A local story of the success of a far right mayor among Roma:

social exclusion, cultural hegemony and political clientelism in a Hungarian

village

By

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Abstract

Recent years have witnessed an unusual voting behaviour of the Hungarian Roma minority which has not been subject of social inquiry yet. The support of Roma for an openly anti-Roma party emerged almost parallel to the appearance of the Hungarian far right party in the Hungarian parliament. This particular voting behaviour raises questions about why and how this apparently contradictious choice could be engendered. Relying on the data collected by quantitative method the answer points to the direction of political clientelism, cultural hegemony and social exclusion. The thesis argues that being excluded from relevant institutions in the presence of dynamically changing power relations, coming from competition of the local political elite. This led to the emergence of political clientelism coupled by Roma's consent of the negative dominant view on them in the village could possible lead to contradictory political choice of the minority.

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1. Introduction

> 'I am tired of being labelled a racist only because I am brave enough to say that gypsy crime exists, because I condemn that most of the gypsies are averse from working and only want to live on benefits. And they who live on our money turn against us and seek our lives.' [1]

The quote is from a campaign video of the Hungarian far right party, called Jobbik, in which the party clarifies its relationship toward the Hungarian Roma minority. Its four main messages by which Roma can be seen as criminals, parasites, lazy and dangerous for the majority society well characterize the party's Roma related political agenda throughout its political activity. The openly anti-Roma activity of the party was always characteristic to the party from 2006, long before it became a parliamentary party in 2010. Its activities were supported by the Hungarian Guard a paramilitary organisation, founded in 2007, being infamous for threatening and marching through Roma inhabited settlement in small rural villages. Taking into account the activities and the openly racist ideologies of the party, it seems to be incomprehensible why it could receive support from Roma voters. However, parallel to the entrance of the openly anti-Roma far right party into the Hungarian parliament in 2010 the media has been already reporting cases when members of Roma minority have been willing to support or/and vote for that party. This seemingly paradoxical voting support of Roma for the anti-Roma party stands in the focus of this thesis. Supporting the party by Roma has been characteristic to the most disadvantageous rural areas more precisely of Northern Hungary with a high proportion of Roma and significant poverty and unemployment. Territorially the support of Roma voters for that party most frequently occurs in those areas where the extreme-right party is the most popular among majority society. The party preference of the ethnic minority has not been widespread in the country yet, it is rather a rare speciality occurring in local level elections.

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[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LinPWci4BQg The 2010 Jobbik Campaign video.

Therefore the source of my research is two Hungarian local government elections. The elections were held in 2013 and 2014 among which the former was a by-election while the latter could further increase the number of Roma far-right voters. Concerning that there are only several villages led by far right mayors in Hungary and taking into account the imbalance power relations in the village where I conducted my research, I will not share the name of the village neither its geographical location. Furthermore the names which I use in my thesis are no real names in order to protect my informants. The thesis explains how the interplay of power and ethnic social relations characterised by economic, social, cultural and political exclusion of Roma lead to a contradictory electoral choice in local government election. To be clear the research is not interested in drawing a general picture of Roma voting preference and behaviour it rather focuses on exploring how local dynamic influences the voting behaviour of Roma. Therefore the thesis is not going to make any generalisation concerning this voting preference of Roma but it understands it as a product of the changing local power dynamic of the village. Thesis argues that being excluded from relevant institutions in the presence of dynamically changing power relations, coming from competition of the local political elite leading to the emergence of political clientelism coupled by the consent on the negative dominant view on Roma in the village – it could possible lead to contradictory political choice of the minority. As it was already mentioned there is no available source which would specifically examine the voting behaviour of Roma in Hungary neither there is academic work that would account for Roma support for the far right party. Academic work has been focusing on ethnicity as rather an engine of political mobilization, participation and representation. Dawson (1995) based on his studies on African-American in the United States argues that the unifying force in African-Americans politics is not race anymore but black economic subordination. Identifying economic subordination as central to the articulation of group interest unifying African-Americans

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regardless of their class differences coincides partly with McGarry's (2009) statement. McGarry argues that although poverty, discrimination and economic marginalisation for most Roma serve as a basis for shared interest however, social and cultural interest also plays a relevant role in their political agenda. Székely (2007) highlights that the usage of ethnicity in politics either by politicians or by an ethnic group is based on the dialog between the two which is shaped by current social, political and economic issues. Moreover Székely states that voting for ethnic parties rather comes from the salience of ethnic issues invoked by the parties coupled by the judgment of their competence and does not stem only from ethnicity. Vermeersch (2001) similarly to this view argues that for political mobilization the 'project' of Roma identity could significantly draw inspiration from international political discourse and scholarly literature. All in all these approaches are all instrumental and serve to explain ethnicity as a tool for political awareness and ethnic mobilization. Nonetheless by only applying their analytical perspectives it would be impossible to break the puzzle down following from the perplexing voting behaviour of Roma. Thus the thesis rather than focusing only on what makes a group unified, it also looks for explanations coming from the local dynamic that leads to the division of a group to the extent, which ignores the group's stigmatizing political activity of the far right party in its voting behaviour. The thesis draws on the concept of social exclusion, cultural hegemony and political clientelism taking into account the changing local power dynamic of the village and its maintained unequal power relations that entail both social exclusion of Roma and the perpetuating patron-client type relationship. The concept of social exclusion by providing account for the perceived exclusion of Roma, points out how the embedded power relations lead to the maintenance of patron-client type relationship between Roma and majority society. Cultural hegemony will help to understand the ways in which Roma explain their voting preference for the far right mayor

and refusal to vote for a Roma candidate while political clientelism will account for local political dynamic that led to the voting behaviour of Roma.

To conceptualize the relationship between Roma and non-Roma the thesis relies on Young's concept of oppression and his conceptualization of social groups. Young's (1990) argues that social group not only exists in relation of other group but also a result of social processes. Young's conceptualization of social group permits to approach the relations between Roma and non-Roma as a result of social processes shaped by the different dimensions of oppression and social exclusion. The thesis relies on the different perspectives of social exclusion (Mathieson at.al, 2008) such as the economic dimension shedding light on the structural causes of social exclusion, the social dimension that explains exclusion on the basis of the lack of integration in social life and the substantial dimension that account for the personal dimension of exclusion emphasising its role in low self-worth. It also involves the right based and the participation approaches (Mathieson at.al, 2008). The thesis relies Kovai's claim who argues that kinship is a primarily organising force among Roma in some rural areas of Hungary. As a consequence of the "assimilation regime's" identity politics under communism by which fixing the stigmatized meanings of Roma identity in public and political spheres pushed it into private sphere reinforcing the kinship relations among Roma. Gramsci's works represents a shift from economism to an approach that understands power relations which is not only determined by economic forces but also led by political and ideological relations. Gramsci claims that the dominant group by the popularization of its world views' wins the consent of the subordinate group that contribute to the maintenance of its power. Among Gramsci several concepts as a part of his theory of cultural hegemony the thesis applies its concept of ideology in order to understand how existing local power relations are maintained by the dominant culture. His concept of ideology is divided into philosophical and organic ideologies among which the former is philosophically elaborated

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while the latter pervaded partly by the former, represents the common-sense (Hall, 1986). Concerning this thesis the latter will be applied in order to gain insight into the local beliefs, prejudices, perceptions that impact the voting behaviour of Roma. Among the different approaches of political clientelism the thesis employs on the concept of 'old' and the 'new' clientelism and draws on Hopkin's (2006) proximity/ distance dimension. 'Old' clientelism is rather characteristic to traditional agrarian societies. Furthermore it is less materialistic, involves a deep asymmetry between the client and patron while it operates in personal level. In contrast 'new' clientelism characteristic a mass party clientelism operates in a less personalized level maintains a more symmetric clientelistic relationship being explicitly more materialistic (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007). Hopkin's proximity /distance dimension emphasis the face-to face nature of clientelism by which he argues that the more personalized the relationship between the politicians and the voter is the more the relationship can be considered to be clientelistic. All three approaches will contribute to understand the nature of political clientelism that has evolved between the far right mayor and Roma leading to the victory of the mayor. The research applied an inductive approach to the case and relied on qualitative research method. I made semi- structured and unstructured interviews with 20 Roma dwellers. Half of the interview subjects voted in favour and half of them voted against the far right candidate. I participated in religious gathering, a primarily school carnival, in a local fair. I made observations in the local government office, in the house of culture, in the Roma settlement, in the village as a whole, in a Roma Baptist Church in the morning gatherings waiting for assignment for public work. The finding of the research points to the direction of social exclusion, political clientelism and cultural hegemony by which the changing dynamic of the local political and power relations led to the voting preference of Roma.

2. The Hungarian extreme right wing party and its role in anti-gypsyism

The Movement for a Better Hungary- Jobbik stands both for 'Right Wing' as well as for Better - is the third largest party in Hungary with 47 seats in the Hungarian parliament and three seats in the European parliament. Jobbik stands out as the most radical right wing ethno-nationalist party in Europe. Founded on October 24, 2003 Jobbik is the successor of MIÉP (Party of Hungarian Life and Justice) a previous anti-Semitic party which was dropped out from the Hungarian parliament in 2002. The party's political agenda similarly to its counterpart in Eastern Europe call for law and order policies against indigenous ethnic minorities, advertise an anti-establishment attitude against the political elite, which has been decreasing after becoming a parliamentary party in 2010. It professes a strong Euroscepticism and a commitment to defend the nation's right to self-determination. Nevertheless probably the most successful and loudest element of its political agenda is its anti-Roma sentiment, making Jobbik a very aggressively anti-Roma party. The party was not only able to raise its popularity and political success by politicising Roma minority issue but also introducing its articulation in a radical fashion by its political rhetoric. Since the last decade Jobbik has legitimated a radical frame over Roma issues (Bartek Pytlas 2016) and has become one of the most effective parties to shape public opinion regarding Roma related issues. Pytlas analysing the attempt of mainstream politics to confront Jobbik's radical right frame of Roma issues, points out the failure of the former, stating that Jobbik has become the 'frame owner' (2016, p.189) of the Roma issue. The public discourse was characterised by a 'politically correct' attitude concerning Roma related issues between 1990s and 2000s (Bernát, 2013), but by 2006 this has been radically changed. This date coincides with introduction of the term 'gypsy crime' ('cigánybűnözés') that rapidly gained currency in public discourse as a result of Jobbik's impact on public debate. The party simultaneously claiming the acknowledgement of

the racist phrase 'cigánybűnözés' in public discourse by blaming the then government for its inaccuracy demanding a new Roma policy. The term gypsy crime coined in the public discourse represents a milestone in the development of an overly racist debate about the minority. Bartek Pytlas states that placing 'gypsy crime' in the public discourse coupled by the activities of its paramilitary group Magyar Gárda proclaiming the need for the protection of Hungarians vis-à-vis Roma population, established a dominant frame and vocabulary of Roma issues. This dominant frame and vocabulary defined the public discourse to the extent that mainstream parties have been starting to use a similar form of rhetoric (Anikó Bernát et.al. 2013) which proved to be a considerable obstacle to use a sustainable and inclusive utterance concerning Roma issues. From this time the frame became a reference point along which Roma related-issues concentrated in the public discourse in spite of the entrance of experts coming from different fields. Bartek Pytlas claims that although the party's introduced vocabulary that could not surpass its initial extremely racist language yet enhanced its frame by using expressions like 'parasites' 'threat' 'demise' in its articulation on Roma. The analysis of Bartek Pytlas shows that by 2009 Jobbik became to be seen a 'credible' political expert in the field of Roma politics while it was able to fulfil a significant role in dictating Roma related narratives and policies. But Jobbik could not have achieved its rapid success without its paramilitary organisation the Hungarian Guard. Founded by the president of the party, Gábor Vona in 2007, the association defining its main objective as the defence of Hungarians against 'gypsy criminality' simultaneously demanded the restoration of public order and security in the countryside. Wearing military uniform that is similar to the Arrow Cross officers – responsible for Hungary's 'reign of terror' during the world war second – practising an intimidating military-style that rallies throughout Hungary, particularly targeting villages with large Romani populations. A survey conducted in 2013 (Bernát et.al) in Hungary shows that the anti-Roma sentiment and attitude of different social groups not only

has surfaced by the aggressively anti-Roma activities of Jobbik and the Hungarian Guard, but also points out that social groups and attitude have a relevant role in helping the party to move from the margin to the mainstream. The survey, examining the level of anti-gypsyism of different social groups, points out that a disproportionate number of those who proved to be anti-gypsy are all supporters of the extreme right wing party. Although there is no research that examines the relationship between the paramilitary activities of the Hungarian Guard and Jobbik and the serial killings directed against Roma, many agree that there might be a correlation between the two as the activities of former, reaching its peak coincide with the year of the serial killings. With this in mind it is particularly important to learn more about the possible causes of the willingness of Roma to vote for Jobbik. In the following the thesis using different approaches explores the distinct layers of the particular voting behaviour in a local level.

3. Mapping the Social, Political and Power Relations of the Village

The settlement where I conducted my field work is a middle-size village in terms of its scope and population. Its spatial structure divides the locations of the Roma population into three parts. The Roma settlement consisting of three streets and locating in the north-eastern part of the village provides home for almost the half of the Roma residents. Typical to the arrangement of rural villages in Hungary it is located almost the furthest away from the centre of the village. As evidence for its stigmatized nature, who can afford herself moves out from the settlement to other parts of the village inhabited by the majority. The other Roma inhabited part of the village, called Ibolya street, populated largely by one family is located in the south-eastern part that consists of only one street. The third part of the Roma inhabited zone consisting of a street also populated by non-Roma dwellers, is a farm separated from the village by a highway and a railway line. The rest of the Roma population is scattered in different locations in the village although their number is not significant. The different locations of Roma inhabitants reflect their distinct social stratification in terms of their housing condition, internal and external networks, access to employment and public services like health centres, kindergarten and elementary school. The Ibolya street and the scattered Romani residents represent the top layer of the social structure of stratification in terms of the above mentioned social differentiation. The social stratification of the Roma settlement's inhabitants is various nonetheless their access to different resources is well below from those outside of the segregated part. The farm's Roma population consisting of few families almost entirely concealed from my observation coming from the silence on the neighbourhood by my informants. Thus this part of the village does not form part of my research. Nevertheless taking into account its size, the number of inhabitants, location and its lacks from the accounts it might have not influenced the research's outcomes considerably. Its population is nearly

3500 inhabitants of which Roma dwellers consist of forty per cent. The number of Roma dwellers and the size of the Roma settlement have begun to increase in the nineties due to the social political subsidy ("szocpol ") granted by the state. Parallel to this expansion two different processes appeared on the surface. First a slow yet constant emigration of the majority population from the village to larger centres and towns could be observed promoted by the economic expansion after the system change. This has been followed by a constant move-out from the Roma settlement into these abandoned houses creating a relatively ethnically diverse spatial arrangement. The continuous emigration of the majority inhabitants, the tiny but still present immigration of Romani residents and the relative stability of the Roma population – partly as a result of the lack of resources to emigrate – create a demographically changing composition of the village population. This changing composition of the village population in favour of Roma is one of the reasons that serve as grounds for competition and conflict most markedly appearing in the political sphere.

During socialism the economic structure was mostly based on the surrounding companies of the village as well as its agricultural activity most precisely apple production although the latter could not provide significant and sustained employment for the inhabitants. For most of the villagers the main source of income was the timber and the rubber company having the capacity to employ hundreds of skilled and unskilled labour in that period. Although nowadays these companies still form an economic fabric of the village nonetheless it is mostly due to their taxes as they have gone through tremendous downsizing after the transition. The timber company still employs the top-management from the village which position descended from father to son yet as a consequence of downsizing the skilled labour was reduced to a couple of dozen people, while unskilled labour has been completely ceased. By the downsizing of the unskilled labour most of the Roma inhabitants lost their job. As far as it is known, after a recent retraining, only four Roma men work for the timber company. In

the beginning of the nineties a Packaging Systems Ltd. and in the early millennium years a Packaging Trade and Services Ltd. were founded. The Packaging Systems Ltd. employs fifty-one people from the area however it is not known how many workers are employed from the village. Both companies were relying on outwork offered by the surrounding small businesses, which small businesses employed unskilled Roma labor that could offer job opportunity for a few families. Nonetheless because of the mechanization taking place in these companies toward the mid of this decade, there was no need any more to the cooperation with small businesses thus Roma lost their job.

After the transition it is not known how exactly the land privatisation has been allocated among the villagers, although the majority of the lands, whose biggest owners have not changed up to now, have been only bought by a few families from the village. Some of these large landowners overlap with political leadership of the village. The owners of the smaller lands change hands, which have to do with the emigration from the village. Nonetheless the Roma population completely left out from the purchase of the land during the privatization. Although after the transition they were given land usage to produce for themselves, these lands have been taken back by the local government. However, in the recent years one could witness a transfer of walnut production between non-Roma and Roma owners as a result of being overwhelmed by the apple production of the possessors. In any case this shows us that the possession of any resource is not a result of competition but it takes place by the majority's thoughtful considerations. For the apple grower farmers the main source of labour is Roma inhabitants of the village. Nonetheless land-related forms of living for Roma only takes place from a subordinated position dependent upon the landowners' choice for employment since Roma only fill the gap of seasonal work. The early cherry season takes place in May followed by sour cherry on June both of which conducted in a small scale not being able to provide job opportunities for only a few families. The apple-picking season start

in September and because of its large-scale production it ends only in November, which in each season can provide job for two to three hundred people. But since there are not enough jobs for the whole working-age Roma population in the seasonal work the employment of those who are chosen entails a complex process of bargaining. The bargaining in turn further deepens Roma's vulnerability for the landowners as it entails a series of concessions during the whole year from those who are employed in the end. Another form of entering in service of ethnic-Hungarians by Roma, are gardening, home repair, house cleaning on the basis of casual work. The state sponsored and EU funded programs are also an integral part of the village's economy in the form of Public Employment Programme, Start Work Programme, and Complex Programme aimed at the inclusion of Roma settlements. Although the first two programs are not specifically targeted at Roma population they are the main beneficiaries of them in the village. The last two programs have been started in 2014 after the local government election ended by the reelection of a far right mayor who first took the mayor's chair in a by-election held in the village in 2013. Whilst Public Employment Programme was introduced on January 2009 under the leadership of the previous mayor it was not used as a source of livelihood for the villagers. The role of the program, increasing employment has been expanding from 2013 up to now. According to the far right mayor 70-80 per cent of the program's employees are Roma. By public employment 650-700 inhabitants were employed annually which number is equal to the unemployed in the village where the only possibility might be for unskilled labor apart from some training, to have an income is public employment. Following the fall of communism – opening the way for free democratic elections at a national as well as local level in 1990 – significant changes could not be witnessed regarding the mayor and composition of the local government assembly in the village until 2010. The apparent stability in the political sphere on the one hand was granted by re-electing the same mayor for twenty years, on the other hand with minor alterations re-

electing a similar composition of the local government assembly for the same length of time. The apple economy is not only a typical economic activity in the area but also provides a major economic source for a dozen farmers which after the land privatization was extensively developed by state and EU funds. The accessibility of the funds was granted by the local government activity whose mayor is one of the biggest apple farmers in the village. Constituting the political elite the mayor with other permanent representatives in the local government overlapped with the economic elite between the periods of 1990-2010. Moreover as I discovered during my field work this economic and political power, owned by a few powerful actors, was supported through a complex web of family ties. The members of these families also fill key positions in different committees of the local government as well as in social institutions like medical, educational and social welfare. It is well-known in the village that the then political and economic elite affiliate with Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Alliance) which is the ruling national conservative party in Hungary since 2010. The established power arrangements, during the leadership of first mayor, whose internal dynamics this paper does not undertake, ended with the retreat of the mayor in 2010. Under his leadership, the emerged social and ethnic boundaries are well illustrated by the accounts of Roma inhabitants according to which as a symbolic form of exclusion they were not allowed to enter in the local government's office. The accounts on his term suggest a strong client-patron type relationship, realized in the economic sphere concerning their labour, while a passive participation was characteristic in social and political life of the village. After his retreat the unity of political sphere has been loosen by the appearance of other political actors coming from different social strata of the village. The political competition most sharply evolves between a previously caretaker candidate who finally won the election in 2010 and the old members of the dominant group, who after the retirement of the mayor continued to fill key positions. After the election different types of strategy are applied in order to undermine the

mayor's position in the local government by old members of the local government assembly and the administrative officials who have strong ties to dominant actors of social political and economic spheres. His position was contested by local dominant elite of all spheres on the basis of his educational background having only a vocational school as opposed to highly educated officials in the village. What the election also brought up to the surface was the racist fear not only of the elite but also of the majority population. Because of his previous job the mayor maintained a closer relationship with Roma inhabitants. This relationship was a patron-client type, marked by paternalism but still allowed more communication and cooperation between the actors. The mutually beneficiary patron-client relationship led to the mobilisation of Roma voters as an exchange of the new mayor's previous supports. Although it is not known from the data whether Roma mobilized for the 2010 election was the largest mobilization, but it showed a massive support for the caretaker candidate after which he was called 'the mayor of the Roma'. The tangible support of Roma for a non-Roma candidate might have been perceived by the majority population as a rupture on established power arrangement that has been evolved alongside social and ethnic boundaries. However, he did not complete his mandate since he died in 2013. Due to his death a by-election has been held on October 2013 that ended with the victory of a far right candidate. The far right candidate ran for the position of being mayor affiliated with Jobbik. Since 2006 he was already a member of the local government assembly when he only stood as a candidate for municipal election affiliated with MIEP (Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja) which was another extreme-right party in Hungary. Following the 2013 by-election he again successfully won the 2014 local government election. An openly anti-Roma party's candidate won the last two elections by the support of Romani residences of the village. My thesis explores the circumstances of both elections as well as tries to offer possible explanations for this particular voting behaviour. While taking into account the local political, economic and social dynamic of the

village I explore what could lead to the support of far right candidate by Roma residents as well as why they did not vote for Roma candidate running for mayor position in 2013 and 2014.

4. Methodology

My access to the field more or less followed Buchanan's et al (1998) four stages of access model, involving the getting in, getting on, getting out and getting back stages. As for the first stage I knew my objectives, time and resources limitation that framed my field work. The getting on stage was significantly eased by my local contact that although was not directly from the field provided a rapid access to it. Furthermore as I grew up in a small village not far from the area where my field was situated, I spoke the language and had the interpersonal skills needed. The getting out stage was obvious for my informants as their second question was to me when I would leave. The fourth stage was left open as I did not know whether I can go back to conduct further research, leaving behind the feeling of uncertainty in my informants as well as in me. In the first two days I worked with a gatekeeper who was the leader of the local minority government. He offered me access to many families in Roma settlement but as I soon noticed his influence on the behaviour of my informants I continued to conduct my research without him but still accepting his guidance on practical issues. The research was conducted by using a mixture of qualitative methods involving a series semi-structured, unstructured interviews and participant based observations. My interviewing style particularly in the beginning of my field work rather followed an unstructured form. In the beginning unstructured interview style helped me to contact people as it provided a sufficient space to touch upon whatever topics they found important. This also had its advantage since it allowed me to discover the narratives of the village on different issues. Following the first few days I switched to using semi-structured interviews as people from the village started getting to know me as well as my project. I could conduct interviews with 11 women and 9 men as well as I could reach Roma interviewees from the three different parts of the village, where

they live. Taking into account the age aspect I reached interviewees between the ages of 16-50.

My participant observations were completed by following the different rhythms of the village according to the current parts of the day. Thus I did observation during the morning work assignment of public workers in front of the local government, by taking part in both a religious event organised every week and a local school carnival, by visiting the local market, by having chance to sit in the hall of the local government office, and by randomly hanging around the village.

Concerning my positionality during the research process e.g. how I was perceived by Roma and non-Roma interviewees (involving the far right mayor) varied greatly. My positionality also concerns what were my expectations before arriving to the field and how and whether they changed significantly during the field work. My beliefs, political stance, cultural background and geographical area I come from (Bourke, 2014) all were touched upon in different context influencing the relationship with the interviewees. My Roma ethnicity with Roma informants sometimes was used as a tool to claim closeness, upon which they based their rights to demand my opinion. Other times my ethnicity was ignored since it was replaced by another more dominant identity. With regard to the far right mayor my supposed leftist political view marked the boundaries between us as well as my researcher identity as a 'Roma expert' was used to confirm his opinion any time talking about Roma inhabitants of the village ' *you know this if you deal with this issues'*. The urban-rural division coupled by my perceived cultural and social capital led to the spreading beliefs in the village that I am a high-ranking state employee increasing the distrust toward me within mainstream population. Generally I expected that my position as a Roma will help me to easily getting in contact with Roma informants but I also had some qualms about refusing my project taking into account its sensitivity. This would have been completely understandable regarding the local power

relations and the place Roma occupy in it. Taking into account my concerns regarding the far right mayor whom I tried to contact before my arrival but who was never available, led to the assumption that probably he will prevent to conduct the research by denying the access to the field. But this assumption rather met with curiosity of my research.

I employed an inductive approach that fitted into my qualitative research method. I started with observations and making interviews. In the following as I was not sure about the nature of the research findings I searched for emerging patterns from my collected data after the field work was completed. It allowed me to freely shaping the direction of the discussions and interviews according to the salience and emphasis on dominant issues related to my research question. My aim was to map the existing power relations in the locality I chose to study with special attention to the following issues: a) main economic resources of the setting b) economic embeddedness of Roma in the village and surroundings area c) the negotiation of Roma identity by local institutions involving the relationship between local and minority self-government d) the perception of these institutions by Roma in particular local and minority governments e) the relationship between Roma and non-Roma inhabitants f) the interpretation of the 2013 and 2014 local government elections by Roma dwellers and the exploration of possible reasons for voting or not voting for the far right candidate among Roma g) and the meaning of Jobbik in local level. Searching for emerging patterns after completing the study led to find theories such as social exclusion, cultural hegemony and political clientelism to be useful to understand the voting behaviour of Roma.

5. Exclusion, perceived exclusion and its implication for clientelism

This chapter shows the different faces of perceived exclusion interpreted by Roma population and in doing so, highlights its implication for clientelism. To conceptualize the relationship between majority society and Roma population in the village and make sense of the experiences of Roma in contemporary society it relies on Young's concept of oppression and the different perspectives of social exclusion. Young conceptualize social groups as '… are expressions of social relations' (Young, 1990, p. 7) that is, they exist in relation to another group. The identification with their own group arises from encounter and interaction with other groups during which they perceive the differences in ways of life, forms of associations and experiences between their and the other groups. But individuals not only identify on the basis of social relations but also their social status and the history of their common social statues. Social group identifications are not only the result of social relations but also social processes. This conceptualization of social groups allows us to approach the relations of Roma with local non-Roma as a product of social processes shaped by the different dimensions of oppression and social exclusion. According to Young oppression is structural which entails systematic constrains on a group. Systematic constrains are reproduced by political social and economic institutions. This will be shown below by the analysis that provides examples for political, religious, educational, residential exclusion. However, Young's five faces of oppressions are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, violence and cultural imperialism I only rely here on his concept of marginalization which to some extent involves exploitation as a form of oppression, which will be supplemented by different perspective of social exclusion. In the next chapter however, as the theory of cultural hegemony overlaps with Young's concept of cultural imperialism and powerlessness the analysis also provides insights in to these concepts. Marginalization according to Young is the

most dangerous form of oppression since it denies participation in social life and deprives group from material goods. He states that marginalization 'block the opportunity to exercise capacities in socially defined and recognized way' (Young, 1990, p. 19). Moreover he argues that welfare provision dependency creates a structure operating in a patronising and punitive way against marginalized people. Patronising is a recurring element in the account of Roma, pervading their relationships often leading to develop clientelistic relationships. Concerning social exclusion although there are different perspectives on social exclusion such as the multidimensional, dynamic and relational, this thesis combines these three approaches in its interpretation of perceived exclusion of Roma. By applying the multidimensional perspective (Room, 1995) the analysis sheds light on the structural causes of social exclusion. This approach identifies three dimensions of social exclusion (Mathieson at.al, 2008). The economic dimension explains exclusion on the basis of labour market exclusion that results in the lack of material resources. The social dimension refers to the lack of integration into social life and community. Substantive dimension accounts for the personal dimension of exclusion that implicates the question of low self-worth. Furthermore the thesis also includes the dynamic and relational dimension of exclusion to the extent that recognises the changing and interactive nature of exclusion over time (Room). Amongst three different schools of thought involving the right-based, participation and agency approaches the thesis takes the perspectives of the first two. Based on my data analysis appearing as an emerging pattern I argue that social exclusion reinforce client-patron type relationship within and outside of Roma community. I also draw on the findings of a Hungarian anthropologist Cecilia Kovai (2015) who investigated the making and remaking of 'Roma-Hungarian differentiation' in the rural parts of Hungary. She claims that kinship as an organising force has a relevant role within marginalized group such as Roma. She argues that assimilation policies under socialism still determining the relationship of Roma and mainstream society in rural parts of

Hungary, defined Roma identity as a disadvantage that may be eliminated. Roma identity is also associated with incivility, inferiority and backwardness in public sphere thus relegated its articulation to private sphere. As a consequence Roma identity being only palpable in private sphere further strengthened kinship as a primarily organising force among Roma. Nonetheless she also acknowledges that organising on the basis of kinship is a result of Roma's structural marginalisation in which kinship seems to provide stability vis-á-vis uncertainty coming from their structural position. In the following by gaining insights into everyday experiences the chapter reflects different forms of perceived exclusions e.g. spatiality, housing, education, employment, religion and participation and their implication for the creation of patron-client type relationship.

5.1. Analysis

The following account reveals that not only there has been existed an ethnically divided spatiality but also the perception of not belonging to the village. The isolation and its consequences are expressed by pointing to different levels where there is an 'up' and a 'down'. The distance expressed through spatiality depicts two different worlds one is clean and ordered the other is chaotic and dirty. Local government office presents the highest level of the village, which appears as a symbol of centrality and importance while at the same time Roma settlement turns up as its opposite being out of ordinary rather carrying backwardness.

> I said in the assembly we also belong to the village so raise up the settlement to the level of the village. They asked me what does the level of the village mean. What does the level of the village mean? I think it means the level of the local government office. If we need to clean up the surrounding of the local government then send us to the Roma settlement too and buy us a drainage channel because after a heavy rain the settlement becomes a mud bath that you can boat in it. Children cannot go to school without becoming everywhere muddy. Is there money for everything only there is no money for this? How many years there was no money spent for the settlement. (Ferenc)

Educational segregation appears as another face of social exclusion. It starts from kindergartens since Roma and non-Roma children go to two separate kindergartens. Based on the opinion of the kindergarten teachers Roma and non-Roma children are selected and placed in separate classes in elementary school by the end of the kindergarten. This points out that an early segregation starts showing the patterns of a strong long-term segregation trend that continuous to the end of primary school. The memories of the sixteen years old interviewee account for perceived ethnic discrimination at very early age that seemed to be burned into her memories. It highlights that exclusion working on the basis of ethnicity operates in an abstract level that ignores humanity. It also suggests the reproductive character of exclusion that not only draws the ethnic boundaries by a school system but also through the inherited

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patterns of separation. Her story carries the need for belonging that does not occur naturally but by the coercion of exclusion.

> I felt inferior to others in school. The Hungarian and Roma differentiation not only occurred orally but also in actions. In every year there was a class 'a' and a class 'b'. In class 'b' only Roma pupils were in the 'a' there were three or four of us. Even if pupils in class 'b' were much better students than in class 'a' they were still left there. Well in the primarily school I always wanted to leave class 'a' and go to class 'b' because my classmates kept saying that you are a gypsy we do not want to play with you and would not want to be your friend. (Bianka)

The story of the separately operating religious congregation indicates an initial exclusion between the Roma and mainstream religious groups whose permeability has been completely closed hitherto. Religion seemingly had a serious community building strength among Roma inhabitants. Tracing down its history the Start House which provided place for the Baptist religious group to gather but after the local government started to rent the Start House, the group has been starting to fall apart. It became a secular place within which Roma Baptist were not allowed to practise their religious according to religious rules. However, it is not clear besides possessing another social centre that stands abandoned whilst having plenty of empty buildings as a result of an ongoing emigration why the local government started to rent the Star House and then buy it. Due to the limitation of the thesis it does not cover this issue but the intension of the local authorities might refer to a systematic effort to smash Roma self-organized groups.

> Ten years ago we had a congregation with 200 people until Star House was owned by the Baptist. But now we are not more than 10 unfortunately. The local government started to use the Star House for different activities. Recently the Child Protections Service also moved in. I think they already bought the house. But God does not allow us to use secular space so we do not have place to gather. We were never part of the Hungarian Baptist group up to now there is no Gypsy[2] there I do not know why it is like this, we are open but they cannot accept us. (Károly)

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[2] As a researcher I use Roma to name the minority nonetheless in the accounts of the analysis I follow my informants and using gypsy.

The story about the misuse of power shows the systematic nature of discrimination that entails deprivation of legal as well as human rights. The exclusion although realized under local conditions extends beyond it. It simultaneously points out the inferior place of the individual as well as creates a second class citizen status. The practice of the local authorities using state resources to control the behaviour of locals on the one hand demonstrates the misuse of power, on the other hand portrays the exclusionary nature of public employment inducing dependence. The repetition of act of reporting the notary refers to the presence of a tension that comes from the informant's awareness going beyond the usual boundaries. The act of the inhabitant also points out the relational nature of power in so far as it challenges the local power relations in spite of being aware of its consequences. Demonstrating the relational nature of power his conclusion simultaneously points at the precise assessment of the operation of local power relations, his occupied position in it and the desire to challenge it. Nonetheless the desire to challenge it only appears to be possible by the support of a more powerful actor of the village. Whether or not the powerful actor exists the reference to her or him suggests how the local power dynamic might plant the seed of an asymmetrical client-patron relationship endowing the patron with power only by the denial of fundamental rights of those excluded.

> I reported our notary because he slapped my son when he was coming from the school. They crossed his street and my son hit his letter box. He came out of his house and slapped the thirteen years old boy. Then I reported him immediately. Thereafter the mayor called me to the office and I had to withdraw the accusation because otherwise he would have dismissed me from public employment and would cut the social benefits. But now there is someone standing beside me so if I have to do something I will see through to the end. Note if someone has power it is very difficult to confront him. You have no chance. (Béla)

The following account reveals that there has been a literal exclusion from local political institution under the leadership of first mayor experienced on the basis of ethnicity however, it suggest a recent change in both the local political dynamic and attitude of local authorities.

The framing of the events suggests a reluctance participating directly in the local affairs that might be explained by previous infringement of exercising civic and political rights. It can be also explained as a consequence of the changing local dynamic and attitude rather working with chosen patrons than directly Roma residents or by both. In any case it suggests a strong basis for patron-client type relationship.

> If I have problem why would I go to the local government if we have our own leaders to whom we should turn to? Under the leadership of our first mayor, we were not allowed to enter to the office (local government) they kicked us out. It was like if we wanted to meet with the prime minister. Now if gypsies have some problems they go to Aladár (the leader of the minority government) and he will intercede with the mayor asking him to employ them in public employment. (Jenő)

The difficulties of accessing healthcare being a strong sign for social exclusion also seems to be an everyday experience of Roma inhabitants. The account shows that accessibility to healthcare is not only accidental or impossible but depends on the good will of others. In this case social exclusion, blocking individuals from resources and opportunities provides a fertile ground for a patron-client type relationship where vote can be exchanged for fulfilling those basic needs that are available for other members of society.

> Once I asked him (the Roma candidate run for the position of being mayor) to take the small girl with leukemia to the hospital. He told he could not. If someone does not help for a small child with leukemia then how would he help if I go to him to the office (local government) asking one-time benefit for prescription? He would not give, so better if he stays where he is I would not vote for him. (Klára)

Examining the different faces of exclusion one can see that poverty and exclusion e.g. the lack of access to resources and the denial of rights and participation in social and political life provide a fertile ground for patron-client type relationship. Keeping in mind the possible implications of social exclusion for the creation of client-patron type relationship the next chapter shows the role of ideology in maintaining the existing local power relations. First it gives a general sense about how dominant local ideologies

influence Roma's perceptions about their social-economic status and then it points out the possible impact of these ideologies on the voting behaviour of Roma.

6. Dominant culture and its reflection in the voting behaviour of Roma

This chapter first introduces some general thoughts on Gramsci's cultural hegemony followed by an explanation of his conception of ideology. Ideologies or/and popular common sense serves to gain insights into the possible causes of willingness to vote for the far right candidate and the reluctance to elect the Roma nominee.

Antonio Gramsci was an Italian political revolutionist whose work has begun to be known outside of his country around 1965. Arrested by the Fascist State most of his notes were written in prison and many of them not have been translated yet. His work placed within Marxist paradigm and generally understood as an effort to revise, sophisticate orthodox Marxism and loosen its rigidity. This means that he was working within the terrain of Marxism and his resulting new concepts, thoughts and sophistications should be understood within this theoretical frame (Lears 1985). Although it is not to suggest that he does not provide extraordinary insights in the operation of different type of political regime, civil and political society, politics and ideology. Moreover his work represents a shift from economism to an approach that explains society and power relations not only on the basis of economic foundations as the only determining structure, but by forces that are driven via economic, political and ideological relations as well. He developed the theory of cultural hegemony in order to explain why working class revolution had not come to pass under advanced capitalism in the previous century while he also aimed to offer a more successful revolutionary strategy (Bates, 1975).

Marx also acknowledged that ideology has a significant role in both reproducing the economic system and class relations and the social structure that support them. But Gramsci drawing on Marx's theory of the dominant ideology attached more importance to the power of ideology. Gramsci argued that domination is not only achieved by means of economic fields but also by ideological (cultural) and political leadership (Hall, 1986). He claims that ruling groups' hegemony maintained by winning the consent of the subordinate groups through popularization of their culture e.g. ideas, values, norms, mores, discourses so that the ruling class' worldview becomes the dominant cultural norm. Coming in a moment of crisis in a historical block when dominant culture/ideologies are attacked by other emerging ideas show not a stable but a continuous struggle of ideas and groups implying that hegemony of a group is never completed and perpetuated. Thus a historical block in the moment of crisis achieved hegemony by a continuous negotiation of alliances, using the combination of coercion and consent and the popularization of ideas to influence the conception of world of masses. He distinguishes between state and civil society in which the former is a dictatorship ruling through forces while the latter through the transmission of ideas, beliefs, norms, morals etc. reproduce the legitimacy and the hegemony of ruling group. Although there are many interesting topics from Gramsci's work as the most relevant part of this thesis the chapter turns to discuss his concept of ideology. In doing so it aims to explain Roma's voting behaviour by a closer examination of their dominant beliefs, ideas, norm and prejudices. According to Gramsci ideology as a concept of the world which when it scatters throughout society produces forms of practical activity. He differentiates between philosophical and organic ideologies in which the former is part of the latter while the latter affecting everyday life by common-sense informs the consciousness of the social position of an individual. Common-sense presents itself as a traditional wisdom. It is not coherent rather contradictory yet flexible enough to be penetrated by new conceptions and philosophies forming a terrain

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on which they can compete in order to influence the consciousness of the masses. This common-sense or popular thoughts in the course of political education and cultural politics transformed into collective will. The struggle for hegemony therefore is an attack on this unity wanting to bring new consciousness that serves the interest of those who successfully manage both challenging the unifying ideologies and forming alliances. Once it achieved hegemony maintains its power by different strategies. Political, cultural and economic power define the boundaries of common-sense by avoiding confrontation with outside voices; ignoring views outside of these boundaries; labelling other opinions irresponsible; and seeking to exclude outside ideas, values and experiences from public discourse. The relevance of the theory of cultural hegemony concerning this thesis lies in its basic premise that hegemonic groups partly maintain their dominance by a hegemonic culture that propagate a world view which although mainly serves their interest appeals to a wide range of groups in society. In short they have to be able to convince subordinate groups that their particular interest overlaps with society at large. Consensus obtained in this way through the components of the dominant culture: norm, values, beliefs, prejudices, perceptions and sentiments support and legitimate the existing social order. Nonetheless consent never fully achieved or it might be never obtained only less powerful people do not revolt. As hegemony is not a static system but rather a process according to Gramsci parallel to it, there are live options to counter hegemonies. Nonetheless what is difficult for those who challenge hegemony is the vocabulary to express their grievances and transform it into a conception. Although Gramsci formulates his theory in an effort to explore how power is wielded in a broader context such as at national and global level, it has still useful implications locating some of its elements for a local level. The thesis takes into account that the effect of dominant culture at a national or global level does not leave untouched small localities. It is also aware of that Roma's economic and social situation is subject to the dominant culture at both levels

nonetheless it looks at a local level of values, norms, beliefs, prejudices etc. examining their content and dynamic. Thus in the following the chapter explores the articulation of ideas, norms, beliefs, prejudices, sentiments and their resonance with or/and divergence from the dominant ideas in the village among Roma residents. It looks at Roma's interpretation of their social and economic position in the village, vocabulary to express grievances, consent to the general direction and perception of majority as prestigious and confident. In so doing it sheds light on their effect on voting behaviour of Roma regarding the 2013 and 2014 local government elections.

6.1. Analysis

The following account reflects the local dominant institutional norms and discourses and their relation to Roma. The immediate line of the informant he draws between Roma and norms shows that Roma do not belong to those who adhere to norms. The account reflects the expectation of norms of a public institution that perceives Roma's behaviour as a violation of these norms. This violation seems to set up powerful boundaries that categorize Roma as animals through which the differentiation becomes even stronger between human beings who adhere to norms and Roma. Not being perceived to be a human being designates Roma's inferior positions while it points out the mainstream society's strict surveillance over the borders of norms. It also informs us about the tension created among Roma by the establishment of strictly delineated lines that by separating between norms and deviances designates the borders of norms along which they must define themselves.

The truth is that there are Roma who live like animals and they also behave like animals. They do not know how to speak and behave in a normal place like a public institution. Unfortunately they neither in a cultural way nor in hygiene can follow the norms. (János)

In addition to the expectations of institutional norms this account reflects local norms on the living conditions of Roma which stands in a sharp contrast to the dominant values. The lack of letter box, fence, sidewalk, animals and gate appear as a sign of incivility sharply specifying the local norms to which Roma not adhere. The absence of expected standards in comparison to mainstream society's living condition and lifestyle reflect the inferiority of other lifestyles while at the same time point at the superiority of the former. Comparing Roma children to animals which not only dehumanize them but also reduce them to numbers seem to mirror not only a local but a widespread picture about Roma. The multitude of children expressed by animalizing them on the one hand depict Roma's as savagery living

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without any rules on the other hand it already includes the expectations of the rules of a civilized world.

> The villainous gypsies who are such negligent they neither have a gate nor a fence. They do not have a sidewalk neither a letterbox that the postman cannot put the letter anywhere because there is no place for it. They do not have any animals and children sitting in the window looking like chimpanzees. (Géza)

The following account as another feature of cultural hegemony shows the legitimation of the dominant group's views that contribute to the maintenance of existing order. The contradiction is clearly stands out in the informant's perceptions and sentiments. While he translates racism into good will which deeply reflects the local dominant culture /prejudices that he internalized, he is aware that their living condition is due to the unfair distribution of resources. The guidance of an appropriate lifestyle simultaneously points out the 'deviation' of Roma from local expectations, norms values while the appropriation of paternalistic world view of the mainstream society reflects a desire to meet all these expectations.

> If we think over it they have reason to be anti-Roma. The Hungarians only want us to be educated to plant the garden, to clean the yard. (Gáspár)

The same informant a little further in the interview formulates this opinion:

> They always looked down on us, but while they beautify the village they have done nothing so far in the Roma settlement since the first mayor fixed the roads. (Gáspár)

The next two interviews' details again points out the identification with dominant beliefs and show the dynamic of local beliefs being the reflection of each other. The details of the two interviews completely recorded separately in time and place are echoes of each other. The dynamic of local beliefs reflecting the social and economic position of Roma in the village not only shows the prevailing utterance on Roma but also points out its structural

embeddedness. The astonishing similarity of the two accounts refers to a high degree of legitimacy of prevailing social order in which Roma's economic and social position are perceived to be a personal failure ignoring its structural causes.

Attila the leader of the minority self-government:

> You know what is the biggest problem of Roma? They are terrible at managing their money if they could do it than they had money in the end of the months. But they cannot that is why they do not have money for shampoo for the children.

The far right mayor:

> We should teach them how to run a household. They need to be tough that when they get the social aid they should not buy 45 slices of cakes and 8 pizzas but they should try to cut their expenses. Their biggest problem is that they do not know how to manage money in order to still have it in the end of the month. I think we should start with this because then the integration is worthless.

The grievances of Roma residents seemed not to be articulated in a local level. One day when I was sitting with one of my interviewees at her kitchen table asking her about the affairs of the village she suddenly fall silence first looking at her daughter as if she wanted to ask her permission and whispery told me about the visit of a neo-Nazi group two years ago in the corn harvest season which starts in October. She told me that they use to wear black uniform generally arriving with a van and shouting that 'Gypsies you will die today' while they are crossing the streets of the Roma settlement. When I asked her what they do in this case she replied that the first time when they called the police they only come a few hours later but they did not do anything. The next year when the same thing occurred the police told them that Roma have to wait until it ends in blood otherwise they cannot do anything. In both cases while Roma residents kept watch whole night at the settlement, none of the local authorities were present. The incident spread in the village like a local legend as if it was only invented by Roma to such an extent that during the field work in spite of its seriousness only two times was it mentioned. While I was listening to her account what I noticed is that my informant's

eyes betrayed uncertainty and embarrassment. She was not sure whether I believe her as well as she felt embarrassed as if I would see her mad. She only described the sequence of the events but nothing could be heard in a wider context neither the absence of the local authorities as well as the mayor nor the questionable work of the police. When I asked her about both, she was smiling and bowed her head. What this case shows is the difficulty to articulate grievances in the absence of an appropriate vocabulary which lack prevents people to translate their experience into a palpable form that would enter into the stream of local ideologies and philosophies. Nonetheless her reaction is also a result of the strategies of local hegemonic discourse which in the course of making the incident a legend labelled it irresponsible pushing it outside of its boundaries.

In following four accounts there can be seen how local perception/ beliefs related to Roma appear in their voting behaviour. The first reflects the pertinence of the existing power relations on the basis of Roma candidate's lack of education and age. Although the informant describes the possible reaction of the local elite in case of the Roma candidate would have been elected as a mayor, it seems at the same time he formulates his own opinion. The account refers to the incompetency of the Roma candidate that unfolds itself through the implicit comparison to the majority elite. The elite's merit apparently not only comes from their socio-economic status but also from the fact that they belong to mainstream society. Ethnicity seems to play an important role in the allocation of the mayoral position where being a non-Roma itself seems to be a self-evident virtue.

> The Hungarians could not tolerate if a young gypsy guy would be the mayor. Imagine they are teachers, one of their son is the leader of the timber company how they could then tolerate a gypsy guy they would become sick because of it. (Géza)

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This second account explains the incompetency of the Roma nominee based on his lack of education and his supposed incivility again reflects the consent that the existing power relations indeed are legitimate. It reflects the local beliefs and prejudices surrounding the Roma population of the village. Illiteracy and being uncultivated being signs for incivility seem to be permanent markers of the minority group in the local discourse. In the assessment of the Roma candidate's capability to perform his duties as a possible mayor 'incivility' serves as a reason for his denial. The local legend that he wants to build a night club in the local government implicitly refers to the fear that a Roma mayor would subvert the order, visioning a chaos where no rules would be, reflects the racist fear of the majority.

> The Roma candidate cannot even write down his name. He wanted to transform one of the rooms of the local government into a night club. I am sure if we had voted for him the village would have lost its future. Taking into account this the Jobbik (far right party) sounded better than him. (Nikoletta)

The account below was the answer when I asked my informant why a whole street in the Roma settlement voted for the far right candidate. Whether it was his own opinion or he only conveyed the views of the others or wanted to please me supposing that I might have similar ideas the account in any case reveals a very strong coincidence with the content of the components of dominant culture. The vulgar articulation of the incapability of a Roma candidate to be a mayor might refer to conflicts between the informant and the Roma candidate. Nonetheless the statement's general 'validity' for those who come from Roma settlements, its attack on socio-economical background, and its degrading articulation of Roma ethnicity seem to show consent to the general direction that legitimate the majority leadership of the village. According to the accounts of many informants they have not personally known the far right candidate before the 2013 election apart from some village gossip about his occupation and marital status. Taking this into account, the below statement

implies a perception of the majority society as prestigious and confident to be able to fulfil the mayor's duties.

> Because they did not want that a beggar dastardly who comes from the gypsy settlement would be the mayor. (Aladár)

This last account shows the frequently appearing statement on Roma politics or/and Roma politicians that contribute to the delegitimization of the Roma candidate. The common-sense about the wielding of power by Roma might refer to experienced corruption. Nevertheless one cannot ignore on the one hand the generalisation in this context considering Roma on the other hand the assumption that mainstream society is less willing to abuse power. The informant beliefs that 'Hungarians know better everything' reflects deeply the local common-sense regarding Roma while it offers a possible answer for the failure of the Roma candidate to become a mayor.

> Do not put power into the hands of a gypsy because they cannot use it properly. They always misuse power wanting everything only for them. Surely there are also Hungarians who can be similar but they are still much better than gypsies. I would not like if a gypsy would be the mayor or would be a member of the local assembly, because we used to have only Hungarians since the Hungarians know everything better. (Éva)

In this chapter applying Gramsci's theory of ideology the analysis showed the reflection of dominant culture in Roma's accounts and its impact on the ways in which they explains their reluctance to vote for the Roma candidate. The next chapter will account for the local social political dynamic concerning the 2013 and 2014 elections explaining the role of cultural hegemony and political clientelism in the success of the far right mayor.

7. Political clientelism and the success of the far right mayor

This chapter accounts for the success of the far right candidate among Roma inhabitants in the village, which can be best explained by applying the concept of political clientelism. In so doing it takes into consideration the local political dynamic and the role of the Roma votes in the political competition characterised by a strong rivalry. Political clientelism brought by the changing dynamics of the local political sphere beside the theory of cultural hegemony proves to be the most appropriate tool to explain the high number of Roma votes in the support of the far right candidate. After drawing on the theoretical framework the chapter introduces the analysis to account for the 2013 and the 2014 local political elections. In so doing it provides insights into the process of establishing clientelistic relationship and the use of public or state resources in exchange for political support during both elections.

Political clientelism has been in the focus of social and political inquiry since the late 1960s and early 1970s. This first wave of clientelism mostly was studied by anthropologists and political scientists and only in the second wave it extended to other disciplines such as history. In the 1960s clientelism as a practise was identified with traditional and agrarian societies (Roniger, 2004) and it was supposed that it would disappear by the beginning of democratisation. The first wave's conceptualization by James C. Scott defined the patron-client relationship:

'a special case of dyadic (two-person) ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefit, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support or assistance, including personal services, to the patron.' (James C. Scott, 1972, p. 92)

As one can notice the concept does not necessarily involve politics or more precisely the exchange of vote for resources and goods. It rather aims to describe the traditional patronage relationship characteristic to feudal societies which involves a strong dependency of the client on the patron in terms of the latter's supply of essential goods and services that is necessary for survival (Hopkin, 2006). The client reciprocates it with on the one hand services and goods such as labour and rent on the other hand with loyalty and deference. What is important for the purposes of the thesis concerning this concept, called 'old' clientelism its face-to face and asymmetrical character. Although 'old' clientelism implies a greater asymmetry in the patron-client relationship which is not specific to my case it is still relevant in the sense that the clientelistic deal concerning the patron reciprocity on the one hand does not involve the immediate transfer of exchange one the other hand does not define the nature of the benefit in advance. It also implies the imbalance of power since the patron has control over resources which without him/her would not be available for the client. Both key features of the 'old' clientelism are characteristic to the patron-client relationship between the village's mayor and the Roma inhabitants. Nonetheless some qualities of the 'new' clientelism are indispensable to understand the nature of clientelism between the mayor and the Roma voters. The refutation of the prophecy according to which clientelism would disappear in the course of democratization and development that led to the second wave research started in 1980s and early 1990s. It acknowledges the persistence of clientelism in both developed and less developed democratic countries. 'New' clientelism is understood as a strategy of political mobilization and control in the course of social exchanges. Studies expand its scope to political parties, factions and administration, as well as the list of available resources such as political, economic and instrumental offered by patrons. The distribution of state resources in the exchange of political support which is very characteristic of this type of political clientelism is not the only difference between the 'old' and the 'new' clientelism. Hopkin

(2006) argues that the 'new' clientelism is less personalized, unequal and durable, while it is more bureaucratic, and more explicitly materialistic. This claim is underpinned by Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007) stating that party competition in democratic countries provides greater freedom for the client to choose or leave its patron in exchange for a better deal thus it creates a more symmetrical relationship regarding the client. The less durability of 'new' clientelism one the one hand can be explained by the client's possibility to exit the relationship for another, on the other hand can be elucidated by the type of exchange, involving a direct economic exchange providing nothing for a continuous relationship. Its more bureaucratic feature comes from its expanded scope that raises the local clientelistic relations to a national party level where instead of a personal relationship the organisation becomes the patron. In this case the person is only a mediator of a party who distributes resources only with permission of it while in this way it also becomes less personalized. 'New' clientelism offers other perspectives to interpret the voting behaviour of Roma. One of the most important features of 'new' clientelism for this thesis is its changed durability approach, pointing out the temporal character of the clientelistic relationship in the village. It also entails the use of state resources in exchange for votes which is also characteristic to my case. Nonetheless political clientelism in the village remains personal and in some respects a mixture of the above descriptions of symmetrical and asymmetrical relationship. The chapter also draws on Hopkin's differentiation between distinct dimensions of clientelism taking into account what he calls the patron-client proximity/distance and the subject of the exchange. He claims that (2006, p.5) 'the less individualized is the exchange between voters and office-holders, the less clientelistic the political relationship'. His argument is based on the varying degree of the exclusiveness of the goods offered by the patron. He makes distinction between public goods, club goods and private goods. Public goods implemented in a national level provide widespread availability for voters, therefore it is not efficient to ensure the political support of

the voters. Club goods offer benefits for a group or for different sectors but clientelistic exchange occur in a group rather than an individual level. The distribution of private goods such as (2006, p. 6) 'helping in the labour market, … allocation of public sector jobs, help acceding to welfare benefits or favouritism in administrative decision' is the more efficient to grant the client benefits in a direct and personal way. Therefore the more excludable the goods provided in an individual level the greater the chance that the client will support the patron in a clientelistic relationship. Hopkin also takes into account the proximity/ distance dimension on the level of the client. He claims that the more the client offers her/his votes or a package of votes from friends, colleges, relatives to a candidate rather than to a party the more clientelistic the relationship. Following Hopkin's argument what he calls a classical clientelistic exchange can be applied to my case regarding the criterion of proximity dimension, considering both the client as well as the patron. Armed with this analytical frame the analysis tests the criterion of 'old' and 'new' clientelism and the proximity/distance dimension.

The retirement of the first mayor of the village in 2010 dramatically changed the dynamic of the local political sphere. Those constituted the local political social and economic elite, forming a fairly tight faction in these different spheres of the village, underpinned by their intertwined family relationships, wanted to retain their political power. Although not officially but affiliated themselves with the Hungarian ruling party (Fidesz). Two of the old members of the elite who were already permanent members in the local government assembly run for the position. Nonetheless the retirement of the previous mayor elicited a strong rivalry among the competitors for the mayoral positions leading to rearrange the existing political power relations. Those who were rather in the periphery of this competition had occupied positions in the local institutions or in the surrounding companies nevertheless none of them belonged to the local elite. One of the competitors employed by the local government as a

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village trustee for nearly ten years thus, having extensive links to the village's different layers proved to be one of the most likely candidate. Although he belonged to working class of the village and before never aspired to the position neither was a member of the local government won the 2010 election. The far right competitor as the youngest one among the nominees was a member of the local government assembly since 2006 aspired to the position from 2010. His popularity in the village was growing parallel to his party as well as it came from the dynamic of local politics. First in the 2010 local government election, Roma votes have been starting to play a significant role and brought success for the village trustee. Following the death of the village trustee in 2013 a by-election was held in the same year. The competition was very close, the far right candidate won the election although he could hardly get 150 votes more than the Roma nominee who was also closely followed by an old member of the local elite. The far right mayor could win the 2013 election only by the support of Roma voters and although he confidently won the 2014 election getting 600 votes more than the second most popular candidate, he received three times more Roma votes. How the rapid rise of the far right politician could be possible and why a part of Roma inhabitants of the village choose to support him that the chapter account for. In the following the analysis first focuses on the establishment of a clientelistic relationship between a Roma inhabitant and the village trustee before the 2010 local government election. This will show first how clientelistic relationship evolved in the village later, becoming a tool for political clientelism second it explores the background of the emergence of the clientelistic relationship between the same Roma inhabitants and far right mayor. Hereupon it accounts for the 2013 and 2014 local government elections.

7.1. Analysis

While we were sitting at a kitchen table we flew back in time with my informant until we arrive at beginning of the relationship between him and the village trustee. He (hereafter called Bálint) willingly shared with me the details of their encounters that carries the traits of 'old' clientelism in terms of its face-to face character and the asymmetric nature of their relationship. Beginning as a traditional clientelism the relationship expands to the political sphere in the 2010 local election serving as a means to reciprocate the favours of the village trustee. Bálint provides a package of votes to the caretaker, who by the help of the votes becomes the mayor.

> When we worked in the lumberyard the caretaker and his wife had a buffet there. They gave us a lot of discount because we were a very poor family. If we asked something we got it and then we paid for it in the evening when we got our payment. And until he was the caretaker of the village and his task was to allocate and oversee the public employment if I asked him to let my brother leave a bit earlier to go to work somewhere else he always did this favour for us.

> I told to him that I support him with those who are around me even though János (a member of the old elite) asked my support. I told him that because he was there when we needed him we will reciprocate it with our votes.

Following Scott's definition of a patron-client type relationship it can be seen that the relationship was strongly instrumental in which the caretaker using his higher socio-economic status and influence provided benefit for Bálint. Their relationship does not reflect the level of dependency characteristic to 'old' clientelism but it suggests an imbalance of power. The asymmetry comes from both their socio-economic status and the fact that the patron has control over resources that the client needs. The relationship apparently is more accidental than durable which more a feature of 'new' clientelism nevertheless whenever they engage in contacts with one another it seems to show the same pattern. The latter account sheds light on one of the features of 'new' clientelism according to which (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007) party competition provides a greater opportunity to clients to opt for another patron. Although

it was not a competition between parties but among different candidates it still can be applied to the case. Nonetheless as nothing was mentioned by my informant concerning the goods in exchange for political support it seemingly carries some characteristics of 'old 'clientelism in the sense that the return is not offered in advance which also points out the imbalance of power between the patron and the client.

Bálint is considered to be the most affluent Roma in the village. He has an extensive social capital with mainstream society as well as with Roma due to which he wields influence among the latter. His personal ties to majority society partly can be explained by his childhood residence that was in a non-Roma populated part of the village, on the other hand by different jobs offered under and shortly after communism. Everyone who I talked to in the village identifies him as a centre figure of his family, which is confirmed by himself as well. Moreover he is claimed to be a person of authority in his family who has a decisive role in issues concerning the village's affairs within his family. The role of Bálint supporting the village trustee draws the attention to him becoming to be noticed as a possibly client who has an extended kinship and influence within it by the political actors involving the far right mayor. Thus by enacting a clientelistic relationship with the far right candidate he plays a significant role in the 2013 by-election that ends with the victory of the far right candidate.

When the mayor died in 2013 the social and political dynamic of the village again changed and a new candidate also appeared to pursuit the mayoral position who was a Roma candidate. The competition as above mentioned was very close the first three candidates who received the most votes were the far right nominee the Roma competitor and a member from the old elite.

After the 2010 local election the far right candidate contacted Bálint, noticing his willingness to make a clientelistic deal and the high number of votes that he could 'deliver'. From then on

they met on regular basis to discuss the plans for the village and the situation of Roma. Their social and political exchange can be approached by Hopkin's proximity/distance dimension. Their relationship was highly personalized involving private and excludable goods in exchange for political support which was returned by providing services for the far right candidate's campaign and offering a package of votes from Bálint's friends and family. It mutually occurred in an individual level from both sides one the one hand Bálint providing goods for an individual candidate rather than to a party, on the other hand the candidate offering excludable, private goods in a long-standing personal relationship. The literature would call it as a classical clientelistic exchange.

Bálint recalled his memory of the beginning their relationship:

> He noticed how many people I could bring to the election to vote for the caretaker and after that he started to look for my company. He involved me in discussions in different events of the village and he showed up in a lot of place with me. Honestly you know what I liked about him is that he did not came in the last minutes as the others to ask my help but almost immediately after the 2010 election. He knew he lost the election and he has four years to fulfill his goal of getting my support. And it is not anymore about his mayoral position since then I have become a public worker and a foreman, I am in charge of watching over fifteen people.

What striking in his account besides the features of political clientelism is the implicit suggestion of transgressing the norms in the village by 'showing up together'. It is not that Roma and people from majority society never talk to each other in the village but it is about treating publicly Bálint as a partner that seemed to be one of the most important benefits for him. The account shows that Bálint is well aware of the transgression that points out both his sense of exclusion as well as his desire not to be excluded. Their relationship made known in public goes against the local norms in that it portrays Roma as uncivilized who are in opposition to the norms and values of the village, who thus cannot be treated as a partner. Bálint's reason to support the far right mayor beside political clientelism might be explained

by both his identification with the dominant culture and by the local political dynamic in the village. He explains his perception about the Roma candidate that reflects the local common-sense and coincides with my beliefs of many Roma inhabitants in the village.

> He knew I am an influential person in the village and because of this he wanted to get my support. But I knew he would do nothing for the village neither for Roma. He wants everything only for himself but he cannot even give a speech and only finished elementary school.

It is striking that while Bálint felt honoured by the request of the far right politician to establish a patron-type relationship, he rejects the Roma candidate for the same reason accusing the latter to only striving for power. This might refer to a rivalry between Bálint and the Roma nominee but his account also coincides with the hegemonic consensus that perceives people from the dominant group more competent and legitimate. This legitimization is underpinned by his articulation of difference between the two candidates' educational background in which he calls the far right candidate highly educated while he finished only high school and not educated at all the Roma nominee with his elementary school.

Nonetheless the chapter account for not only his support but also those Roma who voted for the far right candidate in the 2013 by-election. Around 150 Roma voted for the far right candidate in the by-election which is equal to the number of Bálint's extended family and his closest friends. His role in delivering the votes of his family and friends can be explained by the features of 'old' clientelism that pervades his relationships with his family. As I argued in a little above social exclusion can reinforce client-patron type relationship within the Roma community as well as with majority society. Drawing on his account it reveals that he has a permanent role in bringing different resources for his family and friends that made him a central figure. Within his family and friends his patron role might have granted him a position which was never questioned or challenged during the 2013 by-election regarding his role to deliver their vote for the far right candidate. This argument can be supplemented by Kovai's

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claim who argues that kinship is a primarily organising force among Roma in some rural area of Hungary as a consequence of the assimilation regime's identity politics under communism. This can be seen in the relationship between Bálint and his family during the 2013 by-election that kinship was Bálint's primary resource to provide a package of votes for the far right candidate.

Concerning those who voted for the Roma candidate clientelistic expectations and kinship as an organising force seem to be an adequate explanation for their voting behaviour.

> Obviously I voted for him because he is my cousin his whole family in the Roma settlement voted for him. He is the only one who can help for us. And he also argues that he has already enough money so he only wants the mayor position to help for us. (Kristóf)

Drawing the conclusion of the 2013 by-election it brought a change in the local political dynamic. The last few months before the 2014 local governmental election were a period of negotiations between the members of the majority society. The old elite seeing the ever-modest result of their candidate concluded that he has not too many chances to win the election. Nonetheless they also noticed the obtained votes of the Roma candidate which was higher than their nominee's in the 2013 by-election. The old elite traditionally affiliated with Fidesz constituted the social, economic and political elite in the last twenty years were able to maintain their power which seemed to be disappearing. The village's narratives of their attitude to the Jobbik's candidate testify a very strong hostility toward him based on his socio-economic and educational background and his affiliation with Jobbik. But he was still a 'better' choice or candidate than the Roma nominee whose victory the old elite by all means wanted to avoid.

> Even the eighty years old Hungarians when they heard that a Gypsy run for the mayoral position asking help for transporting them to the local government office in order to vote for the far right mayor in order to prevent a gypsy to be a mayor.

> But when last time only seven Hungarians ran against each other in the election the half of the Hungarians did not go to vote. (Klára)

New voices have appeared in the village according to which if a Roma candidate would win the mayoral election or a Roma nominee would become a member of local government assembly, the old elite would move from the village. The far right mayor proved to be a good strategist in order to maintain his mayoral position which he won by the help of a Roma client in the 2013 by-election. Taking advantages of the racist fear of the old elite as the first most likely candidate he was not only able to receive the highest level of political support of the majority society so far, but was able to almost completely change the composition of local government assembly. Although a member of the old elite running the election was able to get in the local government assembly, noticing that he was alone left the position within a few months. Changes also could be observed in his clientelistic attitude toward the Roma population. The privileged position of Bálint as his old client, was partly taken off by starting to maintain a clientelistic relationship with the whole Roma in the village. For this reason compared to the 2013 election he got much more Roma votes. The mayor using state resources to allocate excludable and private goods such as allocating as many public works as possible, helping to acceding to welfare benefits followed the forms of 'new' clientelism. However, the type of exchange provided to each other being highly individualized clearly refers to 'old' clientelism. The imbalance of power as a feature of 'old' clientelism remains also characteristic to that type of patron-client relationship, which is between the mayor and the Roma inhabitants in that the mayor is in a position to offer goods that essential for Roma.

> I very much respect this mayor he is very good never were so many Roma employed by public employment before. (Katalin)

> During eleven months (the time which has passed between the 2013 by-election and the 2014 election) he convinced us that he is a good mayor, since if we did not have money he even gave us from his pocket which we never had to give back. Not to mention public employment it has never been before that so many people work in our family. (Judit)

> He convinced a lot of people during ten months that it is worth voting for him. In the 2014 election he did not need Bálint's help to win. Before the 2014 election he also invited the whole Roma football team for a dinner, which was a very good idea. Think about it we are twenty-four in the football team if we count everyone with his family is more than five hundred people. (János)

> This mayor bought the Roma with his office hours and the public employment because when he became the mayor started to employ a lot of people and he was available when you had any problems he patiently listen to you. (Géza)

> He lends you money if you need and charges your prepayment energy meter. (Margit)

> When he became the mayor he helped us a lot and we did not have to give him back the money. It meant a lot for us that he offered occasional social benefit sometimes 5000 or 10000 HUF depending on the budget of local government. I say to you that if he will continue in this way we will vote him again in the next five years. (Péter)

The access to resources is conditioned on political reciprocation which everyone is aware of although it is not literally said as oppose to Bálint's case. The selective release of state resources proved to be an excellent strategy to political mobilization. However, the nature of the exchange provided by the mayor fulfilling basic needs for survivor being a very characteristic form of 'old' clientelism shows an extreme asymmetry in the relationship of Roma and him. The asymmetry in this relationship is underpinned by those who either lied that they voted for the far right mayor or expressed their fear about not being provided with those goods because they did not vote for him. By taking advantages of both the racist fear of majority society and the possibilities offered by political clientelism the far right mayor not only could become the most likely candidate of the village but also win the consent of both the old elite as well as the Roma residents. However, temporary feature of 'new' political clientelism also reflected by the account attaches conditions to his current political position.

The changing local social and political dynamic provided an excellent ground for the strategical use of political clientelism and use of majority society racism leading to and maintaining the victory of the far right mayor. Taking advantage of the Roma residents',

poverty and exclusion the mayor could perfectly use the means of political clientelism among them. The need for jobs, money, and other resources constituting means for survival that Roma otherwise have not access to, were provided in exchange of their votes. Nonetheless his victory was also underpinned by the dominant views and discourses on Roma with which Roma identify. The consent gained by dominant culture contributed to see him as a 'proper' candidate while it brought the image of chaos and backwardness regarding the Roma candidate among Roma.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to provide explanations for the support of a far right party's candidate by Roma. As it is a rather rare political phenomenon characteristic to local elections in rural areas of Hungary my research focused on local level election. Thus I studied two local government elections in a small village where a high proportion of Roma voted for an extreme right wing party's candidate. In the focus of the research were the 2013 by-election and 2014 local government election. In order to understand the ways in which Roma explain their electoral choice I relied on the theories of social exclusion, cultural hegemony and political clientelism. Social exclusion first offered insights into Roma's perceived institutional and spatial exclusion. It examined the access to healthcare, justice, local political and social institutions. The analysis pointed out that Roma lack the access to above resources, goods and services. As a consequence they engage in clientelistic relationship through which they hope to satisfy their basic needs to services and goods. Social exclusion, pushing them to maintain and rely on clientelistic relationship thus also has a significant role in their electoral choice. The far right mayor taking advantage of the changing dynamic of political and power relations, accessing resources through his mayoral position gaining advantages from socio-economic status of Roma establishes a patron-client relationship with them. For accounting the failure of the Roma candidate and also to approach the far right mayor's success from another angle the research analysed how components of the local dominant culture reflect on the socio-economic status, life style etc. of Roma by gaining insight into Roma's discourse and views. This reveals that the racist views that pervades local beliefs and perceptions etc. concerning Roma clearly appears to play an important role in Roma's reluctance to vote for the Roma candidate and rather prefer the far right nominee perceiving him as a legitimate.

The changing local political and power dynamic provided an excellent ground to establish a patron-client type relationship taking advantages of Roma socio-economic status. Political clientelism and the identification with dominant culture by Roma provided a fertile soil to impact Roma voting behaviour.

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