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World anthropologies and privatization of knowledge: engaging anthropology in public

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The language of privatization and the privatization of language



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The dominant processes underlying the transformation of life in all current societies have been that of privatization amidst globalization, including the conversion of things, activities and ideas into commodities, or commodification, expanding into all domains of social and cultural life. Not surprisingly, languages are also seen now as commodities that carry different values in the era of globalization, while under economic pressure language practices are used as currency for the flow of capital. These new trends, driven by marketization and privatization, impact different domains of knowledge production and elite formation, from education, the workplace, market and public sphere to digital communication. They deserve closer scrutiny with respect to implications for their critical real-world issues from linguistic, cultural and economic rights to identity.