

ABSTRACT

The past few decades have seen the emergence of the concept of *hybrid warfare*. This term gained special attention after the Russian invasion of Crimea. Since then, Russia and China have been criticised for the use of such methods. To this day, the concept is still debated in the academic world.

This study examines the use of hybrid methods to achieve strategic objectives by Russia and China. Both countries understand, in their own way, the benefits of using such methods, especially at the regional level, and use them to weaken their rivals and gain strategic advantages. Drawing on a corpus of academic literature, articles, reports, evaluations, and online news, this study shows that Russia and China use hybrid strategies in different ways and for different strategic purposes. Our analysis shows that while Russia uses hybrid tools to incite conflict and justify armed intervention to achieve its goals, China uses them subtly to avoid confrontation and gradually fulfil its objectives.

This thesis concludes that the concept of hybrid warfare depends on the actors using it and that Russia and China have envisioned hybrid models that suit their needs. It also lays the groundwork for future research on the subject in more depth and provides a novel tactical-strategic framework that can be used and studied in other areas related to hybrid warfare.

Keywords: hybrid warfare, Russia, China, strategic objectives, regional conflict, geopolitics