

IMSISS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2682554 DCU 21109575 Charles 40429735
Dissertation Title	The Use of Hybrid Warfare to Achieve Strategic Objectives: Comparing Russian and Chinese Approaches

<p>Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)</p> <p>Word Count: 22950</p>		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark A4 [19]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Excellent
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Excellent
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Very Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Excellent
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Excellent
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Excellent
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Excellent
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Excellent
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Excellent
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Excellent
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Excellent
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Excellent
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required
• <i>Appropriate word count</i>	Yes

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ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

This is an ambitious dissertation on a relevant topic. The research question is clearly formulated and the structure is coherent. The literature review chapter demonstrates the Author's familiarity with the debates surrounding the concept of hybrid warfare and their nuanced understanding of the concept's evolution and limitations. The analytical framework remains a bit unclear as the key aspects to be compared are not presented in an explicit manner. The selection of Russia and China as cases is sufficiently justified, but the criteria for selecting specific sub-cases are much more vague.

The analysis of cases varies in terms of the depth of engagement with particular situations. An overall understanding of hybrid warfare in Russia and China is discussed at length in a convincing manner. The analysis of sub-cases is more problematic. In the Russian case, the analysis of the 2008 Georgian War is mixed with the analysis of pre-war Russian policies. The inclusion of the ongoing war against Ukraine blurs the boundaries between hybrid warfare and warfare in general. The analysis of the East China Sea would have benefitted from more thorough engagement with the problematique.

The comparative analysis and the conclusion are among the strongest parts of the dissertation. Similarities and differences between Russia and China discussed in those parts might have been used to create a more robust analytical framework, which would have strengthened the dissertation as a whole.

Reviewer 2

The dissertation provides a comprehensive analysis of hybrid warfare, focusing on the strategic objectives and approaches of Russia and China exploring the evolving dynamics of warfare in the contemporary geopolitical landscape. The author aims to compare Russian and Chinese approaches to hybrid warfare, shedding light on the strategies, tactics, and implications of these methods. The scope is well-defined, encompassing a broad spectrum of concepts and real-world applications.

The methodology relies on an extensive bibliography that includes academic journals, news articles, policy briefs, and military reports. The research design seems robust, although further details on the research methods would provide additional clarity. The findings then offer a detailed comparison of Russian and Chinese hybrid warfare strategies. The analysis is thorough and insightful, comparing the hybrid warfare strategies of two major global powers and the interpretation offers a nuanced understanding of the subject. The conclusion synthesizes the key findings and provides insights into the broader implications of hybrid warfare in the global context.

While the dissertation is an excellent piece of work, there is always room for improvement, particularly in the comparison of China's and Russia's approaches to hybrid warfare. The analysis would benefit from an ex ante comparative framework; without it, the comparison appears somewhat random. Additionally, the results might be biased due to the case selection. The text argues that "The Kremlin uses a hybrid approach to legitimize both overt and covert military operations on foreign territory, while China has long favored subtle and protracted methods, avoiding confrontation." This is a very good and strong argument, but there is a problem in that the dissertation explores only the Russia-Georgia and Russia-Ukraine conflicts, omitting other cases involving Russia that did not end in war. This limitation may affect the comprehensiveness and balance of the analysis, underscoring the need for a more inclusive examination of relevant cases.

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Overall, the dissertation provides a valuable contribution to the field of security and strategic studies, offering a detailed examination of hybrid warfare through the lens of Russian and Chinese strategies. The author's focus on comparing these two major powers adds depth and complexity to the research.