

# **Political Perceptions of Georgia's Population**

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## 1. Introduction

A country's constitution defines how a country's political system is organized. The constitution, if abided by, builds a "skeleton" of politics by setting the rules and laws of political action that in turn prescribe norms of conduct and strategies of action for the participants in political processes. The participants in political processes, for their part, have their own expectations of the political system, know what is the most valued and why a given political system is acceptable or unacceptable for them. The process of such interaction between the constitution and the citizens establishes the genuine essence and significance of the constitution to society, reveals its strong and weak points and outlines the prospects of its further reform.

The present paper studies society as a space where people who have subjective views and opinions interact. While interacting with each other and the institutions of the political system, citizens draw up their own versions of reality that are tinted by their own political views and ideologies. Therefore such notions as democracy, law, constitution, etc. may carry different meanings and may have different values for different people. Thus, apart from being heterogeneous, political society consists of large groups of people whose views are more or less similar and who evaluate political developments in a similar manner. Such a cohesive systems of political views in this study will be referred to as political discourses. The goal of the present study is to identify and study the political discourses largely prevalent in society. The premise of our research is the view, according to which one of the major principles of democracy is that all the views in society have the right to contribute to the formation and functioning of a country's political system.

## 2. Methodology of the Study

The study draws on combination of two approaches. By its essence it is interpretational. But at the same time a statistical analysis of factual data has been applied. The study is aimed at understanding Georgian society rather than studying it, as the word study implies traditionally in a frames of empirical approach. Readers who are less interested in the methodology can skip this chapter and move to the next one.

In order to identify different political discourses, factor analysis was used, namely, its "reverse" version, the so-called "Q-method" (based on Stephenson's Q-sort method)<sup>1</sup>. The traditional factor analysis ("R-method") is based on identifying relations *across variables*, and allows for the identification of content-related factors<sup>2</sup> defining the identity of an object or a phenomenon. The mathematical processing of a matrix of intercorrelations allows us to identify such major factors. Unlike the ordinary factor analysis, the Q-method allows a correlation to be established not across variables, but *across respondents*. Processing the matrix of intercorellations drawn up in this way makes it possible to divide individuals into certain groups (and to identify factors on the basis of that), rather than to group variables by factor. In other words, the method enables us to group respondents by their views on the object under study and, accordingly, identify the discourses prevalent in society in this regard (i.e. each identified factor is at the same time a discourse).

The method reveals the attitudes of individuals towards a specific issue. This allows us to compare different groups' systems of views on specific issues through individuals' evaluative reactions to the statements in the pre-prepared set of statements (Q-set). In addition, an individual's stance towards a certain statement in a Q-set becomes valid only when considered in the context of that individual's evaluative reactions to all other statements.

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<sup>1</sup> A similar study conducted to reveal political discourses in 13 post-Communist countries was used as the basis for the methodology and theoretical approaches applied in this study. See, John S. Dryzek, Leslie T. Holmes, "Post-Communist Democratization. Political Discourses Across Thirteen Countries". Cambridge University Press, 2002

<sup>2</sup> Let's look at an example to illustrate that. Say, any combination of spectral colours can be described as a linear factor of three main colours (red, green, blue), i.e. these three colours are three main factors determining the essence of the said phenomenon.

Research based on the Q-methodology is conducted in several stages. At the first stage, statements are prepared for the Q-set, based on the data obtained from focus groups and the media.

Because the study aimed to reflect the views of *ordinary* members of our society, it was largely focus group findings that were used as a source of statements for the Q-set. Therefore, when setting up focus groups, we tried to select groups that would be heterogeneous to the extent possible in terms of social and demographic characteristics. Four focus group meetings were conducted in three areas, namely, two in Tbilisi and one in Kutaisi and Telavi respectively. Eight to ten people participated in each focus group. Each meeting lasted about an hour and a half. Moderators did not use any pre-prepared questionnaires in order to minimize their influence on group members and in order to ensure that the discussions were spontaneous and unrestricted. The complexity of the topic and indefinite nature of the citizens' views on this quite impersonal issue need to be taken into consideration.

After the transcription of focus group materials, separate phrases were singled out of the text. In total, about 400 statements on a wide spectrum of political issues were obtained. As was expected, ordinary citizens proved to be much more concerned about those aspects of constitutional arrangement that could have a direct effect on them than about the organization of central government. Focus groups members raised issues such as the protection of human rights, granting the Orthodox Church the status of state religion, citizenship and national identity, regional self-governance, etc. The respondents' views about these issues were as a rule more distinctly shaped.

At the next stage, each statement was identified and categorized by means of the so-called discourse key. The key is a two-dimensional system (the discourse element and the type of statement) with four parameters/categories in each of the two dimensions. A combination of these categories results in a matrix of 4x4; that is, in the end, the whole sample of statements has been grouped in 16 categories.

Type of statement	Discourse element			
	Ontology	Agency	Motive	Natural and unnatural relations
Definitive	1	2	3	4
Designative	5	6	7	8
Evaluative	9	10	11	12
Advocative	13	14	15	16

The discourse element comprised the following categories:

1. Ontology– a set of entities (institutions, social groups, personalities, etc. existing in reality), i.e. this can be a nation, a political system, politicians, individuals, clans, etc.
2. Agency – capacity to act, that is either attributed or not attributed to the entity
3. Motive – some motives may be regarded as highly important while others may be rejected or neglected.
4. Natural and unnatural political relations (political equality, national and class conflicts, hierarchical divisions based on the degree of welfare or political interests, experience, demographical characteristics etc.)

The second dimension (type of statement) consisted of the following parameters:

1. Definitive – relates to the meaning of the term
2. Designative – refers to facts
3. Evaluative – refers to values that exist or may exist

#### 4. Advocative – refers to what should or should not exist

On the basis of the above criteria, the entire sample of statements was categorized into 16 groups, that is, into 16 cells of the obtained matrix. The statements were classified by three experts independently. The evaluations were then finally adjusted.

From each category of statements, four statements were randomly selected for the Q- set, i.e. a set of 64 statements was developed. It should be noted that the statements were presented in their original form (as they were pronounced by their authors). Copyediting was limited to shortening and grammar mistakes. As the matrix cells were not completely filled in, a few more statements were selected from the media and added to the sample. Also, a number of statements were selected from the media that were essential to our research but were not pronounced by focus group members (e.g. 13<sup>3</sup> and 17). The random selection principle was not strictly observed in the process of selection in order to avoid the repetition of identical statements. In the case of similar statements, one of the two was rejected and replaced by a different statement.

At the third stage of the study, individual interviews were held in which respondents were asked to group the 64 statements into 13 groups (in a quasi-normal distribution) by degree of agreement with each view. The evaluation was carried out using a 13-score scale, ranging from 6 (agree most) to -6 (agree least)<sup>4</sup> including 0. Some 40 respondents took part in this phase. The selection criteria guaranteed the diversity of respondents in terms of social and political characteristics. Social characteristics include age, education, type of activity, degree of material well-being, and housing. Respondents were selected from four regions. Specifically, 25 people were selected in Tbilisi and five in Batumi, Kutaisi and Gori respectively.

Political characteristics were largely linked to political affiliations. The sample comprised people who actively supported or were members of a particular party as well as those who were in opposition or indifferent to all the parties. Because the study was conducted parallel to a poll of 1,000 people, the random selection principle was well observed. The study was conducted in autumn 2004.

The obtained data were processed using the statistical programme PQ Method 2.11<sup>3</sup>, specially designed for the Q-method. Factor analysis was conducted through establishing correlations between Q-sets in the matrix of 40x40, after which the matrix was analysed using a centroid method and varimax rotation.

As was said before, the factors established through processing data by the given statistical programme are discourses that are close to the opinions of certain groups of respondents. The statistical programme can link the respondents to two, three or more (up to seven) factors, even if the factors are not of the same importance or content. Prior to the interpretation of data, the optimal number of factors to be selected and analysed needs to be established. A researcher can use two criteria in order to compose an optimal group – the formal criterion (drawing on statistical parameters) and the content criterion (ignoring discourses that are less important in terms of contents). We used both criteria. It was revealed that using two factors (discourses) made it possible to divide respondents only into pro-government and opposition groups, in which case we would not be able to say much about more rooted ideological differences. In addition, too many statements in this case appeared in the consensus field (both discourses reacted on these in a similar way). Using three discourses would bring the same results. Selecting more than five discourses would not add much value in terms of contents as it would include discourses created by single respondents. Eventually, it was decided to choose between four and five discourses. Further, in the case of four

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<sup>3</sup> Hereinafter the statements of the Q-set are denoted by figures that correspond to their numbers in Table 1.

<sup>4</sup> See chart 1

<sup>3</sup> PQMethod was adapted, revised and is maintained by Peter Schmolck. The Fortran code on which based was originally written for the mainframe by John Atkinson under the guidance of Steven Brown at Kent State University.

factors, all the respondents appeared to be clearly associated with this or that discourse, whereas the five-factor division excluded many respondents on the grounds that they had no firm association.

After discourses are identified, the analysis of their content begins. When interpreting and comparing discourses one needs to bear in mind how the study was conducted and what importance was attached by respondents to this or that statement, or how the statements were ranked by respondents. The study differed from a regular sociological survey in that respondents in this study did not evaluate each statement independently from other statements, but rather they sorted them in relation to each other. Therefore, in order to characterize factors it is not sufficient to look at the statements that have got an extreme scores (-6,-5,+6, +5). One needs also to consider respondents' reactions to other statements as well as differences between the factors, even if they are minor. For instance, the statement (50) which reads "At this stage and in our circumstances dictatorship is the best thing ..." is only slightly positive (+1) for factor 3, but if we consider that other factors rank this statement very low (-5), it emerges that the response carries considerable information about the peculiarities of the third discourse.

It should be also taken into account that almost all the statements that compose our political field carry two and sometimes even three meanings. In other words, ranking a particular phrase from -6 to +6 by a respondent often does not allow us to find out what the respondent is implying. Therefore, and based on the methodology of the study, each individual statement needs to be considered against the background of other responses. Even in this case, the interpretation of objectively identified discourses still implies a certain degree of subjectivity and is largely dependent on what knowledge we have of the situation and developments in Georgia. The very fact that the authors of this research are residents of Georgia and participants in political processes has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that the obtained data were considered in the context formed by our knowledge of Georgia and the processes and confrontations in the country, as well as our knowledge of the context in which specific phrases were pronounced in the course of group discussions. The disadvantage could be the fact that we, the authors, being process participants, naturally are in some discourse already. Any individual views his or her own discourse in a positive light, while making others' discourses the object of criticism and even antagonism. We tried to be objective towards all the discourses, but still do not rule out the possibility that individuals with different political standpoint would make slightly different emphasizes while analysing this data. The phenomenological approach, which has served as the framework for conducting this study, acknowledges certain subjectivity in itself. Moreover, such subjectivity is an integral part of research.

We should also take into consideration that in addition to the discourses identified by the study, there may be other, less widespread, more specific discourses in Georgia that characterize relatively small but clearly distinct groups. Such groups would include, for instance, non-Georgian speaking national minorities who were left beyond the scope of the study. We should point out that the study provides us with information about the vast majority of Georgia's population, but it does not rule out the existence of radically distinct discourses prevalent with small groups. We should also bear in mind that in addition to those individuals who, due to their education, intellect and/or political awareness, were capable of evaluating the proposed statements in accordance with their ideologies, there is also the politically "lower" social stratum of people who found it practically impossible to express their positions.

### **3. Summary of Findings and Theoretical Generalization**

The study has identified four different discourses amongst the Georgian population, i.e. four different types of political views. Before we move to their description, we should first of all explain what we mean under "difference in political views".

Real people living in Georgia are not complete antipodes who do not have any common aspirations. For instance, any citizen of Georgia wants Georgia to revive, its citizens to live better

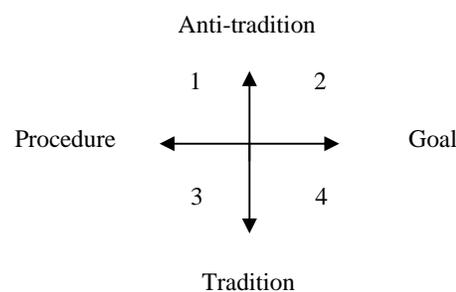
lives, wants to have a constitutional democracy in the country and Georgia to become a modern, civilized country. If we look at the issue this way, we will not see any considerable difference among the people. The difference becomes apparent only when we ask these people to prioritize the above statements and rank their values, i.e. state what it is that they want to achieve in the first place. In real life, it is the political environment that makes this demand on the people, by creating the need for the people to elect governments and to take stances on the priorities of political decisions and action plans.

In order to create clear picture of the citizens' real -life views and their variety, we will introduce an abstract model of discourses in which, unlike what happens in real life, all the discourses (and their imaginary carriers) are thoroughly different and confront each other, i.e. we are introducing the Weberian ideal-type model. In real life, such ideal-type discourses do not exist in their pure form. Nevertheless, ideal types help us understand the diverse universe that surrounds us.

The discourses revealed by our study are ideal-type discourses. They are shown in Table 1 (see appendix ) as four ideal Q-types that were identified by the four-factor statistical analysis. Across each statement in this table there is a score range of -6 to +6, which reflects the ranking of the statement by an imaginary individual (possibly non-existent in real life) who would be in complete agreement with the given discourse. The number of discourses is indicated in the first cell of the relevant column. The table contains 64 statements listed in decreasing order of consensus (from maximum consensus when all have the same opinion to maximum confrontation when opinions are radically different).

In fact, the table is the last element of the empirical part of our research. The next stage is the analysis and interpretations: labeling of discourses, their narrative characteristics and theoretical considerations. This is largely done in the next chapter, where the discourses identified by the study are described in detail and characterized. Here we summarize briefly the findings and with that purpose in mind we introduce yet another abstract theoretical model of political views. Despite the fact that this model was not originally used as a starting point for the analysis – rather it was developed as a result of the analysis – it still seems expedient to present the model at this stage for the reader to better understand the analysis below.

Let us consider systems of political views that can be placed in relevant quarters of the two-dimensional plane given below. The dimensions of the plane are formed by the given oppositions:



We can provisionally regard the vertical dimension of this plane as an opposition: tradition – anti-tradition. The lower half of the plane exhibits traditionalists to whom the source of political legitimation is, first of all, everything that is local, Georgian - that has roots in the past, is demarcated from the rest of the world and has a distinct identity. Those on the opposite pole of the dimension attach higher importance to the western experience and the future and sometimes even neglect the past.

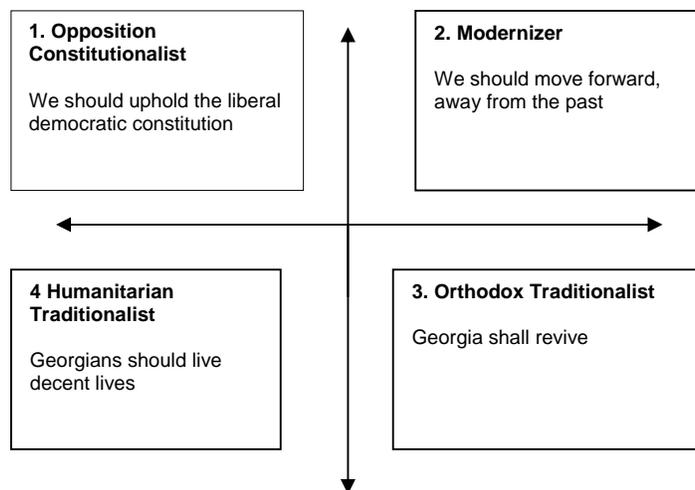
The horizontal dimension of the plane can be thought of in terms of the general attitudes towards politics. The right side of the plane exhibits those who prioritize goals in politics, while the other

side places emphasis on the rules followed by the politicians to achieve their goals. We provisionally call this opposition the opposition of the “procedure” and “the goal”. To illustrate this we give below the Lincolnian definition of democracy: “Democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people.” The followers of the “procedure” would attach more importance to the government *by the people*, whereas followers of the goal would maintain that the government be *for the people*.

We should explain here why we have used the term “anti-tradition” as an anti-notion to “tradition” to designate the upper part of the plane, and not “westernism” (“medasavleteoba”) with which Georgian reformers pushing changes identify themselves so often. The point is that the notion of westernism in Georgia has been appropriated by one specific discourse, though other discourses too have claims on it. In our opinion, genuine westernism would be somewhere close to the central zone of the above diagram rather than the absoluteness of any of its extreme edges. All four quarters of the plane are integral elements of what the authors of this study regard as western liberal democracy, and genuine westernist development would only be possible if these elements coexisted and no radicalization and mutual rejection took place.

In accordance with the above divisions, the upper right quarter of the plane is occupied by those for whom it is most important to effect changes as rapidly as possible in Georgia in order to replicate the models functioning in more developed democracies. The lower right quarter too displays those who consider the country’s rapid development a priority, but rely on Georgian traditions and mentality. Georgian traditions are of priority for those in the lower left quarter as well, but these people consider the Georgians the carriers of these values first of all and place the goal of securing decent lives for Georgians above the country’s development. The upper left quarter, alike upper right corner, is inspired by western models, having however a distinct focus on the rules of political life rather than the goals of political changes.

The discourses identified by the study differ from each other like the quarters of the plane, that is, they are in quite good, though not exact, correlation with the quarters of the plane. Using provisional names, we can argue that the first discourse, “Modernizer”, is located in the upper right quarter, “Orthodox traditionalist” – in the lower right quarter, “Humanitarian traditionalist” – in the lower left quarter, and “Opposition constitutionalist” – in the upper left quarter.



We should regard these four attitudes as maxims that convey well the priorities of Georgia’s population.

#### 4. Analysis of Political Discourses in Georgia

Can we say that the above-discussed abstract model is suitable for describing real discourses and, if so, what are these discourses after all? Table 1 illustrates four discourses identified by our study.

In general, all these discourses converge on the position that all the articles of the constitution shall be enforced and that violation of the constitution is inadmissible, and that democracy is when there is a diversity of opinions and that the constitution shall facilitate the development of democracy and political competition, that the governors shall be guided by the constitution and shall not change it arbitrarily (49, 64, 14, 53). What is the difference between the discourses then?

A set of statements that became the basis for the questionnaire for the respondents comprises quite complex, often philosophical, statements. For instance, according to some statements, the content of the constitution is purely legalistic (4), according to others – it is political (3), it serves to uphold moral standards (9), ensures the political stability and effectiveness of the governance (11), sets limitations to the majority rule and contributes to the development of political pluralism (64). In respondents' answers, such conceptual statements were to some extent overshadowed by politically more pressing issues. However, it can be said that a constitution based on moral values was more positively assessed overall than a constitution that limited the majority will. The concept of the constitution is prioritized highest by the second discourse, which considers the constitution legalistic (the main law of the country) and ideological (political treaty) at the same time. This discourse assigns the function of state ideology to the constitution to a certain degree. The third discourse too regards the constitution as a political treaty, but links it with the majority of people, rather than with the state. The fourth discourse, in contrast to the others, is highly pragmatic and along with supporting political pluralism in the constitution, prioritizes political stability and the effectiveness of the government. Such pragmatism is rejected by the first discourse, which is most indifferent to the constitution's substance and is more concerned about the procedures for making changes to it.

The set appeared to contain many such statements that allowed a comprehensive analysis of political views within the selected discourses. These statements comprise a wide spectrum of attitudes that manifest themselves in relation to topics such as human rights, democracy, dictatorship, regional organization and self-governance, justice and so on. Hence the opportunity of an in-depth analysis of the discourses.

If we look again at the above two-dimensional classification, we will see that the third and the fourth discourses draw on an obvious traditionalist orientation (58, 63, 33, 61). In this respect, they have a conservative nature, but with one peculiar feature. While conservative discourses in western societies are characterized by religious foundations of legitimation, in the post-Soviet context religion is not equally valuable for all kinds of traditionalists. The third discourse is highly concerned about the status of the Orthodox Church and supports the idea of defining its status in the constitution (34), whereas the fourth discourse is indifferent to the political status of religion, and would better be thought of in a frames of Soviet tradition. Thus, these two discourses – the third and fourth – are exhibited in the lower part of the plane. Contrary to the first two discourses, the third and fourth discourses are more prone to regarding the state flag as a symbol of state ideology (2), less sensitive to the violation of their own rights (41), less apprehensive of a one-party parliament (27) and of the tailoring of legislation to fit one person (16). Both discourses have a positive attitude to the present government, as fresh young energetic rulers appeal to them (38); they believe that the new governors respect the law (42), and those who abuse the law cannot advance more easily than law-abiding citizens (44).

On the horizontal dimension the discourses differ by their orientation towards goals and procedures. However, the difference between the discourses in the upper part of the plane is manifested over one type of issue, while that in the lower part – over another. The first and the second discourses confront each other with regard to the changes made to the constitution and the new flag adopted in the aftermath of the Rose Revolution, whereas the third and the fourth diverge

on the issues of democracy and dictatorship as well as the relationship between the church and state. The third discourse supports the president taking up all the responsibility in the present extraordinary situation (54) and maintains that the Georgian people should have one ruler (18), whereas the fourth discourse categorically disagrees with these statements. The fourth discourse does not share the third discourse's interpretations of democracy and dictatorship. The third discourse maintains that the form of government, whereby power is concentrated in one person who expresses the interest of a part of society, is a democracy and not a dictatorship (8), that is, the concentration of power in one person's hands does not in itself mean dictatorship (1). Despite the fact that both traditionalist discourses somewhat avoid to make judgments on constitutional changes (maybe, they do not feel competent enough on these issues), this does not necessarily mean that they do not have clear, and at the same time disparate, political visions of the principles of constitutionalism. The fourth discourse supports pluralism and the constitutionalist ideas of the separation of powers much more than does the third discourse.

The disagreement between the first and the second discourses is more about the appraisal of current policies. These two discourses stand out for their high politicization. "The flag that flies today" is viewed as the flag of the National Movement by the first discourse, while the second discourse strongly disagrees with the statement (17). The fourth discourse welcomes the staffing of public services with people who contributed to the revolution, while the first discourse does not support this idea (52). The first discourse strongly disagrees with the opinion that there was an urgent need for constitutional changes (35) and that the president's right to disband parliament may facilitate the settlement of political conflicts (5), while the second discourse is quite positive towards both statements. Despite that both discourses converge on the point that the constitution is still not properly respected, the first discourse is far more categorical about this (37).

An effective means to illustrate discourses more clearly is to narrate statements characteristic of the discourses, the method applied by Dryzek and Holmes in their work. As we have noted before, to characterize a discourse we use the most radical statements of that discourse (scored as -6, -5, +5, +6) as well as statements that make discourses distinct from one another.

### **1. Opposition Constitutionalist**

*It is very bad that constitutional changes were made in such a short time (35), not much has improved since then anyway (37). The ruler shall be subordinate to the constitution, neither shall the constitution be interpretable in multiple ways – as often happens with the laws – it should be spelled out explicitly and have one single interpretation; it is inadmissible that the ruler change the constitution at his discretion, these changes too were unnecessary (53, 38, 48). I disagree that history is governed by personalities (12). I do not think that the president should assume all the responsibility because of the extraordinary situation, or tailor the legislation to fit himself, or have the right to dissolve parliament (54, 16, 5), neither can I justify dictatorship on the grounds that corrupt officials should be dealt with (50). In general, if the authorities are not pressured from the bottom, they are likely to care less for the people and more likely to protect their own interests (46), even more so where parliament is one-party and full of people who failed to fulfill their potential elsewhere (27, 59). Posing demands to the government is problematic, as we ourselves often fail to protect our rights (41). It is like this because in our country the constitution does not play the role it is supposed to play (19). The government itself has little respect for the law, other factors are at play in governance (42). The intention to fight criminals has been declared, but nobody has been held responsible, not even Shevardnadze (31). On the contrary, those who abuse the law are promoted, and revolutionaries occupy government posts – this is inadmissible (52). Revolution cannot justify constitutional revision, neither can it bring about democracy, because regrettably, as is apparent, government of the people, i.e. democracy, is not attainable (24, 21).*

## **2. Modernizer**

*It is high time for people to stop playing politicians and mind their own business (59), as for the laws, they can be better dealt with by lawyers (23), especially as our political and public order and rights have already been defined by the country's main law – the constitution (4). It is very dangerous to have leaders that do not abide by the constitution and change it at their discretion, nobody should establish dictatorship for the good of the people (53, 43, 49). Because the constitution spells out the political vision of our future (3), every single person should respect it and the constitution should set a framework for any individual's life (56). In such a case we will no longer look back into the past, we should live in the present and plan for the future (58). We are not different from other civilized nations, are we (33)? It is natural that the constitution was changed following the Rose Revolution in order to fill the legal vacuum and bring the country back to constitutional rule (24, 35). Further, the changes made were not bad: parliament has acquired a major lever to control the executive – the right to a no-confidence vote, while the president's right to dissolve parliament will make it possible to clear up political conflicts (6, 5). Let us not accuse the new young government of tailoring the changes to fit their needs (38), isn't it natural that those who made the revolution are now occupying posts in the government (52). The new state flag too is good and attractive (17). The country's progress is hampered by strong regions, but we cannot wait until this problem is settled as we need to establish order now.*

## **3. Orthodox Traditionalist**

*Everything will be settled if the constitution establishes the special status of the Orthodox Church, if the people are employed, pay taxes and contribute to the state budget – the state will revive (34, 32). Times are hard now and the president should assume all the burden of pulling the country out of this hardship (54). This does not mean a dictatorship will take over in Georgia (1), doesn't the president express the majority will, and don't presidents everywhere play a big role, while Georgians are the kind of people who should have one ruler (40, 8, 18). Our mentality is such that anything foreign, even good, may not be applicable in Georgia (33). We can even admit that we need a dictator who will protect the public interest and defeat corruption (50), but he should still act within the limits set by the constitution, even when he protects society from criminals (25), and the constitution should not limit the majority rule (13). The president and parliament elected by the people should have the broadest rights, while the appointed prime minister's rights should be limited as far as possible (60), then a one-party parliament will no longer be a problem, rather it will be a positive feature, as in democracies people have diverse goals and views and from these one particular and correct view should be selected (27, 15, 14).*

## **4. Humanitarian Traditionalist**

*Constitutioners should obey the constitution and the laws, while ordinary people should live as befits human beings (56); however, ordinary people often violate the laws and get oppressed because of that, therefore the new government's methods of fighting criminals should be more subtle (44, 31). Don't 90% of people still dream about being at least a bit corrupt, this is reality (26). As for my rights, I will take care of them and protect them, it is not a problem these days (55, 41). It is the constitution and not pressure from the people that should ensure the government's stability and effectiveness (11, 46). Besides, it is professionals who in the first place should occupy public offices (57). I will not agree under any circumstances to a dictatorship justified by the need to combat corruption (50), the state should not be the instrument of violence (7); there is a fundamental difference between dictatorship and democracy, first of all because the constitution should be enforced and it should not be changed by one individual and there should be a diversity of opinions*

*(53, 14). It is good that we are moving towards the western system, but not all that is western can be applied in Georgia (30, 33). It will not be bad at all, if once in a while we look to the past and take good examples from there as well (58). Local issues should be dealt with in the regions and should not be sent to Tbilisi to be tackled here (61); the problem of Georgia's unification is one of the acutest on today's agenda (63).*

In order to better understand how characteristic the given assessments are for this or that discourse, it will be useful to compare the four-factor and five-factor distribution of respondents. What will change if we try to break down the spectrum of views further? In the case of breaking down the respondents into five factors (which will not be discussed in detail here, as we will touch upon some of it only), the first and the third discourses identified in the previous case would remain the same. Only the second and the fourth discourses would undergo transformation. The second discourse would become radicalized towards dictatorship and would find it difficult to differentiate between dictatorship and democracy. It would turn positive towards “the good dictator” and would be more categorical in saying that making changes to the constitution has been a necessary exercise. The fourth discourse would acquire religious features, lose its nostalgic sentiments and become rather critical of the present government and the recent developments. It would retain its traditionalist orientation concerning self-government, though. The newly identified fifth discourse would take up a more modernist than traditionalist orientation. At the same time, its views about democracy and the constitution would be such that could be described as “People’s democracy”, like the Soviet-type democracy. Although this discourse would be an explicit supporter of constitutional democracy and be against dictatorship, the constitution and the state in its consciousness would bear many Soviet features. The state flag would express the state ideology; the constitution – future aspirations and moral values. The state itself would be centralized. Such a dominant state is acceptable for “people’s democracy” unless it transforms into dictatorship and violates the privacy of the people (“the realm of lifeworld”) – the area of their autonomy. With this provision, “the popular democrat” would back and welcome the present government which came to power through the revolution. Despite nostalgia towards past times, the popular democrat would hope that the bright future outlined (“democracy” instead of “communism”) by the new government, would bring much good to the people.

The five-factor scheme enables us to make two conclusions: a) piety and a tendency to side with dictatorship are not characteristic of the third discourse only. The second discourse, too, in its radical manifestation has a tendency to approve of dictatorship, while those who advocate making a provision about religion in the constitution are present in almost all the discourses; b) the Sovietesque views about the state and the constitution are widespread and the signs of it are revealed in the aspirations of the modernizer, as well as the attitudes that are most characteristic of the humanitarian traditionalist, confronting modernizer’s intention for state’s excessive penetration into the realm of people’s lives and violation of their autonomy.

Each system of views identified here has a benevolent interpretation – the way it sees itself – as well as a critical view from the outside, a different one, depending on which discourse’s angle it is viewed from. Furthermore, each system of views can tilt to moderation and thus come closer to the accepted democratic discourses, but each of them can also stray into radicalism and jeopardize democracy.

The second discourse believes that the time for political battles has ended and that it is time to enforce the acquired political powers. To this discourse, the continuation of political confrontation is a threat and, therefore, it downgrades the first discourse’s attempts to look at developments from the political point of view – the state flag should not be regarded as the National Movement’s flag, the government in power – as a dictatorship, and the people who came to power through revolution – as usurpers of public offices. The right way of development has been defined, it is time for the lawyers to just translate that into the laws. The second discourse regards the fourth discourse as a serious

threat too, as the latter may not abide by these laws. In no case shall it be allowed that a large segment of society, so-called ordinary people, be left beyond the framework of legal regulations and thus hamper development. This will become yet another source of corruption. Therefore, the past should be abandoned. We cannot afford to postpone the enforcement of the laws until territorial integrity is restored. The second discourse challenges the third discourse too on the latter's focus on Georgian mentality and traditional values. The second discourse does not support making a provision about religion in the constitution either.

The first discourse, unlike the second one, does not view the present situation as the basis for democratic development. It clearly detects the signs of dictatorship in the present circumstances and regards the strengthening of the principle of constitutionalism as a premise for the protection of its own political rights. The second discourse from the standpoint of the first one is more of an advocate of a Bolshevik-type totalitarianism, as it changes the flag and the constitution at its own political discretion and gets hold of public offices. According to the first discourse, second discourse in this regard is supported by the third discourse as well, which believes that today is a special moment and the president should assume full responsibility in order to pull the country out of this situation. The third discourse, according to the first discourse, is on the whole dangerous for democracy, because it downplays the need for the rule of law and tilts to the, strictly majoritarian rule that violates the principles of constitutionalism that almost becomes dictatorship. In the opinion of the first discourse, the fourth discourse has no legal consciousness, is indifferent to the recent manifestation of disrespect to the constitution and does not share the first discourse's determination to act politically and subject the government to the people's scrutiny.

The third discourse, like the second one, is hopeful for the future, as it believes that the president who came to power through revolution embodies the majority will and, therefore, he will realize the people's hopes: for instance, he will grant special status to the Orthodox Church. However, if the president's powers are blocked, then it may become difficult to enforce the majority will. According to the third discourse, both the first and the second discourses place inadequate emphasis on the enforcement of the people's will and by doing so put Georgian individuality and identity at risk. The third discourse does not see much difference between these discourses except that it considers the first dangerous, as it is in opposition to the government, whereas the problem with the second is that it follows a different direction of development, copying western experience too much. As to the fourth discourse, which is fearful of dictatorship and places excessive emphasis on the protection of human rights, it puts at risk the possibility of enforcement of the people's will through the concentration of political power.

The fourth discourse starts with a very interesting statement about constitutioners and ordinary people, which can have multiple interpretations. On the one hand, it resembles the confrontation between the Habermasian system and lifeworld and the call to protect the lifeworld. On the other hand, it not only clearly differentiates between the law and morality (which the Marxist approach, contrary to the liberal one, would not do), but also clearly demarcates the domains for both and regards the people's lives first of all as the home of morality. Finally, it can be interpreted as "amoral familism"<sup>5</sup> which, according to Putnam,<sup>6</sup> is characteristic of uncivic consciousness as opposed to republican consciousness, engenders corruption and hampers the working of democracy.

If put in the context of Georgian history, this discourse symbolizes an approach which both in the Soviet period and before, in the times when Georgia toiled under the yoke of multiple foreign conquerors, evolved into a tradition. This tradition shaped mass strategies of self-survival and

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<sup>5</sup> Edward C. Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, The Free Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1958

<sup>6</sup> Robert Putnam having studied civic traditions in modern Italy has concluded that the historically shaped difference between civic traditions in southern and northern Italy affects the way the government institutions function. Putnam links the lack of civic traditions in southern Italy to the region having been under the influence of foreign conquerors for a long time. The latter observation seems relevant in the Georgian context as well. R.D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press, 1993

maintaining identity, the essence of which is to demarcate adverse and alien environments rather than try to influence them.

In this respect, the discourse is most challenged by the second discourse whose main interest is to promote an establishment of a system. The second discourse wants to change all that is the refuge and pillar of the fourth discourse – the past and Georgian mentality. The second discourse threatens the fourth one with the imposition of system, bearing certain totalitarian values, while the third discourse reveals to it the signs of dictatorship. Therefore, the third discourse is no escape either, despite the fact that the two share certain value attitudes. The third discourse is somewhat fraught with religious fanaticism, while its dictatorial tendencies can make the private individual the object of violence from dictators. Despite all these considerations, the fourth discourse has confidence in the government, which is undermined by the first discourse. The intention of the fourth discourse to hide in a shell and hope that the government would take care of things is challenged by the first discourse, which pushes the former towards taking position within the public space - something that the fourth discourse is not used to.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings of previous studies<sup>7</sup> conducted in Georgia corroborate the stability of the systems of views identified by this research. Their analogues (at least those of the first three) have been revealed by other studies. This substantiates the view that they should be considered in the process of constitution-building.

If we take into account that the respondents' answers, due to social expectations, are likely to be more positive to constitutionalism and democracy than will be their behavior in less public circumstances, an assumption can be made that the discourses described here, or at least some of their radical manifestations, can put constitutionalism at risk. On the other hand, if we admit that it is possible to avoid the radicalization of discourses and facilitate their convergence, then we will see that they will form a regular, healthy political spectrum that is comparable to any spectrum in any constitutional liberal democracies. Thus, Georgia's task is not to exclude any segment of society from political processes, but rather to ensure that this process facilitates the realization of the finest aspirations of all political views.

Such a convergence is contingent upon the selection of a constitutional model and the right decision on the institutional organization of the country's political system. For instance, one thing that can contribute to that is a more appropriate electoral system. We can presume that the majoritarian system is more appropriate for *traditionalist* political views, while the proportional system would appeal more to those representing *anti-tradition*. If this surmise is correct (to be substantiated by additional research and considerations), then what will the formation of a two-chamber parliament bring about for Georgia, in which the upper chamber will be staffed with majoritarian MPs and the lower chamber with members elected through the proportional system? How should the competencies be divided between the two chambers in order to avoid the majority's political views being disregarded or to prevent conflict between the chambers?

This is just one possible question that outlines possible considerations and application of the findings of this study. In the course of analyzing the findings we should take into account that the methodology of the given study does not allow the question to be answered as to how widespread this or that view is in Georgia. Further research could answer that question.

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<sup>7</sup> See John Dryzek, Leslie T. Holmes, "Post-Communist Democratization: Political Discourses Across Thirteen Countries". Cambridge University Press, 2002, and Hanf T., Nodia G. 2000. Georgia – Lurching to Democracy. From Agnostic Tolerance to Pious Jacobinism: Societal Change and People's Reactions. – Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden

## 6. Appendix 1

Statements in the left column of the table represent a set of expressions evaluated by respondents. Across each statement there are marks from -6 to +6 reflecting the assessment of the statement in four identified discourses. The number of a discourse is specified at the head of a respective column. The given table includes a total of 64 statements arranged from the maximum consensus (all respondents are more or less unanimous) to the maximum opposition (radically different views).

Table 1.

№	No. of statement	No. of factor (discourse)			
		1	2	3	4
9	When morale norms are defied, the constitution serves to reconcile the move with informal morale principles that existed for the entire history of the mankind.	1	0	2	1
49	All provisions of the constitution should be strictly observed. No future goals can be used as an excuse for violating the constitution.	4	5	4	2
64	A constitutional model should facilitate the democracy building and the development of political competition and political thought in a country.	2	3	3	4
14	Democracy is a diversity of opinions, when everybody has his/her own opinion, and it is necessary to choose the best one from this variety of views.	3	3	3	5
61	Local problems should be solved at a local level, not in Tbilisi.	1	1	3	4
10	The constitution of Georgia is not only for ethnic Georgians. Georgia is a multi-ethnic country. This issue has become urgent in recent times.	0	3	0	0
45	The Armenian and Azeri communities have higher birth rates than ethnic Georgians. If citizenship is more important than ethnic identity, an ethnic Armenian may be soon elected president of Georgia. I think it is a danger.	1	-1	2	0
12	Individuals have a leading role in history.	1	4	4	3
29	Regions of Georgia have never been acting independently, either from historical or any other point of view.	-1	-4	-5	-4
53	Authorities must abide by the constitution. No leader	6	5	3	6

	should be given a right to amend the constitution by himself.				
36	The problem is that those with better knowledge and judicial education know how to breach laws.	-1	1	0	2
13	Constitutional countries have such kind of democracy, which ensures that a majority does not have full power.	0	-1	-3	1
28	In Communist times citizens enjoyed all possible constitutional rights – holiday, education, employment and entertainment – but they were not implemented in practice and actually remained on paper.	-4	-1	-4	-1
7	Every state is a tool of violence.	0	-2	0	-3
59	It is necessary to ensure that every citizen finds his/her own true role in practical activity, in doing something practical, instead of trying to get in parliament.	5	6	5	2
62	If we want to be a state, let's put aside human rights. This theme was deliberately imported from outside in order to undermine the state and promote a cosmopolitan outlook.	-2	-4	-2	-4
47	Just too powerful regions created the biggest problems for David Agmashenebeli.	-2	2	-1	-1
22	Unlike Communist times every citizen is able to speak out on any matter freely nowadays. Nobody will be killed for this reason, and nothing will happen.	-3	-2	1	0
48	The constitution should not be applied in a lawyer's way, with arbitrary and subjective interpretation. The constitution must be clear and unequivocal.	6	4	0	3
21	Democracy, or people's government, can be never achieved in practice. People and government will always exist separately.	3	1	-1	0
57	The human factor should be given a top priority in personnel policy because if a person is not positive, in our point of view, his/her appointment will change nothing.	0	1	-1	-3
3	Constitution is a political thesis to be used as a basis	2	5	3	0

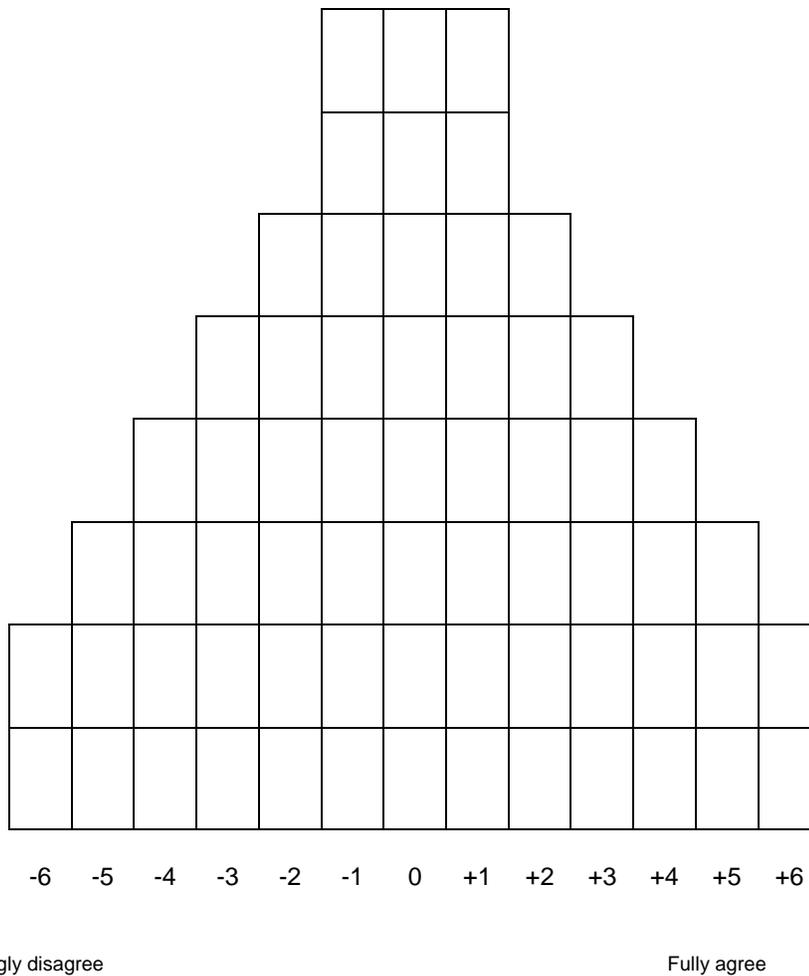
	for future nation-building.				
60	Elected president and parliament should have as much power as possible, while powers of an appointed prime minister must be limited to the greatest extent.	-3	-2	2	-1
51	As long as we do not have laws, we will have no salaries, foods, or drinks.	-2	-2	2	1
20	Many provisions of the constitution are violated because of the absence of objective judiciary.	3	4	0	-1
26	No less than 90 percent of people would be glad to be at least a bit corrupted . This is a reality.	-3	0	-2	2
25	There are such cases when it is necessary to violate the constitution in order to punish a perpetrator and protect the society from crime.	-1	-2	-4	1
24	Revolutions similar to our Rose Revolution always lead to constitutional amendments.	-3	2	2	1
43	There is nothing wrong with dictatorship, provided a dictator is a good ruler, taking care of the people, and citizens are happy under his/her government.	-3	-6	-2	-2
6	The no-confidence vote is the parliament's major tool to control the government.	-2	3	-2	-3
11	The main objective of a constitutional system is to ensure political stability and efficiency of governance.	-2	0	1	4
15	Democracy is a form of government in which the entire society agrees to common values and a common goal.	1	2	-4	-1
5	The presidential right to dismiss a parliament is a means of settling likely political conflicts.	-4	2	-1	-1
39	As to the position of prime minister, people do not see any difference between a prime minister and a state minister.	1	-4	1	-3
52	Those demonstrating in the street and organising revolutions should not be given official posts.	2	-4	-1	0
23	Sometimes I may understand laws better than	-1	-6	-1	-1

	lawyers, because they know only what they were taught in universities, while I have greater hands-on experience.				
2	The national flag reflects a state's ideology.	-2	-3	1	3
19	Our constitution fails to play a role any constitution should have in general.	4	-1	-1	-2
16	If the legislation is adjusted to one person, he/she may be considered a monarch, not president.	4	2	0	-2
46	Unless grass roots hold the government accountable, authorities will be always able to reach an agreement with each other and continue a happy life.	5	1	1	-3
41	Today we may be well aware of our rights but, unfortunately, their implementation depends on other factors.	3	1	-2	-4
58	The problem of Georgia is that we continue living in the past. One must not live in the past. A man should think about the present day and tomorrow.	-1	3	0	-5
55	I must take care of my problems on my own and ensure that they are not violated. It is up to me to deal with the problem.	1	-1	-3	5
27	We have a one-party parliament and, naturally, it will make only decisions that satisfy the government, even if they contradict public interests.	4	0	-3	-2
63	First Georgia's territorial integrity should be restored and only after we can speak about the constitution.	-1	-3	4	4
50	Dictatorship is the best option for us at present – one leader with exclusive powers capable of disciplining low-ranking bureaucrats, who are bustling and trying to gain as many personal profits as possible.	-5	-5	1	-5
40	Many in European countries do not know their own president because it makes no difference whether Peter or Paul takes the presidency – there will be no serious changes, no matter who is in power.	0	-3	-5	2
18	Generally speaking, the Georgians are a nation that needs only one ruler.	-4	-3	4	-4
44	Those who violate laws are able to achieve a successful career, while those who cannot breach	1	0	-3	-6

	laws are miserable, unpractical, honest and unlucky people.				
32	All problems will be solved, if every citizen gets a job and pays taxes. If so, the budget will get enough revenues and the state will recover.	-1	4	6	1
33	I like everything good, but the Georgian mentality makes it impossible for me to make use of everything, that is American, British or Japanese in Georgia.	2	-1	5	5
4	Constitution is a country's basic law, which determines the country's political and social structure, and every citizen's rights.	2	6	-3	3
8	The only difference between democracy and dictatorship is that a certain segment of the society is able to influence the government.	0	0	5	-5
37	This new period has already seen some changes that really allow living in line with the constitution.	-6	-1	0	1
38	These constitutional amendments were indispensable because young, energetic and skilled people came to power.	-5	-3	2	1
42	The government's directives, influential friends, etc. play a bigger role today. Just authorities defy the law most often and, therefore, there is no rule of law in the country.	5	1	-4	-2
31	All criminals should be brought to justice. This government has never held anybody, including Shevardnadze, accountable.	2	-2	-2	-6
30	It was unclear during Shevardnadze's rule who is a boss and who are his/her subordinates. Since the new government came to power, the country has moved closer to the western system.	-4	1	-5	3
17	The current fluttering flag is one of the National Movement.	3	-5	1	-1
35	Quick constitutional amendments were justifiable. The country was in a constitutional vacuum. A revolution took place and there were no other solutions.	-6	2	-1	0
1	Dictatorship does not mean that rights of a citizen are	0	0	-6	2

	violated. It means that one man has absolute power.				
56	Constitutionares must respect the constitution and laws, while ordinary people should live in a human way.	0	-5	1	6
34	It makes no difference whether the constitution makes special emphasis on religion. If a citizen is a faithful Orthodox believer, it does not matter whether religion is constitutionally protected or not.	-1	-1	-6	0
54	Under present-day special circumstances, the president must assume full responsibility and should be given extraordinary powers.	-5	0	6	2

## 7. Appendix 2



Graph 1. Scale of Q-set for 64 statements