Chapter 2

Mobility and the Cosmopolitan Perspective

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This chapter raises the following questions: What is new about mobility in the cosmopolitan perspective? How does the cosmopolitan gaze, or to be more precise, does 'methodological cosmopolitanism', change the conceptual frame, the realities and relevance of mobility?

I shall develop my argument in five steps. First, I would like to locate the cosmopolitan perspective in the discourse of globalization. Second, I want to draw a distinction between philosophical cosmopolitanism and social scientific cosmopolitanism. My third part focuses on the opposition between methodological nationalism and methodological cosmopolitanism. The fourth step outlines the research programme of the cosmopolitan social science, especially in relation to issues of mobility. And finally, in the fifth step I discuss different ways of perceiving, analysing and coping with the local–global nexus.

Cosmopolitan perspective and the discourse on globalization

Globalization has exploded into the sociological agenda in the last ten to fifteen years. We can distinguish three reactions: first *denial,* second *conceptual and empirical explorations*, third *epistemological turn*. The first reaction was and is: nothing new. There has been quite a sophisticated defence of conventional economics, sociology, political science and so on, which tries to demonstrate that the evidence which has been brought up in favour of globalization is not really convincing.

But this strategy lost its credibility when a second reaction became prominent; that is, a generation of globalization studies which were concerned with how to define globalization; which aspects of globalization represented historical continuity and discontinuity; and how to theorize the relationship between globalization and modernity, post-modernity and post-colonialism. These studies primarily concentrated on understanding the character of globalization as a social phenomenon; there were important conceptual innovations, operationalizations and empirical studies, represented for example by David Held and his group (*Global Transformations*) or, in Germany, Michael Zürn and his group (*Im Zeitalter der Globalisierung?*); Held used the basic term of 'interconnectedness', Zürn the term of 'denationalization'.[1]

1 See Held et al. 1999; Zürn 2005.

More recently, however, scholars started to ask what implications these socio-historical changes may have for social science itself: when fundamental dualisms – the national and the international, we and the others, inside and outside, fixity and motion – collapse, how does this effect the units of analysis in special fields of social science? In this 'epistemological turn' globalization poses a challenge to existing social scientific methods of inquiry. To be more radical: sociology, political science and ethnography rely on fixed, immobile and comparable units of analysis (like survey and comparative research), but they lose their subject of inquiry (see, for example, Urry 2000, 18–20). They all face significant challenges in reconfiguring themselves for the global era. In order to do this one needs a new standpoint of observation and conceptualization of social relations and consequently a paradigmatic shift from the dominant national gaze to a cosmopolitan perspective is enforced.

Philosophical cosmopolitanism and social scientific cosmopolitanism

As a first step on this way of change we have to distinguish between different versions of 'cosmopolitanism' (Beck 2006; Beck and Sznaider 2006): the first, most commonsense meaning refers to a plea for cross-cultural and cross-national harmony; this is what I mean by '*normative* cosmopolitanism' or '*philosophical* cosmopolitanism'. During the era of Enlightenment, European intellectuals heatedly fought over what today would be called two 'passwords': 'citizen of the world' and 'cosmopolitanism'. Both terms were always discussed in relation to the then nascent nationalism. What we need to do now is what Walter Benjamin called a 'saving critique' of the Enlightenment's distinction between nationalism and cosmopolitanism so we usefully can apply it to twenty-first-century reality: the normative notion of cosmopolitanism has to be distinguished from the *descriptive-analytical social science* perspective, which is no longer consistent with thinking in national categories. This I call 'analytical-empirical cosmopolitanization'. From such a perspective we can observe the growing interdependence and interconnection of social actors across national boundaries, more often then not as a side effect of actions that are not meant to be 'cosmopolitan' in a normative sense; this is '*real existing cosmopolitanism*' or the '*cosmopolitanization of reality'*. This last type of cosmopolitanization refers to the rise of global risks, global publics, global regimes dealing with transnational issues: '*institutionalized cosmopolitanism*'.

The philosophical debates on cosmopolitanism have tended to neglect actual existing cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanization. My favourite neglected Kant quote to demonstrate what I mean comes from his popular lectures on anthropology and is about the German character: '[The Germans] have no nation pride, and are too cosmopolitan to be deeply attached to the homeland.' Is this only further evidence that philosophers know themselves least? Perhaps. But it also suggests that philosophy is of limited use in thinking about real existing cosmopolitanism, because the cosmopolitan challenges are not in theory, but in practice, and – even more important – the 'cosmopolitanization of reality' is quite a different thing from imagining cosmopolitanism philosophically.

What are some actually existing cosmopolitanisms? Most of them are not intended but unintended, not a matter of free choice but a matter of being forced. Cosmopolitanism may be an elite concept, cosmopolitanization is *not* an elite concept. Cosmopolitanization, for example, derives from the dynamics of global risks, of mobility and migration or from cultural consumption (music, dress styles, food), and the media impact leads – as John Urry and others showed – to a shift of perspective, however fragile (Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006). And it leads to a growing awareness of relativity of one's own social position and culture in a global arena. Cosmopolitanization also leads to new relations, new connectivities and mobilities as Tomlinson puts it (Tomlinson 1999).

All of these actually existing cosmopolitanisms involve individuals with limited choices. The decision to enter a political realm larger than the local one may sometimes be made voluntarily, but it often results from the force of circumstances.

More narrowly market-driven choices usually derive from the desire not to be poor, or simply not to die. Entertainment choices are based on a range of options frequently beyond the control of individual consumers. Such compulsions may explain in part why the mass of really existing cosmopolitanization does not enter into scholarly discussions of cosmopolitanism: to argue that the choice of cosmopolitanism is in some sense self-betraying and made under duress takes away much of its ethical attractiveness. If cosmopolitanization is both indeterminate and inescapable, it becomes difficult to conceptualize and theorize. Yet such is normally the case in a world where the boundaries are deeply contested.

Conceptualizing these different types of cosmopolitanization raises many questions and objections. I want to pick up only one: what do the vastly different variants of 'cosmopolitanization' have in common? To what point is it meaningful to classify, for example, Kant's *Ewiger Friede*, the Rio Conference on sustainable development, and white New York teenagers listening to 'black' rap as variants of 'cosmopolitanism'? There is a big difference between Kant's philosophical vision of a cosmopolitan order and the Rio Conference, but through the backdoor of 'side effects' – that is, of the global perception and acceptance of the global risk dynamics – global problems offer options for cosmopolitan solutions and institutions Kant had in mind. And the New York teenager is, of course, not a cosmopolitan. Listening to 'black' rap does not make him or her a cosmopolitan, but an active part of an ever-denser global interconnectedness, interpenetration and the mobility of cultural symbols and flows. From Moscow to Paris, from Rome to Tokyo, people live in a network of interdependencies, which are becoming tighter by everybody's active participation through production and consumption. At the same time we are all confronted with global risks – economically, environmentally and by the terrorist threat – which bind underdeveloped and highly developed nations together. There is a global mobility of risks where people, ideas, concepts and things travel from one side of the world to the other and infect or effect at any place in ways that no-one can predict (see, for example, Kaplan 2006; Law 2006; Urry 2002; Urry 2004; and Urry [illegible] this book).

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The big difference between the classical philosophy debate on cosmopolitanism and sociological cosmopolitanization is that the cosmopolitan philosophy is about free choice, the cosmopolitan perspective informs us about a *forced* cosmopolitanization,

a passive cosmopolitanism produced by side effects from radicalized modernization. And in this context the distinction between globalism and cosmopolitanization is very important.

Globalism involves the idea of the world market, of the virtues of neoliberal capitalist growth, and of the need to move capital, products and people across a relatively borderless world. Cosmopolitanization is a much more multidimensional process of change that has irreversibly changed the very nature of the social world and the place of states within that world. Cosmopolitanization thus includes the proliferation of multiple cultures (as with cuisines from around the world), the growth of many transnational forms of life, the emergence of various non-state political actors (from Amnesty International to the World Trade Organization), the paradox generation of global protest movements against globalization, the formation of international or transnational states – like the European Union – and the general process of cosmopolitan interdependence and global risks. In terms of contemporary politics one might pose these as conflicts between the US and the UN: the US represents globalism, the UN cosmopolitanization. These two visions of second modernity haunt contemporary life, each trying to control and regulate an increasingly turbulent new world.

Opposition between methodological nationalism and cosmopolitanization

My third argument starts with making a distinction between normative and methodological nationalism. Normative nationalism is about the actor's perspective: methodological nationalism is about the social scientific observer's perspective. The conventional post-war social science regards the nation as a huge container, while international relations are assumed to account for all relations outside that national container.

Even in world-systems theory, the subunits of the system are almost always nations, whose relations to each other are ordered by capitalist development and interstate competition. Most political scientists and political theories still do equalize state with nation state; political parties monopolize the representation of political conflicts and so on.

Anthropology takes the local for the site of culture, which is often analysed in terms of its relationship to the world of nations (colonialism, nation-building and so on). It often takes the established hierarchies of the local, the national and the international for granted. This critique of methodological nationalism is only possible from a cosmopolitan point of view. It is the first step of methodological cosmopolitanism.

Critique of methodological nationalism includes reflecting and questioning the basic background assumptions and distinctions. One can explain this very shortly in the field of mobility research, which often presupposes the distinction between *mobility* and *migration*.

Of course, on the level of the social actor (mainly the nation state and its citizens) there is a big difference between mobility and migration. 'Mobility' stands for a fact and a positive value inside national societies and it is a general principle of

modernity (see Kesselring in this book). 'Migration' stands for movements of actors across national borders, which is negatively valued and often criminalized. In the national perspective it is both: it is legal and legitimate to stop or regulate 'migration' while at the same time 'mobility' is to be enforced. But if this distinction becomes part of the social science vocabulary and theory, this is a clear case in consequence of methodological nationalism. The problem of this substantial treatment of 'migration' and 'mobility' is that it adopts categories of *political actors* as categories of *social scientific analysis*. It takes a conception inherent in the practice of nationalism and in the workings of the modern state and state system and makes this conception a centre for social theory, philosophy and research about mobility and migration (aliens and citizens).

In social and political theory and philosophy one has to ask: What justifies closed borders? What justifies the use of force against many poor and depressed people, who wish to leave their countries of origin in the Third World to come to Western societies? Perhaps borders and guards can be justified as a way of keeping out criminals, subversives or armed invaders. But most of those trying to get in are not like that. They are ordinary, peaceful 'mobile' people, seeking only the opportunity to build decent secure lives for themselves and their families. What gives anyone the right to point guns at them?

It was Niklas Luhmann who argued in his system theory that communication knows no borders. This is one of the main reasons why he criticizes the conception of *many* national societies and argued for one and only one society, namely 'world society'. There are three contemporary approaches to political theory – Rawls, Nozick and liberalism – to construct arguments to oppose the social scientific distinction between mobility and migration. It is, especially, the liberal tradition of Western societies which contradicts this distinction. Liberalism emerged with the modern state and presupposes it. Liberal theories are deeply rooted in methodological nationalism. They were not designed to deal with questions about migration. They assumed the context of the sovereign state. As a historical observation this is true. But liberal principles (like most principles) have implications that the original advocates of the principles did not entirely foresee. This is one of the reasons why radicalized liberalism can argue for a cosmopolitan perspective and becomes part of methodological cosmopolitanism.

The cosmopolitan perspective on mobility

Methodological cosmopolitanism, therefore, is not only about new concepts but about a new *grammar of the social and political.* Methodological cosmopolitanism is *not* justified in itself; it only justifies itself by producing – as Imre Lakatosz calls it – a 'positive problem shift'. It justifies it by opening up new fields for research, theoretical interpretation and political action. This shift of perspective from methodological nationalism to methodological cosmopolitanism allows a focus upon quite a lot of different theoretical and empirical landscapes:

- Global risk dynamics: the rise of a global public arena results from the reaction

to non-intended side effects of modernization (Beck 1992; Böschen, Kratzer and May 2006). More precisely, the risks of modern society – terrorism, environment, etc. – are inherently transnational and global in nature and attempts at controlling them lead to the creation of global fora of debate, if not necessarily to global solutions, too.

- Cosmopolitan perspective allows us to go beyond '*international relations*' and to analyse a multitude of interconnections, not only between states but also between other actors on different levels of aggregation. More than this, it opens up a new space for understanding trans- or post-international relations.
- Sociology of inequality: a de-nationalized social science can research into the global inequalities that were covered by the traditional focus on national inequality and its legitimation.
- Different forms of 'banal cosmopolitanism': finally, everyday cosmopolitanization on the level of cultural consumption (music, dress styles, food), everyday travelling and connecting between distant places and people in the world (Lassen 2006; Kesselring 2006) and media representation lead to a shift of perspective, however fragile, in growing awareness of relativity of one's own social position and culture in a global arena.

But here I want to discuss the question: What kind of innovations derive from a cosmopolitan perspective on mobility?

My first argument relates to a *macro-perspective*: What is the 'subject' of mobility? Not only individuals or groups within or across borders, but also whole national societies and nation states. This 'society mobility' or 'state-migration' is a kind of *immobile mobility* of a territorialized unit. It can be studied in the case of the European Union and relates to the mobility between membership and non-membership countries. Europe is not a static unit (like a national society), but a process of *Europeanization*. That means one of the basic secrets of the European Union is the *dialectics of integration and expansion*. The mobility of societies as a whole is one of the main characteristics of Europeanization. The intensified integration within the European Union alters the communities' external relationships. The affluent core becomes more and more directly involved in stabilizing political and economic conditions in the neighbouring regions. EU integration intensifies and more inner EU borders vanish, the common interest of EU states maintaining the patterns of concentric circles outside the communities' borders becoming even more apparent. In a certain sense this expresses the European Union's capacity to alter and to change the shape of its social and political configurations and it signifies its liveliness. Its capacity to be mobile, its '*motility*' (see Canzler, Kaufmann and Kesselring in this book), is a decisive factor in the whole process of making Europe.

Since the non-members of the EU have to adjust their structures and institutions to the EU norms (open markets, human rights, democratic values), the EU integration of variable geographies includes the excluded: the non-members but potential members. Thus this kind of macro-mobility, which is grounded on consensus and free choice of the non-member states, is not a product of war, imperialism and colonialism – but it operates with a specific inside–outside nexus. Borders are at the same time there and not there; they do function and do not function, because the anticipated future

of the EU membership becomes a real existing force for institutional reforms in the non-member state (for example, Turkey).

Secondly, are there other conceptual innovations looking at mobility from a cosmopolitan perspective? Yes. And I would like to distinguish between the concept of a '*cosmopolitan place*' and the concept of '*cosmopolitanization of places*'. What I define as 'cosmopolitan place' is pretty much related to 'urban space' or 'global city', but it has to be clearly distinguished from methodological nationalism. I suggest there are two aspects to what makes 'being cosmopolitan' different from 'being national'.

First, one does not exist in the cosmopolitan place in the same way as one exists as part of the nation. If the nation is fundamentally about belonging to an abstract community, then the cosmopolitan place or space is about immersion in a world of multiplicity and implicates us in the dimension of embodied cultural experience. In cosmopolitan places cultural differences are experienced '*at ground level*' and involve *bodily materialized engagement* with the complex realities of the 'excluded others'. The co-existence of cultural differences provokes questions like: *Who am I? What am I? Where am I? Why am I where I am?* – very different questions from the national questions: Who are we? and What do we stand for? The nation, we may say, is a space of identification and identity, whilst a cosmopolitan place is an existential and experimental space of difference. Here the concern is no longer with the culture as a binding mechanism – 'what binds people together into a single body'; cosmopolitan places are regarded as a huge cultural reservoir and resource – valued for its complexity and its incalculability. While the nation is about stability and continuity, the cosmopolitan place offers important possibilities for cultural experimentation: How can strangers live together? It is a complex of specially distributed cultures, side by side, overlapping, hustling, negotiating, constantly moving and jostling – a physical and embodied co-existence that defies any abstract (national) schemes of integration and assimilation.

This understanding of the cosmopolitan place has implications for the understanding of citizenship and vice versa. Again it undermines the distinction of mobility and migration in relation to specific places. In the first modernity (centred on the nation state) three distinct components of citizenship are being combined: citizenship as a political *principle of democracy*, citizenship as a *juridical status of legal personhood*, and citizenship as a form of *membership* in an exclusive social category. Republic or democratic theorists stress the active participatory dimension, liberals usually concentrate on personal rights and methods of justice, and communitarian theorists are concerned with the dimension of collective identity and solidarity. What characterizes cosmopolitan places is the *de-composition* of the first modern paradigm of citizenship and the evolving of new 'as-well-as' categories with a new set of choices and dangers.

The clear-cut dualisms – between members and non-members of a (national) category or between humans and citizens – collapse. This does have several implications; for example, for the juridical dimension of citizenship – the citizen in this approach is not a political actor but a legal person, free to act by law and under the protection of law. It can be more 'fluid' and potentially inclusive, since it is not tied to particular collective identities or a membership in a *demos*. Consequently the

citizen does not need to be territorially bound. But consequences could be a loss of politicization and solidarity. Universalizing legal personhood undermines the will for political participation as well as the strong identification with the social solidarity that the democratic-republic concept presupposes. On the other hand, cosmopolitan places open spaces to invent and amalgamate in crucial experimentation the combination of human rights and citizenship, legal status, social identity and political-democratic participation.

From a conceptual sociological point of view this experimentation combines elements which seem to be analytically exclusive (at least in a Weberian perspective): the principles of legality and legitimation or illegality and illegitimation. The border-crossing world of cosmopolitan places and spaces is, relative to specific perspectives, at the same time legal and non-legal, legitimate and non-legitimate, depending on a national or cosmopolitan perspective, methodological nationalism or methodological cosmopolitanism.

In reality, what characterizes cosmopolitan places is their structural and topographical overlapping and their (to some extent) contrary frames of reference related to the position and the power of social and political actors. The first modern paradigm of citizenship was never normatively satisfactory. It promised to resolve the tensions between democracy, justice and identity if only it was institutionalized in the right way. Cosmopolitan places are an empirical falsification to this claim: the exclusive territoriality and sovereignty inherent in the nation state model are being transformed due to the emergence of transnational economic practices in super-national legal regimes, post-national political bodies, which intersect in cosmopolitan places. Thus cosmopolitan places are an experimental space about a new paradigm of citizenship that is both adequate to cultural diversity in cosmopolitan places and normatively justifiable.

Perceiving, analysing and coping with the local–global nexus

The main differences between a '*cosmopolitan place*' and the '*cosmopolitanization of places*' are as follows: the first is reflexive, the second is latent; the first is fixed to urban space, the second is open to many different configurations of 'place' – the global context of *rural areas*, the global context of *regions*, the global context of *households* and so on. All of these different 'politics of scale' (Swyngedouw 1997; Marston 2000; Brenner 2001) involve the question about the activity of the actors. In a second cosmopolitan modernity the social and the political has to be re-imagined and re-defined. But this is a challenge for quite different theoretical approaches, system theory (in its distinct versions from Wallerstein to Luhmann), symbolic interactionism or ethno-methodology (to name only a few): *beyond* methodological nationalism the competition between theoretical positions and their framing of empirical research evolves anew.

I would like to make a distinction between a post-modern approach and a second-modern approach: very much simplified, the post-modernists to some extent welcome the fluidity of an increasingly borderless world. They argue that the disembedded 'social' and 'political' are increasingly constituted by flows of people, information,

goods and cultural symbols (see, for example, Lash and Urry 1994; Urry 2000). From the point of view of second-modernist theory and research they underestimate the importance and contradiction of 'boundary management' in a world of flows and networks (see Beck, Bonß and Lau 2003). This has to be studied both in cosmopolitan places and the cosmopolitanization of places. A post-modern vocabulary of flows and networks, despite recognizing that networks can be exclusionary, provides little analysis of power relations within cosmopolitan places and networks. And therefore it finds it difficult to explain reproduction into change in cosmopolitan places. The question is: Does thinking in 'flows' and 'networks' neglect the *agency* of the actors and their sense-making activities as forces in shaping the flows themselves?

In order to go beyond the false opposition between the space of flows versus the space of places (Manuel Castells) social theory has to develop an understanding of how cosmopolitan places (or the cosmopolitanization of places) constitute an *active relationship of actors to space and place*. Thinking along this line, reflexive modernists see globalization as a repatterning of fluidities and mobilities on the one hand and stoppages and fixities on the other, rather than an all-encompassing world of fluidity and mobility. If the whole world became mobile and liquid this would be a certain form of linear and first-modern modernization. Mobility research in the context of theory of reflexive modernization shows an active mobility politics of actors on every scale from the body to the global. Also, in the contexts of hypermobility and hyperactivity there is a need for stability and reliability. People actively develop sophisticated strategies of coping with mobility constraints. Kesselring (Kesselring 2006a; Kesselring 2006b) describes patterns such as the centred, the de-centred and the reticular mobility management where people actively deploy stability cores in contexts of mobility and fluidity which enable them to a huge amount of movements and travels. Surprisingly, the most effective strategy seems to be the centred mobility management. In this type people circulate around a clearly defined place of belonging. They practise an active relation to space and place without losing social and cultural contact and identity. In a certain way this exemplifies what I call a cosmopolitan identity of 'roots with wings' (Beck 2006).

From a standpoint of mobility research in a cosmopolitan perspective the main issue is not as Lefebvre puts it the 'production of space' (Lefebvre 2000). If we take actors as powerful players in the process of the social construction of the global age we shall talk and think about the 'production of place'. More than this we need to talk about the social production of interfaces between spaces of globality and spaces of territoriality. The 'world city network' (Taylor 2004) represents the visible structure of globalization and cosmopolitanization. It rests on powerful infrastructures and machines that enable individuals, groups, companies and whole nations to be connected with other places and spaces around the world. Together with complex systems of IT infrastructures and the Internet, these networks of mobility (such as airports, road systems, the worldwide system of vessels and ports and so on) build the backbone of the cosmopolitan society and the process of globalization. This constitutes a specific constellation of 'fixity and motion' (David Harvey) and the dialectics of (im)mobility and a strained relationship between moorings and flows. The modern open society is a mobile society and as such it is a 'mobile world risk society' (Beck 1992; Kesselring forthcoming).

From the discussion of flows, we see the need to redefine places in the light of the multiple connections cutting across places. From the study of transnationalism, we see the critical importance of the emergence of a new politics of scales of social action and the reconfiguring of relationships among the multiple scales within which places are embedded. Finally, from the study of borders, we see the vital importance of seeing place as politically produced and contested. In a second-modern perspective we have to merge these various perspectives into a concept of the social as increasingly embroiled in place-making projects that seek to redefine the connection, scales, borders and characters of particular places and particular social orders. What methodological cosmopolitanism looks for is to replace the national ontology by methodology, a methodology which helps to create a cosmopolitan observer-perspective to analyse the ongoing dialectics between cosmopolitanization and anti-cosmopolitanization of places.

These ongoing dialectics can be observed in so called 'places of flows' where the ambivalences of the process of cosmopolitanization come together, interact and create new mobilities, stabilities and fixities. These places of flows (like global cities, airports, train stations, museums, cultural sites and so on) are locally based but transnationally shaped, connected and linked with cosmopolitan networks and structures. Understanding power in the global age needs a mobility-related research that focuses on places of flows and the power techniques and the strategies of boundary management that define and construct places and scapes where cosmopolitanization is possible. From these places we can learn how the cosmopolitan society works. The cosmopolitanization of modern societies does not happen in an abstract space of flows. It happens where and when the local meets the global and the channelling and the structuration of flows has to be made and organized. It is the hidden 'power of the local in a borderless world' (Berking 2006) that structures and gives shape to global flows and mobilities.

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how to do SS research when comparisons aren't fixed and there is a shift from national gaze to cosmopolitan gaze

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normative/philosophical cosmopolitanism: plea for cross-cultural and cross-national harmony

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in contemporary times, societies cannot be analyzed in national categories due to the mobile nature of society.

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interconnected world via global flows and symbols.

and also confronted with global risks: economically and environmentally

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going beyond "international relations" and to analyze multitudes of interconnections, not only between states but between actors on different levels of aggregation.

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sociology of inequality: global inequalities

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