda qualitative content analysis program.

## 6. Results

### 6.1. Descriptive results

Fig. 1 presents the visualisation of the reputational network, whereas Table 3 shows the descriptives of the network. The reputational network is a sparse network: individuals sent and received 1.4 nominations on average. The low density<sup>9</sup> (0.3%) can be partly explained by the fact that the number of nominations was limited to a maximum of five names while the number of actors is high.

<sup>8</sup> We do not include the sender and receiver effect for the cultural field measure either, because our questions are not directed to any specific field.

<sup>9</sup> The density of the network is the total number of nominations divided by the number of all possible dyads

**Table 3**

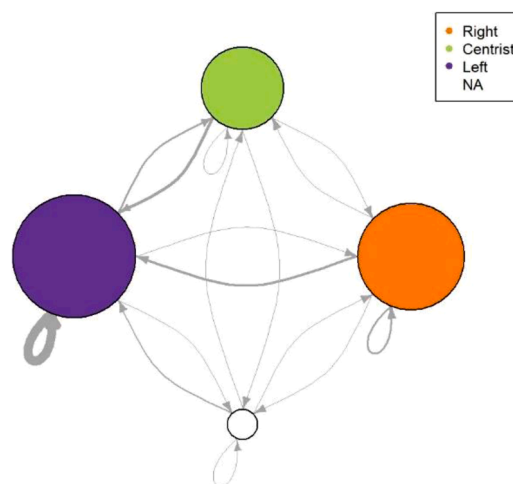
Descriptive statistics about the reputational network with and without the four most frequently nominated actors (stars).

	With stars	Without stars <sup>1</sup>
Number of actors	411	407
Number of nominations	577	284
Density	0.003	0.002
Average degree <sup>2</sup>	1.404	0.698
SD indegree	7.924	2.243
SD outdegree	1.313	0.839
Outdegree centralisation	0.009	0.006
Indegree centralisation	0.266	0.048
Average distance	2.540	2.522
SD distance	1.326	1.545
Reciprocity	0.011	0.007

Notes: SD = standard deviation.

<sup>1</sup>The four stars received 110, 77, 74 and 27 nominations.

<sup>2</sup>The average degree including those actors who were cut-off from the final network ( $N = 342$ ) is 2.03.



**Fig. 2.** A reduced digraph containing four meta-nodes based on the respondents' political attitudes and the aggregations of links between these nodes, weighted by the total number of nominations. The size of the meta-nodes is proportional to the number of respondents according to their self-reported placement on the right-left political spectrum.

Furthermore, nominated individuals who were not part of the survey were not included in the reputational network. Therefore, there are isolated actors in the network, although they originally gave some reputational nominations. Apart from these limitations, our network clearly shows the centre-periphery pattern described by Bourdieu and Anheier and Gerhardtts, which reflects the unequal distribution of reputation (Anheier et al., 1995; Bourdieu, 1996). Fig. 2 shows a reduced graph containing four meta-nodes based on the respondents' political attitudes and the aggregations of links between these nodes, weighted by the total number of the nominations. It can be seen that the majority of the nominations are amongst leftist actors, and leftist actors receive more nominations from rightist and centrist individuals than the other way around.

Fig. 1 shows that there are individuals with a particularly high number of incoming nominations in the network. We identified four "stars", i.e., cultural actors whose indegrees lie outside the third standard deviation from the mean. These stars receive half of the incoming nominations (49.9 percent), which can severely bias our parameter estimates for political homophily if they belong to one political camp. We therefore conducted all analyses both with and without these stars to assess the robustness of our findings. Fig. A1 and A2 in the Appendix show the reputational network and its reduced graph without these stars.

Table 4 shows the percentage of nominations according to the self-placement on the political right-left spectrum. On average, those who place themselves on the political left tend to get more reputational nominations than those with another political orientation. However, three of the stars reported themselves to be leftist, while one of them reported to be centrist. Without the stars, the advantage of leftists disappears and the average indegree of actors with different political orientation becomes very similar.

**Table 4**  
Descriptive results by self-placement on the political right-left spectrum.

	Left (6–9)(n = 147)	Centrist (5)(n = 99)	Right (1–4)(n = 128)	Missing answer(n = 37)
Average indegree in the reputational network (SD)	2.65 (12.7)	0.82 (3.1)	0.7 (2.3)	0.46 (2.2)
Minimum and maximum indegrees	0–110	0–27	0–16	0–13
Average indegree in the reputational network (SD) without “stars”	0.9 (2.62) (n = 144)	0.55 (1.69) (n = 98)	0.7 (2.3) (n = 128)	0.46 (2.2)
Minimum and maximum indegrees without “stars”	0–20 (n = 144)	0–10 (n = 98)	0–16 (n = 128)	0–13

**Table 5**  
Results of the LRQAP analysis.

	Model 1 Estimate	OR	p	AME	Model 2 Estimate	OR	p	AME
Intercept	–8.245				–8.786			
Political homophily								
Left-left	1.415	4.116	***	0.0066	1.134	3.107	***	0.0029
Right-right	0.345	1.411		0.0012	0.962	2.617	**	0.0024
Centrist-centrist	–0.148	0.862		–0.0004	0.218	1.243		0.0004
Incumbent homophily	–0.061	0.941		–0.0002	–0.076	0.927		–0.0001
Incumbent sender	0.138	1.148		0.0004	0.156	1.169		0.0003
Incumbent receiver	1.857	6.402	†	0.0034	0.896	2.449	†	0.0012
Leader homophily	–0.049	0.952		–0.0002	0.204	1.227		0.0003
Leader sender	0.121	1.129		0.0004	0.217	1.242		0.0004
Leader receiver	0.171	1.186		0.0005	–1.370	0.254	*	–0.0017
Major cultural award homophily	0.042	1.043		0.0001	–0.043	0.957		–0.0001
Major cultural award sender	–0.257	0.774	*	–0.0007	–0.410	0.664	*	–0.0006
Major cultural award receiver	1.315	3.724	†	0.0049	0.869	2.386	*	0.0017
Same cultural field	0.267	1.306		0.0009	0.744	2.104	***	0.0015
Gender homophily	–0.063	0.939		–0.0002	–0.052	0.949		–0.0001
Male sender	0.136	1.146		0.0004	0.068	1.070		0.0001
Male receiver	0.629	1.875		0.0015	0.287	1.332		0.0004
Age difference	–0.015	0.985		0.0000	–0.009	0.991		0.0000
Age of sender	–0.007	0.993		0.0000	–0.004	0.996		0.0000
Age of receiver	–0.026	0.975		–0.0001	–0.009	0.991		0.0000
Place of birth homophily	–0.015	0.986		0.0000	0.057	1.059		0.0001
Place of birth of sender	0.085	1.088		0.0003	–0.025	0.975		0.0000
Place of birth of receiver	–0.270	0.764		–0.0008	–0.120	0.887		–0.0002
Elite university homophily	0.220	1.246	*	0.0007	0.306	1.358	*	0.0005
Elite university sender	0.023	1.023		0.0001	0.026	1.026		0.0000
Elite university receiver	–0.625	0.535		–0.0018	0.037	1.038		0.0001
Arts degree homophily	0.022	1.023		0.0001	0.158	1.171		0.0003
Arts degree sender	–0.123	0.884		–0.0004	0.099	1.104		0.0002
Arts degree receiver	–0.064	0.938		–0.0002	0.238	1.269		0.0004
Media activity homophily	0.192	1.212		0.0006	0.186	1.204		0.0003
Media activity of sender	0.011	1.011		0.0000	0.011	1.011		0.0000
Media activity of receiver	1.874	6.517	*	0.0034	1.361	3.901	**	0.0016
Number of actors	346				342			
Number of dyads	119,370				117,306			

Note: The four most nominated actors (stars) are excluded from Model 2. Number of permutations = 5000. † $p < 0.1$ , \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

## 6.2. The results of the LRQAP analysis

The results of the LRQAP analysis are presented in Table 5. We assumed that political homophily would raise the chance of reputational nominations in the political left and right, but not in the political centre. The results are only partly in line with our hypothesis. With regard to political attitudes, homophily is only significantly more likely amongst individuals with leftist political attitudes ( $OR=4.116$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , Model 1), but not amongst individuals with rightist or centrist attitudes, compared to nominations between dissimilar actors.

The exclusion of the four most nominated actors alters these results. Without these stars, political homophily is not only significantly more likely amongst individuals with leftist political attitudes ( $OR=3.107$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , Model 2), but also amongst individuals with rightist attitudes ( $OR=2.617$ ,  $p = 0.001$ , Model 2), compared to nominations between dissimilar actors.

Further results indicate that actors having a major cultural award are more likely to receive ( $OR=3.724$ ,  $p = 0.064$ , Model 1) but less likely to send ( $OR=0.774$ ,  $p = 0.044$ , Model 1) reputational nominations than actors without an award. Respondents are also likely to nominate others who attended the same type of university (elite vs. non elite,  $OR=1.246$ ,  $p = 0.029$ , Model 1) and those who are

active in the media (media activity receiver:  $OR=6.517, p = 0.026$ , Model 1). Incumbents on the cultural field are more likely to receive nominations than newcomers ( $OR=6.402, p = 0.075$ , Model 1). If stars are excluded from the model, leaders of cultural institutions are less likely to receive nominations ( $OR=0.254, p = 0.051$ , Model 2), while actors in the same cultural field are more likely to nominate each other compared to those in different fields ( $OR=2.104, p < 0.001$ , Model 2). The other effects are not statistically significant in the model at the 0.1 or lower level.

To assess the robustness of our findings, we repeated the analysis with a different categorisation of political attitudes (right: 1–3, centrist: 4–6, left: 7–9 on the 9-point scale). The findings on political homophily are robust using the modified categorisation (not presented in the paper). To further investigate the left-right political cleavage, we also estimated models containing parameter estimates for the left-right and right-left nominations (thus, using the centrist-left, centrist-right, left-centrist, right-centrist dyads as reference categories). The results are presented in Table A3 in the Appendix. The findings show that left-right and right-left nominations are not significantly less likely than nominations between centrist and leftist or rightist actors.

### 6.3. Qualitative data analysis

Our cross-sectional regression analysis partly supported our assumptions about political homophily. Individuals with leftist political attitudes are more likely to recognise other cultural actors with similar political attitudes. Individuals with rightist political attitudes are also more likely to acknowledge others with a similar political orientation but they tend to recognise the most nominated leftist actors as well. In this part of the analysis, we interpret the results of the network analysis with the help of our interview data with members of the literary field. We aim to explore whether the presence of political homophily in the cultural reputational network is the result of political polarisation and to identify the potential mechanisms behind this association.

We found that ideological differences between cultural actors are indeed manifested in a clearly divided structure for the literary field. Institutionally, there are two associations for writers: in 2004, renowned liberal writers, as a protest in a political case, quit the general association (*Írószövetség*) and joined to another company (*Szépírók Társasága*). Similarly, there were two associations for young writers; in this case, *JAK* was the original and *FISZ* was founded in 2005 as a right-wing rival.<sup>10</sup>

Respondents described the division and reported on the difficulties of crossing the border. Contrary to our quantitative results on a few universal cultural stars, including one writer who received the most nominations, our interviewees even questioned the possibility of any consensual achievement:

Now this whole system became like a barricade, and there are no overlaps. Formerly there were these consensual figures, everywhere acknowledged. Like X or Y, the great ones. And there were those who made a decision that they want to be present everywhere in literary life, independently from political or ideological cleavages. They were like bridges and they could do it. For me it was, how to say, a kind of enviable ethos in the 2000s, but now I think that taking on this challenge and behaving like bridge-men is getting more and more difficult. (*poet and aesthetician, 36*)

A young writer gave an account of the disappointment concerning the generational reproduction of the political cleavage in culture: And I thought these political camps were the problem of the older generations and we could get rid of them, we can get rid of history. But it was an illusion. (*writer, 33*)

Interviewees often used the analogy of *Kulturkampf* for describing life outside political camps, as it even threatens mental health:

It is deathly, because if you go and stand in the political centre, they will shoot you from two directions, and for your every word; for one sentence you say, they will call you a traitor, a bastard, whatever...a Nazi...So you know, it's no use doing this. In my opinion, it is no use taking that position; it only brings problems for you and your loved ones, and you can't sleep and you will have a nervous breakdown. (*poet, 58*)

Respondents reflected on the reasons for the camp mentality, naming existential vulnerability, the fact that the vast majority of writers cannot live off of the market and are dependant on scholarships and institutional support. They usually blame government cultural policy that distributes resources on the basis of political loyalty, for the growing intensity of the 'war'. In this structure, peer pressure to stay loyal to the camp is very strong. Trying to avoid political camp mentality can cause actual disadvantages, such as losing positions and a decrease in reputation:

The point is that you are still a bit safer if you belong to somewhere. The position of the independent intellectual is very complicated, very sympathetic and I try to hold on to it to a certain extent. But in the meantime I wouldn't show up at an event organized by the [rival academy of arts]. Maybe there would be colleagues there with whom I'd be together with pleasure, but I know that my own political side would regard me as a traitor, and I would get emails and then next time I would not be invited by people from my side. (*writer, 62*)

However, although the structure of the field is clearly divided, interviewees did not describe the two rival camps as equals, neither in quantity nor in quality. The institutional system of reputation production in the literary field was described as dominated by leftists or liberals. Most of the gatekeepers of the field (editors of the most prominent journals and publishing houses, curators of important fellowships) and also the most famous artists were described as left-liberal. Also, when respondents were asked to name colleagues they respect highly, leftist dominance was clearly present in their preferences, even in the case of rightist interviewees. In the

<sup>10</sup> *JAK* announced its closure in 2019, referring to the lack of financial support from the state. In 2015, the Orbán government founded a new academy for young writers (*KMTG*) and subsidised it with an amount that was one hundredfold of the yearly budget of *JAK* or *FISZ*.

meantime, interviewees referred to the paradox that the financial means and leading positions of state-run institutions have been concentrated in the hand of rightist intellectuals since the Orbán government holds power. Leftist dominance in reputation was explained differently by members of the two camps. According to right-wingers, the system of reputation production is ideologically biased and gatekeepers tend to be politically partial:

The essence of the problem is that they [leftists] are the ones who define who is respectable. We used to think that literature is basically leftist or liberal and this means some kind of liberty, because art is free. But in the meantime I see that there is a strong dictatorial atmosphere amongst leftist intellectuals. I was actually told by a publishing house that, because I am the member of [name of a right wing writers' academy], they would not publish my book. So it is so strange that they are against exclusion... but actually they are brutally exclusive. (*dramatist, 42*)

I was told not to count on any help in my career from them until I worked for [name of a conservative daily paper] because that is intolerable. (*writer, 70*)

This bias is especially problematic for the evaluation of the work of the right-wingers, because they themselves do not find the institutions and publishers in the right-wing camp of good professional quality. They would prefer to be published and become accepted by the dominant camp, without having to give up their views.

Actually, on the right side there is no inclusive medium, no willingness of reception; there is no prestigious publishing house on the right side, no respectful literary board. (*writer, 70*).

In the meantime, left-wingers claimed that reputational levels of the field are based on cultural achievement. They described the main difference between the two political sides in terms of aesthetic (and market) value and quality:

There was no one, let's say, on that [the right] side, no one in whom I was interested as a publisher, you know? I always tried... how to say...to implement positive discrimination on those authors who were at least promising...nothing happened. I was not successful. (*editor of a top literary publishing house, 66*)

In sum, our interviewees recognised the role of political division in the organisation of the cultural field. Talking about their own aesthetic judgements, they considered cultural reputation in terms of aesthetic value in the first place and were reluctant to connect their own aesthetic preferences and cultural choices to political camps. However, they felt that political bias is practised by most of the other actors in the cultural field.

What is interesting and exciting about it, is that of course the more intelligent part of the company says that the division is merely aesthetic. Except that they draw aesthetic borders, interestingly, in a way that their buddies are always in, and enemies are always out. And this makes me think that these are quite suspicious aesthetic foundations...but anyway, this is human. (*poet, 53*)

In this polarised formal and informal structure, many interviewees perceived camp membership as a kind of symbolic capital: joining a political community results in benefitting from certain material and symbolic resources. This perspective also means that new generations of actors are joining the clusters for their acceptance and career advancement, reproducing the cleavage between the two camps.

I think that there are many people around this gang; young people, and not-so-young people, who are not that talented or just not that successful and that is why they want to justify even more that they are right. They are often mean to me. Young folks, I don't even know them and they call me out because I am a rightist. I think they want to flatter this circle, because this is also a circle of interest; they distribute scholarships. I always applied, never won...and of course my paranoid mind sees a concept here. (*writer, 42*)

In the meantime, some actors with a sufficient amount of reputation do not necessarily need to express their membership in their camp any more. They at least can afford to be tolerant towards dissimilar political views, as the rightist interviewee already cited above explains about some very prominent liberal colleagues of hers:

The problem is that they are so toughly exclusive and so camp-minded, in the worst sense, but actually the really great writers aren't doing this! And this is pretty surprising. X, she is very political, and all, but she actually likes me; she can disconnect politics and talk to me. Or Y, for him, these are real questions to talk about and he is not like "let's kill them all". (*writer, 42*)

## 7. Discussion

In this study we aimed to detect the extent of and mechanisms behind political homophily in the reputational network of the Hungarian cultural elite. Joining previous literature on the structure and mechanisms functioning in the field of cultural production (Anheier et al., 1995; Bourdieu, 1983, 1996; de Nooy, 2003; Dubois & François, 2013; Ekelund & Börjesson, 2002; Giuffre, 1999; Jensen & Kim, 2020; Lang & Lang, 1988; Nooy, 2002; van Dijk, 1999; van Rees & Vermunt, 1996; Verboord, 2003), we argued that reputation distribution is of crucial importance in the cultural field. Expanding how cultural achievement is translated into recognition, we underlined what kind of biases could mark this process and argued that political homophily might be an important one. We argued that the politically divided structure of cultural life influences the distribution of cultural reputation: members of the cultural elite tend to appreciate more those who hold similar political views to their own.

Our quantitative findings have revealed political homophily in the reputational nominations of the cultural elite. Being a political leftist considerably improves the chance of being held in high rank by those who have a similar political self-identification. The same

phenomenon for the rightists turn up only if we exclude the biggest cultural stars from the network. This suggests that rightist actors recognise the achievement of the greatest leftist actors, but otherwise, they are also more likely to nominate other actors with similar political attitudes. However this border-crossing type of recognition does not really work in the other direction. This suggests a leftist dominance in the reputational network. Meanwhile, in the political centre, homophily is not significant, which is in line with our expectation on the connection between homophily and polarisation.

Political homophily might be present in cultural reputations due to different mechanisms. On the one hand, due to preferences, opportunities and institutional constraints, people might tend to associate with others who hold similar political views (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1995; Knoke, 1990). On the other hand, others we associate with and who we respect influence our political views and preferences (Lazer et al., 2010). Our cross-sectional LRQAP analysis did not allow us to disentangle these potential mechanisms; we thus used the qualitative interviews to shed light on them.

Interview data supported our assumption that a camp mentality affects the distribution of reputation. It also showed that it is not only present when we study the whole cultural elite across various cultural fields but also within at least the literary field. This qualitative evidence suggests that the significance of political homophily is not the consequence of the cross-field nature of our quantitative data. The literary field proved to be formally divided in its institutional structure, and informally strongly sanctions any attempts to cross the borders of political clusters. However, the leftist camp is dominant in reputation distribution, and the cultural achievement of its most prominent members is acknowledged throughout the literary field.

Accordingly, while similarly to previous findings (Körösenyi, 2013; Kristóf, 2013), camp mentality is clearly present, it seems that some cultural actors with a very high reputation can break through the boundaries of political camps. The reputation of the greatest leftist cultural stars is widespread across the political spectrum. However, there are no rightist stars in the reputational network, only a centrist one.

Interview data suggest that camp mentality is reasonable at the individual level: belonging to a political camp functions, for cultural actors, as a contribution to their symbolic capital in the Bourdieusian sense. It is a resource that originates from belonging to a group and from being part of the exchange processes that maintain that group (Bourdieu, 1985, 1986). Interviews shed light to the mechanisms through which this structure works: threat of existential precarity, peer pressure against centrism, and the *Kulturkampf* boosted by the anti-liberal rhetoric and the authoritarian power-exercise of the Orbán-government (Kristóf, 2017a, 2020). Cultural reputation systems thus reinforce political self-identifications through their maintenance of a camp mentality: if an individual would like to improve their reputation, it is apparently worth joining one of the camps. To put it differently, staying outside either camp is a strategy that may have certain reputational costs for cultural actors and this helps maintain the divided structure of the network.

The network analysis of reputational nominations showed several further sociological factors that are associated with the distribution of reputational nominations. It is notable, however, that in contrast to previous studies (Ekelund & Börjesson, 2002; Gallotti & Domenico, 2019; Kadushin, 1974; Kristóf, 2013), the socio-demographic characteristics of cultural actors (age, gender, and place of birth) are not amongst them. In the Hungarian cultural elite, males are vastly overrepresented (80 percent), and the mean age is quite high (63.5 years old). It might be that because of this "old boys' network", age and gender do not have an effect on reputation. The situation is quite the same with territorial background. Elite members born in Budapest are overrepresented (half of them were born in the capital) but it does not affect their reputation. The bottleneck for cultural reputation is not correlated with the place of birth, rather, to the place (and prestige) of education: alumni of the most prestigious Budapest-based universities tend to nominate each other as 'greatest cultural actors'. This result is in line with previous literature that highlights the importance of the institutional structure of the cultural field in reputation distribution (Dubois & François, 2013; Ekelund & Börjesson, 2002; Gallotti & Domenico, 2019; Giuffrè, 1999; van Dijk, 1999).

Actors whose performance has been recognised with a major cultural award in the past are more likely to receive reputational nominations. This is not surprising, considering that reputation in a functioning cultural field must be closely connected to achievement, and awards should more or less reflect performance. In our model, owners of these awards send less but receive more nominations.

If the biggest stars are excluded, there is also a significant homophily between actors who operate within the same artistic or cultural field, because they are naturally more familiar with each other's work (Basov, 2020). Interestingly, being a leader of a cultural institution is not related to reputation. If stars are excluded, leaders of cultural institutions are even less likely to receive nominations than those who are not leaders. The reason for that might be that these actors, likely to be appointed by the local or central government, are part of the elite because of their strategic institutional positions, but this position does not guarantee them as much reputation as cultural performance does for famous artists or scientists.

We found two other variables related to fame that are associated with reputation. Incumbency in the cultural elite (but not age) had a positive effect in our model: those who have been members of the elite for at least ten years had a higher reputation. The result was the same for those who appeared in the national media. However, the direction of causality is not clear. A plausible alternative explanation could be that those who had a higher reputation could 'survive' in the elite more easily. Similarly, cultural actors with a high reputation are more sought after in the media as interviewees in the long term.

In this paper, we argued that political homophily has a prominent role on the construction of cultural reputation. It alters the process in which reputation is accumulated. Our study is explorative in the sense that, in contrast with cultural homophily (Basov, 2020) or field position homophily (Gallotti & Domenico, 2019), political homophily in reputation production has rarely been empirically investigated before. However, it is an important factor in structuring the cultural field empirically as well as theoretically as a case of structural homology between oppositions within the field and the field of power (Bourdieu, 1983). Our results might be case-specific because of the especially high level of political polarisation amongst the Hungarian elite. However, there are other societies with similarly deep political cleavages (Fiorina et al., 2010; Patkós, 2017). Therefore, the empirical study of cultural reputation

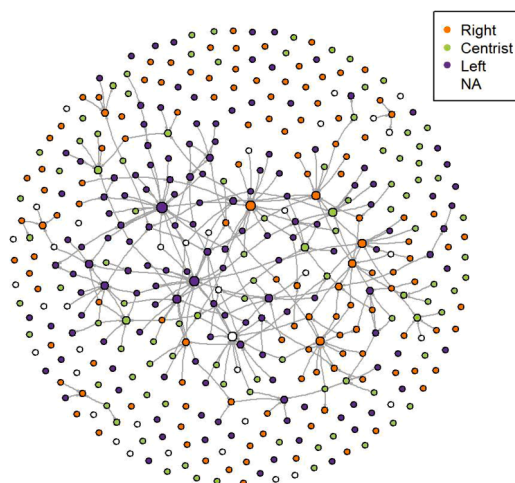
should not disregard the structural role of political homophily.

### Acknowledgements

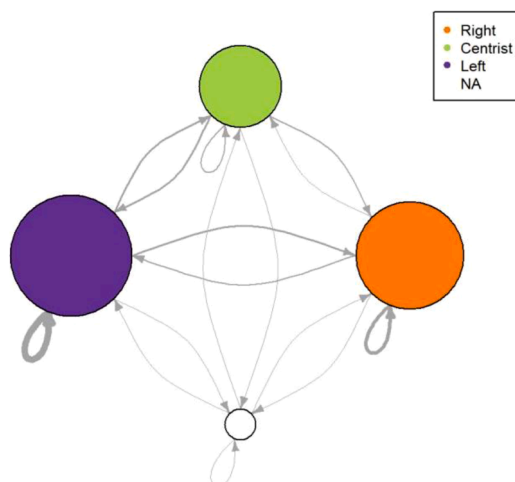
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### Appendix

Table A2



**Fig. A1.** The reputational network of the Hungarian Cultural Elite without the four most nominated actors (stars) *Notes:* Number of actors = 407, total number of nominations = 284. The size of the nodes is proportional to the number of incoming nominations. The direction of nominations is marked by the head of the arrows (from -> to). The color of the nodes represents the actors' self-reported placement on the right-left political spectrum coded into three categories (right, centrist, left). Actors who are not connected to the network voted for people not included in the survey.



**Fig. A2.** A reduced digraph (without the four most nominated actors) containing four meta-nodes based on the respondents' political attitudes and the aggregations of links between these nodes, weighted by the total number of nominations. The size of the meta-nodes is proportional to the number of respondents in the sub-sample according to their self-reported placement on the right-left political spectrum.

**Table A1**  
Sample of the Hungarian cultural elite.

First sequence (January 2018-June 2018)		
	N	Percentage
<i>Positional elite</i>		
Members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences	35	8.5
Members of the (two) Academy of Arts	40	9.7
Leaders of scientific and cultural institutes	43	10.5
Leaders of universities	13	3.2
Leaders of daily, weekly and monthly papers (incl. online)	50	12.2
Leaders of institutions of communication	24	5.8
<i>Reputational elite</i>		
Recipients of cultural awards	144	35.0
<i>Market elite</i>		
Bestselling music performers	19	4.6
Bestselling literary authors	22	5.4
Second sequence (June 2018-September 2018)		
<i>Reputational elite</i>		
Snowball sample (the most often nominated actors by the members of the first sequence, not already in the sample) <sup>1</sup>	21	5.1
<i>Total</i>	411	100

Notes: Because 10 percent of nominees on the sample list declined to take part then, technically, not all the most often nominated individuals were included in the study. Instead, we therefore used a top-down strategy of nominations to collect the snowball sample.

Our survey was part of a series of elite surveys conducted at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences over the last 25 years. In the first wave of the surveys in 1993, researchers used a positional/reputational method without snowball sampling. The proportion of the positional/reputational elite was 60:40. In the second and third wave of the surveys (2001, 2009) this sample was supplemented by a 10 and 5 percent respectively of market elite and snowball reputational elite. In 2018, we followed this sampling procedure (note that proportions achieved in some categories differed somewhat from those planned).

**Table A2**  
Descriptive statistics about the independent and control variables.

Variables	Percent	The share of homophilious ties of all existing ties (%)	
Independent variables			
Political attitudes <sup>1</sup>		Political homophily	48
Leftist	39.3		
Rightist	34.2		
Control variables			
Gender: male	80.0	Gender homophily	78.5
Place of birth: Budapest	53.0	Place of birth: homophily	53
Has a degree in arts	21.0	Arts degree homophily	64
Gave an interview last year <sup>2</sup>	72.0	Media activity homophily	71
Attended an elite university <sup>3</sup>	45.0	Elite university homophily	41
Incumbent <sup>4</sup>	71.5	Incumbent homophily	73
Leader of a cultural institution	32.0	Leader homophily	57
Owner of a major cultural award <sup>5</sup>	27.0	Award homophily	87
	39.0		
Field			
Literature	11.0	Field homophily	25
Fine arts, architecture	14.0		
Media	18.5		
Sports	0.2		
Theatre, film	13.0		
Academia (science, social science and the humanities)	34.0		
Music	9.5		
Age	<b>Years</b>	<b>The average age difference in absolute years between:</b>	
Mean	63.6		
SD	13.7	Actors with existing ties	0.05
Minimum	26	Actors without ties	15.61
Maximum	95		

Notes: N = 411.

<sup>1</sup>For measuring self-placement on the right-left political scale, a scale of 1–9 was applied, which was later recoded into three dummy variables: right dummy (1 if 1–4 on the scale, 0 otherwise); centrist dummy (1 if 5 on the scale, 0 otherwise); left dummy (1 if 6–9 on the scale, 0 otherwise).

<sup>2</sup>Have you given an interview for the national media, television, or radio in the last year?.

<sup>3</sup>Corvinus University of Budapest, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Eötvös Loránd Science University, Semmelweis University, University of Theatre and Film, Liszt Ferenc University of Music, The Hungarian University of Fine Arts and Hungarian Dance Academy.

<sup>4</sup>If the respondent had been a member of the cultural elite before 2010 according to the relevant sampling criteria.

<sup>5</sup>Kossuth Prize (highest Hungarian state award for the arts) and Széchenyi Prize (highest Hungarian state awards for sciences).

<sup>6</sup>Field specific cultural awards such as Liszt Prize (music), Jászai Prize (theatre), József Attila Prize (literature), etc.

Table A3

Results of the LRQP analysis with parameter estimates for the left-right and right-left nominations.

	Model 1 Estimate	OR	p	AME	Model 2 Estimate	OR	p	AME
Intercept	-8.170				-8.723			
Political homophily								
Left-left	1.365	3.917	***	0.0062	1.097	2.995	***	0.0027
Right-right	0.291	1.338		0.0010	0.927	2.526	**	0.0022
Centrist-centrist	-0.193	0.825		-0.0005	0.185	1.203		0.0003
Left-right	-0.456	0.634		-0.0012	0.193	1.213		0.0003
Right-left	0.108	1.114		0.0003	-0.402	0.669		-0.0006
Incumbent homophily	-0.062	0.940		-0.0002	-0.077	0.926		-0.0001
Incumbent sender	0.154	1.166		0.0005	0.147	1.158		0.0002
Incumbent receiver	1.854	6.386	†	0.0034	0.911	2.487	†	0.0012
Leader homophily	-0.050	0.952		-0.0002	0.204	1.227		0.0003
Leader sender	0.127	1.135		0.0004	0.233	1.262		0.0004
Leader receiver	0.155	1.167		0.0005	-1.400	0.247	*	-0.0016
Major cultural award homophily	0.042	1.043		0.0001	-0.042	0.959		-0.0001
Major cultural award sender	-0.257	0.774	*	-0.0007	-0.414	0.661	*	-0.0006
Major cultural award receiver	1.307	3.693	†	0.0049	0.867	2.379	*	0.0017
Same cultural field	0.272	1.313	†	0.0009	0.745	2.106	***	0.0015
Gender homophily	-0.063	0.939		-0.0002	-0.052	0.949		-0.0001
Male sender	0.131	1.140		0.0004	0.074	1.077		0.0001
Male receiver	0.623	1.864		0.0015	0.291	1.338		0.0004
Age difference	-0.015	0.985		0.0000	-0.009	0.991		0.0000
Age of sender	-0.007	0.993		0.0000	-0.004	0.996		0.0000
Age of receiver	-0.026	0.974		-0.0001	-0.010	0.990		0.0000
Place of birth homophily	-0.016	0.984		0.0000	0.056	1.058		0.0001
Place of birth of sender	0.100	1.105		0.0003	-0.043	0.958		-0.0001
Place of birth of receiver	-0.292	0.746		-0.0009	-0.091	0.913		-0.0002
Elite university homophily	0.220	1.246	*	0.0007	0.307	1.359	*	0.0005
Elite university sender	0.019	1.019		0.0001	0.034	1.035		0.0001
Elite university receiver	-0.616	0.540		-0.0017	0.020	1.021		0.0000
Arts degree homophily	0.021	1.021		0.0001	0.157	1.171		0.0003
Arts degree sender	-0.118	0.888		-0.0003	0.098	1.103		0.0002
Arts degree receiver	-0.069	0.934		-0.0002	0.229	1.257		0.0004
Media activity homophily	0.192	1.211		0.0006	0.185	1.203		0.0003
Media activity of sender	-0.002	0.998		0.0000	0.028	1.028		0.0000
Media activity of receiver	1.890	6.620	*	0.0034	1.331	3.787	**	0.0015
Number of actors	346				342			
Number of dyads	119,370				117,306			

Note: The four most nominated actors (stars) are excluded from Model 2. Number of permutations = 5000. † $p < 0.1$ , \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

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