

Reclaiming sovereignty over the body

Reclaiming sovereignty over the body: Post-2022 Russian migration between bio-, thanato- and necropolitics

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This article examines the lived migratory experience of Russian citizens who have left their country after Vladimir Putin's announcement of the partial mobilisation of military reservists on September 21, 2022. By using the 'assemblage approach' to migration, and the concept of 'aleatory sovereignty,' both embedded in Michel Foucault's reflection on bio-/thanato-politics and Achille Mbembe's reflection on necropolitics, this article discusses post-2022 Russian migration as a process of migrants reclaiming sovereignty over their own bodies. More precisely, we reconstruct three main dimensions of this migratory experience. We scrutinize how they resisted and challenged the Russian bio-/thanato-political regime, sliding into necropolitics, by taking the decision to leave; we analyse how they regained sovereign power over their bodies by starting their migration route and remaining on it

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for some time; we examine how they renegotiated their aleatory sovereignty in various new settings by examining their ways of adaptation in different host countries, i.e. new biopolitical regimes.

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[2] <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2025.103436>