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Russia marches South: army reform and battlefield performance in Russia's Southern campaigns, 1695-1739

Stoyanov, A.

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Propositions Aleksandar Stoyanov (dissertation LU 26 April 2017)

1. Distances, covered by the Russian armies between 1695 and 1739 were unparalleled compared to the movement of contemporary European forces.
2. The quality of the Russian field performance follows an upward trend during the campaigns of 1695-1739.
3. The main offensive routes, established during the Petrine Era and the Minikh's campaigns were the strategic basis for future invasions into the Ottoman and Persian territories.
4. Non-combat casualties during the Russian campaigns of 1695 and 1739 were considerably higher than the number of troops killed or wounded in action.
5. Military commanders of foreign origin continued to play a vital role in the organization and the conduct of war during the first half of the eighteenth century.
6. When evaluating military performance and the structure of eighteenth century forces, the impact of climate and terrain should always be taken into consideration.
7. Specialists on the Ottoman Empire should focus on existing Ottoman archives outside Turkey in order to obtain new sources of information on Ottoman history. The archives in Sofia can be a good starting point.
8. Personal affiliations should never cloud a historian's judgment.
9. Political correctness should never outrank truth.
10. History is not learned – you must live through it.