



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Albina Starodubtseva

Title: “Russian Hybrid Warfare in Ukraine: Comparative Analysis of Two Cases and Identification of Critical Elements in the Successful Application of Hybrid Tactics”

Programme/year: Security Studies/2021

Author of Evaluation (external assessor): Anzhelika Solovyeva

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	9
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	29
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	38
<i>Total</i>		80	76
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	20
TOTAL		100	96



Evaluation

Major criteria: This is a strong work, which clearly reflects the author's deep knowledge of the problematic and related literature. Research objectives are clearly defined. There is a good balance between theory and practice, with much attention to the conceptual and empirical nuances involved in the studied case. Comparative analysis presents strong evidence. This study also builds on a substantial body of literature, including Russian-language sources. There are many things to praise generally, however, there is also potential avenue for improvement, as also reflected by a minor reduction in points.

There lacks elaboration on how exactly this study contributes to the existing, and quite rich, body of knowledge on the Russian hybrid warfare. This is not meant to question or downgrade the author's contribution, but a more explicit definition of the author's own voice could be useful.

While the conceptual basis of this work is thoroughly researched and robust, richly detailed knowledge on non-state hybrid warfare is excessive and references to it are sometimes redundant. The concept of non-state hybrid warfare is certainly a crucial context for grasping the meaning and logic of hybrid warfare as such, but its integration could have been more clearly driven by its relevance for this particular study of state hybrid warfare.

The author draws attention to a very important point: "synergistic effects" created by the "synchronized use" of different means and strategies of hybrid warfare. While the author points out such effects, they cannot be adequately, and fully, demonstrated in practice when above-military, non-military and military means are separated into different empirical sub-sections. The presented structure also makes it more difficult to accurately distinguish among the "three main stages" of hybrid warfare, theorized on pp. 17-19.

Minor criteria: This work fully conforms to the formal requirements.

Overall evaluation: I recommend "A" for the overall assessment.

Suggested grade: "A"

Signature: Anzhelika Solovyeva