

Project Group 70, Militant Research and Activist Sense

Comment

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Questioning knowledge - broadening our perspective.

We go to school and university to learn.

We go on the streets to demonstrate.

Does one have something to do with the other?

What kind of knowledge are we being taught at school and university? Is that the only valid form of knowledge? Can we gain knowledge ourselves by being active? What does science have to do with activism?

For 12 or 13 years we have made a pilgrimage to school every day, listening to the teachers' sermons and dutifully reading in the math and history books what other people discovered. No matter if it was about the structure of a plant cell, the binomial formulas, or the French Revolution - in all subject areas there are people who have analysed and interpreted things. But knowledge is not only gained in the laboratory or in the lecture hall, and by assuming that one's view of vision is enormously limited. Because even though classical scientific work leads to great insights, it does not give an overall picture and it easily loses touch with reality. Not all areas of life can be covered by academic knowledge, but there are other forms of knowledge acquisition, that are much more active and much closer to reality - which brings us to militant research.

This form of research does not happen from an ivory tower, but on the streets. One gains a kind of knowledge that can only be obtained through activity. It is more accessible and not as exclusive as the one our professors teach us at university - because everyone can participate. This knowledge is valuable and belongs to a multi-perspective-including and well-founded view. Especially in universities, people often get lost in the discourse and other methods of gaining knowledge get out of sight. To achieve an overall social change, however, it is not enough to simply analyse a problem theoretically and produce an essay interspersed with technical words. It needs experience, knowledge from lived scenarios and knowledge from other perspectives. There are people around the world directly affected by multiple struggles who are organizing and emancipating themselves. Militant researchers are actively participating in society. These movements and activists are producing knowledge independently and offer their gained knowledge openly to the public, therefore make it accessible.

We need to be open for a change of our perspective and our role in society and keep in mind that the world is bigger than what we got to know in the last 12 or 13 years. We need people to do research beyond the academic bubble. We need to understand that also activism creates knowledge and knowledge creates activism.