Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Recasting Subjectivity

Globalisation and the Photography of Andreas Gursky and Allan Sekula

Zanny Begg

Globalisation is a complex process that is partially governed and directed, partially the result of unpredictable and cumulative changes, which is unifying the world under the neo-liberal economic model but also fragmenting the experience of life under capitalism. Three key aspects of globalisation; deterritorialisation; hyper-capitalism; and time-space compression have generated changes in how we view photography that can be registered in the work of Andreas Gursky and Allan Sekula. Gursky has explored the potentiality of globalisation by opting for a hybrid technique that combines photography and digital manipulation. Largely focused on the industrial and technological possibilities of globalisation, he uses digital manipulation to bend our sense of perception to the outer edge of credibility, creating a world we recognise but also one which is partially imagined and not yet realised. Gursky chooses the horizon as the 'strategic notion'[1] by which to convey a sense of time–space compression. By flattening out the depth of field in his images he reduces the power of the horizon – sometimes even obliterating it all together – creating a new sense of perspective. Gursky's world no longer bends away from the viewer; it stands to attention, in focus, flat, illuminated. This all-over sense of perspective is evocative of the 'smooth space' of globalisation described by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in *Empire*. Allan Sekula, on the other hand, has focused on the limits of globalisation. Following the deterritorialised flow of capital, he focuses on the wave of industrialisation in the developing world which has relocated old technologies into this new context. Within the two worlds of globalisation, Sekula chooses to focus on the one inhabited by the poor, the marginalised and the dispossessed. He has retained an interest in indexical photographic techniques because he feels this is the clearest way of portraying this aspect of globalisation.

The difference between Gursky and Sekula's approach to photography highlights the diverse ways in which globalisation can be understood. Both worlds exist within globalisation – one holds the promise of

1. Michel Foucault, *Fish Story*, Richter Verlag, Germany, 2003, p 106.

626

borderless capitalism, which is the focus of theorists such as Kenichi Ohame and Thomas Friedman. The other shows the threatening reality of capitalist exclusion that has sparked the global justice movement and the new wave of militancy that arose in the mid-1990s. The two worlds of globalisation explored by Gursky and Sekula – one of promise, the other of threat – collide in the influence exercised on these by the rise of the 'multitude' or the global justice movement. While Gursky has been less obviously influenced by the movement itself, from 1995 he shifted from the depiction of single solitary individuals towards crowds of people reflecting a general re-emergence of, and interest in, a representation of collective social activity; Sekula has made himself part of this movement by participating in the Seattle uprising against the WTO and including a direct representation of it in his work – *Waiting for Tear Gas*.

THE GLOBAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

The global justice movement, with its presence in Seattle, Genoa, Melbourne, Prague, Cancún, Florence and other cities whose streets as a result were filled with mass demonstrations against capitalism, has emerged in response to neo-liberalism and has proposed an alternative form of globalisation from below. As Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue, 'far from being defeated, the revolutions of the twentieth century have pushed forward and transformed the terms of class conflict, posing the conditions of a new political subjectivity, an insurgent multitude against imperial power'.[2] This movement has changed the frame of the debate by reopening a vein of resistance to capitalism that seemed closed off in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

After a period of defeats and demoralising retreats post-1989, the movement against capitalism felt a shift in the winds in the mid-1990s. The Zapatista uprising in southern Mexico in 1994 was followed by the strike wave in France in 1995, both of which were described at the time as the 'first revolt against globalisation'.[3] These rumblings were quickly followed by the explosion of social unrest over trade and investment regulations. Mark Weisbrot, Co-Director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, gave this scorecard for the power of the global justice movement in 2000:

> … ever since NAFTA created the first public debate on US trade policy, every major administration initiative to extend its principles has failed. Fast-track authority for the President to negotiate new trade and commercial agreements: failed in Congress. The Free Trade Area of the Americas: tabled. The Multilateral Agreement on Investment: nipped in the bud… Then there was Seattle.[4]

These successes were subsequently followed up with a few more. The blockade of the World Economic Forum's Asia Pacific Meeting in Melbourne prevented delegates attending the first day; the Prague meeting of the IMF and the World Bank closed a day early; the 9–14 November 2001 meeting of the WTO was scheduled for Qatar (a

2. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Empire*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2000, p 394.

3. R Krishnan, 'December 1995: The First Revolt Against Globalisation', *Monthly Review*, May 1996, p 4.

4. M Weisbrot, 'Globalisation on the Ropes', *Harper's Magazine*, May 2000, p 6.

627

small demonstration-proof dictatorship in the Middle East); the massive demonstrations against the G8 meeting in Genoa, in July 2001, forced the organisers to concede that international meetings will perhaps become a thing of the past; a million people flooded the streets against the war and capitalism in Florence for the European Social Forum in 2002; and then the battle of Seattle was consolidated with the collapse of the Cancún meeting of the WTO in September 2003.

Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St Clair, in a book they co-produced with Allan Sekula, explain that this new movement is more complex and challenging than the social movements which emerged out of the 1960s radicalisation against the Vietnam war. As they explain, 'capitalism could stop that war and move on … capitalism can't stop trade and survive on any terms it cares for'.[5] The global justice movement has, therefore, generated a conceptual roadblock for capital. Immediately following a time when theorists such as Francis Fukyama were declaring the 'end of history',[6] capitalist powers found themselves confronting a popular anti-capitalist movement which was making its own history.

The global justice movement has not only challenged capitalism but also the leadership of the leftist parties, which are perceived as tied to an earlier and outdated national project. Responding to the deterritorialisation of capital, the movement has adopted a rhizomatic structure comprising loosely connected groups not bound to any particular place and which eschew structured hierarchies, often bringing together people who share a particular identity or interest – queer, trade union, environmental and so forth – which then merge into larger collective protests or conferences.

Allan Sekula gives a powerful sense of this movement in his work *Waiting for Tear Gas [white globe to black]* (1999–2000).[7] Immersing himself in the same physical and emotional space as his subjects, Sekula took the photographs of the Seattle protests according to a self-imposed set of rules: no flash, no press-pass, no gas mask, no zoom lens, no pressure to capture the one defining moment of violence.[8] He wanted to convey a sense of the 'flow' of the protests: the highs, the lulls, the waiting around, the flashes of violence. Through this anti-photo-journalistic approach, Sekula manages to capture an evocative picture of the new global justice movement. As he himself points out, the 'alliance on the streets' of Seattle was 'stranger, more varied and inspired' than any preconceived idea he may have had of what the movement should look like.[9]

Waiting for Tear Gas unfolds like a rhizome. The images revolve continuously in a slide carousel with no beginning or end. Each image appears before the viewer before being slowly replaced by another flowing between night and day, intensity and quietude. The forces of protest shoot to the surface in this work from many different sources: the students, the trade union activists, the older people, people dressed up or naked. The flow of the protest is interrupted at several points by lines of police, but the demonstrators go underground, retreat or move on and around these blockages.

The Seattle demonstration was a powerful impetus for similar anti-capitalist movements to grow in other countries around the world. The

5. J St Clair, A Cockburn, and A Sekula, *5 Days that Shook the World: Seattle and Beyond*, Verso, London, 2000, p 117.

6. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Avon Books, New York, 1992,

7. Images from this work contained in *5 Days that Shook the World*, eds Alexander Cockburn, Jeffry St Clair and Allan Sekula, London, Verso, 2000, pp 120–36 and Sabine Breitwieser, ed, *Allan Sekula: Performance Under Working Conditions*, Generali Foundation, Vienna, 2003, pp 310–14.

8. Sabine Breitwieser, ed, *Allan Sekula: Performance Under Working Conditions*, op cit, p 310.

9. Ibid, p 310.

628

strength this movement has in turn had an impact on debates over agency. In the early 1990s, I remember reading an article that pondered whether postmodernism would 'kill the movement'. In this article the question was posed:

> What sort of rainbow smorgasbord would it look like? A postmodern demonstration would have workers at the back of the building, feminists in front, activists against the war round the sides, a collection of gay and lesbians to the left and… greenies to the right. What chance does this cacophony of protest have of defeating the highly organised and centralised power of capital?[10]

The way in which this question was posed seems quaint and clearly outdated. The global justice movement has gathered just such a 'rainbow smorgasbord' of demonstrators who have scored an impressive number of victories against the highly organised and centralised power of capital.

During the early 1990s, the debates over agency centred on the relationship between class and identity. Generally speaking, Marxists were fearful of the postmodern penchant of fracturing the movement into smaller individual identities, whereas postmodernists were suspicious of the homogenising calls to the universal subject position of the working class. In the absence of a living mass movement, these debates solidified into sterile accusations of blame on both sides.

The global justice movement has reconfigured this debate by bringing to life a movement that is singular and multiple at the same time. It gathers together 'one no, many yeses', to borrow a chant from the streets of Genoa. This brought the collective mass back into the frame of reference, a mass, like the crowd in Gursky's *May Day IV* (2000),[11] which is neither homogenised nor entirely fragmented. Even the appearance of the collective mass as part of Gursky's oeuvre – which conveys all the other sign-posts of globalisation, travel, consumerism, leisure, trade – is an indicator of its re-emergence as part of the culture of globalisation.

The energy and excitement of the book, *Empire*, whose pages brim with optimism and which concludes with an acknowledgement of the 'irrepressible lightness and joy of being a communist',[12] can only be understood in the context of the rise of this global justice movement. As Negri's English-language translator, Matteo Mandarini, explains, *Empire* 'has

10. 'Will Postmodernism kill the movement?', quoted in a polemical flyer for the National Organisation of Women Students Australia Conference, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1994, from *CrossRoads*, May 1992.

11. David Frankel, ed, *Andreas Gursky*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001, plate 59, p 182.

12. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Empire*, op cit, p 413.

Andreas Gursky, *May Day IV*, 2000, C-print mounted on plexiglas frame, 208 x 508 cm, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, and Art Resource and Artist Rights Society

been able to tap into and give rational expression to the optimism expressed in the new age of militancy that emerged in the mid-1990s'.[13] This optimism has been a healthy antidote to the musings of those, such as Fredric Jameson, who feel that it is 'easier to imagine the thoroughgoing deterioration of the earth and nature than the breakdown of late capitalism'.[14] It also represents a shift away from postmodernism's preoccupation with individual identity towards an understanding of the collective or what Negri, borrowing a term from Spinoza, calls the 'multitude'. According to Mandarini, the cultural, political and economic changes bought about by globalisation provide the core transformation that allowed Negri to develop the notion of the 'multitude'.[15] Coming from the *Operaismo* or the autonomist Marxist movement in Italy,[16] which has provided some of the more creative attempts at analysing the changing composition of the working class, Negri first expounded this concept in *Empire*, co-authored with Michael Hardt, developing it further in their latest collaboration *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire.*

THE MULTITUDE

In describing the multitude, Negri begins where Jameson leaves off. Both Jameson and Negri assess the impact of hyper-capitalism, a phase in capitalist development in which, as Jameson describes, the 'world market has reached its limit and things and labour power have become universally commodified'.[17] The world market at this stage has closed the distance between nature and culture, immunising the entire globe with capitalist 'serum'. But at this juncture, which Jameson acknowledges must bring us closer to the very point which Marx predicted would lay the basis for socialism, he runs into a 'blockage of the historical imagination', which cannot conceptualise a 'viable alternative'.[18] It is this aporia that Negri attempts to breach.

To explain the concept of the multitude, Negri builds on Marxist concepts of the socialised worker which had creatively reappraised Marx's theory of the law of value. In *Capital*, Marx argued that labour-power is a commodity that the workers exchange for a period of time in return for a wage. Time homogenises the experience of labour by providing a means by which to determine its equivalent.[19] What Marx saw as 'specific to the capitalist mode of production' is the ability to define the use-value of labour by its exchange value.[20] Real subsumption of capital exists when labour is increasingly socialised and the whole of social life, production and reproduction and cooperation is subsumed by capital. [21] According to Negri, the real subsumption of society by capital, which could only be analysed by Marx as a tendency, is now accomplished through globalisation.[22]

In contrast to Jameson and many other critical theorists who also analyse the process of subsumption of capital, the starting point for Negri is always the power of labour. Consistent with autonomist Marxism, Negri views the historic tension between labour and capital from the vantage point of labour. As the field of exploitation of life under capitalism goes on expanding, Negri refuses to maintain the field of labour exploitation at the site of production alone. He emphasises that job mobility, part-time and casual work, the diffusion of production into

13. Antonio Negri, *Time for Revolution*, Continuum, New York/London, 2003, p 3.

14. Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn*, Verso, London, 1998, p 50.

15. Negri, *Time for Revolution*, op cit, p 14.

16. '*Operaismo* is a specifically Italian variation of Marxism, which posits the working class as the dynamic but autonomous core of capitalism', Negri, *Time for Revolution*, op cit, p 262.

17. Fredric Jameson, *Cultural Turn*, op cit, p 91.

18. Ibid, pp 90–1.

19. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol 1, Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, London, 1986.

20. Negri, *Time for Revolution*, op cit, p 25.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid, p 256.

the informal economy and the growth in intellectual labour do not mean the end of the working class. [23] As Negri explains, 'the only possible answer to this, from the working-class viewpoint, was to insist on and fight for the broadest definition of class unity, to modify and to extend the concept of working class productive labour'.[24] Negri extended this definition to cover the 'wide range of behaviours in social struggles, above all in the mass movements of women and youth, affirming all these activities collectively as labour'.[25]

The genealogy of the multitude is traced from the shift in production from Fordist to post-Fordist production techniques.[26] This shift transformed the exploitation of work physically concentrated at the assembly line to more immaterial and intellectual forms of labour. Negri argues that 'if we pose the multitude as a class concept, the notion of exploitation will be defined as exploitation of cooperation'.[27] Negri links the multitude to the new global justice movement: 'in social terms the multitude represented at Genoa [the mass demonstration against the G8 meeting] was the first full representation of the new layer of precarious workers in "social" labour produced by the revolution of post-Fordism'.[28]

Critics of Negri point out that he often theorises tendency as fact. This weakness certainly colours his assessment of the shift in production that underpins the concept of the multitude. Obviously Fordist production methods continue to exist in pockets of production in the First World and obviously in the new deterritorialised production centres in the developing world. But despite this the multitude remains a useful conceptual return to the mass in the developed world where an ability to conceptualise it was most seriously lacking. It also points towards tendencies for a change in how we conceive of collective subjectivity.

Gursky has provided an interesting portrait of the First World assembly line in *Siemens, Karlsruhe* (1991), which registers the shift in production away from Fordism.[29] The Siemens Industrial Park at Karlsruhe is the fifth largest Siemens location in Germany and produces electronic and computerised products. Gursky was commissioned by Siemens to participate in a photographic project that gave him access to the grounds of the factory. He was struck by how old-fashioned he found the factories; the mass assembly lines were still in place.[30] The contrast between the state-of-the-art jumble of electrical wires and the nostalgic 1970s lighting in this photograph manages to convey this sense of displacement. It is an idealised fiction of technological amazement captured from the viewpoint of an earlier generation. The contemporary edge is added by the mainly middle-aged women who work on the assembly line. This is not a booming successful factory of the future, but a relic of the past staffed by older marginalised female workers.

In Gursky's later works we see a shift towards the multitude. The giant crowds of sports fans, bankers and ravers, which swell his work from the mid-1990s, mix the collective experience of labour and recreation in a way that complicates earlier definitions of the working class. *May Day IV* (2000) has a mass of people photographed from a high vantage point typical of Gursky.[31] These are young people dancing and talking at a rave. It is May Day, a traditional workers' holiday, and we imagine these people to be a mix of students, casual workers and young professionals having a day off. The entire surface of the image is in focus, so that each person stands out as a distinct unit, but as a whole the

23. Antonio Negri, 'The Mass Worker and the Social Worker', online (available at: http://www.geocities.com/cordobakaf/massworker.html, accessed 13 September 2003).

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Antonio Negri, 'Towards an ontological definition of multitude', online (available at: http://www.generation-online.org/t/approximations.htm, accessed 1 November 2003).

27. Ibid.

28. Antonio Negri, 'After Genoa', online (available at: http://slash.interactivist.net/news/02/08/10/1643246.shtml, accessed 13 October 2003).

29. David Frankel, op cit, plate 10, p 68.

30. Museum of Modern Art, Press Release, February 2001, online (available at: http://www.moma.org/about_moma/press/2001/gursky_2_14_01.html, accessed 1 November 2003).

31. David Frankel, op cit, plate 59, p 182.

Andreas Gursky, *Siemens, Karlsruhe*, 1991, C-print, 176 x 206 cm, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, and Art Resource and Artist Rights Society

picture gives a sense of collectivity. Looking at this image we can understand what Negri means by the 'multitude is a whole of singularities'.[32]

The multitude is different from earlier concepts of the mob or the people. The mob appears as a collective entity which, like the frenzied women in Emile Zola's *Germinal*, tears through the singularities of its component parts. The mob is violent, irrational and easily manipulated. The people, as conceived by Thomas Hobbes or Jean-Jacques Rousseau, constituted an identifiable mass of individuals whose rights and needs were invoked by a contract with a higher sovereign power. The people were conceived of as a unity of interests that could be represented by a transcendental power. The theory of the multitude instead requires, as Negri points out, 'that the subjects speak for themselves, and that what is dealt with are unrepresentable singularities rather than individual proprietors'.[33] Negri explains that the multitude is 'an active social agent, a multiplicity that acts'. Unlike the people, the multitude is not a unity but, in contrast to the masses or plebs, 'we can see it as something organised. In fact it is the active agent of self-organisation.'[34]

Sekula conveys this sense of the multitude in *Waiting for Tear Gas*. Like *May Day IV*, this image also complicates earlier notions of class by providing a picture of the multitude that combines various social and economic roles within society through a new collective experience. In this work, however, Sekula focuses on a more political conception of the multitude by portraying those who have been cast into this role through their opposition to trade, speculation and unproductive wealth. It was the very actions of the stock exchange traders pictured by Gursky and the international rules of trade developed by organisations such as the WTO that prompted the demonstrations in Seattle, conveyed in *Waiting for Tear Gas*. The multitude appear in the Seattle demonstrations as a

32. Antonio Negri, 'Towards an ontological definition of multitude', op cit.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

632

Allan Sekula, *Waiting for Tear Gas [white globe to black]*, 1999–2000, courtesy Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica

self-organising collection of singularities. This is neither an angry mob being manipulated or led from outside nor a unified group of people who can be spoken for by a higher body. The Seattle demonstrations were organised autonomously, bringing together a collection of singularities into a collective movement.

Suspicious of the often spurious vanguard claims of Leninist parties, the global justice movement has been heavily influenced by autonomist political theories that stress self-organisation. This interest has been fuelled by the rise of the autonomously organised movements, such as the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas and the *disobbedienti* in Italy. Sylvere Lotringer and Christian Marazzi describe the Italian *autonomia* movement as 'the desire to allow differences to deepen at the base without trying to synthesise them from above, to stress similar attitude without imposing a general line, to allow parts to coexist side by side in their singularity'.[35] Taking this as a cue Sekula lets this movement's diversity speak for itself, resisting the pressure to find the one 'defining' image of 'violence' that captures the movement as a whole.[36]

Negri defines globalisation as an unmediated conflict between Empire and multitude.[37] This conflict plays itself out through the work of Gursky and Sekula. Confronting the images of solidarity and struggle that Sekula has created in *Waiting for Tear Gas* and *Freeway to China (Liverpool version)*, are the images of the stock exchange workers and bankers created by Gursky.

Gursky's *Chicago Board of Trade II* (1999)[38] portrays a 'pre'-multitudinous crowd – the new generation of worker/owners who have been created by global finance. On the one hand, it is a picture of exploiters, those who buy and sell the shares that have become the symbol of unproductive wealth and privilege; but, on the other, it is also a picture of exploitation, which shows workers swarming like ants in this giant

35. S Lotringer and C Marazzi, 'The return of politics', in *We are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anti-capitalism*, Verso, London, p 111.

36. Sabine Breitwieser, ed, *Allan Sekula: Performance Under Working Conditions*, op cit, p 310.

37. Negri, *Time for Revolution*, op cit, p 229.

38. David Frankel, op cit, plate 48, p 158.

Andreas Gursky, *Chicago Board of Trade* II, 1999, courtesy Art Resource and Artist Rights Society

task of (un)productive labour. Gursky has created a crowd scene that appears similar to *May Day IV* but can, in fact, be more usefully read as a depiction of the mob. The singularities of the crowd in *Chicago Board of Trade II* have been fused together in what Marx describes as the 'callous nexus of cash payment'.[39] The traders who crowd the floor are pawns manipulated by the machinations of the stock exchange, not a

39. Karl Marx, and Fredrick Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, Resistance Books, Sydney, 1998, p 48.

Allan Sekula, *Waiting for Tear Gas [white globe to black]*, 1999–2000, courtesy Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica

634

Allan Sekula, *Waiting for Tear Gas [white globe to black]*, 1999–2000, courtesy Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica.

self-organised collection of singularities. Their activity is geared towards a competitive struggle for financial supremacy and is not a collective expression of their wants and needs unmediated by money.

WORLD BECOMING – WORLD PASSING

In their depictions of globalisation, Gursky portrays a world that is becoming while Sekula focuses on a world that is passing. Gursky's work brings to life a well-lit world of travel, markets, hotels, airports, ports and crowds that helps us understand the real by also being more than the real.[40] The power of Gursky's images lies in their sense of possibility – he creates an imagined world that connects in an uneasy way to the world of today. When explaining one of his images, Gursky claimed he wanted to create the 'most contemporary possible view'.[41] Because of the changes caused by globalisation – deterritorialisation, compression and hyper-capitalism – Gursky's photographs can only achieve this by providing a picture of a floodlit and unsettling world which is not (yet).

But where there is light there is also darkness. Outside the spotlight of the globalised world lies a darkened reality of relocation, labour, lay-offs, dirt, sweat and pollution. It is this world that is the primary interest of Sekula. In 1989, Sekula started work on one of the first serious attempts to provide a visual response to the process of globalisation by tracking the changes in work on the wharves. He chose the sea, more anachronistic than air travel or the Internet, as a metonym for globalisation because it compressed much of the history of the processes of global travel, exchange and trade. The sea is embedded with memories of earlier pre-industrial and industrial phases of capitalism, which haunt Sekula's critique of globalisation. The reduction in

40. P Galassi, 'Gursky's world', in *Andreas Gursky*, ed David Frankel, op cit, p 29.

41. L Cooke, 'Andreas Gursky: Visionary (per)versions', in *Andreas Gursky, Photographs from 1984 to the Present*, ed Marie Luise Syring, Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf, 1999, p 14.

Allan Sekula, *Waiting for Tear Gas [white globe to black]*, 1999–2000, courtesy Christopher Grimes Gallery, Santa Monica. All images are from the work 'Waiting For Tear Gas', 1999–2000.

sea-freight charges laid the basis for the deterritorialisation of capital as ships turned into global trucks transporting the goods produced in the developing world back into the markets of the 'old' world. This heavy, clunky movement of objects contrasts in Sekula's mind with the instantaneous click of the mouse associated with global capital by reminding us of the people whose labour has created globalisation. The result of these investigations, *Fish Story* (2003), combines a series of photographs, which spreads out from the old industrial and shipping heartland of the West into the new industrial docklands in Asia and the developing world, with text responding to the 'dismal science' of neoliberal economics.

In direct contrast to Gursky, who believes that photography is no longer credible and that a 'fictitious construction' is now required, Sekula is attracted to photography precisely because of its 'social referentiality'.[42] Sekula seeks a more indexical relationship than Gursky between his subject matter and his photographs. Sekula describes his approach as 'critical realism', which seeks to construct works within concrete life situations in which there are active clashes of interest and representation.

> Any interest I had in artifice and constructed dialogue was part of a certain search for realism, a realism not of appearances or social facts but of everyday experience in and against the grip of advanced capitalism.[43]

Sekula uses the term 'contextual bracketing' to explain his linking of photography to social and political reality.[44] The challenge he set himself was connecting the 'micro-sociological observations that are cast up for the camera … to a broader context and pattern of meaning'.[45]

42. B Buchloh, ed, *Allan Sekula: Photography Against the Grain: Essays and Photoworks 1973–1983*, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1984, p ix.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. Sabine Breitwieser, ed, *Allan Sekula: Performance Under Working Conditions*, op cit, p 25.

636

There is a telling image of a welder's booth in *Fish Story* that conveys a sense of the world that is disappearing through the process of globalisation. The photograph, *Welder's booth in bankrupt Todd Shipyard. Two years after closing. Los Angeles harbour, San Pedro, California, July 1991*,[46] shows a rusty spanner that has been turned over to reveal a silhouette outlined in dust. The forgotten spanner and its ghostly trace appear a reminder of the skilled industrial workforce in the United States whose jobs have been relocated through a process of deterritorialisation, in this instance to Korea's huge Hyundai Shipyards. David McNeill describes this photograph as a 'spectral image' that reminds us of the absence of labour where it once thrived.[47]

The theory of the multitude makes it possible to return to this question from another vantage point. In their expression of collective subjectivity one could argue that it is Sekula who invokes a world becoming, whereas it is Gursky who focuses on one that is passing. In works such as *Waiting for Tear Gas,* Sekula brings to light the counter-force within globalisation, the multitude, which is seeking to construct an alternative form of globalisation centred on human rights and global citizenship. This multitude challenges the old powers of privilege expressed by the stock exchanges and trading floors of Gursky's portrait of global capitalism.

The multitude is in a process of becoming by invoking a world that is not (yet). The slogan for the May Day demonstration in Sydney 2001 was 'Another World is Possible'. [48] This slogan raises the possibilities of an alternative future that maintains the globalisation of communication, labour, travel and culture, but challenges the unequal distribution of wealth and power within global capitalism. The 'smooth space' of Empire is also a striated space for those without cash who find the flow of life blocked at every turn. The cashless masses who are the subjects of globalisation, struggling on welfare, forced to flee to refugee camps, labouring in the hulls of deterritorialised ships of convenience, have been transformed into the multitude who pose a radically different form of globalisation from below. Their struggle invites the possibility of a world becoming.

46. 'Planet Art', in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, 3:2, 2002, p 19.

47. Ibid, p 18.

48. The author helped organise this demonstration and attended the organising meetings that developed this theme copied from the European global justice demonstrations.