

The Origins of the Cold War: Assignment Help Notes

Target Objective

The target objective for this essay is for students to evaluate the range of causal factors associated with the start of the Cold War and to arrive at a substantiated judgment about whether the Cold War was an *inevitable consequence* of U.S. – Soviet rivalry.

Brief Indicative Content

Themes for analysis include:

- *Strategic*. The realist view that the Soviet Union and the United States were both engaged in the pursuit of power in order to guarantee their own security.
- *Ideological*. The contest between two diametrically opposed systems: Soviet Communism and American liberal democracy and capitalism.
- *Psychological*. The personalities and perceptions (misperceptions?) of policy makers, especially Stalin, Roosevelt, and Truman.
- *Political*. The domestic context of the foreign policy debate in the United States (bureaucratic politics, public opinion, and the military-industrial-congressional complex) and in the Soviet Union (totalitarian control, militarization of society).

The best answers will demonstrate *connections* between these explanations and consider their *relative* significance. Students are *required* to use the extracts in the assignment sheet to explain and evaluate the historiographical arguments that have been advanced over time. Students should add their own knowledge – of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 but especially of the period 1945-49 – to the interpretations in the extracts. Students may discuss: the emergence of the USA and the Soviet Union as the world's two superpowers; the consequences of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences; the "Stalinization" of eastern Europe and growing Western fears of communist expansion; the US atomic bombing of Japan; the US "Open Door" policy and the strategy of containment, including the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid, and Soviet accusations of "dollar imperialism"; the divisive issue of Germany, including the Berlin Blockade and the creation of separate German states; the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Suggested Resources

To sustain a well informed and analytical discussion, students will need to go beyond the material in the extracts by using a variety of books, including those from which the extracts are taken, e.g.:

(a) Books [Check Google Books: <https://books.google.com/>]

Alperowitz, Gar (1995) *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb and the Architecture of an American Myth* (New York: Knopf)

Gaddis, John Lewis (1997) *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press)

HIS 354 Research Assignment: Roberts and Westad (2013), Book VII, Ch. 6, Q.4; and
Book VIII, Ch. 2, Qs 2, 3, and 4
This is also a HIS 202 and POL 401 topic

Leffler, Melvyn P. and Odd A. Westad eds (2010) *The Cambridge History of the Cold War Volume 1: Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Mastny, Vojtech (1996) *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press)

Trachtenberg, Marc (1999) *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press)

Zubok, Vladislev and Constantine Pleshakov (1997) *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press)

(b) Articles, Chapters and Papers

Leffler, Melvyn P. (1999) "The Cold War: What do We 'Now Know'?", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 104, No. 2, pp. 501-524. [Blackboard]

Schlesinger Jr, Arthur (1967) "Origins of the Cold War", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 46, No.1, pp. 22-52. [Blackboard]

White, Timothy J. (2000) "Cold War Historiography: New Evidence Behind Traditional Typographies", *International Social Science Review*, Vol. 75, No. 3/4, pp. 35-46. [Blackboard]

(c) Web Sites

Institute of Historical Research, "History in Focus Issue 10: The Cold War", available at:
<http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/cold/websites.html>

The Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars,
<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project>

The Miller Center, University of Virginia,
http://millercenter.org/academic/dgs/primaryresources/cold_war

The National Security Archive, George Washington University,
<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/index.html>

Santa Clara University, "Cold War Electronic Information Resources", available at:
http://www.scu.edu/docs/SCU/Library/Orradre/research/political_science/coldwar.html

Students are not required to conduct internet-based research for this assignment, and indeed are discouraged from using electronic sources except those listed above. However, if students find an electronic source that they wish to use and have any questions about the reliability of the material found online, they should consult their instructor.

Technical Requirements

Students must follow the advice given in (a) the *History Study Skills* guide on “Researching, planning and writing essays”; and (b) the *Student Guide for History Courses On Ground*, which contains writing exemplars. In brief, essays must conform to the following requirements:

- Between 2,000 and 2,500 words i.e. 8-10 double spaced pages with one-inch margins, and font size of 11 or 12. A word count must be provided at the end of the paper.
- Referenced using APA (Harvard) system. See Indiana University Bloomington, Campus Writing Program, ‘APA Style: A Quick Guide’, available at: <http://www.indiana.edu/~citing/APA.pdf>
- Bibliography of sources used (which is the convention for APA).
- A clear structure with an obvious introduction, middle section, and conclusion.
- The introduction must establish a thesis and indicate the content that will be discussed.
- Each subsequent paragraph should discuss only one analytical point, or two closely-related points.
- The conclusion should reiterate the line of argument and should highlight what is most significant.

Late Assignment Policy

Research essays that have not been through the structured drafting and review process (further details below) will not be accepted for submission, and any research essay submitted after the deadline will receive zero points. If there are extenuating circumstances that are properly documented, you will be permitted to write another research assignment on a completely different topic to the first submission (i.e. you will have to start all over again).

Plagiarism Policy

Students are reminded about Baker College policies on academic honesty (syllabus, p.2):

“Academic honesty, integrity, and ethics are required of all members of the Baker College community. Academic integrity and acting honorably are essential parts of professionalism that continue well beyond courses at Baker College. They are the foundation for ethical behavior in the workplace. There are four possible consequences for violating Baker College’s Honor Code:

1. Failure of the assignment
2. Failure of the course
3. Expulsion from the College
4. Rescinding a certificate or degree”

Your instructor may require you to submit your essay to Turnitin, as stated in the syllabus:

“Baker College utilizes plagiarism detection services and has the authority to submit any papers or assignments to such services to determine authenticity. Some assignments may need to be submitted electronically for this purpose.”

HIS 354 Research Assignment: Roberts and Westad (2013), Book VII, Ch. 6, Q.4; and
Book VIII, Ch. 2, Qs 2, 3, and 4
This is also a HIS 202 and POL 401 topic

Assessment

Essays will be assessed on the basis of three criteria:

- *Analysis and evaluation* (80 points). The significance of the information deployed must be analyzed consistently and a clear line of argument maintained throughout the essay.
- *Factual knowledge and understanding* (80 points). The information deployed must be accurate and relevant to the question.
- *Communication and presentation* (40 points). The essay must be properly structured, free of spelling and grammatical errors, and supported by a sufficient number of references and a bibliography consistent with the APA style guide.

In addition, 50 points are available for the structured drafting and review process, which will be assessed EITHER by using the “Milestones” rubrics, OR the submission of a prospectus. Your instructor will advise you which method will be used. Students should familiarize themselves with the detailed descriptors in the rubrics, which are available on Blackboard under “Course Information”.