

Alan paton's cry the beloved country



Can you just imagine living in a world where racism is not only rampant, but legally forced. Racism stems that one race is more superior to the other which results in different ways people are treated. Alan Paton's Cry the Beloved Country points out that in South Africa, racism is a very big problem. And it has become worse because of the segregation laws that are being implied in the biggest and most developed city of the country. In this novel, segregation is known as the separation of housing and opportunities people get based on their race.

Cry the Beloved Country takes place during the time period of growing racial tension in South Africa. The novel is set in pre apartheid time period. This novel shows that non-whites are pushed towards the fringes of their own city, where housing is almost impossible to find. And therefore they are forced to live in temporary camps that quickly become their permanent shelter. This outskirts of the town is full of crime and sickness, which only worsens the poverty of the non-whites that are living there. Children die, women start doing work for men to earn money for their family, people commit crime in the seek of money, men are thrown in jail, increasing the resentment and poverty of the non-whites. Apartheid was the government's policy of racial segregation between Europeans and non-Europeans in Johannesburg.

The main goal of the Apartheid was to create a difference between the Europeans and non - Europeans in most of the activities that took place in the city, such as in education, housing and employment. The first incident of racial divide that we see in the novel is when Stephen Kumalo takes a train from Ndotenshi to Johannesburg. Most of the white people have their own

cars and that is why the trains are mostly filled with black people. But even though the white people have their own valuable source of transport, the train has been divided into 2 parts, Europeans and non-Europeans. The non-Europeans part is more crowded as very few black people can afford their own source of transport. The Europeans section in the train is considered to have more comfort compared to the non-Europeans section. The same can be said true for the facilities that are available in the city of Johannesburg.

The workers in the gold mines build modern buildings, beautiful houses and a functional and working hospital for the Europeans. Whereas in the black community, you will be lucky to find a roof above your head. Houses are not even close to what the black community offers. There is a hospital where you can find people lying on the floor, so close to each other that it is like a mission to not step over them. The black families go to Sophiatown, because that is the only place where they are allowed to live. But upon reaching there, they find a long waiting list to get a house, in meantime 2 or more families rent space in the same house or people build small tents for themselves to live in. The conditions in the city not only expose the black people to the difficult life in Johannesburg but also lack of resources lead majority of black men to get involved in crime.