UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

Department of Administration and Organization Theory

AORG350

Master's Thesis in Administration and Organizational Science

SPRING 2018

Relations between Knowledge and Politics in an Authoritarian Regime

The Academic Profession at Makerere University, Uganda

Andrea Kronstad Felde

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Acronyms

CEDAT	College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology
CHUSS	College of Humanities and Social Sciences
CSO	Civil society organization
FS	Feedback Seminar
HURIPEC	Human Rights and Peace Centre
Mak	Makerere University
MISR	Makerere Institute of Social Reserach
MP	Member of Parliament
MUASA	Makerere University Academic Staff Association
NORHED	Norwegian Program for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PILAC	Public Interest Law Clinic
SoL	School of Law
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
UEA	University of East Africa
WB	World Bank

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The research design for the following study is an exploratory, qualitative case study. It is a case of the *Academic Profession* at Makerere University in Uganda and explores and aims at understanding the relationship between the academic profession and the political system. It aims at understanding how the state imposes formal and informal restrictions on the profession within the *College of Humanities and the Social Sciences* and the *School of Law*, while at the same time exploring how the academic profession react to and handle this. It also assesses if and how the academic profession contributes to democratization of the Ugandan society and if they are an important social force in society.

This study is a contribution to the field of research on the relationship between knowledge and democracy in authoritarian countries, in contrast to that of modern, democratic societies. The reason why the case of Uganda is interesting, is since the Ugandan society is caught between processes leading to democracy and processes leading to dictatorship, while it is also caught between structures of the traditional and the modern society. The informal and personal penetrates the way formal institutions work in the political system, and this has consequences for the academic profession, leaving it in a state of uncertainty.

The study finds that there is a particular and uneasy relationship between scientific knowledge and politics in Uganda. The relationship can be characterized by disinterest and lack of trust in scientific knowledge and informal power and control. External infringements on academic freedom and self-censorship is common, and the academic as an entity is too weak to constitute a powerful social force in society contributing to a more democratic society. Nevertheless, individual committed academics contribute through their research, teaching, outreach and activism.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

Uganda has struggled to build a political state based on democracy, and Makerere University (Mak) and the Ugandan society are caught between processes leading to democracy and processes leading to dictatorship (Mbazira, 2016b:13; Halvorsen, 2010c:216). Today, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) with President Museveni in front can be described as "soft authoritarianism" (Makara, 2010:79). Through the post-independence history of Uganda, the relationship between the political system and the university have been ambivalent. Academics have continuously suffered hardship and deprivation for their struggle for democratization, and government have perceived the university as the hotbed of domestic opposition (Sicherman 2005;47-48; Currey, 2003:9). Especially the relations between academics within the disciplines of Humanities and the Social Sciences, and the state has been problematic. Despite a more favorable political climate following the NRM´s rise to power in 1986, academics have continued to feel that their rights have been limited (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003:14; Currey, 2003:14-15).

1.0 Objective and Research Questions

This thesis will examine and try to understand the relationship between the academic profession (scientific knowledge) and politics in Uganda, and the role of academics in democratization processes. The thesis is based on a case study; the academics within the College of Humanities and Social Science (CHUSS) and School of Law (SoL) at Makerere University. The project investigates the role of academics in political developments and explores whether and how they are relevant for democratization. The study will seek to describe and understand:

> *The relations and interplay between knowledge and politics in Uganda, and how the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL at Makerere University handle these.*

In order to understand and provide answers to the stated objective, three research questions have been developed:

1. *How, if at all, do academics understand their role(s) in relation to politics?*
2. *What is the role of the state – the political regime – in enhancing or diminishing the academic freedom of the academics?*
3. *Are academics playing a constructive role in democratic developments?*

Thus, the study will start broadly by seeking to provide an understanding of the role of academics in relation to politics, and the relationship between the academic profession and politics in Uganda. Second, it will assess the ways in which the political regime is limiting the academic freedom of this profession at the CHUSS and the SoL. This understanding is essential in order to finally understand how the academic profession contributes to democratization of the Ugandan society, since these limitations have consequences for how the academic profession contributes. When addressing the latter, it will not be my normative assessment on whether and how academics contribute. Rather it will be understood through the perceptions and actions of the academic profession themselves.

The data sources used in the work, is 22 qualitative interviews with academics and external informants, a feedback seminar with seven informants, and 42 documents such as strategic reports from Mak and newspaper articles.

1.2 Brief Background to the Study

Uganda can be understood as a hegemonic authoritarian hybrid regime where the incumbent uses state institutions to preserve his stay in power (Helle, 2017a:69). Today, power is concentrated in the hands of the NRM leadership, especially the president who retains in office through flawed elections (Freedom House, 2016). Power is also concentrated in the hands of the security force, while ordinary MPs and civic groups have little practical ability to affect legislation and government policies (Helle, 2017a:59).

The government of President Museveni continues to violate free association, expression, and assembly rights (HRW,2017). Indicators suggest that the knowledge-politics nexus in Uganda is ambivalent; scientific knowledge is not perceived to be working as a base for political decisions, academics are rarely able to influence political decisions and policies, and the president is repeatedly criticizing the social sciences and humanities in Uganda for their lack of relevance to the needs of the country (Wandera 2014; Agencies 2016).

1.3 Delimitation and Specification

The study tries to explore and understand the relationship between knowledge and politics in Uganda, through the experiences and perception of the academic profession at Mak. The knowledge-dimension is represented by the academic profession within the CHUSS, and the

SoL at Mak. The politics dimension consists of the political and government elite (the president´s office, members of parliament, and government officials). The study examines the exchange of knowledge between academics and policy-makers (such as elected officials, advisors and civil servants). The relationship between knowledge and public officials who work at the service level (such as tax officials, the police, local government councilors), and those who are not part of the public sector, but who often wield strong influence (business executives, religious leaders and traditional leaders), will not be investigated in this paper.

It will, however, examine tensions between power and knowledge, politics and truth in the politics-knowledge nexus in Uganda, and further how the academic profession handle potential conflicts in this nexus. In the case of Uganda, academic freedom is central, and will be given extensive attention. The study address instances where academic freedom has been curtailed, and issues of self-censorship will also be addressed. This is of importance, since violations of academic freedom are more common for the social sciences and humanities than for the natural or life sciences (Altbach & de Wit, 2018:29). Academic freedom is taken to be a necessary condition for the free pursuit of knowledge, and academics should enjoy freedom from undue political interference in their work. Connelly (in Connelly and Gruttner, 2005:2) claims that; "What seems to make the juxtaposition of dictatorship and university interesting is academic freedom: dictatorships destroy it, universities need it".

I suggest that since institutions which promote research and learning (like the university) are essential in the transitional process towards democracy, the academic staff are integral to this process. Whilst I recognize that there are other important institutions and actors in a democratization process, I have chosen to focus on the academics within the CHUSS and the SoL, and Mak as the biggest, oldest and most prestigious university in the country (Kasozi, 2003; Sicherman, 2005). Indeed, while many researchers have explored the role of academics and universities in already democratic societies, and the interplay between knowledge and politics in such countries, few have explored the relationship between academics and the political system in authoritarian regimes, and how this affects the academics´ efforts to promote democracy. Therefore, this study can be understood as explorative in that particular sense.

1.4 Previous Research on the Field

This section will briefly present some of the empirical contribution to the field of the role of academics and their relation to politics in authoritarian societies, Uganda included.

Altbach (2013b:25-28) finds that many universities in developing countries are important political institutions – they train elites, and they play a direct political role as a forum for dissident perspectives and mobilization of opposition activities. Due to this, academic freedom often suffers, and protecting this freedom and academic work does not receive a high priority from government. In their comparative study, Connelly and Grütter (2006) finds that even under the most repressive regimes, academics can sometimes preserve a precarious measure of autonomy by insisting on the maintenance of professional standards, although they also found that the academics within the humanities and the social sciences had the most difficulties in maintaining their integrity given the nature of the disciplines. However, they also found that given the contradiction in most of the cases between a regime´s desire for political control and its desire for economic progress, academics were often given some independence from the regimes[1].

The Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC) finds that in the Ugandan society there is a perception that academia should play an active role in shaping politics. Despite of this, they find that this is not happening to the extent that is wanted. The study finds that while some members of society find it unrealistic that academia can play an active part in politics due to structural and organizational weaknesses of academic institutions, others argue that it is because academics in Uganda are grabbed by apathy or that academics have chosen to partner with the state in order to benefit from state resources rather than criticizing them (HURIPEC, 2016:44-45).

In contrast, Bisaso (2017:458) find that professors and researchers at Mak have contributed as experts in political decision-making processes in Uganda. This contribution, however, have mainly come from the disciplines of the sciences and technology, and the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT) at Mak. Innovations from these disciplines, especially in agriculture, medicine and technology have attracted funding both

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[1] The dictatorial regimes in the comparative study were: Nazi Germany, Mussolini´s Italy, Francoist Spain, Maoist China, the Soviet Union, and the Soviet bloc countries of Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary and Poland (Conelly and Grütter, 2006).

from international agencies and the government of Uganda. These academics, however, have been engaged as individuals, not as institutional experts, especially in the areas of health and agriculture research (Bakibinga, 2006; Muhumuza et al., 2005:10; Wafula & Clark, 2005:691, in Bisaso, 2017:453-56). In a similar fashion, Kasozi (2003:12) finds that most policy-makers in Uganda regard the Sciences and Technology as the disciplines that are relevant to society, and thus indirectly disregard the disciplines of the social sciences and law altogether.

What is missing in the previous research on the field, is the perceptions of the academics themselves; how they understand their role in relation to politics, how they assess their contributions to politics, and their own perceptions on the relations between knowledge and politics in Uganda. And further, how they perceive the role of the state in relation to knowledge. Rather than seeing the disconnect between knowledge and politics in Uganda as a result of individual factors among the academics as in the Synthesis Report provided by HURIPEC, attention needs to be given to more structural factors such as the political system, with its neopatrimonial and authoritarian features.

When trying to unfold and understand the relations and interplay between knowledge and politics in Uganda, the issue of power is central. The framework which this case study is analyzed within, is one of *electoral autocracy*, where the ruling NRM, with President Museveni in front, relies on a variety of structural impediments in order to effectively shut out dissenting voices (CBR, 2016). What seems to be missing in previous research is an assessment on whether the political system base their policies on scientific knowledge and research from the CHUSS and the SoL rather than the STEM-disciplines[2] at Mak, and if the political actors regard this knowledge as relevant for development and the needs of the nation and society.

Thus, this study is a contribution to the field on the role of scientific knowledge in authoritarian regimes, and the relationship between academics and the political system in such a society. Luescher-Mamashela et al., (2011:ix) finds that whether and how higher education makes a contribution to democratization beyond producing the professionals that are necessary for developing and sustaining a modern political system has remained an unsolved

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[2] Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

question. While their contribution to the field is a study of the role of students in democratization of society, this thesis contributes by focusing on the role of the *academic profession* in democratization processes.

1.5 Outline of the Paper

The study comprises of 11 chapters. In this introductory chapter I have briefly introduced the study and presented its objective, research questions, specifications, and previous research conducted on the field. Chapter 2 will acquaint the reader with the historical political context and situation against which the academic profession at Mak are to be situated and analysed. It gives a summary of the history Mak, and describes in short the state of the university today.

Chapter 3 details the theoretical framework for the study, constituting four sections addressing the topics of 1) knowledge, 2) knowledge-politics relations, 3) political systems and the role of knowledge, and finally in section four I position this thesis in light of the theoretical contributions presented. Chapter 4 will present the methodological work with the thesis, explaining what I have done and assessing the validity and limitations of the study.

Chapter 5, 6 and 7 each present the data from the primary and secondary sources answering to the three research questions. Chapter 5 present the role(s) of the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL in relation to politics, and how they perceive the relations between knowledge and politics. Chapter 6 presents the limitations facing the academics, and the consequences these have for academic freedom. It assesses in what ways the political regime is restricting the profession and its academic work. Chapter 7 presents how the academic profession can contribute to democratization in Uganda.

The following Chapters 8, 9 and 10, analyse the data from the empirical chapters in light of the chosen theory in the subsequent order, before Chapter 11 provides a summary and concluding remarks on the role of knowledge in relation to politics in Uganda, and on the role of the academic profession in democratization processes in light of this relationship.

Chapter 2: Context of the Study

2. Introduction

The academics, their relationship to politics, and their contributions to democratization have to be understood within the context of Makerere University since this is the institution where the academics are being created and shaped, and since this is their work place. Further, they have to be understood in the context of the political history and current political situation in Uganda, since it is to this context they can contribute to change. Therefore, this chapter will briefly present the history of politics in Uganda from independence and onward before it addresses the political situation of today. Second, it will present the history of Mak, while also provide the current context of the university.

2.1 Politics in Uganda

After independence from British rule in 1962, Uganda have vacillated between multipartyism, one-partyism, military regimes and the Movement regime (Makara, 2010:29). President Museveni came to power in 1986 by winning a civil war. He took over the presidential office after decades of political turmoil, with leadership in the hands of among others Milton Obote[3] and Idi Amin (1971-79). During Obote´s first term as president (1966-71), he gradually abolished all competition and established a one-party state (Kasfir 1976:206). Amin enacted a coup while Obote was out of the country in 1971, and the rule by Amin was characterized by government terror, massacres and economic repression (Glentworth and Hancock 1973:249-250, in Helle, 2017b:15-16; Musisi & Muwanga, 2003:8). Obote came to power again by winning a rigged election in 1980, and during his second term as president (1980-85), the Ugandan society saw further economic, physical and moral destruction (Sickerman, 2005:105). In the post-independence history of Uganda there has never been a peaceful transfer of power (Kalyiegira, 2016).

After coming to power President Museveni did not allow a multiparty system and prohibited political party activities (Helle, 2017c:7). The justification for the no-party system was that a multiparty system would not be appropriate for the Ugandan context, especially considering the experiences of the past (Kamp, 2010:18). Since the reintroduction of multipartyism in

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[3] Prime minister: 1962-66, president: 1966-71 and 1980-86 (Sickerman, 2005:106-111)

2006, Uganda has made improvements concerning the – at least formal – guarantee of basic democratic standards. Still, however, NRM is massively dominating the political system (Kamp, 2010:17,22).

The structure of the government in Uganda is built on patronage politics, and the party in power controls the human and material resources of the state, including the media. This is due to the absence of separation between the state and the NRM (Tangri and Mwanda, 2001,2006, in Makara, 2010:50). Various state institutions, especially the coercive arm of the state, the state bureaucracy and the agents of political socialization, is perceived as working for the wishes of the ruling party. Other institutions, such as the judiciary, are generally perceived to be fair to all, although there are indications suggesting that such institutions too are being "tamed and trimmed" by the ruling elite to compromise their independence (Makara, 2010:54).

The fusion between the state and the NRM party creates opportunities for the NRM to use and distribute state recourses, which are used to buy votes, positions or policy (Helle et al., 2011:2, Kamp, 2010:24-25). Makara (2010:29) argues that the longevity of NRM in power has led to its domination of the political system and the construction of a symbiosis between the party and the state. The dominance of the NRM cannot be divorced from the "Big Man" syndrome that pervades Ugandan society, since most institutional and political processes have been reduced to the "Big Man" within the ruling party. Olum (2010:77) further finds that the personality of the president is so dominating that much of what transpires within the party and within the state needs to get his tacit consent. In short, there is no clear distinction between the political *regime* in the country, and the *state* itself (Olum, 2010:65-74).

In contrast, Ugandans clearly support democracy with 81% preferring democracy to all other political systems (Liebowitz et al., 2018:2). Public support for choosing leaders through regular, open, and honest elections has averaged 85% between 2002 and 2017. While support for democracy has been on the rise, satisfaction with how democracy is working is decreasing among the people in Uganda. Fewer than half (46%) of Ugandans say they feel fairly or very satisfied with democracy in the country.

2.2 Historical background; Makerere University

Makerere was established in 1922, as Makerere Technical School, by the British colonial administration. When it was established, it enrolled 14 student, and this marked the beginning of higher education in Uganda and the East African region (Currey, 2003:7; Ocitti, 1991). It was established to serve the British East African territories of Kenya, Tanganyika, and Uganda. Emphasis during the *colonial* phase was given to developing human resources to serve as assistants to the colonial experts (Bisaso, 2017:426).

In 1962 the idea of a national university gained ground following the granting of independence to Uganda. Indeed, "*a national university...became an obligatory sign of real independence*" (Mamdani, 2008:5). In 1963, Makerere joined with universities in Kenya and Tanzania, to form the University of East Africa (UEA). The late 1960s is known as the heydays of Mak, when it achieved an international reputation as a first-class institution. Due to nationalist pressures, the UEA was dissolved in 1970, resulting in independent, national universities in each of the three countries (Musisi, 2003:614, in Bisaso, 2017:426).

In Uganda, Mak and the entire higher education system were adversely affected by political, social, and economic upheaval from the 1970s until early 1990s. During Obote´s first term as president the state control of the university was increased, and the running of the university was subordinated to the government. The head of state was the chancellor of Mak and had full powers to appoint all senior administrators, while the minister of education had power to direct the affairs of the university "in the national interest" (Mamdani, 2003:12-13).

During the rule of Amin, arbitrary firing became common, students and academic staff were killed, and many academics fled the country. The 1970s were characterized with a hostile relationship between government and formal bodies representing staffs´ interests at Mak. In 1975 the Makerere University Academic Staff Association (MUASA) was banned. This was one of many efforts to silence protests and discussion among academics (Currey, 2003:14). By 1977, more of Uganda´s professionals lived outside of Uganda than inside (Kyemba, 1997:98). Those who remained, struggled to maintain standards with low or no pay, in an atmosphere of political menace (Sicherman, 2005:246-47; Whyte & Whyte, 2016:44).

During the 1980s the university was faced with staff shortage due to the massive brain drain following the killing and abduction of academic staff. There was shortage of basic materials

such as papers, and Mak´s main donors withdrew wholly or in part (Sicherman, 2005:107-116). Instability in staffing and finance made planning impossible. The Obote II government continued the killing of academics and cooped other staff by hiring them as ministers. Thus, from the early 1970s through 1985, fear was endemic. The Department of Political Science was particularly vulnerable because they "understood too much and might stick their necks out". Despite the prolonged crisis in these decades, the university was never closed (Sicherman, 2005:109-116).

From the late 1980s and early 1990s, African universities, Mak included, were badly affected by shifts in policy at the World Bank (WB) and IMF (Sicherman, 2005:128). The advent of neoliberal reforms by the WB gave rise to the what Mamdani calls the "Neoliberal University", resulting in, among others, curriculum reviews and the development of private higher education in Uganda (Bisaso, 2017:457). The WB tried, according to Mamdani (2008:8), to marginalize higher education as an elitist preoccupation. During the mid-1990s there were two main reforms at Mak; the first was privatization, and the second commercialization. Privatization amounted to the entry of privately sponsored fee-paying students into the university, while commercialization was understood as the process of making curricula and academic programmes respond to the market, meaning that the market defined priorities in the functioning of the public university (Mamdani, 2008:v,8).

2.3 Makerere University today

Today the stated vision of Mak is "*to be the leading institution for academic excellence and innovations in Africa*," and its mission is: "*to provide innovative teaching, learning, research, and services responsive to national and global needs*" (Luboobi, 2008:12). Three pillars have been identified; 1) learner-centeredness, 2) research-driven, and 3) knowledge transfer, partnership and networking. The university wishes to position itself as a research-driven university where research and teaching is mutually reinforcing (Luboobi, 2008:9). In 2008 the university formally shifted from a community outreach paradigm to knowledge transfer, partnerships, and networking, a shift that increased the focus on partnerships with the private sector (Bisaso, 2017:453-456).

Mak operates as many universities in Sub-Saharan Africa, under stringent resource constraints, characterized by limited government funding (Bisaso,2017:446). It has benefited

significantly from external funding awarded by development partners, mainly to support research for individual academic staff and departments (MUK, 2013:42-43). From 2002/03, private funding has exceeded government funding, and Mak´s main sources of funding today are student tuition and fees, money from development partners, and government grants. Nevertheless, the university is not able to raise enough financial resources to facilitate its stated operations (MUK, 2007b:18).

2.3.1 The CHUSS and the SoL

The Humanities and Social Sciences are some of the oldest sets of disciplines at Mak (CHUSS, 2011:2). The Faculty of Social Sciences was established in 1963, evolving from a larger combination of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) was formally established on the 1st of February 2011. It is the largest college of Mak in terms of student population, constituent units and number of courses and programmes offered (CHUSS, 2011:v; MUK, 2007a:386).

The School of Law at Mak, was established in 1968, mandated to provide education in the study of law and legal sciences, and to promote the development of scholars and advocates. At that time, however, it was called Department of Law, and was located in the Faculty of Social Sciences. In July 1970, the Department of Law became a Faculty on its own, and in 2012 it was formally established as a College although it retained the name School of Law (Mak, 2014:63).

2.3.2 The Academic Profession at Makerere University

The number of PhD holders in Uganda is estimated at 1,000. Among these, 60% are employees of Mak, while 53% have been trained at Mak (Bisaso, 2017:430-432). At Mak, the minimum requirement for employment as a lecturer for all fields (except clinical sciences and the fine arts), is a PhD. The number of full-time academic staff at Mak in 2016 were 1432, with 258 in the CHUSS and 44 in the SoL. Mak considers full time staff to be staff from the ranks of Professor to Assistant lecturer. At the CHUSS there was in 2016 29 teaching assistants or part time academic staff, while the figure at SoL was 3 (MUK,2016:31-36).

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

3. Introduction

Various scholars have argued that there is no address to appeal to in society other than that of the scientific system, if one wish to gain certain and accepted knowledge (Stehr, 2009a:23). The world today is increasingly impacted by science, and it play an increasingly important role in modern societies, remaking basic social institutions, in areas such as education, culture and the political system. Stehr (1994:6) argues that contemporary societies may be regarded as *knowledge societies* if all spheres of life are penetrated by scientific knowledge, and if authority is based on expertise and scientific knowledge. Weiler (2006:71) argues that in modern societies scientific knowledge has become "*the currency of choice in legitimating state power*".

This chapter will be sectioned in four main parts in order to provide a review of the academic literature that can help provide answers to the research questions. It starts by looking at different understandings of knowledge, before it continues with a review of the different orientations of politics and knowledge, as well as their interplay. From there, it follows a comparison of democratic and authoritarian political regimes and the role of knowledge in such societies, a review of the relationship between modernity and democracy, and academic freedom. In the end, I will position this thesis, in light of the theory presented.

3.1 Knowledge

There are many different types of knowledge and many different understandings of knowledge - thus knowledge can be conceived of and classified in many ways (Jensen et al., 2016:26). According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2018) knowledge can refer to a theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. It is about understanding someone or something, such as facts, information, descriptions or skills, which is acquired through experience or education. In this study, knowledge will be understood as *scientific knowledge produced within a university*, thus departing from and excluding other types of knowledge such as indigenous and experience-based knowledge[4].

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[4] Indigenous knowledge is defined by Emeagwali (2014:1) as "*the cumulative body of strategies, practices, techniques, tools, intellectual resources, explanations, beliefs, and values accumulated over time in a particular*

The scope of the study is further limited to understand scientific knowledge as the *social sciences* and *law*, two different types of knowledge (sometimes called different modes of knowledge) that further can be contrasted from other types of knowledge within the university. Central to this thought is that certain constructions of knowledge function in particular ways, and when asking a particular question, different modes of knowledge will provide different answers. In line with this thinking, it follows that there is no single "truth" or "objective" knowledge, although within each mode of knowledge, academics are searching for "true" knowledge, and within each, there are different ways of validating this "truth" (Nygren, 1999, in Jensen, et al., 2016:30).

Two notions of knowledge are used in this study. First is the traditional understanding, that knowledge is something *cognitive*, and second, that knowledge can be understood as the "*capacity to act*". This latter understanding, however, will be problematized since the understanding of a social phenomenon, which scientific knowledge provide, does not always lead to changed behaviour for actors in society.

3.1.1 Cognitive knowledge

Scientific knowledge is by Jensen et al. (2016:29) understood as "*derived through systematic, analytical inquiry, but which is also spatial*". By spatial, it is meant that knowledge is partial and linked to the contexts in which it is created (Nightingale, 2003, in Jensen et al., 2016:30). They argue that it is situated, that knowledge cannot be understood in isolation from where it is produced, and that knowledge always is from "somewhere" (Jensen et al., 2016:26; Koch & Weingart, 2016:21). By this, it is meant that even though knowledge is thought to have universal value, the production of this knowledge always takes place somewhere, in different places and in different cultures. This context and specific place, will interact with the knowledge being produced. By this understanding, scientific knowledge is not stable but rather mobile and varies from place to place (Jensen et al., 2016:27).

3.1.2 Capacity to act

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locality, without interference and impositions of external hegemonic forces". By Jensen et al. (2016) this is understood as local experience-based knowledge.

Stehr (2009a:20) understands scientific knowledge as *"the capacity to act"*, and as the possibility of "*setting something in motion*". Stehr and Grundman (2012:32) argue that knowledge should be understood as the first step toward action, since knowledge is in a position to change reality. They argue that knowledge in itself is not (already) action, but that knowledge can lead to social actions, at the same time as it is the result of social action. Rather than understanding knowledge as power, as in Francis Bacon´s notion "Scientia est potential" (*knowledge is power*), they think of knowledge as *potential* power.

Millstone (2015:52-53) argues that the claim that "knowledge is power" is slightly misleading. He argues that although knowledge may be necessary for power, it is not sufficient. If scientific knowledge and expertise is to contribute to changes in society, such as for example democratization, then knowledge and the exercise of expertise needs to be in the public domain. This is because power often have been exercised by controlling the creation, diffusion and portrayals of scientific evidence and knowledge. Further, he states that deliberations behind closed doors often conceal the fact that power is exercised in scientific-seeming deliberations. Thus, he argues that transparency is a condition for both scientific and political legitimacy (Millstone, 2015:52-53). In´t Veld (2010a:2) also find that scientific knowledge by its very structure never directly relates to action, because it is fragmented, partial and conditional.

3.1.3 Academic Profession

The academic profession is sometimes called the "*profession of professions*" (Clark, 1987:1-3,373). The academic profession consists of many professions, and a loosely coupled array of varied interests (Clark, 1987:396). For long time, it has trained members of other leading professions, such as medicine and law, and in recent times, it has also accommodated many would-be professions that have come to it for training and legitimation. It trains the members of a number of sectors outside of academia, and its ideas speak both to politics, to social order, the economy and culture (Clark, 1987:1-3).

This profession is rooted in a large number of disciplines that are based in the academic system itself, constituting of among other the natural and social sciences, the humanities and the arts. Therefore, it consists of many disciplines and many professions. The profession has great internal variety, varying between continents and countries (Clark, 1987:1-3). What

makes it unique, is that it is the only profession which have monopoly on its own reproduction (Halvorsen, 2017). This is among the reasons why the profession is considered to be one of the most influential in shaping other professions, and Perkin (1969, in Enders, 2006:5) describe the profession as the "*key profession … the profession that educated the other professions*".

Clark (1987:382) argue that the academic profession is qualitatively different from other professions because it is inherently fragmented, rather than integrated by professionalism. It is fragmented because professional attachment forms first around the disciplines. What integrates, on the other hand, is a common understanding of a normative order. Academics in different disciplines are committed to the advancement of knowledge, they respect research and they share procedural expectations, and basic academic codes of intellectual honesty and the pursuit of truth (Clark, 1987:377).

The profession is shaped by many social settings, the prominent among them being; 1) *national context* (where the strongest influence is by government), 2) *discipline* (the profession takes different shape in physics than in political science, in biology than in law etc.), and 3) *institutions* (whether it is community college or research university). These three contexts interact with and shape one another in various ways (Clark, 1987:1-8; Enders, 2006:5-6).

3.2 Knowledge-politics relations
3.2.1 Differing orientations

In accordance with Weber´s (1968) account of science and politics as two different spheres, this study is based on the assumption that there is a fundamental difference between scientific knowledge and politics, and that science and politics adhere to different operational logics. Maasen & Weingart (2005:4) understand the relationship between science and politics as one between "*two differentiated subsystems with fundamentally different codes of operation*". The logics of politics and science do not coincide. They can both diverge and be contradictory given their different orientations and values (Koch & Weingart, 2016:7-8).

Science is seen as a subsystem of society that primarily adheres to a code of *truth*, while politics is primarily guided by a code of *power* (Maasen & Weingart, 2005:4). Ultimately,

science should produce truth, while political decisions should safeguard power. The mode of politics is oriented towards the closing of public conflict through compromise. For this purpose, knowledge is used strategically. For politics, the truth of knowledge is not the goal in itself, but rather a mean to legitimize the decisions. The mode of science is on the other hand oriented toward the continuation of systematic knowledge production, to learning, and to questioning of already existing knowledge (Maasen & Weingart, 2005:4).

In a democracy, politicians are legitimated by their voters, and they should represent the interest and preferences of the voters. Academics, on the other hand, are legitimated by their specialized knowledge, and are supposed to provide answers to factual problems (Koch & Weingart, 2016:7-8).

Other differences are related to language, time planning and attention span. According to Kurth and Glasmacher (2011:271-272), academics tend to use a technical and academic language that can be difficult for non-scientists to understand, while politicians often speak in a simplified and popular manner. For academics, the acquisition of specialized knowledge and expertise over a long period of time is of highest importance. The attention span of academics is long and the acquisition of knowledge is accumulative. In contrast, politicians devote only a small amount of their attention to a particular topic – they need information quickly to deal with an ever-changing society (Kurth & Glasmacher, 2011:271-272).

In table 1 the different orientations of the mode of politics and the mode of science (social sciences and law) are presented, focusing on their different norms and values, activity and action, purpose and aims, legitimacy, time horizon and planning, and language and communication. The table is based on the theoretical contributions presented so far.

Table 1: Differing orientations in politics and science

	POLITICS	SCIENCE
NORMS and VALUES	Politics is primarily guided by the code of *power*	- Social science aspiration: (universally) valid knowledge about human societies. - Social science primarily adheres to a code of *truth,* while law primarily adheres to the code of *justice*
PURPOSE and AIMS	- Ultimately political decisions should safeguard power; reproduction of power and authority through problem solving and the production of symbols of comprise and of belonging	- Ultimately science should produce truth - Support the need for differentiated and specialized knowledge, reflect on the consequences for social development of this differentiation and specialization

	- Crisis management and popular support takes center stage	
LEGITIMACY	Politicians are legitimated by popular voters	Academics are legitimated by their specialized knowledge
ACTIVITY and ACTION	- Oriented toward the closing of public conflict through compromise, maintaining power and decision-making - Are supposed to represent the interests and preferences of their respective voters	- Knowledge production, teaching and learning, questioning of existing knowledge. - Are supposed to provide answer to factual problems
TIME HORIZON and PLANNING	Devote a small amount of their attention to a particular topic; need information quickly to deal with an ever-changing world	The acquisition of specialized knowledge and expertise over a long period of time; the attention span is long and the acquisition of knowledge is accumulative
LANGUAGE and COMMUNICATION	Simplified language in a popular manner	Technical language

Adopted from: Maasen & Weingart (2005), Weiler (2006), Heilbron et al. (2008), Halvorsen (2010a; 2010c), Kurth & Glashmacher (2011), Koch & Weingart (2016)

3.2.2 Interlinks

Despite the different orientations of knowledge and politics, the relations between them are not a "one-way-street", but rather characterized by interdependencies and by dialectic relations. The different modes are partly competing, but also partly complementary (Jasanoff, 2004, in Turnhout, 2010:25-26). In a modern, democratic society knowledge and politic are mixed in and depend on each other in various ways, despite ideals to keep them apart (Halvorsen, 2010a). As part of the process of *scientification* of politics, political decisions and statements are based on knowledge, and politicians are asking for knowledge about the society they are trying to govern. Academics should deliver high-quality knowledge for politicians to use when they make their judgements. A society based on scientific knowledge is a precondition for the growth of the modern society and its institutions (Wittrock et al., 1991; Halvorsen 2010a; Halvorsen 2010b).

Koch and Weingart (2016:7-8) argue that it is the ever-increasing complexity of modern societies, governing, administration and regulation that has led to the discourse that policy-makers depend on academics, who provide expertise for the formulation and execution of politics. For the most part of a century, an almost axiomatic belief has guided modern, democratic societies in their attempts to incorporate science into public policy. This is that scientific knowledge is the best possible foundation for public decisions across ever-widening policy domains. In this way, science comes closest to the ideal that knowledge should *speak truth to power*, and most areas of public policy are claimed to be based on scientific knowledge (Jasanoff, 2011:19; Miller, 1999:1240).

The advisory process is, in an ideal situation, a collective duty of science and politics (Kurth & Glasmacher, 2011:271-272). Government seek counsel from committees, commissions and think thanks of various kinds, as well as from individuals and institutions deemed to have relevant expertise, such as academics and the research university. Advise can take different forms, depending on the credentials of the advisers, their relations to governmental institutions, the issues they address, and the time horizon over which their recommendations might be expected to take effect (Owens, 2011:73). Academics participate in policy-making in many ways, as educators, theorists, analysts, legislators, implementers, evaluators and critics. They influence political and administrative decision-making both as participants and as providers of reliable scientific knowledge (Tarschys & Lackapelle, 2010:293).

According to Weiler (2006:67-71) there is a strong reciprocal relationship between knowledge and power. It is reciprocal since both power and knowledge require legitimation – knowledge legitimates power, and conversely, knowledge is legitimated by power. Both must have a claim to credibility, but they also require recognition. Knowledge derives its validity both from social, political and cultural circumstances, as well as the legitimacy inherent in the conceptions of knowledge itself. When political decisions are based on scientific knowledge, they strive to rely upon, and legitimate themselves with "true" knowledge (Maasen & Weingart, 2005:4; Weiler, 2006:67-71).

The relations between science and politics are not constant, and they are changing over time. Through their actions, academics and policy-makers establish new institutions and mechanisms for linking knowledge and politics (Wittrock et al., 1991:45,75). Despite the many interactions that occur between politics and knowledge in a knowledge society, this does not lead to an intermingling or "blurring" of the two subsystems. Rather, as Maasen & Weingart (2005:4) argue, one can understand the nature of the relationship between them as one of "coupling". For example, when decisions are based on scientific knowledge, they strive to rely upon and legitimate themselves with "true" knowledge, yet for politics, the truth of the knowledge is not the goal in itself but a mean to legitimize decisions. In this way the mutual references of the systems have consequences for both of them.

The table below provide a summary of the interlinks between knowledge (social science and law) and politics that are common in modern democratic societies. The table is based on the theoretical contributions presented so far.

Table 2: Interlinks and dependencies between science and politics in democratic societies

	Interlinks between	
	Politics	**Scientific**
Policy-making	Politics makes knowledge-based decisions, and political statements and policies make references to knowledge Knowledge is used strategically for closing of public conflict. Cannot use power without referring to scientific knowledge Expertise: Policy-makers depend on academic expertise to legitimate political decisions Advisory process: The advisory process us ideally a collective duty of science and politics	Scientific knowledge is expected to feed into policy making. Research findings and theories do percolate through the public and media, and influence both policy debates and decisions Contributing to the governance of complex problems: shaping agenda, defining issues, identifying options and choice of action, monitor impact and outcomes Expertise: Academics provide expertise for the formulation and execution of politics. Agenda setting: Setting issues on the public agenda, and assessing their priority
Legitimation	Politics is increasingly seeking security and legitimation in scientific knowledge Political opponents use research in debates (because they demand rational justification for the political position taken)	Knowledge derives a great deal of its legitimacy from the state and decisions made by it; for example, decisions on who should enjoy public funding The social sciences provide interpretation of problem constellations and legitimation for policy proposals
Democracy and modernization	The "social question" can only be solved through systematic and empirical analysis of the underlying social issues	Facilitate to an optimal democratic discourse Academics can open up space for public discourse regarding societal values, promote responsible citizenship and civic virtue, and foster an understanding of differences among groups in society Social scientists and those with legal training play and important role in the practice of democracy by *"integrating substantive legal rights, technical legal procedural requirements and greater flexibility in social and legal problem solving"**
Translation and bridging	Collaboration, communication and mediation between academics and policy-makers is required to produce scientifically valid, socially accountable and politically relevant knowledge	Scientific knowledge is not per se speaking unmediated to power; professors and scientific experts build the bridge between science and politics

Adopted from: Wittrock et al. (1991), Miller (1999), Weiler (2004), Menkel-Meadow* (2005:368), Maasen & Weingart (2005), Weiler (2006), Bloom et al. (2006), Furstenberg (2010), Halvorsen (2010), Halvorsen (2010c), Martinelli (2010), ISSC (2010) and Kurth & Glasmacher (2011).

3.3 Political System and the Role of Knowledge

A political regime can be characterized by its politics and under what kind of rules and regulations the regime´s policies are being developed and implemented. A regime can only exist if it is able to acquire and keep power, as power is the medium of politics (Halvorsen, 2010a:244). A large number of rival hypotheses explain the emergence and persistence of democratic regimes, and the notion of democracy hold many definitions. This study is based on Sørensen´s (2010:422) definition that "*democracy is a form of government where the people rule*". Democracy refers to a polity which shape power, spaces and experiences, as well as to the interaction between citizens necessary to create a common will to pass a binding judgement. In this way, a political judgement is seen as a common activity (Brown, 2015:175-176; Halvorsen 2010a:250).

Further, Lipset (1959) define democracy as:

> "*A political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials. It is a social mechanism for the resolution of the problem of societal decision-making among conflicting interest groups which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence these decisions through their ability to choose among alternative contenders for political office*"

In addition to this feature of a democracy, another important characteristic of a democratic political system is a legal-rational bureaucracy. Legal-rational authority was by Weber (1968:215) understood as the dominant mode of organization within modern societies, where authority was understood as legitimate power. Weber suggested that legal-rational authority is the chief characteristic of the bureaucratic organization in modern society (Heywood, 2004:130). This form of legitimate domination operates through the exercise of a body of clearly defined rules; in effect, legal-rational authority attaches entirely to the office and its formal powers. It arises out of the respect of the rule of law in that power is clearly and legally defined, ensuring that those who exercise power do so within a framework of law (Weber, 1968:215-16; Heywood, 2004:135).

Weber (1978:1028-29) contrasted the legal-rational authority with patrimonialism, which he characterized as follows;

> "*The patrimonial office lacks above all the bureaucratic separation of the "private" and the "official" sphere. For the political administration, too, is treated as a purely personal affair of the ruler, and political power is considered part of his personal*

> *property… The office and the exercise of public authority serve the ruler and the official on which the office was bestowed; they do not serve impersonal purposes*"

Weber´s original point of reference were societies that were traditional in the sense that the authority of the ruler stemmed from divine or other such non-secular forces (Hyde, 2013:98-99). Despite the disappearance of patrimonial systems of rule in many African countries along the lines of colonialism, the norms associated with such systems survived among many leaders of the new nation-states after independence. This gave rise to the notion of *neo-patrimonialism,* which like the former assumes the presence of personal rule, in which the authority of the leader, who is beyond question, is personally in control of running the affairs of the state (Erdman & Engel, 2006, Hyden, 2013:98-99).

The notion of neo-patrimonialism is derived from Weber´s concept of patrimonialism and legal-rational bureaucracy and appears as a hybrid of the two ideal types of domination. Neopatrimonial rule takes place within the framework of a legal-rational bureaucracy where formal structures and rules exists. In practice, however, the separation of the private and public is hard to observe. Patrimonial practices penetrate the legal-rational system, twisting the logic, function and effect of the legal-rational system (Bratton & van de Walle, 1997:63; Erdmann & Engel, 2006:17-19).

This highly personalized form of rule is marginally restrained by formalized systems of rule and bureaucratic institutions since the checks and balance that are supposed to make the rule of law and bureaucratic institutions of government work optimally cannot be applied. This type of rule is shaped less by institutions or impersonal social forces and more by personal authorities and power (Jackson & Rosberg, 1984:421-425). The system is composed of the privileged and powerful and is favoring the rules and his allies and clients. Both government and the administration are permeated with patronage and corruption, and the norms that affect their actions are rooted in friendship, kindship and networks. These norms end up undermining the rules of state institutions, since constitutional rules and administrative regulations can be evaded. The system is characterized by uncertainty, dependency and rewards, and sometimes threats and fear (Jacoson & Rosberg, 1984:421-425; Hyden, 2013).

3.3.1 Modernity and democracy

Stehr and Mast (2010:37) argue that an understanding of the links between democracy and scientific knowledge should be embedded in a theory of modern society, one that accounts for how shifts in distribution of power within and among major social institutions accompany structural changes in society. In Western Europe, power have throughout history gradually transformed from being anchored in informal and personal networks of power, to legal and formal networks, and formal power linked to the rule of law (Halvorsen, 2010a:244-245). During this process of modernization, the ability of a society to use power for social transformation was strengthened.

For Halvorsen (2010c:217), modernity and democracy are related developments. Modernity can be understood as a concept used to indicate social changes and the political will that challenges tradition and political forces resisting change. The core idea of democracy is that power is shared in society, and that processes of democratization increase power sharing. Halvorsen (2010c:219-222) argues, that unless power is spread throughout society, the idea that academics will contribute to modernization and democratization is an illusion. Democratization can be understood as processes of change towards more democratic forms of rule. Although these processes might not follow prescript societal laws, they may encompass the breakdown of a nondemocratic regime and an establishment of democratic procedures, a democratic order and a democratic political culture (Sørensen, 2010:445).

According to Wittrock et al. (1991:1-12) the social sciences in Europe in the late 19th and early 20th were constituted as part of a modernization of these countries. The social sciences provided a base for the rational and enlightened ordering of societal affairs, and they were preoccupied with the "social question"[5]. They had an important impact on the organization of government through different analytical techniques and advisory bodies, and different parliamentary bodies and governmental commissions based political actions on scientific knowledge and research. Gradually parliamentary bodies and governmental commissions came to embrace the notion that political actions should be based on extensive, systematic and empirical analysis of underlying social problems (Wittrock et al.,1991:12).

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[5] Understood as "*concerns about the wide-ranging effects of the industrial and urban civilization that was rapidly changing living and working conditions for large parts of the population in many European countries during the 19th century*" (Wittrock et al.,1991:12).

Hyden (2013) argues that states in Africa are still weak and soft[6], with power based within networks of affection[7]. Thus, a number of states in the Sub-Saharan Africa, have not yet developed state-structures emphasizing the formal aspects of social organizations. History in Africa shows that modernity does not create political democracy (Halvorsen, 2010c:219). Rather, it creates the condition for democratization by allowing the growth of a more *differentiated* society. Within a modern society, many sources of power evolve. A plural society relies on a variety of sources of influence and power, all of which may influence common decisions, but it also have degrees of independence to pursue own goals (Halvorsen, 2010c:219).

Helle (2017:52,60) classify Uganda as a relatively typical case of a hegemonic electoral regime. It can also be understood as a hybrid regime - between democracy and autocracy, although a hybrid regime is a different regime form vis-á-vis autocracy and democracy. The defining feature of hybrid regimes like Uganda, is uncertainty about institutional processes and institutional outcomes. According to Przeworski (1991:12, in Helle, 2017a:62) uncertainty can mean that actors are not able to predict what can happen; that they know what is possible but not what is likely, or that they know what is possible and likely but not what will happen. He argues that democracies are characterized by the last; uncertainty about outcomes but not about the procedures for reaching the outcome, while in non-democracies there are certainty about outcomes, but uncertainty about procedures (Helle, 2017a:62-63).

3.3.2 The Role of Knowledge

In democratic societies research findings and theories do percolate through the public and the media, and influence both policy debates and decisions (ISSC, 2010:318). In this way, knowledge and politics depend on each other. Politics makes knowledge-based decisions, policies make references to knowledge, and politics are legitimated by, and seek legitimation from scientific knowledge (Halvorsen, 2010a:236). In modern societies, science thus have an extensive influence on the production of socially relevant knowledge (Stehr, 2009a:23).

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[6] The state is weak when it fails to shape society, and when it is rather shaped by society. It is soft when officials do not act in accordance with formal rules and thus does not provide a measure of certainty as to what can be expected (Hyden, 2013:71).

[7] Networks of affection, or rather the Economy of Affection (Hyden, 2013:74) can be understood as a social logic. The core principles are "*1) who you know is more important than what you know, 2) sharing personal wealth is more rewarding than investing in economic ventures, and 3) a helping hand today generate returns tomorrow*". This logic centers on direct, face-to-face reciprocities to get things done. Therefore, relations of power are predominately personal and informal, and dominates the way formal institutions operates.

Moreover, in democratic societies scientific knowledge is speaking truth to power. This means that academics independently conduct research on a matter, and politicians subsequently decide how to act upon that knowledge. Scientific "fact"-finding is seen as standing apart from and prior to politics, and scientific facts are separated from political values. Science establishes the quality and integrity of its findings on its own terms before political judgements come into play (Jasanoff, 2011:19).

Deviation from this practice can convert science into an instrument of politics. With loss of autonomy, scientific knowledge, it is though, cannot deliver "objective" knowledge about the functioning of society (Jasanoff, 2011:19). The role of scientific knowledge is to speak the truth to power, and academics has as an important duty to serve the public in general, and therefore no societal interest in particular (Halvorsen, 2010a:238,248). If knowledge, however, is shaped for political purposes, and if academics see their role as servants to dictatorial regimes, the kernel value of truth telling is undermined. In modern societies by contrast, scientific knowledge cannot be contested by politics (Stehr, 2009a:23).

In a neo-patrimonial society, the political elite can use the state for their purpose due to lack of power sharing in society, control the state´s use of force and dictate the actions of many institutions in society, the University included (Halvorsen, 2010a:246-247). This has consequences for knowledge production, research and academic freedom. Hyden (2013:101) argues that a political system of personal rule is not a system that responds to public demands and support by means of public policies and actions. Nor is it a system in which the ruler aims at policy goals and steers the governmental apparatus by information feedback and learning (Jackson & Rosberg, 1982:18, in Hyden, 2013:101). When political control is in the hands of the few as in a neo-patrimonial society, this can be used to control the research university and the academics working within it.

3.3.3 Academic Freedom
Ideally, academics have academic freedom to develop and select topics for their own research, and they should pursue this path despite criticism and contradictory forces. Knowledge mediation and creation has academic freedom as a precondition, since knowledge then can develop protected from external pressure (Halvorsen, 2010a). A research university needs

autonomy from particular interests in society such as the state and political leaders, since it is the institution that should protect and promote academic freedom. Individual academics should have the right to pursue knowledge and select the subject of research and teaching by their own, without fear of persecution for either political, religious or social orthodoxy (Moja & Cloete, 1995:52). Academic freedom includes the political freedom of academics both inside and outside of the university (Shils, 1991, in Altbach, 2011:4). Political freedom inside the university amount to the freedom of academics´ own political, economic and social beliefs in teaching and research as long as they make clear that their exposition of their views is distinct from their analysis of the facts or their exposition of a theory about those facts. Political freedoms outside of the university include the freedom of association and political activities, and representation in political parties (Shils, 1991, in Altbach, 2011:4).

While Bergan (2002:49, in Karran, 2009:276-77) claims that academic freedom is the heart of a democratic society, Manan (2000:257, in Karran, 2009:277) argues that the scope of academic freedom is wide in a society that has a high regard for knowledge and universal values, whereas the scope in authoritarian and autocratic societies is often narrow.

3.4 This study

While politics is understood as the struggle for power, scientific knowledge is understood as *knowledge derived through systematic, analytical inquiry, but which is also spatial*, and as the possibility of "setting something in motion". This, however, is not the same as the possibility of making use of the capability of taking action, since characteristics or constraints of a particular situation for taking action – which vary from context to context – are either relatively open or unchangeable[8] (Stehr, 2009a:21).

As Stehr (1994:6) have argued, a society may be regarded as a knowledge society if all spheres of life are penetrated by scientific knowledge, and where authority is based on expertise and scientific knowledge. The academic profession shares a common understanding of a normative order; academics are committed to the advancement of knowledge and the pursuit of the truth. The profession will, depending on historical and national contexts (such as political history) have its own characteristic ways of affecting the rest of society (Clark,

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[8] A situation can be conceived of as open if it is controllable and if it can actually be influenced (Stehr, 2009a:22).

1987:377). Since linkages between knowledge and power are both intimate and consequential, there is a need of arriving at a better understanding of such linkages and relationships; how they are related, and how they depend on each other (Weiler, 2006:74; Halvorsen, 2010a:254).

The theoretical framework provided in this chapter is based on literature about politics and science in western, modern and democratic societies. This study will thus bring attention to these topics in a different political context. It aims at contributing to the debate of the role of social science and law in relation to the state in an authoritarian regime and provide an understanding of how academics within these disciplines are facing constraints by the state, and potentially contributing to enabling democratic developments in society. This study contributes by untangle - from the perspectives of the academics - illegitimate methods used by the regime to control and undermine academic research and activities, as well as clarifying the intricate and uneasy relationship between the two spheres.

By bringing in perspectives from Hyden, this study suggests that the role of academics in relation to politics and in democratization processes are highly determined by the role and structure of the state. Therefore, the study will analyze the relationship from a perspective which place questions of power, influence and struggle at the center. Greenway et al. (1992:239, in Miller, 1999:1241) argue that many studies tend to foreclose questions of power, but that one need to be sensitive to the way in which some issues come to be defined as important and put on the public agenda, when others are not.

Thus, the relations between knowledge and politics has to be understood in light of the framework of a neo-patrimonial political system, where the governing mode has patrimonial features (Rothstein & Varraich, 2017:92; Makara, 2010; Mbazira, 2016b; Kamp, 2010). Halvorsen (2010c:216) finds that the Ugandan society and Mak is caught between processes of democratization and processes leading to dictatorship. Instead of power being exercised following prescript laws, it is rather exercised according to the personal preferences of the president and the ruling party. This model of government conflicts with the ideal type exercised by modern democratic rule-of-law states and has, as will be presented in the following chapters, implications for the knowledge-politics relations in the country.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4. Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology used in the study on the knowledge-politics relations in Uganda. It starts by presenting the research project where this study took part within. Second, it makes an argument for why a qualitative approach to the case study was considered to add dept to the analysis, and it presents the analytical strategy the study draws on, before describing the case. Third, it describes the various elements in the data collection process; the field work, the data sources, the unit of analysis and the interview guide, how access to informants were gained, and finally ethical considerations. Then the steps of analysis are presented, and finally the limitations of the study is assessed and reflected on.

4.1 NORHED Research Project

During the last 2 years, I have been a research assistant in an ongoing NORHED[9] research project, at MISR[10] at Mak, called *Building and reflecting on Interdisciplinary PhD Studies for Higher Education*. This project aims at studying and understanding the academic profession at Makerere, in relation to the administration at the university, the broader society, the economy and the political system. In a broader sense, it tries to understand the academic profession in times of neoliberalism. This project has worked as an exploratory phase for my own master thesis, as the topic and focus of the two studies are closely related. I have, however, enjoyed full freedom in choosing my own direction for this study, including the freedom to decide research questions, interview guide, theoretical framework and other decisions along the way.

4.2 Qualitative Approach

In order to provide answers to the research questions, an important decision guiding the work with the thesis was to decide on which methodological approach to use. I considered the qualitative research approach to be most sensible for my study, rather than the quantitative approach or other strategies available in social research. One important reasons underlying my choice was that the problem addressed in this study is socially complex, and because the work of the academics cannot be separated from the institutional, national or historical context in which they are embedded (Halvorsen, 2010). Since the quantitative approach assume that the

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[9] The Norwegian Programme for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development
[10] Makerere Institute of Social Research

same set of causes produce the same results, often irrespective of context, this approach was not considered suitable to find answers to the research questions (Creswell, 1994).

Drawing on Creswell´s (1994:5) ontological assumption about the nature of reality, this study understands reality as subjective and multiple as seen by the researcher and informants in a study. It entails somebody´s opinion or feelings rather than facts or evidence and is thus multiple. Due to this, reality cannot be understood as either objective or singular, nor as apart from the researcher (Maxwell, 2011). When interacting with the academics at Mak during the interviews, it was important to bear in mind that the relationship of the researcher to the researched was not necessarily independent. With this in mind, I tried not to reveal my personal opinions on the topics in question during the interviews, since this could affect they answers of the informants or make them unwilling to participate.

4.2.1 Interpreting and Understanding vs. Causal Explanations

According to Weiler (2006:65) there has occurred a shift in the tension between e*xplaining* and *understanding* in the analysis of social life. Winch (1958:94, in Weiler 2006:65) argue:

> *"The central concepts which belong to our understanding of social life are incompatible with concepts central to the activity of scientific prediction. When we speak of the possibility of scientific prediction of social developments… we literally do not understand what we are saying."*

The driving force behind this turnaround is as Bratberg (2014:13) sees it about a weakened belief in the lawfulness in social behavior as well as the ability of researchers to conduct objective observations. He argues that both the researcher and informants are minded subjects with the opportunity to shape their surroundings. This means that the social sciences are based on shared reflection between participants, and not relationships between the observer and objects. Social science research has thus gained increased awareness of the unique and contextual (Bratberg, 2014:14).

Given the qualitative nature of the study, attempts have not been given to explicitly define independent and dependent variables. The aim is to understand rather than explain the relationship between knowledge and politics in Uganda. Explaining, based on variables, is more in line with the thinking and structuring of quantitative studies. This study does not seek general description or looking for general causal relationships, but builds on the interpretative

social science tradition, which aim at interpretation of actors, their ideas and intentions (Bratberg, 2014: 13).

Østerberg (1993) argues that all people understand more or less about social life. Thus, the task is to interpret social relationships in ways that go beyond this everyday understanding. What sociology is trying to deepen is this understanding, make it more coherent and put it in the context of other knowledge. Thus, I draw on the approach of *interpretative sociology* when trying to understand, interpret and describe the case in this study. It is based on principles of social constructivism - that the social world is fundamentally subjective and depends on being interpreted to be understood, that objective observation is considered unrealistic and the researcher's task is to understand how actors understand themselves and their situation (and thus indirectly why they act as they do) (Bratberg, 2014: 14-15).

Interpretation will here be construed as something other than a causal explanation. The reason is that society does not follow laws in the way that the natural science does (Østerberg, 1993). What happens in social life cannot be explained by sociological laws, which also enables us to derive what will happen in the future. Even though much of what is happening in social life is as expected, it still appears something new and unpredictable. A systematic statistical analysis is thus not the only road to truth in the social sciences. The aim of the study is inference, e.g., to infer beyond the immediate data collected, to something broader that is not directly observed (King et al., 1994:8) – to understand, interpret and describe the relationship between knowledge and politics, and how academics contribute to democratization in Uganda. Considering these aspects, I decided to use the qualitative research approach in this inquiry.

4.2.2 Case Study – What is this a Case of?

A case study is defined by Ragin (1987) as "*an in-depth multifaceted investigation, using a qualitative research method*" to examine a single social phenomenon. Yin (1994:13) sees it as an empirical inquiry which investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-time context when the boundary between the phenomena and the context is not clearly evident. A case study can be understood to be time specific, contextual and particularistic.

The case study research design was critical for my study since it offered the opportunity to explain *why* certain outcomes might happen, rather than simply identifying the outcomes. It

also made it possible to obtain a holistic picture of the problem rather than dealing with isolated factors (Quddus, 2007:24-25). Since the objective of this study is not to make generalization about relationships among variables, but to understand specific outcomes in an empirically defined case, the case-oriented approach is useful in this study. The outcome that this case study is trying to understand, is the knowledge-politics relationship in Uganda as it unfolds between the CHUSS and the SoL at Mak and the political system. The approach is more sensitive to complexity and historical specificity, and it is more concerned with actual events, human agency and processes than are variable-oriented studies (Ragin, 2014:ix). Appreciating complexity in this study is given precedence over the goal of achieving generality, as in line with the case-oriented approach (Ragin, 2014:55).

The case study can be understood as a case about the relationship between academia and politics. It is a case of the *academic profession*, one which investigates the relationship between the academic profession (the knowledge dimension) and politics. The case is one of the interactions and interplay between the academics within the CHUSS and the SoL, and the political regime, and how the contributions of academics, and attempts at political development, is understood, described and reflected on.

The case-oriented approach has allowed investigating the relationship between the academic profession and politics in Uganda in a context-specific and holistic manner. Throughout the study, the case has been examined as a whole, not as collection of variables. The different parts that make up the case of the academic profession at Mak are understood in relation to each other, considered together as composing a single situation (Ragin, 2014:52).

One of the advantages of the case study approach has been that it allowed for a close collaboration between me and the informants, while enabling the informants to tell their stories. Through these stories, the informants were able to describe their views of reality, and this enable me to better understand their actions (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, in Baxter & Jack, 2008:545).

4.3 Data Collection

One of the strengths of the case study approach, is that is allows to use a variety of data sources as part of the investigation. In this study, I have used both face-to-face interviews and

documents as sources of data, in order to reach the broadest understanding as possible of the knowledge-politics relations in Uganda.

Because this study aimed to explore the relationship and interplay between knowledge and politics in Uganda, as well as the impact of academics on democracy, what were needed were the academics own understandings of the issues at stake. With regard to the issue of politics, the focus of research was not on the technical content of politics as such, but rather on the processes through which they (policies etc.) were developed. Furthermore, the issue of the academics own understanding of their *role* as academics, and in relation to the political system was important to investigate. In order to reconstruct the latter, I approached the academics as the decisive actors, and used interviews as the main method of investigation. Interviews constituted an important mean of data collection for my research, since I could map the participants´ personal views on events that they had experienced (Quddus, 2007:29-31).

I did two field trips to Makerere University, Uganda. The first was during October and November 2016, where I conducted 16 interviews with members of the academic profession at Mak and collected secondary sources such as official reports from Mak and newspaper articles. The second took place during March and April 2017, where I conducted further four interviews, two with academics at Mak, and two with journalists working for Daily Monitor Uganda. During this trip I continued the collection of secondary sources, as some of these were only possible to obtain when present at Mak.

A feedback seminar (FS) was held in April 2017 where I presented a paper with preliminary findings and interpretations for feedback and comments. In May 2017 I conducted 2 interviews, one with an academic from Mak at that time located in Bergen, and one human right activist in Kampala, via Skype[11]. Furthermore, several informal discussions with both academics, administrative staff and PhD candidates at Mak during the field work gave me extensive insight into the case in study. Finally, being a former student at Mak have given me first-hand experience on the ground at the university which have guided my work with the thesis and enabled me to get access to informants as well as secondary sources that would otherwise be difficult.

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[11] See Appendix 1 – Table 8 for list of all of the interviews conducted

Within the NORHED project the four researchers have conducted a total of 85 interviews. Although 59 of these was conducted at other Colleges than the CHUSS and the SoL, they were important in order to understand the work situation of the academic profession at Mak generally, and in order to see differences between the Colleges. Thus, all of these interviews guided the work with this thesis.

4.3.1 Unit of Analysis and the Sample

There are no fixed rules for determining the ideal number and types of respondents in a case study based on interviews (van Thiel, 2007:100). I used purposive selection of respondents for my study. This is a method that, in this case, involved focusing on people within the relevant academic disciplines, with relevant information about politics and democratization in Uganda.

The unit of analysis is the individual academics within two Colleges at Mak – the College of Humanities and Social Science[12] (CHUSS), and the School of Law[13] (SoL). In a Ugandan context, the sample consists of a fairly homogeneous group of interviewees even though they vary regarding academic discipline and position, education, age, sex, etc. The academics are subdivided in 5 categories along the lines of the departments to which they belong, which are:

1. Academics within *Sociology & Anthropology*
2. Academics within *Political Science & Public administration*
3. Academics within *History, Archaeology & Organizational Studies*
4. Academics at *Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR)*
5. Academics within the *School of Law*

The academics´ particular knowledge and interpretation of the social situation were of relevance for reconstructing the social objects that I wasn´t able to observe directly. The aim during the study was to access the academics *personal* experiences, views, beliefs, values, reflections and interpretations, and they gave the researcher a unique insight into the field.

4.3.2 Feedback Seminar

After the first round of interviews was conducted, the FS of approximately two hours was conducted to explore the academics view and experiences on our working papers and

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[12] See Appendix 6 Table 3 for structure of the CHUSS
[13] See Appendix 7 Table 4 for structure of the SoL

preliminary impressions in the NORHED project. It was open to all the informants who took part in interviews during the first round. Despite confirmation from 17 interviewees, the FS was in the end arranged with seven academics including male and female academics. Among them were two of the informants I had previously interviewed, and further two were working within the relevant Departments for my study. The seminar was recorded in accordance with the expressed consent of every participant.

4.3.3 External Informants: Journalists and Human Rights Lawyer

The journalists and the human rights lawyer make up the group of external informants that was interviewed for the study. This was so since they were not the unit of analysis. Rather, they were chosen because they had relevant information and knowledge about Mak in general, and about activities of academics within some of the departments in particular. Including them in the sample was instructive insofar as their knowledge and potentially contrasting or confirming views of the role of academics was an important aspect of the research. Further, their assessment of the relations between academia and politics in Uganda, and what informal practices and power that had relevance for such relations, was especially important. Moreover, they provided useful comments on preliminary findings, and impressions that came up during the first field trip.

4.3.4 Politicians

Since this case study is a case of the academic profession at Mak, it does not cover the views of politicians. To exclude politicians and other policy-makers might be seen as a limitation, as the aim of the study was to understand the relationship and interplay between politics and knowledge. It was initially thought that doing interviews with government officials and members of parliament (MPs) would be of value to the study since they would represent the political dimension from that angle. Field work in Uganda, however, is hard to plan and predict in detail, and the time constraint, as well as difficulties with gaining access to these actors, made me rethink the sample of the study. Based on considerations of time and access, I decided to focus on the academics, and only include some few journalists and a human right lawyer with relevant knowledge as the external informants. However, it covers analysis of news articles where their views (formal and informal) can be understood.

Other considerations that came up in regards to using politicians as informants, were the issue and possibility of *socially desirable answer* (Van Thiel, 2007:52). Given the political context in Uganda, it would be expected that answers to sensitive questions in the interview guide, would not be honest reflections on the issues discussed, but rather politically correct answers to back up one's patrons and networks of affection[14]. Even though this expectation would not be met in every case - since the patrimonial logic is not penetrating every aspect of the political system in Uganda - it was likely that it would have such an impact on the data that it would give invalid answers to the questions posed. Hence, after much consideration, this study made a deliberate decision not to include politicians as a unit of analysis.

4.3.5 Interview Guide

The interviews were guided by a written guide that focused on eliciting the academics´ views and experiences about their role as academics; within Mak, in society, and in relation to politics. All key informants were interviewed using the same guide that covered a number of broad topics; respondents educational and training background, how they understood their work role, how they understood democracy, and other more indirect questions about relevance and influence in relation to the political system. The interview guide was open for subjective elements, as the guide consisted of numerous opinion-ended questions. This was important, in order to grasp the academics´ own understanding of the academic-politics relations.

The interview guide constituted two main parts. Part one was developed by the research group in the NORHED project, while part two was developed by me. Throughout the work with the guide I got extensive feedback and comments by the other members of the group so as to develop the most suited questions. All of the questions gave valuable data that was relevant for this thesis. The interviews with external informants, was done primarily for this study[15].

The variety of the roles of the academics and the journalists required a flexible use of the interview guide. The guide was designed to ensure comparability by focusing the interviews of specific major topics. The initial effort was to make a pre-fixed list of questions, but during

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[14] This was found in Helle´s (2017:36-37) study on elections in Uganda, where actors in the political system either had too little or too much incentive for sharing information, and who often either did not trust researchers, or had talked to so many researchers and donors that they "knew" what to say and not.
[15] For more information, see interview guide in Appendix 3

the interviews, they were used more as guidelines. A rather open interview approach was instructive insofar as it provided room for interviewees to reflect on the issues related to the topics, which they found to be most important. Letting interviewees report about concrete cases often brought forward implicit patterns of social action and interpretations that were not explicitly formulated. This was instructive, also since it gave insights into specific cases that could be investigated further in other data sources. Letting them report about concrete cases and issues of their own choosing, also helped to avoid socially desirable responses.

Sometimes, however, interviewees seemed to provide more of an official or normative answer rather than actual experiences. This could be because they were hesitant to directly criticize prevailing practices within the university, or practices related to government, or unwilling to disclose their knowledge, views and reflections for other reasons. This might be seen in light of the sensitivity of the topic, and I tried to keep this in mind throughout the interviews.

It is important to emphasize that the sample size is not believed to be large enough to generalize the insights from the study to other disciplines within Mak, nor to other universities in Uganda. The study is aimed to provide new insights to a social phenomenon, to which there is done little research about in Uganda and it is as such explorative. The data in this study has been used to illustrate patters with regard to the various roles the academic play in relation to politics in an authoritarian regime.

A standardized introduction and information letter was distributed to all informants prior to the interviews, which gave them basic information about the purpose and objective of the study. The interviews took around 30 minutes to 1 hour. Interviews were tape-recorded whenever this was allowed and possible. While some appointments were arranged in cafés or other venues suggested by interviewees, I usually met them at their offices at Mak.

4.3.6 Documents Reviewed

According to Good (1966, in Quddus 2007:34-35), documents used as a data source in research is defined as "reports of events" for the purpose of conveying information. The literature reviewed for the study included multiple sources such as national acts, university reports, and newspaper articles. Such data sources were collected and analyzed in order to contextualize the interview material, but also to potentially bring in different perspectives on

the knowledge-politics relationship. Contradictions that emerged through this approach were not treated as irregularities or distortions of the findings from the interviews; instead, they reveled different patterns of legitimation and thereby crucial aspects of the research objective[16].

The only documents in this study that "represent" the political sphere is the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995. This is included since it provides the legal basis for academic freedom. However, the constitution represents only the formal side of government, and the study find that the actions taken by government officials depart from what is stipulated in the constitution. When searching for other official documents that touched upon the relationship between knowledge (social science and law) and politics in Uganda relevant for this thesis, little was found.

The reports from Mak used as material in the study are annual reports, strategic frameworks and strategic plans, both for the university, the CHUSS, and the SoL. Mak is required by law on a regular basis to produce and publish these documents, with the aim of highlighting the achievements and key focus areas for the period in the reports[17]. They state the long-term goals and mission of the university, but also the "state of the art" at Mak, and provide information on academic activities within the university in the preceding years. As such they were relevant to include as material in the study.

The third sources of secondary data that was included was newspaper articles containing information on activities at Mak and in relation to politics, such as the academic staff strike, academic activism, and on academic research being seized by government. These were included to bring in an external perspective on the knowledge-politics relationship, and in order to see what kind of debate this relationship was creating in the national press.

Finally, the last sources of secondary data were previous research on the field, mainly conducted by academics at Mak. None of the secondary sources that was included provide the personal experiences, perceptions and understandings of the academic profession themselves,

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[16] See Appendix 1 – Table 8 for list of all documents reviewed
[17] University and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001

but were important to include, as it provided alternative sources of information about the knowledge-politics relationship in Uganda.

4.3.7 Gaining Access to Informants

Gaining access to informants and other sources of data is a critical phase of doing research. It did not only facilitate access to the necessary information, but it also determined what information was made available. Prior to the first field trip, an administrative staff member at Mak provided assistance to the NORHED research group and reached out to academics within the 5 departments of interest for my study. We also sent the introduction letter by email, and an invitation to participate in the study, hoping for as many informants as possible. This method, however, provided few informants willing to participate. Thus, each of the academics was contacted either via sms, Whatsapp, direct call or by a visit at their office when I was present at Mak. This approach was challenging and time consuming, and gaining contact details of academic staff proved challenging for a number of reasons. The online presence of Departments at the Mak website was rudimentary and not always up to date regarding whom were employed, which positions they held, as well as regarding phone numbers and email addresses.

Academics in Uganda are used to being contacted by Western academics who want to ask them general questions for their research projects, for example on elections in the country, something that can lead to a form of "interview fatigue" (Helle, 2017a:47). This, I think, made it a bit challenging to get in contact with academics that was willing to participate in the study. Only one, however, stated that he did not want to do interviews with "foreigners".

According to Feldman et al. (2002, in Quddus, 2007:26), gaining access to informants is a process of relationship building. Throughout the process of gaining access, I had to bear in mind differences in culture and language. Further, I had to be aware of the hierarchical structure within the university, and formal and informal power structures between the academic staff, the administrative staff and the leadership. One central aspect that often resulted in trust among the informants was my previous attendance at Mak as an exchange student.

4.3.8 Ethics

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In all types of research, ethical issues are of paramount importance. Since this study is concerned with the study of people, I was committed to interact with participants in an atmosphere of trust and respect; I listened to them attentively and showed my genuine interest. During the field work and the subsequent writing stages, I have maintained a responsible attitude, and I have continued to respect the confidentiality of all informants. None of the names of my informants are used in the thesis. This is done in order to protect the identity of the participants who played important roles in the study. Instead, I have attached codes to each and every informant, which made it easy to handle the data collected.

Finally, all interview materials have been stored in a location to which only I have access. Maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of the informants in this study has been of special concern. Since experience have revealed that academics at Mak are both victims of censorship, self-censorship and sometimes threats because of their views and opinions, I made their anonymity a crucial concern through all stages of the work.

4.4 Steps of Analysis – Coding and Interpretation

The findings of this study were produced through an interactive process of data collection and analysis. After each fieldtrip, the interviews were transcribed and subjected to an inductive process of coding. By this I mean indexing the themes in the interviews in order to structure the material. For coding the material, I developed categories gradually along the lines of the main topics in the interviews. These were; 1) *relevance*, 2) *influence*, 3) *support to and trust in academic work*, 4) *use of power and academic freedom*, 5) *engagement in society and political engagement*, 6) *democracy*, 7) *the role of academics in democratization processes*, and 8) *corruption*[18].

Initially, I tried to structure the data along the lines of the main topics from the interview guide as it was presented. After reading the transcribed empirical material several times, the categories were redefined. Gradually, I was able to develop a set of categories that represented the first step of empirical "generalization", and I could start searching for patterns in the material. Based on these categories, it was possible to analyze the empirical data; searching for the similarities and difference, find the main trends and the "outliers" among the perceptions of the academics.

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[18] See Appendix 4 and 5 for Code Books explaining the categories and codes

Codes were developed under every category, and each category has 2-5 codes. These codes were based on the empirical data, and attempts were given to develop codes that could capture the diversity in the material under each and every category. The codes have been adjusted throughout the whole process, in order to present the data as accurate as possible. I did the work manually, without the assistance of any software programme meant for coding of qualitative data.

4.5 Credibility, Validity and Limitations of the Study

According to Helle (2017a:45-46), Ugandans are pretty open when it comes to discussing politics, especially if they find the researcher interested in soliciting their "expert" opinions. Further, he argues that the NRM-regime has put some emphasis on promoting nominal freedom of speech, and therefore it is considered to be a relatively low-risk enterprise to speak to Western academics who only write for academic purposes. Although some of the informants that agreed to do an interview with me clearly spoke freely, I found others to be guarded. This could be because rather than being interested in their "expert" opinion, this study, as well as the NORHED project, where interested in delineating their personal understandings and perceptions of their work and on their relation to politics.

In this way, one limitation could be that some informants were unwilling to participate due to the topic of the study. There might be reason to believe that some of those who did not wanted to participate either did not want to address their views towards the ruling elite, or that these informants would be regarded as supporters of the political regime. However, since our introductory letter focused less on the political dimension in the project, I have reason to believe that the sample of respondents is not too skewed. Most of those who did not want to participate stated reasons like lack of time, or that they would not be available for other reasons (that they were out of the country, in the village, in a burial, at the hospital etc.). Academics at Mak have a really hectic work week, so this was expected. However, their stated reason could conceal other reasons why they did not want to participate.

A threat to the study would be if informants gave information that was unreliable. This could especially be a threat if one considers the political landscape for academics in Uganda. Van Thiel (2007:52) explains that informants are sometimes more willing to give the *socially*

desirable answer to a question than his or her true opinion, or answers what they believe are politically correct. Certain topics during the interviews was difficult to address. This was most common when the questions asked were directed toward the ruling elite directly, where some informants simply did not want to reveal their true opinions or held back their positions on the issue. Although this could be understood as a limitation, it should also be seen as one of the important findings of the study, as addressing the issue of academic freedom of the academics was one of the objectives.

To overcome this challenge, I tried to ask indirect question that did not immediately appear to be too politically sensitive. Thus, I asked questions based on indicators of the topic in questions, rather than direct questions. This, I think, made the informants more willing to talk and reveal their positions and values, even though the threat of socially desirable answers was never totally dismissed. Finally, the secondary data from Mak were consulted to gauge the credibility of information provided in the interviews.

A potential consequence could be that those that were not interested in or eager to expose their perceptions on the topics would be underrepresented, and as a consequence this could misrepresent the perceptions among the academics of their roles in relation to politics. However, this did not seem to be the case, given the multitude of opinions regarding the role of academics, as well as their relations to politics and their own engagement in the topics. Quite clearly, as will be presented later, the academics seem to belong to two different "groups" at Mak when one regard their relations to politics, and the informants in the study constituted members of both of them.

Another limitation could be if the selection of academics was on the basis of "typicality" or familiarity. Deliberate efforts, however, was made for this not to be an issue. All academics within the relevant department were contacted if and when their information was available either at Mak´s webpage, or if this was available through our contacts among the staff at the university. However, some were not easy to reach, and this might have distorted the sample somewhat. Preferably, more informants from the School of Law would be interviewed, but they were hard to reach. Despite this, I managed to interview three informants at SoL, one human rights lawyer that graduated at Mak, while another member of the NORHED research

team also interviewed two academics at SoL. Thus, I consider this to be adequate for the purpose of the study.

One of the objections against the study could be that it primarily makes use of individual perceptions as data. This is particularly critical when dealing with issues where actors have strong incentives to hide their true preferences, and scholars have found that it can be a challenge to access and trust data collected in authoritarian and hybrid settings (Van Biezen and Kppercky 2007, Goode 2016, in Helle, 2017:49-50). Due to this, I also based the study on secondary data sources, such as documents from Mak and newspaper articles. Nevertheless, as Helle (2017a:49-50) finds, that one should remain critical about relying too much on media sources, as these might be biased as a result of direct censorship or self-censorship.

Although this study finds that the academics within the CHUSS and the SoL engage at some level of self-censorship, I did not find that they have strong reasons to hide their true preferences, tell lies or give false descriptions of how they understood the issues and topics discussed in the interviews. Since the interviews were open ended, the informants could to a great extend avoid questions or topics they would find unpleasant or sensitive, and shifting focus to something else they would like to address.

The FS held in April 2017 gave valuable feedback and guided the subsequent work on the thesis. Writing the preliminary paper and being able to get comments on this by the academic profession were crucial for enhancing the validity of the final thesis paper. This is so because it allowed to integrate a process of *member checking* in the study (Baxter and Jack, 2008:556). The informants discussed and clarified the interpretations in the paper, and they contributed with new and additional perspectives on the issues under study. It provided an arena to bring up questions that had emerged through the process of writing the paper, and to adjust the interview guide so that it was better able to touch upon the knowledge-politics relations and academic freedom. One of the important outcomes of the FS was the new reflections I made on the state of academic freedom at Mak and the indicators of this. Although fewer academics than expected participated in the seminar, this was not decisive for the comments put forward, as fewer participants allowed for a more in-depth discussion. Finally, extensive discussions and monthly meetings with the NORHED research group provided a forum for discussing interpretations of the data along the way.

Chapter 5: The Relationship and Interplay Between Knowledge and Politics in Uganda

Empirical Findings - Part One

5.0 Introduction

While the academics believe that they their work are relevant for the Ugandan society and the political system, they assess their influence in the political sphere to be low. Knowledge is not always perceived to be a base for political decision and development of policies, neither is government perceived to be interested in research coming from the CHUSS and the SoL. The academics see a poor reading culture in government, and they rarely feel valued and recognized for the academic work they conduct. Sometimes the work of the academics is perceived to be a threat to the political regime. Government is reported to devalue the disciplines at the CHUSS and the SoL, while it supports and fund the STEM-disciplines. The academics mainly understand their role within the university as teachers and research. There is a heavy consultancy culture among the academics, but few engage with the public through public debates, and none of them take part in partisan political activities.

In this chapter, findings from the study will be presented that answers to the stated objective – *how the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL understand the relationship and interplay between knowledge and politics in Uganda, and how the academics handle these.* Thus, it will also address and provide answers to the first research question; *how, if at all, the academics understand their role(s) in relation to politics.* The chapter is divided in two sections. The first presents the views of the academics within the CHUSS and the SoL based on the conducted interviews. In the second section, the views of the external informants will be presented together with the findings from the written secondary data sources.

5.1 The Views of the Academics

This section begins with a presentation of the academic´s own understanding and perceptions of their current situation at Mak, regarding their work role and conditions. This is done because the conditions and context of the academics, have important implications for their work, and since it might affect their relations to politics. Second, it will present their understanding of relevance and influence of their work, as an integral part of their

understanding of their role(s) in relation to politics. Third, it will address the support to and use of knowledge, the interest in knowledge, and whether scientific knowledge work as a base for political decisions. It is followed by a presentation of the understanding of the reading culture in government, while it proceeds to the question of whether academics regard themselves as valued by the political system. Then, it presents the perception of the STEM-disciplines as in a privileged position within Mak, before finally addressing the academic profession´s political engagement and engagement with society.

5.1.1 Current Work Situation at Mak

When describing a typical work week, all academics gave descriptions of a hectic week with teaching, research, outreach and consultancy, and for most also administrative responsibilities. Teaching and related follow-ups such as marking and grading, clearly dominated the informants work week. All reported that the biggest part of their time was spent on teaching, and most found it to be an overemphasis on teaching at the expense of research. Teaching both day and evening classes, as well as Saturdays was common. Teaching many courses was the normal, and most thought that they had too many students to teach.

If at all, research was done in late hours, in weekends, vacation, in between semesters, in any case when everything else was done (i.e. teaching and follow ups). Most had been able to publish at least one article or book within the last few years, but they reported that they did not have time to do research effectively. The motivation to do research was evident across the two Colleges, despite the constraints they all faced (large number of students, lack of time, and inadequate resources and funding). Few believed that the time to conduct research was adequate. If the academics were able to decide on their own, research would have been prioritized higher in their everyday work at Mak.

Administration was understood differently among the informants; some thought of this as including meetings at department and school levels, operating as head of department or dean of a faculty, and coordinating programmes and exams. Others understood it as marking and grading papers, exams and consulting students otherwise understood as related to teaching. Despite different understandings, most believed that it was taking too much time, while few did not take part in any administrative work. None perceived administrative responsibility as a career path, but administrative tasks were seen as necessary in order for academia to work the

way it was supposed to.

Community outreach was understood as one of the missions of the university; a duty. It was reported by all of the academics, but few had a clear understanding of what it constituted in practice. For some, outreach was to interact with community, to cause change or to influence policy. In broad terms it was understood to *work with (and for) communities*, or to *give back to society*, therefore it is very vague. However understood, the academics were expected to offer community services relevant for their areas of academic specialization. For some outreach was synonymous with consultancy, whereby the lines between those categories were sometimes blurred.

Consultancy work was reported by every informant, either explicitly or implicitly. Many academics looked for other jobs outside of Mak, to make extra income. This was referred to as *moonlighting* and was done out of necessity to make ends meet. The academics were using the reputation of Mak as their operating base when doing consultancy work, given the prestige, high standing and ranking of the university. A dilemma related to this work was perceived to be; either you choose to be a pure academic but lacked the necessary income to put food on the table, or you did consultancy work, thus making more money, but missed out on research, since consultancies did not result in publications, and since it was reported not to follow the same scientific standards as academic research.

In general, the academics found little time for seminars, tutorials, one-to-one student contact, and intellectual debate. There seemed to be a hierarchy of academic tasks, where research was regarded as more prestigious and important than teaching, and teaching few hours was regarded as better than teaching many hours every week. The academics argued that they to some extent had been downgraded to teachers, even though both teaching, research and community outreach together was the mission of Mak[19].

5.2 Relevance of Knowledge

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[19] The latter strategic pillar, *community outreach*, had shifted to *knowledge transfer, partnerships and networking,* although all the academics at the SoL and the CHUSS still (and only) referred to community outreach as the thirds strategic pillar. They referred to 3 pillars; 1) teaching, 2) research, 3) community outreach. Thus, this pillar still prevailed in the mind-set of the academics.

Relevance as a concept is hard to define, as it is a relational concept, changing depending on whom and what one is regarded to be relevant for. Relevance can be seen as an *emic* concept (*from the perspective of the subject*) which means that it depends on context (Church & Katigbak, 1988:140-141). Thus, here relevance was understood in terms of how the academics saw it themselves. Among the informants, "being relevant" and "relevance" were blurred concepts, with no singular understanding. There existed many different and conflicting understandings of what constituted relevance, for whom ones' work should be relevant, and if the profession at all was relevant. Thus, it was difficult to grasp a common understanding of relevance among the academics at the CHUSS and the SoL.

Quite often, relevance was linked to *development* of some sort; economic, social or political development. Even though relevance was hardly explicitly stated, it was often linked to a normative undertone – that relevance was *do good for society or community*. It was seldom specified who exactly the work of the academics where relevant to, but a common perception was that they were relevant for the Ugandan society in broader terms. Thus, they understood their relevance in relation both to the lay person, local communities and the political system.

Many understood relevance in terms of community outreach. Central to this was relevance understood as enlightening the public, to do advocacy on issues of politics and governance, influence policy, and interact with communities. These types of relevance could take the form as capacity building in government, guiding government officials and policy-makers in their work, engage in policy and legislative processes, and training of governmental officials. In this way, relevance was often understood as a linkage between Mak and society, where Mak should or was providing the latter with knowledge that would be used to the benefit of society. One of the central actors or potential receivers of knowledge was regarded as the political system – with its decision-makers and politicians as the key users.

Quite often, relevance was also understood in terms of knowledge dissemination and teaching, an understanding of relevance that was linked to the students. In this regard, relevance was understood as to teach the students to think both independently and critically. This type of relevance was closely linked to the profession´s role as a teacher.

One informant highlighted that Mak should provide society with a knowledge base, by which political decisions should be based on, and which should work as base for nation-building and development. Thus, he understood the university to be the center of society, and a driving force. In a similar notion, another believed that the relevance of academia was to educate the country´s citizens, which would pave the way for development. Meanwhile, another informant believed that the relevance laid in making citizens aware of their roots and history.

Therefore, there was two main orientation of relevance of the academics and their work, one *internal* and one *external*. The internal was closely related to the tradition of teaching students and dissemination of knowledge, both activities within the borders of the university. The external notion was understood in terms of outreach, where influencing and informing policy was central. This notion was more closely linked to the profession´s role as a researcher but was also oriented towards the society outside of Mak. This was emphasized by several of the academics, and one noted:

> *"There is a traditional role which would be to guide students, to teach, guide and do research. But also, the other role is to do with the fact that you engage with the public (...). So, the outreach work which you find me doing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example (...) that is part of my mission as a professor, so there is two lines here, at the university, but also at the outside of the university."* (I.12)

5.2.1 Influence

During the interviews it was not always easy to understand whether the informants thought they *should* and *could* be relevant or if they perceived to be *actually* relevant. Frequently, it was reported that the academics *should* be able to contribute to various political processes in a variety of fields. The academics believed that their academic work (teaching, research and outreach) were relevant to society. What was contested among them were whether or not they enjoyed *influence* in society and in the political system. In an ideal situation, the informants argued that their work would be relevant and that they would enjoy influence, indicating that the situation of today was far from ideal.

> *"And I think for (our) work to be relevant and to be accepted as relevant, and then be acknowledged as relevant, it has to find its way into the public domain, into public policy and acknowledged as such you know."* (I.16)

Since it was not always clear if the informants thought they were or could be influential, there was a need to make an analytical distinction between *relevance* and *influence*. Relevance and

influence was related, but here influence was understood as the ways in which the academics were contributing to or affecting a certain political or societal issue. Influence was understood as something external - that the academics were able to influence the political system or political actors in some way, outside of the university, having consequences for the particular matter in question.

Relevance on the other hand, was understood both internally and externally, since academics, having multiple roles, could be of relevance both within and outside the university. The academics could also be relevant to societal actors with or without these actors being able to acknowledge, understand or value this relevance, and without being able to take advantage of the knowledge provided by the academics. In contrast, influence was dependent on both the academics, and the *users* of the scientific knowledge, research and expertise provided. Influence was related to action since it was expected to lead to social change of some sort.

This study is limited to the influence the academics may have in the political arena in Uganda. Thus, the academics could enjoy influence, if they were (or thought they were) for example; contributing to policy, if decisions in parliament and the bureaucracy was based on knowledge coming from the CHUSS and the SoL, and if their research was read, listened to and used in the political system. Based on the distinction between relevance and influence, it was possible for the academics to be relevant and enjoy influence at the same time. It was, however, equally possible to be relevant to society and politics without enjoying influence.

When asked if the academics enjoyed influence in political processes, that they were able to contribute to policy making in various ways, answers where twofold. On the one hand, most academics thought they were able to contribute to policy making to some degree – they contributed occasionally and on some issues. At the same time, however, they also argued that their contributions were not enough, due both to internal weaknesses within Mak, but also because they faced different outside limitations often connected to government[20].

Most gave very general answers when asked on which issues the academics had influenced. Again, an issue was with the wordings of the answers - most believed that they *would* be, or

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[20] These constraints and limitations will be presented in Chapter 6, and discussed in Chapter 9

could be able to influence, but few gave concrete examples of cases where this was done. This could of course be due to the fact that measuring influence in general is difficult, and that it is challenging to trace by whom policies have been influenced by. For most informants, contributing to policies only happened occasionally, and some believed that they rarely, or never, contributed to policy making. One stated:

> *"The most difficult people to influence is the policy-makers in this country. We have tried many times, but with very little success. (...) Under my project, I went and met with the undersecretary and booked an appointment to go and speak to the people who draft these politics (...). Maybe after 10 minutes they were dozing, they were not attentive at all, and here was me and I was (...) thinking God, this country needs help."*

Despite of this, some examples where given where academics had been contributing in terms of policies. One argued that the academics at the department where he belonged participated in many areas, among these on issues related to environmental laws. Another made contributions by commenting on guidelines for how juridical cases should be handled by the judiciary, training MPs on international human rights, and by holding presentations for MPs on constitutionalism in Uganda. Other issues that academics report that they had been able to contribute to were; local government and issues related to decentralization, governance and accountability, political party structures, youth employment, electoral shortcomings and the ways elections were conducted, and unconstitutional laws violating human rights.

The academics had a self-perception that their work and research was relevant, but many times it was not acknowledged as such by the political system. Although it did not appear to be a clear pattern in the perceptions of the influence the academics enjoyed, an analytical distinction was made between how the *conditions for influencing* was perceived and understood, and how the academics´ *perceived actual influence* was understood. This distinction, put the academics in two categories: 1) Those that perceived the conditions for influencing to be *bad*, and their perceived actual influence to be *lacking*, 2) Those that perceived the conditions for influencing to be *bad*, while at the same time perceive that they were able to influence. None, however, argued that the conditions for influencing the political system was good or adequate.

Many of the academics at the CHUSS fit in the first category, as they saw the conditions of influencing to be bad, resulting in a situation where they did not perceive that they were able

to influence. Other informants at the CHUSS and most from the SoL, argued that they managed to influence the political system on some issues, despite perceiving the conditions for influencing to be bad. The academics at the SoL argued that they perceived their relevance and influence to be greater than for other departments at Mak, indicating that their research was met with more interest, were used more and was more frequently requested.

5.3 Support to and Use of Knowledge

One of the topics that was most elaborated in the interviews, was if the government and political actors in Uganda was interested in the research produced at the CHUSS and the SoL. Most argued that government was not interested in research from these departments whatsoever. Most also argued that the political system did not value the research, or that the political actors did not take their research seriously. Yet, some argued that politicians looked at their work with skepticism, arguing that academics were too critical.

5.3.1 Interest in Knowledge

The informants did not believe that actors within the political system in Uganda were interested in the knowledge produced within the CHUSS and the SoL. In any society, government, parliament and policy-makers should all be regarded as users of knowledge produced at the university. This, however, was not always perceived to be true in regards to the CHUSS. The academics argued that politicians neither read nor payed attention to the research produced.

One indicator of political interest in knowledge, could be if government or parliament was demanding for knowledge about the society they tried to govern. Most frequently, the academics found that government and state institutions were not asking for research and relevant knowledge, but that the academics would *prefer* this to be the case. Thus, yet again, the academics were talking about a preferred or ideal situation, where government and other institutions of the state would request research on issues that the academics perceived as relevant to the running of the state, on issues such as how to bring about development, and how to improve people´s well-being.

However, the ideal situation was far from the reality of what was going on. This perceived departure from the preferred situation were quite evident in most of the views of the

academics regarding government´s interest in research and knowledge production at the CHUSS and the SoL. They argued that each of the arms of government *could* be beneficiaries of the knowledge produced, which would be shared through consultations and consultancy services, but this was not happening to the degree they wished.

> "*And that is what they present, the parliament, they don´t consult, because if they were consulting the best people to use would be us, you come to us, we consult the people, and then you get the real views of the people, they don't do that.*" (I.3)

Sometimes however, academics found that they were asked for advice or service by government. One informant argued that, for his department, the largest stakeholder was government (central, regional and local government), and that it was a receiver of both knowledge, products and graduates coming from Mak.

In some cases, academics were given money from government to conduct research or do consultancies but when the assignment was completed and the academics came up with their recommendations for policy or change in current policies, they reported that nothing was done, since it required change in established political practices. Sometimes the recommendations for change involved complete alteration of the current political practice. One informant gave an example:

> "*Even when I just came here in 2002 I did research for Minister of Agriculture (…) and they said that "you are the best placed to advice on this", (…) they gave me money, and I went to two districts, and I said "this thing is not working completely, stop it". Then they said "do you want me to lose my job?" (…) Of course, they got my work and put it in the shelf, they did not work on it.*" (I.3)

In this case, the academic argued that the government official was concerned of losing his job if he followed up on the advice given him. Rather than being interested in suggestions for changing established practices, the Ministry of Agriculture were according to the informant rather interested in confirming that the existing practices was working. Consulting academics seemed thus only to be for "window dressing" and a way to legitimize already existing practices. In a similar fashion, another stated:

> "*(…) I mean, you just have to go to the Ministry to look at the amount of the work they have commissioned, and look at the duplication which means that either they did not learn anything or that they never read it in the first place, otherwise they would not be asking people to do the same things over and over again.*" (I.17)

So, it was believed that even if government was requesting knowledge and commissioned research, they did not always pay attention to the recommendation, leaving them to ask for the same type of research over and over again.

5.3.2 Scientific Knowledge – a Base for Political Decisions?

A related and central issue that was reflected on, was whether political decisions was based on scientific knowledge and research disseminated from the CHUSS and the SoL. Few though that research which originated from these Colleges worked as a base for political decisions in parliament, government or for policy making. As many informants emphasized, it was difficult to establish a causal link between the two. Hence, one had to consider it on a case by case basis. Despite this, the perception was that political decisions often were based on other matters than research and scientific knowledge. One said:

> *"I wish it was, I can´t say that it largely is because sometimes a decision that is taken sometimes they are really not based on research."* (I.10).

Common to academics was a belief that decisions were not based of scientific knowledge, but rather on private motives and conceptions. In their view, policy-makers relied on the politicians, not on the work of academics or other professional consultants. What was perceived to guide political decisions was more a matter of informal discussions and interests, rather than "truth telling" and "objective" knowledge, according to these informants. Political decisions and policies was perceived to be based on public sentiments, somebody´s gut feeling or idea, or simply "hear and say". Often these informal bases for decision making was perceived to be connected to the wishes of the president himself.

5.3.3 Reading culture

Generally, the academics argued that the research produced at the CHUSS and the SoL were not read by political stakeholders. It was reported that few read academic journals, reports or papers. In relation to research conducted on neo-liberal policies in higher education and its consequences, one noted:

> *"Our politicians don't read completely, they don't read because the book ("Scholars in the Marketplace") really spells out the problem of the university in Uganda. If the President, the parliament read the book, they would reform our education system. But they don't read, even when you call them and say "maybe I want to give you a paper" they will listen for the first five minutes, and then they are waiting for when it is tea time and then they go away."* (I.3)

Some argued that the channels for communication between academia and the political system was missing, making it difficult for the politicians to read the available research. Conversely, others argued that the relevant research did not "get out there" - reaching the potential users such as government. Rather, research output was stored in libraries at Mak. Both these features, they argued, steamed from the same problem; that research and academic work was not communicated and translated to the political system in a way that made it available to and easily understood for the user. The academics, then, argued that the issue of research not being read, was a problem originated both from within and outside of Mak. This since academics were not able to make it available, and since government were perceived to be disinterested in the research produced.

Despite what many of the academics understand as a poor *reading culture* in the political system, they insisted that the research still had a value. These further argued that efforts should be given to communicate research findings to potential users of the knowledge, despite of this perceived poor reading culture.

> *"We do our best to disseminate it. I mean even if it is not being read, at least the documentation is there, we shall refer to it, and we need to be able to capture these things as they are happening."* (I.10).

5.3.4 Valued

On whether academics perceived that they were valued for the job they were doing by the political system, perceptions varied. The views on being valued or not was two-fold. Those who were closely connected to government, and who were repeatedly asked for consultancies, were perceived to be valued by government. Others, who were not close to government, either because they were not perceived to do academic work that was "relevant" or because they were "too critical", did not think they were valued. This was reflected on among several informants, and one stated:

> *"If we feel valued? As I said, those who are hired as consultant for government, those who are members of agencies or committees feel that they are highly valued, they are highly appreciated, because their views sometimes become public policy."* (I.7)

The aspect of being recognized by their work, was related to the issue of the reading culture in the political system. Even if the research output was read, and even if it sometimes was working as a base for policy and decision making, it seldom came with a reference to the

academic who had contributed, or the scientific article it was based on. The informants found that policy-makers did not always attribute the ideas to the original thinkers. Thus, it was difficult to assess if the research was used in the political system or not, or if it was influencing these political processes:

> "*So that attribution, or lack of attribution makes it very difficult to say that "yes actually, our knowledge is really relevant because if you look at policy a or policy b, that is definitely informed by (...) research." (I.17)*

5.3.5 Support to the STEM-disciplines

Many academics at CHUSS argued that government was emphasizing the STEM-disciplines at the expense of the social sciences and humanities, and that these were the only disciplines at Mak that were receiving state funding. This they argued, were because these disciplines, together with economics were believed by government to have the potential to bring about economic development in the country. Despite of this, the informants argued for the importance and relevance of the disciplines at the CHUSS. They argued that it was not only the Sciences, but also that disciplines within the CHUSS and the SoL could contribute to development.

On that note, academics argued that one of the reasons why research from the STEM-disciplines was more frequently used and funded, was the different orientations among the disciplines. While the STEM-disciplines were oriented towards science and technological development, the disciplines with the CHUSS and the SoL was oriented towards society, the political system and justice. One elaborated:

> "*I think (...) the political establishment is comfortable with people who have done physical sciences, and they are in the lab. For what they do of course, it can be physically seen, understand? And they rarely go into the political social analysis arena. (...) You have more people going into the areas of law, humanities, social science, now those ones, the very nature of the disciplines, they are making a critique of what – society. And when things are not going well, definitely you become a subject of what – analysis. (...) these very people who are studying social sciences are the ones revealing those weaknesses in the system, so they (politicians) would prefer that they (academics) are not there, or they are few.*" (I.16)

The academic work, research and outreach activities coming from the CHUSS, the academics argued, was often seen as a threat to the political regime, given the nature of the disciplines of the social sciences and the political science, and the discipline of law. Political actors, they argued, sometimes felt threatened by the potential power of academics, understood as the

power of "objective knowledge" and the power that lied in speaking the truth to power. This was brought up by many of the academics. As illustrated by two of them:

> "*So political science, since we are dealing with power, and power relations, government is sometimes a bit hostile. Sometimes, quite hostile to our ideas.*" (I.7)

> "*the government maybe feel that the academia maybe overstepping their work, their work should be to teach, that's the way they interpret. So, any critique, any feedback that comes from the academia, maybe regarded negatively, yeah so that is a major problem.*" (I.10)

5.4 Political Engagement and Engagement with Society

None of the academics reported that they engaged directly in political activities. Most informants understood politics in a narrow sense – as *partisan* politics and activities within political parties. Therefore, they excluded other, broader activities that could be understood as political. Some informants argued that the work of academics should be strictly separated from the political sphere and the civil society, and thus that the academic work should be strictly academic, understood as to teach and conduct basic research, and not engage in advocacy work. Within the university, their job should be to teach and do research. In relation to teaching, one noted:

> "*The role of the university teacher should be separated from civil society. The teacher should operate as a thinker. A thinker that is fair, neutral, professional and philosophical. Unjust if a teacher (…) trying to shape them as students, political and active actors.*" (I.1)

There were differing opinion on whether the academics had to stay politically neutral in their role as a teacher. However, most argued that one should stay politically neutral in this role and in relation to their students.

> "*Yes, very much (I think I should be politically neutral in class). I always tell them that I don't have any political party I support. I criticize all of them, I can appreciate all of them also, so that I remain neutral. I think that it is the right thing to do, otherwise you persuade your students in any direction, because they believe in you as a teacher.*" (I.3)

In addition, they argued that they had to be politically neutral since the students had different political ideologies and supported different political parties. Thus, the academics should not be ideological and promote their political visions in the lectures. Although they thought about politics, they tried to be as politically neutral as possible.

Others argued that it was not possible to stay neutral in the role as a lecturer. At the SoL, they

argued that it was neither possible nor useful to be politically neutral. The argument for this was that they did not only teach *about* the laws, such as the Constitution, they also teach about constitutionalism, involving governmental and juridical practices both nationally and internationally. Thus, teaching law also meant criticizing these practices. By this they did not mean to be partisan, but they considered criticism of the practices of government and political leaders being fruitful and constructive, and relevant for their discipline and teaching.

Although the academics argued that they were not active in politics, some of them claimed to frequently engage with the broader society in Uganda. Engagement in such activities, however, was not a regular engagement among most of the academics, but rather among some of the most committed ones. The majority seemed to be at a distance from the realities of the society that they were set to analyse. Although strongly committed staff was found at the CHUSS, most of them, were believed to be at the SoL. These were active in public debates, participated in public lectures and gave public speeches, they commented on pressing social and political issues on TV, on radio and in national newspapers. They sat on boards, both as board members and as chairpersons, while some were active in local and national NGOs[21]. Sometimes too, they gave what they called "professional input" into discussions in NGOs and CSOs.

Although these academics did not participate in partisan politics, they were political in the sense that they shared their views on politics through presentation, in conferences, public dialogues, on TV and on radio. Such statements as some argued, could even be personal views on politics in Uganda, and was thus sometimes departing from their role as an academic. Giving interviews and participate in public media dialogues they though helped to get their views spread across the country, and to reach out to other people that were interested in politics in Uganda.

> *"(…) the School of Law have here a staff, the faculty are very open minded, they are the ones you find writing in the newspapers, commentaries on you know for example, remember there were the Speaker of Parliament wanted to close of the media from being part of the discussion in the parliament, and one of the professors here wrote and said that "This is backwards. We have come a long way from that and we need to be able to see the transparency in the parliament". And that is the commentary coming from the professor of law."* (I.10)

Some informants at the SoL had been and continued to be active in terms of reaching out to

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[21] Examples will not be provided in order to protect the anonymity of the informants.

other sectors of society, such as the media. This engagement aimed at helping and direct the media to how they could do their work more freely, and how it could be more independent from political constraints. They had also participated in trying to create an independent Media Council, since it previously had not been perceived to be accountable.

Academics within the SoL had also worked quite closely with political opposition parties in the past. Political opposition parties they argued, had sometimes tried to go around the hurdles faced by police and the regime, by bringing some of their discussions and debates inside the university. Various parties had repeatedly partnered with the semi-autonomous department under the SoL the Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC), and the long established "partnerships" between SoL and opposition parties dated back to the time of the no-party system in Uganda (1986-2006) [22].

5.5 External Actors and Secondary Sources – Contrasting Views?

The external actors interviewed, all argued that academics had an important role to play in engaging in political matters in Uganda and that they should contribute to policy-making. One of the duties of the academics as one of the external informants saw it, was to speak the truth to power. Despite what they saw as an important role to be played by academics, they were not content with the current contributions of the academics. They argued that their performance was too weak and that they should do more in terms of engagement, such as engaging in public lectures and debates. Also, these informants emphasized, academics should break down political actions and policies, making them easier to understand for the public. One informant stated:

> *"(…) for the last 10 years or even more, there has been what I would not want to call it the death of the academia, but there has been a bit of silence. Previously you had the, those guys the professors, the doctors from that university, you know they did a lot of commentary on social issues and political issues, they would write if the government has something they were doing, (…) they would come out to guide."* (I.20)

As with many of the academics, none of the external informants thought that government was interested in research coming from the CHUSS and the SoL. They argued that government did not care about what the professors said, and they did not believe government to take research as something important. They neither believed that the research being developed at Mak did

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[22] (Kamp, 2010:17-21)

"sink down" to government. In contrast to the academics, none of them saw this flaw as a result of a bad reading culture in government.

In line with the academics, the human rights lawyer argued that the president in Uganda was more interested in the research coming from the STEM-disciplines than that from the CHUSS and the SoL since this was argued to be of more relevance to economic development. Also, he perceived this as a tactic choice of government since the disciplines of the CHUSS and the SoL had the potential of exposing the weaknesses and illegitimate or even illegal practices of the government. One informant noted:

> *"(...) That for me is a plead to simple shut up people, he does not want people to be exposed to the work that this is about, to engage them in government issues, and so as long as, for him to succeeding in keeping people quiet, and silent, but that also shows you how serious he takes academic scholars to be, he does not really take them to be serious."* (I.21)

This issue had also been addressed in national press. According to Wandera (2014) the president criticized humanity courses at universities in Uganda of being useless, arguing that even though graduates accomplished academics degrees, they were not able to solve issues that could steer national development. Accordingly, the president was also expressing the need for more science and technology programmes, arguing that the century was driven by unprecedented advances in sciences and technology.

In Uganda, such statements brought a lot of attention and critique in the academic community, with people arguing that the President had a personal vendetta against these disciplines (Aderibibe, 2014, Agencies, 2016). The current Strategic Plan of the CHUSS argues that the Sciences and humanities informed each other, and that national development, science and technologies would thrive on a shaky ground if it did not have a solid foundation in the humanities and social sciences. This is so, as this argument goes, because the social science the disciplines provide the key for unlocking the potential of individuals and society to develop, and to adopt and adapt to scientific and technological advances (CHUSS, 2011:4).

5.6 Summary and Concluding Remarks

While the role of the academics within Mak was understood as the roles of teachers, researchers, consultants and to some degree administrators, the academics mainly understood

their role in relation to politics as that of providers of scientific expertise and advice, which could contribute to the governance of complex problems, by shaping the public agenda, defining issues, identifying opinions and choice, and monitor impact and outcomes. Thus, their role perception both within the university and in relation to politics was understood in line with the roles of academics elsewhere. In addition, they also saw it as their role to contribute to democratization and constitutionalism. Therefore, some also took on the roles as social activists.

What became evident was that the relationship between knowledge and power in Uganda was neither clear nor easy. The academics believed that they had *relevance*, meaning that the research, work and knowledge they produced was important to society, political decisions and policies, and that this knowledge should be listened to and used, especially by political actors. At the same time, however, what was lacking was their *influence* over political processes and those actors engaging in politics. While the external informants argued that academics had an important role to play in relation to politics, where they should contribute to democratization and truth telling, they were not convinced by the current level of engagement among the academic profession.

The political system was reported to relate little to research, articles and books from the CHUSS and the SoL, and there was reported to be a lack of knowledge about, and interest for this research. New policies were rarely thought to be based on scientific knowledge and research, and research from these colleges was rarely the base for political decisions and statements. Many politicians were regarded as unwilling or unable to absorb and exploit the variety of research coming from the colleges, and they found it to be a poor reading culture in government. While some academics were used as consultant by the political system, others were rarely used as experts and advised by politicians and public officials. The scientific articles and reports coming from the CHUSS and the SoL were less mentioned as direct sources for decisions and policy processes, indicating an attribution problem in government and parliament. Limited funding was restricting the academics to conduct the research they wanted, while they argued that the STEM-disciplines were given priority over the social sciences, humanities and law, since they were perceived by government to be most relevant for national and economic development and least critical of political practices.

Chapter 6: Academic Freedom and Constraints

Empirical Findings – Part Two

6. Introduction

In their daily work, academics met various constraints that limited their work. Although the informants pointed to different constraints, some were frequently mentioned by almost all of them. Within Mak these were; too heavy teaching load and too little available time for research, low salaries and self-censorship. Outside of the university restrictions were understood to be; limited funding, hostile and critical attitudes towards the academics by government officials, and formal and informal use of power by government. While academic freedom sometimes was restricted, few of the academics had a clear perception of this. Few wanted to address the use of power by government directly. Those however that spoke of it, portrayed a landscape that could be quite intimidating for the academics.

This chapter will present the findings from the analysis conducted answering to the research question: *What is the role of the state – the political regime – in enhancing or diminishing the academic freedom of the academics.* Central to this chapter is also internal constraints at Mak that the academics face in their daily work. The chapter is divided in three main parts. Part one presents and reflect on the views and understandings of the academics. The second presents the views of the external informants as well as findings from the secondary data, while the final section is presenting three examples where government have tried to restrict the work and actions of the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL.

6.1 The View of the Academics

6.1.1 Internal Limitations

Generally, heavy teaching loads and many students were argued to be a limitation to both if and how research was conducted, and if outreach activities were conducted altogether. In some departments, the belief was that there were not enough academics to teach the offered courses, and that this lead to a heavy work load for the academics that were qualified to teach them; the student-teacher ratio was reported to be far from balanced. Human resource related limitations such as inadequate staffing in terms of qualifications and numbers where resulting in both frustration, stress and lack of time to conduct among other things, outreach activities. A typical statement was as follows:

"And the other bit has to do with, the kind of duties we are expected to play here, meaning that when you teach and do research there may not be enough time to go and engage with the public beyond the campus. And so, those would be some of the limitations, that would limit the kind of engagements and the kind of outreach that we can take in terms of influencing policy with government." (I.12)

Low salaries were among the biggest concerns for many academics. Even though not stated directly, almost all reported that salaries were so meager that they had to take on extra work loads within the university, in form of teaching extra classes, adding on the already heavy working load. Many of them also took on teaching positions in other universities in Uganda. In addition, most conducted consultancies outside of the university, for various NGOs, international organizations, and occasionally the government. As a result, time was not enough for many to engage in and try to influence the policy processes as a regular engagement.

6.1.2 Formal and Informal Use of Power

No informants thought that government in any way *formally*, through laws or other direct sanctions, restricted or decided what the academics within the SoL or the CHUSS were to conduct research about. As one stated:

"No government don't determine the research questions because they don't fund researchers. You do your research freely." (I.2)

All of whom talked about this issue, agreed that the reason why government did not determine what kind of research was being conducted, was due to the lack of funds from government to the university. However, the issue of funding was two-fold. On the one hand, some of the informants believed that since government was not funding research at the CHUSS and the SoL, this meant that government was not able to determine the research priorities or research questions. On the other hand, although it seemed that there was no state interference in the research conducted at Mak, many saw this non-provision of funds for research as a constraint. Most referred to funding of their departments at the CHUSS and the SoL as one of the most significant constrains regarding their ability to contribute to policy, and to do research that would be relevant for government and state institutions. One argued:

"I mean, in an ideal situation, in an ideal place, and of course, one have to recognize that we

are, we are constrained by the reality, that we have very limited funding, at the department level." (I.17)

Informants argued that the limited government funding for the CHUSS and the SoL was a deliberate move by government to restrict the academics in the kind of research they could undertake. They argued that making Mak dependent on private funding, rather than government funding, was a strategic choice made in order to control what kind of research came out of the university. As one stated:

> *"But for me I think the biggest way of stifling academic criticism has been not to fund the university, and just make it really hard to earn a living, and just be so preoccupied with earning money. (…) I don't think Museveni is stupid, and you know he is the government, he is not stupid, he knows that academia is potentially his biggest threat, but of course he won't say that, he will say that there is no money in the budget."* (I.18)

Since the academics only emphasised funding as the mechanism curtailing their academic freedom, they tended to overlook informal power structures and informal use of power that undermined their academic freedom.

6.1.3 Academia as protected space?

One argued that Mak, or academia in Uganda in general, was a protected space – protected against the partial interests of the political regime, the army and the police. Furthermore, some informants believed that Mak had a comparative advantage – that their environment was freer than for other institutions and groups in the society, such as the civil society. One noted:

> *"But you can see now there is narrowing space for civil society to operate, the state wants to know everything that is happening. That is where the academia comes in, with a comparative advantage because of our space we have more academic freedom, and we have more space. We can have seminars here within the university and the, the cover of academic freedom and enlightenment of minds generally."* (I.10)

At the same time informants told that as a lecturer you never know all your students sitting in class, indicating that there could be spies participating in the lectures, subsequently reporting to the regime. One argued that *"everybody is working within some kind of controls"* (I.10), understood as indirect government control, restricting the work of the academics. In this way it became evident that the academics worked under some forms of control – most of which were informal rather than formal.

Many of the informants thought that criticizing government either through research output or in class could potentially be dangerous. It could be problematic since state officials not always were perceived by the academics to respect their academic freedom, and sometimes the academics feared that critical comments would be met with limitations or constraints by actors in the political system. Few wanted to address these issues in detail, and were often brief or vague:

> *"Yeah, it is, because we work in an environment, it depends on how free the environment is and how one looks at one's personal security." (I.15)*

> *"You can criticize freely, but I tell you there is consequences of criticizing, the state wins a lot of influence." (I.2)*

One of the consequence of being critical of the regime either in public debates or in research that was reported during the interviews were receiving threats, either through text messages or phone calls. It was argued that this was done frequently by members of the political regime. Some of the informants mentioned several academics within the SoL they knew had been threatened for their work. Another added that "*You know, any movement too far and somebody might pull the leach.*" (I.17).

6.1.4 Networks of Affection

Some informants at CHUSS spoke of informal relationships between academics and representatives of the state, which could be understood as patron-client relations, constituting networks of affection. By the academics, this was understood as relations between academics and political actors where the academics resisted from conducting research that portrayed the actions of these political actors in a bad way, and in return, they were perceived to get consultancy jobs for government committees, funding or other favours relevant for their work. Even though it was hard to establish which academics were part of these networks, these relations seemed quite obvious among the academics themselves. The academics that were perceived to be connected to the state were called "official academics" by the other academics. Two informants elaborated:

> "*There are those we call "official academics", they get consultancies and funding from the state, those who are critical will not get it. So, certain things is not done on merit.*" (I.2)

> "*I came back to find all these (...) government departments now would not give you work unless you agree to give them a kickback, and it had become so normal, and to me it was such a shock that someone could give me work, you know seemingly based on merit and my*

experience and my skills, and then say "but you have to give us a kickback". And you know, it was like everyone was doing it, and all the consultants seemed to have accepted this as the new normal." (I.18)

These patron-client relations seemed to be part of the reality for some of the academics from the CHUSS, although it was not explicitly talked about by most of the informants. At the SoL, it was believed that in order for the regime to silence critical voices, some academic had been co-opted. One informant argued that this was done either by government giving them a ministerial post, or a judicial position. In these instances, critical voices were bought with positions in government or in court in order to keep them quiet. Other times, according to the informants, academics had been vilified and shunned, due to their critical opinion and research.

6.1.5 Self-restrictions and Self-censorship

As a result of intimidating threats and informal power, academics were perceived in many cases to limit their own freedom of speech, and at times self-censorship were reported. This took different forms, and it could happen in research, in public debates or in class.

> *"Of course, you think of the consequences of yourself. I think, honestly, people engage in some level of self-censorship. First, you try to do certain kind of research, it can even become a bit more dangerous for you, more tricky for you."* (I.2)

Self-censorship was understood as something negative, as it was regarded to prohibit the truth from emerging and the academics from practicing their profession freely. Self-censorship was seen as a consequence of self-limitation, fear, a perceived need to play safe, or due to the types of limitations and controls that the academics faced. Thus, many academics acknowledged that self-censorship existed at the CHUSS and the SoL, often due to a feeling of insecurity – of the potential consequences for their personal well-being. While most of them put a high premium on academic integrity and values, they also acknowledged that in practical terms many academics had to self-censor. Most frequently, however, the academics did not give expression of personal experiences with self-censuring, but rather referred to colleagues they knew had experienced the consequences of being censored externally by public officials, or they talked about self-censorship as a general phenomenon within Mak.

6.2 The Views of the External Informants

As with many of the academic informants, the external informants argued that the government of Museveni was using threats to intimidate the critical academics.

> "*You have first to agree (to) the government position. If you are going to keep continue doing your work as academics, you have to be careful what you say, and how you say it.*" (I.21)

The use of informal power, the same informants argued, negatively affected the work of the academics. Not only did it limit what kind of research and public activities the academics could engage in, it also led to self-imposed restrictions, self-censorship and apathy. This was in line with the perceptions of the academics themselves.

> "*I think what is happening is self-censorship for sure. Why the professors at the school of law don't speak out, why they don't write, I think it is all because of self-censorship really.*" (I.21)

To some extent, it was easier for the external informants to talk freely about sensitive issues during the interviews, and they could be more direct in their reflections. This could be because of their distance from the university and the political sphere. This was evident, especially when they talked of networks of affection that academics and politicians engaged in, arguing that there in many cases were no independence between them. One noted:

> "*I think they are bedfellows. There is no independence between the political science lectures and the politicians. And yet I thought, there should be people we trust (…). So, when you have that compromising kind of thing, I don't see really that there is an independence. Because I mean he (the president) pays the papers of what is there.*" (I.19)

Further, they also claimed to observe that loyal academics faced favour by government in terms of positions and funding. Since some academics were reported to get position in the political system, the external informants argued that one could not rule out that some became part of the ruling establishment. They argued, that the state was reaching out to some academics, and since the salaries from Mak was not perceived to be sufficient, they provided the academics with extra income, so that they could for example manage their loans.

6.3 Controls by the State

Governmental control over academics at the CHUSS and the SoL was exercised in various ways[23]. Formal forms of control are in this thesis understood as methods used by the political elite to undermine or downgrade the work and legitimacy of scientific knowledge and

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[23] In Uganda, knowledge production is regulated in several ways, among other through laws, and administrative regulations. These formal and legitimate attempts to control knowledge production and dissemination are not the focus here.

academics. Thus, they should be understood as formal, albeit illegitimate use of power. These were both visible and open to the public, but they were framed by political actors as something different. The informal tactics had the same purpose, but was more hidden, and was not necessarily visible for the public or the media. Even though these could be understood as means of controlling academia, they could also have other purposes. In the following, I will sketch three pertinent examples that illustrate the use of formal power to restrict the work of the academic profession. Each in its own way describe and reflect on the relationship between politics and knowledge.

6.3.1 Academic Staff Strike 2016

In the end of October 2016, academic staff was striking at Mak, due to late payments of *incentive payments[24],* which was supposed to be paid by the government. This was money promised by the President, but was delayed by eight months (Musinguzi, 2016a). On November 1st, the President ordered the closure of Mak with immediate effect, in order to guarantee the "safety of persons and property" (Dahir, 2016). Soon after, Museveni commissioned a Visitation Committee, whom was tasked to holistically investigate issues at Mak, and submit a report to the President within a period of 3 months. However, this report was handed over on December 29th 2017 (Mak, 2018). The closure of Mak lasted 5 months (Softpower, 2017).

This was not the first time academic staff was striking, and striking has been common among academics, non-academic staff, and among the students at Mak. Neither was it the first time Mak had been completely closed during a strike[25]. One informant elaborated on this issue, arguing that late payment was a deliberate move to restrict or censure academics:

> *You have a university such as Makerere University that used to previously be very critical of the state and, but now that it is barely receiving funding, public funding from the government. (…) we have not been paid what we call the incentive payment, I think since march 2016, so that is a way in which the government is trying to sort of like say "you guys are the ones who talk, so we have to find a way to narrowing your space"* (I.10)*.*

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[24] The incentives were introduced during the 2013/2014 academic year, and were meant to consolidate allowances that academics were earning from teaching evening programme students and eradicate indiscriminate distribution of the allowances among lecturers (Musinguzi, 2016b).
[25] President Museveni also closed the university in November 1989 (Makerere University, 1991, in Currey, 2003:13).

The closure of the university, and the late payments, can be understood as an effort made by the government to silence academic protests and complaints. It can also be understood as an instance of use of formal power and control to restrict the work of the academics. One external informant stated:

> *So, for me, I see that as another way of control. And it has not been the first time that the university was closed. (...) I see them as indirect attacks, telling them to keep their, to know their place, and not to enter so much into politics. And also, the little pay that they are giving, that means that they does not focus much on academics. They focus on other ways of seeking survival, that is the control of what academia can do. So, they are not paid enough, they are always striking (...).* (I.20)

According to the journalists, the continued strikes among the academic staff, eroded the respect and trust in the academics and their work. One argued that a well-known tactic by government was to gradually erode academics´ respect. This, he argued, was done by claiming that academics only were "money hungry", as the rhetoric was in in statements made by government in the newspapers during the strike.

6.3.2 Stella Nyanzi – Academic Activism

On April 7th 2017 Dr. Stella Nyanzi, an academic previously working at Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR) at Mak, was arrested for criticizing the President on his social media accounts. She was further arrested for violating the President´s right to privacy under the Computer Misuse Act 2011, referring to the president as "a pair of buttocks" (Amnesty, 2017a). During the hearing in the case, the state attorney requested for examination of her mental health. On May 10th 2017 she was released on bail, after being imprisoned for 33 days. Prior to the arrest, Nyanzi was prevented for boarding a plane to the Netherlands, even though she had been granted a visa to attend an academic conference there (Amnesty, 2017b).

The arrest of Nyanzi came less than two months after she publicly criticized the First Lady Janet Museveni, wife of the president and minister of Education, for failing to provide sanitary pads to all schoolgirls in Uganda. This was a promise made by the President during the campaigns for the 2016 elections. The First Lady claimed in Parliament on February 14 2017 that the government had no money for such services (Amnesty, 2017b). Later, Nyanzi criticized and verbally attacked Janet Museveni on Facebook. She came out strongly using a sexual language and described Mrs. Museveni as a failure in her capacity as the Minister of Education (Adongo, 2017; Burnett, 2017). One informant argued that this had been done in

order to shock people into action, and supporters saw the rudeness and obnoxiousness of Dr. Nyanzi´s comments as tools of resistance and protest against a powerful oppressor.

Nyanzi was charged against Article 24-25 in the Computer and Misuse Act 2011, for "cyber harassment" and "offensive communication" (Al Jazeera, 2017). The president and his supporters were trying to frame this as a case about violating the right to privacy. Furthermore, it seems that the government was trying to make the case into one about political activism. The external informants argued that the president was more occupied with sending a message to activists not to criticize, than with a conviction in the case. The name of Janet Museveni, whom was mostly "attacked" and the explicit target in the case, were not mentioned in the case papers. The external informants were further convinced that charging Nyanzi was understood as a way of trying to weaken both present and future activists. One journalist noted:

> "*You cannot really speak out, "when you do we shall bash your head in". That is the orientation of Stella´s situation. So, it is about government fearing that many more people are going to come up.*" (I.21)

6.3.3 Electoral research - *Controlling Consent*

After the 2016 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, a group of researchers and activists from different academic and intellectual traditions in Uganda wrote through the Centre for Basic Research a book called *Controlling Consent: Uganda´s 2016 Elections* (CBR, 2016). This was supposed to provide a systematic synthesis on the elections, offering a space in which to elaborate on where Uganda was in terms of electoral democracy. According to the authors, it would *"make a significant contribution to the knowledge and understanding of Uganda's governance and electoral processes both as a test of and reflector upon the country's political development"* (CBR, 2016). Scholars argued that this was a well-researched collation of material on the increasingly authoritarian character of the state in Uganda (LSE,2017). In March 2017 more than 600 copies of the book were confiscated and banned by Uganda´s customs authority. They claimed that the book had been falsely declared as educational material, when it in reality was political (LSE, 2017; Kafeero, 2017).

With the exception of *Controlling Consent*, there were no formal censorship of academic publications in Uganda. None of the academics recalled any other books that had been seized

during recent times. However, one of the journalists argued that this was not the first time that critical books had been seized by government:

> "*Yes, it has. Especially when it is critical of government shortcomings, in terms of politics and ever so, provision of social services. Government does not like it to reach the liberty of light.*" (I.19).

Table 5 give an overview of formal and informal methods used by the political establishment as means to control academia at Mak. Some of these were linked to other constraints elaborated on in this chapter, and they were as such not straightforward, but open for interpretations. The table is based on findings in the interview data and from the documents reviewed.

Table 5: Methods used by the political elite to control the academics and research at CHUSS and SoL at Makerere University

Formal	Informal
Inadequate funding for research	Hidden personal threats personal – texts, calls
Closing the university during the academic staff strike autumn 2016, when academic staff was protesting against stalled incentive payments	Buying critical voices in academia with positions in government
Enforcing "colonial" rules on critical voices in academia – Use and interpret laws to work against the freedom of speech of academics	Funding and other favors to academics that "play on the same team" as the political establishment. They were called "official academics"
Deny political opposition events at campus due to "safety issues, fear of riots"	Spies on campus/in the classroom – reporting to the regime
President Museveni criticize the social sciences and humanities in media of being irrelevant	
Seizing academic research	

6.4 Summary and concluding remarks

The academics are faced by a situation of meagre salaries, too heavy workloads and limited funding, and all of them meet various challenges in their daily work. While some academics perceived Mak as a protected space from political influence and restrictions, others believed that government was restricting the work and activities of the academics both through formal and informal means. The external informants as well as some academics argued that such methods as threats, seizing books and buying critical voices in academia were used in a strategic manner to limit the interference of academics into politics in Uganda. Some academics were perceived to engage in networks of affection. Those were called "official academics" and was reported to stay loyal to the regime for favours. As a consequence of the illegitimate use of power, some academics faced restrictions that were self-imposed, such as when they curtailed their own academic freedom.

Chapter 7: The Academic Profession and Democracy

Empirical Findings – Part Three

7. Introduction

Neither the academics nor the external informants understood the political system in Uganda to be democratic, describing it rather as a disguised dictatorship. Although few of the academics had a clear understanding of how they contributed to democratization, it was often indirectly understood as how they shaped their students, through training of government officials, through outreach activities and public engagement. It was among the academics at the SoL and among the critical academics at the CHUSS that the commitment to contribute was seen as the highest. The constraints presented in the previous chapter were perceived to limit the academics` potential of contributing.

This chapter will start broadly by presenting the academics´ understanding of the state of democracy in Uganda. Altbach (2013b) find that academics in developing countries are deeply embedded in national realities. Thus, it was of importance to understand how they perceived the political landscape before assessing their contributions to democratization. Second, it will present the views of the academics in terms of how they could be relevant for democratic developments. Third, the chapter will present the views of the external informants as well as the secondary data. In the end, an example will be presented where the informants believed that the academics had contributed to processes leading to democratization.

7.1 The view of the Academics

As a starting point: None of the academics thought that the political system in Uganda was democratic. Democracy was understood to be the most legitimate way of running the state, but for most, it was perceived to be very limited. As noted by one:

> *"Everyone is talking about democracy in the sense it is practices in the West. Then, in terms of freedom of associations, freedom of speak, freedom of opinion, freedom of word. I think the democracy here (…) does not exist. But as far as I am concerned, what we have here is authoritarians, yeah and you cannot be talking about democracy and at the same time authoritarians."* (I.15)

Some argued that the checks and balances which were supposed to guarantee the separation of power in the political system, were completely missing. Others pointed to a near collapse of

almost all key institutions of the state such as the judiciary, the government and the legislature. They argued that judges were being appointed because of their political affiliation, and Members of Parliament owed their positions in Parliament to the president. Generally, elections were not perceived to be free and fair, and government was reported to shut down social media during elections. Police brutality during elections was argued to be an issue, especially when the government used the police and army to combat the political opposition from competing on equal grounds.

A common view held among the academics was that the political system was highly personalized, around president Museveni. One stated:

> *"One of the problems is that we have a Head of State who is so occupied with being in power (...). He being in power beyond so many years, nothing will be done. He does nothing and this is very openly. If you are his supporter you can do anything and you can get away with anything. If you are not his supporter they will look for any change to throw you out."* (I.3).

Just one informant expressed that most practices in Uganda was relatively democratic, such as elections, the election race and political activities. Although he also argued that there were democratic reversals; intolerant levels of corruption, inefficient levels of public service delivery, and a tired elite in power. Another, referred to the regular elections as an indicator of democracy, arguing that there was at least a *resemblance* of democratic practices. At the same time, he was questioning if they were conducted in a free and fair manner. Lastly, one though that the High Court both enjoyed trust and integrity, especially if one compared it with the police, and as such, this was an institution which was fulfilling its role in a democratic polity.

What was clear, was that according to the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL, the political system in Uganda could be described as a neopatrimonial and authoritarian regime. Some of them used the term *electoral autocracy* and described the system as one that was neither totally democratic, nor totally totalitarian. As one elaborated, on the face of it, one was observing seeing a democratic dispensation – the courts were working according to set laws and standards, and they were independent from the political system. The newspapers and television were reported to be independent from the Head of State, and they were free to report on any societal and political situation. People were free to criticize government in public, without fear of their lives. On the other hand, these practices were not perceived by the academics to be consolidated, even though the laws were there to regulate and guarantee

democratic practices and institutions. One noted:

> "*when it comes to thinking about deeper meaning of democracy, that deeper or consolidated democracy, it is absent in this country because you have a group of people who control power in this country, they control all the political processes, they control even the juridical processes, even the parliamentarian processes, and later on elections.*" (I.14).

Thus, most argued that the separation of power in Uganda was not clear, and that there was a fusion between the political party in power and the state. They perceived the NRM to use politics of fear, and the history of violence as an effective strategy to stay in power. There had never been a peaceful transition of power in Uganda, and academics questioned if there were any democratic processes which could guarantee that in coming elections.

7.1.1 How the Academic Profession Contributed

Few academics did have a clear understanding of how they contributed to democratization. Nevertheless, they indirectly touched upon the topic during the interviews. Most of them believed that they *could* be relevant for democratization if they were not restricted by the limitations they all faced (see Chapter 6). If and how they were contributing to democratic developments, however, were contested.

7.1.2 Shape Students to Become Future Democratic Leaders and Bureaucrats

There were contrasting views on whether the academic profession should influence by the way they shaped their students. Some argued that the job as a teacher meant to teach the students to think critically, help them to produce sound arguments for their beliefs and participate in discussions. Others argued that shaping the students to become future democratic leaders and bureaucrats, was one of the goals of teaching. One informant argued:

> "*Certainly, this is part of the teaching, this is part of (what) the university is trying to because we are preparing these people to go out there, they are the next leaders, as they say they are the next leaders of the country. So certainly, as we do the training, part of the mission is to prepare these people for the, you know to run the country.*" (I.12)

Others argued that the role as a teacher only meant to put knowledge on the table and give the students theoretical interpretation. One informant believed that this would give the students freedom to discuss and reflect on theoretical perspectives. If one tried to shape the student, then one would be regarded as an activist, which would be wrong. In his words:

> *"When it comes to democracy, the teacher should not force this onto the students, but rather, if the students decided that democracy is important, it should be because it is the student who appreciate this method."* (I.1).

In any case, one of the reported objectives was to equip students with the tools to critically judge what was going on outside of Mak. Some though that being able to shape the students were not in their capacity due to the meager salaries and lack of time for such engagement. They considered this as if asking for extra work for themselves. Even so, they addressed the need for a coordinating mechanism within Mak that could plan for such an engagement.

There were different views of how to train the students to become democratic leaders and bureaucrats, in their everyday work as a teacher. Some of the informants held panel discussions and debates where they would bring in politicians from outside the university, with the hope of inspiring the students. At the SoL, different measures had been taken with the objective of shaping the students. For example, the program at the Public Interest Law Clinic (PILAC) was offered for students to interact with the community outside of Mak. The objective of this program was to raise the students' social consciousness and bring to light the real problems in the communities. The Human Rights and Peace Centre (HURIPEC) was also reported to have an outreach element to shape the students. The CHUSS had courses in ethics and public administration, and ethics and international relations. Academics within the CHUSS argued that this was a way of influencing the students´ thinking about their role. They also ran in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung a youth leadership program called *Young Leaders Forum Class*, which the academics argued had the same purpose.

7.1.3 Train Government Officials

At the SoL, the academic profession argued that their role included providing a training ground for democratic leadership and bureaucrats. This was understood as capacity building, to guide government officials and policy-makers in their work. Thus, they did training of government officials. One example provided was that they did training of MPs on international human rights, another was holding presentation for MPs on constitutionalism in Uganda. This was understood as a regular engagement at the SoL, and one that was given priority by the academics. Other times, they commented on guidelines for how cases should be handled by the judiciary. At the CHUSS too, some mentioned this as an engagement, although few elaborated on specific events or examples of where, when and how this

happened. They argued that this was one of the missions of the college. Despite of this, it was not seen as a constant engagement at the CHUSS but more in line with the role of the academics in an ideal situation. As noted by one:

> *"One of the requirements of this department, one of the missions would be to carder of the Ugandan civil servants. That's why we teach public administration, so it is one of the core missions of the department certainly. (…) So, it is one of the core aims of the department to have (a) say and train the public administrators."* (I.12)

7.1.4 Public Engagement and Activism

The public engagement among the academics was varying. Within the CHUSS and the SoL there were both highly active and inactive academics in terms of community outreach, participation in public debates and discussions, or commenting on political and societal issues in various media outlets. Those that were active saw this as an important part of the work as an academic at Mak, and it was further understood as among their multiple roles. For others, it was not perceived to be an important or interesting aspect of their work, and some neglected it altogether. An informant at the SoL provided an example of where she had engaged:

> *"Also, many of our colleagues have engaged in you know public debates and discussions on different issues, I remember myself after the first presidential debate before the elections in February 2016, I was one of the legal analysts of the debate, you see what were the issues, so we also take up a public role, really to discuss how is the government of this country and where could it be better."* (I.10)

Another informant argued that engagement with the public was an important aspect of the work of the academics, one she believed to be important also in terms of democratization:

> *"There are those that are still teaching, and yes they are well known for their writing and their critique of you know, what is going on in Uganda of politics, of human rights, you know of everything really, so I think professors that has been there definitely have played a quite significant role in, you know, in critiquing some of the what, the unconstitutional laws, laws that violate human rights, laws that are not fair, you know the way elections are conducted, and all these things, they have definitely played a role, and they continue to play a role through you know talking, writing, research, writing opinion papers in the newspapers (…)."* (I.18)

Those academics that engaged with the public on a regular basis, were also those that were believed by other informants to take on the role as activists. Activism in this context was not understood as partisan political activism, but rather social activism that transcended political ideologies. Within the SoL, all the informants did regularly engage with the public. In addition to being academics, they could also be understood as social activists since they

engaged by providing critique of illegitimate practices, participate in public discussion, train government officials and MPs, conduct critical research, and speak the truth to power.

The academics at the CHUSS was divided along the lines between those who were critical of government and who were not. The division among them, was allegedly quite visible within the university and the political system. None of the informants, however, identified who belonged to each group. One group was believed to consist of those who were critical of government practices, and often criticize government actions and policies (even though they at times faced restrictions). While the other group was believed to consist of those who preferred to stay passive, seemingly having no interest in politics, or no interest in provoking the regime. While those that I interpreted to be part of the first group often spoke more openly of their roles in relation to politics, the academics in the second group most of the time did not want to reveal much of their personal opinions in this regard. One of these, however, stated:

> *"I told you, I am really weak on the activism because I am a coward, I don't want to cross the government, and I don't want to be known by them. I prefer to keep a low profile, and because I don't think the risk is worth it, if something happens to me it is my kids that will miss me, and who will care for them? You know, which is probably a fallacy because Uganda is for all of us, and if we don't solve them now, we don't leave a better country for our children. So, I know my thinking is wrong and I know I should do more, and I keep telling myself that I will do more, but I always get too busy with life."* (I.18)

7.2 Potential Problems

On a few occasions, the academics reported that efforts to contribute had other consequences than those intended. One argued that even though there were opportunities to have influence for example when parliament committees were going to make a law, parliament would as a rule not take the suggestions coming from the SoL seriously. According to the informant, this was because the parliament was too partisan. This could have serious consequences. She explained:

> *"(…) they are very important submissions, but in fact sometimes when you propose such things you see, you can even contribute to make an even worse law because they realize "this is it" so they can tighten it, so the opportunities are there but the situation might not allow it, in certain cases where proposals have a political problem. Not because what is being proposed is not sound, but because parliament is too narrow and too partisan to take it up."* (I.4)

A different issue that was thought to limit the contributions of the academics was that of the academics´ individual commitment to their work. Some informants criticized other members

of the academic profession of lacking commitment to their work. Not few academics were perceived by others to be demoralized by the heavy workloads, a missing balance between the different tasks of being an academic, and by the meager salaries. This, however, was interpreted as flaws at the individual level, as others managed to maintain their commitment to their work, facing the same challenges. One stated:

> "*I hope for change, there is so many things that is wrong with this university, I don't even know. (...) Okey, if you feel that you have an obligation to be here and be a part of the change, that might be okey. But the rest is only here to teach and then go home, and they don't have time to care about it.*" (I.11)

Two important issues that the informants perceived to affect some of the academics' commitment to their work, were nepotism and corruption within Mak. Due to such challenges at the university, one informant stated:

> "*… I actually considered leaving academia for good. When you work here, you see the ugly side of academia, and you are not sure if you want to be part of it.*" (I.13)

Another issue was that some representatives of the academic profession at the CHUSS was distant and withdrawn from the society they are supposed to analyse. Thus, some of the publicly engaged members of the profession, argued for increased engagement and commitment among the academic profession at the CHUSS.

7.2.1 How to Influence when Met with Limitations

A recurrent issue in the interviews was what the academics could do when they were met with challenges or found difficulties in influencing and contributing to democratization. A common view was that the most effective thing they could do were to find ways of simplifying their research and scientific message. They argued that what was needed was to "translate" academic findings to formats that was easy to understand and use by the policy-makers. Thus, a call was made for enhanced communication through seminars and dialogues aimed at making research outputs more easily available for actors in the political system. Finding simple methods for communication was thus understood to be the key.

For others, in order to make a contribution to policy or the political sphere more generally, critical views needed to be channelled through institutes with in Mak that was regarded to be in "good books" with government officials. Although not necessarily trusted by the regime,

these institutes received a big proportion of its funds by government, and thus, these research outputs were reported to be used to a greater extent by actors in the political system. One informant argued that this was the most efficient way of getting government to listen to the research produced by that the academics:

> *"But I channel my views through a team of researchers in EPRC (Economic Policy Research Centre). And when these ideas reach government, the government accepts them, because they are coming from a research institute that is funded 65% by the government, and it is in good books of government. So, critical views from EPRC, sometimes is toned down, edited, but those views are accepted more directly because EPRC is seen as a think tank of the government."* (I.7)

7.3 The Views of the External Informants and Secondary Sources

All the external actors interviewed argued that academics had an important role to play in contributing to processes leading to enhanced democratic practices, such as; free and fair elections, rule of law, human right and constitutionalism. They argued that the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL should be able to guide government and parliament in their work. One informant stated:

> *"the academia in a fragile democracy, if you want to call it a fragile democracy, or in a disguised dictatorship, that you see here. Academia is supposed to try and guide, in my opinion they are supposed to try to guide, to be able to guide the country. For example, if there is no rule of law, they are supposed to say "this is how things should be done". If there is an abuse of human rights, they are supposed to come out and guide (…)."* (I.20)

Another external informant argued that the academics were powerful resources in terms of brain power, which was essential when democratic practices and principles was at stake. As with the academics who argued for more engagement from the profession, the external informants called upon increased engagement and commitment among the profession since they could be important actors in processes leading to democratization. In contrast to the academics, the external informants called for this both among the academic profession at the CHUSS and at the SoL. Accordingly, academics should move out from the *ivory tower*, and give more public speeches and publish more books on issues related to democratization and constitutionalism. On the contributions from the SoL, one external informant noted:

> *"So, the silence from the Faculty of Law. Okey, they are saying a few things nowadays, but for me I still find it is not enough, the School of Law needs to do much more than they are doing right now, they have to speak out more, they need to engage more."* (I.21).

Not only did the external informants think that the level of contribution to be inadequate, they also though that the academics from the CHUSS and the SoL were less frequently engaging with the public than previously. The academics were perceived to engage less with the public in terms of public lectures, and other outreach activities.

Various events and public lectures organized at Mak during the previous years could be understood as contributions to democratization. In 2014 the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the CHUSS hosted a session at the Uongozi Summer School which was one of the activities of the East African Uongozi Institute – with the aim of inculcating leadership qualities and competencies among the next generation of East African leaders (Mak, 2014:35). Several academicians and politicians from the region talked to the students on different topics under the theme "African States: Competing Identities and Democratization". During this event, The Minister of Education and Sports noted:

> "*such institutions are of great importance at this time when Africa is faced with many leadership challenges that have resulted into suppression of human rights, violent conflicts, and economic deterioration.*" (Mak, 2014:35).

The CHUSS (MUK, 2007a:399-401) argued that the long-term objectives of their master degree programme in Public Administration and Management was to build national capacity in public policy formulation, and to promote democratic values and practices in the Ugandan society. It was also expected that the dissertations of this programme would make a significant contribution to the knowledge of public policy and planning. Thus, it was seen both as a way of shaping the students, and as a way of contributing to democratization and increased interaction between the academic profession and the political system.

Public engagement was reported several times in the annual reports from Mak. There were held both public lectures, dialogues and inaugural lectures of which many of these brought up topics and issues relevant for democratization. The inaugural lecture series was a platform for academic staff to contribute to the academic life of the University, but also a way to engage students and the public more generally (Mak, 2016:25). These contributions are presented in short in the table below.

Table 6: Public engagement at CHUSS and SoL (2013-2017)

Year	College	Type of event	Purpose
2013	CHUSS in	International	Examined new and emerging issues in social development and

	conjunction with Simmons College	Conference of Social Development (ICSD)	discussed long standing concerns including human rights issues.
2013	SoL in collaboration with the University of Pretoria	Inaugural Public Lecture by Julius Osega	The former President of the Republic of Mozambique presented the paper: *the role of the Police in upholding and promoting democracy*.
2013	HURIPEC	Public dialogue	With Human Rights Network Uganda and Center for Constitutional Governance. The dialogue discussed the issue of human rights and violations of public order.
2013	PILAC	Public discourse	Topic: *Corruption and Good Governance*
2014	CHUSS	Annual Makerere University Human Rights Expo	A university flagship event dedicated towards promoting human rights awareness (sensitization) among academics, students and the general public.
2015	SoL	Inaugural Lecture by Professor Oloka-Onyango	Title: *Ghosts and the Law.* Addressed the scenarios were courts had declined to hear cases because they fell under the "political question doctrine" hence failure to call on the government to act on the aggrieved matters.
2015	CHUSS	A series of seminars	Discussed the national political environment within the general election discourse, debating and presenting papers on issues over intra-party democracy, the role of money in elections and party ideologies.
2016	SoL	Inaugural Lecture by professors Sylvia Tamale	Title: *Nudity, Protests and the Law in Uganda.* An analysis on how women in Uganda have stripped naked as a way of putting focus on law, gender and power relations in society.
2016	CHUSS in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung	Seminar	Title: *Youth, Politics and Elections in Uganda*

Sources: Mak (2013:7,52), Mak (2014:51), Mak (2015:25,28,36) and Mak (2016:25-26,38-39)

7.4 Amicus Curiae (Friend of Court)

On March 10th 2016, various civil society organizations (CSOs) filed an *Amicus Curie*[26] motion to join a presidential election petition, after the Parliamentary and Presidential elections on February 18th 2016. Among these were nine academics from the SoL (Oloka-Onyango, 2016). In doing so, they joined the presidential election petition put forward by Mbabazi, the third-place presidential candidate. Mbabazi´s petition in the Supreme Court was challenging the validity of President Museveni´s win in the election. This petition was of interest to academics since it raised important questions of public interests; whether the general elections were conducted in a free and fair manner.

To be a "friend of court", denoted a right to other than the parties to a case to submit to the

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[26] According to Business Dictionary (2018) Amicus Curiae refers to "*an individual who, while not a party to a litigation, provides expert testimony at the invitation of a court. He or she may also argue in support of a public interest case (or a party to a case) not being adequately represented in a trial*". It translates from Latin to "friend of court".

court. This meant that in addition to Mbabazi, the academics could provide the court with relevant information to the case. According to the press statement, the admission as Amicus Curiae would serve the interest of justice and enhance participation in the courts of people in Uganda, who would otherwise not be represented (MinBane, 2016). This was the first time that the court had allowed academics and CSOs to be friends of court in Uganda.

The duty of CSOs to engage in matter of public interest is enshrined in the Constitution (1995) and states "*civic organizations are especially charged with the responsibility to engage to protect constitutionalism, human rights and democracy*" (CCEDU, 2016). A similar article claiming such a duty for the academics did not exist. Despite this, the academics engaged in this manner still thought that they had a role to play in promoting democracy and constitutionalism. As one of the academics who contributed as "friend of court" put it:

> *"We have civic obligations as legal academics to provide our expertise for the benefit of the public. (...) We also did this to be an example to our students that we actually practice what we preach to them. As much as we did this in our individual capacities, we believed that it would enhance the profile of the School of Law and Makerere University. The Court has now allowed us as its friends and to give it advice. This is the first time a court in Uganda is allowing legal academics for this purpose. Interventions of this nature are going to fundamentally change the way courts in Uganda work."* (Mbazira, 2016a)

7.5 Summary and Concluding Remarks

While neither the academics nor the external informants saw Uganda as run according to democratic values and principles, they all saw it as the role of the academic profession to contribute to democratization in one way or the other. Even so, they did not have a clear understanding of their current contribution, or how this could be done in the future. While I interpreted the academics at the SoL to be the most committed to this role, I only regarded the critical ones at the CHUSS to have the same commitment. My interpretation coincided to a great extent with the self-perception of the academics. The academics contributed in various ways; through research, teaching, outreach and public engagement. All of these contributions were understood as a continuation of their roles as academics, while some also engaged in and built social activism into their research and the academic role. Others either stayed passive, had no interest in participating in the public debate, or lacked commitment to their work, thus they were preoccupied with their traditional work roles, those of primarily teaching and sometimes doing research, without these aiming at contributing to enhanced democratization.

Chapter 8: The Relationship and Interplay Between Knowledge and Politics in Uganda

Analysis - Part One

8. Introduction

The academic profession does not have a contract with society to be relevant for a particular purpose or client (Halvorsen, 2017). At the same time however, it is expected by the broader society that the profession should provide relevant knowledge, in one way or the other. Relevance of academic work (research, publications, outreach, public engagement) is understood by members of the academic profession as interaction with community, enlighten the public, conduct research and advocate on issues of politics and governance, and to influence policy and political decisions. The academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL have the capacity to conduct research and generate new knowledge that target national issues of relevance for society. And yet they are not considered to be of relevance by government as a potential user of this research. Academics themselves have their own conceptions of relevance, but they are also affected by the conceptions held by others. Generally speaking, there is a considerable tension between the conception of relevance the academics have, and that of government (Brennan, 2007:19-24).

In this chapter, I will present and discuss the science-politics nexus in Uganda, in light of the theoretical contributions on the field. It starts by comparing the nexus in Uganda to that of the knowledge-politics relationship in modern democratic societies as presented in Chapter 3. In the second section, a discussion is presented on the role of politics in relation to the academics, and why the political system is perceived not to appreciate and utilize the knowledge, research and expertise that the CHUSS and the SoL provide. In the end, the issue of trust in scientific knowledge and the work of the academic profession will be discussed.

8.1 The Science-Politics Nexus

There are various ways for academics to exercise influence over political processes and the political system. In democratic societies, academics regularly participate in advisory processes with different branches of government (e.g. executive, legislature). Scientific knowledge is working as a base for political decision-making and use of scientific knowledge

legitimize political decisions (Weingart, 2003, in Maasen & Weingart, 2005:9). In Uganda, the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL argue that they should participate as academic experts in policy-making, since this is believed to contribute to sounder decisions and more effective policies as they think they are capable to provide relevant knowledge on the matter at hand.

To claim relevance is one thing, to prove it is another. The academics at the CHUSS and the SoL are not frequently utilized as experts, and the political regime is not interested in creating the space of the academics to contribute with expert advice and recommendation to decision-making, as in democratic societies (Weiss 1986; Schudson 2006; Parkinson 2003; Christiano 2012, in Tellmann, 2016:1). Rarely government in Uganda accept recommendations and act upon them immediately as in linear model of policy making (Thomas & Grindle, 1990:1165), and the academic profession does not expect research-based knowledge to have any *direct* effect on policy-makers. And yet, they expect that research and consultancies should inform policy and political decisions, if not as *immediate* uptake.

In democratic societies, decision-makers call upon experts when seeking information or knowledge, and there is an assumption that governments will follow scientific recommendations because they produce the best available knowledge though a consensus-building process. This is happening less in Uganda, given the reported disinterest in scientific knowledge – where government does not perceive the CHUSS and the SoL to produce the right kind of usable knowledge. Decisions are often made without reference to knowledge, and scientific knowledge is less requested. More often than not, the academic profession argues that reliable knowledge does not enter the policy process, and that it seldom and insufficiently is deployed. Rather than being used, it is often ignored by political actors. What is in stark contrast to the knowledge-politics interplay in democratic societies, is the political disinterest in the knowledge provided by academia, their lack of trust in scientific knowledge, and political efforts to control and undermine the legitimacy of scientific knowledge.

The contributions of academics and their influence in political decisions and policy processes, such as in agenda setting, policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation, have to be understood against two aspects that are particularly important to bear in mind (Solberg, 2017:16). The first is the *time* dimension. Since it often takes time before a completed

research project can have concrete impact on society, it is questionable to look for impacts and immediate results right after the completion of a project. The other aspect is the *attribution* problem. The further one looks for broad and long term societal and political impact of research, the harder it is to establish the causal link between this research and its impact; the impacts may have been partly or entirely produced by other factors than research. In other circumstances it can be difficult to identify the exact researcher and research project that have produced the impact (Solberg, 2017:16).

Agenda-setting is one of the crucial processes in the political realm (in´t Veld, 2010:16). The academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL, have the potential of being relevant in terms of bringing important social and political issues to the political agenda, since these disciplines study the society itself. This is not the case, however; the academic profession is not able to put important issues on the Ugandan agenda for policy-making. in´t Veld (2010b:16) argues that politicians typically select agendas that may produce political success, and thus, "unsolvable" problems do not appear on the political agenda, because successes are impossible.

Following the argument of in´t Veld, so-called unsolvable problems appear to flourish in Uganda, including but not limited to; poverty, corruption, patronage, human rights abuses, police brutality and arbitrary arrests, and lack of a level political playing field (Olum, 2010; ACFIM, 2015; Helle & Rakner, 2016; HRW, 2018). These are all issues which academics both from the SoL and the CHUSS try to bring on to the public agenda. They have conducted well-grounded scientific research on these issues which make them scientific experts capable on guiding the government on these important issues.

To bring achieve "success" on such complex, multi-layered and inter-dependent societal and political issues, would require state institutions, such as government and parliament to change some of their prevailing practices. This is so because these issues are interlinked with the practices of government and parliament, such as political corruption and patronage (ACFIM, 2015; Mbazira, 2016b). In Uganda, the political will to alter its actions does not prevail, and issues that are not in the interest of the regime in power, will rarely be put on the political agenda since they enjoy almost complete power in defining the agenda.

The strained relationship between the political regime and parts of Mak is resulting in a situation where the former is less likely to seek professional advice from the latter. Furthermore, the state does not rely on "objective" knowledge, as in democratic societies. Government officials are believed to lack both knowledge and interest about relevant research in their fields of politics. Many politicians and bureaucrats are unwilling and some even unable to absorb and exploit the variety of research coming from the CHUSS and the SoL. The academic profession also argue that politicians lack the absorptive capacity in relation to their research. Thus, the political regime does to a lesser extent use scientific research from the Colleges as a base for future politics, political priorities and policy-making.

Based on the understandings among the informants and from the secondary sources presented in Chapter 5-7, a table have been constructed which provide an overview of the relations and interlinks between politics and knowledge as it unfolds in Uganda. The table, as with the discussion, does not try to make general assumptions about the politics-knowledge relations in Uganda, since it is limited to the sample in the CHUSS and the SoL within Mak. Thus, the findings in this study may depart from politics-knowledge relations regarding other modes of knowledge, such as the STEM-disciplines, as well as between other universities in Uganda and the political system. The various elements of the table have been, and will be addressed in this chapter, Chapter 9 and Chapter 10.

Table 7: The science-politics nexus in Uganda

| | Interlinks between | |
	Politics	Social Science & Law
Policy-making	Politics rarely makes knowledge-based decisions, and political statements and policies does not make references to scientific knowledge from CHUSS and SoL. Politicians and policy-makers does rarely listen to research. Often uses power without referring to scientific knowledge from CHUSS and SoL Expertise: Policy-makers depend on academic expertise to legitimate political decisions Advisory process: Government rarely seek advice from academics. The control the selection of advisors and the fields of knowledge they present (since these factors may decide the answers they can except)	Scientific knowledge is expected to feed into policy making but it rarely happens. Expertise: Contributing as experts to policy making is not a regular engagement. Some are sitting on boards or committees, for example: Technical Committee on Societal Protection in the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development Advisory process: Those who does not criticize government practices or the ruling elite sometimes find that they advise Agenda setting: Academic are rarely able to put social or political issues on the agenda

	Agenda setting: The ruling party have almost total control of the political agenda, which makes it hard for other actors in society to contribute	
Legitimation	Politics is not seeking security and legitimation in scientific knowledge from CHUSS and SoL Political opponents do not use research in political discussions	Inadequate funding and informal methods of control is undermining the legitimacy of the academics
Consultancy work	Rarely does government give commissioned research assignments to academics at CHUSS and SoL on societal issues that the political system has interest of. If they consult, that rarely follow recommended practices	Heavy consultancy culture among the academics. However, they are rarely consulted by government
Outreach and activism	Outreach: The head of state criticize humanities and social sciences for being irrelevant for development and the needs of the nation Activism: Academic social activists face threats and informal means of control by government. Enforce strict "colonial laws" to shut down dissenting voices Critical research: use formal and informal methods of power to control academic work (seizing books, pay academics poorly, threats)	Outreach: Some few academics are regularly engaging with knowledge-based judgements in public debates and media. These are commonly known for their public engagement Activism: Some academics are engaging in social activism to promote justice and democratization. Few oppose the pressure from government Critical research: HURIPEC and MISR are persistent in conducting critical research
Translation and bridging	Collaboration, communication and mediation between academics and policy-makers is not a common engagement in all fields	Inadequate channels for communication and influence
Academic Freedom	Impose restrictions on academic freedom of various kinds (threats, seizing books, withhold incentive payments during strike etc.) Does not take measures to protect the academic freedom of academics	Due to uncertainty about restrictions and reprisals, academics engage in self-censorship
Democracy and modernization	MPs are trained in workshops organized by SoL	Train and educate future leaders – this is a lasting engagement from SoL Setting the premises of politics in the long run (ex: by research conducted at SoL on family constellations and sexual rights)
Networks of affection	The ruling elite is buying critical voices to silence with positions in government. Give consultancy jobs etc. to loyal academics	"Official academics" engage in informal networks connected with the political elite. Academics get positions in government, the civil service or the judicial system if they are loyal to the regime

8.2 Politics Dimension

According to the academic profession in Uganda, decision-makers and politicians approaches academics and their research with reservation, a severe dose of scepticism and disinterest in

many instances. The academics are neither particularly valued, nor trusted by the political system. Trust in science-based knowledge is a precondition for the existence of a research university, and knowledge creation depends on trust from the authority that has influence over the university, as well as different users of the knowledge in society, such as government, parliament and the civil service. Knowledge and the outcome from the university, such as books, reports, and candidates need to be trusted to have an impact (Halvorsen, 2010a:250-251). Without being trusted, the academics at Mak find themselves in a situation where they are neither listened to, advised, nor asked for knowledge in their fields of expertise.

One informant illustrated this problematic relationship between academia and government by stating in a rather general way that:

> "*There are few governments that trust universities in Africa. There are few universities where you know, government and universities are working hand in hand, you know happy friends, because traditionally universities have always been centers of opposition. Not necessarily supporting an opposition party, but centers of resistance, center of questioning, centers of demanding for more in terms of rights. So, the relationship, I don't think the relationship between our university and the government is any different from any other university in the establishment.*" (I.17)

By "establishment" was meant the kind of political system found in Uganda, and elsewhere in Africa: Big Men in authoritarian regimes, where the power is concentrated in the hand of the few, in the ruling elite of the state, and where power is uncontested, with one center of power (Makara, 2010). In such a system, in stark contrast to a modern society where trust in the academic profession have been a common feature for long time, the state does not always tolerate dissenting and critical voices – or sharing power with other actors, groups and institutions in society.

Sicherman (2005:106) found that during Obote´s first term as president (1966-1917), Mak was seen as one of the three centers of power in society, together with government and commerce. Due to this, Obote increased state control over the university, among other, through The University Act of 1970. Also, today, academics and their research are viewed with skepticism, and seen as potential dissenting and opposing voices. By the political regime, Mak is seen as a center of power in society - especially the CHUSS and the SoL due to the nature of their disciplines[27]. The disciplines at the CHUSS are oriented toward a critical and

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[27] Political science for example, is the scientific study of government. It includes the study of political ideas and values, political behavior, and the political institutions which are created for the pursuit of collective goals. It

practical study and understanding of the human thought and behavior, as well as social and political dynamics as they relate to the individual and societal socio-economic development (CHUSS, 2011:v). Academics are understood as a challenge to the power of the ruling elites since they have the potential of contributing to more power sharing in society as part of modernization and democratization processes (Halvorsen, 2010c).

Science emanating from the CHUSS and the SoL is speaking truth to power, and deliver knowledge for politicians to use when they make their judgments and decisions. Despite of this, one can argue that most of the scientific knowledge coming from the CHUSS and the SoL at Mak is not per se in a position to drive the political process and lead to effective policies, given the lack of interest from the political system. Arguably this is the case because knowledge in Uganda have not become "*the currency of choice in legitimizing state power*", as Weiler (2006:71) claims it to be in democratic societies.

Barry (1995:103, in Rothstein, 2017:139-140) argues that "reasonableness" should be the guiding principle when decisions are made about the content of policies that government pursue. By this, he says, when people engage in political processes they should give sound arguments based on a secular understanding of knowledge for why they prefer certain policies over others. This can be understood as an argument for politics to be based on scientific knowledge, and that political arguments and decisions in the Ugandan context should be grounded in knowledge disseminated by academics within Mak. Rarely, however, are political actors in Uganda perceived by the academic profession to make references to scientific knowledge and research coming from the CHUSS and the SoL, and rarely do they find that arguments and political statements are based on a secular understanding of the knowledge they provide. Rather, it is based on political priorities that will credit the politicians and the regime.

But political decisions in Uganda need legitimation too, and the political actors realize that they have to act in accordance with the state of knowledge, meaning that they cannot act completely irrationally. Lentsch and Weingart (2011:7) argue that government´s "mandate of

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yields theories about politics and administration, two major dimensions of the study of government, and seeks to test and improve them by empirical research. Sociology on the other hand, aims at enhancing the understanding of society, societal relations, and problem-solving to societal needs (MUK, 2007a:386).

rationality" explains why they need to have their policies supported by expert opinion. If policy-making is knowledge-based, it will provide both legitimacy and effectiveness. Effectiveness is assured if the knowledge concerns true statements on the relationship between political interventions and their societal effects. Legitimacy on the other hand, is furthered when policies are based upon the "objective truth" (in´t Veld, 2010:6).

Thus, the academics perceive that government in Uganda legitimate their decisions, when necessary, with references to international organizations such as the World Bank on issues such as economic development. Referring to international organizations in itself should not be understood as problematic. When, however, reports and knowledge provided by such organizations are seen as a substitute for basing decision on knowledge produced at the national university, this should be understood as an indicator of the lack of trust of the academic profession at Mak. It can then be seen as a way for the regime to legitimize their decisions, while at the same time avoid doing this through the national academic profession and by so doing indirectly opening the space for academia as a societal force in society.

The term *capacity for action* as in Stehr´s (1998:36) understanding of knowledge, signals that knowledge may be left unused or may be employed for irrational ends. This is important as knowledge is not automatically used. Even though the research output coming from the SoL and the CHUSS is relevant for the Ugandan society and for national development, it requires a political system that is willing to listen to the work of the academics, and that are willing to use it, even if it goes contrary to what favors the interests of the political elite. This, however, prove difficult in Uganda, given the way the informal social logic is penetrating the formal state institutions that are supposed to base their decisions on scientific knowledge coming from Mak. Hyden (2013:74) found that relations of power in African countries are predominately personal and, in that sense, informal. One reason why political actors are not understood to be interested in using knowledge that goes contrary to their interests, may be that they do not allow themselves to be reduced to the notion of a "cog in the machine" but insist on upholding their personal esteem and dignity in ways that often go contrary to the demands of a legal-rational type of bureaucracy (Hyden, 2013:67-68).

Furthermore, as in´t Veld (2010b:20) argues, policy-makers will hardly accept new knowledge that does not fit into their core belief system, for example their political theory.

Since much of the knowledge and research produced at the CHUSS and the SoL make scientific claims and recommendations contrary to the practices and values of the political system, it is not surprising that the academic profession at both the CHUSS and the SoL rarely find that they are able to put issues on the political agenda or contribute to other phases of the policy process. Often, their scientific recommendations challenge the status quo of the political system, which run counter to "deep core" beliefs and values of the political elite (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier, 1994:180, in Owens, 2011:84). In these instances, it has shown extremely difficult for the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL to exert influence over the political system.

Meulemann & Tromp (2010:203) argue that political decisions are not taken on the basis of available knowledge per-se, but on the basis of *interpretation* and *selection* of knowledge. The political actors in many instances interpret available knowledge from the CHUSS to be critical of state practices and not relevant to national needs and development. Thus, they often chose not to select and use the available knowledge and research. Rather they are perceived to select and use knowledge that is regarded as relevant for economic and technical development, such as the research disseminated from the STEM-disciplines. In contrast, the social sciences are often overlooked or disregarded. Clearly, then, the usability of knowledge for policy-making in Uganda is therefore not only a matter of objectivity, but also influenced by values, beliefs, convictions and interests (Meulemann & Tromp, 2010:203).

In Uganda then, a bottleneck between the realm of politics, policy-making and research is perceived to exist where the scientific knowledge and research provide an inconvenient truth to the regime. As a result, newly produced knowledge at the CHUSS and the SoL that attacks the existing political convictions of the political regime will often not be applied in policy-making. Research findings that support government policies and the actions taken by government are loudly praised by government officials, while findings that threaten to undermine them are simply laid aside. To keep quiet about the outcome of commissioned research (as in the example provided in Chapter 5), is as Meuleman and Tromp (2010:216) find it not a very spectacular but effective way to neutralize unwelcomed news.

Although knowledge from the CHUSS and the SoL at times were disputed in the political arena, where clashes of values and interests are considered to be part of the game,

interpretations of scientific knowledge differed between and among politicians and policy-makers (Meuleman & Tromp, 2010:202). Some informants in the study stated the importance of not seeing government as a monolitt, meaning that the political system was not homogenous, that it consisted of different people with loyalties to different political parties and political actors. This is in line with the argument put forward by Badat (2006:96-97) that even in a generally authoritarian and repressive context, the state and its apparatus and institution are seldom omnipotent, monolithic or impermeable to contestation.

8.3 Trust in Scientific Knowledge

According to Halvorsen (2010a:230-251), trust in knowledge will usually only be found if the political regime is of a legal, rational kind. Stehr (2003:647) on the other hand, argues that without some element of trust exhibited by members of society towards academics, the profession would vanish. As the interviews demonstrate in several instances, some academics are used as consultants by governmental committees (even though their findings are not always used as a base for further work on the issues at stake), others are holding seminars for MPs, and further some sit in committees, providing the political system with scientific knowledge and expert advice. Although this could be understood as indicators of trust in the academic profession, is should rather be seen as a way of politicians and decision-makers to legitimizing political decisions, actions and policies. This since there is a need to legitimize political decisions and policies also in Uganda since this is important for effectiveness and public support in the broader society. In this way scientific knowledge is used strategically for political purposes as emphasized by Maasen and Weingart (2005).

Furthermore, trust in the academic profession seem to some extent to depend on the loyalty of academics towards political elites and on the patron-client relations they engage in. If the academics are supporters of the political regime, chances are that both they and their work will be used and listened too, and potentially trusted. If academics, on the other hand, are not supporting the regime, it is much less likely that their work is used. I suggest, that there could be some element of trust in the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL, although this seems to be conditioned on loyalty to the regime. As one informant put it:

> "*So, some of the professors in this department are strong allies of the ruling party. Some are critical of the ruling party. So, there are those in this department who actually sit on certain committees of government and they serve as advisers to government units. So those tends to*

carry the view that government is doing the right thing. They appear to lend academic weights even to the mistakes and the misinfomations which seem to prevail in government (...) So in short, our view, our relationship with government, depends on where we stand." (I.7)

Mamdani (2003:51-53) argue that the NRM, ever since they came to power in 1986, have had a strong developmentalist ethos, and thus have considered the Humanities both as marginally significant and as an inexcusable luxury. Today, these attitudes toward the Humanities and the Social Sciences still prevail. President Museveni stated belief is that the STEM-disciplines have relevance for the economy, and for development and for the country in broad terms. This is in line with the policy of the WB, which gives credit to, and trust the Sciences (Higgens, 2013, in Halvorsen, 2016). Museveni´s continued support to the sciences – vis a vis the way he is undermining the social sciences – can be understood as a strategy to control the social sciences and, thus, as a type of political control. This political control - the power to define who is relevant and whom is irrelevant - seems in some way to be legitimated, since Museveni can be backed up by powerful statements by the WB of their similar understanding of relevance[28] (Gibbons, 1998:1).

The regime with the president in front, is thus ambivalent in regards to trust in scientific knowledge. In the worldview of the president, it is as if there were a hierarchy of disciplines, where the "hard" fields like natural sciences, biology and physics are at the top, and the "soft" fields like sociology and social sciences are at the bottom (Bisaso, 2017:460). Weiler (2006:67-68) argues that hierarchies are the quintessential manifestation of power, and that they signify higher and lower ranks in a given order, domination and subordination, greater and lesser value, prestige and influence. In Uganda knowledge hierarchies become a pervasive structural characteristic of the university, where different types of knowledge are endowed with unequal status, value and influence, and where the STEM-disciplines occupy a leading position. Within Mak, this is understood to be the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology, the College of Natural Sciences, and the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. This is in line with what Brennan (2007:19-28) finds, that it is the needs of the economy and industry – as interpreted by governments and international organizations – that are at the centre when assessing the relevance of the disciplines within universities.

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[28] University relevance judged primarily in relation to their contribution to economic development (Gibbons, 1998:2).

For academics to be of relevance for society, is related to the issue of trust in knowledge. Utility of knowledge is one form of relevance, and in the worldview of the president, it is not useful that social scientists criticises the actions and policies of the political regime. The media statements by the president (see Chapter 5), are clear indicators of the low levels of trust the political regime have in knowledge produced within the CHUSS. One can argue that the statements of the president partly can be seen as attempts to downgrade the disciplines of the CHUSS, and as an attempt to protect his government´s illegitimate practices from the public.

The critique can also be read as a recognition by the regime of the potential power of academia at Mak. The academics don't have power in the traditional sense of the word, where power is usually discussed in the context of social relationships – as power exercised to gain something, or over a person. Rather the power of knowledge lies in the influence knowledge enjoy in society. Thus, Stehr (2009a:25) argues that power is related to ability; to make a difference. The work and research of the academics represent a threat to the way the regime is running the state, since some research projects in various ways target illegitimate government practices such as corruption, vote buying, police brutality, human rights abuses, and Museveni´s overstaying in power. In the long run, the efforts by government to undermine the academic profession can erode trust of scientific knowledge also in society and among the public. This is thus an expression of how actions of the state can have a delegitimizing effect on scientific knowledge, as emphasized by Weiler (2004; 2006).

Mamdani (2017:131) argues that the public interest cannot be equated with the interest of any regime, since the public interest is the interest of society, of which government is only a part. This is why neither the university nor its academics should "represent" the government. The academics should rather represent all the different interests in society, and it should provide a forum in which the public interest can be discussed, debated and formulated (Mamdani, 2017:131).

Although some members of the academic professions engage in informal network of affection related to the regime in power, and others engage in self-censorship, none of the representatives of the profession argued that their role was to serve the regime in power. This is of importance, since academic freedom hardly can be upheld if the academics sees their

role as that of servants to a dictatorial regime (Halvorsen, 2010a:246). However, it should not be expected that those academics informally connected to the regime would speak openly about this. Thus, knowing the extent of the phenomenon is difficult.

8.4 Summary and Concluding Remarks

There are two conceptions of the role of knowledge within the CHUSS and the SoL, and the academics understand the relevance of knowledge both as the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, as well as they see the relevance of their work as something that should respond to the needs of society. It is the mandate of the CHUSS to analyze, guide and inform policy, inform decision-makers and the public at large, and to look critically and advice on issues of governance, respect of human rights and ethical matters in society (CHUSS, 2011:v-4) For the SoL, the mission and objective is to "*foster a commitment to justice for all, develop and enhance the legal knowledge necessary for practical application in national development, democratic governance and integrity in public and private institutions*", while at the same time educate Ugandan lawyers that are familiar with the legal system and legal problems in their political context (SoL, 2006:7, 21; MUK, 2007a:282). Even so, the political system is not interested in making references to scientific knowledge from the colleges or use it as a base for political decisions and policies.

Rather, when necessary, they are believed to legitimize their decisions by making references to international organizations such as the WB, an act that should be understood as an indicator of the lack of trust in the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL. Although Badat (2006:96-97) argues that research output can enter into policy-making in numerous ways and shape the policy thinking of political actors at various points, the academic profession struggle to prove their relevance to the political system given the nature of the disciplines, resulting in a strained relationship between the academic profession and the political system.

Chapter 9: Academic Freedom and Constraints

Analysis – Part Two

9. Introduction

For Olukoshi and Zeleza (2004;602) academic freedom is one of the main critical issues of the African universities today, and Article 6 in the Kampala Declaration (1990) states:

> *"Every African intellectual has the right to pursue intellectual activity, including teaching, research and dissemination of research results, without let or hindrance subject only to universally recognized principles of scientific enquiry and ethical and professional standards."*

Most academics at the CHUSS and the SoL argued that they had the freedom to speak their mind, write and do their research freely. At the same time, however, most of them brought up concerns regarding the consequences of *critical* research and the potential consequences such research could have in terms of academic freedom. Thus, they acknowledged that some forms of informal power were exercised on critical researchers, although inconsistencies in their reasoning and antagonistic statements on issues regarding academic freedom were evident throughout the interviews.

Despite of the claimed irrelevance of the CHUSS and the SoL, the political regime in Uganda laid down constraints on research, the academics and the university. These were both formal as in the case of financial and legal constraints, but also informal ones, such as threats, and use of favors to loyal academics, and as a result academic freedom was in many instances perceived to be restricted. However, since these perceived attempts to restrict the academics often were informal, or "hidden" by other formal controls, they were difficult to grasp. The political elite viewed academics as potentially influential, and as a latent threat to their power and positions. The combination of the political disinterest and distrust in the academic profession on the one hand, and the use of informal power on the other was resulting in a situation where academic freedom was infringed, which manifested in a situation that could be characterized by an *academic-political paradox,* which will be discussed in this chapter.

9.1 The Role of the State

Various scholars have emphasized the importance of governments who respect the autonomy of universities in all academic matters (Collini, 2017; SAR, 2017). Mlenga (2017:187-188)

argues that the importance of academic freedom cannot be overstated, especially in countries where social, economic and political development is a work-in-progress, and where the ruling elite is averse to critique. Uganda is a case in point. Academics should be able to contribute to the well-being of a nation by conducting research that has the potential to influence state policy (Mlenga, 2017:188). In order to do this however, the state should, as emphasized by the Kampala Declaration (1990:15), "… *desist from exercising censorship over the works of the intellectual community*". This needs to be one of the obligations of the state.

For the government in Uganda, however, protecting professional freedom of expression and academic work is not a high priority. Academic freedom is guaranteed in the Constitution (1995:29b) which states that *"every person shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and belief which shall include academic freedom in institutions of learning"*. However, in reality, academic freedom is not guaranteed in the everyday life of the academics, and government is often the actor perceived to compromise this freedom.

Altbach (2003:16) argues that academic freedom in many developing countries is more than "academic" because the writings and sometimes the teaching by professors may have direct political consequences beyond the university. At Mak, academics who express views in opposition to government face problems, and it can be argued that segments of government do not respect the academic freedom of the academics at the CHUSS and the SoL.

9.1.1 Financial Constraints

According to Mamdani (2003:xiii), various successive governments in Uganda have systematically devalued higher education. During the Amin (1971-79) and Obote I and II period (1966-71, 1980-85), the government devalued the university in that they saw it as a dangerous center of independent and critical thought (Sicherman, 2005:105-19). From 1980s to present, the structural and financial constraints have been the most obvious. During the Museveni period, from 1986 to present, governments have embraced the WB policies of privatization of higher education in Uganda, arguing that investments in higher education gave little return for money compared to investments in other areas, especially primary education (Mamdani, 2003:42).

Whyte & Whyte (2016:46) argue that the production of knowledge, like any production, is constrained by the economy in which it exists. Financial constraints can be understood as those constraints regarding the financial situation of the academics. The first financial constraint facing the academic profession is their meagre salaries (SoL, 2006:5). The academics argued that they were neither enough to provide for the family, nor bring food on the table.

Altbach (2013b:32) finds that few academics in developing countries are able to devote their full attention to their academic work because of the need to supplement their incomes. Thus, their academic careers are less than a fulltime occupation, even if they hold regular full-time positions. What is seen among the academics is that besides working full-time as academic staff at Mak, they also have to *moonlight* their services to other universities in Uganda where they can teach or provide consultancy services in order to increase their income. This constraint was reported to have consequences for research, and subsequently teaching as the two are supposed to be informing each other (CHUSS, 2011:8-10).

A related financial constraint is the government funding of research within the CHUSS and the SoL, which is perceived to be low or missing altogether. This constraint has two components. First, you have a public research university that is inadequately funded by the state, that does not provide enough money to conduct research, which is at the core of the role of the academic within the university and in society (CHUSS, 2011:10). On the other hand, most of the limited state funding that is given is geared towards the hard sciences. This priority is due to the regime´s belief that the former is essential to bring about economic development, while the social sciences are deemed irrelevant to this end. This makes the state to become an informal actor in setting the academic agenda within Mak. Low salary and heavy workload also adds to this. This is resulting in a situation where academics become primarily occupied with acquire a sufficient income, rather than conducting research, influence the political sphere and contribute to democratization.

Closely related and often as a consequence of inadequate state funding, was the reported dependence on donor funding in order to finance research projects. The donor funding was as a rule allocated to specific research topics and research questions. This was also found by Mamdani (2009:86-87). This affects the academic agenda, since only some research issues get

funding from the state, and because the donors have their own agendas and interests in the research projects they funded. In this way, the donor community also became an actor in setting the academic agenda at the CHUSS and the SoL, although the problem was more pronounced at CHUSS.

9.1.2 Formal Constraints

Shils (in Altbach, 1991:9-10) categorize infringements on academic freedom as *pre-emptive* and *punitive*. Pre-emptive infringements do not necessarily mean a direct infringement on academic freedom. An example could be if political policies forbid some subjects to be admitted to universities, and as a result specific themes would not be conducted research on. Sanctions such as censorship and imprisonment are more punitive given that they are designed to create fear among academics.

As presented in Chapter 6, government in Uganda exercise control over the academic profession in various ways. In the example of the *Academic Staff Strike 2016*, the state withheld and refused to pay salaries promised the academic profession, threatened the striking academics with police, and closed off Mak. Article 10 on *freedom of association* in the African Chapter on Human and Peoples Rights[29] state that *1) Every individual shall have the right to free association provided that he abides by the law*, and 2) *Subject to the obligation of solidarity provided for in Article 29, no one may be compelled to join an association.*

Busia Jr. (1996:20-22) argues that since the Charter give civil and political rights the same legal status as economic, social and cultural rights, the right to strike is within the scope of this article. Further, since it does not accord different legal status to the two generations of rights it would be a violation for the State to withhold salaries, refuse to pay salaries, threaten striking academics with police, and arrest or detain striking academics. Refusing to pay the incentive payments, should be understood as a formal, albeit illegitimate way of constraining the academic profession at Mak and exercising control over the academics.

Furthermore, both scholars and international organizations have argued that the continued prosecution of *Dr.Nyanzi* (see Chapter 6) violates both Uganda´s Constitution, and

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[29] The African States members of the Organization of African Unity, parties to the present Convention entitled "African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights". Adopted in Nairobi 1981, entered into force 1986.

international human right laws regarding the rights to liberty, freedom of speech and expression. Amnesty International (2017a) for example, considered her to be a prisoner of conscience, held solely for exercising her right to freedom of expression. It is also in breech with Article 3 in the Kampala Declaration (1990), which states: "*No African intellectual shall in any way be persecuted, harassed or intimidated for reasons only of his intellectual work or opinions*". In addition, the traveling ban on Nyanzi was in breech with Article 4 in the Declaration, which states:

> "*Every African intellectual shall enjoy the freedom of movement within his or her country and freedom to travel outside and re-entre the country without let, hindrance or harassment. No administrative or any other action shall directly or indirectly restrict this freedom on account of a person's intellectual opinions, beliefs or activity.*"

The case of Dr. Nyanzi can be understood as a punitive infringement on academic freedom since it was designed to create fear among academics. Not only did the informants in the study believe that it would limit the academic and activism activities of Nyanzi herself, but also that it aimed at creating fear among future potential academic activist speaking out against actions by the President.

Meuleman & Tromp (2010:202) argue that one of the reasons why political actors does not welcome the results of research is that they would prefer a different interpretation of the results or would prefer to see different results. In many cases, political actors in Uganda overlook and neglect scientifically sound knowledge coming from the CHUSS and the SoL. In the case of *Controlling Consent* (see Chapter 6), however, *unwelcome research* where seized and stopped[30]. This, too, has to be understood as a punitive infringement on academic freedom since it was a directly attempt at censuring scientific research from SoL.

9.1.3 Informal Constraints

Albeit a difficult task, unwrapping the informal methods used by the political regime to control the academic profession was of importance since they restricted the academics in fulfilling their roles as academics and researchers. From the interviews it was clear that the informal methods used were not isolated single events, but something that occurred on a

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[30] Meuleman & Tromp (2010:216) define unwelcome news as "*research which threatens to harm the material or idealistic interests of an organization or that is politically inopportune, that affects the position or prestige of high placed persons, or that hurts nationalistic, religious or other idealistic feelings*".

regular basis. Article 3 in the Kampala Declaration (1990) puts emphasis on such constraints, and states: "*No African intellectual shall in any way be persecuted, harassed or intimidated for reasons only of his intellectual work or opinions*".

The academic profession is confronted by powerful governmental institutions, and members of this profession have become victims when they have attempted to present the truth. The regime itself rarely show interested in what is being researched. Since the knowledge produced by the academics at the CHUSS and the SoL often speak truths that are inconvenient for those in power, this has resulted in attempts to suppress, silence and undermine this research, and the science in general. This is in line with what Hyden (2006, in Halvorsen, 2010a:251) have found in other Sub-Saharan countries.

The regime in Uganda looks at some of the academic staff at the CHUSS and the SoL as opponents and have handled this threat in various informal ways. The buying of critical voices for example, have to be understood as acts that recognizes the power of the academics. The spying that have occurred at Mak has to be understood in the same way. Such actions by government were also common during the time of Amin and Obote II, where spies where put at campus to check whether academics was "encouraging students to say or do things not quite all right" (Colman 1998:116-17, in Sicherman, 2005:249).

In this system, ultimately science suffers, because suppression and distortion of the truth may undermine the public confidence in scientific knowledge, and lead to cynicism (Meuelman & Tromp, 2010:216). Vedel (1970:1, in Dégni-Ségui:57) argues that the productivity of academic work requires it to be shielded from the pressures which it could be brought to bear by the powers, and to protect it from all forms of censorship, intimidation or favoritism. The consequence of the informal use of power by government is that the academic freedom of the academics is at risk and is in several ways constrained.

Such limitations imposed on academic freedom, will over time, damage the profession, and create problems both for further free expression and research. Attacks on academic freedom shrink the space for academics to develop and convey knowledge and serve society, especially on issues of critical importance to public policy and democratic debate (Bergan, 2018:28-29). For universities to function at high levels of excellence, academic staff require

the freedom to think and do research without undue interference by any authorities (Taha & Bjørkelo, 2017:229). Mlenga (2017:188) argue that the lack of academic freedom and the suppression of analysis that are critical of the state, is a recipe for national stagnation, since it will not allow academics to generate knowledge that can help inform state policies. In addition, when academics, who supposedly speak from the apex of the tower of knowledge, are silenced and prevented from being critical of government, the masses, who generally feel less empowered, are more likely to remain silent (Mlenga, 2017:188).

9.2 Self-censorship and Uncertainty

The lack of a respected culture of academic freedom in Uganda has an impact on the intellectual atmosphere at Mak. One of the consequences are self-censorship. Self-censorship, is the least visible, and least costly, way for a regime to control its population (Helle, 2017c:2). All forms of censorship involve an external censorship regime that tries to limit what can be uttered, and the act is conducted because the person being censored perceives an external censor (Cook and Heilman 2013; Horton 2011, in Helle, 2017c:4). Helle (2017c:6) argues that self-censorship thrives under uncertain conditions, such as low trust and weak institutions, as in the case of Uganda.

According to Helle (2017c:8-9) the NRM regime has built a complex but vague censorship regime that have been used irregularly to marginalize and punish *speech acts* by media that have been unwanted by the government. While media institutions in Uganda remain nominally free to pursue the truth, hold political actors to account and express differing political views, selective implementation coupled with targeted use of both judicial and extra-judicial threats keeps Ugandan media houses and practitioners in a state of uncertainty with regards to what can be said and not. He finds that the most dangerous issues to report about are those that touch on the military and the State House, two central institutions in the Ugandan regime (Helle, 2017c:9-10).

In a similar way, this study finds that academics sometimes feel uncertain when it comes to conducting research on issues that are considered politically sensitive, and when commenting on such issues in public debates or in class. Some academics are afraid to challenge mainstream though or powerful actors in the political system. Due to different types of political control the academics are also careful to directly discuss politics, either in class,

discussions, interviews, or in media. Thus, little research is conducted on pertinent or controversial issues related to politics or governance at the CHUSS and the SoL generally, and especially at the CHUSS.

Although the academics did not go in detail on when they censored themselves – or on what political issues or institutions they had to conduct self-censorship, those that spoke of it indicated that this practice kept academics from investigating the most important power-holders in Uganda. Criticism regarding electoral practices, political bribes and corruption, were met with restrictions. When faced with such criticism in different types of research outputs, the regime in addition accused the academics of drumming up the data and questioning the validity of the research, even though the validity of this scientific knowledge is based on scientific models and methods, and on the rigorous quality checks of peer review (Irwin et al. 1999, in Edelenbos et al., 2010:156).

As a result, members of the academic profession restricted their academic behavior to "traditional" academics roles, such as teaching with related follow ups. Many of those who had time for research – either as a result of self-censorship or political control and power – restricted their research to focus on smaller but safer societal or political issues. In contrast, and despite sanctions by the state, the critical academics at the CHUSS and the SoL were determined that research on political sensitive issues was of importance, and they persisted in conducting research on important democratic practices such as elections. Even so, they too were reported by other informants to be victims of self-censorship to some degree.

In a neopatrimonial political system like Uganda, patrimonial practices penetrate the legal-rational system and affects its logic and "reproduction", but it does not take exclusive control over the legal-rational logic. Actors in the political system have a certain degree of choice as to which logic to employ. Thus, the political system is characterized by uncertainty and insecurity about the behavior and role of state institutions and the agents of the state (Erdmann and Engel, 2006:18-19). For the academics, as a result, they face uncertainty as to when the political regime for example decide to exercise informal control over and constraint the work of the academics. They are aware that they will not be sanctioned every time they make critical comments, judgements or research on the regime in power, or face other constraints such as threats. However, the fear of such sanctions makes some of the academics

to engage in self-censor, meaning that they censor themselves before they are censured by the regime.

The line not to be crossed by the academics when conducting research that are considered critical by the political elite, was undefined and not clearly understood by the informants. This can be understood as one of the consequences of a regime that are characterized by uncertainty, since they do not always act on critical research or critical judgements. Some of the power of the external censor (the government) lies in this uncertainty. Since the academics can never be certain on exactly when they cross the line or when they will be sanctioned, they put restrictions on themselves. This may thus be as Helle (2017c:2) finds it, one of the least costly yet effective ways of controlling the academic profession and restrict their academic freedom. One can further argue that the regime in Uganda have moved away from blunt censorship as was the case during the regimes of Amin and Obote, to the current practice of using more sophisticated forms of control to restrict what comes out of the CHUSS and the SoL at Mak.

9.3 Collegial Defense of Academic Freedom
In African traditions, academic freedom has tended to be understood as both negative and positive rights, as *institutional autonomy* and *social responsibility* (Zeleza, 2004:43). Zeleza (2004:46) argue that the question of academic freedom and social responsibility of academics have come to dominate the African discourse in part due to the acute politization of African social formation. Mamdani (1995:17) argues that academic freedom is a democratic and historical right which has to be fought for. Accordingly, academic freedom cannot be understood in isolation from other democratic struggles, and "*a prerequisite to creating autonomous space is to define relations with society on a democratic basis*".

Within the CHUSS and the SoL the issue of academic freedom does not dominate the academic discourse, and few efforts are taken by the academics to collectively defend their academic freedom. The need to safeguard academic freedom, however, is of particular significance in Uganda, given the various instances where academic freedom is infringed, and since many politicians prefer not to hear criticism of their policies and actions (Mlenga, 2017:188).

Academics for Academic Freedom (AFAF,2017a) argue that in the current political climate in Uganda, it is harder than ever for academics to defend open debate, backed by a claim to their academic freedom. They argue that many academics are fearful of upsetting either managers of the university or politicians by expressing controversial opinions. In contrast to AFAF, this study only find support to claim that part of the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL are fearful of upsetting actors in the political system, and not managers at Mak. And thus, that academic freedom is more a matter of concern in relation to the political regime (and the donor community, with its funding conditionalities), than to the leadership at Mak.

What is needed is a collegial defense of academic freedom coming from the academic profession within the CHUSS and the SoL. "Scholars at Risk" (2017:34) argues that recognizing the limitations placed upon academic freedom – despite variations in target, type of attack and scope - is a critical first step in devising solutions. For this to happen however, critical self-reflection among the academic profession is needed. Altbach (2013b-25-27) finds that many universities in developing countries have become politicized and that governments are frequently involved in academic decisions. Since government in Uganda is an informal actor in setting the academic agenda and restrict the academic profession through illegitimate use of power, the academics themselves will be the best placed to reflect on these issues. Karran (2009:263) argue that by raising awareness of academic freedom, academics would be better able to and motivated to defend it.

9.4 Summary and Concluding Remarks

Freedom of speech at the CHUSS and the SoL is constrained, and it remains unusual for academics to openly criticize the president or the ruling elite, which suggests that many prefer to practice self-censorship rather than risk coming into conflict with, or being sanctioned by, the state. One of the main reasons for self-censorship, is thus related to the political system. The neopatrimonial logic which operates in the Ugandan society, prevents the academic profession from standing up for academic freedom. The lack of academic freedom can be seen as symptomatic of the lack of freedom and political space in Uganda more generally. In such a system, attempts to propagate independent or alternative frameworks to the existing political system are often taken to be a direct challenge to the rulers (Dégni-Ségui, 1996:77).

Chapter 10: The Academic Profession and Democracy

Analysis – Part Three

10. Introduction

Academics at the CHUSS and the SoL can contribute to democratization by shaping the public opinion, strengthening democratic values among key elite groups, their student and the general public, and unmask power relations that underlie and shape social life. They can do so through research, dissemination and publication, through teaching and by how they shape their students, and finally through outreach activities and public engagement. However, the extent and success of such engagement depend on the relationship between knowledge and politics in Uganda, whether such engagement are encouraged and valued, or ignored and hindered by the political regime. While Huntington (1991:33-34) argues that one of the most decisive factors affecting the expansion of democracy in society is political leadership, Sall (1996:5) found that it is precisely because academics play an active role in the democratization processes that academics are harassed. Thus, the ways in which the academic profession contribute to and promote democratic practices has to be understood in light of the findings from the previous chapters.

In this chapter, I will address and discuss the ways the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL contribute to democratization in Uganda. This is done through an examination of their perceptions about; 1) their role as experts, 2) through research, 3) knowledge-based judgements in public debates and media and through social activism, 4) by providing training for democratic leaders and bureaucrats and by the way they shape their students, and finally 5) through addressing issues of political corruption in government and parliament. In the final section, the issue of internal corruption and democracy at Mak will be discussed.

10.1 Ways in which the Academic Profession Contributes to Democratization

Mak and the academic profession have a social obligation for knowledge generation and transfer (MUK, 2017:7). The social mission of universities, can be understood as knowledge dissemination and participation in the public debate with knowledge-based contributions. Mak has to be visible to the broader society, and scholars ultimately see universities as the lifeline of society. In the Kampala Declaration (1990:20,22,24), the social responsibility of academics

is understood as; a *"responsibility to promote the spirit of tolerance towards different views and positions and enhance democratic debates and discussion"*, to *"struggle for, and participate in the struggle of the popular forces for their right and emancipation"*, and to *"show solidarity and give sanctuary to any member who is persecuted for his intellectual activity"*. Not only does the academic profession have a social responsibility to contribute to democratization; they also have a personal one. According to the Ugandan Constitution (1995:xxix) one of the duties of its citizen is to promote democracy and the rule of law.

10.1.1 The Role of Experts

The academic profession at Mak work towards democratization in various ways. One of the most important contributions is that they produce knowledge that can be used for democratic purposes in society. Reasoned democratic deliberation depends upon knowledge provided by academics, since they possess specialized knowledge about the "state of the world" that may enhance deliberations on political decision-making (Weiss 1986; Schudson 2006; Parkinson 2003; Christiano 2012, in Tellmann, 2016:1). Science is the ultimate reference when reliable knowledge is requested, and as an institution, it is oriented to the common good, and transcends political ideologies and economic interests (Weingart, 2018:2)

The disinterest in research discussed in previous chapters (see Chapter 5 and 8) is severely limiting the use and effect of the research that is coming from the CHUSS and the SoL. The academics argue that the research has a value in itself and that they will continue to refer to it. Even so, if the research is not being used, it loses relevance to society. The value of the research at the CHUSS and the SoL seem dependent on societal actors using it for democratic purposes. As has been shown, the actors in the political system tend not to do so.

Stehr (1994:2-4) argues that despite of a continued knowledge generation and transfer from a university, there is neither a linear trade-off between the increase in knowledge and the decline of "irrational" politics, nor between knowledge and the increase in the ability to plan, control and predict. Further, he argues, the process of scientification of societies does not imply that all actors adopt scientific thinking and reasoning. Despite the continued commitment to knowledge generation and transfer by the academic profession at CHUSS and SoL, the academics rarely find that research is based on the scientific knowledge they provide. Thus, attempts by the academics to contribute to democratization through their role

as experts in relation to politics, does often "lead nowhere". This since they find that government does not take their recommendations seriously, or that they base their decision on other grounds than that of scientific knowledge from the CHUSS and the SoL.

10.1.2 Research

For Mamdani (2003:262) the relevance of a university is that it works as the location where a society comes to understand both its potential and its weaknesses. This is done through research and reflection. Lentsch and Weingart (2011:7) argue that knowledge can have a de-legitimating function to governments if it contradicts their policies, and that any communication of knowledge may undermine the authority and the legitimacy of governments. Especially academics within the SoL can be argued to act in some ways as a countervailing force to the political regime through their research contributions. Here, the academic work is in many cases radical compared to the research from the CHUSS because they have a long tradition of building social activism into their research, and because the research at the SoL is developed according to their own ideas about what is relevant. This is to say, they control the research agenda within their projects and institutes.

Research conducted at the HURIPEC is a case in point. The center was established to foster teaching, research and activism on human rights and peace issues. It is geared at promoting the understanding and respect for human rights and democratic governance in the East-African region (HURIPEC, 2018). The research coming out of SoL intends to set the premise for politics in the long run, such as in the case of research conducted on sexual rights, and family constellations.

That knowledge can have a de-legitimizing function to government implies that governments have an interest in controlling the kind of advice given to them and, if possible, the individual academics or universities where it is generated (Lentsch & Weingart, 2011:7). Although controlling the activities within a university should not in every case be understood as illegitimate practices, research from the SoL have frequently met constraints meant to undermine their legitimacy (as seen in Chapter 6 and 9). At times, attempts at contributing to changing laws to be more in line with democratic rights of citizens and human rights have had unintended consequences, and become part of juridical practices leading not do democratization, but rather to increased curtailed rights of citizens (see Chapter 7).

One of the factors limiting academics in contributing through the research they conduct, is that they are unable in many cases to conduct the research that they would prefer. This was especially thought to be a problem at the CHUSS. Among the academics, the will was there to do research, but the missing part was funding for the research projects they wished to conduct. Even when the topic for donor projects was democracy, academics argued that the donors were only looking for a particular aspect of democratic practices in Uganda. Rarely were the academics able to have a say over the research questions of such projects. The problem with this as the academics see it, is first that the research agenda is not set and controlled by the academics themselves, and second that research on these aspects of democracy is not always believed to be relevant or needed. This is affecting their possibility of contributing with new and relevant knowledge to society in terms of democratization.

Although left unused by the political system, both the expertise and research provided by the academics are often used and followed up by other actors in the Ugandan society, such as civil society actors, donors and other international actors. This is in line with Stehr and Masts (2010:40) understanding of knowledge since they see science as an effective social force that can engage and in turn rely on CSOs. The academic profession also reports that media in Uganda have been helpful in getting the research out to these users, and that this is a way of communicating the research findings far more effective to the public. In this way one can see that they contribute to democratization by shaping the public opinion and clarify complex political issues and their implication for the public.

10.1.3 Public Engagement and Social Activism
The academic profession within the CHUSS and the SoL also provide society with public opinions by more direct participation than publications, for example through knowledge-based judgments and participation in public debates and in media. Allen (1988:112, in Karran, 2009:276-77) suggests that one of the services that academics can offer is to provide serious and direct criticism of the society of which they are a part.

At times, the critical academics both within the CHUSS and the SoL address systematic failures of the current government to operate democratically, and they critically address the regime´s inability to provide justice and the levelling of the political playing field. Further,

they also address the policies and ideologies of those in power, and the absence and weaknesses of real commitment to democratic values and practices among political actors. This is understood as one important contributions of the academic profession in both modern democracies and in patrimonial regimes (Martinelli, 2010; Huntington, 1991). This type of engagement exposes the weaknesses of the state, as well as the illegitimate practices of the regime, something that in the long run can undermine the legitimacy of government, just as with research. Further, it also enlightens the public and broader society on such practices.

According to Allen (1988:112, in Karran, 2009:276-77) academic freedom is essential for academics to provide direct criticism of the society and the political system they are a part of, since it enables academics to provide expert criticism of the workings of government, and ensure that they are accountable for their actions, and thereby strengthening democracy. Although the academic profession is constrained (see Chapter 6 & 9), they are still able to provide criticism of governmental practices, since not all critical public engagement is met with sentiments and since actors in the political system have a certain degree of choice as to which logic they want to employ – the legal-rational or the patrimonial.

Apart from the efforts made by some critical academics within the CHUSS and the SoL, few engage in political debates in media or write chronicles in newspapers. Those who do however, have done so for a long time, they are publicly known, and have a reputation both within and outside the university of being "outspoken". Despite constraints faced by the state they still have the courage and a commitment to search for and speak the truth to politics. These academics, can be understood to be active, challenging and critical to the regime in power. Rather than being advocates of the interests of the regime, the outspoken academics use their academics background and commitment to engage in society, and comment on societal and political issues. One recent example is the case of *Amicus Curiae* (see Chapter 7), where academics came together and used their expertise to promote transparency, participation and democratic values in the court.

Most of them, however, either stay neutral or passive, and yet some have no interest in public discussions in TV, newspapers, nor in political debates at Mak. Although the members of the academic profession both have a professional and a personal responsibility to promote democracy, human rights and constitutionalism, a perception among some of them was that it

should be accepted that some members of the profession did not want to be part of the public debate. For Mamdani (2017:94) the university should not be a think tank since these are policy-oriented centres where the point of research and outreach activities is to make recommendations. He argues that in a university like Mak, there needs to be space for both applied (policy-oriented research) and basic research.

The university also need to provide a space for academics that seeks to engage in basic research where the aims is to identify and question assumptions that drive the very process of knowledge production, and who prefer not to engage in public discussions more in line with the policy-oriented tradition. In a similar fashion, Jensen et al. (2016:16-17) referring to Hountondji (1990) argue that Africa has become trapped in the inequalities of knowledge production by focusing on research of societal relevance. The argument is that while it is a reasonable demand that knowledge production should serve the public good by contributing to nation-building and social needs, it means that Africa becomes a place for applied research only, thereby leaving the basic research to the Global North.

Martinelli (2010:287-289) and Asher & Guilhot (2010:341) argues that academics need to keep themselves at a critical distance from the social issues that they study. This can be understood as an argument for maintain a separation between academic work and activism. In such a way of thinking, a problem could be if there is conflicting expectation on academics as they need to balance their integrity as researchers with the responsibilities that follows from taking part in politically charged settings. The commitment and engagement by the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL through reports, and through comments based on scientific knowledge in media and public debates, does not blur the line between academic work and political activism, since it transcends political ideologies, and since none of the academics engage in traditional, *partisan* political activities.

If the public engagement of the academics transcends political ideologies and if the academics argue that their role is distinct from that of politicians and other political actors, then their contribution to promote and enhance of democratic values in public debates should be understood as one of the strengths of the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL, not as partisan advocacy work. In a neopatrimonial state like Uganda, it is of importance that academics use their voice in society to critically assess the political establishment when

democratic values are at stake, as well as contributing with truth telling to citizens as this is one of their core values.

10.1.4 Promote Democracy by Providing Training and by Shaping their Students

For Mamdani, it is within the university that leadership for an independent country is cultivated, and where one develops the range of choices which makes democracy meaningful in different spheres of life (Mamdani, 2003:268). A lasting engagement by the academics at SoL have been to provide a training ground for democratic leadership and bureaucrats through the courses they offer to MPs and to the civil service on human rights and constitutionalism. Mamdani (2003:268) argues that the relevance of the liberal arts and the social sciences is that it can produce a generation of leaders with a shared understanding and a shared vision, and that this requires willful and concerted action by the academic profession. Although one finds this commitment at the CHUSS, it is understood as a more integral part of the SoL, and a more lasting commitment by its academics.

Promoting democratic values through the teaching of the student body and by the way they shape their students can be understood as a long-term commitment by the academic profession to contribute to democratization (Halvorsen, 2017b). Within the SoL every informant argued that this was an important part of teaching, and as an important aspect of their work generally. This was also evident at the CHUSS, but to a lesser extent. It was done through providing students with the analytical tools to critically assess and judge actions taken by political actors, informal structures of power in society, but also through teaching courses in ethics and public administrations as was the case at the CHUSS.

At the SoL, the PILAC intends to promote a culture of social justice by developing a consciousness among law students of the important public role lawyers play in protecting the rights of Ugandan citizens. The clinic train students in strategic use of the law as a means to protect human rights and the public interest (PILAC, 2018). In this way the PILAC is understood by some academics as an effort to contribute to democratization, through making the students aware of their social mission.

Given that the academic profession is constrained in many ways, they find little time to fulfill their other roles within the university than that of being a teacher. Efforts to contribute to

democratization through teaching and by shaping their students can be regarded as one of the most effective ways to contribute since it is in this area they spend most time. The academics make use of the (relative) comparative advantage they have in society – that the university is a protected space. This is the case at least to a greater extent than for other groups in society such as for various CSOs. In the long term as a result, these efforts to contribute can result in increased democratic practices and values in society.

10.1.5 Addressing the Issue of Political Corruption

One of the most persistent issues in the political system in Uganda, is corruption (Wandera, 2018). The EU Criminal Law Convention on Corruption (in Rothstein & Varraich, 2017:59) states that corruption threatens the rule of law, democracy and human rights, undermines good governance and social justice. According to Afrobarometer (2018), 85% of Ugandans believe that the media should constantly investigate and report on government mistakes and corruption. Given the social responsibilities of the academic profession, it too should play an important role as a "watchdog" on government mistakes and corruption, and as a part of the system of checks and balances in the political system (Mlenga, 2017:199; Gerstl-Pepin 2007, in Goede, 2010:115).

One example of such contributions by the academics at the SoL, is research on electoral shortcoming, as was the case of the publication *Controlling Consent* (see Chapter 6). Such contributions are of importance since it focus on and expose severe undemocratic practices which the regime repeatedly try to disguise. Although being seized, the book created a good deal of attention in media, potentially making the public even more aware of these breaches of democratic principles. In another study on corruption conducted at the CHUSS, research was met with silence from government, and was not used due to the revealing of corrupt practices. One informant elaborated:

> "*In 2014, I did a research with a colleague, we got funding from SIDA and we did research on corruption. We wrote the report, we were trying to show the trend of corruption, and then actually we were seeing disaster. We presented our report, we even wrote a report, but I think it stopped at that, they put the report in the shelves, and everything was kept quiet. But what we saw ahead in time was a total collapse of the state.*" (I.3)

This example on research conducted for the Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda, was one of many where government officials were reported not to act on the recommendations provided

by the profession. Some in government responded, however, with interests for the findings and addressed the need for academic work conveying the message of corruption. Others dismissed the findings altogether, seeing no relevance of the research conducted. Even though they did not think eradicating corruption was possible, the academics argued that there was an opportunity which the academics could use to influence and mitigate corrupt practices, through research and advocacy work.

10.2 Internal Democracy and Internal Corruption

Halvorsen (2010c:215) argues that the more democracy develops in society, the greater the space for knowledge development. The greater the space for knowledge development, the more a research university develops its own knowledge democracy, understood as internal democracy. Thus, the two democracies presuppose one another. In order to contribute to democratization, Mak need to run according to democratic principles and so needs the actions of the academics. However, if the internal democracy at Mak presuppose democracy in the broader Ugandan society, then one should not expect Mak to be run solely according to democratic principles given the hybrid regime of the society it is part of.

Of great importance in regard to being a "watchdog" on corruption, are the moral and ethical codes of conduct expected from academics. Halvorsen (2010b) argue that the code of conduct can refer to the promotion of values related to the development of democracy and democratic attitudes among citizens. As he sees it, one long-term effects of the knowledge produced by academics in society can be a democratic culture, and it is one of the values that may legitimize their roles in society (Halvorsen, 2010b:x). This however, requires a university that is run according to internal democratic principles and values.

In some countries, corruption is widespread in academic life - as in the society generally - and the academic profession is significantly affected (Altbach, 2013b:33). In a large number of cases however, corruption is an occasional matter, but it is still deeply damaging to core academic values and to the profession. Altbach (2013b:33) argue that without a transparent and meritocratic environment, the academic profession cannot flourish and the university cannot achieve its goals. How Mak is run is therefore of importance for how the profession there can contribute to democratization. If Mak is characterized by corruption, fraud and

misuse of resources, then this context will be likely to also affect the moral and ethical codes of the academics.

The level of corruption in academia at Mak was hard to establish. Nevertheless, both representatives of the academic profession and external informants, argued that corruption was widespread, although none of the informants addressed in detail the corrupt practices within the university. They stated, however, that what often matters is who you know, and that you can pay for what you want. This is in line with the *social logic* of the economy of affection that pervades the broader Ugandan society. This logic centers on the principles that whom you know is more important than what you know, and that a helping hand today generates returns tomorrow (Hyden, 2013:74).

The academics argue that what is needed at Mak is transparency, and an efficient bureaucracy run according to the legal-rational kind of authority. Furthermore, they argue that what is needed is the right people – staff that adheres to formal rules, and individuals that subordinate their personalities to the definition of the role that they are expected to perform. This is in line with what Hyden (2013:67) emphasize as important for creating strong and formal institutions in weak states like Uganda.

If universities cannot be insulated from societal corruption, as Altbach (2013a) argues, then one could question how academics can take on the role as watchdogs on corruption in parliament and government. Altbach (2013a:75) finds in many developing countries that ingrained corrupt practices at all levels in society also influence the university. Based on the perceptions of the academics, there might be reason to question whether Mak have strong traditions of meritocracy and whether the university is run only according to formal rules and authority. In the broader Ugandan society, the informal is institutionalized in state institutions to the point where it tends to dominate the way these formal institutions operate. The perceptions of the informants could be understood of as indicators that some actions at Mak are run by informal networks that operate and influence formal decisions in the institution. Due to internal corruption, one informant quite firmly believed that the academic profession at Mak could not properly address the issues of political corruption:

> "*I don't know, the university is not an island, it is the heart of the society, so you cannot extricate the university from the environment. (…) an example on where the university has*

consistent in practice on integrity and lack of corruption is in admissions. There is no effort to, no other way, you have to go through the same measurements. But I think this is the only one that has remained. Apart from that, the classes are corrupt, you find people negotiating grades, you find people altering grades in the database. So, you cannot be a leader against corruption, no way." (I.6).

10.3 Individual Commitment

To investigate the academics´ personal commitment to their role in relation to politics and to contributing to democratization, a reference is made to Nambutebi & Mpoza´s (2017:141) study on organizational commitment at universities in Uganda. They find that the academics at public universities in Uganda, like Mak, are both *normative* and *emotionally* committed to their universities. Being normatively committed meant that academics had a feeling of obligation to remain with the universities because it was the morally right thing to do, while emotionally commitment was a result of congruence between the values of the academics and those of the universities (Nambutebi & Mpoza, 2017:141-153).

The study also found, however, that when academics cited reasons for remaining in their universities, most of them gave reasons associated with the benefits their universities provided, and the costs they might incur if they chose to leave the universities. Organizational commitment was seen as a problem throughout universities in Uganda, and the universities are at risk of losing their academics, since they would leave once the benefits of their leaving outweigh the associated costs (Nambutebi & Mpoza, 2017:153).

At the CHUSS, the commitment of the academics to their roles as teachers, researchers and consultants were in some cases understood to be weak, and sometimes lack of commitment were self-reported by the academics. Lack of enthusiasm and motivation was not derived from a disinterest in their role at Mak, but rather as a result of a combination of different factors; low salaries, heavy working loads, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and governmental control over academic work and academic freedom. Altbach (2013a:75) argues that over time academics cannot survive systematic starvation without their ethics being damages. This affected the academics´ commitment to their work and their role at Mak generally, and their commitment to contribute to democratization in society in particular. Academics often found themselves to be preoccupied with staying afloat in a busy work week with a hectic schedule, where there was little time for other activities than those related to their role as a teacher.

Together, and over time, one could expect this to undermine the academics´ role as researchers within Mak, their public role in society, and their motivation to "contribute to change"; such as to conduct *critical* research and participating in the public debates. Thus, there is a need at the CHUSS to strengthen the normative and emotional commitment to the roles as well as to their work and social mission.

The commitment to promote democracy among the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL is understood as a personal one, rather than a collective, professional one. Even though the academic profession is committed to the search for the truth, the profession as a whole is not particularly aware of this current and potential role in the democratization processes. Academic contribution to the democratization process can only happen by active engagement. They need to engage and provide knowledge and research about societal and political issues not only when they are asked (as is rarely the case), but also when they see that democratic practices and principles are at stake. Still, however, there are members of the academic profession both within CHUSS and SoL who are really committed to promote critical science-based knowledge - knowledge that speaks truth to power and the political elite.

10.4 Summary and Concluding Remarks

The academic profession contributes to democratization of the Ugandan society in various ways. They educate students geared at promoting the understanding and respect for democratic values, democratic governance, and human rights, while also speaking the truth to power through teaching, research, outreach and activism (HURIPEC,2018). At the same time, however, their contributions are severely constrained by both the internal limitations within Mak, but also by the perceived need by government to control the agenda at the CHUSS and the SoL. Thus, imposing illegitimate formal and informal restrictions are imposed on the profession. Although the academic profession perceive it as its role to contribute to democratization, in the everyday situation at Mak most academics find themselves to be preoccupied with staying afloat in a busy work week, while only the academics at the SoL and the committed academics at the CHUSS finds ways of contributing through their everyday work, despite constraints of all sorts.

Chapter 11: Summary and Concluding Remarks

11. Introduction

This chapter will provide a summary of the thesis, and it is structured in line with the order of the research questions. Thus, section one provides a summary of the relationship between knowledge and politics, and how the academics understand their *roles* in relation to politics, while section two summarize the findings of the state of *academic freedom* within the CHUSS and the SoL. The third section summaries how the academic profession is contributing to *democratization* in Uganda, in light of the challenges they face as academics. The final section will round up the thesis by offering its concluding remarks.

11.1 The Relationship between Knowledge and Politics

There is an uneasy and intricate relation between knowledge and politics in Uganda. While the academics argue that their work have relevance for society, politics and national development, they lack influence over the political system. They rarely observe that their scientific knowledge and recommendations are used in the political system, and scientific knowledge from the CHUSS and the SoL is not perceived to be a base for political decision-making and policies. There is a widely held perception among the academics that there is a weak and troubling reading-culture in government, resulting in a situation where research from the university is seldom read. When research is read and used, however, the academics does not get credit for it.

Apart from this, the academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL contribute with scholarly knowledge in informing government on some issues on the political agenda. In terms of research, there is a well-established tradition of research activity in some units which can act as catalyst for others, such as the HURIPEC and the MISR, and there is a strong research and publication repository – especially the MISR library (SoL, 2006:19, CHUSS, 2011:6). There exists capacity for research to policy translation in some areas. One of the opportunities of influencing politics and contributing to democratization is publications through international journals - for those academics with international networks. This is not a regular engagement, however, and the influence the academic profession enjoys in the political sphere in terms of

contributing to policy making and political decision have to be assessed on a case by case basis.

Government and political committees does not turn to the academics when critical information and advice is needed. Rather, they either base their political decisions and priorities on political, moral or pragmatic beliefs. Other times, they turn to international organizations where they seek legitimation for their politics, as in the case of the World Bank. Finally, when they turn to academics within Makerere, they turn to the STEM-disciplines as these are recognized by the Ugandan government to be relevant for economic development (Kasozi, 2003:12). Rarely is actors in the political system seeking to legitimize their decisions and policies with claims to be based on scientific research coming from the CHUSS and the SoL.

This is not to say that the CHUSS and the SoL does not have relevance or influence in society and to the political system, but rather that government on a regular basis does not act as if the CHUSS and the SoL contribute with relevant knowledge to their fields of interest. The academics then understand their role in relations to politics as researchers, advisors and experts that are able and willing to provide socially relevant knowledge that can inform decisions and policy making. Some see their role as academic activists, since they combine social activism and academic work, as a way of reaching out with their science-based judgements in the public debate and as a way of influencing.

11.2 Academic Freedom

According to the academics, there is little interest in research within the political system. At the same time, however, these actors view the work of critical researchers as a potential threat to their positions and practices; this is understood as an academic-politics paradox. As a result, academic freedom is not really respected by the state, and abuses of this freedom is frequently reported. Several cases illustrate this; scientific outputs seized by government, closing off the university, government denying paying the incentive payments promised the academic profession, the arrest of critical academic activists, informal threats, negative attitude and publicity from government, and unstable and ambiguous government policies (CHUSS, 2011:8). Situations like these is curtailing freedom of expression. On top of this, the

academic profession faces structural limitations such as limited funding for research and publications and meagre salaries (CHUSS, 2011:6).

The relationship between politics and knowledge is characterized by uncertainty. It is uncertain because the academics is not able to predict when they are too critical of government or the political elite. This produce a situation where some and not others face constraints by the state, curtail their own freedom of expression and self-censor. Other times, academics are caught in networks of affection, where they owe their loyalty to political actors, and in return get favours such as commissioned work, funding for research projects, or other financial favours. These are called "official academics" and are preoccupied with research on "safe" issues that does not in a critical manner address the practices and actions of government or the political actors who constitute their networks of affection.

11.3 How Academics Contribute to Democratization

The academic profession at the CHUSS and the SoL is less occupied with issues concerning democratization and critical research, than staying afloat in a busy work environment with heavy workloads, mostly in form of teaching and related follow ups. Research projects from the CHUSS and the SoL at Mak seem generally to have low political impact. Institutionally, the exceptions, are research conducted at the MISR and the HURIPEC. Individually, the exceptions are the critically oriented academics both within the CHUSS and the SoL, in contrast to the official academics. They persist in participating in the public debate, provide critical research, and resist attempts by the state at curtailing their academic freedom.

Despite the challenges they face, a few but engaged individual academics find ways of influencing the political sphere and contributes to democracy, either through research, public engagement, training of government officials or by the way they shape their students. This however, is understood as a personal commitment rather than a collective one regarding the academic profession as an entity. In terms of research, some centres and some academics expose the weaknesses and strengths of the government and provide a plurality of perspectives on societal and political issues. These are understood to be committed to their work and their motivation is regarded to be strong.

Others seems to lack commitment to their work and are challenged by poor motivation. This is reported to be a result of the limitations and constraints they face (SoL, 2007:18, CHUSS, 2011:7). Internal corruption poses a challenge to the way the academic profession contributes to democratization, since a profession that does not act according to formal procedures and democratic principles hardly can operate as a watchdog on political corruption and informal and illegitimate use of state power.

11.4 Concluding Remarks

In this thesis, I have discussed the peculiar character of the relationship between knowledge and politics in Uganda. To what degree this "peculiarity" varies from other countries where there is an authoritarian regime to whom truth-telling is a threat, would be an interesting cross-national comparative study for the future. My ambition here has been to show how the character of this relationship is in Uganda by help of a more limited empirical study of academics at Makerere University.

The academic profession is operating in an unreceptive political environment. Academics understand their work as clearly relevant for the political system and for democratic developments, but they perceive their influence over political processes as low. Government see little relevance of research coming from the CHUSS and the SoL for solving burning societal and political issues, and the regime view academics and their work with disinterest. Thus, political decisions and policies are only under certain circumstances based on scientific research disseminated from the CHUSS and the SoL. One conclusion is hard to escape: The use of social science-based knowledge is not institutionalized in the Ugandan political sphere.

There are two parallel stories at Makerere University. One is the story of the *official academics* who are informally connected to the regime. The other is the story of the committed academics that are independent and preoccupied with the advancement of knowledge and the pursuit of the truth.

In order for democracy to be realized, the political elite in Uganda have to come to terms with the fact that democracy at a minimum, is the least harmful form of government for themselves and the society. Huntington (1991:21) argues that longstanding authoritarian regimes are especially considered an obstacle to democratization, as they tend to become "particularly

staunched opponents of democratization". Olum (2010:79) finds that because the NRM regime with President Museveni in front best can be described as soft authoritarianism, it has legally allowed the political opposition to operated but ensures that it is too weak to dislodge it from power. This study finds that the regime looks at academia too as a potential, and at times a real threat to their positions and practices. Therefore, although the academic profession is legally and formally allowed to operate the academics are through illegitimate formal and informal means of power restrained to have too much influence in society and over the political system.

One reason why they current regime perceive academics as opponents to their way of governing, is that they see the spreading of power in society as a threat to their political power. If allowed to operate freely, with academic freedom and adequate resources, the profession would be a viable social force in society contributing to this sharing of power in society. In the current hostile climate provided by the political elite, the academics have limited opportunities of contributing to the democratization of society (CHUSS, 2011:6). Their efforts to contribute are largely individual rather than collectively organized and conducted. And as an entity, the academic profession is too weak to pose a challenge and work as a countervailing social force to the regime in power.

Kasozi (in Ssempbwa et al., 2017:xxiii) has argued that the academic profession at Mak is concerned with training of the mind to think, generate ideas and create the next generation of thinkers. This study finds that the same profession also can create the next generation of democratic citizens and leaders, as well as contributing in other ways to a more democratic society, through their research, teaching and research, and by hosting policy dialogues on contemporary public policy issues through seminars, workshops, conferences and the media (Mak, 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; MUK, 2007a:386).To do so effectively and with success, however, the academic profession needs to operate in an environment of academic freedom. Attacks on academic freedom shrink the space for academics to develop and convey knowledge and service to society, especially on issues of critical importance to public policy and democratic debate.

The academics fear speaking freely against the political regime, and they operate in an environment of uncertainty. Academic freedom remains fragile and is not consolidated. The

pursuit of academic freedom involves struggles against the authoritarian practices of the state. The history of Mak in post-independence Uganda has been one of a constant tension between the state and the university, characterized by relationships of control and uncertainty (Kyemba, 1997; Mamdani, 2017:112-13). Today, too, government feel obliged to control the academic agenda, although this is done through new methods of control – through both hidden and informal power structures. They have moved away from blunt censorship, and today the academics stay largely insecure to when and if the academic profession will be constrained for their research, teaching or outreach. Restrictions on academic freedom is negative as it prohibits the truth from emerging and for the academics to practice the profession freely. As a consequence of the insecurity among the academics, there is a perceived need to play safe, resulting in self-censorship. As a result, the space for the academic profession to think freely, raise questions and share ideas, shrinks (SAR, 2017:4).

All this being said, at times, the individual academics contributes to democratization as research output is exposing to the public illegitimate practices in government. As a result, the authoritarian and non-democratic actions of actors in the political system is challenged. Compared to the CHUSS where the academics vary from highly inactive to highly active in terms of contributing to democratization of the Ugandan society, the academics at the SoL is setting the premises for politics in the long run, they control their own academic agenda, and they have a long tradition of building social activism in their research, publications and outreach activities. In the long run, this research, outreach and activism can change the space in which power is exercised.

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APPENDIX:

Table 8: Overview of the interviews conducted

Nr.	Department	Date
1	Political Science & Public Administration	October 2016
2	Political Science & Public Administration	October 2016
3	Sociology & Anthropology	October 2016
4	Sociology & Anthropology	October 2016
5	School of Law	October 2016
6	History, Archeology & Organizational Studies	October 2016
7	Political Science & Public Administration	October 2016, March 2017
8	Sociology & Anthropology	October 2016
9	History, Archeology & Organizational Studies	October 2016
10	School of Law	October 2016
11	History, Archeology & Organizational Studies	October 2016
12	Political Science & Public Administration	October 2016
13	MISR	October 2016
14	Political Science & Public Administration	October 2016
15	Political Science & Public Administration	October 2016
16	Sociology & Anthropology	October 2016
17	Political Science & Public Administration	April 2017
18	School of Law	May 2017
	Newspaper	**Time**
19	Daily Monitor	March 2017
20	Daily Monitor	March 2017
	Other relevant informants	
21	Human rights lawyer	May 2017

Table 9: List of secondary documents – base for analysis

Nr.	Title	Type of document	Author	Year
1	*The Constitution of the Makerere University Academic Staff Association.*	Constitution	MUASA	1975 (amended 1989)
2	*African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights*	Charter	African Unity	1981
3	*The Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility*	Declaration	CODESRIA	1990
4	*Constitution of the Republic of Uganda*	Constitution		1995
5	*Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act*	Act		2001 (amended 2003, 2006)
6	*Makerere University in Transition 1993-2000. Opportunities & Challenges.*	Article	Currey	2003
7	*Makerere University School of Law, Strategic plan 2016-2016: Seizing the initiative and foster excellence*	Report	School of Law	2006
8	*Makerere University Prospectus 2007-2010*	Report	Department of Academic Registrar Makerere University	2007a
9	*Repositioning Makerere to Meet Emerging Development Challenges –*	Report	Makerere University	2007b

	Strategic Framework: 2007/08-2017/18			
10	*Makerere University Strategic Plan 2008/09 – 2018/19*	Report	Luboobi	2008
11	*Makerere University College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) Strategic Plan 2011-2018*	Report	College of Humanities and Social Sciences	2011
12	*Makerere University Annual Report 2013*	Report	Mak	2013
13	*Makerere University Fact Book 2013/2014*	Report	MUK	2013
14	*Makerere University Annual Report 2014*	Report	Mak	2014
15	*Arts courses are useless – Museveni*	Newspaper article	Wandera	2014
16	*Makerere University Annual Report 2015*	Report	Mak	2015
17	*Uganda Civil Society Organization File Amicus Curiae Motion to Join Presidential Election Petition No.1 of 2016*		Citizen´s Coalition for Electoral Democracy in Uganda	2016
18	*Makerere University Annual Report 2016*	Report	Mak	2016
19	*FactBook- Special Edition. Tracking the performance of the Makerere University Strategic Plan 2008/09-2015/16*	Report	MUK	2016
20	*Uganda Civil Society Organization File Amicus Curiae Motion to Join Presidential Election Petition No. 1 of 2016*	Blog	MinBane	2016
21	*Museveni concerned quality of university education*	Newspaper article	Agencies	2016
22	Makerere ranked fourth best in Africa	Newspaper article	Ahimbisibwe	2016
23	*THE ROAD TO 2016. Citizens´ Perceptions of Uganda´s Forthcoming Elections*	Synthesis Report	HURIPEC	2016
24	*Controlling Consent: Uganda´s 2016 Election. Key Messages – Facing 2021*	Review of forthcoming book	Center for Basic Research	2016
25	*One of Africa´s oldest universities is closed after student and staff unrest.*	Article	Dahir	2016
26	*Makerere Lecturers strikes over arreas*	Newspaper article	Musinguzi	2016a
27	*Makerere University closure looms as students join lecturers´ strike*	Newspaper article	Musinguzi	2016b
28	*Amicus curiae submissions in the Supreme Court of Uganda for Presidential Petition No. 1 of 2016*	Article	ACME	2016
29	*What are you doing befriending the court? Don't you have enough enemies?*	Newspaper Article	*Oloka-Onyango*	2016
30	*Academic Stella Nyanzi charged with "cyber harassment".*	Newspaper article	Al Jazeera	2017
31	*Urgent Action. University Lecturer Must be Released.*		Amnesty International	2017
32	*Uganda: Stella Nyanzi free but ludicrous charges must be dropped*		Amnesty International	2017
33	*We are going to arrest Stella Nyanzi – Minister F Weer Lokodo*	Newspaper article	Adongo	2017
34	*Book Review: Controlling Consent: Uganda´s 2016 elections by J.Oloka-Onyango & Josephine Ahikire (eds)*	Book Review	LSE	2017
35	*Makerere University as a Flagship*	Research article in	Bisaso	2017

	Institution: Sustaining the Quest for Relevance	edited book		
36	*About Academics for Academic Freedom*	Webpage	Academics For Academic Freedom	2017
37	*Efforts to Silence Ugandan Feminist Firebrand Speaks Volume. High Profile Academic Jailed Over Facebook Posting*	Article	Burnett, M.	2017
38	*Makerere Academic Staff Impatient With Delayed Rwendeire Committee Report*	Newspaper article	Softpower	2017
39	*Book on 2016 polls seized*	Newspaper article	Kafeero, Daily Monitor	2017
40	*Vice Cancellor's Special Press Conference, Wednesday 3rd January 2018. Briefing on the Visitation Committee Report.*	Report	Mak	2018
41	*About HURIPEC. Human Rights and Peace Centre*	Webpage	HURIPEC	2018
42	*Public Interest Law Clinic, About Us*	Webpage	PILAC	2018

Interview Guide

Guide for interviews with professors at Makerere University During 2016 and 2017

<u>The interviewer to the person being interviewed:</u>
This project – as the letter shows – (give them the letter of introduction) - is about the academic profession. In the longer run we are comparing three countries and campuses; South Africa, Norway and Uganda, so now it is about Uganda and Makerere.

The main question we want to find answers to is:
How do representatives of the academic profession, professors mainly, identify with their work role at Makerere. How do you understand and describe what you do in your daily work , what expectations do you have to your work - role as a professor , and what expectations do you think other have (like the leadership of the university, actors in society, colleagues, students, the general public)?

Part One (the same question for all the interviews conducted by the NORHED research group):

1) We need some of your biographical data (those we did not find on the web): age, gender, educational background, work career up to the present position
2) Can you give a description of a typical working week: how much teaching, how much research, how much time for administration (meetings). How are your relations to colleagues, how much do you work together. What other jobs, consultancies, etc., what brings in the most of income.
3) To what degree and how are you involved in PhD education, active in PhD programs? What is your view of the quality of the PhD education at Makerere? How are you recruiting PhD students, have you been trying to recruit PhD students. Have you ever had cases of PhD student being recruited for non – academic reasons (not really

qualified)?

4) If possible, what research would be prioritized; and when not possible why? (Money, time, burden of other work, personal energy or combination).

5) How much and what kind of interaction do you have with students. What is your understanding of the quality of the students? Do you like the role as a teacher? How important is teaching for you in your role as a professor? Do you think you are valued enough for your teaching efforts?

6) What is the title of the last academic book you read? Title of last written paper, report or whatever?? Do you have an example of your own writing you can share, or title of a paper of a chapter? How much more time would you use for research if you could?

7) What is the most challenging aspect of your work in relation to the administration? What would you change in the way the university is managed if you could? What forum of influence is the most important for you as an academic? Ho w and to what degree are you participating in such forums?

8) Please describe your contact (that are active today) with academics outside your university in Uganda, and then with academics in other countries.. What is most important for you; academics in Africa, in Europe, Anglo - America, other parts of the world?

9) In his book "Scholars in the market place" professor Mamdani at Makerere suggest changes. These suggestions are about ten years old. Do you think they still are relevant, and if so what you think still needs to be done? Mamdani suggests: 1) Remove vocational programs from campus, 2) Find a consensus in politics and society for the funding of a "research university", 3) That research must be an integral part (component) of higher education, 4) That the funding of students must be based on the idea that higher education is a pubic good, and 5) That privatization leading to commercialization – which may be contradictory to the university as a public good – must be stopped.

Part Two:

To the person being interviewed:
We now have a few question that in particular seeks out your ideas about relevance of your knowledge for the kind of students you teach; for example if the knowledge gives them access to the labor market,, how you think your research may be relevant for actors in society, or in what way you as a citizen with particular qualification due to your knowledge and networks, take part in society and thus tries to change it to the better.

10) How do you try to make your work and knowledge relevant for example by how you shape your students? (Curriculum development, the structuring of relation between education and work, reform of the system of higher education and learning) or;

11) How do you make your academic work relevant by relating to a) other disciplines? b) to actors outside campus, c) to the general public (article sin newspaper, etc); d) through consultancy work, e) by doing commissioned research work, or f) by direct contact with persons in industry, bureaucracy or otherwise?

Part Two – Section Two (questions developed for master thesis):

In this part I will focus on your role as an academic within your discipline, emphasizing the dynamics of relevance and contribution to society such as the public, Government and donors,

among others. Is the research and knowledge produced at this department relevant for such actors, contributing to new insights on important issues in the national context, such as democracy and corruption?

12) How do you make your academic work relevant by relating to a) other disciplines, b) to actors outside campus, c) to the general public (articles in newspaper, etc.) through consultancy work, e) by doing commissioned research work, or f) by direct contact with persons in industry, bureaucracy or otherwise?

13) How do you try to make your work, and knowledge relevant for example by how you shape your students? (Curriculum development, the structuring of relation between education and work, reform of the system of higher education and learning)

14) We would like to know what types of activities you participate/engage in at Makerere besides teaching and conducting research; Are you regularly participating in any discussions at your college? Are you part of the University Council, or any of the Committees connected to the Council? If so, which Committee/Representation in Council? Do you think that university politics is important – in what way, and what in particular do you find interesting?

15) Do you think that your teaching can motivate students to become active citizens (e.g. participating in society/democratic developments, write articles in newspapers or other activities aimed at knowledge dissemination, membership in student unions etc.)?

16) In what ways do you communicate your academic relevance (e.g. your research) to actors outside Makerere, such as: the public, the government (and government agencies), relevant international organizations, parliament (agenda)

17) To what degree can you and other professors, influence government in; Providing fair implementation of laws and politics, reducing corruption and clientelism, Promoting anti - corruption strategies (government strategies)? How would you describe/characterize the relationship between Makerere University and the Government, and Makerere - Parliament? Have you written any articles of these topics, which say something about what you think/your stance on this matter?

18) Do you feel that actors outside Makerere are influencing what kind of questions should be relevant for your research, teaching etc.. (e.g. Commissioned research work, but also a felt pressure to please external actors when deciding on topics and research questions for research projects) Other actors such as; Government, Policy agendas (specific national policies), Political parties, NGOs, Donors, International organizations? What types of question/knowledge are they requiring/requesting?

19) Do you consider Makerere as a training ground for bureaucrats and political leaders? (Training ground based on the knowledge and experience students gain from participating in classes//lectures – e.g. teaching and research – but also the experience they gain from being active at campus – e.g. student politics, discussions etc.) In what way does the academic profession at your department contribute to this? If you could decide, would you do anything differently in order to achieve this? Do you believe that you as a professor can contribute to the promotion of democratic values and democratic leadership?

20) How, as you understand it as a professor, would you describe democracy in Uganda? If you were to describe some features of Uganda that is pointing toward democracy, what would it be? What could be specific characteristics of democratic development in Uganda, which may be different from characteristics of democratic developments in other countries? Contrary to characteristics of western liberal democracies or contrary to the beliefs of international donors etc.

21) To what extent do you believe that your research, or research of any of your colleagues work as a baseline for political deliberation in government and in decision - making? Are you aware of any research/publications from your department that have been used for this purpose in recent years? How do you perceive your level of influence on government/policies (in matters relevant for your academic interest/research)?

22) As you see it, is there a lack of electoral research – focusing on electoral shortcomings as emphasized by such actors - in Uganda? Could more electoral research help to create more free and fair elections? In your view, what should be the main focus of such research?

23) In what way can professors at Makerere contribute to fight corruption in Government and Parliament? How can Makerere work as a corrective to corruption? (Contrary to, or in addition to, other central actors in this regard) In what way can Makerere contribute to securing norms of predictability, accountability and control? How well or badly would you say that the NRM government is in promoting such norms/values in the context of fighting corruption?

24) Are you engaged in any political activities outside campus, or do you feel the need to act politically neutral in your role as professor? If you take part in any political activities, which one; A political party, A political movement, political organizations (not a political party), Writing articles in newspapers,, Participate in discussions, lectures or debates, Observing plenary or committee sessions in Parliament. Do you feel that you have to avoid getting involved in political issues because of a conflict between your role as an academic professor and you as a citizen? If so, why?

Finally, returning to what we started out with; what would you do with your role as a professor, and with your university organization to secure more relevance in society of your knowledge?

Code Book 1: Academics

Category 1: *Relevance*

Codes:	**Understandings of relevance**	**How does academics make their work relevant/how do they communicate their academic relevance?**	**For whom/what are they/could they be relevant?**	**Do the academics think they are relevant?**
Explanation:	How academics understand the relevance of their academic work.	How the academics communicate their work/relevance. For example; through consultancy work, newspaper articles, by direct contact with persons in committees,	For what actors and to what issues the academics perceive that they are relevant to	If the academics thing that they are relevant Note: *are, could* or *should* they be relevant?

		bureaucracy or otherwise		

Category 2: *Influence*

Codes:	On what issues/topics does the academics perceive that they have influence?	On what issues/topics do the academics perceive that they have little/no influence?	Contribute to policy making?	What limits their influence?
Explanation:	Issues that the academics argue they have influence over in relation to policy processes, decision-making, etc.	Issues that the academics argue they have no/little influence over in relation to the policy process, decision-making, etc.	Do the academics think they contribute to policymaking?	What do the academics perceive limit their influence?

Category 3: *Support, trust, interest in academic work at CHUSS/Law*

Codes:	Is their research being read and listened to?	Is scientific knowledge from CHUSS and Law a base for policy making?	Is the knowledge being valued/trusted? Do politicians support academia?	Is government asking for knowledge about the society they try to govern? (interest)
Explanation:	Does the academics think that their research is being read and listened to by political actors and decision-makers?	Does the academics think that research and scientific knowledge produced at CHUSS/Law is used as a base for policy making, political deliberation etc.?	Does the academics think that they are valued by political actors for the work they are doing, and that politicians are supportive of academic work at CHUSS/Law?	Does the academics believe that government is requesting for knowledge, critical information and advice from academics at CHUSS/Law?

Category 4: *Power and academic freedom*

Codes:	Does government influence research questions (or other matters relevant for academic freedom?)	Informal power/networks of affection?	Careful what to teach/talk about in class? (Self-censorship)	Other restrictions (or types of control) faced by the political system?
Explanation:	Does government determine the research agenda? Or decide other matters relevant for academic	Does academics engage in network of affection connected to the ruling elite/political elite?	Does the academics report on cases where they have to be careful what to say/teach in class? Do they engage in self-censorship of any kind?	Do they mention other types of controls/restrictions/ limitations by government?

	freedom – what to teach etc.?	Do they mention government use of informal/hidden power?		

Category 5: *Engagement in society and in political matters*

Codes:	Participate/engage in activities that can influence politics other than research?	Need to act politically neutral in the role as a teacher?	Avoid getting involved in political issues because it conflicts with the role within Mak?	Academia as activism?
Explanation:	Does academics engage in activities outside Mak such as public debates, newspaper articles etc.?	Do the academics think that they should stay politically neutral in relation to their students?	Do the academics think that they have to stay out of political activities because it conflicts with their role as a teacher/researcher?	Do the academics perceive academia as a type of activism? Problematic if the line between academia and activism are blurred?

Category 6: *Democracy*

Codes:	Understanding of democracy	Current state of democracy in Uganda
Explanation:	Different understandings of democracy among the academics	How the academics understand/perceive the current state of democracy in Uganda. If not understood as democracy, what then, alternatives?

Category 7: *The role of academics in democratization processes*

Codes:	Mak as a training ground for bureaucrats and political leaders	Promote democratic values and democratic leadership?	Internal democracy at Mak
Explanations:	Do the academics argue that the university can provide a training ground for bureaucrats and political leaders? If so, why? Alternatively, why not?	Can academics promote democratic values and democratic leadership in their work as academics?	How do they understand democracy within the university?

Category 8: *Corruption*

Codes:	Can academics fight corruption in government and parliament?	Internal corruption at Mak
Explanations:	Can academics address issues and act as a "watchdog" on political corruption?	How do they understand the issue of corruption within the university? Does it exist? Where and what type of corruption? Who are the corrupt and the corruptee?

Code Book 2: External Informants

Category 1: *Relevance*

Codes:	Relevance of academic work?	How do academics make their work relevant/how do they	For whom/what are/could academics be relevant?	Are academics relevant?

		communicate their academic relevance?		
Explanation:	How external informants understand the relevance of the academic work at CHUSS/SoL.	How the external informants think the academics communicate their work/relevance.	For what actors and to what issues the external informants perceive that academics are relevant to	If they think academics are relevant

Note: *are, could* or *should* they be relevant? |

Category 2: *Influence*

Codes:	**On what issues/topics do academics have influence?**	**On what issues/topics do they not influence?**	**Do academics contribute to policy making?**	**What limits the influence of academics?**
Explanation:	Issues that the external informants argue that academics have influence over in relation to policy processes, decision-making, etc.	Issues that the external informants argue that academics do not have influence over	Do the external informants think that academics contribute to policymaking?	What do the external informants think limits the influence of academics?

Category 3: *Support, trust, interest in academic work at CHUSS/SoL*

Codes:	**Is research being read and listened to?**	**Is research from CHUSS/Law a base for policy making, political deliberation etc.?**	**Is the knowledge being valued/trusted? Do politicians support academia?**	**Is government asking for knowledge about the society they try to govern? (interest)**
Explanation:	Does the external informants think that the research produced is being read and listened to by political actors and decision makers?	Does the external informants think that research and scientific knowledge is used as a base for policy making, political deliberation etc.?	Does the external informants think that the academics are valued by political actors for the work they are doing, and that politicians are supportive of academic work?	Does the external informants think that government is requesting for knowledge, critical information and advice from academics?

Category 4: *Power and academic freedom*

Codes:	**Does political actors influence research questions (or other matters relevant for academic freedom?)**	**Informal power/networks of affection?**	**Self-censorship**	**Other restrictions (or types of control) faced by the political system?**
Explanation:	Does government determine the research agenda? Or decide other matters relevant for	Do external informants think that academics engage in network of affection	Do external informants think that academics engage in self-censorship of	Do external informants mention other types of controls/restrictions/ limitations by government on academics at CHUSS/SoL?

	academic freedom?	connected to the political elite? Do they mention government use of informal/hidden power?	any kind?	

Category 5: *Engagement in political matters*

Codes:	**Participate/engage in activities that can influence politics other than research? (debates, newspaper articles etc.)**
Explanation:	Do external informants think that academics influence politics in other ways than trough research. For example; through public debates, newspaper articles etc.

Category 6: *Democracy*

Codes:	**Current state of democracy in Uganda**
Explanation:	How the external informants understand/perceive the current state of democracy in Uganda. If not understood as democracy, what then, alternatives?

Category 7: *The role of academics in democratization processes*

Codes:	**Mak as a training ground for bureaucrats and political leaders**	**Promote democratic values and democratic leadership?**
Explanations:	Do the external informants think that the university can provide a training ground for bureaucrats and political leaders? If so, why? Alternatively, why not?	Do external informants think that academics at CHUSS and Law promote democratic values and democratic leadership in their work as academics?

Category 8: *Corruption*

Codes:	**Can academics fight corruption in government and parliament?**
Explanations:	Can academics address issues and act as a "watchdog" on political corruption?

Table 3: Structure of College of Humanities and Social Science at Makerere

College of Humanities and Social Science					
Schools (5):	**Liberal & Performing Arts***	Women & Gender Studies	Language, Literature and Communication	Psychology	**Humanities & Social Science***	+ **Makerere Institute of Social Research** (MISR)
Departments:	1) Philosophy & Development Studies 2) Religion & Peace Studies 3) Performing Arts & Film 4) **History, Archeology & Organizational Studies***		1) Literature 2) Linguistics, English Language Studies & Communication Skills 3) European & Oriental Studies 4) African Languages 5) Journalism & Communication	1) Mental Health & Community Phycology 2) Educational, Organizational & Social Psychology	1) **Sociology & Anthropology*** 2) Social work & Social administration 3) **Political Science & Public administration***	

Table 4: Structure of the School of Law at Makerere

School of Law				
Departments (4):	**Law & Jurisprudence***	Public Law	Commercial Law	Environmental Law	**+ Human Rights & Peace Centre (HURIPEC)***