

# **Privatized Housing and never ending displacement: the temporality of dwelling for displaced Georgians**

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## **Ingress: housing story**

We<sup>2</sup> are on our way to a former student hostel at the outskirts of Tbilisi, Georgia. We are not quite sure where our bus-stop is.

The hostel turned collective center is an institutional space for hosting internally displaced people (IDPs) who came from Abkhazia to Tbilisi in the 1990s. The building houses IDPs and non-IDP families. Technically the building is no longer a collective center because most residential units were privatized in 2009. When we ask the bus driver where to stop, it is, however, the description of the ‘IDP house’ that makes him understand where he should let us off: neighbors and Tbilisians still know it as an ‘IDP-building’.

We approach the twin blocks, there are groups of men outside, buses, machutkas (shared taxis) and a taxi are waiting for passengers. It is a cold December day, but the men are still outside because there is no gathering space for them indoors. We enter the building, with its open ground floor, find a coin-operated lift. But can the lift be trusted? The stairs are dark, uneven and sometimes not secured with railings, so the lift becomes the preferred option. We come out of the lift on the ninth floor to an equally dark corridor. All the wooden floors once there are long gone and most likely used as firewood. A window with its glass missing makes it breezy. A kind resident provides us with some light and we can identify the door we are looking for.

Salome<sup>3</sup> opens and her daughter – a young woman in her twenties – is also there. We enter the light, well maintained and warm room which is now the two women’s home. They have fitted the room with new windows and renovated the bathroom. Across the corridor, they have built a kitchen in a box-room without windows. Their plan is to develop another room in the collective center for the daughter to occupy. A space in the corridor appropriated some time back has been sealed off and, one day, they will complete an outer wall, install windows and make it part of their home. They do not long for a return to Abkhazia, their lives are here.

Residents are gradually modifying the building, transforming rooms not meant for permanent living and constructing spaces that did not exist, they build kitchens, and renovate bathrooms. There is gradual transformation of the one-time student dorm in the Soviet era, then a collective center for internally displaced persons and now a residential building on par with any other residential buildings in the city. However, there is a limit to how much people can change this residence with its small living spaces, run down corridors and crumbling structure. The building’s afterlife as a Soviet time student dorm and as a collective center continues to affect everyday lives.

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### **Understanding protracted displacement through the dwelling**

More and more refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) live outside the traditional humanitarian spaces of the camp and predominantly in urban areas. Accompanying this trend is a policy shift away from focusing on camps to increased emphasis on assisting people living in urban areas. In this context, there is a need to better understand the nature of current dwelling spaces for forced migrants, be it rented residences, shelters or collective centers, such as Salome's described above in the ingress. Salome represents a significant proportion of forced migrants<sup>4</sup> who may – with or without assistance and government- or owner-consent – occupy available buildings that were often not intended for permanent living. These shelters may be abandoned or unfinished buildings, buildings that were generally built with a different intention than permanent residency such as hotels, student- and workers' dormitories, kindergartens, schools, sanatoria, hospitals, factories or storage spaces. In protracted displacement, the residents of these shelters and collective centers gradually appropriate the buildings into becoming long term residences because there is no available solution in sight. The buildings may not be considered home at the outset, but the gradual appropriation of the buildings such as Salome's may be understood as homemaking practices even though they are substandard, do not lead to a solution and an end to displacement (Brun 2012).

In the current discourse around forced migration in the Middle East and Europe, it has been much emphasis<sup>4</sup> on these types of temporary spaces for refugees such as the more well-known hotel City Plaza in Athens (Koptyaeva 2017). This category of living spaces for forced migrants is not new and have been a common practice on the Balkans (Council of Europe 2011) and in other more urban displacement crises such as those that emerged with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The case of internal displacement in Georgia and the privatization processes that have taken place in that context, may be helpful for understanding some of the dynamics between temporality, materiality and displacement-status in this particular type of dwellings for forced migrants. In this chapter we thus explore and analyze the experience of what happens when the status of the material shelter that forced migrants occupy change from temporary to permanent living spaces through privatization, but people's displacement status do not change accordingly.

The material for this chapter was collected between 2003 and 2015 at various times by the two authors<sup>5</sup> (see Thorshaug 2011, Brun 2015a,b, 2016, 2017, Brun et al. 2017). A central focus of our research has been on the homemaking that takes place in the temporary dwellings that people from Abkhazia have occupied since their displacement in the 1990s. In this context, people have become tied to and interact with the material dwellings in particular ways. This material dimension of social life has gained prominence in social science research

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<sup>4</sup> We have been unable to identify numbers of how many forced migrants occupy such dwellings

<sup>5</sup> We did not conduct fieldwork together, but the different periods of fieldwork built on each other's insights and we spent time in the same buildings and worked at times with the same interpreter. Throughout all our research we had more possibilities of interviewing women than men. Women are more often at home in their dwelling and were often more willing to share their experiences with us. The material thus reflects a particular gendered perspective where women and homemaking in the dwelling spaces that they occupy become the focus of regard.

(Coward 2009, Schatzki 2010), but has not represented a significant body of research in forced migration (Dudley 2011). Unpacking the role of materiality in co-constituting social life provides insights into what buildings can do and the impact of the material on people's experience of displacement (Gieryn 2002). In this chapter, we position our work in relation to the body of work described as a geographies of architecture that seek to understand the thrown-togetherness of the *material infrastructures*, *institutional arrangements* and *everyday practices* that come together through dwelling in particular buildings (see Kraftl and Adey 2008, Lees and Baxter 2011, Thorshaug 2018). Conceptually, our contribution is to add *temporality* to the literature on geographies of architecture. We find that understanding the interaction between the IDP status (the institutional dimension) and the building (material infrastructure) must be seen in the context of the particular experience and governance of temporalities – past, future and everyday times – that we identify in protracted displacement. Our lens is to create and understanding of how the institutional arrangements, the material infrastructure and the temporalities come together in the process of inhabiting the building through homemaking practices that bind material and imaginative geographies together (Blunt and Dowling 2006, Jacobs and Merriman 2005, Kraftl 2005). We understand homemaking as the process of “endowing things with living meaning, arranging them in space, in order to facilitate the life activities of those whom they belong, and preserving them, along with their meaning” (Young 2005: 140–141).

In this chapter, we then take the material buildings – the collective centers for displaced people and the privatization process of those buildings – as the starting point for everyday life and homemaking. We consider the buildings as the point from which people find their bearings (Ahmed 2006, 2010). The dwellings do not only become the background to people's lives, but represents an element of what people draw together (Jacobs and Merriman 2005) through an everyday skillful engagement with their environment (Simonsen 2007). This intimate co-dwelling of bodies and buildings help to shape people's horizons, their desires and ambitions (Ahmed 2006). The building with its particular social status thus becomes a directive for the status and social position of those who dwell in the building. By emphasizing the role of the building and shelter in long term urban displacement, we are able to unpack a central dimension of forced migration and to understand the policies of displacement: the interaction of forced migration-status and shelter.

In the next section we describe the displacement situation for the Georgian internally displaced from Abkhazia and the institutional infrastructure around their displacement. We then introduce the collective centers and the process of transferring of ownership of the dwelling spaces, referred to as privatization process before analyzing how people relate to the material buildings after and during the privatization process by focusing on temporal registers, material dimensions and the displacement status and how these dimensions interact through homemaking practices. We conclude by reflecting on the role of the IDP status and the privatized buildings in order to understand better the interaction of the material building with the process of unending displacement.

### **War and displacement: the Georgian IDPs from Abkhazia**

Abkhazia and Georgia were both annexed into the Russian Empire in the nineteenth century and treated as separate republics. However, in 1931, Abkhazia was included into the Georgian Soviet Republic and lost some of its autonomy. With the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991, Georgia was declared independent nation state and Abkhazia one of its regions. Abkhaz authorities presented secession-claims from Georgia in 1992. The Georgian authorities refused to let go of the Black Sea region and Georgian forces entered Abkhazia to regain the disputed territory, but were defeated. In the conflict that followed about 250.000 ethnic Georgians, approximately 46% of the population in Abkhazia at the time, fled their homes and were granted the status of internally displaced persons when they settled in the Georgian controlled territories of the country (Kolossoff and O'Loughlin 2011). Many IDPs settled in Western Georgia close to Abkhazia in and around the cities of Zugdidi and Kutaisi, but a large proportion found their way to Tbilisi where they had relatives and where there was better access to employment. Interviews for this chapter were conducted in the two cities of Kutaisi and Tbilisi.

The conflict between Abkhazia and Georgia is often described as a frozen conflict with periodic outbursts of war such as the war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008. Many scholars now believe that Georgia has lost de facto control over Abkhazia (Kabachnik 2012) whose independence is recognised by a handful of states, including Russia. For security reasons, it has been almost impossible for ethnic Georgians to return to Abkhazia since their displacement. With the unresolved conflict, people have remained in the IDP status. It is believed that if the Government of Georgia officially recognises that the IDPs can stay rather than return, they simultaneously admit that they have given up on the Abkhaz territories. Consequently, the nationalist discourse of a unified Georgia that includes the territories of Abkhazia is still strong and its internally displaced people play an important role in keeping Georgia's hope of regaining control over Abkhazia alive. There is a shared belief between the government, the internally displaced and the general Georgian public that Abkhazia must stay part of Georgia and that return of the displaced represents the only valid solution to displacement. As a consequence, the ethnic Georgians displaced from Abkhazia in the 1990s, remain in the status of internally displaced persons in Georgia.

During the more than 20 years of displacement, there have been waves of international attention and support for the IDPs. In the 1990s, international NGOs and UN organisations, such as the UNHCR, were actively present and assisted the IDPs with basic needs. However, due to the strong emphasis on return, more long term assistance with the possibility of integration of the IDPs into their existing living environments was not politically acceptable. In the early 2000s, after about ten years of displacement, international organisations were talking about 'temporary integration' to shed light on the problematic and temporary situation of the internally displaced and to convince the government that more long-term strategy to assist the IDPs was necessary (Brun 2015, 2016a). However, as we show below, it would take another decade before a more long-term strategy could be implemented.

Nearly half of the Georgians who came from Abkhazia settled in collective centers, other were renting or staying with family or friends<sup>6</sup>. Until 2009, the collective centers were institutionalised spaces where services such as electricity and water were provided by the state. Humanitarian organisations assisted the internally displaced to make minor improvements such as repairing communal sanitary facilities, leaking roofs and sometimes changing windows. The collective centers represented crowded, substandard and unhealthy living conditions, but nevertheless a space where people lived together. Residents had also, when they were able to, themselves improved living spaces as much as they could. However, since their arrival in the 1990s and until 2009, no substantial changes were made to improve the substandard conditions in the collective centers.

The permanent impermanence was more and more unbearable and the government's willingness to accept longer-term strategies increased gradually. This willingness resulted in the new state strategy for IDPs launched in 2007. Here, the notion of 'durable housing solutions' became a means to provide, at least partly, a durable solution. A durable housing solution, the Government emphasized, was not a full local integration process, but for the displaced in the collective centers, it meant the possibility to privatize their living spaces.

### **Privatization: durable housing solutions and the transfer of ownership in collective centers**

With the privatization programme, IDPs could buy their living spaces in the collective centers for a symbolic 1 Georgian Lari<sup>7</sup>. Simultaneously, buildings of commercial value, occupied by the internally displaced could be taken over by business actors and the IDPs in those buildings were given a compensation (Thorshaug 2011, Brun 2016).

A Working Group on Privatization<sup>8</sup> with members from the humanitarian community and civil society established minimum standards and legal guidelines for the spaces that could be privatised. The minimum standards were recognised by the Georgian authorities, but were not systematically applied on the ground and particularly not in Tbilisi. In Tbilisi, the argument was that people are being transferred property on prime locations that will increase in value. Consequently, the government was not willing to improve conditions or attempt to fulfil minimum standards and many of the buildings that were privatised were left in a poor state<sup>9</sup>. Privatization was based on the number of family members that left Abkhazia. After 17 years of living in the same space, many families had increased in numbers, but could not access larger spaces.

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<sup>6</sup> For more on internally displaced Georgians in rented accommodation, see Brun 2016.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Georgian Lari is 0,38 USD (oanda.com, 28.10.17)

<sup>8</sup> UNHCR led a group that established minimum standards for space, quality and facilities. The information concerning this process is based on interviews with stakeholders such as government officials, international humanitarian organisations and national civil society organisations.

<sup>9</sup> Rehabilitation of Collective Centers took place before or during privatization in the western regions of Georgia. The concentration of money and efforts towards the western regions of Georgia must also be understood because the politics of settlement of IDPs are geared towards the western regions, which are closer to Abkhazia but also in order to avoid further urbanisation in Tbilisi.

Formally, people had difficulties obtaining deeds for their newly owned spaces. The authorities kept the original contract whereas the IDPs retained an owner certificate which is strictly not valid (Thorshaug 2011). Additionally, the contract only allowed one signatory on behalf of the household. However, everyone that were registered as residents in the apartment were also included in the paper-work with a clause stating that the signatories renounce the right to make any further claims to the government concerning housing assistance. In effect, the second and third generation IDPs unintentionally gave up their rights to further assistance. Generally, information concerning legal rights became a main issue addressed by national civil society organisations (Georgian Young Lawyers Association 2014).

Despite their concerns, most people who were offered privatization accepted. Afraid of losing the opportunity to a more permanent living space they did not dare to decline and in the beginning the privatization process was rapid. Some, however, were careful and reluctant: if they privatized, would they lose the right to assistance upon return and the right to compensation for the lost houses in Abkhazia? What would happen with their monthly IDP-benefits? The spaces in the collective centers were small and sub-standard, would this mean the end to any possibilities of improving living conditions? In many ways, privatization was a mixed experience. Living in a general condition of poverty and uncertainty, privatization came with responsibilities that were difficult to fulfil such as paying for electricity and to organise and pay for maintenance.

The idea of transfer of ownership may be understood as a very convenient way for the government to handle the IDP problem. With privatization, the government made substantial efforts to provide durable solutions for IDPs. However, privatisation was also understood as a first attempt to cut off assistance and see the IDPs as economically self-reliant and less dependent on government assistance (Manning 2009).

The privatization process took place on the basis of a particular moment in time. No needs assessment or assessment of the quality of the dwelling were undertaken before privatization papers were signed. As mentioned above, the process was rapid and many households were uncertain about what they signed up to. Privatization was random, based on what living spaces people had access to at the time. In some ways, the transformation of the collective centers into condominiums provided a potential for the residents to integrate into the wider society. With transfer of ownership, the building is no longer an institution, but formally a residential building on par with other buildings. Residents can now apply for grants from local authorities to upgrade the building, whereas before, the internally displaced would turn to humanitarian organisations or the ministry responsible for the internally displaced. With privatisation, the IDP status becomes irrelevant vis a vis the material building. Additionally, ownership leads to control, security of tenure and the possibilities to invest and modify your dwelling within the limits that the material structure imposed on people. In the remainder of the chapter, we will discuss how people experienced the privatization process and what difference it may have made to the displacement experience.

### **Clash of temporalities, norms and the material buildings**

For the Georgians who fled Abkhazia in the 1990s, displacement represents an unending state of being where different temporalities of the past, present and future come together but often clash. Moreover, the buildings under consideration also represent a particular meeting point of temporalities, their own histories and futures which tie in with the temporalities of displacement. In the context of Georgia and other post-socialist states, it has become common to consider ways in which the residual of socialism and Soviet life continue to play a role in contemporary societies (Frederiksen 2013, Škribić Alempijević and Potkonjak 2016, see also Benjamin 1923/97). The afterlife of the Soviet era buildings turned collective centers imprint experiences and everyday life in displaced people's privatized dwellings. With clashing temporalities in the building, people experienced a sense of exclusion and marginalisation that represented a particular expression of power and status (Frederiksen 2013, Sharma 2014). We will describe three dimensions of clashing temporalities here: first, the histories of buildings built with a very different intention than permanent dwelling; second, clashing temporal registers in everyday life; and, third, the understanding of an ideal home that lies in the past and which is understood to be unreachable in the future.

The experience of dwelling is affected by the history and the current standards of the material building and this represents our first identification of clashing temporalities in the dwelling. Collective centers may be understood as 'unhomely' (Blunt and Dowling 2006) because they were not originally meant for family life and that the living-spaces have histories that are present in how people relate to them. Julia used to live in an old hospital-building in Kutaisi that was a collective center until the privatisation process started in 2009. She talked about how she always felt that the illnesses of patients were still sitting in the walls. While living in the former hospital, she constantly worried that her children would fall ill because of this afterlife of the hospital turned collective center. She felt that she was unable to escape that history. Inevitably, the prolonged nature of displacement and later privatization meant a clash of temporalities in the building between its intention, its history and the everyday time for its current inhabitants.

With privatization, and even though people now owned the living space and controlled that space, people were striving to create home and lead a decent everyday life within the bounds of the building. Rita lived in a privatized space in a former student dorm and later collective center. She invited us in for coffee and said she would have liked to be more hospitable but she did not have more to be hospitable with. She made an excuse for not receiving us in a 'proper way'. Her wish was to have another room for receiving guests, instead of having to receive us in her combined bedroom/dining room/living room.

“All families should have separate living rooms and bedroom. It is not normal to eat, sleep and watch TV, all in one room. If I have guests I would like to have a separate room where I could welcome them” (Interview July 2010).



The small crowded spaces represent a second clash of temporalities; the clash of everyday times, the particular and different temporal registers that are played out every day: the sleeping, eating and hosting – the shifting of temporal registers that needs to take place in one small room is laborious, it is challenging to keep it tidy, maintain privacy and dignity, and it challenges the norms of dwelling and everyday requirements.

Making home is about creating both pasts and futures through inhabiting the grounds of the present (Ahmed 1999). Strategic actions are developed to fulfil normative understandings of the ideals of home, ideals developed over a life course and which shapes the orientation of people in time and space. However, there are constraints on home-making imposed by the physical structures of collective centers and thereby restricting the prospects of achieving the norms. The restrictions on homemaking in the temporary dwelling is closely connected with the experience of losing a home, wherein lies the third clash of temporalities in the privatized dwellings. To lose a dwelling that is defined as home is to lose something meaningful that extends beyond the material domain. The experience of loss is emphasised when interviewees speak of their former dwelling spaces. Dedika pointed out that even though they did not own their former house, they had enough of everything and they were content. Everything was theirs, they were in control, they had everything they needed to make home:

“It is not just about the apartment we had there, but all the things we owned, the linen, the dishes, all the things” (Interview (Dedika), July 2010).

Homes are created in the tension between the real and the ideal (Mallet 2004). The rather idealist notions of past home that displacement may cause, shape the expressions and imaginaries that people create in the dwellings of the homes they desire. The norms of the home were influenced by that past experience of home where the socialist housing was not about ownership, but about the security, things and the practices that came together in a functional way in the dwelling. Consequently, drawing on past experiences of home is central to how the internally displaced are currently imagining and making home in their dwelling spaces. The experience of loss does not only involve the material property they have left behind but also the wider social context of the community and the social relations that constituted it. With the privatization process, it was the unhomey spaces in the collective centers that were supposed to become permanent homes and in the next section we turn to understand how the privatization process influenced homemaking practices in more material ways.

### **Materiality and institutional manifestations**

The co-constitution of everyday life and the material takes place through making the living spaces in the collective centers inhabitable and more home-like spaces (Brun 2012). This process of inhabitation (Krafl and Adey 2008, Simonsen 2012), that reached a new stage with privatization contributed to a re-orientation in time and space. The dwelling became a more permanent residence with an outlook to stay put rather than return. Ownership represented the possibility of investing in the dwelling. With the help from remittances, Salome, from the ingress had replaced her windows, renovated the bathroom and appropriated space across the corridor to build a kitchen. However, some of her neighbors who had also privatized their spaces had no economic opportunity to make improvements and had a very different perspective on living with this particular material environment. For them the bad air-quality that came out of the air ducts was unhealthy with mildew and other pollutants after years of use. The building and its residents had health problems because of the building and would “suffocate to its history” a neighbor of Salome said, and he continued, “we are stuck here, we cannot return to our homes, we cannot afford to move to a better place”.

Most people we interviewed, made the most of the limited space in the collective centers despite all the limitations for improvements. Being confined to very few square metres, often only one room where all activities of family life were performed as described above. Partitioning of a room is a common practice. Curtains are used to divide a space, walls are lined with different wallpaper to separate the bed-area from the kitchen table, for example. Beds are made into sofas during the day. In a laborious process, separate spaces are clearly demarcated for different everyday activities to help to cope with the clashing temporalities.<sup>10</sup>

From the time the internally displaced first occupied the collective centers, and long before privatization, people made considerable efforts in personalising the spaces as much as possible and to organise them in ways that would support everyday routines and habits. Here, the role of particular objects from the past and the present came together such as the few photographs the family had managed to bring or get through friends after displacement, a cup from the wedding presents brought with them when they fled. Preservation, modification and appropriation of a dwelling are important for the emotions with which people invest in their living spaces. “It is mine because I worked on it” was a common statement in interviews conducted both before and after transfer of ownership. Modification led to identification with the living space. Through home making the dwelling spaces served as a material anchor for a sense of agency.

Despite ownership, however, the building continues to act as a marker of identity and a particular social status. The afterlife of previous uses and statuses associated with the building, its reputation in addition to the size, style and location of the building continue to

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<sup>10</sup> Some families managed to appropriate more rooms in the collective center. There were some buying and selling of rooms before privatization which paid off in the sense that families were generally able to privatize whatever space they controlled at the time of transfer of ownership. In these cases, separation of activities could happen more easily, privatisation enabled a better position at this point, and those with enough space, did get a good deal, although for the majority this was not the case.

determine an inhabitant's position in the social hierarchy. As alluded to in the ingress, everyone knows which are the IDP-houses. Interviewees frequently express that they feel the negative social stigma of living in a collective center, even though it is technically not a collective center anymore. The collective center was an exceptional structure in Tbilisi. It represented a kind of 'villagization' (Manning 2009) of the city, an erosion of the Tbilisian urban culture together with the conflict arriving to the city with the internally displaced. The privatized spaces in the former collective centers are not easily being freed from this exceptional status but are coded by the wider population as houses for those who have fled:

“I don't feel like IDP in any other sense than living here. It is this apartment that makes me IDP” (Mariana, interview July 2010).

Tamar had a similar experience and this was transferred to the next generation such as her son that did not feel like an IDP outside the house:

“When he (her son) is out he forgets that he is an IDP. Once he comes back and sees this building, he becomes an IDP again. The house makes you IDP, it is humiliating. Once there was a delegation from the Christian Democrats who visited the building. One of them is a friend of our son. When she met him here, she was very surprised and started to cry: 'I never thought you were IDP', she said” (interview August 2010).

Collective centers are considered the material manifestation of the very sense of loss and deprivation and the privatization process did not necessarily change this experience. In the former collective centers, the displacement experience is a continuous presence in people's everyday lives through the marginal and substandard living spaces. Perhaps with time, the stigma attached to the former collective centers will change. Inhabiting the privatized living spaces in the former collective centers have created new possibilities for homemaking and people may feel at home there, but from the interviews with Mariana and Tamar in 2010 to the encounter with the bus driver on the way to visit Salome, the former collective centers are still associated with displacement.

## **Conclusions: temporalities of protracted displacement**

We should not take for granted that if people stay long enough in one place, they will get used to the space and be happy there. Daily activities and interactions that happen in and around people's dwellings contribute to people's sense of belonging, but more than twenty years after their displacement, the majority of the internally displaced in Georgia continue to express a hope to return (UNHCR 2015). However, as we have shown elsewhere, many do not think return will happen in their lifetime (Brun 2015, Thorshaug 2011). Living with a dominant discourse of return, challenges the possibility of creating a sense of belonging. Being an IDP in Georgia has been associated with long term dependency on aid in the context of a public discourse that overlooks IDPs' complex and translocal attachment to place. Displaced people, despite being citizens, feel out of place because they are associated with the place they displaced from rather than where they currently live (Brun et al. 2017). After many years of displacement, there are few benefits left in the IDP-category, most humanitarian organizations have moved on to other displacement situations, but the category lives on (Brun 2003, 2010, Brun et al. 2017)<sup>11</sup>. The temporary living spaces in the collective centers were closely associated with the institutional arrangements around the temporary status of 'internally displaced persons'. The question is to what extent could the privatization process contribute to change this status?

The material dwellings for displaced people represent politically significant spaces that help to understand the history, sociality and status of internal displacement. Dwelling as a political issue has been particularly significant in the Georgian government's response to and settlement of IDPs in temporary dwellings that have remained temporary in accompaniment with their status. Starting from a geographies of architecture that focuses on the interaction between the material infrastructure, institutional arrangements and everyday practices, we have shown that privatization did help to some extent to enable people to develop their lives based in the material building. Salome (from the ingress) felt at home in the former collective center on the outskirts of Tbilisi, her closest friends were her neighbours, her daughter had a job nearby and her son and husband had been buried in the neighbourhood. She had found her bearings, the privatized room was the center of her home making and her plans for the future was to stay here.

However, the unchanging nature of the buildings, where old statuses stick with the buildings that was built and inhabited with a different temporal orientation than permanency contributes to a continued clash of temporalities in and after the privatization process. People become stuck in a material structure that they cannot escape, where everyday times clash in these sub-standard, small spaces. What we have thus shown in this chapter is the power of particular temporalities produced in the interaction between home making and the material buildings during protracted displacement.

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<sup>11</sup> We have defined these processes of exclusion as 'abjection'- forms of state control and boundary-making that exclude members from the very thing that requires their inclusion and lead to a type of ambiguous citizenship that emerges from protracted situations of displacement. For more on this discussion, see Brun et al 2017.

The nature of dwelling spaces occupied by displaced persons become central to the displacement experience; we can understand social life and practices through the material building. The case we have presented has resemblance to other urban displacement settings. Often, in situations of displacement, buildings not intended for permanent dwelling are frequently being occupied as residences. People make uninhabitable spaces habitable through occupation. However, many of these dwelling spaces remain marginal spaces always attached to a particular form of temporality: an impermanence that stick with the building even though displacement seem never-ending. The politicized nature of forced migration and the unwillingness of nation-states to resolve situations of protracted displacement become manifest in the conditions of these material buildings. Privatizing substandard dwellings that continue to represent marginalized lives cannot alone solve and end displacement.

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