Cleavage Theory and the Electoral Geographies of Georgia[1]

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ABSTRACT: Georgia has held several important elections from the beginning of 2008, culminating in the fall of 2012 when an opposition political group defeated the ruling party. As competitive elections are relatively new to Georgia, a substantial amount of literature is dedicated to the problems of voting in that country. This chapter investigates how particular theories of voting, especially the cleavage model of Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967), may be applied to the case of Georgia. The main argument is that political cleavages can be identified; however, their origins differ from those suggested by Lipset and Rokkan. It is argued that the political cleavages in Georgia are the products of the country's recent historical experience – urbanization and ethnic alienation.

KEYWORDS: Georgia, elections, geography, cleavage model, democracy, Saakashvili

Introduction

Unlike most western European countries, Georgia has a relatively short history of free and competitive elections. Little research has therefore been done in the field that would deal with the explanation of voting behaviour and, in particular, its spatial aspects. Cleavage theory, originally suggested by Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967), cannot be completely applied to Georgian elections, as it is not relevant to this case. This chapter will show the existence of electoral cleavages other than those mentioned by Lipset and Rokkan. It will develop a theoretical model of voting behaviour in nascent democracies, examine the election results of the three national elections held in Georgia since 2008, and try to build a quantitative voting model as well as identify additional important aspects of voting behaviour in Georgia. Centre-periphery and urban-rural political cleavages are relevant in the voting context of Georgia. We argue that these

cleavages are the legacies of the communist and precommunist era, which crystallized into voting behaviour.

Theoretical Insights of Electoral Cleavage Formation in Postcommunist Space

Cleavage theory, as suggested by Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, refers to the major debate of electoral geography – formation of particular voting behaviour in a given territorial context. Generally, it deals with the process of cleavage formation and its transformation into party systems. Parties are defined as "agents of conflict and instruments of integration", thus mobilizing populations to strengthen their national identities (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967: 3). Conflicts of interests among different societal groups inside the political systems are articulated in terms of political parties. Parties by themselves are instruments of expression in elections representing corresponding population groups (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). As their analysis mostly covered the politics of established Western democracies, Lipset and Rokkan identified four major dimensions of political cleavages that have long dominated West European politics: centre–periphery, state–Church, land–industry and owner–worker. They also list the corresponding critical revolutions contributing to the formation of dichotomies: the Reformation and Counter-Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, national revolutions after 1789, the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century and the Russian Revolution.

At least two political cleavages bear distinct spatial characteristics representing respectively: (i) conflict between a nation-building "centre" and an ethnically, religiously and culturally different "periphery" and (ii) contest between conservative rural areas with an agricultural economy and urban areas with a large proportion of the population being employed in the secondary and tertiary sectors. These political cleavages have greatly influenced the electoral geographies and longtime voting allegiances of the population in Western democracies by forming spatial characteristics of voting behaviour – for example, the establishment of agrarian parties in Nordic states and the emergence of the Scottish National Party (Taylor and Johnston, 1979).

However, there is an argument whether this theory applies to the modern political situation. Several factors, including the emergence of so called "postmaterial" values contribute to the loss of importance of traditional cleavages, which in the past played an important role for voter allegiance. Moreover, Fukuyama's widely discussed idea about the end of ideology questions the overall concept of cleavages as the basis for societal divisions (Johnston and Pattie, 2003).

As we move geographically from western Europe to the east and southeast, numerous questions arise about whether the four dimensions of political cleavages influence the process of party formation and, consequently, electoral behaviour. The region's historical past is quite different from those of west European democracies. Consequently, accounts of emerging social cleavages suggested by Lipset and Rokkan are arguably insufficient. It is worth mentioning that communist regimes, which for decades dominated the region's political scene, caused the violent deterioration of previous political systems.

Formation of political cleavages in postcommunist polities have quite distinct relations to their historical past, depending on the type of communist regime. Herbert Kitschelt (1995) draws three different categories of communist regimes according to their type of policy making and bureaucratic involvement: patrimonial communist, bureaucratic-authoritarian communism, and national/national consensus communism. Most countries of the former Soviet Union, including Georgia, belong to the group of patrimonial communist regimes, which had "low opportunities for intra-elite contestation and institutionalization". The author also stresses that the newly formed urban population, which consisted of workers and white-collar intelligentsia, became "indebted to the communist regime (and successor former Communist leaders) for the dramatic improvements in the standards of life" (Kitschelt, 1995: 455). Here the regime was not contested as there was no independent stratum of intellectuals with precommunism heritage able to challenge the communist regime (as they were physically and morally annihilated) (Kitschelt, 1995). Here the cleavage is defined as the result of the communist past, the so-called "Leninist legacy" and is measured on a liberal–authoritarian axis (Whitefield, 2002).

Evans and Whitefield argue that despite a long period of communist rule, which almost eradicated and structurally changed national political landscapes of the region,

ex-communist nations developed several of their own political cleavages based on local factors and their historical past (Evans and Whitefield, 2000). In a later study, Whitefield identifies several factors that form cleavages in postcommunist polities: precommunist cultural legacies, variations of communist rule and democratic transition, institutions and elite factors, social experiences and identities (Whitefield, 2002).

The theories described above show that communist and precommunist legacies and socio-demographic peculiarities explain the emergence of electoral cleavages; alternatively, all these factors are translated into spatial context (ethnic, religious, economic patterns, formation of historical regions, and so forth).

Historical regionalization is another factor largely contributing to the formation of electoral geographies in East European societies. Historical regions are spatial units that are formed under certain historical, socioeconomic and geographic circumstances. Hence, demographic and religious factors, precommunist heritage as well as identities and the type of economic activities can be conceptualized as historical geographical divisions. Notably, several authors identify historical regionalism and, consequently, geographic variables as crucial determinants of voting behaviour in postcommunist states. Perepechko *et al.* (2007) argue that presocialist political cleavages possess a regional dimension in Russia's electoral geography. Zaricky analyzes the role of historical regionalism in Poland – more specifically, partition of the country and "Prussian heritage" (Zarycki, 2002). Habsburg's historical legacy is important for explaining voting behaviour in Ukraine and Romania (Roper and Fesnic, 2003). And finally, several studies on elections in Ukraine point towards distinct regional and historical-geographic background to explain the country's electoral peculiarities (Clem and Craumer, 2008; Mykhnenko, 2009).

In conclusion, political cleavages in postcommunist societies are products of relatively recent events rather than long-term socioeconomic developments and cultural changes. This conclusion should hold especially for the case of Georgia, which was at the periphery of European industrialization and thus was less affected by the process. We might, however, argue that in addition to communist legacies and socioeconomic peculiarities, precommunist cultural heritage – namely, the historical regionalization of

the country – could potentially have a significant effect on the formation of political cleavages and electoral geographies of the country.

Dimensions of Electoral Cleavages in Georgia

Continuous allegations of electoral fraud and undemocratic electoral campaigns have affected Georgian elections since independence. Since 1990, almost all elections have been dominated by single political groups (Gamsakhurdia's Round Table; Shevardnadze's Union of Georgian Citizens; Saakashvili's United National Movement) and candidates having administrative and material resources for the manipulation of the election results. Moreover, in many cases, incumbent candidates did not have strong political opponents and thus their decisive victory was assured. However, from 2008 the situation changed. Until 2012, there was no precedent for power transition using the voting process, excluding the1990 legislative elections held in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia, formally part of the Soviet Union.

Two crucial events in 2008 had a significant impact on Georgia's political developments. After cracking down on protestors in November 2007, President Mikheil Saakashvili called for snap presidential elections in January and announced that he would seek re-election. Levan Gachechiladze, leader of the United Opposition group, which was formed by several political organizations, was the only serious opposition candidate. The incumbent President narrowly managed to avoid the run-off elections by winning 53% of votes. The political configuration was diametrically different for the parliamentary elections, which was held 5 months afterwards. The ruling party, the United National Movement (UNM), gained a landslide victory, managing to gather 60% of the vote and win 72 out of 76 single-member electoral districts, which led to a comfortable constitutional majority in the legislature.

Voter polarization characterized both elections and significantly affected the election results. The events that preceded the January elections, including brutal suppression of a large protest rally, the shutdown of major national broadcaster "Imedi", and the declaration of a state of emergency, split the voters into "pro-government" and "antigovernment" camps. This polarization was especially accentuated in Tbilisi and other major cities where the incumbent President failed to secure much

support and sometimes even lost to his rivals. However, parliamentary elections were way more successful for the ruling UNM despite significant levels of voter polarization.

Political groups suggested different political agenda to the voters. Yet they did not differ all that much between the presidential and the parliamentary elections. Levan Gachechiladze, the presidential candidate of the United Opposition group, announced that after his victory there would be a shift from super-presidentialism to a parliamentary system (Civil Georgia, 2007), whereas the whole campaign of Saakashvili and the UNM was focused on social programmes, promising the introduction of free health insurance, the building of new hospitals, higher pensions and more subsidies to the agricultural sector (Corso, 2008).

On 1 October 2012, the parliamentary elections marked an important milestone in Georgia's political history. The Georgian Dream Coalition (GDC) defeated the UNM which had ruled the country since 2004. The main characteristics of the parliamentary elections were its high polarization – except for the GDC and the UNM, no other party was able to collect even 5% of votes in any voting district in the country or win a single-member seat in the parliament. The electoral campaigns were turbulent and sometimes even violent. Both sides blamed each other and claimed that the other was in violation of electoral rules, relying on illegal funds and administrative resources, restrictions on media broadcasting, suppression of party activists, and so forth. The process was significantly affected by the publication of scandalous videotapes allegedly depicting the torture of inmates by the members of penitential system employees. Oppositional Georgian Dream Coalition managed to gather 55% of the proportional vote. In contrast, the United National Movement was able to receive just 40.3% of the votes. The share of votes in the single-member districts was similar. GDP accordingly appointed 85 MPs in the 150 legislative body of the country. The elections also were marked with very high voter turnout – almost 61% of all voters participated in the voting process in difference with 55% in the presidential elections and 52% in the parliamentary elections held back in 2008.

Outcomes of the last three national elections displayed several important spatial patterns, which can also be identified as electoral cleavages. The urban-rural dichotomy of voting was a major one. Rural areas expressed loyalty to Saakashvili and the UNM whereas in the municipal centres, opposition candidates and political parties were doing

better. The difference was evident even among urban and rural areas of the same voting districts. Several factors contributed to the emerging pattern of voting behaviour. First, urban areas, especially the capital city, are the main battlegrounds in Georgian politics. In fact, the most important events that led to fundamental political changes had their origins in the streets of Tbilisi and, to a lesser extent, in other urban settlements. Urban residents suffered from unemployment and other economic problems as much as their counterparts in the rural areas. Consequently, we cannot explain the emergence of such a cleavage in terms of socioeconomic hardships. Access to the media and the availability of a wide range of information were other important factors. In comparison to residents of rural settlements, citizens of urban areas enjoyed more diverse sources of information about politics and current events. Opinion polls suggest that television is the main source of information for Georgians (National Democratic Institute, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c), on the other hand, before 2012, only a limited number of TV broadcasters had nationwide coverage (OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission, 2008). They were often accused of being state controlled (Mikashavidze, 2010) – for example, Imedi TV, which was taken off air on 7 November 2007, resumed its broadcasting only after a year.

The voting behaviour of the ethnic minorities forms another dimension of political cleavages revealed during the national elections of 2008 and 2012. It is a long-established trend that the representatives of ethnic minorities in Georgia, especially those residing in Kvemo Kartli, Javakheti and Kakheti regions, overwhelmingly vote for the incumbent government (Nodia, 2006). In different times these areas were strongholds for the Communists, the Georgian Citizens' Union of Eduard Shevardnadze and the United National Movement. Not surprisingly, the tendency was maintained in the 2008 and 2012 national elections. For example, in the 2008 presidential elections, in the Ninotsminda voting district, which is populated by Armenians, Saakashvili was able to receive about 90% of the votes. In the Azerbaijani-inhabited Marneuli district, 88% of the voters supported the government candidate. In the 2008 parliamentary elections, despite being strong in other areas of the country, the United National Movement largely secured its victory with votes from minority representatives. Finally, in the 2012 parliamentary elections, more than quarter of votes received by the UNM came from the seven districts primarily inhabited by the minorities – Gardabani, Marneuli, Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tsalka, Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda).

7

Electoral turnout is an important factor that can measure the strength of political engagement and voter mobilization around important issues. Lipset and Rokkan argue that political parties serve as "instruments of conflict and mobilization", as they try to translate political support into votes. High turnout in 2008 elections indicated higher support for the government, whereas the situation was different prior to the 2012 elections. In 2008, the local mobilization of the UNM supporters can be explained by active party grassroots organizations (and *allegedly,* use of administrative resources), especially in rural areas. However, the situation was altered prior to the 2012 parliamentary elections, when the Georgian Dream Coalition, which had plentiful resources, established strong network of party activists and local organizations what enabled them to contest the UNM. Another motif of including electoral turnout in the model is the control for the electoral fraud. Higher turnout could indicate not only the mobilization of voters but also vote rigging. Especially in 2008 presidential elections, there were allegations of ballot stuffing and other manipulations supporting the candidate of ruling political group. Interestingly enough, in the 2008 presidential elections, votes cast for Saakashvili and voter turnout correlated highly with each other ($r=0.6308$, $n=76$, $p<0.001$, which also throws the whole process of voting into doubt.

To summarize, there are at least two general electoral cleavages in Georgia that were important for all national elections held in and after 2008. Although political cleavages barely affect party formation in Georgia, there is proof that cleavage structures affect voting behaviour.

Cleavage Model of Voting – Data and Discussion

We have already identified the two crucial electoral cleavages that were important during the national elections of 2008 and 2012. Urban–rural and centre–periphery divisions have had an important impact on the formation of spatial patterns of electoral outcomes. The next step is to prove whether those factors are statistically significant. Our model investigates how the urban–rural dichotomy, ethnic minority population, and the level of political mobilization influenced voting preferences during the 2008 presidential election, and the May 2008 and October 2012 parliamentary

elections. More precisely, we want to find out how vote shares for the incumbents reflected the identified political cleavages.

In our model, the votes cast for Saakashvili and the UNM are taken as dependent variables in three submodels for the presidential and parliamentary elections. The urban–rural cleavage is operationalized with the share of city/town population inside the voting district whereas the central–periphery cleavage is represented by the share of ethnic Georgian population in the municipalities (administrative municipalities in Georgia in almost all cases reflect the boundaries of electoral districts). The model employs another independent variable, overall turnout in order to measure the level of political mobilization and control for potential electoral fraud. For the 2012 elections submodel we have 73 cases, as the elections were not held inside Liakhvi, Akhalgori and Upper Abkhazia voting districts, which were out of Georgian jurisdiction and control.

In a generalized form, the following formula describes our model:

Vote share for the UNM candidate = $\beta_0 + \beta_1$ urban population + β_2 Georgian population + β_3 turnout

We used voting district level data from the presidential and parliamentary elections. As there was not a significant time threshold (only 5 months) between the two events, the model assumed that the proportion of urban and ethnic Georgian population would not change significantly and thus used the same data. There are two electoral districts (Liakhvi and Upper Abkhazia) that have no urban type settlement and ten electoral districts of Tbilisi where, despite the incorporation of several rural settlements within their boundaries, the rural share of the population is negligible relative to the whole number of voters in the unit (in fact, there are other objective factors, especially economic activities and administration, which strongly tie the population of these villages to the metropolitan city centre). As the last population census in Georgia was conducted in 2002, the figure representing the share of the urban population on the municipality level is based on 2006 estimates published by the government of Georgia (Government of Georgia, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2007d, 2007e, 2007f, 2007g, 2007h, 2007i, 2007j).

The data is logged into the ordinary least squares (OLS) model in order to reveal the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. The model underwent different statistical tests on relevancy. The results are summarized in Table 2.1.

	2008 presidential elections	2008 parliamentary elections	2012 parliamentary elections
	Votes cast for Saakashvili	*Votes cast for the UNM*	*Votes cast for the UNM*
Share of urban population (2006)	−0.191	−0.201	−0.225
	(−4.330)**	(−6.560)**	(−5.580)**
Share of ethnic Georgian population	−0.218	−0.245	−0.213
	(−3.990)**	(−6.170)**	(−3.560)**
Electoral turnout	0.696	0.418	−0.351
	(4.660)**	(4.470)**	(−1.770)
Intercept	0.417	0.674	0.941
	(3.750)**	(10.210)**	(8.480)**
R²	0.59	0.67	0.49
N	76	76	73

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 2.1 Cleavage model of voting in Georgia

Overall, the suggested equation explains 59% of variation in the 2008 presidential elections, 67% in the 2008 parliamentary elections and 49% of variations in the dependent variable in the 2012 parliamentary elections submodel. We have a steady pattern when looking at the coefficients for the urban–rural cleavage. They are all negative and cause about the same decrease in vote shares for the UNM and Saakashvili. Similarly, the coefficient for the share of Georgian population is also negative for all submodels; however, they vary significantly – a decrease in the case of the 2008 parliamentary elections and an increase in the 2012 parliamentary elections submodel. To summarize, the two independent variables measuring the major electoral cleavages in the country, cause more-or-less similar negative change in the United National

Movement's and Saakashvili's votes. Despite the fact that the elections in 2008 and 2012 differed hugely by both political context and actors as well, the two main cleavages had about the same effect on electoral outcomes.

Lipset and Rokkan argue that the origins of the urban–rural dichotomy lie in deepening societal conflicts that were caused by the Industrial Revolution. In some cases the political cleavage could translate into political parties, for example, in Nordic states, where urban areas dominated political life, "the struggle for democracy and parliamentary rule was triggered off through a broad process of mobilization within the peasantry" (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967: 20). However, it is hard to prove whether the Industrial Revolution could have an impact on the societal division in the country, which is located in the periphery of Europe, where the main developments of the shift occurred. It seems that the urban–rural dichotomy (as well as the centre–periphery political cleavage) arose due to more recent events.

Peculiarities of Georgian urbanization could be an important reason for urban–rural political cleavages. Like other countries of the Soviet Union, Georgia underwent a very rapid process of urbanization. Whitefield (2002) argues, that the urban–rural dichotomy in voting could be traced to the occupational class – indeed, mass urbanization in the Soviet Union was directly defined by increasing industrialization. Occupational classes were formed during the Soviet rule. The mentioned dichotomy still has an influence on formation of voting behaviour and its spatial patterns. On the other hand, as Kitschelt suggests, urban areas were home to large numbers of "white-collar" workers and the intelligentsia, contributing to the strength of urban–rural dichotomy.

Kitschelt's idea sheds light on another important dimension of voting behaviour observed in Tbilisi. The two elections in 2008 revealed a strong difference in the electoral patterns between "prestigious" and "working-class" neighbourhoods of Tbilisi. The opposition candidates (and parties) with radical political demands enjoyed higher political support in well-off areas whereas less prestigious neighbourhoods preferred to vote for the UNM with its focus on social programmes. We can argue that this particular pattern could have the same origin as the urban–rural electoral dichotomy.

City neighbourhoods, especially in Tbilisi, experienced a significant level of social segregation. The central, prestigious areas of the cities were allocated to "white-collar" workers and the intelligentsia, who formed a distinct social landscape. Their economic

situation and status greatly improved during the Soviet era. Consequently, it had large impact on their loyalty towards the communist system. The first years of independence were marked with turbulent and violent political events, which caused the ousting of Gamsakhurdia and invitation of a long-time leader of Soviet Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze. The latter spent more than 10 years as the president of independent Georgia until the Rose Revolution in 2003. It is worth mentioning that during Shevardnadze's "second era" many Soviet-time Communist Party members and apparatchiks found their way into various political and public positions. We can argue that the Rose Revolution, which removed the old system, left the old elite and people benefiting from it dissatisfied. However, the popularity of the President and his party, which was maintained until 2007, did not contribute to the emergence of political cleavages.

According to Lipset and Rokkan (1967), the centre–periphery political cleavage is defined as the struggle of peripheral culture and groups against the central, assimilating force. However, the strategies of struggle vary in different countries. As some research argues, ethnic minorities in Georgia have several important obstacles in order to be equally represented in the mainstream political activities. Nodia (2006) lists several areas of concerns: language-related problems, information issues and lower levels of political representation and participation. Thus during all post-Soviet elections, the representatives of ethnic minorities voted for the incumbents (Nodia, 2006). Due to the nonexistence of minority political parties, the representatives of minorities align with the incumbents. Moreover, as recent research by Zollinger and Bochsler (2012) shows, "central" oppositional political parties could also be used as a proxy by minority elites in order to be represented in local and regional parliaments. For instance, both the UNM and the GDC named former and current members of the Javakhk Union as their candidates for single- member districts in the Akhalkalaki region, which is primarily inhabited by ethnic Armenians (Armenia News - NEWS.am, 2012). Yet in Georgia there are few signs of political cleavages that reinforce ethnic divisions. However, it is conceivable that minorities chose political self-exclusion by voting for the government and showing their loyalty to the incumbents in order to defend their own lifestyle and relative stability and security in their local communities.

Another important pattern is the extreme fluctuation of the coefficient for the electoral turnout. It has the largest positive effect in 2008 presidential elections submodel, decreases for the parliamentary elections and becomes insignificant in the 2012 parliamentary elections. As mentioned above, we measure both electoral fraud and voter mobilization using the value of electoral turnout. A large positive coefficient for the 2008 presidential elections suggests that higher turnout led to more support for Saakashvili. However, the situation changed dramatically in 2012. During the parliamentary elections, higher electoral turnout played a strong role in the victory of the GDC which supposedly was able to form strong local organizations and trigger huge public interest in the elections.

By looking at the map of residual distribution by voting districts (Figure 2.1) some interesting spatial peculiarities could be identified. Initially, we can argue that higher fluctuations in residuals could indicate the existence of additional "hidden" factors that contribute to the formation of particular voting behaviour in a district, which cannot easily be explained by the given model. In the submodel of presidential elections, in Javakheti, Shida Kartli, Racha-Lechkhumi and Upper Imereti the predicted results are quite similar to the observed values, whereas coefficients in Samegrelo, Kvemo Kartli and Guria suggest the most extreme fluctuations. For the 2008 parliamentary elections submodel, the regional discrepancies are present as well – similar to the presidential elections, Samegrelo and Kvemo Kartli show extreme values of residuals. As for the new patterns, Shida Kartli has a high value of residuals. However, in the whole territory of Kakheti, mountainous areas of Eastern Georgia, Tbilisi and surrounding municipalities the model perfectly explains the patterns of voting behaviour. Finally, in the 2012 parliamentary elections model, regional patterns are also maintained. Like the previous parliamentary elections, the model explains the variation inside the Kakheti region. In the mountainous areas of Western Georgia, Upper Imereti and Shida Kartli, the model offers a convincing explanation as well. What is worth mentioning, here, are the two hotspots with the extreme fluctuations in the residuals – Sashkhere municipality, a native area of Georgian Dream Coalition leader and Akhaltsikhe/Aspindza – homeland of the candidate for prime minister, Vano Merabishvili from the UNM. The latter areas also had the highest residual values in previous models as well. In the country, where personal factor in the politics is still

decisive and ties to native places are strong, supposedly, this fact could be an important contributor to electoral behaviour.
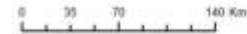
To conclude, the model suggests that there are two political cleavages contributing to the formation of voting behaviour in Georgia. The analysis shows, that the coefficients are statistically significant for all submodels. The factors contributing to the formation of the electoral cleavages are persistent, which allows us to say that the tendency could be maintained for other elections as well. Territorial distribution of the residuals shows strong regional patterns that indicate local "hidden" factors contributing to the formation of particular voting behaviour in a given area. Despite the fact that the cleavages exist, they are the results of more recent developments, unlike in West European societies.

Conclusion

The cleavage voting model presented in this chapter proposes that electoral dichotomies were important for recent presidential and parliamentary elections in Georgia. However, the electoral cleavages were not formed according to the factors given by Lipset and Rokkan. Urban–rural and centre–periphery electoral cleavages can either be dated back to the Soviet era or the early 1990s when Georgia suffered from violent ethno-territorial conflicts. If we take the urban–rural political dichotomy, the process of urbanization during the Soviet period and changing social structures of urban settlements in Georgia have affected today's electoral developments. Additionally, the "hidden cleavage" of ethnic minorities, which is partly expressed by their lack of integration into the political system, can be explained by more recent events. We can argue that there could be other factors that will be important for explanation of voting behaviour, which are missing from the model; however, the statistical tests do not indicate this. Interestingly enough, the spatial distribution of residuals has significant regional characteristics, which means that there are some other hidden factors that also affect the formation of voting behaviour. As subethnic and regional patterns in Georgia were always quite strong, it is not a surprise that this situation is crystallized in voting behaviour.
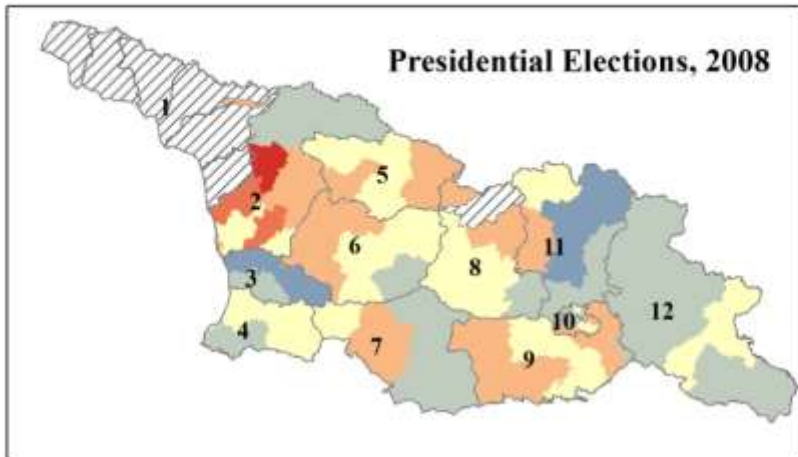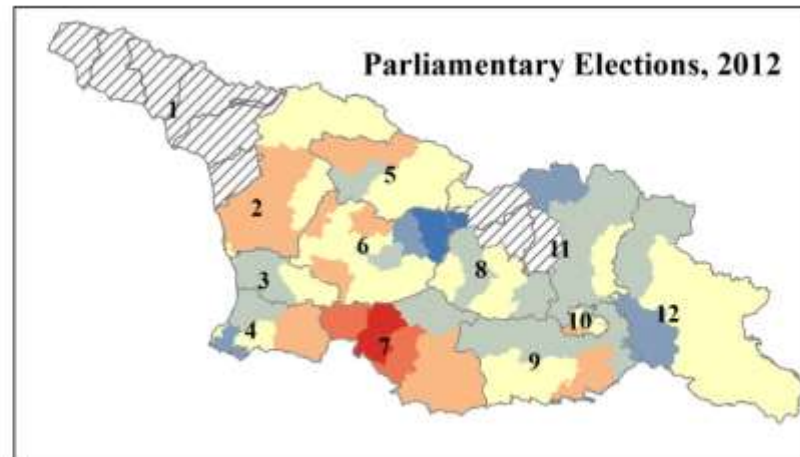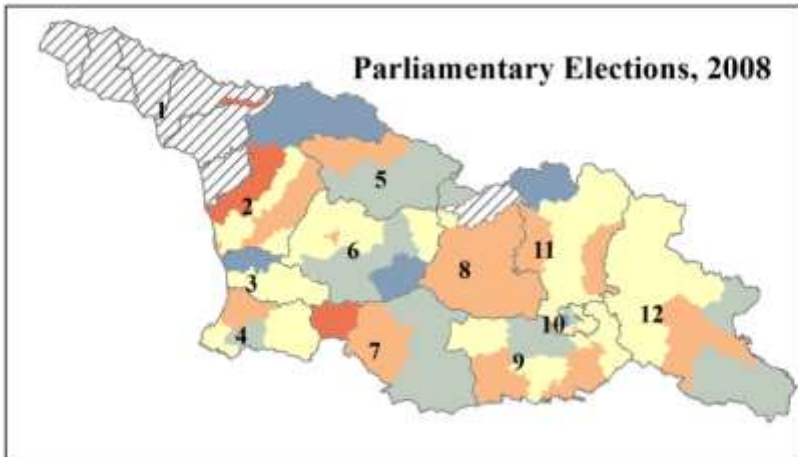
Figure 2.1 Geographic distribution of residuals.

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