What we do when we #PrayFor: Communicating posthumanitarian solidarity through #PrayForMarawi

Junesse Crisostomo

Abstract

When Islamic State-inspired extremists laid siege in Marawi City, #PrayForMarawi circulated across various social media platforms. Using Kenneth Burke's Guilt-redemption rhetoric as framework, how was solidarity communicated through #PrayForMarawi tweets?

#PrayForMarawi frames the terrorist siege as the source of guilt which destroyed our upholding of cosmopolitan values. Mortification in the form of self-sacrifice is performed through the announcement of acts of prayer online while victimage is communicated by offering up ISIS as the tragic scapegoat that needs to be banished. Through this framing of the situation, the liberation of the city becomes the "amen" of the online prayer utterance, transporting socio-political events onto the realm of divine intervention. The liberation of Marawi was the ultimate purging of guilt in #PrayForMarawi. However, two years after the liberation of Marawi, no hashtags of solidarity are trending for the 100,000 Marawi residents who are still displaced and homeless. Some of the residents have even expressed their frustration and impatience toward the government's broken promises of rehabilitation.

Because of the redemption acknowledged in the answered prayers of liberation of #PrayForMarawi, a post-humanitarian solidarity of "mass self-communication" purified our individual guilt while failing to provide a collective and sustained commitment for justice towards the suffering of others.

Keywords: Hashtag, Rhetoric, Guilt-Redemption, Post-Humanitarian, Marawi

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Introduction

The terrorist siege of the largest Muslim City in the Philippines, Marawi City, began on May 23, 2017, and has claimed hundreds of lives as it forced its residents to evacuate the city premises. The battle between government military forces and extremist militants in the city went on for five months, an unexpected length of time that made the Marawi Siege labelled as a "prolonged war," the longest urban battle in the modern history of the country (Cellona, 2018).

This war was triggered by the Philippine military's arrest operation of the top ISIL leader Isnilon Hapilon who was listed as one of the most wanted terrorists by the US State Department (ABC News Staff, 2017). This arrest operation prompted the extremists to go in combat with the state troops, declaring Marawi City a new caliphate of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant group (ISIL) (Betteridge-Moes, 2017). Researcher Joseph Franco (2018), through personal correspondence, explains that the extremist organization responsible for the Marawi siege is the Maute Group, known colloquially in Lanao del Sur as the "ISIS" group. However, he also clarifies in a recent paper that "there is little evidence of actual affinity with ISIS central. The resilience of the Maute Group is rooted in their kinship ties with local politicians in the province on the one hand, and their ties to a faction of the MILF on the other" (Franco, 2017, p. 299).

CNN Philippines reported that within twenty-four hours since the terrorist siege of Marawi City started, *#PrayForMarawi* remained the number 1 trending hashtag on Twitter (CNN Philippines Staff, 2017). The news website says, "prayers flooded social media amid reports of local terror group Maute's takeover and burning of public and private facilities in Marawi City, Tuesday afternoon" (para. 1). Rappler, another Philippine news website, also described how #PrayForMarawi took the Internet by storm, stating that "heartfelt messages poured out on Twitter in support of the civilians and soldiers in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, as Filipino troops clashed with terror groups on Tuesday, May 23" (Tupaz, 2017, para. 1). Other Twitter users condemned the terror group that attacked the predominantly Muslim city in Mindanao (Tupaz, 2017). The aforementioned news articles reported how Twitter became a medium for its users to share photos and videos that captured the tension in Marawi. Images of fires, flags, soldiers, and helicopters transported the events of the city to the immediate access of various social media users.

#PrayForMarawi is an example of how social media plays a pivotal role in framing national narratives after terrorist attacks. In this line of thinking, the framing of events is no longer the monopoly of news institutions or the political and intellectual elites. Through social media, the common

man begins to own a significant voice in participation in online discourse, facilitating the construction of a "democratized bottom-up discourse" (Kalim, 2018, p. 1).

The technologization of communication

Posting heartfelt messages on one's social media timeline, condemning terror groups online, and reporting the chaos of the city to one's social media followers were the responses undertaken by most Twitter users in the heat of a terrorist event. These posts are linked through the hashtag #PrayForMarawi, an example of #PrayFor hashtags which has been used as a common online response to terrible events all over the world (Margolin, 2016). Jame Bartholomew (2015) states in an online article that while being widely used in social media platforms, #PrayFor has received scrutiny as a social and political act. The use of "prayer" as response to tragedies such as natural calamities and terrorist attacks has been criticized as promoting religious overtones while replacing real action. Moreover, the article also states that #PrayFor may lead to "virtue signalling," a way to perform sympathy only to be perceived as a compassionate human being, to redeem one's guilt, or simply to gain "retweets" or "favorites." Virtue signalling is similar to the concept of performative allyship, or when a person "performs" support and solidarity with a marginalized group even though these performances are not particularly helpful to the said group. Phillips (2020) further explains that "performative allyship usually involves the 'ally' receiving some kind of reward — on social media, it's that virtual pat on the back for being a good person or on the right side'" (para. 6).

#PrayFor hashtags are products of the technologization of communication. Lilie Chouliaraki (2010) talked about the impact of technology on our humanitarian conceptions and actions of solidarity. She states that most messages that focus on the way we respond to the suffering of distant others become "simplified" because of the Internet and social media. This simplification can be described as the spectator/user's mode of engagement with the humanitarian cause when all that was done was to "click" links and to "repost" social media statuses. Chouliaraki explains that,

> This simplification has to do with the use of the Internet as the vehicle for public action on distant suffering. Speed and on-the-spot intervention, both features of online activism celebrated as catalysts for a new democratic politics, are here instrumental in addressing the key problem of the humanitarian sensibility … the non-sustainability of grand emotions towards a cause for any length of time. (p. 117)

This technology can then be characterized as accompanied by an effortless sense of immediacy in response to the suffering of others and a sense of dramaturgical consciousness where we act ourselves out by curating our day-to-day posts for an online audience in mind.

Chouliaraki (2013) explains that because of the affordances of the Internet, solidarity becomes a site for self-expression where the emotionality of the spectator becomes the focus of the message instead of the vulnerabilities of the distant other. We address the needs of others by speaking about "us," creating a solidarity performed on a stage of "mass self-communication" (p. 18). Additionally, through the technologization of communication, we become used to what Chouliaraki terms as "monitorial citizenship", a type of global citizenship which habituates us into embracing the rhetoric of cosmopolitanism but without the necessary sustained actions aimed towards justice for the sufferings of others.

Anril Tiatco (2018) explains that "nowadays, cosmopolitanism is best understood in social sciences and cultural studies as openness to difference, ethics of hospitality, disposition of care, global responsibility, and global involvement" (p. 2). However, Chouliaraki (2013) posits that in the post-humanitarian imaginary, cosmopolitanizing acts of solidarity seem incapable of moving beyond plain rhetoric. Solidarity no longer requires our physical presence or our sustained commitment to provide justice for the sufferers we claim to be in solidarity with. Instead of long-term commitment to justice, we become accustomed to a "more fragile and fleeting public sensibility characterized by simply being watchful even while we are doing something else" (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 178). This is what Chouliaraki labels as an example of post-humanitarianism, the neoliberal tendency of people to replace an ethos of longer-term commitment with a closer-to-life altruism of the everyday. We become accustomed to the definition of solidarity that is focused on our consumption of celebrity appeals, graphic animations, and social media even through hashtag activism, than our physical, intellectual, and sustained commitment to provide justice for the sufferers.

During the siege of Marawi, there were various hashtags used by social media users to participate in discourse. Based on my observations of the social media climate during that time, various hashtags came to surface. Some examples also include "do not just #PrayForMarawi, #HelpMarawi," which directs social media users to hashtags focused on information on how to donate or volunteer, pointing out that prayers are not enough as response in such situations. I have also observed the use of #BangonMarawi by social media users, where the rehabilitation of Marawi was emphasized. However, among all of these solidarity hashtags, it is #PrayForMarawi that reached trending status in social media sites during the heat of the terrorist

event (CNN, 2017; Tupaz, 2017). Indeed, #PrayForMarawi became a vehicle for solidarity at that time when the situation demanded it. But how was the situation framed in this hashtag, and what kind of solidarity was demanded by it?

Prayer, rhetoric, and communicating situations

People use prayer utterances in different kinds of situations (Sharp, 2013). Examples of these prayer utterances are "when people tell others that they 'prayed over' an important and difficult decision; when people tell others who are sick that they are 'praying for' them; and when people say they are 'praying' for rain to come during a drought" (p. 160). These prayer utterances are obviously not reports of one's act of prayer but are utterances that signal to others an intense yearning for an occurrence on the behalf of oneself or others, and to signal to others authentic feelings of care for another person or group of people. Prayer utterances are also a type of rhetoric that "people employ to align their conduct with cultural norms, values, and expectations of the situation in particular and the overall cultural environment in general" (Sharp, 2012, p. 258). Prayer utterances can then be considered as performative speech-acts because they are words that have the power to "do things". John Langshaw Austin (1962), in *How to Do Things with Words*, emphasized that utterances do not only aim to describe what is being done, rather, "it is to do it" (p. 6). In other words, utterances not only "say" things, but also "do" things. In this perspective, the utterance "pray for" can then be considered as a social script that people perform to maintain the cultural value of caring about the suffering of another.

If *prayer* is the "what is to be done?", then the *situation* is the "about what?" In an article by Erik Vatnoey (2015) on leaders' responses to terrorism, he introduced Aristotle's conception of the three kinds of rhetoric: forensic, deliberative, and epideictic. Forensic rhetoric is presented to an audience whose role is to "pass judgment on past events based on existing laws" (Vatnoey, 2015, p. 5). Deliberative rhetoric is for an audience whose task is to "make decisions on future action in the political assembly" (p. 5). Lastly, epideictic rhetoric is for an audience who is "'an observer' of the orator's skills as he gives praise or blame to things of the present" (p. 5). In other words, deliberative and forensic rhetoric aim to persuade or dissuade others while epideictic rhetoric are ceremonial responses to events that aim to praise or blame specific entities at present time (such as in eulogies, nominating speeches, etc.).

#PrayForMarawi can be considered as a speech-act which is epideictic in nature. It is a ceremonial response to a tragic situation which consequently highlights a society's deeply-held values during a terrorist attack. Epideictic

discourse such as speeches given by national leaders after a terrorist attack may seem as a plain description of the present, but is actually a performance of "praising and blaming", reflecting which values must be upheld during a kairotic moment. These speeches do not necessarily have deliberative purposes of persuasion for they do not have a practical orientation. However, Vatnoey (2015) argues that epideictic rhetoric may also have practical relevance. Epideictic discourse highlights a society's values and beliefs that can be mobilized in future decision-making. He further states that "epideictic discourse plays a significant role in deliberative processes. It has the potential to strengthen the common values in society, create community, and form the beliefs that determine future decision-making" (p. 1).

Epideictic rhetoric focuses on how actors define the values to be praised and the entities to be blamed, a process similar to what Kenneth Burke (1970) defined as the ritual of purification in the guilt-redemption cycle of human drama. Purification is an attempt at symbolic redemption or restoration "when what one believes about the world proves to be untrue" (French & Brown, 2011, p. 3).

Burke (1970) cites "Order" as the first stage of the redemption cycle. The Order can be described as what humans portray as the state of perfection that must be established. This concept of Order needs to be upheld, therefore, humans' conceptions of "thou shall" and "thou shall not" are created. This is called the "principle of the negative" which represents the laws we uphold, and when we violate these laws, negative feelings brought by the imperfection in the Order lead to "guilt." Guilt comprises of negative feelings experienced through a variety of emotions not limited to embarrassment, tension, anxiety, or shame.

In order to rid oneself of this guilt, "mortification" and "victimage" are undergone rhetorically to achieve one's symbolic restoration. Mortification is a ritual of "self-sacrifice". It is the process of inflicting mental or physical pain to "oneself" to regain the worthiness that was lost. Burke (1970) explains that mortification is "an extreme form of self-control" or "self-denial" (p. 190). Victimage, on the other hand, is purification through scapegoating, the "offering up of another" for the forgiveness of one's sins. Burke (1984) further describes scapegoating as "the use of a sacrificial receptacle for the ritual unburdening of one's sins" (p. 206). To sum it up, this whole ritual process of purification is represented rhetorically in this logic: the state of perfection (Order) has been polluted (guilt) and must be purified (mortification and victimage) in order to achieve redemption and restoration (a new Order). Additionally, Burke (1966) also argues that "transcendence" can be used to avoid guilt, when the use of words or

terms to assign an action taking place in a lower realm of the hierarchy is brought onto the context of a higher realm. Burke claims that there are four realms to which language belongs to. The first realm is the natural realm which consists of positive terms that symbolize materiality, biology, and physiology. The socio-political realm deals with social relations, laws, and terms associating right and wrong such as "good", "bad", "justice", "peace". The logological realm deals with "words about words" such as "grammar", "rhetoric", and "poetics". Lastly, the ultimate realm refers to words belonging to the mystical, the spiritual, the divine, and the supernatural. In this sense, socio-political terms are given new meaning by rhetors by placing them in the context of a higher, spiritual realm.

Existing studies on rhetorical responses after terrorist attacks mostly focus on the epideictic rhetoric of government leaders (Vatnoey, 2015; Hubanks, 2009) after such events. However, this paper will study and interrogate the "public" in "public speaking," where audiences of the rhetoric of government leaders and the media become the "public" speaking. #PrayForMarawi tweets' epideictic nature describe values and beliefs that are highlighted in times of crisis. This study will then highlight how the Marawi situation is framed by Twitter users, analyzing how the framing of the situation is reflective of Kenneth Burke's (1970) guilt-redemption cycle. This research will also serve to critique the ways in which we express solidarity with the suffering of distant others, interrogating how the purification of our guilt becomes accomplished and justified through the post-humanitarian imaginary.

With that said, I ask, "How did the framing of the Marawi Siege reflect a rhetoric of guilt-redemption, and what kind of solidarity was demanded and ultimately performed through this framing?"

Data Gathering
Extracting the Tweets

In order to extract a sample of the corpus, Twitter's Application Programming Interface (API) was used. Since this study requires retrieval of historical data, a python export-tweets script was employed. The script allows users to get old tweets programmatically and bypasses some limitations of the Twitter Official API (i.e., time constraints).[1] The command retrieved a maximum of 2, 674 top tweets containing the "#PrayForMarawi" hashtag for the given time interval into an Excel File of comma-separated value (CSV) file format.

I am aware of the limitation that my dataset is influenced by the algorithms of Twitter and the language of the code I used for extraction. Therefore, I do not claim that all #PrayForMarawi tweets echo the same

message. I believe that there are those who used the hashtag for a variety of reasons. One observation I have seen is that most of the tweets in my dataset are pro-government, thereby shaping the analysis I have written.

By studying the Top Tweets under #PrayForMarawi, I imply that Twitter's algorithms also shape the result of what people see by default when they search a particular hashtag. On most clients, searching for discussions under a certain hashtag will lead to the "Top Tweets" of a specific hashtag, an undisclosed cocktail of what the algorithm deems "authoritative" or "socially relevant." These evaluations made by social media algorithms depend on inscribed assumptions about what matters, showing "structural tendencies toward what's already popular, toward English-language sites, and toward commercial information providers' in-search engine results" (Bruns & Burgess, 2015, p. 25). In this regard, I can say that the most dominant themes in #PrayForMarawi tweets is a product not of a well-represented public but a calculated public, where algorithms influence the discourse available for us to consume. Additionally, I will be presenting select tweets that represent the themes I derived from my dataset.

Data Analysis

After the tweets were extracted into a CSV file, I visited the links of the Top 100 tweets and arranged the tweets into dominant themes. These tweets will be analyzed through rhetorical criticism, "a qualitative research method that is designed for the systematic investigation and explanation of symbolic acts and artifacts for the understanding of rhetorical processes" (Foss, 2018). Generative rhetorical criticism involves the generation of units of analysis and an explanation for a curious artifact without relying on previously developed methods of rhetorical criticism (such as metaphoric, cluster, narrative, or pentadic criticism).

For the theoretical framework that will guide the creation of an explanatory schema for the artifact #PrayForMarawi, I will be using theoretical understandings of Kenneth Burke's (1970) guilt-redemption cycle and Lilie Chouliaraki's (2013) conceptions of the post-humanitarian solidarity. The analysis will be divided into three parts: the rhetorical context, rhetorical argument, and rhetorical effects, based on the method proposed by James Martin (2015) in analyzing rhetorical situations.

The Rhetorical Context

James Martin (2015) describes the rhetorical context as the historical time and place in which a rhetorical message is produced. This will cover the imperfections in a situation that demanded a rhetorical response, also known as exigencies, and a description of the structure that envelop the rhetorical messages.

The terrorist crisis in Marawi City happened during the administration of President Duterte. This crisis was triggered by the Philippine military's arrest operation of the top ISIL leader Isnilon Hapilon, "declaring the city a new caliphate of ISIL, or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant group" (Betteridge-Moes, 2017, para. 5). Franco (2017) elaborated that,

> Hapilon's group prefers more low-key extortion activities to sustain their presence, coupled with playing up alleged linkages with the Islamic State. Hapilon's self-proclaimed "IS Basilan" has been recognized by the official ISIS leadership, but the latter stopped short of declaring an official ISIS *wilayah*, or province, in the Philippines. Hapilon has basked in being recognized as the emir of ISIS supporters in Mindanao, but remains keen on formally being named *wali*, or governor, of a *wilayah*. (p. 299)

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) clarified that some of the terrorists are indeed foreigners who have been staying in the country for a while, offering support for the Maute group who were responsible for the Davao bombing in 2016 and two other attacks in Mindanao in the same year (Betteridge-Moes, 2017, para. 5). Jose Calida, solicitor-general of the Philippines, stated that "the dream of the Maute Group, which has pledged allegiance to ISIS and its flag, is to transform Mindanao into an Islamic state" (Joseph Hincks, 2017, para. 5). What makes the Marawi Siege a terrorist event in Mindanao different from previous ones is its relationship to ISIS. Joseph Hincks (2017) of TIME.com even reported that,

> Marawi is the latest front in what has been a recent surge of apparently ISIS-linked attacks beyond the carnage in Iraq and Syria. These include: a bloody late May assault on Coptic Christian pilgrims in Egypt; the suicide bomber at the Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, the London Bridge assailants the following week; twin suicide bomb attacks that killed three policemen in Jakarta; and twin attacks in Tehran" (para. 7).

Therefore, terrorism's global presence at the time of the Marawi Siege was on center stage, spotlight on. This was seen as the beginning of ISIS's potential to grow in Southeast Asia, where countries are mostly Muslim.

The terrorist attack in Marawi involved the burning of churches, houses, and schools, the taking hostage of innocent residents, and the beheading of some police officers (Betteridge-Moes, 2017, para. 6). To provide a counterterrorist measure, President Rodrigo Duterte declared Martial Law

across the entire island of Mindanao, thinking that the war will be over in weeks (Betteridge-Moes, 2017, para. 7).

From the onset, the declaration of Martial Law has already sparked controversy and debate across sectors and from the public. In fact, "references are already being made to former Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos, whose 1972-1986 regime was characterized by Martial Law and synonymous with arbitrary arrests, detention, disappearances, as well as extrajudicial killings" (Chandran, 2017, para. 3). Anthony Hustedt (2017) reports that,

> Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1971 in response to the reciprocal violence between armed Muslim and Christian groups that followed the Jabidah Massacre. Rather than suppressing the armed groups, operations by the Armed Forces of the Philippines led to a consolidation of Islamic independence groups under Nur Misuari and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), which managed to field 30,000 fighters and tie up 80 percent of the armed forces in the resulting conflict" (para. 6).

Anthony Husdedt (2017) further explains that declaring Martial Law under Duterte's rule may exacerbate the situation in Mindanao, knowing that "the Moro people are not known for relenting under military pressure and will likely be mobilized in response" (para. 11) and the declaration will only lead to increased support and resources for the militants.

Marcos's Martial Law is known for the human rights violations under dictatorship rule (ABS-CBN Investigative and Research Group, 2018). The terror brought about by Duterte's declaration of Martial Law after the siege of Marawi is highlighted by Duterte's controversial first year in office. Duterte approved Marcos's burial at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani in his first year of office, and his "war on drugs" that claimed thousands of lives was already being framed as similar to bloody human rights violations in a dictatorship (Agence France-Presse, 2017; Sabillo, 2016). Hustedt (2017) emphasizes that,

> Given the history of the Philippines and the abhorrent record of the Duterte administration, as seen by his "war on drugs," the return of martial law to Mindanao is an ominous sign of the violence and bloodshed which will certainly follow. The potential scale of the looming atrocities is buried at the crossroads of the history of the Islamic extremism in the

Philippines and President Rodrigo Duterte's disregard for human rights and the value of human life. (para. 2)

The Marawi Siege indeed is an imperfection in the social order. In this sense, it can be analysed that the violence of war happening in Marawi and President Duterte's declaration of Martial Law are exigencies that need to be addressed with discourse.

Rhetorical discourse that served as a response to the Marawi Siege are not exclusive to government leaders for social media users were as quick to respond with messages of solidarity through the various online platforms available, one of which is Twitter (CNN Philippines Staff, 2017; Tupaz, 2017). One of the hashtags that created a public that performed concern for Marawi is #PrayForMarawi and the rhetorical situation in which it emerged does not only cover the details of the siege itself but also the medium in which it was conceived.

One of the many social media sites in which solidarity was expressed through #PrayForMarawi is Twitter, a social networking site where the hashtag system allowed Twitter users to cross-reference hashtags in tweets (Twitter posts), to track trending topics, to have a better "eavesdropping" experience, all using information coming from fellow Twitter users. The process is also very simple and does not rely on "top-down" usage regulation. According to Axel Bruns and Jean Burgess (2015),

> The hashtag has been perceived as the 'killer app' for Twitter's role as a platform for the emergence of publics, where publics are understood as being formed, re-formed, and coordinated via dynamic networks of communication and social connectivity organised primarily around issues or events rather than pre-existing social groups (p.13).

The authors also note that the hashtag demonstrates "Twitter's ability to respond rapidly to breaking news—an ability which builds not least on the fact that new hashtags can be created ad hoc, by users themselves, without any need to seek approval from Twitter administrators" (Bruns & Burgess, 2015, p. 15). Jean Burgess, Anne Galloway, and Theresa Sauter (2015) also emphasize that hashtags coordinate conversations, interpret and provide contexts, and enable people to participate in conversations with strangers. Furthermore, the authors explain that hashtags have material and symbolic features, and these 'ad-hoc' publics that form around a hashtag through the activation of a specific issues is an example of how hashtags can bring "publics" into being.

Given all this, social networking sites such as Twitter are automatic invitations to self-expression in different situations. Lilie Chouliaraki (2013) states that although the Internet's interactive affordances provide people with the agency to talk about the suffering of distant others, "it ultimately communicates something about 'us'" instead (p. 15). Digital technologies allow media users to turn into "producers, rather than only consumers, of public communication" (p. 28). This affordance created a structure of a post-humanitarian imaginary in #PrayForMarawi where "solidarity refers to the capacity of digital media to incorporate the moral imperative to act on vulnerable others within digital platforms that render solidarity a matter of tweeting personal emotion" (p. 16). This communication of one's personal emotions about the plight of the people of Marawi instead of a sustained commitment for justice for its displaced citizens is an example of how #PrayFor becomes a performative act of guilt-redemption achieved through social media.

The Rhetorical Argument
Cosmopolitanism as Order: I see humans, but no humanity

Martin (2015) describes the rhetorical argument as the use of symbols and language by a rhetor to modify the rhetorical situation. In epideictic rhetoric, we may say that this modification is the "framing" of the situation through the values highlighted in the rhetoric and the forging of common grounds and the blaming of a common enemy. In this sense, #PrayForMarawi posts became an avenue for Twitter users to frame the situation as a crisis of "good vs. evil," good humans versus evil beings with no humanity. The use of the term "humanity" as both pertaining to humankind and the properties of being human revolves around values of empathy and cosmopolitanism. In analyzing this using the perspective of the guilt-redemption cycle, the existing Order is portrayed as a world where cosmopolitan values of peace and care for the *other* prevailed. Terrorism was the imperfection that destroys this Order of the world.

Anril P. Tiatco (2018) describes how cosmopolitanism and humanity are intertwined values, defining cosmopolitanism as "the production of a peaceful coexistence among individuals and addressing a sense of *common humanity* and global community" (p. 2; emphasis mine). Figure 1 is an example of how the rhetoric of *cosmopolitanism as Order* became apparent in #PrayForMarawi tweets. The establishment of cosmopolitan values as a state of Order creates the principle of negative through a series of "thou shall", like helping others in times of need and "condemning" those who performed the act of terrorism. The inability to uphold this cosmopolitan Order leads to a multilayered guilt of anxiety about the terrorist attack and one's inability

Fig. 1. I see humans but no humanity (laheybabe1, 2017).

to help. In this perspective, it can be deduced that not being able to act on the suffering of others is seen as harmful to the symbolic social order. Values of self-sacrifice and being "good Samaritans" are social scripts that must be performed in a cosmopolitan world.

This guilt can be analyzed as purified through #PrayForMarawi in a process of mortification, the offering up of oneself through "prayer" in the name of cosmopolitan values. This cosmopolitan value of caring for the other is performed through social media where an "awareness" consciousness becomes the dominating rhetoric of what cosmopolitanism is. To purge one's guilt for a broken world, bringing "awareness" to suffering experienced in various parts of the world become the performance of a monitorial cosmopolitan citizenship.

Figure 2 lists Marawi alongside Syria, Manchester, Bangkok, and Jakarta as representative of the world. Embellished on a black background that signifies mourning, a clustering of these cities into one post suggests a cosmopolitan consciousness of recognizing the suffering of distance others as an event that requires a performance of grief.

This monitorial citizenship is focused on mainstream media's failure to bring attention to the suffering of poor countries while priming news about the suffering of affluent countries everywhere (Ukoha, 2019). Being an agent of "awareness" then becomes an active role that is performed through social media for this monitorial citizenship helps bring the bombing in Manchester, Jakarta,
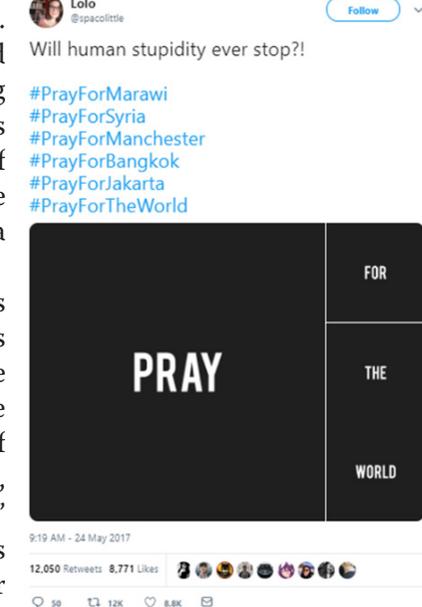

Fig. 2. Human Stupidity (pacolittle, 2017.)

and Marawi into equal attention.

To post "*I see* humans but no humanity" is also reflective of the public's role as spectators of the suffering of others, creating in us negative emotions of guilt which we attempt to purify while remaining in the role of spectators. The dramaturgical consciousness brought by the technologization of communication gave us a stage to act ourselves out in front of unknown others, a medium for purging guilt. Chouliaraki (2013) states that,

> Dramaturgical consciousness becomes, in this account, paramount in the formation of cosmopolitan dispositions, precisely because the planetary connectivity of the new media have now turned the world into a new *theatrum mundi*—a theatre whose moralizing force lies in the fact that we do not only passively watch distant others but we can also enter their own reality as actors" (p. 16).

Social media habituates us into doing mundane cosmopolitanizing acts, providing us with a structure where we can engage in momentary forms of online activism.

Figure 3, on the other hand, represents our common humanity through the world map, with band-aids on Marawi, Manchester, and Bangkok. This map represents all of the world as one body, a body that feels pain when one of its parts is suffering.

Fig. 3. Band-Aid Solution (bangtanboysph, 2017).

Fig. 4. Unite (julays, 2017).

Kenneth Burke (1969) talks about the rhetoric of sameness as consubstantiality, for "substance in the old philosophies, was an act; and a way of life is an acting together; and in acting together, men have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, and attitudes that make them consubstantial" (p. 23). By depicting the world as part of one body, of one substance, a rhetoric of sameness with strangers is forged. Ironically, #PrayFor is represented only by the band-aid symbol, the "band-aid solution" which pertains to temporary ways to alleviate the problem without really solving its root cause. In a way, the tweeting of #PrayForMarawi may be the band-aid solution we use to cover for the guilt in our inability to solve devastating events in the midst of other people's suffering. Additionally, Figure 4 shows two hands holding each other, referencing intertwined body parts as a way to celebrate values of unity, transporting images of body parts as symbols of unity to an online space to compensate for one's inability to do so in the offline world. Through these rhetorical strategies, the public purged their guilt and achieved redemption. Stephen Littlejohn, Karen Foss, and Joen Oetzel (2016) even concluded that the purging of guilt as the ultimate motivation of rhetoric.

Another cosmopolitan value of accepting difference that is highlighted in #PrayForMarawi tweets are reminders not to blame Islam or other people's religion for is the terrorist event. Figure 5 is an example of how ISIS, believed to be Islam, is argued as not consubstantial to all Muslims. Muslims being portrayed as victims promotes values of cosmopolitanism where regardless of difference, all are worthy of equal regard.

Fig. 5. ISIS not Islam (jkristopherr, 2017).

Fig. 6. Hate doesn't come from religion (heartedsivan, 2017)

Figure 6 is an example of how #PrayForMarawi tweets became an avenue for people to enlighten others not to commit the mistakes the world has done in previous decades as response to terrorist attacks. Diana Ralph (2006) states that global response to the September 11, 2001 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City became the pretext of the myth that Muslims are out to threaten Americans and democracy in general. The "war on terror" was modelled from stereotypes, policies, and political structures that command support for wars of conquest against Muslims. #PrayForMarawi frames the rhetorical situation as one that deviates from the discriminatory perspectives of the past, that this is an opportunity to overcome Islamophobia and stand in solidarity even with Muslims. In this regard, mortification transpires by framing the situation as a deviation from past mistakes, allowing history to become the scapegoat for the events that happen in the present.

Nationalism as Order: Operation Cooperation

The promotion of social cohesion as response to national tragedies is a way of asserting a national identity through the forging of sameness and differences with certain others. Salma Kalim and Fauzia Janjua (2018) explain that Cybernationalism, the use of cyberspace to spread nationalism and produce national identities, is fueled at times of crisis such as terrorism. They state that,

> As in times of national crisis, such as terrorism or natural disaster, individuals—by sharing videos and pictures of tragic events, terrorist activity or state oppression on social media —can trigger the emotions of nations and provide emotive catalysts for revitalizing nationalism as pictures and videos circulated on social media depict a vivid picture of nation in pain (p. 4-5).

Figure 7 is representative of most #PrayForMarawi tweets, using nationalistic overtones that symbolize the Marawi crisis as a crisis of the entire nation. Using the Philippine flag as a cultural symbol to show national identity, the use of these colors for meaning-making imply that peace is valued in our nation, and peace always remains above war—a framing of a symbolic Order that is destroyed by terrorism. The use of nationalist symbols such as the Philippine flag is a form of banal nationalism on social media, "which has become a part of everyday discourses in modern societies" (Kalim & Janjua, 2018, p. 9).

The prevalence of using the Philippine flag in promoting the resilience and solidarity of the Filipino nation in #PrayForMarawi posts is a way of

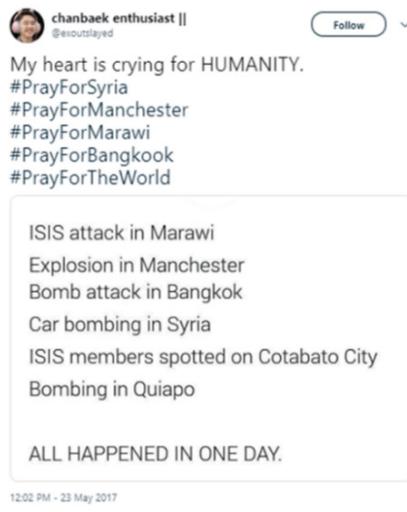**Fig. 7.** Blue over Red (nikoldch, 2017).

Fig. 8. Naming the enemy (exoutslayed, 2017)

forging identification through a performance of unity. In this perspective, the Maute group responsible for the siege is considered as an "other" and they do not belong to the Philippine nation. Purification must be done through the victimage of the Maute group and through the mortification of Filipinos through the setting aside of differences and standing in solidarity with the victims in Marawi.

ISIS the scapegoat: The Metonymy of Evil

For every "us," there is a "them." Our identification with others are also heightened through a common enemy, a common scapegoat: ISIS.

In figure 8, we can see how terrorism, specifically ISIS, was labelled as the enemy. The framing becomes focused not only on the world being united in suffering, but the world being united against the evil being done by ISIS. ISIS's values are the complete opposite of the values and the social order endorsed through the hashtag: tolerance, acceptance of difference, a cosmopolitan world. Although the attack in Marawi is not officially orchestrated by ISIS,[2] this rhetoric labels the enemy as a single entity and group of people, the vilification of a villain which makes it easy for the public to achieve the purification process of the guilt that they are feeling. By focusing on the breach in the social order as the work of ISIS, #PrayForMarawi also became an avenue of a collective sense of recognition that "*The Marawi siege is not our fault, but theirs*". This rhetoric also focuses on the defeat of ISIS as the ultimate purging of collective guilt.

Burke's concept of guilt can be purged through witnessing or participating in a social drama in which we symbolically banish, punish, or kill somebody or something which personifies evil. In #PrayForMarawi tweets, ISIS is the personification of evil, the tragic scapegoat, which is symbolically banished and punished for destroying the cosmopolitan order of the world. This framing of the situation suggest that what we are praying for in #PrayForMarawi is the defeat of the ISIS militants in Marawi. Their defeat is then framed as the redemption of the nation.

I'll be there in Spirit: Transcendence as guilt-redemption

Aside from cosmopolitan values, the importance of religion was also highlighted in #PrayForMarawi tweets. In fact, #PrayForMarawi already has religious overtones in itself, rendering "prayer" as a social value highlighted in times of crisis. This is where Burke's (1984) conceptualization of transcendence is highlighted, for symbols associated with the socio-political realm are transcended onto the realm of the spiritual.

#PrayForMarawi shows how terrorist attacks are tragedies that involve mourning and pain, and we seek the help of a higher power to help us mend the unexplainable and the impossible. While the terrorist attacks were framed as the fault of human stupidity, human mistake, and human evil, religious responses are then believed to summon the perfect supernatural antidote to the imperfect human condition. This framing also enables the rhetoric that a divine intervention is what was needed to solve the Marawi crisis, and political realities can be understood in terms of a divine narrative. Sandra French and Sonya Brown (2011) studied that using superagents or divine beings in the guilt-redemption cycle provides rhetors with an opportunity for transcendence, "a comforting counterstatement to blame" (p. 13).

Figure 9 depicts the Philippines being embraced by the image of a broken-hearted Christ. This personification of Christ embracing the entire Philippines frames Christ as "one with us" by feeling with us and mourning with us. The image depicts that the suffering of the victims in

Fig. 9. Broken-hearted Christ (quotetoponder, 2017)

Marawi is felt by the entire nation, framing the terrorist siege not only as a wound in the national and social fabric of the entire Philippines, but also a wound that can be healed through comfort in Christ. In these examples, transcendence as rhetorical purification is achieved by transporting the socio-political realm to the supernatural realm.

Matters of political concerns are rendered consubstantial to spiritual duties, thus allowing matters such as terrorism to reach a transcendent solution of engaging in spirituality. Figure 9 is also a representation of discourses on religion and power in the Philippines, for while the image can be interpreted as the Christian majority being in solidarity with the Muslim minority, the dominant discourse asserts Christianity's role as savior and healer of an otherwise chaotic world of Muslims.

tin
@tinidorks

I may not be able to help those people in Marawi physically but I can help them spiritually. Keep praying fam, we can do this #PrayForMarawi

♡ 3 7:01 AM - May 24, 2017

Fig. 10. Not physically, but spiritually (tinidorks, 2017)

The guilt that stems from one's "inability to do something" in the midst of other people's suffering is also dominant in #PrayForMarawi tweets, recognizing people's concern for others and their lack of resources to act out on that concern.

In this framing, "prayers" always come in handy. Figure 10 is an example of how "prayer" is framed as a way transporting one's self to the site of suffering even without doing so. However, "to pray" is one thing, but to post it on Twitter for other users to see is another. This reflects Shane Sharp's (2013) theorization that prayer utterances are speech-acts that are used to align one's actions to cultural expectations. By posting that one is "praying," one demonstrates concern for others, but also uses rhetoric to alleviate his or her guilt for not being able to be "physically available" to perform the cultural expectation of helping others. Furthermore, Craig Smith (2013) explains that prayer is an example of a ritual that allows humans to achieve redemption from guilt. The guilt of not being able to do so is purified through self-inflicted rituals such as acts of prayer, transporting socio-political terms of the war in Marawi to the purely spiritual, associating the solution to the war as spiritual intervention, and not as a matter of a sustained sociopolitical effortthat goes beyond the rhetoric of winning a war against ISISIn this perspective, the #PrayForMarawi social drama can be interpreted as the *Christian God's battle against ISIS*, a guilt-redeeming rhetoric which replaces sociopolitical responsibility with a spiritual performance.

Figure 11 frames the rhetorical situation where the ordinary citizen plays an active "sacrificial" role in solving the war in Marawi. This rhetoric places onto one's shoulders the responsibility of being a praying citizen—

an example of mortification. By posting the hashtag, others are invited to accept the purification of collective guilt through collective prayer. This social norm is justified by being a part of the "PH Army", originally referring to the ARMYs (fans of the K-Pop group BTS), while at the same time can be interpreted as a collective force that helps fight the war. In Figure 11, prayers are symbolically depicted as bullets that defeat the enemies in a faraway city, an example of how symbols of war render consubstantial to spiritual terms.

This tweet also reflects the framing of the Marawi siege as a war with a sole objective of killing enemies and stopping an infiltration to the social order by ISIS militants

Fig. 11. Prayer Warriors (apprecitaegiiiii, 2017)

The Mortification of Our Heroes

Burke (1970) defines mortification as the process of inflicting pain to oneself to purge guilt, a form of self-sacrifice. #PrayForMarawi tweets focus on the role of Philippine soldiers as victims and heroes and President Duterte's role as a strong-willed Father of the nation, framing these characters as self-sacrificial entities fighting ISIS. The success of the war in Marawi relies on them and it is the responsibility of the Filipino people to recognize their authority and cooperate.

Figure 12 focuses on trusting the President while invoking the pathos of Duterte as a fatherly savior whose responsibility is to protect the country. By framing cooperation to be as intimate as trust in a relationship, Duterte's ethos is also framed to be

Fig. 12. Trust the President (duuuEKSAM, 2017)

anchored towards goodwill. In this lens, offering up Philippine soldiers and the Philippine President as anchors to hold on to in times of national crisis becomes an example of where we frame the war in Marawi as the sole responsibility of the government to fight.

It is also important to look at a nuanced observation of the rhetoric in #PrayForMarawi tweets. The image of Duterte as fatherly figure reflects a rhetoric that whatever he does to solve the crisis in Marawi is for the good of his children. As children who trust their father, submission becomes the name of the game.

Duterte's declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao can be interpreted as an entirely new rhetorical situation within the larger framework of the siege

Fig. 13. 1972 Vs. 2016 (JHScol, 2017).

of Marawi. While some may see Martial Law as the ultimate system of redress against terrorism in Mindanao as the most effective way to fight the infiltration of ISIS, others see it as a threat to national democracy (Chandran, 2017). By declaring Martial Law in the entire island of Mindanao, human rights violations may become rampant and it may be used as a stepping stone for Duterte's declaration of a nationwide Martial Law (Hustedt, 2017). Figure 13 portrays that those who are against Martial Law feel such fear because of the historicity of Marcos's Martial Law and the human rights violations and tortures that came with it.

Those who are supportive of Martial Law use an "othering" rhetoric towards those who are against it, either by emphasizing geographical differences or political differences. Thus, protesting against the policies being implemented by the government is taken with the "if you are not with us, you are with the terrorists" rhetoric. Figure 14 says "Nasa Mindanao ang Martial Law, pero ang mga reklamador nasa Luzon" (KindaCrazyIcy, 2017) (Martial Law is in Mindanao, but those who complain about it are in Luzon), framing the statement into a directive act requesting people to support the President instead of politicizing his move. This shows a
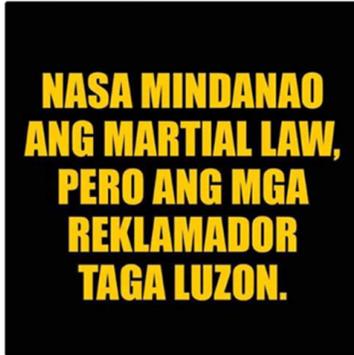
Fig. 14, Reklamadors in Luzon (KindaCrazyIcy, 23).

rhetoric of a normative move to support the government in times of terrorist crisis, treating every ounce of criticism against the President as counterproductive in battling the war in Marawi. Additionally, the rhetoric in Figure 14 shows a disconnect between Luzon and Mindanao when it comes to the sentiments about the President's declaration of Martial Law. The tweet projects that people from Luzon opposed the declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao, but those who support the president's move consider it as necessary in order to stop the infiltration of ISIS in Marawi.

In this perspective, we can prove that identification is the grounding force that sets guilt-redemption rhetoric in motion. Burke (1969) emphasized that persuasion happens only through identification, that new rhetoric is achieved when a rhetor is able to identify with their audience, establishing "sameness" with them, forming consubstantiation through language and symbols. The othering of anti-government discourse in the tweets is an example of how consubstantiality in beliefs is crucial to gaining common definitions of guilt and redemption. One's symbolic expression of guilt may be regarded as redemption for another, and in the case of #PrayForMarawi, the dominant version of redemption is placing the President and the soldiers as heroes and instruments of God to defeat the ISIS.

Figure 15 is an example that #PrayForMarawi is not only for the civilian victims in the city but also to the soldiers depicted as both victims and heroes in this narrative of war. Figures 15 and 16 employ the rhetoric of pathos by showing the sacrifices underwent by our troops in order to redeem our nation from the Marawi war. Prayer is directly requested by the soldier in Figure 14, justifying the people's active participation in the government's quest for liberation.

Purification is then achieved through the acknowledgment that the sacrifice of our soldiers is also a form of mortification on our part. Figure 15 is an example of most #PrayForMarawi tweets that involve people expressing their solidarity with the troops by "praying" for them. #PrayForMarawi

Fig. 15. Soldiers are Heroes (Racal, 2017).

Fig. 16. They fight for peace (AngTanongKoSayo, 2017)

tweets also refer to the troops as either victims who lost their lives in combat or heroes who save the nation. Representing soldiers as peaceful actors, who, like us, are "praying," creates a notion of sameness with them.

Cooperation with the President and the military is seen as the ultimate redressive action in this social drama, their success is what we pray for when we #PrayFor. Here, there is an acceptance of one's role as a "praying and cooperating" citizen during the tragic event. The President's executive role is framed as fatherly protection while the soldiers are lauded as heroes who are at the same time, victims, of the war in Marawi. The redressive action in the declaration of Martial Law and the combat procedures between our troops and the militants in Marawi were framed to lead to the liberation of the city, the ultimate goal of the social drama of the Marawi war. Liberation is the ultimate restoration, the definitive purging of guilt.

The Rhetorical Effects
Liberation as Answered Prayer

James Martin (2015) defines rhetorical effects as the immediate impact of rhetorical discourse on situations, focusing on whether a modification of the situation was made through it and constraints were overcome by it. The epideictic framing in #PrayForMarawi recognizes a common enemy and a common prayer- the liberation of the city from ISIS militants.

After five months of counterterrorist measures from the government, the deaths of militant leaders Omar Maute and Isnilon Hapilon led to the declaration of liberation of Marawi City. On October 17, 2017, President

Duterte declared the city as "free from terrorists' influence" (Dancel, 2017, para. 2).

From this perspective, we may claim that #PrayForMarawi prayers were answered. Guilt is replaced with feelings of redemption because #PrayForMarawi became a useful instrument in disseminating updates and information about the war in Marawi during the siege. Additionally, #PrayForMarawi brought Marawi onto the stage of global attention when Twitter users used it side-by-side with other #PrayFor hashtags.

Indeed, the liberation of the city has become the concluding "Amen" of #PrayForMarawi. There is no more guilt because the scapegoat has been banished not only symbolically but literally. In fact, #PrayForMarawi tweets ceased to be used after the liberation of the city, signifying that the hashtag was only useful within the narrative of an ongoing war. This poses a problem because the hashtag's obsession about the redemption of our guilt through the liberation of the city and the defeat of the militants fail to frame rehabilitation as an ongoing accountability and responsibility.

There's no "amen" for others

To most of us, the liberation of Marawi is the ultimate redemption and purification of our collective guilt. But to others, a different narrative of guilt-redemption is experienced beyond the #PrayForMarawi hashtag.

#PrayForMarawi did not transport us beyond the rhetoric of mortification by prayer into sustained commitments for justice for the victims in Marawi. The redemption achieved in #PrayForMarawi is victory in war and the symbolical and literal killing of a common enemy—ISIS. However, two years after the liberation of Marawi, 100,000 residents are still displaced (Senate of the Philippines, 2019). Some of the residents have even expressed their frustration and impatience toward the government through marching in protests. Drieza Abato Lininding (as cited by Ismail, 2018), Secretary General of the rights group Bangsamoro National Movement for Peace, stated,

> One year ago you said our Marawi was free. But we never felt the freedom. One year ago you promised to rebuild our houses. But we still live in tents and shelters … One year ago you said your plan was beautiful. Where is the plan? We have many questions but up to now there are no answers" (para. 8).

An editorial article from Inquirer.net even refers to the Marawi incident as Duterte's "Yolanda," where President Duterte will remain responsible for "the oversights and intelligence failures that led to the city becoming

a terrifying battleground for hardline Islamic terrorists, to the promised rehabilitation that, two years after the siege, has yet to be started" ("Duterte's Yolanda," 2019, para. 3). The same article argues that many locals from Marawi expressed concern and alarm regarding the rehabilitation of their city because they are not being included in the plans. The government's negotiation with Chinese companies for the reconstruction of the city was also a concern raised by the residents who were rendered bereft and jobless after the siege ("Duterte's Yolanda," 2019, para. 10).

In this perspective, #PrayForMarawi becomes useful only at the presence of a liberation rhetoric where heroes are easily praised and enemies are readily blamed. Additionally, in #PrayForMarawi, our "prayers" are justified as roles of mortification. When it comes to the rehabilitation, the framing of the redemption drama shifts—the responsibility to help the other depends on our consistent demand for the government's rehabilitation efforts, bringing the heroic figure of the administration of President Duterte into that of the tragic scapegoat that must be symbolically banished if the rehabilitation of Marawi does not become successful.

The extension of Martial Law in Mindanao was also framed in #PrayForMarawi tweets as a means to liberate the city in cooperation with the government. However, even after the city's liberation, Martial Law is still mandated in the island of Mindanao. The cybernationalism and solidarity portrayed in #PrayForMarawi tweets communicated an identification with victims of the Marawi war. However, this identification and rhetoric of sameness is not extended to groups of people in the Mindanao area who may suffer from extreme militarization such as the Lumads and other activists fighting for their lands and rights in the island. According to Save Our Schools (SOS) Network (as cited by Bulatlat Contributors, 2019), "Martial Law had shut down 79 Lumad schools, affecting 2,728 teachers and students. Three Lumad students were killed by state forces and paramilitary groups" (para. 13).

While Martial Law has already been lifted in Mindanao on January 1, 2020, the island is still in a "state of emergency", and will continue to ensnare activists demanding accountability from the government (Aspinwall, 2020). #PrayForMarawi's epideictic framing of a terrorist crisis highlights values of cooperation and cohesion while discouraging opposition. Socio-political events and characters are also transported onto the realm of the divine, failing to go back to the realm of the socio-political after the war has been won.

#PrayForMarawi's epideictic framing of a terrorist crisis highlights values cooperation and cohesion while discouraging opposition. It is important to note that among all the hashtags that were conceived about

the Marawi siege, only #PrayForMarawi reached trending status. Twitter algorithms may be blamed for selecting which issues demand our attention, but it can also be a proof of our momentary and fleeting commitment towards justice for the suffering of distant others.

Conclusion

#PrayForMarawi tweets reflected a cosmopolitan and nationalistic Order of peace and caring for the suffering of others. This Order is seen as a state of perfection that must be upheld in a time of terrorist crisis. Guilt is experienced in our inability to uphold this Order, and therefore requires rhetorical means of purification to absolve our feelings of guilt. Terrorism in the siege of Marawi becomes the source of guilt. Mortification in the form of self-sacrifice is performed through the announcement of acts of prayer online while victimage is performed by offering up ISIS as the tragic scapegoat that needs to be banished in the #PrayForMarawi social drama. Cooperation with the government is also framed as a value that must be upheld during national crisis. Members of the military are seen as heroes and victims who fight the war and President Duterte is portrayed as a father figure who protects his children during hard times through mortificatiom.

Through #PrayForMarawi's epideictic rhetorical velocity, the hashtag became a vehicle for guilt redemption co-performed with an online audience. The affordances of Twitter to give agency to its users to curate their statuses by retweeting or to show agreement to another's tweet by clicking "favorite" is the ultimate proof of identification in a collective guilt-redemption ritual. #PrayForMarawi's trending status and the acknowledgment of the hashtag's purpose during crisis events is a way of purging guilt through a mutual sense of forgiveness.

Because of the redemption acknowledged in the answered prayers of liberation, a post-humanitarian solidarity of self-expression in #PrayForMarawi purifies individual guilt while failing to provide a collective and sustained commitment for justice towards the suffering of others. These discourses may promote self-expression but they are also commercial discourses that craft publics as consumers of advertising, news, or social media platforms. Although the #PrayForMarawi discourse may contain a vocabulary of justice, its rhetoric remains incapable of going beyond pleasurable consumption. The use of rhetoric in #PrayForMarawi focused on the redemption of guilt through solidarity based on the emotionality of spectators than the other-oriented discourse of humanitarian communication. One factor is how socio-political events and characters are transported onto the realm of the divine, failing to go back to the realm of the socio-political after the war has been won. This other-oriented basis

of solidarity acknowledges human vulnerability as a cause for our action, but the guilt-redeeming, self-oriented disposition of seeing prayer and blind cooperation as end goal of our communicative acts transform consumption instead of action as a medium of humanitarian engagements. The purpose of the online prayer utterance is not only our connectivity with the suffering other, but also the connectivity and approval of our co-spectators.

#PrayForMarawi is a performative act born out of the post-humanitarian imaginary where people are bombarded with endless information about the suffering of others because of the technologization of communication, where the exigencies are not only rhetor-made but are influenced by algorithms, and where compassion fatigue, a desire to increase one's social capital, and neoliberal perspectives dictate our behaviors (or the absence of it).

Task Force Bangon Marawi claimed that authorities are aiming to finish the rehabilitation of Marawi City by 2021 (Parrocha, 2018). However, in April 2019, President Duterte attributed the Marawi siege to a "man-made calamity" created by the city's residents for allowing militants to do operations in their city, additionally claiming that Marawi's rehabilitation is no longer part of our prioritized responsibility as a nation because "the people there (in Marawi) have the money. Every Maranao there is a businessman. Count the shabu trade, they have the money" (Pres. Duterte as cited by CNN Philippines Staff, 2019).

In President Duterte's State of the Nation Address on July 22, 2019, he implied that, "it was the influence of drugs and money from its illegal trade that sparked and fueled the Marawi siege" (Gotinga, 2019, para. 2). Agakhan Sharief (as cited by Gotinga, 2019), a prominent religious leader and scholar from Marawi stated that he was dismayed of the President's SONA because he did not give plans about the rehabilitation in Marawi. He said, "Ang Pangulo, 'di niya kinayang banggitin ang rehabilitasyon ng Marawi. Bagkus, kanya pa itong minaliit, kesyo parang pinapalabas na lahat drug lord ang mga taga-Marawi" (para. 7-8), (The President, he didn't manage to mention the rehabilitation of Marawi. Instead, he even belittled it, as though to imply that people from Marawi are all drug lords.) .

With this, #PrayForMarawi's call for solidarity has completely faded behind the dominant neoliberal discourses of post-liberation Marawi. Additionally, President Duterte, the most powerful rhetor in the country, introduced a new framing to the narrative of the Marawi guilt-redemption rhetoric.

At this point, one can ask: who are the victims, who are the scapegoats, and where are the hashtags?

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Endnotes

[1] The script uses the python module GetOldTweets-python (written by Jefferson Henrique and Ciprian Billones). The extraction was done by simply running the following scripts in a command line or terminal with python interpreter installed: python export-tweets.py --querysearch "#PrayForMarawi" --since 2017-05-23 --until 2017-06-23 --maxtweets 1000 --toptweets --output "period-1-data.csv.

[2] In 2015, the Maute group pleaded allegiance to ISIS but National Security Council consultant Ashley Acedillo report that there are no confirmation that ISIS recognizes their pledge to be official (Billones, 2017).

Grant Support Details

About the Author

JUNESSE CRISOSTOMO is faculty member of the Department of Speech Communication and Theatre Arts, University of the Philippines-Diliman. She recently finished her MA Communication degree with the UP Department of Communication Research. Her MA thesis studies the role of religious rhetoric in shaping political participation and public opinion on human rights, justice, and peace. Ms. Crisostomo's research interests lie in rhetoric and performance studies. (corresponding author: jdcrisostomo1@up.edu.ph)