



JC1H1 Weighted Assignment 2 (Term 3) Suggested Perspectives

****Note that I have included the part (a) question as well and the answers to it – even though your LA was only the part (b) question. This is so that you can use the part (a) question for practice too if you wish!***

*****I have also included a tab at the side which provides some additional explanation and explains my thinking/what I am doing at each point of the essay, in accordance with the principles and frameworks that you have been taught for writing SBQ part (a) questions that we have covered since Term 2.***

******Do also note that this answer is longer than usual as I went heavily into the context/purpose of the sources in order to demonstrate that there are actually A LOT of things you can potentially say! But as always, you do not need to mention every single thing here to score well!***

1a. Compare and contrast Sources A and B as evidence that the Cuban Missile Crisis was shaped by superpower rivalry.

How are the sources similar? (1 similarity on the surface) Both sources are similar in pointing towards the Cuban Missile Crisis being shaped by superpower rivalry in the greater cold war context, with Cuba being a focal point for the superpowers in their competition for influence as well as in the arms race. This is seen from Source A as Castro claims that “Khrushchev told me that after the missiles have been deployed in Cuba, Kennedy would have to swallow it”, implying that Khrushchev’s (and the Soviet Union’s) objective in Cuba was to further their Cold War aims against the US. Source B also brings this out, as the Soviet government warns the US that “Cuba belongs to the Cuban people” and that “in carrying out the measures (like the naval quarantine) announced by President Kennedy, it is recklessly playing with fire...”, suggesting that once again, the crisis over Cuba had become intimately linked to the overall Cold War rivalry between the two sides.	State the point of similarity, quote and explain. <i>*Note that I skipped “why similar” in this answer. Not ideal but sometimes it happens.</i>
How are the sources different? (1 difference on the surface) However, sources A and B differ in terms of their perspectives on the USSR’s justification for intervening in Cuba. Source A focuses on suggesting that the USSR’s motive for intervening in Cuba was for their own political and security purposes in the context of their Cold War rivalry with the US. It implies that the Crisis had to do with the “correlation of forces at that time” – implying the strategic nuclear balance between the US and USSR, and also claims that the Soviet Union “needed that measure to ensure their own security” - to counter the Jupiter missiles in Turkey. Source B however suggests that the USSR’s motives were altruistic, that their intervention was just to defend Cuba and the Cuban Revolution, as seen from how it repeatedly claims that the US was trying to “deprive the Cuban people of the freedom and independence it had won” and so the USSR was “duty-bound to seriously warn the government of the United States” against it.	State the point of difference, quote and explain.
Why are the sources similar/different? (Compare the context, author, purpose/motives) The reasons for these differing perspectives can be detected from the differing context and purpose of both sources. Source A is from Castro’s reflections on the Crisis to Soviet officials in charge of USSR-Cuban relations in 1987. Despite this, Castro was actually quite critical of the fact that Khrushchev’s (and the USSR’s) engagement in the Crisis was not in the interests of aiding Cuba, but out of a greater concern to use Cuba as a pawn to protect their own political and security interests, as part of their superpower rivalry with the United States. This criticism of Khrushchev could be a reflection of the decline in	Address “why different” by contextualizing Source A through examining its Context, Author, Purpose (C-A-P)



Cuban-Soviet relations post-1962 after the Cuban Missile Crisis, as Castro was unhappy with Khrushchev's decision to strike a deal with Kennedy and withdraw the missiles without even consulting him, and also because much of the course and outcome of the Crisis was determined between the US and USSR, with Castro mostly sidelined. Furthermore, 1987, when this source was created, was in the midst of Gorbachev's attempts to reform the Soviet Union, with the climate of 'Glasnost' (openness) then perhaps further giving Castro the impetus to speak his mind about the Cuban Crisis to the Soviets. Thus, Castro's purpose here was perhaps to use this opportunity to absolve himself of blame in the Crisis, portraying himself as the reasonable one – "it was possible to achieve the same goals without deploying the missiles in Cuba", and helpful ally – "we were ready to make sacrifices for the Soviet Union", while pinning most of the blame for it upon Khrushchev who "caused that Crisis by his stubbornness". There could even be an element of face-saving by Castro here, as he claims "he cannot take the credit for the resolution of the crisis", instead shifting most of the responsibility to Khrushchev, while in reality Castro simply did not have much of a role at all in the negotiations throughout the actual 13-day Missile Crisis.

These possible motives in Source A are in direct contrast to source B, which markedly differs from A in its context and purpose. Rather than being a thoughtful reflection by one of the key players (Castro) in the Crisis years after as the Cold War was ending - that might also have the motive of absolving himself from blame, Source B is an urgent statement issued by the Soviet government to respond to the USA's actions at that point in time in October 1962, with the probable goal of wanting to justify Soviet intervention and criticize US actions. Further contextualizing the Source, Source B's specific purpose seems to be in response to the USA's "Naval Quarantine" on Cuba announced on 22nd October 1962. It is a lot more critical and condemnatory in its tone compared to Source A, perhaps reflecting the urgency of the situation then as the world was at the brink of nuclear war. It directly blames the USA for their actions to impose the blockade, and also appears to have the motive of disguising the Soviets' real intention in Cuba – which was to counter US Jupiter missiles in Turkey and re-establish strategic nuclear parity, under the excuse of generously helping Cuba, a country in need, against the USA's aggressive actions.

As such, while both sources do highlight how the Cuban Missile Crisis was shaped by superpower rivalry, they differ in terms of what the USSR's real motives in the Crisis were. Source A, Castro's take on the Crisis years later with the possible motive of clearing himself from blame, sees the Soviets getting involved due to their interests in the Cold War arms race. Source B, on the other hand, sees the Soviets' motives as altruistic, of helping out Cuba against an aggressive US, possibly as it was a statement released during the Crisis itself that clearly seeks to justify Soviet intervention in Cuba.

Address "why different" by contextualizing Source B through examining its Context, Author, Purpose (C-A-P).

Conclude on the similarities and differences and why this is the case.



1b. How far do sources A-E support the evidence that the Soviet Union was merely using Cuba as a tool for their own Cold War interests?

**Note that I have written this in a somewhat more “advanced” style – keeping the core principles of treating the sources as sets and contextualizing them accordingly, but also being much less robotic/mechanical in my writing! (I.e. it’s a lot less obvious that I’m following a template compared to the previous answers) So do pay special attention to the way I Cross-Refer/Link the sources and make the whole essay “flow” ☺*

***Just as with the part (a) answer, I have also included a tab at the side which provides some additional explanation and explains my thinking/what I am doing at each point of the essay, in accordance with the principles and frameworks that you have been taught for writing part (b) questions that we have covered since Term 2.*

****Do also note that this answer is longer than usual as I included a number of optional bits and also more extensive explanations of some of the sources for your understanding, and also provided both options for the conclusion. As always, you do not actually need to mention every single thing here to score well!*

Introduction Sources C and E support the assertion, while Sources B and D challenge it. Source A on the other hand brings a more nuanced perspective, as while it does mostly support the assertion, there are elements in the source that can be used to challenge it too.	As mentioned in class, in some situations you can also opt to claim that a source has “elements of both support/challenge” or “provides another perspective” etc.
Support Sources To begin with, Sources E and C support the assertion as they point out how the Cubans were being used by the Soviet Union for their own motives. Source E points out that Cuban leaders were “puppets and agents of an international conspiracy”, causing Cuba to be the “first Latin American country to become a target for nuclear war.” This is a direct reference to the situation in September-October 1962, where the Soviet deployment of missiles in Cuba was discovered by US spy planes, sparking the Cuban Missile Crisis. However, Source E’s claims might be questionable as this was a public address by Kennedy himself at the height of the Crisis on 22 October 1962. Kennedy arguably had a clear agenda here of wanting to convey the seriousness of Soviet actions in order to gain public support on the measures he was taking, namely the decision by him and EXCOMM to impose the naval ‘quarantine’ on the same day. His condemnatory tone towards Soviet actions and strong words directed at Cubans – “say a few words to the captive people of Cuba”, were a clear attempt at portraying US actions as just and Soviet actions as reckless and merely taking advantage of Cuba. Nonetheless, despite the clear motive and extreme anti-Soviet view, the Source can still be useful as evidence of US concerns, especially in conjunction with Sources A & C. In particular, the portrayal in Source C of the range of missiles from Cuba and the potential targets they could strike – encapsulated by the arrows pointing at US (and Mexican) cities marked with target symbols, substantially corroborates Kennedy’s point in Source E about the missiles being especially threatening as they were in an area known to have “a special and historical relationship to the United Nations” – a not-so-subtle reference by Kennedy to the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. However, despite C and E lending support to each other, Source C might be a little questionable too. Given that this was a pictorial representation of the Crisis by a US newspaper at the point of the Crisis itself, the alarming way the missile ranges and targets were	Start with my selected 2 sources for the support set – in this case Source E and C. Contextualise Source E with Context – Author – Purpose (C-A-P). Judge reliability/ usefulness of source E. Cross-reference/ link E to the next source – source C. Contextualise Source D with Context – Author – Purpose (C-A-P).



portrayed likely reflects the general climate of fear and alarm then amongst the US public, and so while C and E are both useful in giving us a picture of the situation from the US perspective then, they might not be fully reliable towards our assessment of whether the USSR was really just using Cuba as a tool. The relatively weak support set of Sources C and E thus far, however, are heavily strengthened by the perspective provided by Source A. This time, there are Cuban sources from years after the Crisis that surprisingly also corroborate to an extent with Kennedy's claims in Source E about Cuba being used. Source A, by Castro himself in a conversation with Soviet officials in 1987, openly blames Khrushchev for the Cuban Crisis, highlighting that Khrushchev "caused that crisis by his stubbornness" and also how he (Castro) "did not like the idea" of having missiles in Cuba but accepted it because he knew the Soviet Union "needed that measure to ensure their own security." He thus corroborates Kennedy in Source E to some extent by also implying that Khrushchev's intentions in the Crisis were for the Soviets own purposes, as it was "possible to achieve the same goals (of defending Cuba) without deploying the missiles". Source A has an interesting perspective as while it does show that Khrushchev was using Cuba, thus supporting the assertion, but the way in which Castro highlighted that he was "ready to make sacrifices for the Soviet Union" also challenge the assertion in some sense as it suggests that Castro was a willing participant and it was not entirely a case of the Soviets using Cuba as a tool. Going deeper, Castro might have some vested interests in blaming Khrushchev in this source, as he could be seen as attempting to distance himself from the whole Cuban fiasco, especially given the deterioration of Soviet-Cuban relations after the Crisis due to how Castro was mostly ignored in the course and resolution of the conflict. However, as this source was recorded in the late 1980s, years after the Crisis and in the climate of Gorbachev's push for 'Glasnost', it could still be seen as reasonably credible as Castro could be more willing to share his genuine opinions on the issue in such a climate, even to Soviet officials responsible for Cuban relations. As such, Source A is another strong addition to the support set, and the corroboration provided by the "Communist" perspective of A with the "US" perspectives in Sources C and E gives the support set much weight.	Judge reliability/ usefulness of sources C + E together. Cross-reference/ link C + E to the next Source – Source A. Explaining why A has elements of both support/ challenge. Contextualise Source A with Context – Author – Purpose (C-A-P). Judge reliability/ usefulness of sources A and the whole support set of A+C+E.
Challenge Sources Sources B and D, however, challenge the support set of A,C, E and the assertion. Source B, a Soviet government source on 23 October 1962, was probably a direct response to Source E. It directly challenges Kennedy's claims in E about the Soviet Union using Cuba, instead insisting that it was US meddling in the "destinies of other countries and peoples" that brought about the Crisis. It takes a critical tone towards the US and directly points the finger at the USA's actions, such as the "measures announced by President Kennedy" – referring to the naval quarantine, and also the "armed attack on Cuba of April 1961" – referring to the botched Bay of Pigs invasion, as proof that they were out to "make Cuba an American puppet." Yet, despite the obvious challenge to E and the support sources, Source B is a fairly weak source. Its reliability can be questioned as this was a source by the Soviet government in the early days of the Crisis, right after Kennedy announced the naval quarantine on 22 October, with the obvious intent to blame the US government for the whole crisis and to deflect criticism from their own actions – such as their deployment of MRBMs and IRBMs in Cuba in July 1962 which arguably sparked off the whole Crisis. Given that this statement by the Soviet government clearly ignores its own culpability in the whole matter, Source B by itself is a relatively weak source, though it can still be useful in providing us with the Soviet perspective on the issue then. Source B is however strengthened by a much stronger source – source D, in challenging	Cross-reference/ link from support set to challenge set (B+D), starting with Source B. Contextualise Source B with Context – Author – Purpose (C-A-P). Judge reliability/ usefulness of source B. Cross-reference/ link B to the final



the support set. Source D appears to validate some of source B's claims, particularly the idea that US actions such as the Bay of Pigs were blatantly aggressive to the Cubans and Soviets. Such actions confirmed to the Cubans that the "US intended to invade the island and remove Castro", and to the Soviets that they needed to provide aid to "prevent the overthrow of the young Cuban government." The perspective of Source D is especially valuable as it comes from an academic source many years after the Crisis. By 2006, the Cold War has long ended and the USSR has collapsed. With the increased availability of archival sources (especially on the Soviet side) in the post-1991 period, this source might have had more access to a greater variety of narratives and sources to come up with this view. Furthermore, the prevalence of the more balanced post-revisionist and post-1991 perspectives on the Cold War in this era could also further add to the general credibility of this source. As such, Source D provides a more weighted perspective in support of B to challenge the hypothesis.	challenge source – Source D. Contextualise Source D with Context – Author – Purpose (C-A-P). Judge reliability/ usefulness of source D and the whole challenge set of B + D.
Conclusion (Use EITHER method – not both pls) Method 1 (Judge which set preferred) In conclusion, despite the strength of Source D in the challenge set, the support set of sources is still to be preferred. Within the support set, Sources C and E are actually not particularly reliable by themselves. This is due to their rather one-sided anti-Soviet portrayals that were probably a reflection of the general mood of alarm during the midst of the Cuban Missile Crisis itself, given that these sources were created then. Yet, quite remarkably, the viewpoints provided by the newspaper in C and Kennedy in E is substantiated by a source years later from the Cuban camp – as highlighted by source A. Source A was based on Castro's reflections to Soviet officials in the climate of Glasnost, and thus came about in a context that was arguably more conducive for looking back on the issue and providing a frank appraisal. So despite there still being some motives behind Source A, this corroboration of multiple sources from different perspectives – US (C&E), and Cuban(A) all point to the idea of Khrushchev and the USSR having used Cuba in some way for Soviet interests, greatly enhancing the support set. Compared to this, the challenge set, while raising good points too, is substantially weaker. Source B should be taken with a pinch of salt, as this was a statement for public consumption released by the Soviet government in response to the US naval quarantine, and it conveniently (and glaringly) omits what the Soviets themselves did in deploying missiles to Cuba. Source D, while relatively reliable, merely suggests that the Soviets had some motive of genuinely wanting to defend the Cuban regime, it does not directly counter the arguments in the support set that the Soviets were chiefly using Cuba for their own interests. Thus, on the whole, the support set is stronger and to be preferred. Method 2 (Modify hypothesis) In the final analysis, the support set and challenge set both raise some valuable points. The support sources of A, C and E bring together a mixture of valuable perspectives from the US (C&E) and Cuban(A) viewpoints, both during the Cuban Crisis itself and also upon hindsight years later towards end of the Cold War. Yet, in all of these, the common strand is that the Soviets were indeed using Cuba as a tool for their interests, though the sources differ as to the extent of this. Source E from Kennedy and Source C from the US newspaper both heavily imply that the Soviets were just completely using Cuba for their strategic motives in the arms race, but Source A from Castro suggests that it was not entirely a case of "merely" using Cuba as Castro himself did agree to the missile deployment in the interests of Communist solidarity. The challenge sources of B	State which set is preferred. Explain why that set is stronger. Explain why the other set is weaker. Conclude on which set is stronger. Highlight the perspectives provided by one set. Highlight the



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and D, while weaker as a set overall, too bring another important perspective to the table – that the USA was hardly blameless in the Cuban Crisis and was also attempting to influence events in Cuba for their own objectives. The academic article of Source D corroborates the Soviet government’s statement in B about US actions in the botched Bay of Pigs invasion being a huge trigger for why Cuba turned to the Soviets in the first place. Thus, with the diverse range of perspectives presented by the sources, all of which have some value, the hypothesis should be altered to “Both the US and Soviet Union were using Cuba as a tool for their Cold War interests, though the extent of this differs depending upon the particular viewpoint of the parties involved.”

perspectives

**provided by the
other set.**

***Explain why there
is a better way of
seeing the whole***

***issue that
synthesizes both
(or more) sides of
the argument and***

***state your
modification of the
hypothesis.***