

OUR LEADERS HAVE MURDERED SLEEP

By Godwin Tsa



In William Shakespeare's tragic play, "Macbeth", a brave Scottish General by name, Macbeth, received a prophecy from three witches that one day he will become King of Scotland. Consumed by ambition and spurred by his wife, Macbeth murdered King Duncan and takes the Scottish throne to himself. That murderous act later became his undoing as he became wracked with guilt and paranoia to the extent that he could 'sleep no more', because "he murdered sleep".

After Macbeth murdered King Duncan, he was so unnerved that he could not move. Staring at his hands that were dripping with blood, he told his wife that as he left the King's chamber, he heard two men in another room: "There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried 'murder!'"(2.2.20). To him, it's as though those men, even in their sleep, could see his bloody murderer's hands. Moments later, still hallucinating about the frightening things that happened to him, Macbeth told his wife (Lady Macbeth), that he

thought he heard a voice telling him that he would never sleep again because he had "murdered sleep".

"Me thought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more! Macbeth doth murder sleep"-the innocent sleep, Sleep knits up the raveled sleeve of care. The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath, Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course, Chief nourisher in life's feast-(2.2.32-37).

Sleep is a notable theme in Macbeth, especially because Macbeth kills King Duncan while he is asleep. This scene shows Macbeth distressed about murdering an innocent man while he was vulnerable. Moreover, Macbeth has taken advantage of what is supposed to be a peaceful state, and for the rest of the play sleep will represent a state of danger not so unrelated to death. Macbeth, being a tragic hero, who receives more retribution than he deserves, instigates sympathy among the readers as he is tormented by his guilt.

This is very central because guilt will always recoil upon the culprit. A guilty conscience, a blameful, responsible feeling of culpability leaves Macbeth

guilt ridden.

The bloodbath that followed the heinous crime swiftly took Macbeth and his wife into the realms of madness and death.

Sleep can be interpreted in various ways. First of all, sleep can symbolize tranquility and peace. By murdering sleep, Macbeth has murdered his internal peace, he would then live in fear and guilt in the days to come.

Moreover, Duncan can represent peace and goodness of his country. When Macbeth murdered Duncan, he brought the people of Scotland into turmoil, thus, murdering the tranquility and peace of his country.

Sleep can also represent innocence, purity, and conscience. He murdered his true conscience as he killed Duncan, and the last vestiges of his honour died at the end of his speech.

In our country Nigeria, our leaders have "murdered sleep" through bad leadership and divisive politics that have thrown the country into a state of anarchy and turmoil.

By dividing the country along ethnic and religion lines, our leaders have murdered the peace and tranquility of the nation, and they shall "no more sleep".

Those sponsoring and funding terrorism, kidnapping and other acts of insurgency in the country have equally murdered sleep and like Macbeth, nemesis will catch up with them.

Our leaders who are responsible for the perennial and prolonged strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU, youth unemployment, and high cost of living, have murdered the peace and tranquility of this country.

Nigeria is teetering on the precipice of a failed state through the complete lack of enthusiasm and indecisiveness displayed by the government of the day in dealing with security challenges and poor state of the economy. Those responsible for this sorry state of the country have murdered sleep.

Those promoting same faith

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