

# University of Limpopo

School of language and  
communication

Name & initials: Shai RMD

Student no : 201114028

Course : English

Lectura : Dr Nkhela

Topic : Poems

Submission date: 28-02-14

## ***The Loneliness Beyond***

**Sipho Sepamla**

This poem is a personal account of the speaker who finds himself on the platform of a railway station at the end of a working day. He observes the worker or people who are committed in their jobs arriving; in line 1, 2 and 3 he observed that they come slowly at first but then, much like raindrops that begin to increase before a heavy downpour, like a torrent. He observes how each of them seem tired from the hurrying of the city to the point where they seem to all become part of a single mask less face. He hears them speaking and recognises the clicks of tongues and the laughter. When the train arrives and they start climbing into the coaches, he is reminded of sheep herded into a kraal. He stands there observing this moment and wonders at the lives these people live beyond this train station when they disappear into little holes of resting. He wonders at the loneliness beyond. He used the word "I've" which serves to separate the speaker from the crowd he is observing – and again thinking about "the loneliness beyond", it's also send a message that he too stands alone.

"Like raindrops pattering, then as a torrent the rush of feet". " this is a metaphor which is conveying people as rain drops since they that coming one by one but at the end they are many and in a large number.

"I've seen hearts palpitating", here we realise that since no one can see the heart, the speaker is observing through the action in which people are behaving, one can tell the situation they are in and again this can be realise through experience of life.

"Behind a single maskless face" this metaphor implies that these people are on the same level or have the same face.

"Tired from the hurrying of a city" here it's a personification the city cannot hurry only people can hurry, this is implying that the people who are in that city are always in rush.

"Laughter rising above the grouse of mouths that never rest

From grinding complaints” this is a personification since a grouse that not have a mouth. And the reason of complaining too much is because they never rest they are being overworked.

“Like sheep herded into the kraal they crowd numbered coaches” this is a metaphor where the crowd is compared to sheep.

Disappear into little holes of resting – this is satire.

This poem captures the effects of colonialism on the people of South Africa which is black people in particular. This poem shows that apartheid did not just affect people physically and politically but it also affected them emotionally and psychologically. In other words this discrimination left a deep scar that was left printed in them and it caused them to feel loneliness.

The loneliness is proved from the way they go and come back from their respective work where they are using their last energy to do hard work even when they are tired, they seem to have lost themselves and their purpose as human, and they show no dignity or stands.

“like sheep’s headed into a kraal” this show that they do not have full control of their lives. They are driven to do so, they have to go to work to able to afford the cost of living and they are not given a choice. They are faced with an indirect instruction on they should live. They survive the day by hoping for a better tomorrow but still the loneliness in their lives is a constant reminder that they are the victims of this system that is unfairly treating them.

### **The cry of South Africa Olive Schreiner**

#### **Wagenaarskraal, Drie Susters, 9 May 1900**

South Africa’s outcry in this short poem of Olive Schreiner’s outlines “The Cry of South Africa”, showing Olive’s strong feelings about the senselessness and cruelty of war, written with special reference to the Anglo-Boer War.

According to Gagiano (1993:106): from nattie cloete’s article.

Olive saw the British imperialists as the enemy to oppose, whereas the others identified the British as the justice-bearing civilisation which had to save South Africa

from the Afrikaners political aspirations. It's said that Schreiner's relation to politics can never be separated from her feminism.

"Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Schreiner was convinced that there were only "two questions in South Africa, the native question and the question - Shall the whole land fall into the hands of a knot of Capitalists" (*Letters*, 1987:278).

Scott, 1989:236).

Ill-health forced Olive to refrain from acting as war correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*, but her influence was noticeable in the publications of, for example, Edward Carpenter and Keir Hardy who portrayed the Boers as a simple, defenceless, non-capitalist society pitted against the full military and economic force of the British empire. Olive's ideas were fiercely attacked, for instance by Karl Pearson who justified the war as "a step towards the fulfilment of a Darwinian plan" (in First & Scott, 1989:242), as well as by Sydney Webb who regarded the war as "wholly unjust but wholly necessary" (*ibid.*). George Bernard Shaw wrote in similar vein:

Although fairly sympathetic in examining Schreiner's pleas for the Boer cause, First and Scott (1989:243-244) do criticise her views of the Boers as biased: In her revulsion from imperial policy she committed herself to its antagonist in the white man's war. Her political - and sentimental - attachment to the Boer, later the republican, cause had not been an easy adherence for an English-speaking South African. The more isolated she was for her heretical views, the more committed she grew. She had always lived as an outcast, one had to stand outside the mainstream for the sake of principle (*ibid.*:243).

At the beginning of the war, Olive hoped that the Boers would stay out of colonial possessions, but was against British annexure of the republics. She, however, was prohibited from speaking out openly because her brother Will was in office, but after the fall of his cabinet, she was outspoken against annexation and the burning of farms, as her speech at a conference in Cape Town (9 July 1900) reveals:

The day was coming when England would realise that the most deadly foes she had ever had were the men who, to satisfy personal greed and ambition, had produced this war. Unless England should immediately refute and reverse her entire course of action, every farmhouse which the British soldiers were burning down today was a torch lighting the British Empire in South Africa to its doom; every trench which the brave English soldiers dug was a part of the tomb of England; every bullet which took the life of a South African found its billet in the heart of the British Empire; every political prisoner of South Africa, who in his cell that night would dream of freedom, will one day realise it in his own person or that of his descendants (in Schoeman, 1992:100).

The aftermath of war left Olive lonely and embittered, feeling neither assimilated by the English or Afrikaners: "People who were everything to me during the war, more than my brothers and sisters when I had to try and help them get out of prison, or to get food, seem nothing to me now, and I am nothing to them" (in First & Scott, 1989:252). Olive resultantly turned to the native question, devoting the last of her failing powers to advocate a just dispensation for them in South Africa.

Schreiner's "sensitivity to all forms of oppression" (Clayton, 1986:7) is always apparent in her writing and speeches. Finally, Schreiner has earned herself a place in international intellectual circles. According to Leveson (1992:99) Schreiner should be viewed "not so much as a South African writer but as a participant in the field of international ideas" (Leveson, 1992:99).

# REFERENCE

- Beeton, R. 1987. *Facets of Olive Schreiner*. Craighall: Ad Donker.
- Chrisman, Laura. 1993. "Colonialism and Feminism in Olive Schreiner's 1890s Fiction". *English in Africa*, 20(1):25-38.
- Davey, A. 1978. *The British Pro-Boers 1877-1902*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- Klopper, D. Ed (2000). *Anatomy of Dark: Collected Poems*. Pretoria. UNISA Press.
- Moffett, H. Mphahlele, E. 2002. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *season come to pass: A Poetry Antropology for southern African students*. Cape Town. Oxford
- Schoeman, Karel. 1992. *Only an anguish to live here: Olive Schreiner and the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902*. Cape Town: Human & Rousseau.
- Schreiner, Olive. 1923(1992). *Thoughts on South Africa*. Ad Donder: Johannesburg.
- Schoeman, Karel. 1992. *Only an anguish to live here: Olive Schreiner and the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902*. Cape Town: Human & Rousseau.
- Schreiner, Olive. 1923(1992). *Thoughts on South Africa*. Ad Donder: Johannesburg.
- Schreiner, Olive. 1911. *Women and War*. Virago: London.
- Schreiner, Olive. 1987. *Letters (Vol.1)*. David Philip: Claremont.

