"Squeezing blood from turnips" was the perennial wizardry early modern governments performed in obtaining funding for warfare. Carol Belkin Stevens puts a new spin on this by examining how Russia, one of the poorest of all Eurasian kingdoms, from the 1650s to the 1690s expanded and fortified its southern frontier, some 300 miles south of Moscow. This frontier's length rivalled the one Russia and the Central Powers would contest during World War I. Since the late 1400s, incessant Crimean Tatar predation stimulated the Russians' southern frontier policy. Their effective strategy against the Crimean Tatars was to station sizeable quantities of men to patrol and garrison the abatis fortified lines along the southern frontier. The seventeenth-century Russians on the southern frontier found themselves in a dilemma somewhat reminiscent of that experienced by the early Frankish kingdoms with a dearth of resources save land, artfully exploited. Luckily, the Russians had a centralized government, and so avoided contending with centrifugal political forces.

Stevens in her introduction nimbly reminds us that "Though Russia may have had its mercantilists, it could not seriously consider funding its army through commercial expansion and its taxation" (p. 8). Thus the Muscovites engaged in the ingenious jujitsu of the underdeveloped, and "tried whatever new and old ways of extracting existing surpluses came to hand" (p. 8).

Stevens's remarks flow from the extensive documentation she mustered in the Military Chancellery fond of the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts in Moscow. Surely, scholars engaged in pre-modern, local historical investigations pivoting on statistics would want to ponder her detailed and densely-argued, synchronic study of military and economic mobilization. Her pages brim with methodological "food for thought," and the array of data she marshals often makes her paragraphs micro-worlds unto themselves.

Stevens examines an imposing amount of data on population; grain production, prices, taxation, collection, shipments, and arrears; town weapon inventory; and campaign forces' complements, food needs, and casualties. She painstakingly describes, at times to excess, a newly-settled region that must do its own fighting and supplying.

Integration of the southern borderlands was by no means easy to achieve given the paucity of local material and technical resources. Other obstacles included the Thirteen Years' War, the first Russo-Turkish War, the 1662 Copper Revolt, lack of good coinage and the rocky efforts to effect substitution in kind, uneven progress in hammering together a workable grain supply system, local administrative oversights, frequent lapses by the capital bureaucracy in adequately visualizing local needs, and so on.

The book consists of eight chapters: "Muscovy and Its Southern Provinces," "Food and the Military before 1663," "Army Reform and Regional Consolidation, 1663-1682," "The Incorporation of the South: the 1680s and 1690s," "Supply to the Campaign Forces," "The Russian Defensive Forces," "The Collapse of Southern Status: the Odnovortsy," and a conclusion. They are followed by five tables on southern military concerns: grain supply, service rosters, military censuses, and weapons. The lengthy tables on men in garrison service and on the amount of usable artillery and ammuni-
tion in the seventy-nine southern fortresses are especially handy given the large num-
ber of towns frequently mentioned in the text. Maps scattered throughout the chapters
would have made place-location less trying, and Stevens should have retained the in-
formative topographical descriptions from her 1985 doctoral thesis.

A major premise in Steven's work is that local southern conditions evolved on their
own and constituted a formidable obstacle to the capital's imposing a planning tem-
plate. But, in this reviewer's opinion, she pushes her point too far. She overdraws
when cudgeling unnamed historians for allegedly portraying a bureaucratic center that
relentlessly foisted its standards upon a compliant countryside. But did not
Veselovskii, Sadikov, and Nosov in their analyses of the sixteenth-century Russian
North and Bakhrushkin in his for seventeenth-century Siberia demonstrate that central
representatives had to be responsive to frontier concerns and that application of cen-
tral norms could occur slowly and unevenly?

Stevens does show how ad hoc mobilization of men and grain over a period of
time became systematized, but this process would appear to undercut her localization
thesis, as I understand it. In view of the large number of chancelleries that came into
existence because of the southern frontier, one might wonder how southern regional
identities may have affected specific chancelleries, that is to say the capital bureaucracy.
To what degree did such identities affect chancellery evolution? Do we find advocacy
within the bureaucracy of southern borderland warriors' preoccupations and any
commitment to accommodate them on the southerners' own terms? There are com-
plex responses to such questions, and I somehow feel Stevens's approach to examine
subject-object relations concerning capital and frontier bears reexamination.

Stevens tells us "... the absence of locally organized institutions does not imply the
absence of regional identity" (p. 10). Fine. What, then, constitutes regional identity? Is it
foods, religion, language, family practices, dress, political ambitions, or other differen-
tiating traditions? How do these things combine and where do we draw the line? The
author does not offer us much in the way of clues. This is too bad as fuller presenta-
tion of the ramifications of a regional identity would have strengthened her mono-
graph.

How distinctive was this southern frontier identity? What emerges from her study is
a recent settler population involving itself in new land cultivation and military fortifica-
tion construction and defense and in the process spawning peculiar administrative
vexations. But is this sufficient evidence for a significant or mature regional identity?
Was there sufficient time for one to take root? How might we compare the cultural dif-
ferences of this area to those of the older Russian North and Siberia? The fact that the
recently-arrived southern frontier populations chafed under incompletely developed,
local bureaucratic norms need not imply that such people — strained though their re-
lations might be with Moscow — were in opposition to the central government. Rather,
their annoyance might indicate local desire for the capital to evolve more coherent
regulations so the southern frontier could be treated in some sense like the rest of the
country. Therefore, I cannot assent to the "center vs. periphery" dichotomy she implies.

More breathing space for the reader in this densely analytical book would have
been nice. Many are the spots where the author could have stepped forward and
colorfully expounded upon more of the lived experience conveyed by the archival