

Section A

You must answer Question 1.

The Cold War and Asia

1 Read the sources and answer the questions which follow.

Source A

Few, if any, of the conflicts waged throughout the global South from 1945-1990 can be directly attributable to the Cold War, to be sure, at least not in causal terms. Decolonisation and its contentious aftermath – local and regional rivalries, simmering border disputes, internal contests for power – all exerted a more significant impact on the origins of hostilities than did the Cold War in itself. In nearly every important case, however, the Cold War played a galvanising role, either by offering opportunities to, or setting limits on, local actors; by intensifying, prolonging, internationalising, or foreshortening conflicts after they commenced; or by facilitating diplomatic settlements.

Asia became the first non-Western area fully entangled in the Cold War. Here, local actors laboured quite consciously to harness the Cold War to maximise potential benefits, or at least to minimise potential damages. However, many of the Cold War's consequences for Asian peoples proved to be profoundly disruptive – even, in some cases, catastrophic – as they were beyond the control of any local actors. Conflicts with local roots became exponentially more costly because the superpower conflict became superimposed upon them.

From a book chapter written by an American historian, 2013.

Source B

During the Cold War, it often appeared as if in the Third World the external powers were the dominant actors, if not the sole ones. The polemics of both sides suggested that those acting in disputed regions, such as East Asia and Southeast Asia, were under the control of the external powers: hence the language of 'clients', 'agents', 'mercenaries', 'proxies', not to mention 'running dogs', 'lackeys', and 'puppets' of one side or the other. Inter-state conflicts and wars within states were cast in Cold War terms. Yet, this was, even at the time, far from being the case. Local actors often acted independently and sought to draw their strategic patrons into conflict on their side.

From a book written by a British scholar, 2001.

Source C

The USA's involvement in Vietnam is primarily a story of US leaders considering that it was vital not to lose Vietnam to communism. Our Presidents were never actually seeking a military victory in Vietnam. In my opinion, they were doing only what they thought was minimally necessary at each stage to keep South Vietnam out of Communist hands.

The war in Vietnam was and is a civil war and a war for national independence, in my opinion. The central question of who shall rule Vietnam would have been settled on just these terms long ago had it not been for the intervention of outside powers. But the United States has a particular responsibility for prolonging this war. We must face the tragic probability that more Vietnamese will die by the continuation of the present war than will die, in my opinion, from the bloodletting following its conclusion.

From the testimony of a former US Department of Defence official to a US government committee investigating the causes and lessons of the Vietnam War, 1972.

Source D

Dear Mr President,

I have received your letter in which you described the dangerous conditions caused by North Vietnam's effort to take over your country. We have been deeply disturbed by the assault on South Vietnam. North Vietnam has thus violated the provisions of the Geneva Accords designed to ensure peace in Vietnam.

In response to your request, we are prepared to help the Republic of Vietnam to protect its people and to preserve its independence. We shall promptly increase our assistance to your defence effort. The United States remains devoted to the cause of peace and our primary purpose is to help your people maintain their independence. If the communist authorities in North Vietnam will stop their campaign to destroy your country, the measures we are taking to assist your defence efforts will no longer be necessary.

Letter from President Kennedy to President Diem of South Vietnam, 1961.

Source E

At the end of 1949, Kim Il-Sung arrived with his delegation to hold consultations with Stalin. The North Koreans wanted to prod South Korea with the point of a bayonet. Stalin did not oppose this. After all, this was an internal question, concerning Korea only. Stalin persuaded Kim that he should think it over. Kim went home and then returned to Moscow when he had worked everything out. He told Stalin that he was absolutely certain of success. Stalin was worried that the Americans would jump in, but thought that if war was fought swiftly, then war with the US could be avoided. The war was not Stalin's idea, but Kim's. Kim was the initiator. Stalin, of course, did not try to dissuade him.

From Nikita Khrushchev's memoirs, 2004.

Source F



From a cartoon published in an American newspaper, 1950.

Now answer the following questions:

- (a) Compare and contrast the evidence provided in Sources C and D on the USA's stance towards the issue of aiding South Vietnam against communist attacks. [10]
- (b) How far do Sources A-F support the assertion that conflicts in Asia from the 1950s-1970s were driven by superpower rivalry? [30]

Section B

You must answer **two** questions from this section.

EITHER

- 2** How far do you agree that the Oil Crises exacted the heaviest toll on the global economy during the Crisis Decades? [30]

OR

- 3** To what extent did the economic transformation of South Korea and Taiwan from the 1970s-1990 stem from the fortunate circumstances of both countries? [30]

AND EITHER

- 4** 'The General Assembly was the least successful of the United Nations' principal organs in the post-Cold War period.' [30]

OR

- 5** Assess the view that the failure of United Nations peacekeeping operations from 1960-2000 was a direct consequence of their problematic mandate. [30]