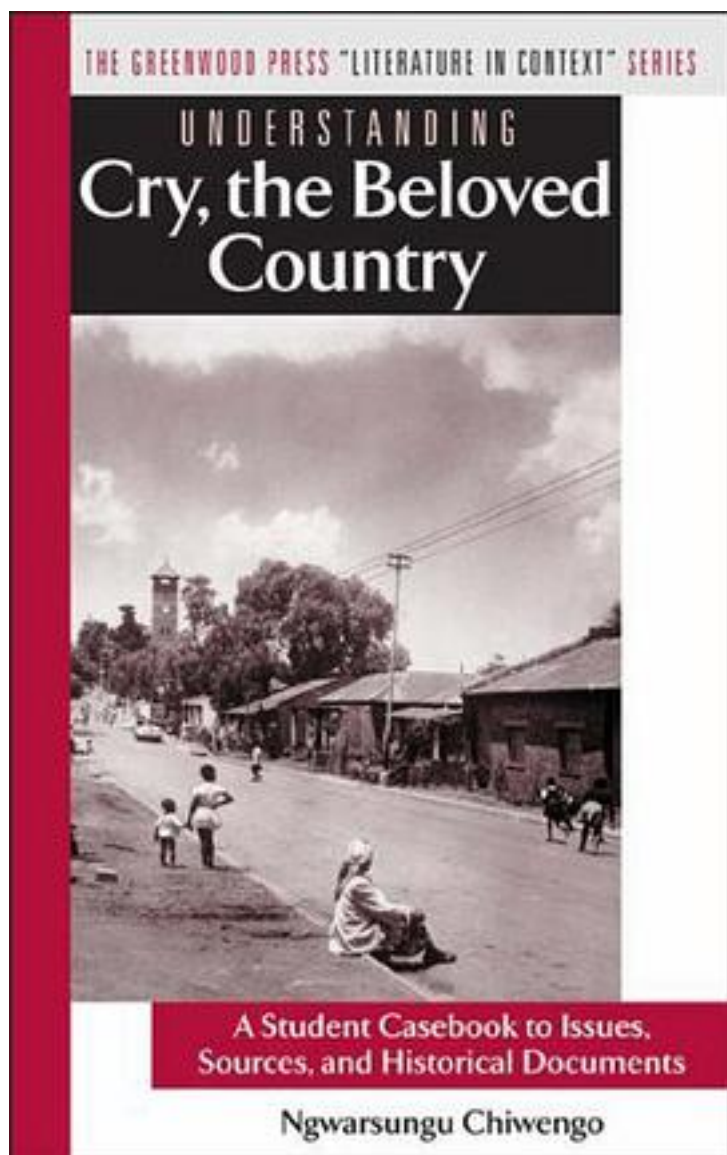


Understanding "Cry, the Beloved Country"



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Alan Paton's "Cry, the Beloved Country" (1948) is one of the most influential works of South African literature. Appearing at a time when the South African political system was being increasingly questioned, the novel drew worldwide attention to the horrors of apartheid, a political institution promoting segregation and discrimination. Because of its historical and social issues, the novel is sometimes difficult for modern students to understand. But, because of the enduring plague of racism, it is all the more important for students to come to terms with the issues Paton raises. This book overviews Paton's novel and relates it to its social and political contexts. The book begins with an analysis of the novel and gives attention to adaptations and films based on it. It, then, overviews South African history. This is followed by a selection of primary documents related to the origin of apartheid, the history and work conditions of miners, the social and economic conditions in urban and rural areas, the challenges facing South African women, and the state of post-apartheid South Africa. While the book does much to illuminate Paton's novel, it additionally helps students use the novel to explore important social concerns still present in society.

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目录:

[Understanding "Cry, the Beloved Country" 下载链接1](#)

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