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Climate Justice: The Cry of the Earth, the Cry of the Poor (The Case of the Yolanda/Haiyan Tragedy in the Philippines)

Abstract

In the Encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis relates the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Literally, cry is a metaphor pregnant with meanings. It can mean the feeling of pain and suffering, the experience of sadness and loss calling out for relief and sympathy. The earth and the poor have equally endured this tears of lamentation. The cry is not just an expression of pain but also an appeal to responsibility. Thus we need to take seriously the groaning of our ecology and humanity. In the context of climate change, the global warming affects the whole world but it specifically affects the poor more. The poor people vulnerable to exposure to disaster as demonstrated by the supertyphoon - internationally known as Haiyan and locally known as Yolanda - tragedy that worsens the poverty of the already poor. The poor daily depend on the earth for their sustenance and livelihood. Moreover, they are mostly endangered in times of disaster. Since they are made from light and cheap materials, their properties are easily damaged or even totally destroyed in times of disaster. Scholars argue that climate change is an issue of justice. Thus, they propose climate justice in distributing responsibility caused by global warming and eventually taking responsibility to the earth as a common home.

Climate Justice: The Cry of the Earth, The Cry of the Poor (The Case of the Yolanda/Haiyan Tragedy in the Philippines)

Delfo C. Canceran, OP

Introduction

When the Pope visited the Philippines from January 15 to 19, 2015, as one of his itinerary, he planned to go to Tacloban to console the survivors in that area devastated by Yolanda/Haiyan supertyphoon. Although the Pope was already warned of the impending tropical storm on January 17, he nonetheless pushed through with his plan to visit the place. In particular, he went to Taclocan because he wanted to show his solidarity and sympathy with the survivors ravaged by that typhoon. The impending bad weather did not deter nor worry the Pope in going to that city. He braved the storm and proceeded as planned. After celebrating mass in Taclabon City, the Pope headed straight to the town of Palo to have lunch with the survivors of the calamity. The Pope expressed his deepest sympathies and offered words of consolations to the survivors. Although his stay in the place was shortened by the typhoon, his message was clear – his compassion for the survivors.

Last May 24, 2015, Pope Francis released his long awaited Encyclical on ecology entitled *Laudato Si* (Praised Be To You) bearing the subtitle “On Care for Our Common Home”. In that Encyclical, the Pope reaffirmed the biblical and theological teachings of the Church on creation as a gift of God the creator entrusted to human beings for stewardship. He criticized the anthropocentric and technocratic development paradigm prevailing in the global order that led to ecological devastation. These two events – the visit and the Encyclical - are not unconnected or merely coincidental gestures of the Pope. They are intimately related: The visit is in preparation for the release of the Encyclical and a justification for the message of the Encyclical that we should care for the earth as our common home. The damage wrought by climate change is devastating to the whole ecology – natural and human. This climate change triggers the writing of this Encyclical that defends the plight of the earth and the poor. The supertyphoon Yolanda/Haiyan is already a warning sign on the devastating effect of this global warming on the whole earth.¹

In this paper, I shall relate the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Both cries are not separated but linked. The linkage becomes evident in times of disaster as demonstrated by the impact of the supertyphoon Yolandas/Haiyan that ravaged the island of Eastern Visayas region in the Philippines. The impact of the supertyphoon was felt by the whole people living in the island but the adverse effect of that disaster was suffered more by the poor. The already poor

¹ We have been using the phrases ‘climate change’ and ‘global warming’ interchangeably. They are related but they are not identical. *Global warming* refers only to the Earth’s rising surface temperature, while *climate change* includes warming **and** the “side effects” of warming—like melting glaciers, heavier rainstorms, or more frequent drought. Said another way, global warming is one symptom of the much larger problem of human-caused climate change. Caitlyn Kennedy and Rebecca Lindset, “What’s the Difference between Global Warming and Climate Change,” *Climate Government*, June 17, 2015, accessed February 17, 2018. <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/whats-difference-between-global-warming-and-climate-change>.

were more and more impoverished and debilitated because their livelihood was devastated. The basic argument boils down to the need of climate justice that summons the rich countries that pollute more the environment to pay for the damage they incurred to the poor countries. This responsibility cannot be substituted nor be ignored because this climate change and global warming have damaged the ecology as a relationship between the natural environment and the human organism. The rich countries did not just split the relationship between the natural and the human, they also took advantage of the natural and human in their lust for profit at the expense of our ecology. This climate justice focuses on the responsibility of the rich countries to the poor countries. However, the goal is the achievement of sustainability of the environment and the stewardship of humanity.



*Map of the Philippines Highlighting Eastern Visayas*²

I. The Cry of the Earth, the Cry of the Poor

The former Philippine Lead Negotiator Yeb Saño addressed the body on the opening of the United Nation Climate Change Summit held in Warsaw last November 11, 2013.³ In his address, he challenged the participants or representatives to act on climate change and not to procrastinate on global warming. As he was delivering his speech, he broke into tears pleading for an urgent action to prevent the escalating destruction wrought by climate change. He was referring to the supertyphoon Yolanda/Haiyan that directly and worst hit Eastern Visayas region in the Philippines. That cry lend to deaf ears because representatives and delegates were more concerned on the financial burdens incurred in turning to alternative sources of renewable energy and not to the adverse effects of climate change on the earth. In that agreement, the governments of the rich countries are obligated to provide funding to the governments of the poor counties to

² Wikipedia, "Leyte," accessed December 19, 2018. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leyte>.

³ Naderev Saño, "Typhoon Haiyan: We cannot Afford to Procrastinate on Climate Action," Accessed February 27, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/11/typhoon-haiyan-philippines-climate-change>.

help them adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. Since these rich countries emit greater amount of pollution, they are obligated to take the bigger responsibility. The cry is not only a plea for mercy in behalf of the survivors and victims of that supertyphoon, but a summon to climate justice that cries out for ethical responsibility.⁴

This cry echoes what Pope Francis affirms in his Encyclical “the cry of the earth is the cry of the poor.”⁵ This cry is also prophesied by Leonardo Boff in his book, “Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor”.⁶ Both Francis and Boff came from Latin America – one from Argentina and another from Brazil - who have witnessed the destruction of the environment in their own country and continent. Both of them are influenced by stance of the Latin American Bishops Conference on environmental issue.⁷ Both of them recognize the damage wrought by the neglect and abuse of ecology and the impact of that damage on the earth and the poor. Ecology involves the relationship between the environment and humanity. Thus, they are interwoven and inseparable.⁸ The destruction of the earth furthers and aggravates the debilitating poverty of the poor. The neglect and abuse the earth is tantamount to the neglect and abuse of the poor.⁹

II. The Tragedy of the Supertyphoon Yolanda/Haiyan

As early as November 7, 2013, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) announced and reported that the country is bracing for an impending supertyphoon internationally named Haiyan and locally named Yolanda. The following day, that supertyphoon directly hit the Eastern Visayas region (Samar and Leyte Provinces) in the Philippines. Although the people were warned beforehand, some of them remained in their houses since they thought that they could bear that typhoon. People have already witnessed and suffered typhoons in the past and they were able to hurdle or brave them. Unknown to them is the disastrous impact of this typhoon that devastated their lives, houses and livelihoods. This unparalleled typhoon really stunned and terrified them.¹⁰

⁴ Levinas is a philosopher of the Other./ Although he deals with human beings, we can extend his arguments to ecology as the other of human being. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Of God who Comes to Mind* (California: Stanford University Press, 198). See also Emmanuel Levinas, *Outside the Subject* (California: Stanford University Press, 1993).

⁵Pope Francis, *Laudato Si: Study edition* (Makati: Word & Life Publications 2015), p. 32.

⁶Leonardo Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* (New York: Orbis Books, 1997).

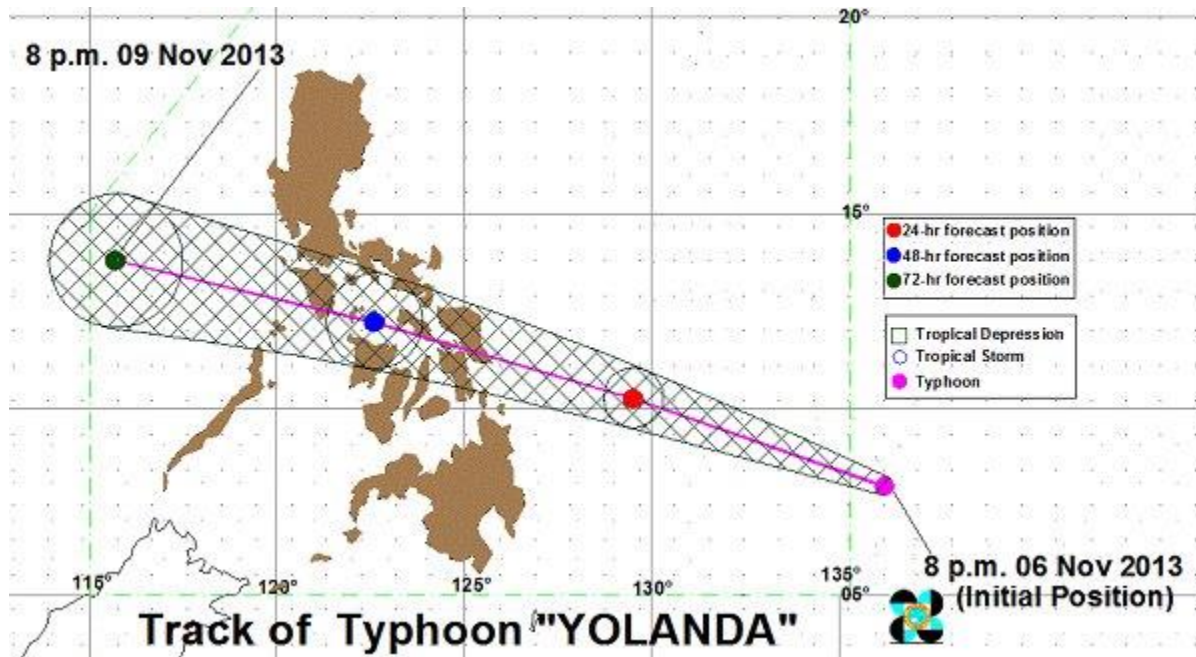
⁷ Pope Benedict, “LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI TO THE BISHOPS OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN,” accessed March 4, 2017. <http://www.celam.org/aparecida/Ingles.pdf>. See especially the section 2.1.4 subtitled, “Biodiversity, Ecology, the Amazon, and the Antarctic.”

⁸ See Michael Scott, *Ecology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁹ Leonardo Boff and Virgil Elizondo, “Ecology and Poverty,” in *Concilium* Vol. 5 (1995).

¹⁰National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, “Final Report RE: Effects of Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan),” accessed February 27, 2017.

[http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1329/FINAL_REPORT_re_Effects_of_Typhoon_YOLANDA_\(HAIYAN\)_06-09NOV2013.pdf](http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1329/FINAL_REPORT_re_Effects_of_Typhoon_YOLANDA_(HAIYAN)_06-09NOV2013.pdf).



Track of Supertyphoon Yolanda/Haiyan¹¹

Science has given us a dark picture of climate change. Climate change refers to the greenhouse effect on earth. This greenhouse effect depends on the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. “When this concentration increases, less radiation is released back into space and as a result it becomes hotter in greenhouse earth.”¹² Climate change is an anthropogenic (human-made) intervention on earth caused by carbon emission from burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas.¹³ The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) enumerates some physical indicators on climate change such as changes in the “surface temperature, atmospheric water vapor, precipitation, severe events, glaciers, ocean and land ice, and sea level.”¹⁴ Climate change can bring about global warming that can heat up the earth and aggravate the weather condition due to carbon emission. “Science tells us that simply, climate change will mean more intense tropical storms. As the Earth warms up, so do the oceans. The energy that is stored in the waters off the Philippines will increase the intensity of typhoons and the trend we now see is that more destructive storms will be the new norm.”¹⁵

¹¹ Frances Mangosing, “Storm Signal 1 Hoisted Over 13 Areas in Visayas and Mindanao,” *Inquirer.net*, November 7, 2013, accessed December 19, 2018. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/521855/storm-signal-1-hoisted-over-13-areas-in-visayas-mindanao>.

¹² Dominic Roser and Christian Seidel, *Climate Justice: An Introduction* (New York and London: Routledge, 2017), p. 2.

¹³ The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) defines climate change as the “change in the state of the climate [...] that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer.” IPCC, *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 17.

¹⁴ IPCC, *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 130.

¹⁵ Fiona Harvey, “Extreme weather will strike as climate change takes hold, IPCC warns,” accessed February 27, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/nov/18/extreme-weather-climate-change-ipcc>.

The Yolanda/ Haiyan is described as supertyphoon that caused calamity to the community. The IPCC defined calamity as the “[s]evere alterations in the normal functioning of a community or a society due to hazardous physical events interacting with vulnerable social conditions, leading to widespread adverse human, material, economic, or environmental effects that require immediate emergency response to satisfy critical human needs and that may require external support for recovery.”¹⁶ Calamity refers to both natural event and human impact of the disaster. Thus, calamity includes hazard due to the impact of the disaster, vulnerability of the people exposed to such disaster and recovery of the people affected by the calamity. Although the people – rich and poor alike - are similarly exposed to calamity, the impact is unequal. The rich can easily cope with the impact due to their available resources. The income of the rich come from different sources such as rent from their property, salary from their employment, savings from banks and income from their business. Considering their vulnerability, the poor are more harmfully affected by it. In this case, the poor are more helpless to the exposure to disaster because of their capacity to withstand and cope with the calamity. The lives, properties and livelihoods of the poor are at risk because their lives are exposed to numerous disasters, their houses were made from substandard materials and their livelihoods are dependent on the soils and the seas. The “developing countries [...] are likely to be worst afflicted in part because of their geography, but also because they are less well prepared for extreme weather in their infrastructure and have less economic resilience than developed nations.”¹⁷

III. The Cry of the Earth

The cry of the earth is a metaphor for anguish and sadness as the earth is compared to the cry of human being. It is primary human being that sheds tears but this cry has been extended or attributed to the earth as well. Human being cries because he or she suffers from grief, sorrow and pain. Thus, the cry of the poor encapsulates the groaning outbursts of the ordinary people such as farmers and fishers who are directly affected by climate change. The destruction of the environment affects their livelihood because they directly rely on the earth for their survival. The fishers depend on the waters in catching fishes and the farmers depend on the soils in growing their crops. This dependency of the ordinary people to the earth exposes them to vulnerability in times of disasters. They have become resilient in their constant exposures to disaster; nonetheless, there are still adverse effects of disaster in their livelihood. This connection between the natural environment and the human lives is fragile and precarious in times of calamity. When they are exposed to such extreme weather conditions, the poor suffer a lot because it affects their survival.¹⁸ This adverse effect is immediately felt by the poor since they live in a daily basis of

¹⁶ IPCC, *Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation*, p. 5.

¹⁷ Fiona Harvey, “Extreme weather will strike as climate change takes hold, IPCC warns.”

¹⁸ The Philippine is rapidly moving away from predominantly agricultural country. Agriculture continues to decrease its contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of the economy. However, agriculture remains to employ a big number of workforce of the population in the country. Cielito F. Habito and Roehlano M. Briones, “Philippine Agriculture over the Years: Performance, Policies and Pitfalls,” accessed August 24, 2018. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPHILIPPINES/Resources/Habito-word.pdf> (Accessed August 24, 2018). Cristina David, “Philippine Agriculture: Its Path to Modernization DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES NO. 95-29,” Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIIDS) October 1995, accessed August 24, 2018. <https://dirp4.pids.gov.ph/ris/dps/pidsdps9529.pdf>.

catch and harvest. In fact, once calamity ensues, their livelihood is devastated and they become broke and indebted.

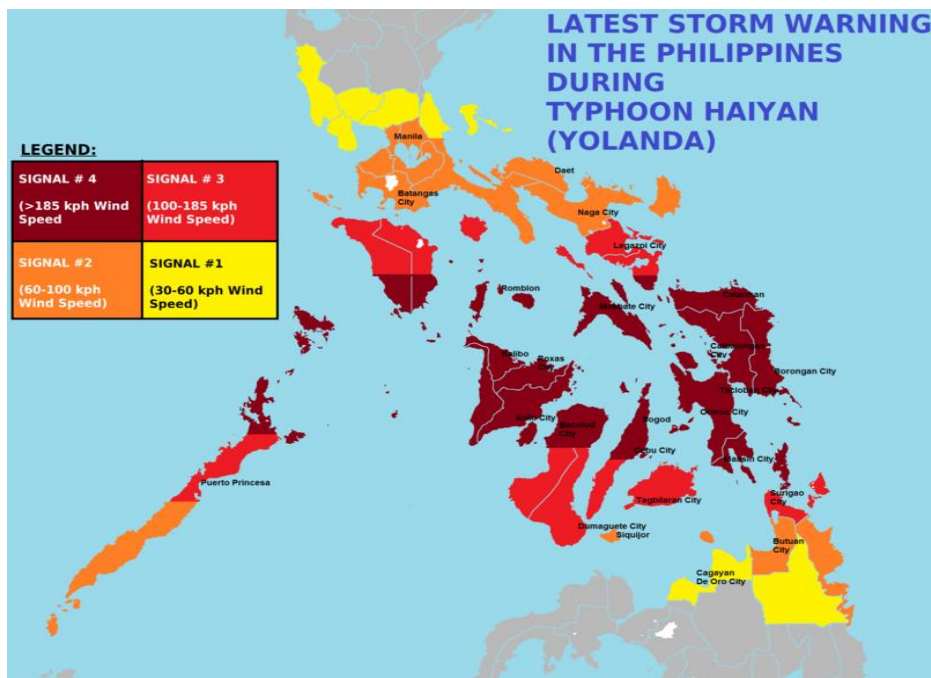
The earth also cries because of the unabated climate change due to carbon emission that produces global warming on earth. The earth has been inflicted with pain by the so-called development aggression that relies on fossil fuels and coals that ‘rapidify’ progress at the expense of the environment. This development aggression relies on mass production of goods and services for human consumptions in the market. The earth has been objectified by the market because it has only been reduced as a source of profit that further produces resources for productivity of businesses and consumption of people.¹⁹ In the long run, this progress warms up the earth and forfeits its economic gains. When the Philippine representative cried before the United Nation summit on climate change, he cried not only because of an emotional outburst of frustration, but an emotional appeal to the body to heed the urgent need to address the climate change by reducing the use of fuels and coals. However, that cry did not transform the mindset of the majority of the members but persisted on the development aggression models that endanger the earth and worsen the climate condition.

IV. The Cry of the Poor

The cry is a clamor of the poor. The poor such as farmers and fishers directly depend on the natural environment for their livelihood. The farmers till their land in planting their crops. The fishers plunge into the sea in catching fishes. When typhoon hit the land and the sea, it inevitably devastates their livelihoods that immediately impacts on their survival. The crops of the farmers are destroyed and the catch of the fishers are reduced. In effect, they are deprived of their harvests and therefore they starve. Their houses are only made from light materials and therefore they are easily wrecked by the winds. The poor families are displaced during typhoon and evacuated to a secured place. The schools are destroyed and therefore the education of the children is interrupted. Their possessions are carried by the current or the wind and they are left with practically nothing. Thus, the basic needs of the poor – food, shelter, clothing and education - during typhoon are literally taken away from them. They are doubly impoverished in times of disaster. Of course, they received humanitarian help during relief operations. However, those reliefs work temporarily since after the typhoon they return to their places and start from scratch. In fact, even during disasters, they are disadvantaged by corrupt politicians and unscrupulous leaders who, instead of giving the reliefs to the poor, steal them or exchange them into cheaper goods. The poor are always taken for granted.²⁰

¹⁹ Henry Sue, *Climate Justice: Vulnerability and Protection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 180-194.

²⁰ Raynaldo Santos, Jr., “COA: Yolanda Fund, Donations did not Reach Victims,” accessed September 14, 2018. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/68525-coa-quick-response-fund-donations-yolanda-victims>.



PSWS Map in the Philippines during the Haiyan/Yolanda Super typhoon²¹

According to the record, the path of the Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan hit the region of the Eastern Visayas consisting of three main islands, namely, Samar, Leyte and Biliran traditionally having high poverty incidence. Since the region comprising the provinces of Biliran, Eastern Samar, Leyte, Northern Samar, Samar and Southern Leyte is vulnerable to disaster, the communities are further impoverished. In effect, the typhoon can worsen their poverty. For example, the Eastern Visayas region registers the third highest percentage of poverty incidence among families in 2012 at 37.2%. The percentages of poverty threshold and poverty incidence per province are the following:²²

V. Poverty Threshold and Incidence in Eastern Visayas (Region VIII)

Province	Per Capita Poverty Threshold (PhP), 2012	Poverty Incidence among Families (%), 2012
Biliran	8,553	20.7
Eastern Samar	10,054	59.4

²¹ CalamityDisasterWatch, “PSWS Map in the Philippines during the passage of Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda),” accessed December 19, 2018.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typhoon_Haiyan#/media/File:Yolanda_PSWs_Map.png.

²² Rappler.com, “Fast Facts: Eastern Visayas,” accessed March 15, 2017.

<http://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/43341-fact-file-eastern-visayas>.

Province	Per Capita Poverty Threshold (PhP), 2012	Poverty Incidence among Families (%), 2012
Leyte	8,593	31.9
Northern Samar	9,511	43.7
Samar (Western Samar)	7,881	36
Southern Leyte	9,805	36.4

US \$1= PhP37.60 in 2012

Poverty Threshold and Poverty Incidence in Eastern Visayas²³

Moreover, Eastern Visayas region is primarily an agricultural area whose major crops include rice, corn, coconut, sugarcane and banana. Majority of the population work in agricultural sector and earn their livelihood from farming and fishing.²⁴ The 2011 record of the Department of Agriculture (DA) stated that agriculture, fishery and forestry accounted for 20.49% of the regional economy. In that year, rice and coconut were the leading agricultural commodities of the region. During the Yolanda/Haiyan typhoon, the crops of the farmers were destroyed and therefore they were broke. They have invested their money in those crops but they did not get any return of investment. In this sense, the farmers suffered the biggest blow because their crops (rice and coconut) were damaged by the typhoon. Coconut products topped the list with P 17.9 billion worth of crops lost while rice came in second with P 3.2 billion in production loss. These losses were foremost felt by the farmers who are deprived of income from their investment. These farmers cannot cope with this damage immediately since they did not have any earnings or savings to rely on. They will be indebted for the next cropping season and their harvests, if there is any, will only use to repay their debts. When they lost their crops, they also lost their capital. To continue their farming, they have to loan from rich people in the locality having exuberant interests. In such a situation., it aggravates their poverty of the poor all the more.²⁵

According to the Philippine Statistical Authority (PSA), the factor of natural calamities has regressed Eastern Visayas area to the “poorest region” in the country in 2012. However, with the devastation wrought by the Yolanda/Haiyan typhoon in 2013, the economic situation has worsened. Eastern Vizayas posted the highest inflation rate pegged at 10.2 % and decrease

²³ Rappler.com, “Fast Facts: Eastern Visayas.”

²⁴ Department of Agriculture, “Agriculture and Fishery Modernization Plan (2012-2017) Eastern Visayas.” accessed August 24, 2018. (<http://www.da08.da.gov.ph/index.php/da-nfrs/profile>).

²⁵ Pia Ranada, “Farmers, Fishermen Left Out in Yolanda Recovery Efforts,” accessed September 14, 2018. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/49789-coconut-farmers-fishermen-haiyan-recovery>.

agricultural productivity placed at P 58,000 per hectare.²⁶ Furthermore, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) reported that 2 million people are wallowing in poverty in Eastern Visayas region. The report noted two factors that account for this plight, namely, the rising prices and the inflation rate contributed to this worsening poverty. The poverty level grew to 54.9 % following the onslaught of Yolanda/Hayian in 2013 compared to 45.2% in 2012. Additionally, the destruction brought by Yolanda/Hayian led to the rise of inflation rate to 4.3% in 2013 from just 3% in 2012. These two factors are attributed to or worsened by the destruction brought by Yolanda/Hayian. Thus, after Yolanda/Hayian, the poor have become desperately poorer in Eastern Visayas region. Thus, more than half of Eastern Visayas population cannot earn the minimum income needed to meet their basic needs. After Yolanda/Hayian, the poor have become desperately poorer in this region. When prices go up due to scarcity of goods in the market caused by the typhoon, the poor cannot afford to buy their basic needs and therefore there is no choice left for them but to endure the hunger.²⁷

VI. Climate Justice²⁸

Pope Francis and Leonardo Boff endorsed integral or holistic ecology as a way out from this environmental crisis.²⁹ Integral ecology recognizes the interconnectedness and interrelationship of nature and society, humans and nonhumans on earth.³⁰ The prevailing binary worldview of nature and society, humans and nonhumans has created this superficial separation. In this separation, human society dominates the relationship and subordinates the nonhuman nature. This anthropocentric paradigm provides ‘man’ (I used the word intentionally) the justification and legitimacy of the abuse and misuse of the earth. Man dominates the earth and abuses nature. Integral ecology corrects that binarism or dualism. Integral ecology highlights the articulation or relationship between environment and humanity. This conceptualization affirms the inseparability of nature and society. That inseparability is symbiotic in the sense that human beings are responsible to the natural environment that provides them their subsistence and survival. Human beings are made last in the order of creation because they are entrusted the stewardship of creation and this stewardship is necessary for the wellbeing and flourishing of life

²⁶ Sarwell Q. Meniano, “E. Visayas Dislodges ARMM as Poorest Region,” BusinessWorld Online, posted on March 9, 2015, accessed March 25, 2017. <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Nation&title=e.-visayas-dislodges-armm-as-poorest-region&id=103965>.

²⁷ Joey A. Gabieta, “Poverty Worsens in Eastern Visayas,” accessed March 25, 2017. <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/680120/poverty-worsens-in-eastern-visayas>.

²⁸ Climate Justice and environmental justice are closely connected fields. We can say that climate justice is a subfield of environmental justice. Environmental justice primarily focuses on discriminatory distribution of environmental burdens and benefits based on categories such as race, age, gender, class, species, etc., while climate justice deals with both anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric concerns. Ecojustice (ecological justice) brings together social justice and respect for nature issues together. See David O. Kronlid, *Climate Change Adaptation and Human Capabilities: Justice and Ethics in Research and Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 22-23.

²⁹ Pope Francis uses the expression ‘Integral Ecology’, while Leonardo Boff employs ‘Holistic Ecology’. See Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si*, pp. 95-111 and Leonardo Boff’s *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, pp. 41-42.

³⁰ See Pope Francis, *Care for Creation: A Call for Ecological Conversion*, ed. Giuliano Vigini (New York: Orbis Books), 2016). Leonardo Boff, *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm* (New York: Orbis Books, 1998).

on earth. In this case, there is an ecological mutuality between human beings and nonhuman beings in this common world.³¹

Moreover, this environmental crisis is not only a local but also a global problem which involves the structural relationship among nations in the world. The market has expanded globally and created a consumerist mentality in the world. This globalization is facilitated by technological development in the market. Scientists and scholars trace this global warming from the onset of the industrial revolution and this global warming has progressively worsened in the passage of time. If this global warning remained unabated, the earth will soon be inhabitable due to the heat that endangers life on earth. In this global order, the rich states (the industrialized countries) have contributed more, while the poor states (developing countries) in their attempt to follow their lead in industrialization have contributed less to this global warming. Due to the prevailing development model that the global order follows, the environmental crisis has worsened. Profit is the driving force of this modernization at the expense of the environment that in the process results on its moribund state. Cheap sources of energy such as fossil fuels are used to propel the production of goods and services in the market and these sources contributed to the worsening of the global warming on earth due to intensified carbon emission.³²

Climate change is an ethical issue.³³ In this ethical perspective, the moral question that we need to ask is: “How can we limit the dangers resulting from climate change without driving additional hundreds of millions of people into poverty?”³⁴ Since we cannot totally get rid of the dangers of climate change, we can nonetheless reduce its impact on people. As we know, in this global order, there is a glaring inequality among countries or states. Climate change is mostly caused by the rich states but the effect is felt mostly by the poor states. If this is the case, states should discuss this urgent issue of climate change and agree on the possible solutions to it. The rich states should share their wealth and resources to the poor states. The poor states have already suffered from their poverty which is again and still aggravated by this climate change. “We strongly favor climate change agreement, especially because it would help poor people in poor nations, and we also favor redistribution from the rich to the poor.”³⁵ Thus, we need to arrest the adverse impact of climate change so that we can save people from falling into the quagmire of poverty. Scientists come up with a consensus that the global warming recorded in history is anthropogenic phenomenon. Human intervention or contribution to the global warming is alarming since if this continues unabated, the threat becomes irreversible and the earth becomes inhabitable. To halt this threat, governments should immediately reduce their carbon emission and turn to renewable energy sources. However, the blame should not be made equally

³¹ See Emmanuel Levinas, *Beyond the Subject: Talmudic Readings and Lectures*, trans. Gary D. Mole (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), Grace M. Jantzen, *Divine Becoming: Towards a Feminist Theology of Religion* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999). Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (London: Routledge, 1989).

³² David G. Hallman *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, New York: Orbis Books, 1994).

³³ Dominic Roser and Christian Seidel, *Climate Justice: An Introduction*, trans. Ciaran Cronin (London and New York: Routledge 2017), 1-16. Eric A. Posner and David Weisbach, *Climate Change Justice* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 10-40.

³⁴ Henry Shue, *Climate Justice: Vulnerability and Protection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 4.

³⁵ Eric A. Posner and David Weisbach, *Climate Change Justice* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 5.

to peoples around the world but it is graded according to the contribution to global warming. The highly developed economies such as China and the United States have been singled out as the main pollutants of the earth and they are made to compensate the victims affected by this pollution. However, they refuse to own responsibility to the indictment because of the costs that it would entail to their economies.³⁶

Specifically, climate change is an issue of climate justice.³⁷ Climate justice recognizes that the problem of global warming is not purely natural or physical but an ethical and political problem. In short, the question of climate change is linked with the ethics of social justice. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) affirms the ethical principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” (CBDR).³⁸ This CBDR requires states to pay in accordance with their differentiated responsibilities. Those states that have contributed more to the problem of climate change – through higher historical greenhouse gas emission to the problem of climate change – should pay more towards the causes of protecting the climate system [...]. The aggregated volume of emission has a corresponding amount of payment. Those wealthier states that are most able to bear the cost should pay more.”³⁹ The CBDR involves three key elements. First, climate change is a common responsibility of states tasked to protect the global environment. Climate change is a global problem that should be prevented through global cooperation. Second, states are required to pay in accordance with their differentiated responsibilities. Those countries that have contributed more to global warming should pay more than those states that contributed less. Third, states are required to pay in accordance with their respective capabilities. Those richer countries that are able to bear the costs should pay more compared to the poorer countries that are less able to pay the costs. Thus, since they contributed more to climate change, the rich states are obligated to a greater responsibility to pay the costs of their abuse of the environment. They pay the costs not only by replacing fossil use with renewable energy but also by helping the poor states recover from their loss.⁴⁰

Moreover, climate justice involves major uncertainties in determining these common but differentiated responsibilities in moral deliberation. There are four major uncertainties in climate change. First, climate change entails a time lag. The cause of climate change (greenhouse effect gas) and the effect of climate change (global warming) are separated temporally because the impact of climate change is extended or prolonged for decades. Thus, the effect is felt not by the present but by the future generation. Thus, the future generation is already endangered without their contribution or participation in his mess. They will bear the impact of this climate change in their time. Second, the cause and effect of climate change is not only separated temporally but also spatially. As we know, climate change is not only a local issue of one country but a global issue of the whole world. Climate change is circulated or distributed around the world because

³⁶ David O. Kronlid, *Climate Change Adaptation and Human Capabilities: Justice and Ethics Research and Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 1-30.

³⁷ Seiji Yamada & Absalon Galat “Typhoon Yolanda/Haiyan and Climate Justice,” in *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, vol. 8, no. 5 (2014), pp. 1-4.

³⁸ See United Nations, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (New York: United Nations, 1992)

³⁹ Derek Bell, “Justice and the Politics of Climate Change,” in *Routledge Handbook of Climate Change and Society*, Constance Level-Tracy, ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 427.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 426-427.

the sources of global warming is spread out around the world. The impact of climate change does not affect only the citizens of the rich country but extended to other countries around the world. Thus, not only the Chinese and US citizens would suffer the consequences of climate change, but also other people scattered in different parts of the world. Third, the causes of climate change are differentiated by various contributors and aggregated in totality. There are different entities that have contributed to the occurrence and aggravation of climate change. This contribution of different entities is combined into totality. In that aggregation, the differentiation is reduced to summation. We cannot capture and compute the exact amount of contribution or participation in climate change. Fourth, our knowledge of the effects of climate change is uncertain for science (such as meteorology and climatology) is still developing. We know that climate change is anthropogenic, but the calculation of the amount of emission and the increase of amount of temperature in the atmosphere remain unknown. There are still gaps in our scientific knowledge about climate change.⁴¹

Conclusion

The catchphrase “the cry of the earth is the cry of the poor” is a truism. This statement relates the destruction of the earth and the disadvantage of the poor in climate change. They cry out for climate justice around the world. The poor such as farmers and fishers directly rely on the earth for sustenance and survival. When the earth is endangered by climate change, the poor immediately feel the impact of it because they are deprived of the sources of their livelihoods. They are impoverished as shown by the impact of the Yolanda/Hayian supertyphoon in Eastern Visayas in the Philippines. The already poor are doubly impoverished in times of calamity or disaster. They have to recover from this calamity or disaster for quit sometime and to return to their normal and ordinary life in their communities. By humanitarian reason, the poor are given aids or reliefs during calamity or disaster from different donors around the world. However, these aids or reliefs are inadequate to address their situation of debilitating poverty. They need to be compensated for the adverse effect of this climate change by rich states or countries. Hopefully, the rich states or countries would substantially help these poor states or countries not out of charity but of justice.

Climate change is an ethical issue of justice. Climate justice is an equalizing force that allots common but differentiated responsibilities to the states around the globe. Although climate change affects the whole globe, the impact is differentiated among states. The United Nations comes up with the principle “common but differentiated responsibilities” among states. Although it is urgently needed, climate justice is problematic because it deals with global inequalities between the few rich and many poor states. These global inequalities involve the unequal relation between them and the international body such as the United Nations can enforce climate justice among the rich states and the poor states. This inequality is not limited to the unequal distribution of wealth among these countries but the amount of carbon emission in the atmosphere. The rich states emit large quantities of carbon emission while the poor countries emit less carbon emission. However, the poor states bear the burden because they are vulnerable in times of disaster or calamity. Thus, the rich states should compensate the poor

⁴¹ Dominic Roser and Christian Seidel, *Climate Justice*, pp. 6-12.

states on the impact of climate change and global warming so that they can adapt and recover from that disaster or calamity. The poor cry out for justice and God will vindicate them.