The Rise and Fall of Communism: Essay Question #1.

**If Stephen Cohen were to rewrite *Darkness at Noon*, would he present the characters of Rubashov and Gletkin differently or would he keep them basically the same?**

**Please take a stand on this issue and defend your response.**

Your response to this question should take the form of a coherent, concise, and well-organized essay of no more than four (4), double-spaced pages (normal font; normal margins).

This exercise challenges you to think about the issues that are at stake in interpreting Stalin’s purges. There is no single, correct response; there are only better and worse responses.

To justify your stand, keep in mind that your ability to persuade your reader is always dependent upon anticipating and rebutting the counterarguments that will be raised against you. Thus, while you are defending your own stance, you will also need to specify what you are arguing against.

Keep in mind that effective arguments are always simple and direct (e.g., “My argument is that….”). Also, a good essay always flows from beginning to end with no interruption or loss of focus.

Use your readings, lectures, and discussion sections to back up your argument concretely. When referring to your readings, use an easy citation form (e.g., page number). It is fine to use quotations if they are short, but make sure it is clear why you are using them. Quotations do not speak for themselves! Also, if you come to a point where you aren’t sure what you are saying, we will not be sure what you are saying either.

It's fine with me if you discuss this assignment with your classmates. However, your essay must be absolutely, completely, irrefutably, and unmistakably your own work.

Your completed essay is due next Friday, September 30. Please hand it in to your TA. Because you will have been working on this assignment, we will not have discussion sections that day. Thus, your TA will tell you how, when, and where to submit your paper. It is your absolute responsibility to make sure he receives it.

Good luck!

AJM