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Construction of Crises:

Climate, Terror and the Eiffel Tower

A Master's Thesis for the Degree Master of Arts (Two Years) in Visual Culture

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ABSTRACT

This work investigates visualizations of two crises; terrorism and climate change. Focus lies on mediated images concerning Paris 2015, where terrorist attacks had an impact on the following UN climate change conference (COP21). The symbol of the Eiffel Tower was used to portrait both issues and will be studied through a semiotic analysis. Terrorism and climate change are argued to be interlinked, although the Tower functions as a powerful apparatus that mediates different meanings depending on which crisis it represents. Roland Barthes' definition of myth is prolonged with a broader sense of ideology as defined by Louis Althusser. The ideology is mediated from the sovereign to the public through the apparatus that is further developed in the writings of Giorgio Agamben. Depictions of crises can accordingly be used by the sovereign in a state of exception with aim to control people's behavior. When signifying universal values, the Tower includes some while it excludes others that do not belong to the Western core nations. Countries in the periphery who suffer from climate change are historical victims of Western imperialism. The Eiffel Tower hides the colonial history while representing democratic values that simultaneously are being limited by the French government. The study ends with an ecocritical analysis of public artworks made in relation to COP21. Art has the potential to make the invisible climate change tangible, although the previous terror and the multiplied myths of the Eiffel Tower interfere with the reading.

Keywords: *Climate change, Terrorism, Image, Ideology, Apparatus*

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INTRODUCTION

Before the 13th of November we were many who waited with high expectations in the fall of 2015. The preparations started early; parades were planned, banners were made, and the travel to Paris was organized. *This was it*, this could be the chance to finally get the world leaders to sign a miraculous binding contract. The main focus of our attention was of course 2015 Paris Climate Conference, COP21, the 21st meeting of *Conference of Parties* held to urge international political response to climate change. The goal of COP21 was to form a legally binding contract with the aim to limit emissions and keep the global warming at a level below 2°C.¹ The atmosphere was good among the green minded students at the university, hope flourished through engaged cooperation. However, there was every reason to be skeptical; earlier attempts of a binding agreement had failed. The well-known Kyoto Protocol was signed in 1997, although when U.S as the leading country of emissions suddenly left the ‘binding’ contract, it allowed other countries to do the same.² The 2009 Copenhagen Climate Conference, COP15 (also known as *Hopenhagen*), was filled with high expectations for a new agreement, although in vain. Despite this unsatisfactory background it was hard not to be affected by the optimism and happy commitment among people in the fall of 2015.

Then, the 13th of November, terrorism hit Paris. Suddenly, interrupting, taking civilian lives and spilling blood on the same streets activists had marked on the maps for their planned marches. The headlines of world news in the end of the year were filled with reports about the terror attacks. A battle between good and evil developed in media where a hunt for suspects contrasted memorials that honored the victims of the attacks. News and attention to the following Climate Conference was consequently influenced by the news and actions of terror. The same activists that long had planned their participation now struggled to make the climate meeting visible in a time when public demonstration was forbidden in the Parisian streets due to security reasons. A clash between crises emerged, where the two news items, terrorism on the one hand and the climate conference on the other, were fighting for headlines.

Despite the duality between the news items, they were visually united with one symbol; the Eiffel Tower. The famous monument, constructed for the world exhibition in 1889, was frequently used in comments on the attacks and continued to be a strong symbol used to

¹ Climate Action, ‘Find out more about COP21’, *Sustainable innovation forum*, [website], 2015, <http://www.cop21paris.org/about/cop21>, (accessed, 8 April 2016).

² L. Lohmann, ‘Beyond patzers and clients – Strategic reflections on climate change and the “Green Economy”’,

represent the climate conference. The visualizations of this particular construction will be the focus of attention in the following work. In a normal state the Eiffel Tower would likely be a quite romantic symbol representing sophisticated French culture and enjoyment. Due to current circumstances, however, I will deal with the monument in a highly serious manner. At first sight the Eiffel Tower is used quite naturally as an icon for Paris, the place of the events. But few constructions in the world have so many connotations tied to them as this Tower. The semiotician Roland Barthes tributes a whole work to it where he makes a deep semiotic reading of the monument. It contains layers of French history, Barthes argues, and it stands for a variation of values that in the end drains it from meaning. It can mean anything and hence absolutely nothing.³ Of course other signs than the Eiffel Tower was used to comment on the terror attacks and promote the climate conference, but surprisingly many contained this celebrated figure.

Research Questions, Goals and Relevance of the Work

Then how can one read the Eiffel Tower in the depictions concerning Paris 2015? What is projected on the Tower? How do the issues of terrorism and climate change relate to or contrast each other? Are the crises portrayed similarly or does the Tower contain contradictory meanings? In a time of multiple mediated crises perhaps the most important question is; *who gains on crises?* Increasing poverty, a lack of food and clean water, global finance collapses, effects of climate change, and a growing threat of terrorism are occurring in a world that never been richer or more educated than today. How is this possible? I will argue that the root of the problem is uneven power structures. The thesis deals with climate change and terrorism as two of the most important issues of our time. How these crises are depicted and portrayed is therefore of highly importance for one to engage people and create action. The portrayal is especially important since we live in a visual culture where images of various kinds are fighting to get our attention. According to Greek tragedies, *κρίσις* (crisis) means that a situation is in need of decision making.⁴ Through history crises has naturally been a part of human culture, although in today's visual culture we see them clearer than ever before. Crises allow a dramatization of news which attracts people's attention.

³ R Barthes, 'The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies', in S. Sontag (ed.), *A Barthes Reader*, London, Vintage, 1993, pp. 236-250.

⁴ P. Shrivastava, 'Crisis theory/practice: towards a sustainable future', *Organization & Environment*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1993, pp. 23-42.

Both terrorism and climate change are threatening issues in time and space. We do not know when or where terror or an environmental disaster will strike. Both issues need precaution and political agreement. Higher security and warfare are used to fight terrorism, and agreements concerning emission regulations were made during COP21. Since clear information about the issues is hard to attain, the individual put trust in what media and the authorities says. When the issues and news about them are circulating globally we take part of events that is happening far from our local neighborhood. Some events are experienced through media to a higher degree, such as the visual reporting of 9/11. As a result people might be afraid despite a low crime rate. When it comes to climate change however, a striking concern is if we are scared enough or if we ever can grasp the full width of this threat.

COP21 could have been a turning point where human decision making dramatically determined the future of mankind. Although, to dramatize something as diffuse and slow as climate change has turned out to be a challenge, especially when contrasted with terrorism. Ethical dilemmas occurred in November 2015 when the environment needed to be discussed while people simultaneously were killed on the nearest streets. Still, communication and interpretation of meaning seem to be the only starting point for humanity to begin to cooperate and act in order to 'save' the future, or rather, keep us from destroying it. Messages with an agenda directed to a broad public have probably never been more important. The language of visual signs is of crucial matter, especially since climate change is so hard to express and grasp in our language.

The thesis is written with a somewhat naïve belief that art and images has an impact on the world. Or rather, that they can mediate ideas and create affection that people act upon. It is therefore an attempt to take every image seriously and see how it potentially can have an impact on our dreams, fears and society. The aim is to show that power and desire is imbedded in our relations to images. Images can therefore be used by those who aim to take control over others. I will argue that people's fear, and perhaps the construction of fear, can be used to control the behavior of individuals. These ideas will be executed more carefully in the following chapters.

The use of the Eiffel Tower will furthermore be declared to possess the ability to reveal present power structures. One observation is that mainstream media to a large extent portrait both issues from a Western rhetoric, that is, from the policies of the United States or Western Europe. This is especially visible when the West is put in contrast with 'Other' often poor or 'less developed' countries that lie outside US or Europe in what is defined as the *third world*.

The symbolic use of the Eiffel Tower has, as I attempt to show, been used in various ways that can be analyzed in relation to this background.

Theory, Methodology and Current Research

Semiotics, the study of signs, will serve as a methodical and theoretical framework for my analysis. Semiotics allows a deeper attention to be placed on the actual image. By understanding the image on its own terms, as a transmitter of messages, it can reveal underlying meaning. The images of the Eiffel Tower chosen for analysis are further made by different producers that I have divided into three categories; (1) *Authorities*, (2) *Media & Activism*, and (3) *Artists*. These three actors mediate their messages on three different levels; the Authorities on a (1) *national level*, Media and Activism on a (2) *social or public level*, and the Artists on an (3) *individual level*. These preconditions of production are important to bear in mind when decoding the images. I have used the categories to understand the context surrounding the images, who have made them and to whom they are being made for, which makes it possible to identify hidden power structures.

Barthes' semiotic reading in *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies* (1964) has quite naturally become the starting point to my study of the monument. This title is following one of his more influencing works, *Mythologies* (1957), in which he practices semiotics on a broad range of issues such as wrestling, toys and Citroën. Under the heading *Myth Today*, Barthes develops his definition of myths, in which he describes three layers of understanding an image. When he argues that *myth is a type of speech*,⁵ Barthes takes departure from linguistic semiotics as defined by Ferdinand de Saussure, although Barthes stretches Saussure's readings beyond language into the visual field. Barthes' mythological understanding of the Eiffel Tower describes it as a mediator of propaganda that acts in a way that we do not notice.

Barthes' definition of myth will hence be my departure to the ideology behind the Eiffel Tower. Barthes himself acknowledges that myth has strong likeness to ideology as he writes 'This is the case with mythology: it is a part both of semiology inasmuch as it is a formal science, and of ideology inasmuch as it is an historical science: it studies ideas-in-form.'⁶ The Eiffel Tower, as a myth, mediates ideology. I will argue that the Tower thus can be defined as an *apparatus*. State Apparatuses, as originally defined by Karl Marx, has been further

⁵ R., Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. A. Lavers, London, Vintage, 2009, p. 132.

⁶ Barthes, 2009, p. 135.

developed by Louis Althusser into what he calls *Ideological State Apparatuses*. Althusser uses the term to describe how the bourgeois and the ruling classes control the society through ideology embedded in institutional apparatuses such as school, military and media. The overall aim is to secure the reproduction of productive forces.⁷

Michel Foucault draws on Althusser's ideas of institutionalized apparatuses when he argues that power and knowledge control our behavior through these institutions. However, Foucault uses the term *dispositif* in French which slightly differs from the English word 'apparatus'. This has been problematized by Jeffrey Bussolini who suggests that the word 'dispositive' is a more appropriate translation of the term in order to distinguish it from apparatuses.⁸ I have in opposition chosen to use the overall term apparatus, since my aim is to link Althusser's sense of apparatus to Foucault's idea of the *dispositif*. As Bussolini argues there are differences between the two terms, however, I will use 'apparatus' as a conjoined term referring to their common features that I find suitable to apply to the Tower. This is made according to the English translation of the concepts that simply uses the joined word 'apparatus'.

The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben take departure from Foucault but goes beyond institutions and argues that the power of ideology can mediate itself through our everyday way of talking, writing and so on – very similar to Barthes' notion of myths as 'ideas-in-form'. With Agamben the whole world can be seen as an apparatus, every one of us appear as mediators of ideology.⁹ Together Barthes, Althusser, Foucault and Agamben use apparatuses as a somewhat coordinated concept to explain how power is spread through ideology in the society.

I will use the term *apparatus* to define the role of the Eiffel Tower in the images concerning Paris 2015. Foucault has previously been connected to the discourse of terrorism within the context of biopolitics, and Agamben's theories are directly dealing with the issue of terror. However, few studies in Visual Culture have compared the threat of terrorism with that of climate change.¹⁰ My use of semiotics, along with the concepts of myth, ideology and apparatuses will be seen through the lens of an *ecocritical perspective*. As an interdisciplinary field of study, Visual Culture has potentials for further development, for instance by incorporating ecocriticism. As a new theory in development, ecocriticism has its roots in

⁷ L. Althusser, *On Ideology*, London & New York, Verso, 2008, pp. 22-32.

⁸ J. Bussolini, 'What is a Dispositive?', *Foucault Studies*, no. 10, 2010, pp. 85-107.

⁹ G. Agamben, *What is an Apparatus? And Other Essays*, trans. D. Kishik & S. Pedatella, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2009, p. 14.

¹⁰ I have not found any studies within the field of Visual Culture, however the two issues are compared in other fields of research, see for instance Dando, 2014.

literature science but has already been used in a range of fields and cultural disciplines. *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996) is an influential anthology where Cheryl Glotfelty's introduction defines ecocriticism as 'the relationship between literature and the physical environment'. As feminism argues for the sake of women, ecocriticism argues for the sake of Earth.¹¹ In the bibliographic essay *Greening the Library: The Fundamentals and Future of Ecocriticism*, Loretta Johnson reviews the literary canons of ecocriticism, but also hints to its future potential as a multidisciplinary approach.¹² Another useful source for understanding the theory is Greg Garrard's *Ecocriticism*. Garrard describe how the potentials of ecocriticism such as understanding and criticizing our current way of living, successfully have been adapted to a broader range of cultural studies. This is much driven forward by the *Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment* (ASLE), Garrard argues, who arranges conferences and publishes a journal. From traditional subjects like romantic poetry and the narrative of nature writing, ASLE has in later years shifted its focus to contemporary popular cultural expressions such as film, TV, theme parks and shopping malls, but also art and architecture.¹³ These subjects highly unite contemporary studies in ecocriticism with those of visual culture; a similarity I think is worth to be further explored in the future of visual culture. The field can gain but also add perspectives to ecocritical theory. To unite Visual Culture with ecocriticism is also one agenda of this thesis. Barthes and Agamben are largely discussed in Visual Culture, but have not been further developed within the context of ecocriticism. Although, as this work aim to show, apparatuses and ideology mediated through images are highly important to how people think and act concerning Nature and environmental problems. In addition the issue of contemporary terrorism can perhaps bring new insights in ecocriticism concerning the portrayal of crises.

In first appearance environmental problems concerning physical recourses might seem to be in opposition to language, semiotics and abstract ideology. It is therefore important to bear in mind that these ideologies are not mere thoughts but physical structures that in reality affect human beings. The structures we face in a globalized world, like nationalism, colonialism and industrialism, have lead to the human suffering and natural degradation that we face today. Terrorism and polluted natural surroundings are indications of how ideologies have real consequences in the material world. Our language and our visual understanding of

¹¹ C. Glotfelty, 'Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis', in C. Glotfelty & H. Fromm (ed.), *The ecocriticism reader: landmarks in literary ecology*, Athens and London, University of Georgia Press, 1996.

¹² L. Johnson, 'Greening the Library: The Fundamentals and Future of Ecocriticism', *Choice*, vol. 47, no. 4, 2009, pp. 623-631.

¹³ G. Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 2nd edn., New York, Routledge, 2012, pp. 4-5.

this language must relate to these challenges. Climate change threatens to destroy everything we have and everything we are. The fundamental ideas behind this thesis is that climate change is strongly linked to terrorism, as well as class struggles, colonialism, racism, and sexual and gender discrimination. Together they make a degradation of nature possible. Ideology is not abstract thoughts without any relevance in the real world; on the contrary these broad ideas have a physical and direct outcome that is climate change and human suffering. When I in the following will shed a critical light on the enlightenment ideas, on industrialism and the growth of capitalism, it is because they together have enabled social and environmental damage to a degree that now threatens our very existence. The Cartesian thoughts and the belief that nature is mechanic was further developed during the Enlightenment and made the human exploitation of nature (as well as other humans) acceptable which escalated in the upcoming industrialization. Although, one must bear in mind that I am privileged enough to write these words *because* of the western industrial development that these concepts have lead to. If it was not for the ideas of enlightenment, democracy, industrialism and capitalism I would certainly not be this lucky. This very conflict is also the cause to why an agreement in the climate conferences is so hard to reach. It is easy to criticize industrialism and capitalism from a Western perspective that already has gained from its benefits. Still, the West claims universal values that shall be adopted by everyone, which escalate occidentalism that for instance strengthen terrorism. Joachim Radkau notes how the environmental movement in the 1970s, when the UN Environmental Conference took place in Stockholm 1972, was widely seen as a Western event. Rich industrial countries that ‘no longer knew hunger’ could claim postmaterial values.¹⁴ Ecocriticism can in the same way be criticized for being a Western privileged theory. A strong majority of ecocritical writers are American and the field has been judged for its strong likeness to American literature studies.¹⁵ Under the title *Humaniora i kris* (Humanities in Crisis) in a Swedish ethnologic magazine, Olavi Hemmilä asks the reader if ecocriticism might be developed in Western countries due to a bad consciousness.¹⁶ I would argue that also the field of Visual Culture might contain some of this bad consciousness over the Western historical greed. Agamben’s writing on the holocaust and refugees in the present might be seen as an indication of this tendency. The truth is that if every nation ‘developed’ like the West the climatic side effects would likely

¹⁴ J. Radkau, *Nature and Power: A Global History of the Environment*, transl. T. Dunlap, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 254.

¹⁵ For instance: R. Nixon ‘Environmentalism and postcolonialism’, in K. Hiltner (ed.), *Ecocriticism: The Essential Reader*, New York, Routledge, 2015.

¹⁶ Hemmilä, O., ‘Humaniora i kris’, *Kulturella perspektiv*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2012, pp. 11-19.

mean the end of human civilization. But how can the West refuse developing countries the same right to industrial development that created the Western lifestyle? This question is one of the most fundamental questions concerning the climate deal in Paris 2015. I will argue that power relations between West and the developing world are manifested in the visualizations of the Eiffel Tower. These power structures are crucial for the issue of climate change as well as our understanding of terrorism.

Structure of the Work

The following work is divided into three chapters dealing with images made by the three categories of producers. (1) the *Authorities* that mediate their message on a national level, (2) *Media and Activism* that direct their message on a social or public level, and (3) *Artists* who communicates on an individual level. The first chapter takes a closer look at how the Eiffel Tower is portrayed by the authorities. Partly how COP21 is marketed by UN, and partly how the Eiffel Tower is used by the French government to comment the terror attacks. The Tower is by Agamben's concepts defined as an *apparatus* used by authorities in a *state of exception*. The chapter also discusses the need of an *Other* and distinguishes links between the issues of climate change and terrorism.

The second chapter deals with social media and activism and mainly concerns one illustration; *Peace for Paris*. This single illustration was spread and shared on social media to comment on the attacks and was later adopted by environmental activists to promote COP21. The chapter discusses the power of images and how *universal values* are spread thorough the Eiffel Tower. Media is argued to be a constructor of myths who creates a mainly Western propaganda. The use of the Eiffel Tower as a symbol among climate activists is questioned.

While chapter one and two deals with the influence that terrorism had on the climate meeting, the third and last chapter discusses the difficulty of portraying climate change. Artworks made to promote COP21, that continued to make use of the Eiffel Tower and its representations, will be analyzed and discussed based on Althusser's concept of *ideological state apparatuses*. Further potentials of art are discussed as an opportunity to find new ways of portraying a climate in crisis.

As semiotics teaches, the ways of creating meaning in our language is unlimited. It is hence an impossibility to grasp every connotation of the Eiffel Tower. Meaning is created everywhere by everyone and interpreted in unlimited ways, and the sign of the Eiffel Tower, as I attempt to show, can mean everything – and nothing. The following attempt of reading

the symbolic monument in a time of crises is therefore far from giving answers, or limits, about the infinitive span of myths concerning the Eiffel Tower. Rather, I will use the images of the Tower as a tool to gain some knowledge and understanding of otherwise large and abstract power structures. I will use the images to describe and interpret how signs and symbols penetrate our lives, fears and dreams of the future.

CHAPTER 1: AUTHORITIES

1.1 The Eiffel Tower as Apparatus

Media and the French government portrayed two crises concerning Paris in 2015: the crisis of terrorism and the crisis of climate change. Previous studies have shown that terrorism is considered as a larger threat than climate change despite the fact that climate change takes more lives than terrorism each year.¹⁷ This is primarily due to media's attention to terrorism. The portrayal of climate change usually lacks the ability to engage for several reasons. Firstly it concerns large and abstract changes that can be hard to picture and explain in a simple and direct manner. Several changes are in addition invisible for the human eye. Secondly, it is a long term process that in contrast to the immediate terror attacks becomes more of a distant threat. Thirdly, it often lacks personification and specific individuals that can create affection or identification. The portrayal of these crises is then of highly importance. In the context of *governmentality*, Foucault has shown that the knowledge about risks can be used in order to control people's behavior. According to Foucault the modern state control its population with power and knowledge that is spread through institutions, procedures, analyses, reflections, calculations and tactics.¹⁸ For instance, the knowledge about the risks of becoming too fat will likely convince people to exercise more and eat healthier. The Eiffel Tower is the most commonly used sign to represent the two crises in Paris 2015. The portrayal of the Tower is therefore of importance since it might show governmental attempts to control the behavior of individuals.

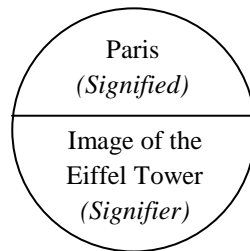
Due to earlier failures of a binding contract, much hope and attention was directed towards the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, COP21. When looking at the images that the UN made in order to promote the conference, the atmosphere of hope and optimism seems present. *Figure 1* (see Appendix) shows the official logotype for COP21. A green leaf is portrayed with the silhouette of the Eiffel Tower in white as its center. In the upper left a half circle of white has been cut off from the contour of the leaf. It might look as if an insect took a small bite from the official logo, although the orange color spreading from the circle and out

¹⁷ V. W. Dando, 'Mapping the media contours of global risks: A comparison of the reporting of climate change and terrorism in the British press', PhD Thesis, School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, Cardiff University, 2014.

¹⁸ M. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978*, M. Senellart (ed.), transl. G. Burchell, New York, Picador, 2004, p. 108.

in the green area indicates that it also represents the sun. In total we see three obvious signs; the leaf, the sun, and the Eiffel Tower.

Why is the Eiffel Tower used in the logo of COP21? What does it signify? First and foremost it is an indicator that the meeting took place in Paris. In Saussurean terms the Eiffel Tower as a single monument becomes a *signifier* for the whole city of Paris. The Tower and the *signified* city together create a *sign*:



According to Charles Sanders Peirce typology, a sign can refer to the object (the signified) in three different ways. The sign can be *iconic*, since the Eiffel Tower has a direct likeness to the city of Paris, namely when you are in Paris you will see the silhouette of the Tower. It can also be regarded as an *indexical* sign since the Tower indicate that the place of the event will take place in Paris. But most remarkable the Eiffel Tower is a *symbol*; it stands for a broader amount of concepts that does not have a direct likeness to its form. It is the symbolic values of the Eiffel Tower that interests Barthes to deepen his analysis on this spectacular monument. In *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies* he makes an attempt to grasp some of its numerous representations:

[...] beyond its strictly Parisian statement, it touches the most general human image-repertoire: its simple, primary shape confers upon it the appeals of our imagination, the symbol of Paris, of modernity, of communication, of science or of the nineteenth century, rocket, stem, derrick, phallus, lightning rod or insect, confronting the great itineraries of our dreams, it is the inevitable sign; just as there is no Parisian glance which is not compelled to encounter it, there is no fantasy which fails, sooner or later, to acknowledge its form and to be nourished by it [...]¹⁹

Barthes continues to describe how the Tower initially was commonly regarded as useless, even before it was constructed. It was an empty monument, except for its creator, Gustave Eiffel (1832-1923), who regarded it as a serious object of rational character. To Barthes it is therefore ironic how people started to fill the construction with other concepts and meanings

¹⁹ Barthes, 1993.

and turn it into a ‘great baroque dream which quite naturally touches on the borders of the irrational’.²⁰ In this respect it has turned into an empty sign that now means *everything*.

Saussure explains our understanding of signs as a language made up by differences. A sign does accordingly not have a value in itself; it does not make sense on its own, but gains its meaning through its relative position to other signs.²¹ Adapted to the Eiffel Tower portrayed in the logo of COP21, one can understand the meaning of the symbolic Tower when putting it in contrast with the other signs. The sun seems to spread a harmonious light of warmth, but can with knowledge about the meeting also be regarded as our strongest source of energy. Together with the text promoting COP21, the leaf in the official logo can easily be regarded as a sign for the conceptual term *Nature*. Then the Eiffel Tower here turns into a symbol not only for Paris, but for humanity as a whole, a symbol for manmade culture and technology – everything that is *non-nature*. A first glance at the logo suggests that culture is in harmony with Nature. Notable is that the Tower is bended slightly, following the leaf, so that the hard and straight steel tower now is softening in line with nature. Nature is in turn keeping the Tower of humanity under its warm nurturing light. The same calm and almost romantic holism can be seen in *figure 2*. The image was found on the official website of COP21, made in order to promote the meeting. The golden sunlight is striking as it shimmers over the city of Paris covered in green vegetation. Under the trees one can distinguish a carousel between the walking paths, but most clearly the dominating Eiffel Tower rises into the blue sky. The image must be read from an anthropocentric worldview, since we are looking at the city of Paris, but even so culture and nature seems to be in perfect harmony with each other. Paris has become paradise; it seems to be a future scenario of opportunities, safety and enjoyment. The Tower is filled with hope and romance in the same manner that Parisians have applied meaning to it since its construction, according to Barthes. These cultural aspects are perhaps needed in order for people to relate to, and take interest in, the climate conference. The image creates dreams about a possible future, dreams about a green city full of culture and entertainment.

The calm and hopeful appearance of the Eiffel Tower in these images is especially heightened in contrast with the previous terror attacks. The context of terror was obviously not considered when the UN produced these images, but as an unfortunate coincidence the myths about the Eiffel Tower were especially multiplied during the end of 2015. To mourn

²⁰ Barthes, 1993.

²¹ F. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, C. Bally & A. Sechehaye (ed.), transl. W. Baskin, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966, pp. 118-120.

and honor the victims of the attacks, the Tower closed down and went dark. When it reopened it was lit up in the French colors, blue, red and white, for three days (see *figure 3*).²² Across the globe other famous monuments were lit up in the French colors as well, sharing their support.²³ Instead of showing images of dead victims, media portrayed the terror events with symbolic images such as the French tricolor, flowers on the streets, or the Eiffel Tower. Symbolic images have not one meaning, but several. Barthes calls them *polysemous*, since every image contains a ‘floating chain’ of signifieds that the reader can choose to read or not.²⁴ When strong symbols are combined they therefore refer to several signifiers as embedded connotations that easily can create emotions. The narrative surrounding the Eiffel Tower adds a whole range of meanings to the attacks and is thus an ultimate tool to evoke people’s emotions. In contrast to the images promoting COP21, the Tower in figure 3 is everything but romantic and optimistic. The image is dark, and compared to the green holism in figure 2, this Tower rises high above the city of Paris. The steel construction stands like armor against foreign enemies, it is powerful and threatening to the one who does not stand under its protection. The silhouette has dramatically changed into a dominant force of a nation. Two very contrasting messages are thus projected on the Eiffel Tower almost simultaneously, following each other. The Tower functions as an *apparatus* of messages.

In *What is an apparatus? And Other Essays* (2009) Agamben defines an apparatus as anything that in some way shapes or controls behavior or opinions of human beings. He takes departure from Foucault who argues that the governmental control acts through institutionalized apparatuses. As such the power manifests itself in our everyday lives and forms our sense of knowledge, dreams, fears and the definition of ourselves as individuals. Foucault explains that it is ‘a form of power which makes individuals subjects.’²⁵ Agamben goes outside Foucault when suggesting that the power is spread not only through institutions, but also through our writing, philosophy, language and so on.²⁶ Everything and everyone can be an apparatus that mediates meanings through modes of *subjectification*. The power aims to make people feel like they are freely choosing an identity. Although, this identity is constructed by the apparatus and the freedom is hence illusionary. Agamben writes: ‘Indeed,

²² N. Oakley, ‘Paris terror attacks: Eiffel Tower turns out its lights as mark of respect to victims’, *Mirror*, 14 November 2015, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/paris-terror-attacks-eiffel-tower-6831948>, (accessed 23 May 2016).

²³ ‘Landmarks turn blue, white and red in support for Paris’, *CNN*, 16 November 2015, <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/11/14/world/gallery/french-colors-1114/index.html>, (accessed 23 May 2016).

²⁴ R. Barthes, ‘The Rhetoric of the Image’, in *Image Music Text*, transl. S. Heath, London, Fotana Press, 1977, pp. 32-51.

²⁵ M. Foucault, ‘The Subject and Power’, *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 8, no. 4, 1982, pp. 777-795.

²⁶ Agamben, 2009, p. 14.

every apparatus implies a process of subjectification, without which it cannot function as an apparatus of governance, but is rather reduced to a mere exercise of violence.²⁷ It is only through subjectification an apparatus can operate its governance. It materializes as such ideology. Althusser who writes explicitly on ideology argues that “‘ideas” or “representations”, etc., which seem to make up ideology do not have an ideal (*idéale* or *idéelle*) or spiritual existence, but a *material existence [my emphasis]*”.²⁸ The Eiffel Tower can be regarded as an apparatus since it materializes ideology and functions as a device that can be used by sovereign forces in attempts to control people to think, imagine and behave in certain ways. Different meanings and messages are projected on it depending on the circumstances in order to affect the individual. Despite the different portrayal of the Tower during the end of 2015, the message is somewhat the same: it aims to gather people and it aims to control people’s thoughts and actions so that it benefits the sovereign power.

Agamben’s sense of an apparatus is similar to what Barthes defines as a myth. ‘Myth is a type of speech’, Barthes declares,²⁹ a message constructed in order to make people believe in it and identify with it. In *Mythologies* he makes a famous analysis of an image on a magazine cover picturing a young black man saluting while dressed in a French uniform. Barthes identifies three levels of meanings of the image. Firstly, as an empty signifier; a black soldier is giving the French salute. Secondly, as a full signifier taking history into account; the black soldier justifies French imperialism. Thirdly, on a higher level that includes both meaning and form is the mythological language in which the soldier becomes ‘the very *presence* of French imperialism’.³⁰ Barthes’ theory of myths has strong similarities to the art historian Erwin Panofsky’s writings on iconology. In the book *Studies in Iconology* (1939), Panofsky also defines three layers of interpreting meaning in visual representations. On the first level, as *Natural Subject Matter*, one can identify pure form or signs in the image, something we know through the familiar. On the second level, as *Conventional Subject Matter*, motifs can be associated to broader themes or concepts that the sign represents. And on Panofsky’s third level, underlying *Meaning* or *Content* can be read from the image due to its connection to a cultural historical context.³¹ However, with his third level of mythology, Barthes goes further than Panofsky in the sense that he moves from iconology and the cultural history into a more extensive ideology and social analysis.

²⁷ Agamben, 2009, pp. 19-20.

²⁸ Althusser, 2008, p. 39.

²⁹ Barthes, 2009, p. 131.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-153.

³¹ E. Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes In the Art of the Renaissance*, Oxford University Press, 1939.

Barthes' sense of ideology can in addition be understood through the writings of Althusser. Ideology is the base of every society, Althusser argues. As with apparatuses, it controls people when they feel that they are free individuals in line with their ideology.³² The Barthesian myth accordingly contains levels of authority and power. Although Barthes repeatedly notes that myth does not hide anything; it distorts, and as such naturalizes ideology.³³ Barthes argues that *constructors of myths* such as the journalist, thoughtfully creates a message that can control people (*consumers of myth*), without them being aware of it.³⁴ Myths can in this way become a norm that functions in our everyday lives without being questioned. Mediators of these myths must be understood as apparatuses.

To return to the images from the UN, a signified has several signifiers; a sign contains several meanings that the viewer can pick and choose from. The viewer reads and interprets some meanings while simultaneously discards others. However, this interpretation of meanings is directed by the image makers. In figure 2 it is more likely that one read the Eiffel Tower as a symbol for culture, knowledge, city, entertainment, future, science, modernity, democracy, development or peace. Barthes' term *anchorage* describes how the meaning in this sense is fixed and directed by the producer in order to take control over the message.³⁵ The viewer can identify with the underlying ideology and, through modes of subjectification, still consider oneself as a free minded individual. The image includes a signifier; the Eiffel Tower in harmony with nature, which are referring to a signified; Western development is fulfilling Nature. The viewer will likely not (even if it is possible) choose to read the Tower as a sign for the steel industry, industrialization, capitalism, colonialism, French patriotism or environmental destruction. In fact, the image does not question our current way of living what so ever, it seems to assume that humanity is doing great. It does not show any actual Nature, contrary it only portraits a manmade nature. An obvious contrast is made when the Tower as culture clashes with the green trees; Nature. Steel meet leafs, and a hierarchy is made visible when the Tower reaches far above the green, like if it actually *completes* Nature or develops *beyond it*. Nature is to become moral, and we are her teachers. In the lack of natural surroundings and concepts, the city becomes a form of second nature in which our current way of living is not regarded as a failure, but rather a success that in the future will unite steel, concrete and economy with the concept of sustainable development. This is the myth behind the image.

³² Althusser, 2008, pp. 44-51.

³³ Barthes, 2009, pp. 153-154.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 152.

³⁵ Barthes, 1977, pp. 32-51.

The optimism and calm appearance is signaling a harmonious message in a time when we face an environmental disaster. The depictions thus risk failing to communicate the alarming situation. We are closing in on a catastrophe that likely will be the end of mankind, still the appearance of the Eiffel Tower in these images does not signal any worry. It promotes new technical inventions in line with Nature, but risks to become a matter of *green washing*; that is, to sell concepts as environmentally friendly when in reality they are not. It has become a myth when the utopian image of a green eco-friendly city is a future almost every individual would agree upon. However, the image talks less about the struggles we must go through to get there. COP21 might be less for the sake of nature, as in trees and animals – but rather for the sake of a human culture that with capitalistic forces strive to continue grow and flourish in the same destructive way that lead up to this point.

An alternative is *degrowth*. Richard Heinberg predicts that today's economy is approaching a definitive turning point; the end of growth. As evident with the latest finance crises and environmental destruction, the economic growth is doomed to end Heinberg argues.³⁶ An economical system without growth is theoretically possible to unite with sustainable development. For instance by consuming less, sharing work and making investments in small businesses focusing on local production, culture and social life. However, these ideas are difficult to see in the UN image, most notably since there are no people present. The image depicts the city of Paris as a single phenomenon, a utopian dream scenario without human beings. It can with this notion be turned into a horror scenario of the future Earth. Like in Alan Weisman's post-human scenario in the book *A World Without Us* (2007), or the following TV-series *Aftermath: Population Zero* (2008) and *Life After People* (2008), the world without humans is portrayed as harmonious. Nature has taken over the city, although it is not Nature that is of attention in these depictions, but manmade buildings and creations. The viewer of the TV-series can watch famous monuments, such as the Eiffel Tower, be ruined by Nature's 'revenge'. As Mark S. Jendrysik remarks it becomes an erotic presentation of the decay of man-made things.³⁷ Our fascination of ruins thus celebrates our great civilization, and as the illustrations promoting COP21 show, Nature appears as most interesting when measured against human related matter.

³⁶ R. Heinberg, *The End of Growth: Adapting to Our New Economic Reality*, Gabriola Island, New Society Publishers, 2011.

³⁷ M. S. Jendrysik, 'Back to the Garden: New Visions of Posthuman Futures', *Utopian Studies*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2011, pp. 34-51.

1.2 *The Other in a State of Exception*

*Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.*³⁸

(Genesis 11:1-9)

As with the tower of Babel from the Old Testament, towers seem to be built in order to unite people. According to the biblical myth, the tower of Babel could be built since people spoke the same language. Although, their enthusiasm and hubris of building a tower that could reach the sky was to be punished, since God's authority shall not be questioned. God ruined the tower and scattered the people all over the world and made them speak different languages. Now they could no longer communicate and build towers that could reach the sky. Still, a tower seems to be a strong symbol, built in order to celebrate cities, nations and kingdoms, or even the greatness of mankind. It speaks to us through the visual language of signs, since the conquest of the sky has a long history and represents several meanings to almost any culture. The World Trade Center was a strategic target for the terror attacks in 2001, not for what it was, but for what it represented and symbolized. The twin towers in New York were a symbol for Western values in a similar way to what the Eiffel Tower signifies today. As one of the world's most famous monuments, the Eiffel Tower carries an almost monstrous amount of history. The word monument originates from the Latin *monēre*, which means to remind, advice, or warn.³⁹ It hence suggests that a monument shall visualize something from the past that needs to be remembered in the future. A monument is often associated to a building or construction massive in size and power, but it also refers to a grave or tombstone as a remembrance of death.

As in the images of COP21, the Eiffel Tower lit up by the French tricolors in figure 3 is portrayed in a directed manner. Some meanings are declining while others are brought forward. The image of the Tower takes for instance no concern to the French history of colonial power over Islamic countries or modern politics. It does not mention the war in Syria, or geopolitical battles over oil and water supplies. The Tower contributes in strengthening the French patriotism by simply focusing on the sanctioned values of France. Foucault often notes that history can be used and bended by sovereign forces in order to convey certain messages.

³⁸ *Holy Bible*, 'Genesis 11:1-9', Biblica Inc., New International Version, 2011, Available from: Bible Gateway, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+11:1-9>, (accessed 2 April 2016).

³⁹ Definition of 'Monument', The Free Dictionary by Farlex, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/monument> (accessed 17 May 2016).

The history of the French revolution, Enlightenment, democracy, freedom of speech and the more recent attack against Charlie Hebdo in January 2015 – can all be used to clarify war in the present. As Barthes remarks, the Eiffel Tower is filled with historical connotations. In *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies* he pictures a travel through the Tower where every layer represents a layer of French national history.⁴⁰ The Tower is a sign for all its history, although, myth, Barthes argues, is constructed by the *loss of history*.⁴¹ When portrayed, a myth does not hide anything but present things with a rhetoric that makes them lose the memory that intentionally created them:

‘Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact’.⁴²

Barthes’ myth is again close to Althusser’s definition of ideology that also excludes history. Althusser take departure from Sigmund Freud’s suggestion that the *unconscious is eternal*. Just as the unconsciousness then lack history, Althusser writes that ‘ideology has no history’, ideology is *eternal*.⁴³

When looking at the mediated image in figure 3, or the actual Tower in the French colors, the viewer will likely interpret the whole nation of France with its power and rich connotations. Despite the history of French colonialism the Tower tells a myth that justifies the greatness of the nation. As Benedict Anderson has stated, nationalism is a form of ‘imagined community’. It is imagined in the sense that members of France never will know its fellow-members. People are united by invisible forces, culture, language and history but also visible signs that create a justification for soldiers to die for the sake of their nation.⁴⁴ As with monuments, Anderson argue that death always has been connected to nationalism, which is evident when people are killed on the streets of Paris and mourned by the French tricolor. National traumas, such as the terror attacks, are known to strengthen nationalism. They create an enemy and an imaginary community against that common enemy. This is much brought forward by media that dramatize the news and create stereotypes of victims and perpetrators.

⁴⁰ Barthes, 1993, p. 245.

⁴¹ Barthes, 2009, p. 169.

⁴² Ibid. pp. 169-170.

⁴³ Althusser, 2008, p. 35.

⁴⁴ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London & New York, Verso, 2006.

As Saussure has argued difference is necessary for creating meaning in our language. It can also be argued that it is necessary for the construction of identity. Besides French patriotism, the Eiffel Tower simultaneously signals that it is non-Muslim, non-violent, non-dictatorship, and non-terrorism. It gains strength from being contrasted with an *Other*. In our everyday language we define ourselves through others; we make meaning by comparing and value things. Jacques Lacan, strongly influenced by Saussure, argues that from the moment we learn to distinguish ourselves in the mirror we separate ourselves from our mother and the surrounding world. That is the first time we can create meaning through difference and shape an *I*, an ego, in order to define ourselves as subjects.⁴⁵ However, when we separate two concepts we also put them in a hierarchy of values. The *Other* is always associated with danger and negative connotations.

As commonly studied in earlier writings of ecocriticism, Nature has always been regarded as an *Other* in Western tradition. The dichotomy of nature/culture is perhaps one of the oldest differences in our culture. Historically people have struggled to keep Nature at a distance, we build houses to keep it outside, and we have always fought against weather, bacteria and diseases. As a result, Nature has become something threatening. It can be explained by Freud's concept of the German word *das Unheimliche*, the uncanny. The uncanny is something unknown, but at the same time familiar. It belongs to us, but in a stage of repression we have pushed it away and kept it at a distance to a degree that it now has become frightening.⁴⁶ However, the climatic changes that is threatening us today, which is likely to become much worse, is not simply Nature as our enemy yet again. Contrary, this time it is we ourselves that are threatening our own existence. *We are Nature*, we control the weather, and in reality the dichotomy between culture and nature dissolve – if it has ever existed. As Greg Garrard notes there is no such thing as humanity 'saving the planet'. Rather we need to keep ourselves from destroying it.⁴⁷ It is hence necessary to find less anthropocentric ways of talking about environmental crises. A biocentric worldview might lead the humanity to some degree of self-awareness.

The Other can further be discussed through the evolutionary thoughts of Charles Darwin. When Darwin stated his 'survival of the fittest' he did not necessary mean that someone must be stronger to conquer another. In a human perspective the survival of the

⁴⁵ J. Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience', in *Écrits: a Selection*, transl. B. Fink, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2004, pp. 3-9.

⁴⁶ S. Freud, *The Uncanny*, transl. D. McIntock, London, Penguin Books, 2003, pp. 123-134.

⁴⁷ Garrard, 2012, p. 205.

fittest could also be accomplished by adaption or cooperation, for instance.⁴⁸ Although Darwin's thoughts made room for a dark view of Nature that did not take human moral responsibility into consideration, especially among Social Darwinists such as Herbert Spencer and totalitarian philosophers during the beginning of the 20th century. Darwinism was turned and used in order to benefit the capitalistic system that needed to exploit an Other (both natural resources and human labor) in order to develop. The Social Darwinistic tradition follows a Western tradition of domination and justifies that some beings are considered more developed than others. This allows man to value himself above Nature in line with the Aristotelian *Great Chain of Being* that was further developed in the Christian tradition, and later in Cartesian thoughts followed by a materialistic Enlightenment. But it also allowed man to stand in a hierarchy over other human beings. Colonialism was made possible by these ideas, and so is the founding of Nazism where the 'evolution of man' is put into a political system that goes to the extreme. In the context of Paris 2015 Islamists are the main suspects and almost dehumanized as such. Behind the fear lies an interpretation of the *Other*.

Through history the West has always been in need of another to strengthen its own identity. In medieval times, Christianity united Europe towards the Muslims. In colonial times, the exotic but 'primitive' Other justified European culture and tyranny against others. During the cold war, Soviet and communism was the binary threat to Western democracy. According to Michael Haldrup, Lasse Koefoed and Kirsten Simonsen the European identity has been blurred since the fall of the Berlin wall, and is in need of finding a new oppositional *Other* in order to strengthen its character. The authors discuss how the historical creation of a binary Other can be seen as a backdrop of today's hostility towards immigrants.⁴⁹ *Orientalism* show that the hostility towards the Orient exists in our everyday life. Although, as Edward Said argues, orientalism in itself is a Western invention that has little or nothing to do with the real Orient; rather, it is created to strengthen the myth of European identity.⁵⁰ Binary oppositions like black/white or good/bad are highly evident in relation to the mediatization of the terror attacks. To label someone a 'terrorist' is to exclude this person from other citizens. No matter if the motive is political, religious or made for environmental protection, the label

⁴⁸ C. Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, 5th edn., London, John Murray, 1869, pp. 91-92, Available from: Darwin Online, <http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?viewtype=side&itemID=F387&pageseq=121>, (accessed 19 May 2016).

⁴⁹ M. Haldrup, L. Koefoed, and K. Simonsen, 'Practical Orientalism – Bodies, Everyday Life and the Construction of Otherness', *Geografiska Annaler: Seies B, Human Geography*, vol. 88, no. 2, 2006, pp. 173-184.

⁵⁰ E. W. Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin, 2003.

terrorist functions in the same way – to exclude. Foucault called this *dividing practices*.⁵¹ Stuart Hall would argue that Muslims suspected for terrorism are made into *stereotypes* in order to create a boundary between the normal and abnormal and thus maintain a symbolic order in society.⁵² Agamben's reuse of the concept *homo sacer* might in addition be an appropriate way of defining the terrorist. In ancient Roman law *homo sacer* was someone who was banned from the law, which means that he was permitted to be killed without legal consequences, but not sacrificed. *Homo Sacer* is a 'sacred life', someone who is captured in a zone of juridical liminality.⁵³ The terrorist is accordingly reduced of his civilian rights and made into something similar to *homo sacer*. The apparatus, the tricolored Eiffel Tower, reduce him into mere existence, he has no rights, he is a suspect, an Other, he is a terrorist.

The mediated narrative of terrorism that occurred after the Paris attacks in 2015 feeds xenophobia and the fear of Islam. The terror attacks bring French patriotism forward through the visual projection of flags and national symbols such as the Eiffel Tower. The Tower cannot be questioned when it is showed to manifest the national motto of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, and when the monument is projected to defend the freedom of speech and democratic values. However, this occurs in a time when French democracy simultaneously is being restricted. The nation announced a *state of exception* after the attacks based on a special French law that was found in 1955 during the Algerian war.⁵⁴ (Although Agamben stretch the origin to the modern state of exception further back to the French revolution.)⁵⁵ This law makes it possible for police and government to extend the original law and for instance make house search or house arrest without any legal trial. Thousands of people were consequently held in custody after the attacks but of these only a handful has later become suspected of committing crime. Both Amnesty and Human Right Watch have protested against the French government's way of discriminating Muslims in the country.⁵⁶ Public demonstrations were banned for the sake of everyone's safety which caused frustration for climate activists visiting Paris before COP21. Activists who challenged the ban were put in house arrest for weeks.⁵⁷ In

⁵¹ M. Foucault, 'The Subject and Power', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 8, no. 4, 1982, pp. 777-795.

⁵² S. Hall, 'Thinking the Diaspora: Home-Thoughts from Abroad', *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1999, pp. 1-18.

⁵³ G. Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1998, p. 83.

⁵⁴ 'Frankrike och undantagstillståndet', Narr. I. Ekman, Prod. A. Sahlberg, *Konflikt*, Sveriges Radio, 30 April 2016, [radio], <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/avsnitt/712288?programid=1300>, (accessed 30 April 2016).

⁵⁵ G. Agamben, *State of exception*, transl. K. Atell, Chicago & London, University of Chicago Press, 2005, pp. 11-12.

⁵⁶ 'Frankrike och undantagstillståndet', Sveriges Radio, 30 April 2016.

⁵⁷ A. Poirier, 'How the Charlie Hebdo attack changed France', *Al Jazeera*, 6 January 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2016/01/charlie-hebdo-attack-changed-france-160105115200218.html>, (accessed 2 May 2016).

time of emergency the Eiffel Tower symbolically protects democratic values that at the same time are put under hard pressure, even limitation, in order to secure the nation. This hints to a tangible contradiction.

Agamben has exclusively written about the *state of exception*. He defines the concept as a stage when a sovereign power in a state of emergency rises above its own established rules. The law ‘is a suspension of the juridical order itself’.⁵⁸ This suspension of law is necessary for the State Apparatus to enforce its monopoly of violence. It allows the sovereign to treat the terrorist as *homo sacer* since it allows him to be killed. This is only possible when the fear among people is used in order to limit their civilian rights in a state of exception. The Law is not only abandoned by the leading power according to Agamben, the law *must* necessary have an exception in order for the sovereign to function and maintain order. The sovereign then ‘creates and guarantees the situation’ for the law to continue being valid.⁵⁹ Agamben’s main point is that the state of exception in our time has become the norm.⁶⁰ It portrays itself as strong and harmonious to a degree where it is not questioned by the general public. In the present day (30 April 2016), Agamben attends in Swedish national public radio where he connects his theories about the state of exception with the current situation in France after the attacks in November 2015. Agamben connects the French state of exception to a general decline of democratic institutions. Individuals agree to that state and governments exploit their rights in order to secure the nation-state. A *state of security* is formed that has three principles according to Agamben. First, it is driven with a politic based on fear. Secondly, security is more valued than freedom. This is made possible by forming an identity against an Other. Thirdly, it is a legal security that becomes unsecure. This occurs when the state suspends its law in a state of exception until the situation is deemed secure and can go back to normal. However, there is a risk that the exception becomes the norm and the normal turns into an exception. In the time following the Paris attacks, it is hard for people to know what is happening and people thus have to put trust in what the government says. To announce that a person *might* be a threat to the national security shows how the sovereign consciously are being uncertain, Agamben remarks, and this risk to damage democracy.⁶¹ Noam Chomsky argues accordingly that an illusion of democracy is maintained in order to allow leaders to

⁵⁸ Agamben, 2005, p. 4.

⁵⁹ Agamben, 1998, p. 17.

⁶⁰ Agamben, 2005, pp. 86-87.

⁶¹ ‘Frankrike och undantagstillståndet’, Sveriges Radio, 30 April 2016.

make undemocratic decisions. Public oppositions are willingly restricted to uphold the illusion of democracy.⁶²

In the French state of exception, the Eiffel Tower can be argued to function in a somewhat illusionary democracy. From representing French ideals and nationalism, it develops into a myth that actually *establishes* the same concepts. The myth shapes and maintains values that lack relevance in reality. It shows values and represents laws that the govern power in the current state abandon in order to make sure that the normal conditions are protected. The Tower as apparatus thus gains power to the sovereign. The strong symbol has influence beyond reason which makes it an ultimate tool for propaganda purposes and the creation of myths. Messages concerning both terrorism and climate change are projected on the Tower with the goal to strengthen the sovereign. Western governments need to stay strong in order to handle the threat of terror and maintain its Western power. They need to portray themselves as righteous and harmonious in order to expand their control. In this way they can protect their own laws by abandon them. They also need to be forceful when tackling climate change. Climate activists might potentially be a threatening force for the leading power, and the myth concerning the Eiffel Tower might calm people with dreams about freedom, justice, peace and sustainability.

1.3 Construction of Crises

As argued so far authorities have used the sign of the Eiffel Tower in radically different ways concerning the two issues. The Tower functions as an *apparatus*, as defined by Althusser, Foucault and Agamben, that mediates ideology that can be used in order to make people think and act in certain ways. When promoting the climate conference the Tower creates a calming and dreamy atmosphere while in the context of terrorism it has a dramatic and grave appearance. The audience is hence facing two crises made into two contrasting issues by the use of the same symbol. Together with other mediated images we are *made* to think about the issues as separated. Much propaganda can be seen in the speeches of politicians denying the importance of natural resources. Tony Blair has for instance argued that ‘religious fanaticism’ is the cause for U.S. to invade Iraq, although the precious oil and U.S. earlier affairs in the country are not mentioned.⁶³ However, resent attempts are made to show the relation between

⁶² N. Chomsky, *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy*, New York, Owl Books, 2006.

⁶³ M. Soules, *Media, Persuasion and Propaganda*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2015, p. 15.

the two issues. The battle over resources as a result from climate change starts to be regarded as a security issue by the UN and Pentagon who study the threatening outcome of global warming. In addition several nations and NGO's are also dealing with security issues caused by environmental problems. It is usually migration, caused by climatic changes, that is argued to cause instability and result in escalating social struggles.⁶⁴ One hypothesis is that the drought in Syria might have caused instability in the country which made it easier for the terror group Daesh (also known as IS, Isis, or Isil) to conquer the area⁶⁵. U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, warns for conflicts due to climate change, and notices how the civil war in Syria followed the country's worst drought on record. According to Kerry, 1.5 million people migrated as a result from the countryside to the cities and made the unstable political situation even worse.⁶⁶ The same has been argued in relation to terrorism in Nigeria, where a massive drought has increased the instability in the country and as a result made room for the terrorist group Boko Haram.⁶⁷ However, one must be careful not to let the environmental circumstances neglect the cultural, historical and political aspects. To make assumptions about terrorism from a Western perspective on resources, demands of course a deeper understanding of the historical background and situation in each country. Although it is equally important to consider climate change a factor of several that causes conflicts related to terrorism.

Power relations between the world's nations have with globalization become entangled and abstract. Still, the diffuse hierarchies are highly present in the struggle for environmental justice which is evident in the discussions at COP21. Immanuel Wallerstein's *world-system theory* explains how Western dominating nations create a *core* that gains power and resources from poorer nations in the third world, the *periphery*. This is made possible through unequal trade businesses in which labor power has a higher exchange value than the original resource. A third category, *semiperiphery*, is defined when a state has partly core- and peripheral activity. A semiperipheral state then exports resources from the periphery to the core and core products to the periphery. According to Wallerstein the power structures between the world's

⁶⁴ A. Baldwin, C. Methmann & D. Rothe, 'Securitizing "climate refugees": the futurology of climate-induced migration', *Critical Studies on Security*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2014, pp. 121-130.

⁶⁵ J. Worland, 'Why Climate Change and Terrorism Are Connected', *Time*, 15 November 2015, <http://time.com/4113801/climate-change-terrorism/>, (accessed 27 January 2016).

⁶⁶ 'Climate change intensifies conflicts, John Kerry says', *Al Jazeera*, 11 November 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/kerry-political-crises-linked-climate-change-151110190932931.html>, (accessed 14 April 2016).

⁶⁷ P. Thomson (reporter), 'Behind Boko Haram's terrorism in Nigeria is radical Islam — and environmental crises', *Public Radio International*, 12 June 2014, [radio], <http://www.pri.org/stories/2014-06-12/behind-boko-harams-terrorism-nigeria-radical-islam-and-environmental-crises>, (accessed 14 April 2016).

nations have been more or less the same since colonial times. Today's countries in the periphery continue to pay for the Western success through pollution, environmental destruction and climate change.⁶⁸ Modernity is thus the product of slavery and exploitation, and with eyes on history the nation of France has a lot on its colonial consciousness, although, this is not especially visible in the visualizations concerning either terrorism or COP21 that the Eiffel Tower manifests. Because myths, according to Barthes, strip things of their history.⁶⁹ The myth does not hide anything, but still manages to purify the Eiffel Tower and the nation of France into an idea of righteous enlightenment.

John Hutchinson has argued that globalization paradoxically tends to strengthen ethnic, religious and national differences. One argument is that the global context of today makes it harder for someone to take responsibility for large-scale issues such as climate change. Hutchinson predict that future conflicts between nations therefore will increase caused by climatic changes.⁷⁰ In a letter to a newspaper, Agamben share his thought *On Security and Terror*. Agamben notes how the difference between state and terrorism threatens to disappear since both security and terror are based on the same deadly system. Security finds its end in globalization, he writes, but the continuous search for security lead us into a constant state of exception. In the long run this threatens democracy.⁷¹ Climate change is like terrorism a threat based on fear. This fear can be used by authorities in order to control the population, and since information is hard to attain, the individual simply must trust what the authorities say. If the fear of climate change increases, there is a risk that the state of exception grows stronger as under current conditions caused by terror threat.

Despite connections between climate change and terrorism, the images concerning the terror in Paris are distinguished from images of the climate conference, and the issues are contrasted in media. However, political leaders make reference to the terror attacks when they promote COP21. The president of the U.S., Barack Obama, states for instance that the conference needs to bring hope and fight cynicism as its enemy. He said; 'What greater rejection of those who would tear down our world than marshalling our best efforts to save

⁶⁸ T. K. Hopkins & I. Wallerstein, *World System Analysis: Theory and Methodology*, Beverly Hills, London & New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1982, pp. 91-103.

⁶⁹ Barthes, 2009, p. 169.

⁷⁰ J. Hutchinson, 'Nationalism, globalism and the conflict of civilizations', in U. Özkirimli (ed.), *Nationalism and Its Futures*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp. 71-92.

⁷¹ G. Agamben, 'On Security and Terror', transl. C. Emcke, *Theory & Event*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2001, [online journal], <http://muse.jhu.edu.ludwig.lub.lu.se/article/32641>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

it'.⁷² The French Prime Minister Manuel Valls decided to go on with the conference despite the attacks with the argument: 'It's an essential meeting for humanity'. Political leaders and companies appear responsible fighting both terrorism and climate change simultaneously. The 'hope' imbedded in COP21, is not only the hope for a humanized nature as seen in figure 1 and 2 from the UN; it has now become the hope for peace and cooperation in contrast to the dark forces of terrorism. The fear of terror and climate seems to strengthen each other. However, the terror attacks and the state of emergency have shifted the climate conference from being for the sake of Nature, to becoming an important task for 'humanity', democracy, universal values and the need for strong leadership in a time when Europe is being under attack. The risk of portraying environmental justice as an answer to human security is that it consequently pays less attention to environmental devastation and more attention to national struggles.

Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge argue that news will gain more interest from the audience if the event can be seen in personal terms and due to the action of specific individuals.⁷³ Media's focus on individualized stories explains why terrorism is an attractive news issue while environmental destruction is not. Anthropomorphism is thus needed in order for people to relate to environmental problems. Joachim Radkau argues that this is evident in modern environmentalism. Rachel Carson's famous *Silent Spring* became popular since it dealt with one environmental problem, DDT, that she proved was threatening to humans. Carson thus made environmental destruction into a human issue. Another example is how the fear of nuclear power and the overall threat of an end to humanity attracted many individuals to join the environmental discussion in the 1950s. The care for nature is not new, Radkau argues, but new to modern environmentalism is the fear that destruction of nature eventually might lead to the extinction of mankind.⁷⁴ The overall threat to humanity is a concern that unites terrorism with climate change. Although peoples fear can be constructed, directed and used by the sovereign as evident in a state of exception. Images of the Eiffel Tower function as apparatuses that take advantage of both crises.

⁷² 'Obama says COP21 is "act of defiance" against terrorism', *Al Jazeera*, 30 November 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/climate-conference-paris-cop21-limit-global-warming-151130052816546.html>, (accessed 5 April, 2016).

⁷³ J. Galtung & M. H. Ruge, 'The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 2, no.1, 1965, pp. 64-90.

⁷⁴ Radkau, 2008, pp. 268-270.

CHAPTER 2: MEDIA AND ACTIVISM

2.1 Peace for Paris and the Power of Images

Many attempts in visual culture are being made to show the importance of visual signs compared to written or spoken ones. Some argue that images and the visual language have a more direct and ‘natural’ communication than written or oral language, as defined by Plato in the dialogue *Cratylus*.⁷⁵ To be human is to sense a difference between oneself and the surrounding world, and the visual thus take a leading role as a natural communication tool we need as evolutionary biological creatures. Language, on the other hand, is argued to be added as culturally constructed. This battle is frequently being debated within semiotics, art history and visual culture, like if scholars feel the urge to defend and make importance to their visual subjects of research. This is somewhat contradictory when mediated images of our time are of such high importance and increased frequency that we face an overload of signs. It is hard to question the importance of images, also in relation to the mediation of the events in Paris 2015 that were shared in newspapers, TV-channels and social media.

The depiction of the terror attacks was dominated by one illustration especially that was shared and spread globally: *Peace for Paris* by Jean Jullien (figure 4) is a surprisingly simple illustration made in minutes after the attacks and shared on Instagram.⁷⁶ It looks like a highly simplistic sketch, some black lines drawn on a white piece of paper. It has no color, no human figure, no blood, nor any text (besides the title) that further extend its meaning. It simply works through our ability to read and understand signs. *Peace for Paris* combines the sketchy silhouette of the Eiffel Tower with the sign for peace. Two heavy symbols are thus combined. They are not clearly depicted; if the illustration was taken out of its context it would be hard to even distinguish the famous Tower. Although, when shared as a comment to the attacks, the meaning gets clear, almost obvious, like that of a myth. As previously argued, the Eiffel Tower is highly loaded with meanings and representations which becomes even deeper in combination with other strong symbols. This simple illustration now includes so many connotations that it means more than any other depiction, more than any image of victims, flowers, spilled blood on the streets, or images of the suspects – this sketchy design has more

⁷⁵ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, Chicago & London, The University of Chicago Press, 1986, p. 75.

⁷⁶ T. Nudd, ‘How a Designer’s “Peace for Paris” Sketch, Made in Minutes, Became a Global Symbol’, *Adweek*, 16 November 2015, <http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising-branding/how-designers-peace-paris-sketch-made-minutes-became-global-symbol-168150>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

meaning than any other. It even made its way from social media into the actual streets of the attacks by people shaping its contours with lit candles. It was seen printed on T-shirts and drawn on the cheeks of mourning Parisians.⁷⁷ *Peace for Paris* turned into a visualization of the attacks since it spoke through a direct visual language that merges several connotations into an emotional state of mind.

To use Barthes' three levels of understanding myth, the illustration can first be read as an empty signifier; Paris is the target of terrorism and wants no more violence. Secondly, as a full signifier, the illustration signals that Paris is an innocent victim but still standing strong. The Eiffel Tower defends ethical values like peace in line with democracy and the freedom of speech. Thirdly, on a mythological level, the illustration *justifies the innocence of France* by depicting its naturally good character. Like if the 'signifier gave a foundation to the signified' by making values appear as natural facts.⁷⁸ Barthes writes: 'myth consists in overturning culture into nature or, at least, the social, the cultural, the ideological, the historical into the "natural"'.⁷⁹ The myth hence makes it a common sense, a norm or a general opinion that France is a peaceful righteous nation. Its innocence becomes the doxa of the terror attacks. The history of colonial power, the struggle over natural resources, and the provocation of the Mohammed caricatures that circulated before and after the shootings against Charlie Hebdo in the beginning of the year, are all forgotten or turned away. However, underneath its directed meaning the illustration hides another forceful sign. Beyond the two obvious signs of peace and the Eiffel Tower, *Peace for Paris* has a likeness to the symbol for anarchy. This strong underlying message is striking when contrasting the passive peace symbol and the meaning is all turned around. Instead of depicting Paris as an innocent target, the illustration contrary hints to an action, a movement, or a political extreme. The symbol for anarchy suits well with the Parisian history of revolutions. The French revolution not the least, and more recently the student and workers' demonstrations in 1968. Paris can indeed be seen as a city built of demonstrations and revolutions. People started to share *Peace for Paris* in social media just minutes after the attacks to such a degree that the illustration seems to have a life or a power of its own. People seem to have *identified* with the message interpreted as the freedom of speech or a peaceful democracy, and willingly they defend the values of France. In this regard

⁷⁷ '#PeaceForParis: Jean Jullien's powerful Eiffel Tower peace cartoon, in pictures', *The Telegraph*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11996084/PeaceForParis-Jean-Julliens-powerful-Eiffel-Tower-peace-cartoon-in-pictures.html?frame=3500956>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

⁷⁸ Barthes, 2009, pp. 154-155.

⁷⁹ Barthes, 1977.

the propagandistic function of visual signs becomes clear. The illustration not only signifies action, but actually *creates* action on social media and partly in the streets of Paris.

Are visual signs then a direct and natural form of communication? W. J. T. Mitchell questions the ‘natural’ ability of images. He writes: ‘The notion of the image as a “natural sign” is, in one word, the fetish or idol of Western culture’. If we see images as natural we do not think of them as connected to superstition, fantasy or compulsive behavior, Mitchell argues.⁸⁰ We do not see the myth behind the images. Visual signs should in this regard be considered as more unnatural and constructed in order to unveil the cultural and historical relations imbedded in our visual language. Images do accordingly not work naturally but through an advanced culture. Images can be powerful and provoking which is evident in the cartoons depicting Prophet Mohammed. The shootings of Charlie Hebdo in January 2015 show how war can be intensified by images. The sensitivity of the drawings are still present during the terror attacks in the end of the year and manifests how caricatures tend to create more reactions than a portrait. The caricature uses a range of signs that can be related to stereotypes and it hints therefore towards much broader cultural and historical connotations.

As a mythological image, *Peace for Paris* signals universal values that appear clear and just. Through subjectification the image connects to the individual who can identify oneself with the message and the underlying ideology. In *European Universalism, The Rhetoric of Power* (2006) Wallerstein question the existence of these universal values. He defines two ways in which universal values are agreed upon. One is that they are ‘revealed’ via an authority of power, or secondly, that they are ‘discovered’ as ‘natural’ insights by groups of people. The paradoxical fact is that there are multiple ‘natural laws’ that fight each other. Wallerstein remarks that people who defend universal values often are quite passionate and rarely take other contrasting views into consideration.⁸¹ *Promoting democracy* was for instance a strategy for George W. Bush to lead U.S. in war with Iraq. Chomsky notes how the Western ‘messianic mission’ of bringing democracy to the Middle East, against their will, has formed a hatred for democracy.⁸² With warfare the duality between the East and the West continue to accelerate. The so called *universal* values are spread through the operation of apparatuses in which the rhetoric of universal values such as *Peace for Paris* cannot be questioned. When looking simply at the illustration it represents *peace for Paris*, but it also hints to what is *not peace* and *not Paris*. With its likeness to the anarchy symbol it does not

⁸⁰ Mitchell, 1986, p.90.

⁸¹ I. Wallerstein, *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power*, New York, The New Press, 2006, p. 45.

⁸² Chomsky, 2006.

appear to be especially peaceful at all, rather, it can be used to provoke violence. The Eiffel Tower is a *synecdochal* sign in the sense that it stands as a representation for the whole city of Paris. Although in this context it also hints to what is not Paris, namely; the enemies, the intruders, the terrorists, and the Islamic State. The illustration do not gain its striking power because it concerns a peaceful Paris, but because it refers to the violence coming from a threatening *Other*. In this regard the illustration contributes in strengthening the sovereign power by using universal values.

Instead of claiming universal values over others, as *Peace for Paris* somewhat does in the French state of exception, Wallerstein suggests that we need to accept different standpoints. Only then can we synchronize our views through a ‘constant dialectic exchange’ and create a long lasting peace for everyone – not only Paris. Although Wallerstein admits that this is easier said than done.⁸³

2.2 Recycling Fear

The strong influence of the illustration *Peace for Paris* makes its way even outside the context of the terror attacks. As seen in *figure 5* the same symbol is adopted by activists who shape its contours with their bodies in order to promote COP21. The human installation is arranged by the artist John Quigley and photographed from above by the aerial photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand.⁸⁴ Again, the Eiffel Tower is combined with the peace symbol, but several new signs have emerged. Seven short lines surround the upper half of the circle and change the whole illustration into the sign of a simplistic sun. This is further defined by the text ‘100% RENEWABLE’ which connects the installation to sustainable development and thus direct one’s attention to the climate meeting. The appearance of human bodies as its contours can also be read as signs for human cooperation and activism. Notable is that the installation is made in front of the actual Eiffel Tower, like if the Tower is treated as an altar or a true apparatus that can be filled with meaning. When using *Peace for Paris* the artist pick up the strong symbol with all its connotations that a few weeks before was related to death and terror. The combination of strong symbols can thus be reused and new signs added in order to give depth and attention to COP21.

⁸³ Wallerstein, 2006, p. 49.

⁸⁴ ‘Aerial Art Action for 100% Renewable Future’, *The Women’s Global Call for Climate Justice*, <http://womencclimatejustice.org/aerial-art-action-for-100-renewable-future/>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

Since climate change is invisible and as such hard to depict, there is a lack of images used for representation. Carbon emissions, melting ice or radioactivity, can under normal circumstances not be seen and must therefore be felt in order to be believed. Joachim Radkau notes that global warming is most likely to be taken seriously during especially hot summers for instance.⁸⁵ Radioactivity is also more feared right after an accident as evident in the political actions following the Chernobyl disaster in the Soviet Union 1986, and more recently the Fukushima accident in Japan 2011. When COP21 is pictured in media it is likely to disappear next to the dramatic news of a terror attack and as a result strong symbols are needed to gain attention to the climate meeting. The use of the Eiffel Tower links the conference to broader cultural structures, and most importantly, it is referring back to the striking terrorism. It might be easier to fight for the climate if the images relate to nationalistic symbols and human culture. It needs to be linked to our everyday and what is important in our societies. The mediation of the terror attacks in media can be argued to make it harder for COP21 to gain attention; although, as *Peace for Paris* shows, activists make use of the signs and attention concerning terrorism. When reusing already loaded signs, an already functional concept follows. The Eiffel Tower becomes in this sense a magnet. It attracts every connotation, every event, and every layer of history that it is associated with. It has become a large heavy monument that can illustrate anything and make it rich in meaning.

However, when *Peace for Paris* is used to promote COP21 it loses some of its original power. When comparing figure 4 and 5, there is an obvious drop of force and dramatic appearance in the human installation. When terrorism is out of the context the illustration is mild and the anarchy symbol is gone from figure 5, replaced by a cheerful sun. Hope and optimism is yet again present as in the UN images (figure 1 and 2), while the dramatic portrayal of a crisis is gone. When terrorism seems loaded and forceful, global justice and climate change appear as less acute and dangerous in comparison. In order to take environmental issues seriously drama and a sense of crisis are perhaps needed. To portray COP21 as a happy story is simply not enough.

According to Barthes the journalist is the producer of myths, the one who creates the concept.⁸⁶ While experts and scientists are becoming convinced about climate change, media can be held responsible for delaying the belief in the general public by allowing skeptical voices to be heard. Marshall Soules argues that political action against climate change was delayed for twenty years due to media's attention to climate change deniers sponsored by oil

⁸⁵ Radkau, 2008, p. 274.

⁸⁶ Barthes, 2009, p. 152.

companies.⁸⁷ This can further be problematized by the *selective exposure theory* which argues that the amount of news and information available today allow people to choose information based on personal values while avoiding contrasting information. This trend might lead to an increase of polarized groups in society. In relation to climate change there is a risk that people refuse to change their beliefs even when facing contradictory evidence. It becomes again a question of subjectification. We identify ourselves through contrasting with others; Human/Nature, Muslim/Atheist, Left/Right and so on. This was highly visible in social media after the Paris attacks where the individual was given the opportunity to connect to universal values. One could for instance choose to have the French tricolor over one's profile picture on Facebook to sympathize with the victims. One could choose to share the *Peace for Paris* illustration and take a stand against terrorism. Although, the freedom to engage also brought responsibility and ethical dilemmas. It was wrong to talk about Paris, when bombing is striking the Middle East every day – it was also wrong not to talk about Paris. It was wrong to have the French tricolor over one's profile picture – and wrong not to. It was wrong to politicize and blame religion – and wrong to ignore the issue. It even became wrong to talk about the climate and COP21 after the terror attacks – and wrong not to. As Bernholdt Brecht famously put it:

*What kind of times are they, when
A talk about trees is almost a crime
Because it implies silence about so many horrors?*⁸⁸

How can we talk about the environment when people are dying on the nearest street? A risk is that myths come between people and the issues they interpret. The Eiffel Tower might for instance function as an apparatus signifying an ideology people can identify with, regardless what that ideology is, the Tower is a variable tool used for subjectification. It is used to evoke nationalism, violence and increased xenophobia – but when made into a symbol for COP21, as in figure 5, the Tower can in contrast be used for people to identify themselves as environmentally friendly and left in opposition to the extremist right.

It is not surprisingly that crises are popular news-issues discussed among people. When following the Greek origin of the word, *crisis* (κρίσις) means that a situation is in need of decision making. A direction needs to be taken in order for something to be changed. It is then perhaps a human need to feel engaged with crises since it opens opportunities to how we can

⁸⁷ Soules, 2015, pp. 27, 69-70.

⁸⁸ B. Brecht, 'To Those Born Later', transl. J. Willett, R. Manheim and E. Fried, *Bertolt Brecht: Poems 1913-1956*, New York, Routledge, 1979.

change the society. Media's portrayal of crises is of high importance since thoughts and standpoint of the individual will affect how the individual acts in the future. *Peace for Paris* depicts terrorism as a trauma but the same symbol softens when concerning COP21. The illustration therefore fails to picture climate change as an equal threat. According to Slavoj Žižek we need fear and terror in order to truly believe in climate change. As Žižek argues we already *know* about climate change and the risk of an emerging ecological catastrophe, although we do not truly *believe* that it will happen.⁸⁹ Perhaps we need a sense of shock or rapture from our everyday lives in order to fully believe. Žižek cites Heidegger who argues that 'terror [*Schrecken*] is necessary if the "modern man" is to be awakened from his metaphysico-technological slumber into a new beginning.'⁹⁰ We need fear to wake up from our dreams, as evident after the environmental disasters following the nuclear accidents of Chernobyl and Fukushima for instance. Western media, that normally pays little attention to terrorism striking the non-Western parts of the world, strongly reacted when terrorism struck Paris. It seems like we must fear our own lives before taking a crisis seriously.

2.3 Western Propaganda

The goal of COP21 was to make people and nations come to an agreement and cooperate worldwide in order to take equal responsibility for the climate. When depicting the global meeting with the Eiffel Tower, however, the images fail communicating this message. The connotations behind the symbolic Tower rather exclude than include people that do not belong to Western elite nations. When the conference was over, COP21 was described as a success by mainstream media. *The Guardian*, for instance, describes the meeting as 'the world's greatest diplomatic success'.⁹¹ *Al Jazeera*, on the other hand, shares a different view on the reporting from the meeting, and notes how COP21 is portrayed differently depending on nations and political standpoints.⁹² According to many experts the agreement of the meeting is not a success and the measures taken is far from being enough to secure a future climate. The magazine *New Internationalist* argues that the outcome is entirely what the most polluted countries wanted it to be. Poorer countries from the global south who already suffer

⁸⁹ S. Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, London & New York, Verso, 2011, p. 328.

⁹⁰ S. Žižek, 'Nature and Its Discontents', *Substance* #117, vol. 37, no. 3, 2008, pp. 37-72.

⁹¹ F. Harvey, 'Paris climate change agreement: the world's greatest diplomatic success', *The Guardian*, 14 December 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/dec/13/paris-climate-deal-cop-diplomacy-developing-united-nations>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

⁹² 'Has the climate change deal really averted catastrophe?', *Al Jazeera*, 20 December 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/listeningpost/2015/12/cop21-climate-change-deal-averted-catastrophe-151220123007364.html>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

from climate change had large expectations and demands that were neglected in the agreement; rather, it turned into an escape for big polluters. Direct action to delimit carbon emissions were not taken and support for transformation to eco-friendly solutions were not as high as expected. Support and funding to the already affected nations was also delimited and delayed so that the injustice remains. According to New Internationalist, COP21 rather lead to false solutions than affective action.⁹³ The world leaders respond to global warming signals that there is no need for panic; rather, it became just another way of continuing making business as usual.

The outcome of the meeting illustrates very well Wallerstein's *World System Theory*. As evident poor countries in the periphery is still suffering on the behalf of Western rich counties in the core. The result of a delayed action towards climate change will continue to gain Western economy while affecting the periphery with environmental and social disasters – the same conditions that made the rise of industrial revolution possible. COP21 was pictured as a Western success, but was in fact a global failure. This is something Western media did not acknowledge. Al Jazeera explains how poor affected countries have few people present on the climate conference, perhaps only one or two persons. Media from these nations are therefore also very few, perhaps only one or two people, in contrast to richer nations that attend with hundreds of people and powerful media. The natural outcome is that the leading countries are heard the most and mainstream media portrays COP21 from their point of view.⁹⁴ Studies by Galtung and Ruge show that events concerning elite nations and elite people will have a higher *news value*.⁹⁵ This means that news concerning core nations will gain more attention from the audience than events concerning the periphery. It can be seen in social media for instance when terror attacks in Paris gain much higher attention than terror attacks in Bagdad. Climate change is not concerning elite nations directly more than perhaps a common concern among individuals and limitations in everyday living (such as attempts to reduce consumerism, car driving, the use of plastic materials etc.). The real consequences are already striking countries in the periphery where people live directly out of the land. For instance, while a drought in core countries would mean that the import of food and other natural resources increases, a drought for a poor farmer in the periphery might cause starvation or migration. People do already suffer from climate change and millions of climate

⁹³ D. Chivers and J. Worth, 'Paris deal: Epic fail on a planetary scale', *New Internationalist*, 12 December 2015, <http://newint.org/features/web-exclusive/2015/12/12/cop21-paris-deal-epi-fail-on-planetary-scale/>, (accessed 20 May 2015).

⁹⁴ 'Has the climate change deal really averted catastrophe?', *Al Jazeera*, 20 December 2015.

⁹⁵ Galtung and Ruge, 1965.

refugees have to leave their home every year. According to the *Global Estimates Report* published by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 22 million people were migrating in 2013 due to natural disasters. Over 85 percent of these people were from countries in the periphery.⁹⁶ The lack of attention to non-elite nations is one reason to why climate change is not as prioritized as terrorism in media.

The images of the Eiffel Tower and the optimism surrounding the climate conference intensify the Western domination but are far from leading to climate justice. Perhaps people wanted a success, a happy story after the violence and terror in Paris. Perhaps a fairytale was needed, a myth that could illustrate that we are cooperating worldwide, united with good universal morals. Media's mediation of COP21 signals that we stand a chance, and that the future is bright after all darkness. But when looking at the real politics behind the scene, there is no happy story. *Liberty, equality, fraternity* does not exist between the world's nations. Everyday our global emissions continue to rise and we run towards the edge of an environmental disaster. It is still a long way to go before the agreement actually has an impact on our actions and reduces our emissions. In the meanwhile the global power structures remain. In order to gain trust from the public the sovereign needs to present itself as harmonious. The positive image of the climate deal can be argued to strengthen the core nations. Western countries appear strong, moral and responsible without delivering direct action. When climate change is not considered as an acute threat, however, it will most likely have deadly consequences for people living in the periphery.

⁹⁶ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 'Global Estimates 2014: People displaced by disasters', *Publications*, September 2014, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/publications/2014/global-estimates-2014-people-displaced-by-disasters/>, (accessed 17 May 2016).

CHAPTER 3: ARTISTS

*We come, we writers, painters, sculptors, architects, lovers of the beauty of Paris which was until now intact, to protest with all our strength and all our indignation, in the name of the underestimated taste of the French, in the name of French art and history under threat, against the erection in the very heart of our capital, of the useless and monstrous Eiffel Tower, which popular ill-feeling, so often an arbiter of good sense and justice, has already christened the Tower of Babel.*⁹⁷

(Extract from 'Protest against the Tower of Monsieur Eiffel', published 1887 in the newspaper *Le Temps* signed by influential members of the literary and artistic community.)

3.1 Potentials of Art

In this chapter images of terror will be left out (however the background of terrorism is still present) and the focus will be directed to public artworks showed during COP21 to promote the conference. Art has potentials to create representations and imaginations where media fails, although; the following art installations continuously reuse the pompous monument, the torn and mythological symbol of the Eiffel Tower. It is yet again projected with meanings, this time to manifest something that it clearly is not: for the sake of Nature. Throughout history artists have struggled to depict Nature. The painters of Romanticism often reduced Nature into something beautiful, picturesque or sublime that was to be seen from a distance. When we face climate change today it is not simply a threatening Nature as an Other seen from a distance, it is also our own actions and lifestyles that is in need of critical awareness. It is difficult to grasp all the ongoing changes in our climate due to large distances in time and space, and art hence has a crucial role to present the unrepresentable and make a difference. Edward Morris and Susannah Sayler argue that activism is based on culture. Art makes room for beliefs that potentially will lead to change, and art can thus be seen as a productive force in society. Art creates a cultural foundation for a more direct action, they argue, since art *opens rather than closes thought*.⁹⁸ Art challenges routine. Accordingly the Humanities can bring new aspects to ecology and make new ways of seeing possible. Contrary to Man against Nature, the individual must see oneself as a part of a whole rather than separated apart from Nature. In order to 'save' the climate we need values and values are in the heart of aesthetic appreciation.

⁹⁷ J. Loizeau, et al., 'Monstrous and Useless', *DWFE*, [website], <http://cargocollective.com/DWFE/Monstrous-and-Useless>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

⁹⁸ E. Morris & S. Sayler, 'The pensive photograph as agent', in B. Schneider & T. Nocke (eds.), *Image Politics of Climate Change: Visualizations, Imaginations, Documentations*, Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag, 2014, pp. 299-322.

Human Energy by the artist Yann Toma (figure 6) is a light installation that incorporates the actual Eiffel Tower and simultaneously uses it as a symbol. A pillar of light penetrates the monument and fills the whole Tower with electricity. Simultaneously electrical ‘glitter’ and spotlights spread light over the city of Paris and make the steel construction appear as a shining star of monumental character. Originally the light installation was supposed to gather energy from people using sports equipment placed underneath the Tower itself. However, due to the state of emergency after the terror attacks it was not allowed due to safety reasons. Instead, the energy symbolically represented the energy gathered from millions of users that exercised using a mobile application named *Runtastic*.⁹⁹

The first rule of ecology is that everything is connected to everything else. *Human Energy* succeeds in making individuals’ joined efforts visible through a magnificent spectacle of light. With a reference to sustainable energy the work signals optimism regarding the climate conference by the idea that *everything is possible* if we work together. The energy flows through the Tower with a great force reminding of lightening or the powerful energy passing through all life and matter on earth. The same holism can be read in *One Heart One Tree* by Naziha Mestaoui (figure 7). As with *Human Energy* this work also incorporates the actual Eiffel Tower, here using its surface for projection of other signs. The work begins with the individual recording ones personal heartbeat through a mobile application simultaneously paying for the plantation of a tree in a former rainforest. A projection of the imagined tree then grows together with the recorded heartbeat on the surface of the Eiffel Tower.¹⁰⁰ Since climate change does not have a face, individuals or identification, this personalized project becomes important. *One Heart One Tree* connects the physical heartbeat of the individual to the symbolic Eiffel Tower and other participants, as well as to Nature through an actual tree being planted for the sake of the environment. Overall the installation, as well as *Human Energy*, mediates a public awareness and puts pressure towards the decision makers attending the conference. Similar to an ecosystem, *One Heart One Tree* binds things together. It projects leaves on steel and makes culture come one step closer to the idea of Nature, Paris closer to the rest of the world, and the individual connected to a global cause of higher purposes. Abstract and large structures are made tangible and the Eiffel Tower is filled with good morals.

⁹⁹ “Human energy” transforms Eiffel Tower’, *Reuters*, 6 December 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/video/2015/12/06/human-energy-transforms-eiffel-tower?videoId=366586020>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

¹⁰⁰ N. Mestaoui, *One Heart One Tree*, 2015, [website], <https://www.1heart1tree.org>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

Both *Human Energy* and *One Heart One Tree* use the Eiffel Tower as an apparatus for the sake of Nature. In doing so they prove Barthes' point that the Tower is meaningless. Because it cannot be regarded as a 'temple of Science', Barthes argues, it is mere an empty construction:

[...] the Tower is nothing, it achieves a kind of zero degree of the monument; it participates in no rite, in no cult, not even in Art; you cannot visit the Tower as a museum: there is nothing to see inside the Tower.¹⁰¹

Perhaps this empty facade then suits for the projection of various meanings. However, whatever message you project on the famous Tower will be in relation to everything it already has been made to represent. When projecting messages of ecology one will find several contradictions. *Human Energy* refers to Paris as the 'City of Lights' for instance. Electrical light has since its cradle lit the Parisian streets, and was also symbolically important when the victims of the terror attacks were mourned by the darkened Tower. The use of the Eiffel Tower for environmental purposes stands in opposition to the Tower as a product of modernism and industrialism that brought light to Paris in the first place. It is still a long way to go for Paris to be lit up by renewable resources as *Human Energy* refers to. The light installation clearly puts trust in modernity and the belief in new technology that can save humanity. The same goes for *One Heart One Tree* where projected leaves as Nature contradictory meets the steel construction symbolizing industrial development that caused global environmental problems to begin with. Both art installations use technology in form of mobile applications in order to reach out to individuals. It is consequently technical development that enables the individual to directly become a part of the global. However, in relation to the two artworks; how many planted trees are needed for humanity to make up for every new Smartphone produced in the world? Or how many solar panels are needed to be built in order for Paris to get 'sustainable'? We still have not found a sustainable path to make up for all new technology that is needed in order to keep the current system intact. Capitalism's eternal will to expand its own production makes sustainability difficult. The local and social commitments that are needed for degrowth is far from being represented when the mighty Eiffel Tower is used as mediator for global communication. The artists obviously try to spread a concern about our climate, although they risk just reproducing our current solutions to the problems – which are far from being enough.

¹⁰¹ Barthes, 1993, p. 240.

When adapting the Eiffel Tower as apparatus, the artists unite individuals to a higher cause, a nation, and a global identity that care for a future. Although, when the large monument is filled with a magnificent light as in *Human Energy*, it risks attracting other connotations less appropriate. It has for instance a likeness to Albert Speer's famous *Cathedral of Light*, built for the Nazi conferences in Nuremberg. Monuments and electric light has been highly connected to nationalism before and are hard to suppress when analyzing *Human Energy*. The protection of Nature seems morally right but can as the Social Darwinistic tradition, as well as the Nazi regime witness, be misused for propaganda purposes. The joint efforts of saving the planet can in a modern context be argued to strengthen the sovereign. When your own heartbeat is connected to the Eiffel Tower as in *One Heart One Tree*, the individual likely feels a strong connection to the Tower, but also to all its multiple myths such as French identity, democracy, modernism, universal values and so on. When using the Eiffel Tower as a symbol, the artists automatically fail being free or critical. As an apparatus the Tower mediates ideology that benefits the sovereign.

3.2 Art and Ideology

In *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1970), Althusser builds his concept of Ideological State Apparatuses on the Marxist theory of the State. Althusser argues that the State power is distinguished from the State apparatus. The State Apparatus contains the government, the army, the police, the courts, the prisons and so on. Althusser define them as a *Repressive State Apparatus* since it 'functions by violence'. This is evident in the French state of exception after the attacks, when the State Apparatus as one sovereign power goes outside its own established laws in order to use violence on its own population. What Althusser further defines as an Ideological State Apparatus is specialized institutions such as religion, education, family, politics, trade-unions, media and culture. The difference between a Repressive State Apparatus and Ideological State Apparatuses is that the former has one clear apparatus while the latter consists of a plurality of apparatuses and is therefore difficult to see clearly. While the former is public, Ideological State Apparatuses are to a large extent in the private sector. But most importantly; while the Repressive State Apparatus functions by violence, Ideological State Apparatuses function by *ideology*.¹⁰² What binds them together is that 'no class can hold State power over a long period without at the same time exercising its

¹⁰² Althusser, 2008, pp. 15-19.

hegemony over and in the State Ideological Apparatuses'.¹⁰³ The sovereign thus gains power over its population by implementing both violence and ideology.

In the context of Paris 2015, what does this mean? The Eiffel Tower is frequently being used to illustrate crises in a time of emergency. In a state of exception it is the apparatus that executes the ideology of the state. The Tower consequently *justifies* the governing state and its legal adjustments. Art has potentials to act separated from the sovereign power and see through the apparatuses and their myths. Although, when using the symbol of the Eiffel Tower, the artworks fail being separated from the ruling ideology since they reproduce the same language. The artworks themselves become Ideological State Apparatuses when they use the Eiffel Tower and its attached myths in a praising manner. What the Tower represents cannot be unnoticed; nationalism, globalism, *liberté, égalité, fraternité* etc., will always hide behind its surface of steel and the ideology is operating its way into our consciousness. The French government promotes itself through the Tower; it constantly justifies its own power. The romantic symbol can equally become powerful, but the Tower does not succeed in getting the message of climate change out in the open. It is already loaded with meaning and as a result climate change depictions end up doing what they normally do; copy already used signs. As evident the signs we got so far is not enough and we need to find new symbols, new ways of talking about the climate.

Richard Kerridge writes about the tough challenges of depicting environmental problems. Since they are invisible and to large extent beyond representation, they cannot be expressed by our common forms of narrative. Anxiety, as we have seen, is not enough for the majority of the world's population to cooperate in eco-friendly practices. Kerridge argues that a whole new narrative is needed. It is a project for ecocriticism, he writes, to investigate new symbols, stories or visual images to illustrate climate change – or help writers and artists to invent them. Kerridge compares environmentalism with feminism and argues that feminism is somewhat more likely to become action since it deals with what we shall do. Environmentalism, on the other hand, concerns what we shall *stop* doing. It is consequently hostile to pleasure, and Kerridge suggests that ecocriticism must make environmental problems sexy and associated with pleasure.¹⁰⁴ Is it then possible to invent a new narrative? Must climate activism be associated with pleasure? According to Žižek we cannot be fooled by the joyful life of capitalistic voyeurism anymore. In opposition to Kerridge he argues that

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ R. Kerridge, 'Environmentalism and Ecocriticism', in P. Waugh (ed.), *Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 530-541.

the ecological crisis must be unpleasing, and we have to see the waste as a result of our own destruction. We have to be shocked and we have to fear to sense the full with of the crisis. In order to see the truth of our actions, maybe the best strategy is not to hide the waste, but to make it visible, Žižek argues.¹⁰⁵ The nature we use turns into totally useless material, to see it might be one way of understanding what we are doing to the planet. We continuously use nature; waste that does not go away is some of its consequences.

Tower Bistro (figure 8) is a miniature Eiffel Tower made by recycled Bistro chairs in red plastic. The installation was constructed outside the arena of the climate conference and is sparkling with light in the evening, just as the real Tower.¹⁰⁶ In total 324 bistro chairs are used for the construction, representing the real Tower's height of 324 meters.¹⁰⁷ The Eiffel Tower as symbol is used in an almost contradictory way when its steel construction is exchanged with red plastic. The great symbol of modernism becomes ironically recycled. The installation shows how Art has potential to break the steel surface of the famous Tower, it could take control of its meanings by destroying what it represents, and making it appear naked without its multiplied myths. *Tower Bistro* has at a first glance an ironic approach to the icon of modernity; however, the intensions behind it are directly opposite. It is made by the furniture company *Fermob* in order to *celebrate* the 125th anniversary of both the classic bistro chair and the Eiffel Tower.¹⁰⁸ The installation hence celebrates the ideology behind the Tower as well as industrial production. As *Fermob* describes the Bistro design in their own words; 'The chair is a jewel of French industrial know-how!'¹⁰⁹ It is accordingly highly connected to French identity and development. It was the French government who directly asked *Fermob* to rebuild the Tower Bistro at the conference hall of COP21.¹¹⁰ Governments and companies are the main actors in the climate conference and this installation becomes an ideal illustration of their cooperation. The potential risk is that the miniature Tower becomes a matter of green washing, in which the company, *Fermob*, appears as more green and eco-friendly than in reality. The concept of recycled plastic chairs are reused for the context of COP21, although,

¹⁰⁵ Žižek, 2008.

¹⁰⁶ L. Marlowe, 'Climate change summit creates world of its own', *The Irish Times*, 5 December 2015, <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/environment/climate-change-summit-creates-world-of-its-own-1.2455031>, (accessed 20 May 2016).

¹⁰⁷ 'Fermob celebrates the 125th anniversary of the Eiffel Tower and bistro chair', *Architectural Digest*, 31 May 2014, <http://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/fermob-eiffel-tower>, (accessed 21 May 2016).

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ 'COP 21', *Fermob*, 1 December 2015, [website], <http://www.fermob.com/en/Stay-up-to-date/Latest-news/COP-21>, (accessed 21 May 2016).

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

the original intention was not to reuse materials for the sake of the planet, but for the sake of profit.

Naomi Klein argues that global capitalism make use of disasters by taking decisions when citizens are emotionally or physically distracted (similar to a state of exception).¹¹¹ As evident during COP21, capitalistic actors take advantage of a new field of exploitation that so far is ‘clean’ in the sense that it does not contain any social resistance. Perhaps ecological crises will not challenge capitalism, but gain it. As the outcome of COP21 shows, political elites serve the capitalistic system even if the survival of mankind is at stake. Tower Bistro is made for mere commercial purposes and the environmental concept fails as it becomes an ideological state apparatus. The Eiffel Tower is celebrated in line with the sovereign that continuously follows the same system and its continual aim for reproduction of production.

3.3 In Search of Other Values

The public artworks made to promote COP21 filled the lack of visual illustrations in media. They intended to make climate change a personal and affecting matter, and attracted further attention to the climate conference. Although, the use of the Eiffel Tower in these depictions tends to complicate this message, and the myths about the Tower interrupt the reading of the artworks. As a huge symbol standing for abstract ideas about universal values and the greatness of France, the Tower hardly makes the climate more tangible. Perhaps large perspectives to a global problem fail affecting the individual. Maybe we need to think in smaller terms. A French fruit and vegetable garden made for instance a unique contribution to the climate conference by growing apples illustrated with the logo of COP21 (figure 9). When the apples are small and white in color, every fruit is wrapped in a plastic bag where it continues to grow but keeps its pale white color. When the apple is full grown a sticker of the logo is added while the plastic bag is removed. After six days in the sun the apple has turned red and is harvested while the sticker is removed, revealing a complete little eatable artwork. 200 of these decorated apples were grown and given away as gifts for the 196 participating parties at the conference.¹¹²

A large famous steel construction, powers of an imperial nation, the start of the industrial revolution, modernism and universal values – here the Tower and all its myths are

¹¹¹ N. Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, New York, Picador, 2007.

¹¹² H. Fuchs, ‘COP21 apple garden: Protecting the climate with art?’, *Deutsche Welle*, 20 October 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/cop21-apple-garden-protecting-the-climate-with-art/a-18786939>, (accessed 18 March 2016).

scaled down and projected on a simple apple. Instead of Nature being projected on steel, here steel is projected on Nature. It is slightly overwhelming to start imagine all the representations of the Eiffel Tower that comes from the simple silhouette made on the apple. In addition the apple contains the logo of COP21. From the basic fruit, one receives the notion about a whole climate, a system of weather and substances that unites every living being on this planet. With common knowledge about the meeting and climate change, one also knows that it is we, human beings, who threaten to destroy the same global system. Imagine that you would consider eating this apple, would it taste good? Or will it have a bitter taste of consciousness? According to the Old Testament, the forbidden apple contains knowledge. Every species on this planet today risk paying for our exploitation of nature and endless desire for knowledge. With the sign of the Eiffel Tower and COP21, the illustrated apple contains huge perspectives and representations compromised on an eatable fruit. The apples were in addition given as gifts for the participators. A gift in itself can be read as a sign for humbleness or stand for principles as sharing responsibility and caring for others. Receiving this apple and holding it in your hand you also have the choice to eat it or not, pay attention to it or not, answer the giver of the gift or not. According to Greek mythology the apple can also be read as a creator of war. Eris, the goddess of strife and discord, gave a golden apple to the other goddesses as revenge for not being invited to the wedding they were attending. The apple was marked with the text; *for the fairest*. Prins Paris of Troy judged that the apple belonged to the goddess of love, Aphrodite, who in return made the beautiful Helena fall in love with him. Helena, however, was already married to Menelaus, king of Sparta. When Paris took Helena to Troy it became the starting point to the Trojan War according to the legend. Perhaps the apples given to the World leaders were intended to be a political troublemaker?

Pascal Garbe, a landscape architect working in the garden, sees a direct link between the apples and the climate conference. According to Garbe the apples are a perfect gesture for the participants since their growth is so depended on the climate. Unpredicted weather changes, such as sudden frost, can wipe out the whole crop.¹¹³ Minor changes in the climate can therefore affect a large amount of our food production. This fear is likely a more tangible fear compared to melting Antarctic glaciers for instance, since it affects humans directly. The melting glaciers risk to change the whole global weather system when it reaches a tipping point, although no one knows when this tipping point will occur or exactly how it will affect human beings. A damaged food production on the other hand, will instantly lead to a lack of

¹¹³ Fuchs, 2015.

food supply, followed by rising prices and battles over resources. In *Living in the End Times* (2011) Žižek brings to mind the reporting on a mysterious disease that threatened to wipe out America's honeybees in 2007. One third of the human diet comes from plants pollinated by insects, and these honeybees stand for 80 percent of that pollination. Such a large scale threat depending on the survival of a small insect is something no scientist could foresee. Žižek argues that this is how we must imagine the climate catastrophe; as 'a small-level interruption with devastating global consequences'.¹¹⁴ The Eiffel Tower is a huge symbol of modernity signaling ideology and abstract power structures that might be hard to grasp. Most notably it does not talk about the planetary health at all; contrary it stands in opposition to the apple grown directly from the soil. Perhaps artists need to think in smaller terms when visualizing climate change. Maybe the only way for individuals to grasp the large spans and global connections is when the problems are tangible. Symbols like the simple gift of an apple, a grown fruit, or small things that individuals can do in their everyday life might be easier to relate to. Perhaps a tree planted in another continent made digital through a mobile application is not enough. Maybe you have to plant the tree with your own hands. The large national symbol of the Eiffel Tower does not reach everyone, but excludes people that cannot relate to the monument.

If the Eiffel Tower then is an Ideological State Apparatus, a medium that continues to control individuals through the ruling ideology, perhaps we must find new ways of portraying crises and act outside the sphere of the sovereign? This could potentially be a dangerous thought, since that is exactly what the terrorist is doing. The terrorist as *homo sacer* is cursed from society and exists outside the sovereign law. Although Agamben might suggest something accordingly when he answers the question 'What is the Contemporary?'. Based on Nietzsche's writings, Agamben defines those 'who are truly contemporary, who truly belong to their time, are those who neither perfectly coincide with it nor adjust themselves to its demands'. Agamben continues, 'Contemporariness is, then, a singular relationship with one's own time, which adheres to it and, at the same time, keeps a distance from it'.¹¹⁵ One could choose to read these lines in relation to climate change. We, as individuals, must create our own understanding of what is happening around us; while at the same time keeping distance to the myths that is being mediated in the society. We have the responsibility to take climate change seriously despite the harmonious portrayal of COP21. We all suffer from a history we never belonged to, as unfair as it might seem when present and future generations have to deal

¹¹⁴ Žižek, 2011, p. 350.

¹¹⁵ Agamben, 2009, pp. 39-54.

with climate change. However, we must respect the present, Agamben argues. Someone who is contemporary and intelligent does not have to like its own time, but still holds on to the present, since it knows that there is no other option. There is no point for nostalgia, Agamben argues, we must look into the eyes of our century.¹¹⁶ If the world leaders fail to handle global warming it will most likely cause self destruction. The transformation to a sustainable living is not happening fast enough, and individuals are equally responsible to ‘wake up’ and take their responsibility for the sake of future existence. We need to become contemporary in Agamben’s terms. The Eiffel Tower, as an ideological state apparatus, will continue to reproduce a history that aims to justify the Western imperialism and materialism that made modernity possible. Agamben writes that in order to be contemporary with time one must be ‘able to read history in unforeseen ways.’ To be contemporary is then ‘to return to a present where we have never been’.¹¹⁷ Perhaps Agamben means that we need to redefine our knowledge of history in order to see through the ideology in present time. *A present where we have never been* might be a society that takes other values into consideration, values that bring further understanding of our consumerism and everyday living. In order to create action, perhaps new symbols are required. We need to act on a small scale where every individual is free minded and caring for the sake of others – Paris as well as the global rest.

¹¹⁶ Agamben, 2009, pp. 39-54.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

CONCLUSION

Western news and political concern pay in general little attention to terror attacks taking thousands of civilian lives globally each year. There is furthermore no news value concerning starving children or the worrying fact that our planet is turning warmer each day. However, massive attention and political action followed the terrorism that struck Paris in November 2015. The response was immediate and trans-national. It is evident that the Parisian terror attacks not simply concerned the death of innocent civilians; but the death of civilians in a rich elite nation, most notably in France and Paris that symbolize culture and values of the entire Western empire. Across the globe the mighty Eiffel Tower rose to illustrate the horror of the attacks. The Tower commented on terrorism and brought forward a powerful message of universal values such as democracy, peace, and the freedom of speech. Beyond its morally good character, however, the monument also contains messages of nationalism that hints to a forceful Western imperialism.

When the same monument is used to portrait the following climate meeting, the Tower has a harmonious and peaceful appearance that fails to communicate the alarming threat of climate change. The previous terror attacks created a serious context that made the illustrations of the climate conference appear even more optimistic. In mainstream media from Western nations COP21 was pictured as a 'success', while for poorer countries already suffering from climatic changes, the agreement was indeed a failure. The actions required to reduce our emissions are heavily delayed into the future. The issues of terrorism and climate change have commonly been portrayed as contrasting issues; however, climate change starts to be regarded as a security issue which conjoins the two crises. The historical power structures between the West and the East, or core and periphery, are the origin for both human and environmental devastation. The power structures are still present and can be one way of understanding the legal struggles behind COP21 as well as the current threat of terrorism. The Eiffel Tower is an outcome of this history, although; by mediating an ideological myth it succeeds in justifying itself as a righteous monument.

The Tower was used by several actors in Paris (authorities, media, activists, artists) due to its incredible ability to affect and represent whatever the sender would like it to represent. It is a heavy and powerful symbol due to our language of connotations and cultural understanding of that language. Images containing strong symbols are striking and potentially

dangerous tools for propagandistic messages and shall as such be taken seriously. The Eiffel Tower is used for different depictions and purposes which make its character somewhat schizophrenic. However, it constantly portrays itself as being certain. In line with Barthes' myth and Althusser's ideology it hides history and justifies Western power and values. As an apparatus it materializes ideas and makes them eternal.

As evident in a state of exception it is difficult to act rational with clear thought after striking terrorism. The French government goes outside the ordinary law in attempts to prevent terrorism and take security measures that threaten democracy. In a time of crisis, it seems, there is no time for democratic bureaucracy. As an apparatus the Eiffel Tower justifies the sovereign power. It signals democratic values that at the same time are being limited by the French government. With a state of security we fear to develop a controlled totalitarian society in opposition to the free values that the Tower normally would represent. On the behalf of peoples fear the mediation of crises thus gains the sovereign power. With the Eiffel Tower as apparatus the sovereign portrays itself as righteous and harmonious, and can as such control the behavior of its population. Public resistance in Paris is freely limited in order to sustain the illusion of democracy.

We cannot prevent terrorism without creating a dualism between 'us' and 'them', the 'West' and the 'Other', which increases xenophobia. What we can prevent on the other hand is climate change. We can act instantly and aim for a more equal and united future. However, COP21 is manifested as if everything is under control, and the optimism following its outcome allows the leading power and companies to look responsible while not enough is done to prevent natural and human suffering. A perspective outside the sovereign power is needed in order to be critical. Media has a responsibility to not let the sensation of news take focus from the important issues. Climate change must be taken seriously without being marketed. Media education should teach about the danger of aiming for sensational news that differs depending on the current news value. The reader, as a consumer of myths, must in addition stay critical to the portrayal of crises. The reader must learn to filter and distinguish the ideology.

Art has potentials to act consciously and illustrate what media fails. Although, as this work has shown, artworks used to promote COP21 continues to use the symbolic Eiffel Tower, perhaps due to a lack of visual signs for representing global warming. The artworks therefore risk turning into ideological state apparatuses that continue to transmit the ruling ideology. Since polar bears and Eiffel Towers are symbols used in the climate debate without any real effect, art needs to make new images and invent new symbols to engage. As scholars

in ecocriticism argue, a whole new language is needed if global warming shall be depicted and regarded as a serious threat. Only then can people act accordingly. Since art opens rather than closes thought, it can lead to individual affection that is the starting point for action. Although, the ability to get people affected towards the environment will continue to be a hard task for scholars and artists in the future. I have suggested that smaller and local perspectives might be easier for the individual to grasp in opposition to a global identification that the Eiffel Tower is made to signify. What certainly needs to be done is to picture climate change as a real crisis. Terrorism must also be studied in a wider context and cannot be simplified as a war against an innocent righteous democracy, since, that is – a myth. The issues concerning climate change will continue to cause social conflicts, but can also be an opportunity for global cooperation. Perhaps a global peace is the only way to create a truthful Peace for Paris.

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APPENDIX: ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1.



Figure 2.

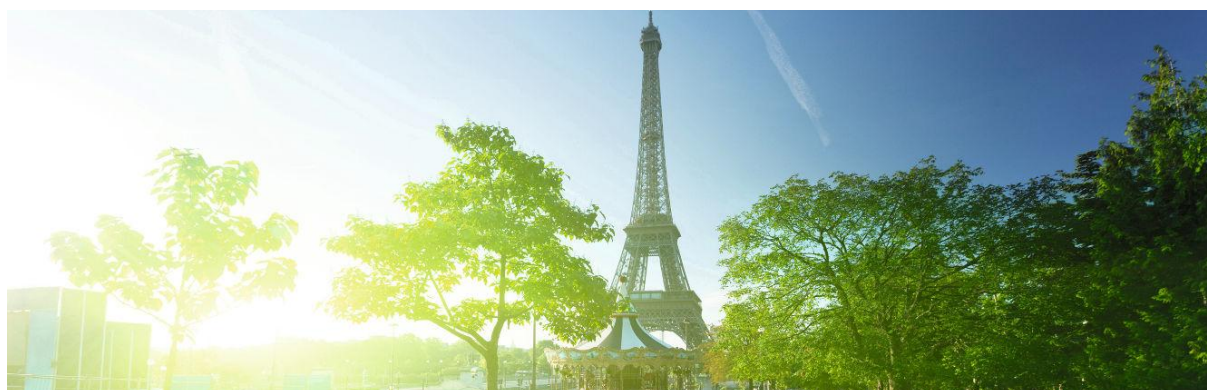


Figure 3.



Figure 4.



Figure 5.



Figure 6.



Figure 7.



Figure 8.



Figure 9.

