

Student Essay on Darkness at Noon and the Ideology of Communism

Darkness at Noon and the Ideology of Communism by Arthur Koestler

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Essay

Darkness at Noon by Arthur Koestler is set at the time of the Soviet Union, during the 1930's- after the Russian Revolution- when communism was at it's peak. At this time Stalin, who was referred to in the story as No. 1, was the leader of the Russian government. The story takes place in a prison cell in Moscow. The main characters in the story are Rubashov, Ivanov, Gletkin and No.1. Rubashov is an ex-commissar who is arrested after being accused of planning to assassinate No.1. Ivanov is an old friend of Rubashovs and is the first examiner for Rubashov's hearings; Gletkin is the second examiner. No. 1 is the communist party leader at that time, Stalin. He is very strict and does not allow anyone to have their own personal opinions, especially if they are against him. He is very powerful and creates a dictatorship in Russia. The main idea of the story is about history and communism. During the 1930's there was a movement known as the Great Purge, where Stalin put fear into every soviet that lived in Russia; people were brainwashed, then tortured and were forced to confess to a crime even if they did not commit one. This movement takes place at the same time as the story which gives us the main theme of the story, the ideology of Communism. The story talks about how, in the communist beliefs, the common people should not get higher education than the upper governing classes and therefore upper class citizens would be more educated. In the story Rubashov admits to planning to assassinate No. 1 because he is brainwashed to think he has done something wrong, even though he is completely innocent. The Communist Party had an oceanic sense, they did not have any feelings of the inhumane things they were doing against innocent people in this case Rubashov was arrested for a crime he had not committed. Rubashov's jail cell in prison represents his own mind and how he feels; he is confined in his own ideas. The prison as a whole represents the ideology of communism and the cruel wrongdoings of these ideas. Darkness at Noon shows how the Communist Party operated without caring about any one person's individual needs.