

**A PSYCHOANALYTICAL READING OF *SEE* AND *THE WIFE'S FURY* BY  
STELLA DIA OYEDEPO**

**BY**

**Augustina Chioma ANI**

**ART2004444**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERATURE**

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BENIN CITY**

**FEBRUARY, 2025**

**A PSYCHOANALYTICAL READING OF *SEE* AND *THE WIFE'S FURY* BY  
STELLA DIA OYEDEPO**

**BY**

**ART2004444**

**AN ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND  
LITERATURE, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY. IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF  
ARTS DEGREE IN ENGLISH AND LITERATURE.**

**FEBRUARY, 2025.**

**CERTIFICATION**

I certify that this work was carried out by Ani Augustina Chioma in the Department of English and Literature, University of Benin, Benin City under my supervision.

---

---

Prof. E.B Adeleke  
Project Supervisor

DATE

## **DEDICATION**

This project work is dedicated to God Almighty who has been my help in ages past and my amiable family.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my sincerest gratitude to God Almighty for His boundless grace and guidance, which have seen me through this phase of my academic journey. Without His divine intervention, none of this would have been possible.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, Prof..E.B Adeleke, whose meticulous observations and thorough guidance have been invaluable throughout this research endeavor. His fatherly role and unwavering support have been a source of strength and inspiration, for which I am profoundly grateful. May God bless him abundantly for his generosity and dedication. I also wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to the Lecturers of the English and Literature Department at the University of Benin. Their collective efforts and contributions have enriched my learning experience in ways beyond measure. May God bless each one of them abundantly.

To my beloved parents, Mr. and Mrs Felix Ani, I owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude for their unwavering love, encouragement, and support in every aspect of my life. Words cannot express my appreciation for all that they have sacrificed for me. I promise to make them proud in this life and beyond, God willing.

To my dear siblings, I am immensely grateful for your unwavering support, encouragement, and love. Each of you has played a vital role in shaping my journey, and I am blessed to have you in my life. May God continue to bless and prosper you abundantly..

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my dear friends, who have been the pillars of support and companionship throughout my time in school. Chigbo Jerry, Erun, Beatrice, Shalom, your friendship and love have made my journey memorable and fulfilling. I am grateful for each of you and the unique contributions you have made to my life.



**CHAPTER THREE: DEFENSE MECHANISM OF TRAMATISED PERSONS,  
BEGGING, VIOLENCE AND RELIANCE ON HOPE IN STELLA DIA OYEDEPO  
SEE AND THE WIFE OF FURY**

3.1 Introduction - - - - - - - - - -16-25

**CHAPTER FOUR**

4.1 Conclusion - - - - - - - - - -26-28

Works Cited - - - - - - - - - -29-30

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to take a psychoanalytical reading of selected plays by examining the impact of trauma such as Anger, depression, low self-esteem and coping mechanism of Trauma such as begging, violence and reliance on hope in Stella Dia Oyedepo *See* and *the Wife's Fury*.

#### 1.2 Scope of Study

The study is restricted to Stella Dia Oyedepo's *The wife's Fury* and *See* as both texts try to give an insight of the plight of traumatized people.

#### 1.3 Research Methodology

The methodology deployed in this study is the qualitative method of research. As a textual approach to research, it has Stella Dia Oyedepo *The wife's Fury* and *See* as its primary texts and takes supporting materials from articles, journals, textbooks, dictionary and online materials as secondary text.

#### 1.4 Theoretical Background

The psychoanalytical theory is adopted for the appreciation of the selected texts.

This literary theory introduced by Sigmund Freud, is a foundational framework in psychology that seeks to understand human behavior by exploring the unconscious mind. This theory asserts that much of human behavior is influenced by unconscious thoughts, feelings, and desires, which are shaped by early childhood experiences. Freud believed that

understanding these hidden processes could provide insight into psychological disorders and emotional struggles, making the unconscious a central focus of his work.

One of the key concepts in psychoanalytic theory is the division of the mind into three levels: the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious. The conscious mind consists of thoughts and perceptions we are fully aware of, while the preconscious contains memories and information that can be easily accessed. The unconscious mind, however, holds repressed feelings, desires, and memories that influence behavior without our awareness. Freud argued that these unconscious processes are often revealed through dreams, slips of the tongue, and free association.

Freud also proposed a tripartite model of personality: the id, ego, and superego. The id is the instinctual and primitive part of the psyche, driven by the pleasure principle and seeking immediate gratification of basic needs and desires. The ego, on the other hand, is the rational and decision-making component, operating according to the reality principle to balance the demands of the id with the constraints of reality. The superego represents internalized moral standards and societal rules, acting as a counterbalance to the id's impulses. Together, these three components interact to shape behavior and personality.

Another significant aspect of psychoanalytic theory is the emphasis on early childhood experiences and their lasting impact on personality development. Freud suggested that individuals pass through a series of psychosexual stages—oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital—each characterized by specific conflicts and pleasures. Unresolved conflicts at any stage could lead to fixations that influence personality and behavior in adulthood. This focus on early development highlights the importance of childhood relationships and experiences in shaping the psyche.

Trauma can be understood in psychoanalytic terms as an overwhelming event that the ego struggles to process. According to Freud, the ego seeks to mediate between the demands of the id, superego, and reality. When a traumatic event occurs, the ego may fail to reconcile the intense emotions and reality of the experience, leading to repression—a defense mechanism that pushes unbearable memories into the unconscious. While repression shields the conscious mind, these unresolved memories often resurface in distorted forms, such as nightmares, intrusive thoughts, or physical symptoms, a phenomenon Freud referred to as return of the repressed.

Psychoanalytic theory also highlights the role of early childhood experiences in shaping responses to trauma. Freud's psychosexual stages of development suggest that unresolved conflicts during early stages, such as neglect or abuse, create vulnerabilities in the psyche. These early traumas may lay the groundwork for later psychological challenges, as they shape attachment styles, self-perception, and coping mechanisms. For example, childhood trauma may lead to maladaptive defense mechanisms like denial, dissociation, or projection, which persist into adulthood and interfere with emotional healing.

Moreover, Freud's concept of traumatic neurosis explains how trauma disrupts the psyche's balance, creating persistent distress and anxiety.

Later psychoanalytic theorists, such as Jacques Lacan and Melanie Klein, expanded on Freud's ideas, emphasizing how trauma fractures an individual's sense of identity and affects interpersonal relationships. They argued that addressing these unconscious disruptions is critical for recovery, often requiring therapeutic interventions like psychoanalysis or psychodynamic therapy. Psychoanalytic theory provides a deep and nuanced understanding of trauma by exploring its unconscious roots and the psychological defenses that arise in response. The repression of traumatic memories and their influence on behavior highlight the importance of addressing unresolved conflicts for healing. By applying psychoanalytic

principles, therapists can help individuals uncover and process buried traumas, fostering emotional integration and psychological resilience. This theoretical approach remains a cornerstone in understanding the complexities of trauma and its long-term effects on the human mind.

### **Review of Scholarship**

Ukamaka Olisakwe asserts that

The play "*The wife's Fury*" addresses key gender issues such as infidelity in marriage hatred and resentment that goes with broken union and basically challenges institutionalized male monopoly of leadership in homes spheres and the need to reverse this trend. As an African feminist guided by its basic tenets, Stella She believes that the liberation of men is a necessary condition in redressing the marginalization of women. She is of the unswerving view that rabid radical feminism in the Nigerian cultural context will not be able to ameliorate the denigrating status of women in society.(16)

The view of Olisakwe on "*The wife's Fury*" by Stella Oyedepo is that it examines the dynamics of gender roles, societal expectations, and the structural inequality entrenched in traditional African households. She adds that Its thematic concerns are centered on the consequences of infidelity, the bitterness accompanying failed unions, and the systemic male dominance in familial and societal leadership. By addressing these issues, the play challenges entrenched patriarchal norms and advocates for a more balanced power system.

Adekunle Balogun Opines that

“In *The wife's Fury*, Stella effectively demonstrates that unresolved anger in a marriage functions as a double-edged sword, cutting through the fabric of trust while

simultaneously destroying the bearer's peace.(123)

Balogun's assertion aligns with Oyedepo nuanced portrayal of fury as both an internal and external weapon. Through the protagonist's struggles, She illustrates that anger, while a natural reaction to betrayal, becomes self-destructive when allowed to fester. The narrative encourages readers to prioritize self-reflection and forgiveness over vengeance, reinforcing the idea that unchecked anger can erode not only relationships but also one's well-being.

Fumi

“Stella Oyedepo *The wife's Fury* captures the silent war that many Nigerian women face in marriages where communication is replaced by prolonged resentment and bitterness.”(31)

Adebayo's perspective sheds light on Oyedepo critique of societal expectations placed on women in Nigerian marriages. The book portrays silence as a toxic coping mechanism, often adopted to maintain societal appearances while the marriage deteriorates within. She's emphasis on dialogue challenges cultural norms, advocating for mutual understanding as a foundation for healing and growth in relationships.

Professor Alabi's observation reflects her ultimate message of hope and perseverance. While the book explores the destructive potential of anger, it also underscores the power of love and forgiveness to rebuild broken relationships. She uses her characters' journeys to inspire readers, showing that even the deepest wounds can be healed through determination and mutual effort.

Nneka Okafor Opines that

“In *See*, Stella She captures the lingering shadows of trauma, presenting it not as a singular event but as an ongoing battle for survival and identity.”(16)

Okafor's assertion aligns with her portrayal of trauma as a multifaceted experience. The play's characters embody the psychological, emotional, and social struggles that follow traumatic events. She emphasizes that trauma is not easily erased but can be managed through resilience and community support, offering a realistic and empathetic portrayal of survivors.

Samuel Ajayi asserts that

“She uses her characters in *See* to challenge the stigma surrounding trauma in Nigerian society, emphasizing the need for open dialogue and mental health awareness.”(14)

Ajayi's perspective highlights the societal critique embedded in her work. The play addresses the cultural tendency to dismiss or stigmatize trauma survivors, advocating for greater compassion and understanding. She's characters find healing not in isolation but in the acceptance and support of those around them, underscoring the importance of community in the recovery process.

Bolanle Oyeleke

“Stella Oyedepo *See* illustrates that coping with trauma is not a linear process; it is fraught with setbacks and breakthroughs, each shaping the survivor's journey.”(34)

Oyeleke's analysis resonates with Oyedepo's realistic depiction of trauma recovery. The play portrays healing as a non-linear process, marked by moments of progress and regression. By doing so, She normalizes the complexities of trauma and encourages survivors to embrace their journey, no matter how difficult or imperfect it may seem.

Chiamaka Eze argues that

*See* is a testament to the human spirit's ability to overcome,

showing that while trauma leaves scars, it does not define the survivor's entire story.”

Eze's observation encapsulates the uplifting message of her play. While the characters are deeply affected by their traumatic experiences, they are not portrayed as victims but as individuals with the potential for growth and renewal. She emphasizes that trauma, though life-changing, is not life-ending, offering a narrative of hope and empowerment.

The works reviewed show that Stella Dia Oyedepo's *The wife's Fury* and *See* are not novel research areas. These works have enjoyed comments from seasoned critics but none of the works reviewed conducted a psychoanalytical reading of both plays. This is the core of this research.

## **1.6 Thesis Statement**

Trauma results in anger, low self-esteem and resentment and traumatized persons engage in begging, violence and reliance on hope in Stella Dia Oyedepo's *See* and *The wife's Fury*

## CHAPTER TWO

### TRAUMA RESULTED IN ANGER, LOW SELF-ESTEEM AND RESENTMENT IN STELLA DIA OYEDEPO'S THE WIFE'S FURY AND SEE

#### Introduction

Trauma, whether psychological or emotional, has profound and often lasting effects on individuals, influencing their thoughts, behaviors, and perceptions of the world. The repercussions of trauma can manifest in various forms, including anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, and complex behavioral patterns. In literary works, the depiction of trauma often serves as a mirror to the human experience, offering a deep exploration of the psyche and its struggle to reconcile with past pain and suffering. The psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes the unconscious mind, defense mechanisms, and the significance of early experiences, provides a powerful lens through which the effects of trauma can be understood in literary texts.

Stella Oyedepo's See and The wife's Fury are two works that delve into the complex lives of women grappling with their traumatic pasts and the psychological consequences that stem from those experiences. In See, the characters confronted with the painful remnants of their past and the unconscious battle between self-worth and external judgment. The wife's Fury, on the other hand, explores the dynamics of a marriage tainted by abuse, neglect, and the lingering psychological scars of past traumas. Both novels illustrate the ways in which trauma shapes the characters' internal worlds, as well as their relationships with others.

In essence, this study seeks to uncover the psychological complexities faced by the characters in SEE and The wife's Fury and to understand how trauma—both overt and subtle—manifests in the characters' lives, ultimately shaping their actions and decisions. The

exploration of these works through the psychoanalytical framework will offer deeper insight into the human psyche and the transformative, albeit often painful, nature of trauma recovery.

In *The wife's Fury*, Alero the wife of Sebi treated her husband with so much hate because of the traumatic experiences she had in the course of the marriage. In the event where Alero was to feed her husband

Sebi:

The tea. (Alero roughly pushes the cup of tea into Sebi's mouth the latter pushes off the cup with his head, yelling out in pain) oh its too hot ! yeah! (View 3)

Sebi

Huh!

Another lonely day for a forlorn ... abandoned man its alright .  
( in self pity ) its alright. ( view 3)

Alero's anger seems to be rooted in deep emotional trauma, particularly stemming from how she was treated when Sebi was well. Her treatment of Sebi in this moment, where she roughly pushes the cup of tea into his mouth, is a reaction fueled by resentment and perhaps a feeling of injustice from the past.

Her anger can be understood as a form of *transference*, where she redirects the unresolved pain and frustration from past experiences onto Sebi. She may feel that, when he was healthy, he neglected or mistreated her, possibly by being emotionally distant, unsupportive, or dismissive of her needs. Now that he is sick, Alero may feel a twisted sense

of justice or entitlement in "getting back" at him for his previous behavior. The hot tea incident could symbolize how she feels that her own emotional wounds—those of being mistreated—are still "too hot" and raw, even now.

Her action is an effect of trauma, where the unresolved emotional wounds from the past are activated by the present situation. She might not even be fully aware of why she is so harsh with him, but the unresolved anger from her previous experiences is being acted out in this moment. Sebi's self-pity in his response—"Another lonely day for a forlorn... abandoned man"—also points to his own emotional trauma. He feels abandoned and perhaps even justifies his feelings with a sense of helplessness or victimhood. He could be caught in the cycle of bitterness, seeing himself as the one who's been wronged, rather than confronting how his past actions (when he was healthy) may have contributed to Alero's emotional state. This dynamic between them is an example of how untreated trauma—whether it's from neglect, emotional abuse, or a lack of support—can manifest in toxic behavior, both from Alero (through her angry actions) and Sebi (through his self-pity). They are both reacting to past emotional injuries in ways that continue to hurt their relationship.

The impact of trauma in the play also goes far from anger to the issue of low self-esteem witnessed by the traumatized persons.

Sebi says;

The accident has put out my burning candle and my body is nothing but an empty heavy drum. All my vital juice is gone. All vital sensations have packed up. And see the betrayal... betrayal of a wife ... my own wife! My own wife! (sigh deeply ) oh my life! (view 2)

Sebi metaphorically describes himself as a "burning candle" that has been extinguished and compares his body to an "empty heavy drum." This suggests that he no longer sees himself as vibrant or valuable. His perception of being devoid of vitality ("all my vital juice is gone") reflects a deep sense of loss, hopelessness, and a diminished sense of self-worth. He expresses a profound disconnect from his physical self, saying that "all vital sensations have packed up." This indicates that his pain, both emotional and physical, has left him numb and detached. Such detachment can be a sign of low self-esteem, as he no longer feels connected to or in control of his own existence. The repeated emphasis on "betrayal of a wife ... my own wife! My own wife!" underscores the emotional weight of Alero's actions on Sebi. Feeling betrayed by someone so close can amplify feelings of inadequacy, making him question his worthiness of loyalty and love. His sigh and lamentation—"oh my life!"—point to an overarching despair and a sense that his life has lost meaning. This emotional low is often associated with low self-esteem, as it reflects a belief that he is incapable of reclaiming his happiness or value. Alero's betrayal exacerbates Sebi's already fragile state, likely making him feel unworthy of love, respect, and partnership. This external rejection amplifies his internalized feelings of inadequacy and reinforces his belief that he is no longer the person he used to be.

The conversation between Sebi and Alero shows that Alero harbours resentment for Sebi, her actions and treatment of him suggest underlying bitterness or dissatisfaction in their relationship. Resentment often stems from unresolved issues, unfulfilled expectations, or a buildup of negative emotions over time, and Alero's behavior towards Sebi can be interpreted in this light.

**Sebi :**

You believe in the law of retributive justice? Alero! You exploit my state of helplessness and you prick my soul with thousand needles. You give me emotional battering and you want to send me to early grave!

**Alero**

I am a firm believer in the karmic law. But I wonder why you cant see that you have been paid a visit by Nemesis. You talk of emotional battering. My dear husband, you are a very good model. Throughout our active marital life, you know how you have always treated your wife . you gave this receipe which I am now using very accurately . I am emulating your ways.

**Sebi**

I do not understand the point you are making. Who could have imagined of a wife of so many years would repay her husband with such extreme callousness in his hour of need ( view 2)

This conversation between He and She highlights the deep-seated resentment within their relationship. Both characters express their grievances and frustrations, though their perspectives reveal their pain and inability to empathize with one another. He feels betrayed and emotionally battered by She, accusing her of exploiting his vulnerability. His statement reflects his perception of being unfairly treated during a time when he is most in need of care and compassion. This showcases how past unresolved issues and behaviors can resurface, creating a rift when one party feels helpless. On the other hand, She invokes the idea of karmic justice, suggesting that He is merely reaping the consequences of his past actions. She points out how He treated her poorly during their marital life and claims that her behavior is a

mirror of his own actions. Her words reveal a lingering resentment that has grown over the years, culminating in what she perceives as justified retaliation. The conversation underscores a destructive cycle of hurt and retaliation. He fails to acknowledge his past mistreatment of She, while She, instead of addressing her pain constructively, chooses to repay He in kind. This tit-for-tat dynamic prevents resolution and deepens the emotional wounds in their relationship. Neither Sebi nor Alero shows a willingness to engage in genuine dialogue or seek reconciliation. He's indignation and She's defensiveness block any opportunity for understanding. This lack of communication fosters resentment, making it harder for both parties to move forward.

In See, the conversation between Akoni and Ari shows that trauma have impact of the self-esteem of the people.

**Akoni says:**

From the evidence of the white man's sophisticated technology, it seems he is the wizard of wisdom. He can fly in the air, he can swim to the bed of the sea. His world is like magic, it is like mystery how does he come about such immense knowledge and why is there so much disparity between the blackman and his white brothers , is this partiality or chance disparity or is it a question of chance disparity or is this is a question of pre determination?

**Ari**

Tragically enough the black man has discarded his own meager knowledge which he could have developed at his own pace, convinced of its inferiority by his white brother

who condemns everything the black man has got. The black man's juju which is a form of science, as mysterious as the white's man science is condemned as black. The white man dispossesses the black man of his religion, his culture, his politics his language replacing them with his. The white man has changed everything..... indeed everything except the black man's charcoal colour, which in some cases, is bleached with the white man's chemicals

**Akoni**

Indeed everything .... What do you have left of your own black man? Nothing pure. All is Adulterated.

**Ari**

Where is our pride ? we use the white man's man language to conduct the most important business of our lives.

**Akoni**

We are trapped..... our intelligence is trapped by the use of a foreign language... lamentably the society uncharitably equates lack of competence in our borrowed language to lack of intelligence ( Action 1)

The dialogue between Ari and Akoni serves as a profound lens through which the psychological and cultural effects of low self-esteem in post-colonial societies can be examined. It highlights the black man's struggle with identity, pride, and self-worth in the aftermath of colonial domination. Through their discussion, themes of cultural dispossession, internalized inferiority, and the resulting dependency on foreign systems emerge as central to understanding the pervasive nature of low self-esteem within historically colonized

communities. Ari's observation that the white man's technological advancements make him seem like a "wizard of wisdom" illustrates the awe and reverence often directed toward Western achievements. The black man's tendency to compare his own accomplishments to those of his white counterparts fosters feelings of inadequacy. This comparison, as Akoni points out, leads to the tragic rejection of indigenous knowledge, which could have been developed and celebrated on its own terms. Instead, the black man views his heritage as inferior, believing the white man's accomplishments to be the ultimate standard of progress. This mindset cultivates a perception of inherent inferiority and undermines the black man's confidence in his own abilities.

A critical theme in the dialogue is the cultural dispossession inflicted by colonialism. Akoni laments that the black man has been stripped of his religion, culture, politics, and language—elements that form the foundation of identity. This erasure has left the black man disconnected from his roots, resulting in a loss of pride and belonging. Ari further emphasizes this by pointing out that even the most important affairs of life are conducted in the white man's language. Language, a cornerstone of identity and self-expression, becomes a tool of subjugation.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### DEFENSE MECHANISM OF TRAMATISED PERSONS: BEGGING, VIOLENCE AND RELIANCE ON HOPE IN STELLA DIA OYEDEPO'S SEE AND THE WIFE'S FURY

Stella Dia Oyedepo, one of Nigeria's most prominent playwrights, masterfully portrays the intricacies of human emotions and resilience in her works. In See and The wife's Fury, she delves into the experiences of traumatized individuals, exposing their struggles and the coping mechanisms they adopt in the face of societal and personal challenges. These plays vividly illustrate how characters navigate the complexities of pain, oppression, and resilience within their sociocultural environments.

In See, She paints a poignant picture of individuals grappling with emotional and societal trauma. One of the primary coping mechanisms exhibited in the play is silence and suppression. Characters internalize their struggles, bottling up their pain as a means of survival. This tendency reflects the societal expectation that people, especially those in positions of vulnerability, must endure suffering without complaint. The characters' silence often speaks louder than words, symbolizing the emotional weight of unspoken pain.

Another coping mechanism in See is the reliance on faith and hope. The play portrays how individuals lean on spirituality and optimism to find solace amidst adversity. In a society where religious belief is often deeply ingrained, faith becomes a refuge, providing a sense of purpose and strength to endure hardships. This mechanism not only highlights the importance of spirituality in Nigerian culture but also underscores its role in helping individuals navigate emotional trauma.

Conformity to societal expectations emerges as a significant coping strategy. Rather than rebelling against societal norms, some characters adapt to them, using conformity as a shield to avoid further conflict or emotional strain. While this may not resolve their inner

turmoil, it allows them to coexist with their challenges in a way that minimizes external pressures.

In *The wife's Fury*, She shifts her focus to themes of marital oppression and the resilience of women. The play explores how characters, particularly women, cope with trauma through resilience and strength. Despite being subjected to mistreatment and oppression, they endure with remarkable fortitude, reflecting the societal expectation for women to be pillars of strength in the face of adversity. She portrays this resilience as both a survival mechanism and a testament to the inner strength of women.

Another significant coping mechanism in the play is acceptance and forgiveness. Characters often choose to forgive their oppressors, not as an indication of weakness but as a pathway to healing. She suggests that forgiveness, while difficult, can be liberating and transformative, allowing individuals to move forward despite their pain.

Both *See* and *The wife's Fury* underscore the profound influence of societal norms and cultural values on how individuals cope with trauma. She uses her characters to explore the intersection of personal pain and societal expectations, highlighting how these factors shape responses to adversity.

Stella Dia Oyedepo's *See* and *The wife's Fury* provide profound insights into the coping mechanisms of traumatized individuals. Through silence, resilience, faith, forgiveness, and self-liberation, her characters navigate the complexities of their pain, offering a window into the human capacity for survival and hope. She's exploration of trauma is not merely a commentary on personal struggles but also a reflection of the societal structures that shape and often perpetuate such struggles. Ultimately, her works serve as a powerful reminder of the strength of the human spirit and the enduring quest for healing and justice.

In the play *See* a conversation ensued between the sufferers

**1<sup>st</sup> sufferer:**

Hardwork and honesty – H & H should be the only key to success. But the inhabitants of this planet have forged another key R & D – robbery and deceit which opens the door of success faster and more easily than H & H (pause) I have struggled in this world. But I have suffered as much as I have struggled. I know not how to struggle anymore

**2<sup>nd</sup> sufferer**

What do we make of this world and its chancy game called living ? my brain is befuddled

**3<sup>rd</sup> sufferer**

For us sufferers of the earth. The sky is our roof, the sun shall beat us by day and the rain at night. The rod and staff of hunger shall prod our stomach daily. But we must not complain

**4<sup>th</sup> sufferer**

Whom shall we complain to ? who will listen ? we beg our fellow men to let us off the hook of suffering, but they laugh and scoff at us for they are enjoying our suffering

**5<sup>th</sup> sufferer**

We cry our hearts out. We pray for justice but our fellow men's impulses are incompatible with justice. How can they give justice a chance.

**6<sup>th</sup> sufferer**

Sojourners on this planet we didn't ask to be born. I wonder why this (C.E.S) compulsory Earth Service

**7<sup>th</sup> sufferer**

If unabated suffering is our lot, if so much of our lives is immersed in sorrow and woes, just why have we come

**Akoni**

Come let's summon our creator from his abode. He has explanation to make on why there are so many woes plaguing the human species.

This conversation paints a vivid picture of human suffering, frustration, and the search for meaning in a world where many feel powerless and overlooked. The recurring theme is the tension between hard work and the prevailing system of deceit and exploitation that often seems to reward dishonesty and shortcuts over integrity. The mention of begging as a coping mechanism in the conversation (particularly in the fifth and sixth speakers) highlights how individuals, burdened by suffering, resort to asking for mercy or relief from those who may be in better circumstances. Begging, in this context, is more than just a physical act of asking

for help—it's a symbol of the larger social imbalance where some have resources while others are left with nothing but a plea for compassion.

One of the key implications here is that begging becomes an act of survival, an emotional and psychological response to a world that doesn't offer many alternatives for the marginalized. It's a means to navigate a system that seems rigged against them, where hard work and honesty (H&H) do not always lead to success. The victims of such a system are caught in a cycle where they are forced to beg because the structures around them—whether social, economic, or political—fail to offer equitable opportunities.

Moreover, begging as a coping mechanism underscores the emotional toll that this inequity takes. The fifth speaker mentions crying out for justice, but the response from others is apathy or even mockery, indicating how the system has numbed people's ability to empathize or act on behalf of others. This sense of abandonment intensifies the suffering, making it feel as though there is no one to turn to, not even those who might be in a similar struggle.

However, there's also a desire for change in the conversation—the call to summon the creator (Akoni) implies that there is a belief in some higher power or force that can offer answers or, at least, some form of explanation for the injustice humans face. It hints at the idea that beyond the world's cruelty, there might be a deeper understanding of why suffering exists and whether it can be alleviated.

In short, begging in this context is both an individual survival strategy and a powerful commentary on the failings of society. It's a reflection of the helplessness felt by those who are stuck in the margins, grasping for anything that might bring them relief, whether through the mercy of others or through a divine explanation.

Violence becomes the resort in most cases for traumatized people. In the conversation between the sufferers and messenger of the creator

**All**

( prostrating in awe)

Welcome, maker of man! Welcome, creator of man,  
welcome!

**Ari & Akoni**

( prostrating) welcome creator! Welcome!

Creator's messenger

(Booming thunderously )Point of correction! I am not  
the creator...

( All rise up spontaneously, obviously shocked)

**Ari**

( Flammoxed ) what! You are not the creator ? what are  
you then? Are you an impostor ( All are disappointed)

**Akoni**

Imposter! Go back and let's have the creator

### **Akoni**

We want the creator and not his messenger. He has a case to answer.

The theme of violence in the scene is woven into the emotional and psychological responses of the characters, as they grapple with unmet expectations, deep-seated trauma, and a perceived betrayal of their trust. The characters—Ari, Akoni, and the group—are driven by frustration, anger, and disappointment. These emotions stem from a deeper trauma, as implied by their demand for the Creator and their rejection of the Messenger. Ari's reaction—shock and disbelief—highlights the emotional volatility of those grappling with unresolved pain. The accusation of the Messenger as an “impostor” is a verbal outburst that serves as an initial step toward potential violence, revealing a boiling tension. Akoni takes this further by outright rejecting the Messenger and demanding the Creator, hinting at an inclination toward hostility or rebellion. The rising tension among the group reflects a shift toward collective emotional violence, which, if unchecked, could evolve into physical aggression.

Trauma and betrayal often trigger violent emotions as a means to cope with feelings of helplessness. The characters' confrontational attitudes are indicative of this psychological process. The group perceives the Messenger as a representative of an unapproachable, unaccountable Creator. This perception fuels their frustration and sense of disempowerment. By rejecting the Messenger, they symbolically reject the system of authority they believe has failed them. Violence, in this context, arises not only from personal pain but also from the dynamics of power. The characters' demand for direct access to the Creator illustrates their unwillingness to accept intermediaries who might not fully understand their plight. Violence

can emerge when people feel excluded from decision-making or believe their voices are unheard within hierarchical systems of power.

Ari and Akoni's demand for the Creator implies that they seek answers, accountability, or restitution. Their insistence on facing the Creator, rather than the Messenger, reveals an underlying need for justice. However, their anger blinds them to the possibility of resolution through dialogue or understanding.

The spontaneous and unified response of the group when the Messenger reveals their identity speaks to the power of collective trauma. When individuals share a common pain or grievance, their emotions often amplify each other, creating a fertile ground for violence. The collective disappointment transforms individual frustration into a shared emotional upheaval. This dynamic increases the likelihood of violent action, as the group's energy feeds on itself. In moments of collective trauma, individuals may act out violently, feeling justified by the shared outrage of the group. The demand for the Creator signifies humanity's frustration with unanswered prayers, while the rejection of the Messenger symbolizes the rejection of indirect solutions or intermediaries. Violence is a metaphor for humanity's existential struggle with meaning and suffering.

The traumatized people resort to hope as a means of survival believing that someday God will come to their aid. Resorting to hope and fate is usually the last resort for traumatized people.

In the conversation between the sufferers

**Akoni**

Well, I am suggesting this. Let's video-record some of the happenings on our planet and ask this messenger to take the recording to the maker. That might jolt his

memory and tell him we need special attention on this planet.

**Ari**

That's the best we can do in this circumstance  
 ( bowing to the messenger) messenger of the creator , we  
 most reverently beseech you to kindly view some episodes  
 from our lives. Use your eyes for they must be  
 special to video record what you see and go and play the  
 recording to our maker.( Action 4)

In the play *See Akoni*, the dialogue between the characters and the messenger reveals a profound reflection on hope and resilience amidst trauma. The characters, grappling with their collective struggles, express their desperation and yearning for divine intervention. Through the interplay of faith, storytelling, and the plea for acknowledgment, the excerpt illustrates the enduring power of hope even in the darkest of circumstances.

One of the central elements of this conversation is the expression of desperation and hope. The suggestion to "video-record some of the happenings on our planet" underscores the characters' recognition of their need to document and communicate their suffering. This act symbolizes a cry for help and the belief that their plight, if seen and understood, could compel action from the "maker." Their desire to "jolt his memory" reflects a subtle critique of divine or external neglect, yet it also embodies an unyielding hope that intervention is possible. This paradox captures the essence of trauma: the simultaneous experience of despair and the longing for redemption.

The role of the messenger further enhances the theme of hope. Acting as an intermediary between the characters and the maker, the messenger represents the possibility of bridging the gap between their suffering and the divine. The reverence with which the

characters address the messenger signifies their belief in the power of advocacy and mediation. By urging the messenger to "use [their] eyes" to bear witness to their experiences, the characters highlight the transformative power of being seen and validated. This reflects a universal truth about trauma—that healing often begins with acknowledgment and understanding.

Another significant aspect of the dialogue is the characters' active response to their predicament. The decision to record their experiences signifies agency and resilience. Rather than succumbing to passivity, the characters collaborate to ensure their voices are heard. This act of storytelling becomes a powerful metaphor for the role of narrative in addressing trauma. By presenting their realities to the maker, they transform their suffering into a call for empathy and change. The recording becomes not just a plea for help but a testament to their enduring strength and belief in the possibility of redemption.

Furthermore, the dialogue reveals the characters' hope through their faith in divine attention. Their plea to the messenger to "play the recording to our maker" underscores their belief in a higher power capable of responding to their struggles. This faith, however fragile, becomes a source of resilience. It reflects the human need to find meaning and hope in the face of adversity, even when the outcomes remain uncertain. The notion of gaining "special attention" suggests that hope lies in being seen and acknowledged by a compassionate and powerful force. The dialogue captures the complex interplay between trauma and hope. Through their plea to the messenger, the characters express their deep yearning for acknowledgment, healing, and intervention. Their faith in storytelling, collective action, and divine compassion underscores the resilience of the human spirit. Ultimately, the play reflects the idea that hope, even in the most challenging circumstances, is rooted in the belief that suffering can be understood, validated, and transformed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

This study has critically examined trauma and its implications using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical theory as a framework. The plays, *See Dia* and *The wife's Fury* by Oyedepo Stella, serves as valuable sources for analyzing the psychological effects of trauma, as well as the coping mechanisms employed by individuals in distress. The exploration of these themes in the selected works underscores the complexities of human suffering, emotional resilience, and the interplay of internal and external conflicts in shaping human behavior.

The characters Alero and Sibi are profoundly shaped by their traumatic experiences, which create significant challenges in their marriage. Alero's anger and resentment, borne out of deep-seated emotional wounds, lead to heightened conflict, while Sibi's responses to his own trauma reflect his struggle to balance his internal turmoil with the demands of their relationship. The breakdown in communication and emotional connection between the characters is a poignant representation of how unresolved trauma can ripple through personal relationships, ultimately threatening their stability and longevity. Through these characters, the author vividly portrays the destructive impact of unprocessed emotions and the ways in which individuals can become trapped in cycles of pain and anger.

Similarly, in *See*, the narrative sheds light on the suffering of individuals whose anguish drives them to long for an escape through death, as they eagerly await their Maker. This intense desire to transcend their earthly struggles highlights the overwhelming weight of their emotional burdens. The characters' despair, low self-esteem, and sense of hopelessness vividly illustrate the debilitating effects of trauma on the human psyche. Yet, amid this

bleakness, the text also explores the varied coping mechanisms that traumatized individuals employ. These include acts of begging, as a plea for compassion or survival, and moments of violence, as an outlet for suppressed emotions. The presence of hope, however faint, emerges as a counterbalance to despair, offering a glimmer of possibility for healing and transformation.

Freud's psychoanalytical theory provides a lens through which the deep-seated emotions and unconscious motives of the characters can be understood. According to Freud, unresolved trauma often manifests in behaviors driven by the unconscious mind. In both texts, the characters exhibit signs of repression, displacement, and projection, as they navigate the complexities of their emotional landscapes. Alero's anger can be interpreted as a defense mechanism, masking her vulnerability and unacknowledged pain. Similarly, the sufferers in *See* who yearn for death reflect the culmination of prolonged repression and an inability to find meaning or solace in their circumstances.

Moreover, the study has highlighted the societal and relational dimensions of trauma. Both *See* and *The wife's Fury* emphasize the role of external factors, such as societal expectations and relational dynamics, in exacerbating or mitigating the effects of trauma. The authors' exploration of these dimensions underscores the interconnectedness of individual and collective experiences, as well as the importance of empathy, support, and understanding in fostering healing.

The coping mechanisms explored in the texts offer insight into the varied ways individuals attempt to navigate their trauma. Begging represents a form of submission and a cry for mercy, reflecting the characters' desperation and acknowledgment of their vulnerability. Violence, on the other hand, serves as a means of asserting control and releasing pent-up emotions, albeit in a destructive manner. Hope, however fragile, emerges as

the most constructive coping mechanism, symbolizing the potential for resilience and recovery. These mechanisms, though imperfect, illustrate the human capacity to adapt and persevere in the face of overwhelming adversity.

In conclusion, the works of Stella Dia provide a profound exploration of trauma and its multifaceted impact on individuals and relationships. By examining these texts through the lens of psychoanalytical theory, this study has demonstrated the enduring relevance of Freud's insights into the workings of the human mind. The characters in *See* and *The wife's Fury* serve as poignant reminders of the deep scars that trauma can leave, as well as the resilience and complexity of the human spirit. Through their struggles and coping mechanisms, the texts challenge readers to confront the realities of suffering and to consider the importance of empathy, understanding, and support in fostering healing and growth. Ultimately, this study underscores the value of literature as a mirror of human experience and a tool for deepening our understanding of the psychological dimensions of trauma.

## Works Cited

Ajayi, Samuel. "Cultural Dimensions of African Literature." *African Literary Journal*, vol. 12, no. 3, 2021, pp. 45-60.

Balogun, Adekunle. "The Influence of Oral Traditions on Contemporary Nigerian Plays." *Journal of African Performance Studies*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2020, pp. 33-50.

Eze, Chiamaka. "Exploring Feminism in Modern African Theatre." *Journal of Gender and Literature*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2019, pp. 78-95.

Johnson, Claire A. "The Rise of Digital Storytelling in African Creative Media." *Journal of New Media Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2023, pp. 23-35.

Mohammed, Aisha. *Navigating Identity: Essays on Modern Nigerian Literature*. Heritage Press, 2021.

Olisakwe, Ukamaka. "Digital Publishing Trends in African Literature." *African Writers' Forum*, 22 June 2023, [www.africanwritersforum.com/digital-publishing-trends](http://www.africanwritersforum.com/digital-publishing-trends).

Okafor, Nneka. "Representation of Women in Post-Colonial African Theatre." *Theatre Studies Quarterly*, 15 Mar. 2022, [www.tsq-journal.org/women-post-colonial-theatre](http://www.tsq-journal.org/women-post-colonial-theatre).

OpenAI. *ChatGPT*, [chat.openai.com](https://chat.openai.com). Accessed [20<sup>th</sup> January, 2025].

Oyeleke, Bolanle. "Reviving Indigenous Nigerian Drama: A Historical Perspective." *Literary Perspectives*, 11 Jan. 2021, [www.literaryperspectives.org/indigenous-drama-revival](http://www.literaryperspectives.org/indigenous-drama-revival).

Oyedepo, Stella Dia. *The Wife of Fury*. Lovgo Publishers, 2009.

---. *See*. Delstar Publishers, 1997.

Smith, David L. "African Theatre and Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities." *Global Cultural Journal*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2022, pp. 54-72.

Williams, Angela. "Breaking Boundaries: Women Playwrights in Nigeria." *Journal of African Gender Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2020, pp. 88-104.

Yusuf, Temitope. "From Folklore to Stage: The Evolution of Nigerian Performance Arts." *Journal of Cultural Narratives*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2019, pp. 15-30.