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During the next decade, the 1960s, as part of the “Alliance for Progress” efforts, Presidents John F. Kennedy and Eduardo Frei signed a “Chile-California Plan” to help Chile develop key areas like education and agriculture. Since 1965, with the support of the Ford Foundation, the University of Chile has enjoyed important interchanges with the University of California-Davis, allowing a new generation of faculty to obtain graduate degrees there (known as the “UC-Davis Boys”). These graduates have since made great impact in two key Chilean agriculture areas, fruit, and wine.

Under the military government and influence of the “Chicago Boys,” a new institutional order was created, based on privatization and reducing the state’s role.

At the same time, Catholic University’s School of Engineering, headed by Dean Raúl Devés and Director Arnoldo Hax, began a profound set of academic reforms. For this effort, they had the support of the University of California-Berkeley, with additional grants from Ford Foundation and Inter-American Development Bank. A significant number of Chilean academics did their PhD studies at the University of California-Berkeley, while several Berkeley professors came to Chile and stayed for months teaching, doing collaborative research and helping the new authorities to develop a new curriculum. These events had three significant impacts. They launched a new concept of engineering curricula. They also initiated full-time academic positions inside Catholic University and created a “university campus,” a common space for different schools and disciplines. Obviously, such tremendous changes had a significant impact at Catholic University, and they spread to modernize the entire Chilean university system in time.

After those first cross-cultural agreements, the relations between US and Chilean institutions continued and deepened. The large numbers of Chilean students in US universities and the quantity of shared scientific papers published by faculty of both countries are evidence of that. Most recently, a renewed “Chile-California Plan” was signed in 2009, and the first agreement between Chile and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was launched in 2011.

This last initiative has two important partners: MISTI-Chile (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) commenced 24 shared research projects; and the Harvard-Chile Innovation Initiative, chose 12 projects to be part of 2013–2014 activities. The Secretary of Economy of Chilean Government proclaimed these efforts 2012’s most successful program for technological transfer. The full impact of Chile-Massachusetts agreement will be appreciated over time; the work is just beginning.

In conclusion, the unique mixed nature of Chile’s system and its alliances with North American universities help explain the prominent performance of Chile’s universities. Today, with a student movement seeking cost-free access to university education, we have a great effervescence inside the system, bringing new questions about the future of Chile’s universities. ■

A Quiet Revolution in Chinese Universities: Experimental Colleges

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In the upcoming decade, changes with respect to governance of Chinese universities can be expected, as they are now planned in many domains and at all levels: external and internal, macro and micro. At policy level, the *National Outline for Medium- and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development (2010–2020)* or the 2020 Blueprint calls for building a modern university system on Chinese soil, which centers on granting and securing university autonomy and academic freedom. At institutional level, Chinese universities are now encouraged to draw up their charters that are supposed to define the boundaries within which they should have jurisdictions and autonomy. While many remain curious and doubtful about whether the government will voluntarily take its hands off, and whether universities will enjoy true autonomy over their own operations, a quiet revolution might now be observed internally at the college/school level, along with emergence of a group of experimental colleges/schools in 17 universities across the

country—one such experimental unit designated in each university.

A “SPECIAL ZONE” IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

This initiative at national level started in 2011, aiming to establish a sort of special zone in the realm of higher education, which targets specifically at experimenting with more faculty authority over academic affairs and latitude for innovation. It embarked on a broad idea and did not have an explicit guideline until one year later. In November 2012, China’s Ministry of Education officially promulgated guidance on the work of experimental colleges. The document spells out specific objectives of this experimentation, including implementation of democratic governance, autonomy over program development, new faculty hiring, student recruitment and resource allocations, and pedagogical reform along the lines of innovative education. A charter and a board will comprise the core of institutionalized arrangements for democratic governance in each experimental unit. In operations, a professorial committee is to be formed to nominate candidates for deanship and represent the faculty in decision making—related to affairs of teaching, research, and administration within the unit. An academic committee is to be set to oversee disciplinary field development and academic performance assessment, to offset interference of administrative power in academic sphere. Explicitly, the experimental units are prompted to build internal capacity to manage their own development, including the establishment of incentive and regulatory mechanisms, in order to secure a proper and a healthy development. Meanwhile, they are required to take the responsibility—and, understandably, the risk accordingly.

HOW DO EXPERIMENTAL COLLEGES OPERATE?

In a sense, this experimentation in academic sphere reminds us of a similar economic domain in the 1980s—i.e., the establishment of a number of economic special zones in China—which spearheaded the opening up of the country’s economy. Precisely because of this nature, the experimental colleges have come up with different and sometimes unique practices, along the broad lines set out by this initiative. For instance, in Tianjin University, the College of Precision Instrument & Opto-Electronics Engineering is the university’s experimental unit and has adopted a unique approach to placing academics at the core of decision making and optimizing their academic power: abolishing the traditional administrative unit of department, as an effort aiming to cut down and curb administrative power in the operations of teaching and research. Now a system consisting of Principal Investigator (PI) led groups is put in place to operate major research activities, which are executed by project

teams within the group. In such a system, an academic PI has the full power to decide new hires and resource allocations. The PI and the project leaders under him/her are supposed to be recruited globally. In terms of organization of teaching, a system based on a Chair Professor is created, whereby a Chair Professor is in charge of program and curriculum development, educational standards and teaching content/material, student evaluation and assessment in a specific field, as well as appointment of course instructors and evaluation of teaching outcome.

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Similarly, the experimental unit in the University of Science and Technology of China, the School of Physical Sciences adopts a system in which a “Project Principal Professor” is in full charge, while all the works in association with teaching and research (including international cooperation) are designed and operated as projects. In contrast to the “flat management” approach in aforementioned examples, Beijing Jiaotong University’s School of Economics and Management installs a new layer of academic unit between the school and its departments, three subschools, which correspond respectively to the three disciplinary fields that the school’s programs cover. With the school delegating most academic power to three subschools, this approach aims to explore the pattern of somehow separating academic and administrative power and leveraging dynamics of academic field development to absorb administrative power. This approach is also expected to form a critical mass in terms of faculty participation in academic management, driven by their shared visions, expertise and training in a particular field.

EXPERIMENTAL COLLEGES USHER IN A QUIET REVOLUTION

Given the absence and insufficiency of democratic governance in Chinese universities for decades, the universities often suffer from inertia in exercising their autonomy—even if they are provided with such an opportunity, let alone pushing for more autonomy. To facilitate the progress, dynamism and initiatives need to be brought into play from the bottom. While the 2020 Blueprint expresses the policy

design from the top, the exercise of granting university charter exhibits a top-down approach as well, whereby Chinese universities are required to work their charters out of a pattern/model preset by the government. In contrast, the experience of experimental colleges/schools showcases a bottom-up approach, whereby many grassroots initiatives could be identified and implemented. Compared with those top-down moves, the experimental units are more likely to tap autonomous practices into existing operations, often in a genuine and innovative way. Arguably, in the world of nature, microorganisms play a more significant role in shaping climate, than lions and elephants. In this sense, this experimentation has been ushering in a quiet revolution that might transform the climate of Chinese higher education.

Nonetheless, this view does not rule out the challenges and risks that might stand in the way of these experimental colleges/schools. From the perspective of path dependence behavior patterns of organizations, it is a challenge to keep the current innovative practices (e.g., the PI-led research groups and Chair Professor-led teaching platforms in the case of Tianjin University) from sliding back onto the old path (becoming another kind of administrative or bureaucratic mechanism). However, this is not going to happen; it is still tricky to prevent too much power from following to and concentrating in the hands of a few PIs and Chair Professors on one hand and to ensure a wide participation of the faculty in decision making on the other. ■

Access to Higher Education: The Israeli Case

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The Israeli academic system is well-developed and exhibits a high level of academic achievement (e.g., high citation rate, Nobel Prize Laureates per capita and high-technology start-ups). Israel economy is highly dependent on its academic level and its high-tech industry, which has led the state of Israel to its remarkable economic growth over the past decade. Furthermore, Israel's high academic level is perceived as an infrastructure for its very existence.

Nonetheless, along with the excellent achievement of the Israeli academia, in recent years it is facing substan-

tial challenges as a result of fundamental economic, demographics, and cultural trends that are changing the social composition of Israel. These trends challenge the ability of Israel's academia to sustain its highly ranked achievement.

Economic trends burden the ability to access higher education. The knowledge-based economy indeed contributes to the economic growth, yet it has an adverse effect of growing inequality. The incremental income inequality and the rising tide in child poverty (among Israeli children currently every third child is poor) actually change the background characteristics of the potential Israeli student.

In addition, demographic trends in Israel have been reaching the point that challenges the status quo of the Israeli society. Among the first graders in the Israeli school system, more than 50 percent are either Arabs or Ultra-Orthodox Jewish. Demography is not the only challenge. The cultural barriers pose a further challenge. Within Israel population more than 20 percent are Ultra-Orthodox Jewish people, most of them uninterested in institutions of higher education.

Indeed, Israeli decision makers aspire to diminish the impact of these trends, by designing and enacting various policy reforms. Hitherto, political considerations of redistribution (e.g., allocating from "rich" to the "poor") hinder the achievement of an effective defacto policy.

This article focuses on trends in access and stratification within Israeli higher education. Israel serves as an interesting case given the sociocultural and ethnic diversity of its population, the majority-minority balance of power, its incremental trend in inequality, and its crucial rising percentage of child poverty.

ACCESS

The incremental trend of access to Israel's higher education institutions is reflected in the increasing percentage of students enrolled in a relevant age group in undergraduate programs, ranging from 6 percent in 2004 to 7.4 percent in 2012. As of 2014, 194,129 students in Israel are enrolled in undergraduate programs. A less prominent trend is evident in the graduate programs, where student enrollment was 1.8 percent in 2004 and is currently similar: some 52,698 and 10,615 students are enrolled in graduate and PhD programs, respectively.

This incremental trend of access to Israeli higher education is more prominent among Arab students than their Jewish counterparts. Specifically, Arab students' access has increased by 53 percent (from 2.8 percent in 2004 to 4.3 percent in 2012). The Jewish sector exhibits a more modest incremental trend of 18 percent (from 7.1 percent in 2004 to 8.4 percent in 2012).