

In *Cry, The Beloved Country*, Paton has written a literary masterpiece by combining a healthy confusion of pleasure and disquietude. He achieves this harmony through South Africa's racial struggles, a father's journey to find his family, and personification of the land. Paton skillfully weaves joy and discomfort to create a multi-faceted book that has incredible depth.

The main theme of the book is South Africa and her fight with apartheid and racism. Racism, even in its most primitive form, causes disquietude and uneasiness in the vast majority of people. However Paton does not simply depict explicit racial violence and desensitize the reader's emotions. Paton uses very subtle and delicate examples that accumulate and eventually immerse the reader into the apartheid and South Africa. For example, Paton does not show a bloody lynching of a family but rather the exploitation of unskilled native laborers in the mines by the Europeans. On the other hand, the racism and apartheid do not exclusively bring disquietude. Paton uses the racism to bring elation to his audience. Elation for the brave Europeans that gave rides to weary women, children and handicapped. Elation for the young white men in the reformatory helping to change the lives of native criminals and elation for the young white boy who brought milk to a village through his purity and indiscriminate view of the world. Paton wields racism as a double-edged sword to instill a sense of disquietude and joy in his audience.

Paton also uses the story of Stephen Kumalo's search for his son as another instrument to cause contrasting emotions in his audience. South Africa, as previously mentioned, is a land of little racial equality and this social obstacle nearly overwhelms Kumalo in his search for his son. Kumalo does not face a string of intense discriminatory encounters but rather comes across a string of racial barriers. Not only does Paton pit Kumalo against racism but also against family and strife. He finds that his sister, who he grew up with in a quiet rural home, has come to the big city (Johannesburg) and turned to prostitution and illegally selling alcohol. His son, who he also raised in the quiet countryside and raised to be a priest, has changed into a thief and murderer. These shocking revelations cause an immense amount of shock, disbelief, sorrow, and uneasiness in general, for the reader. But Paton again craftily turns this struggle into a meaningful and enriching experience. On his journey Kumalo learns many things about himself and his family; not all are bad. There is joy upon finding the son and sister. This is also joy to find that Kumalo's sister, Gertrude, and his son's future wife, are willing to turn from their evil ways and accept the simple and humble life outside Johannesburg.

In looking at the literary technique of Paton one finds he is a very skilled and apt writer. He uses personification of the land especially well to cause disquietude of joy in the reader. In the beginning of the book before the plot elements have been detailed, Paton writes short vignettes about South Africa and her general state. He gives life to the physical South Africa by writing that the mines tear up her flesh, how she will keep and care for men if they will keep and care for her, and when the rains come he writes that her red blood flows freely. When Paton writes of South Africa in pain due to the mines and poor land management, it effectively instills a restless unhappiness. The land is helpless and no one is doing anything for her. Her flesh is torn and her blood is shed. Then at the end of the book Paton resurrects her. The rains come, ending a devastating drought, and South Africa lives again. The rivers and streams flow just as her red blood. This image causes an emotional reverie in the reader.

In the final analysis, Paton is an extremely accomplished artist who can make his audience feel the two contrasting emotions separately and in unison. He creates a delicate equilibrium of pleasure and disquietude that makes for a very deep and rewarding read. This harmony exemplifies itself through the racism and apartheid in South Africa, telling the tale of a father's search for his family and the personification of his homeland.