KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION
ZINE
Vol. 1/2026

WHERE DOES ANGER GO?

KNOWLEDGE critique and THE POLITICS of CHANGE



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This zine was made possible through the shared resources, time, ideas, and care of our community.

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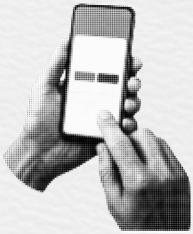






A few months ago, we put out an open call for contributions for the first **Knowledge in Action Network (KAN) Zine**. We were curious about what happens in the spaces between academia and activism: the tensions, contradictions, questions, and possibilities that emerge when knowledge moves between them.

We invited people to share what they were noticing, questioning, experiencing, and making, whether through reflection, poetry, stories, research, or other forms of expression.



What came back to us took many shapes. Some pieces questioned the boundaries of knowledge. Some lingered with lived experience. Others asked what happens when we move between different worlds, languages, and ways of knowing.

And this is where we begin: our first issue.

We hope this zine can remain an open space for these conversations to continue. unfinished, shifting, and sometimes contradictory.

If you have an idea, a story, a question, or a piece of work you'd like to contribute to a future issue, write to us at: knowledgeinactionnetwork@proton.me

Submissions can be in any language (please include an English translation). You may submit anonymously, under your own name, or using a pen name.

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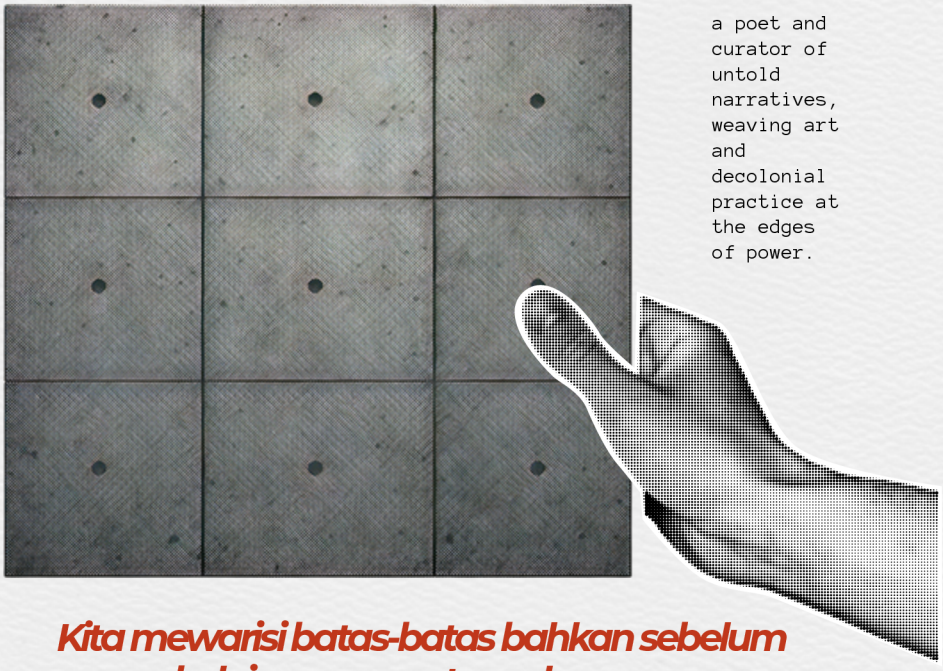
When Does Knowledge Become Action?
Carla Boulos



kemana amarah itu pergi

Kinanti Munggareni

a poet and curator of untold narratives, weaving art and decolonial practice at the edges of power.



Kita mewarisi batas-batas bahkan sebelum belajar mempertanyakannya

Between knowledge and experience, theory and practice, academia and activism, research and movements; between what can be cited and what can only be remembered; between what is recognized as evidence and what is treated as anecdote, testimony, feeling, or simply a story someone tells about what happened to them.

There are institutions around these distinctions: universities, funding systems, publishers, research protocols, paywalls, languages that open doors and languages that don't. Somewhere inside all of this, something keeps moving. For me,

it is often amarah.

Not always the spectacular kind. Sometimes anger arrives quietly. It sits underneath a conversation. It appears when something violent has become so ordinary that people stop calling it violence. Sometimes it comes from grief or exhaustion, or from realizing that something you thought everybody could see has been made invisible by the language used to describe it. Then, eventually, someone asks us to explain.

What happened? How do we know? Can we document it? Can we verify it? Can we turn it into something another institution will understand?

And I keep returning to a question that sounds simple until I try to answer it. **Where does anger go?** What happens to it when something felt in the body has to pass through transcription, categorization, analysis, citation, and review

I first approached these questions through ***poetry***, mostly because ***poetry*** was already close to me. A poem does not have to close an argument neatly. A bodily memory does not arrive with a literature review. A metaphor does not produce a confidence interval. A question can remain a question. And a poem rarely stays on the page. It can become breath, voice, gesture. It moves from a private experience into something shared without necessarily becoming universal.

But forms have institutions around them too.

Poetry can become a commodity. **Art** can reproduce hierarchy. Resistance itself can acquire an aesthetic, becoming recognizable enough to circulate without remaining disruptive. **Crossing a medium is not the same thing as crossing power.**

This is where the familiar phrase *"bridging academia and activism"* begins to trouble me. A bridge makes the problem sound like distance: two sides already exist, and we simply need to build something between them. But academia and activism did not wake up one morning on opposite shores. The distance between them has been organized.

A researcher may have radical questions and still depend on an institution that decides what can be funded, published, recognized, or counted. An activist may have a precise understanding of power while having less access to the resources required to turn that understanding into something officially called research. A community may know exactly what is happening to it and still be asked to produce evidence for someone elsewhere.

One way we have tried to manage that distance is translation.

Experience becomes data. Testimony becomes evidence. A movement becomes a case study. Research becomes a policy brief. Anger becomes a finding. Grief enters a logframe. Resistance becomes a recommendation. Community knowledge appears in the footnotes.

Translation is often necessary. But translation is not transportation. Knowledge does not leave one place unchanged and arrive intact somewhere else. Something happens *while it is moving*.

A story becomes a category. A contradiction becomes a sentence that can fit inside an executive summary. A story told by many people may return carrying the name of one author.

The harder question is *who gets* to decide *how it changes*.

Who controls the form, the destination, the timing, the attribution? Who benefits from the translation? Who carries the consequences if something travels farther than expected? Does the person whose story entered the process retain any power over what the story becomes?

The contributions gathered in KAN Zine circle these problems from different directions. We know how to produce documents. Many begin in urgency. And then? So the important question is not whether something has entered an institution. It is what changes in people's actual capacity after it happens. KAN Zine is not outside it. So if KAN asks what institutions do to knowledge, it also has to ask what KAN is doing to the knowledge that enters it. Not because self-critique makes us innocent. It does not. But perhaps an experiment begins by refusing innocence.

There are stories that should not become data. There are names that should not enter an archive. There are moments when refusing documentation is not a failure of knowledge but an act of care. But knowledge may also need places where it can stop. Places where it remains with the people who made it. Places where someone can say: this happened, it matters, and it is still not yours to take. This matters for a zine whose very existence depends on circulation.

***KAN is not a solution to the division between academia and activism*, and I do not think it should pretend to be one.** Maybe it is something smaller. A place to see what happens when a scholar brings a poem and an activist brings theory. When research becomes conversation. When someone without an academic title can place an experience beside someone else's citations without being told that one is knowledge and the other is merely personal. A place where forms can remain slightly unsettled.

We do not live outside structures. A structured reality is not necessarily a closed reality. People have always made things in the cracks: archives where official histories refused to hold their memories, knowledge carried across borders, kitchens, streets, community halls, poems, pamphlets, songs, and conversations turned into places where people think together. A crack is not freedom from the wall. It is an opening made inside the conditions that already exist. And perhaps KAN can be one such opening, not a bridge that promises to resolve the distance between knowledge and action, but a place where we can notice what happens while knowledge is moving.

I do not think our task is to decide in advance what *anger* should *become*. Maybe it is simply to remain close enough to notice where it goes.

Selamat berlayar melalui karya-karya dalam zine ini dari titik manapun kamu berada!

kan kutulis hikayatku sendiri
entah ia kalam, berfaedah, atau tak
pun biji mataku melukat meleleh nanah
pun lidahku pegat dari kerongkongan
pun kaki tanganku penggal

ich werde meine eigene geschichte schreiben
obgleich heilig, nützlich, oder nicht
selbst mein augapfel geschmolzen zu eiter
selbst meine zunge getrennt von meinem rachen
selbst meine füße und hände zerstückelt

"Aku Tarung yang Tak Boleh Mati", Kinanti Munggareni, 2023 translated to German by Lenna Galley (2025)

Echo Chamber

Sukhjeet



It consumes you
It comforts you
It constrains you

Who do we talk to
Who do we listen to
Who is credible
Who is palatable



What does it mean to be critical
To stay true to **principles**
Should we acknowledge the unacknowledgeable
The Unthinkable

Validation
Humiliation
Feeds, reels, the algorithm
Community notes, shadow bans
Trends, hashtags
Impulse posting, firings
Tech moguls cackling

The echo chamber
Is it breaking
Are we breaking it
Should we escape it?

The turtle academic

Sukhjeet

the turtle academic
is on land



It is slow
It is lost
It is unaware
It is awkward

It doubts itself
It has tunnel vision

It doubts itself
It has tunnel vision

It has to get in the water
to move faster
to discover
to flow
to bloom









In every direction
All the possibilities
the connections
the destinations
the trails

An unimagined legacy
An unimagined evolution
An imaginable future

THE SCIENTIFIC WORD

where is
it and
what does
it do?



by a German
Scholar





I want to write. I want to shake every person around me!

My family, my neighbors, the people on the metro, my research institute—I want to scream at all of them: Wake up from your trance at last. Please, let it be nothing more than a trance, because I cannot believe that we Germans are once again complicit in a genocide.

What, did I just say "genocide"? The forbidden word of the year?! The word that can ruin your academic career? The word that either silences everyone or prompts them to call you a terrorist?

Yes, that word: genocide against the Palestinians!

It is not a word. It is pure dehumanizing violence. It is a pain that can no longer be put into words. It is an incomprehension beyond comprehension. A genocide perpetrated by Israel and supported and financed by Germany.

I have spoken this word, I have written it down here, I have screamed it. And now? Nothing. Silence in Germany. Silence in my research institution. Silence within me.

The scientific word is ultimately just a word if it does not lead to action. And I do not see any actions aimed at stopping Germany's complicity in this genocide.

#NeverAgainIsNow #Ulm5 #FreePalestine #GermanScholarsForPalestine #Scholasticide

Das wissenschaftliche Wort: Wo ist es und was tut es?

von einer deutschen Wissenschaftlerin

Ich möchte schreiben. Ich möchte alle Menschen in meiner Nähe schütteln! Meine Familie, meine Nachbarn, die Menschen in der Metro, mein Forschungsinstitut, alle anschreien: Wacht endlich aus eurer Trance auf. Bitte, lasst es nur eine Trance sein, denn ich kann nicht glauben, dass wir Deutschen erneut an einem Genozid beteiligt sind.

Was? Habe ich ‚Genozid' gesagt? Das Unwort des Jahres?! Das Wort, das deine wissenschaftliche Laufbahn ruinieren kann? Das Wort, das entweder jeden zum Schweigen bringt oder dazu veranlasst, dich als Terroristin zu beschimpfen?

Ja, dieses Wort: Genozid an den Palästinenser*innen!

Es ist kein Wort. Es ist pure menschenverachtende Gewalt. Es ist ein Schmerz, der nicht mehr in Worte zu fassen ist. Es ist ein Unverständnis, das unverständlicher nicht sein kann. Ein von Israel begangener und von Deutschland getragener und mitfinanzierter Genozid.

Dieses Wort habe ich ausgesprochen, ich habe es hier aufgeschrieben, ich habe es geschrien. Und jetzt? Nichts. Stille in Deutschland. Stille in meiner Forschungseinrichtung. Stille in mir.

Das wissenschaftliche Wort ist eben nur ein Wort, wenn es nicht zu Taten führt. Und Taten, die die Beihilfe Deutschlands zu diesem Genozid stoppen, sehe ich nicht.

#NieWiederIstJetzt #Ulm5 #FreePalestine #GermanScholarsForPalestine #Scholasticide

WHEN DOES KNOWLEDGE BECOME ACTION



Carla Boulos

researcher, activist, and PhD candidate whose work focuses on gender justice, conflict, and social transformation

For years, I translated **anger into reports**. I learned how to make **injustice legible**.

How to fit **grief** into **logframes**. How to translate **urgency** into **recommendations**. How to turn **stories** into **evidence**. Many times, this work was important. Many times, it was necessary.

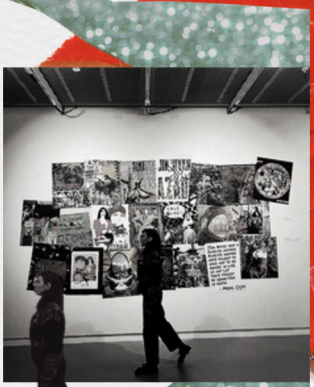
Yet I often left **with the feeling** that something had happened on **paper** while very little had changed on the ground.

A report was submitted. A policy paper was
circulated. A meeting was held.
A recommendation was acknowledged.
Everyone could move on.
Including me.
Writing can be a relief.

You name the problem. You document it.
You make it visible.



FOR A MOMENT, THE PRESSURE LEAVES YOUR BODY





A question has stayed with me ever since: **What if that relief is part of how systems survive? What if some forms of action allow us to process anger without transforming the conditions that produced it?**

I do not ask this as an outsider. I ask it as someone who has spent years writing. As a **researcher**. As an **activist**. As someone who *still believes* in the **power of words**.

None of this means that reports, research, or policy papers are meaningless. **Knowledge matters. Documentation matters. Naming injustice matters.**

Many of the **rights**, **protections**, and **social changes** we have today were **shaped by people who documented**, **researched**, **analyzed**, and refused to let certain realities remain invisible.

Yet I found myself returning to a different question. **If knowledge is important, when does it become action? When does it merely create the feeling of action?**

Looking back on years of working across research, humanitarian, and development spaces, I realized that the moments that stayed with me were rarely found in reports.

They emerged in conversations. In communities organizing. In people refusing to disappear. In acts of solidarity. In relationships. In the quiet spaces where no one was measuring outcomes. **That is where something was actually shifting.**

Trying to make sense of this tension led me to the work of Sara Ahmed.

Ahmed's concept of non-performativity captures a familiar institutional dynamic. Policies, reports, commitments, and statements often do not do what they say they do. They signal concern. They demonstrate awareness. They create the appearance of action while leaving underlying structures largely intact.

The document itself becomes the action.

The appearance of transformation begins to replace transformation itself.

Making sense of this gap also requires naming a few dynamics that many of us working in research, advocacy, and policy spaces have experienced.

Symbolic Action versus Material Change

Reports can *signal* **accountability** without redistributing **power**. They perform concern rather than transforming structures.

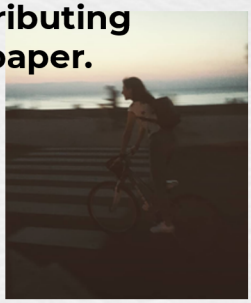
Institutional Absorption

Systems are remarkably good at *absorbing* critique.
Radical insights become *recommendations*.
Recommendations become *frameworks*.
Frameworks become **future agendas**.

The **critique survives**. The **structure survives** too.

Moral Outsourcing

Contributing to a paper.



Citing an issue.

Attending a panel.

These activities can create a genuine feeling of having done something.

Urgency is resolved at the level of recognition rather than action.

The feeling of action becomes a substitute for action itself.

A different lens for understanding this comes from Antonio Gramsci's work on hegemony. Gramsci argued that power is maintained not only through force but also through consent, through everyday practices that make existing arrangements feel natural, inevitable, and productive.

From this perspective, systems do not always silence critique.

They can absorb it. Organize it. Institutionalize it.

Even transform it into evidence of their own responsiveness. *Then there is time.*

Perhaps the most **underestimated political force** of all.

Time as a Neutralizer

Even when change comes, it is often slow, diluted, and bureaucratically filtered until the original political edge disappears.

International legal processes offer a striking example.

Cases brought before the International Court of Justice can take years while realities on the ground continue to unfold in the meantime.

In this sense, time does not simply delay justice. It can **reshape** it. **Soften** it, and sometimes **outpace** it altogether.

This is not a call to stop writing.
Nor is it a rejection of research, policy work, or documentation.

I continue to do all of these things.
The question is not whether we should write.
The question is what happens to our anger once it becomes a document.

What kinds of action become possible through writing?
What kinds of action become postponed?
What kinds of urgency become softened?



We attempt to make change.

Intentions are not the issue.
Direction might be.
Not all action disrupts.

Some action is absorbed.
Some action is neutralized.

Some action becomes part of the machinery it hoped to challenge.
The question is not whether we are acting.

The question is
whether our actions are helping to **confront injustice** or *simply making it more manageable*.

References

Ahmed, S. (2012). On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Gramsci, A. (1971). Selections from the Prison Notebooks. Edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: International Publishers.





LESSONS FROM FRANZ FANON'S DECOLONIAL THOUGHT

The world is still cut in two, but the line no longer runs only between the European quarter and the medina. It now runs across the whole planet. It runs along borders patrolled by drones, through seas where some bodies swim for pleasure and others drown, and along a wall around a narrow strip of coast.

On the other side is the town of those who are counted differently. Their deaths are reported in round numbers, then revised, then doubted. It is a hungry town, starved of bread, of water, of electricity, of medicine. It is a crowded town, where families are pushed from one "safe zone" to another. Each time the zone shrinks, and each time the family is told that this, finally, is humanitarian. It is a town whose rubble is carted away before anyone can read what it records. How far have we come?

We need to rewind back:

" (...) The town belonging to the colonized people, or at least the native town, the Negro village, the medina, the reservation, is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute. They are born there, it matters little where or how; they die there, it matters not where, nor how. It is a world without spaciousness; men live there on top of each other, and their huts are built one on top of the other. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire. It is a town of niggers and dirty Arabs. The look that the native turns on the settler's town is a look of lust, a look of envy; it expresses his dreams of possession—all manner of possession: to sit at the settler's table, to sleep in the settler's bed, with his wife if possible. The colonized man is an envious man. And this the settler knows very well; when their glances meet he ascertains bitterly, always on the defensive, "They want to take our place." It is true, for there is no native who does not dream at least once a day of setting himself up in the settler's place.

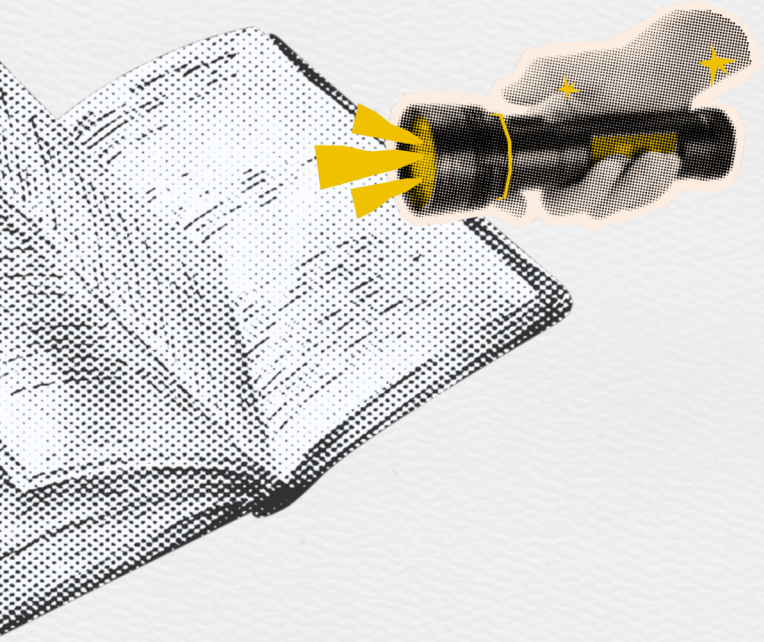
This world divided into compartments, this world cut in two is inhabited by two different species. The originality of the colonial context is that economic reality, inequality, and the immense difference of ways of life never come to mask the human realities. When you examine at close quarters the colonial context, it is evident that what parcels out the world is to begin with the fact of belonging to or not belonging to a given race, a given species. In the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure."

(Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth (1961), p. 39-40. Translated by Constance Farrington, Penguin Classics, 2001)

The colonized of the world watch us today, and they recognize it. The Algerian recognizes it, and so do the Kenyan, the Irish, the South African, and the Native American on the reservation. What they recognize is not a “conflict” as the news anchors say. It is the colonial situation itself, which they know from their own grandparents’ stories. The comfortable town calls this recognition “extremism”:

The native must realize that colonialism never gives anything away for nothing. Whatever the native -may gain through political or armed struggle is not the result of the kindliness or good will of the settler; it simply shows that he cannot put off granting concessions any longer. Moreover, the native ought to realize that it is not colonialism that grants such concessions, but he himself that extorts them (...) colonized peoples, the peoples who have been robbed, must lose the habits of mind which have characterized them up to now. If need be the native can accept a compromise with colonialism, but never a surrender of principle.

(Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth, p. 143. Translated by Constance Farrington, Penguin Classics, 2001)





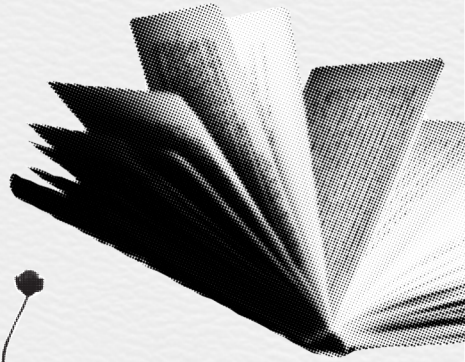
About Knowledge Action Network

We are a group of **social science academics** and **activists** connected by a shared commitment to **national** & **transnational civic spaces**, **social justice**, and **humanist foreign policy**.



This network grew out of ongoing conversations across countries about how to work between academia and activism, and how to **navigate responsibility**, **positionality**, and **uneven power relations**.

We are building a **collaborative and inclusive space** where **activist** and **academic knowledges meet as equals**: to *question power*, *share tools*, and *co-create ways* of acting in the world.





KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION ZINE COMMITTEE

Adhiraaj Anand is a doctoral researcher exploring youth politics, social movements, transnational activism, and civil society across East and Southeast Asia.

Carla Boulos is a Syrian human rights activist and researcher exploring gender justice, transformative justice, and post-conflict social change across Syria, Lebanon, and Europe.

Hamid Talebian is a doctoral researcher exploring Middle Eastern geopolitics, Iran's foreign policy, and its engagements with Africa.

Indi-Carolina Kryg is a doctoral researcher exploring migration, critical citizenship, border regimes, political agency, and civil society in Latin America and Central America.

Kinanti Munggareni is a poet and cultural worker working with youth and communities across Indonesia, Southeast Asia, and Germany, exploring untold narratives, collective resistance, and decolonial practice.

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