

EE563 Quiz 1

1.

The movie walks us through story about conflicts between the belief in faith and the belief in science that leads to violence in the 4th century city of Alexandria. The belief in faith is portrayed from side of the religious believers, who believe in god and do everything to protect their beliefs, while the scientific belief is portrayed from Hypatia, a teacher and astronomer who dare to question everything she does not know. The difference in beliefs is caused by difference in paradigms.

We can see that Hypatia is oriented in positivism paradigm because she uses science and logics to prove and judge whether the things are true. For example, we can see from the movie that she dedicates her life to find the answer of whether the earth is moving on circle and she finally find that the earth is not moving on circle but eclipse. On the other hand, the religious believers are oriented in social constructionism paradigm since they believe in what the society has taught. This difference in paradigms leads to conflicts and wars. At the end of the film, Hypatia was killed by Christian mob since they believe that she is a witch and danger of Christianity.

Apart from difference in paradigm leading to conflict, the concept of paradigm shift is also illustrated from Davus, Hypatia's slave who changes his belief in science to Christianity. This implies that his paradigm changes from positivism to social constructionism.

2.

The word *development* can be differently conceived by different societies. When it comes to development, most people might think about the growth in economic aspect. However, the term development can be thought of other aspects apart from economic growth. In the movie, it shows various points of view about development by different countries including Italy, France, Slovenia, Finland, Germany, Portugal, Norway, Tunisia, and Iceland. The movie illustrates that people in different societies have different aspects of development.

In Italy, the government emphasizes on providing social welfare to people. It believes that workers will be more productive and efficient if they are happier. So, the government tries to award people by giving lots of work benefits including three months paid vacation days, and rights to accumulate the unused vacation days to the next years.

In France, food nutrition and sex education are important and people seriously pay attention to these. Every school in France provides high-quality food to children by dietitian teams. French schools prepare lunch to students as if they are in fine-dining restaurants. Apart from high-quality food, they also emphasize on sex education to children to prevent sexually transmitted disease and adolescent pregnancy.

Slovenia and Finland put a focus on education. In Slovenia, students are able to study until graduating from universities without paying any tuition fees and there is no exception for foreign students. Apart from tuition-free system in Slovenia, Finland, which is well known as the country having the best educational system in the world, has the efficient education

system. Finnish students spend only 3 to 5 hours a day in schools so they can have time to experience knowledges outside classrooms. In addition, there is no standardized testing in Finnish schools. All the test is in the essay format. Even though it seems like Finnish students study only few hours, the result is better than other countries where students spend so many hours in schools such as Thailand.

Tunisia and Iceland pay attention to gender equality. Tunisia has promoted women's rights including rights in reproductive health, rights to access abortion, and rights to participate in political activities. Similarly, in Iceland, power of women concept is apparently promoted as the first female president, who said "when women don't work, nothing works", believes that women can do anything that men can and women power can also change the society.

In my opinion, the hypothesis that could best explain the determinants of development of each country is about freedom. As we can see that the term development conceived by each country could be linked to the concept of development as freedom. Development as freedom in Italy is about the freedom to access social welfare benefit. In France, it is the freedom to access nutritious foods. In Slovenia and Finland, it means freedom of having gender equality.

However, these determinants of development by each country cannot be achieved without economic growth. Since implementing those policies that aim at supporting development within countries requires some levels of public investments. To have some public investments, governments require tax income from people and the way to get that is to collect from people. Therefore, it is necessary for governments to gain income of people and this requires some levels of economic growth. For example, to provide high-quality school lunch, French schools need some funds from the government. Tunisian universities need supports from the government to run their operation without collecting tuition fees from students. Italian employers need compensation for paying to employees with no work. In conclusion, even though development cannot be achieved via only economic growth, it is necessary for countries to have economic growth to gain capital for investment in associated institutions, basic infrastructure, and technologies required to support development policies.

3.

Under the concept of division of labor by Adam Smith, he claimed that we should divide the production into stages and assign tasks to each division of labor to gain specialization. Because he thought this would create economies of scale as marginal product of labor increases due to labors gain specialization. In the movie, we can see that Fuyao company wants American workers to be more efficient. The movie also shows that Fuyao sent American workers to Fuyao factory in China to learn how specialized Chinese workers are and wants them to become like Chinese workers. This implies that Fuyao company follows the concept of division of labor by Adam Smith.

On the other hand, while we see Adam Smith's concept from the Chinese entrepreneur, we can also see Karl Marx's concept portrayed from the American workers. Under Karl Marx's concept, as opposed to Adam Smith, he viewed Adam Smith's concept as capitalism that capitalists always benefit from the labor class who suffers. He claimed that capitalists just look at workers as factors of production. They do not see labor as human but they just exploit the

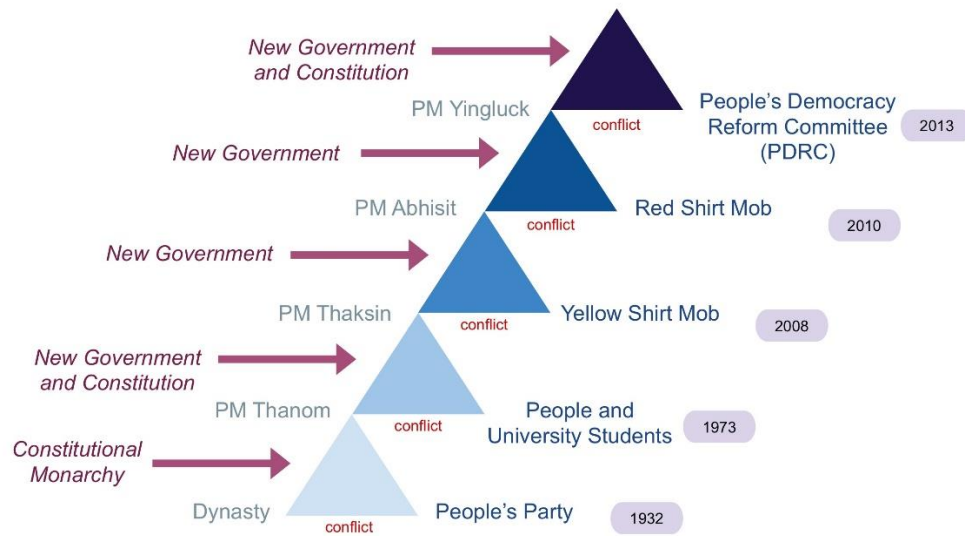
benefits from those labors. In the movie, American workers want Fuyao to join labor union as they realize that the company treat them unfairly. The workers felt they work so hard but got very low wages. We can see that Fuyao did not care about health or security of its workers at all, for example, it did not give safety gloves to prevent injury from glasses to the workers, and it did not give compensation to workers that get injured in the plant. As a result, the workers formed a flash mob to ask Fuyao for joining labor union.

The movie also portrays the concept of the destruction of capitalism by technological development. As the company get some surplus, it can use that amount to reinvest in capital goods such as new technologies. When it reinvests in machines or technologies, demand for labors decreases. From the decrease in labor demand, wages decrease and, as a result, the one who suffer is labor. In the last part of the movie, Fuyao replaced some of the workers with automatic machines to reduce costs of production because machines are much more efficient than human labor.

4.

According to Marxist theory, class is something that identifies which social position ones are in the relation of production. Marx divided people into two groups including *ruling class* and *productive class*. Ruling class is defined as the group of people that own factors of production such as land, capitals, and machines. Productive class is defined as people who do not own factors of production but sell their labor in exchange for wages. Marx stated that, in the past history, there are always two groups of people that are opposing to one another, for example, liberals-slaves and elites-proletarians. Every fight of these people always ends up with a revolution and creates new relationships in societies. The two parties face with *class struggles* which means people always struggle to maintain or lift up their social and economic classes. This circumstance happens when the lower-class gains consciousness of inequality as they were exploited by the upper-class. Marx proposed that the productive or the oppressed class by the ruling class plays an important role in every society. Because the oppressed class can be compared as the base of the society, which is important for emancipation that is essential to create the new society. Therefore, the ultimate goal of class struggles is to acquire classless society. He believed that when there is no class, conflicts would be eliminated and the way to eliminate class struggles is that no one has property rights.

In Thai modern history, we can see that Thailand has been facing class struggles for so long. According to the film Paradoxocracy, it is obvious that Thailand has been struggling in the loop of political conflicts which can be linked to Marxist theory of history as shown in the following figure.



In 1932, it began with the conflict between Thai dynasty and *People's Party* that brought about the revolution from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy. *People's Party* was a group of educated Thais who were eager to see democracy in Thailand because, in that time, there was a trend that many countries in the world started to adopt democracy system such as England and France. Thailand had been suffering from an economic recession after world war I but aristocrats still enjoyed their wealthiness and used up all *Red Purse Money*, the money that had been collected since the period of King Rama III from international trades. By this reason, Pridi Bhanomyong gathered a group of people to form *People's Party* for revolution movement. Thailand was finally transformed to constitutional monarchy and got the first constitution. Despite the revolution in 1932, it was not the end of the story, Thailand still struggled with conflicts along the way.

Later, in 1973, another wave of conflicts started when a group of people and university students assembled around Democracy monument to protest against Thanom Kittikachorn's military government. The situation was getting more severe and end up with bloodshed after military arms started to attack those protesters. The root of the problem is that Thanom's government formed a self-coup then people saw this as a power transition of military government. However, this fight resulted in the new government and constitution.

Afterward, there have been lots of political conflicts that led to the transition of governments and constitutions such as Yellow Shirt mob against prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra in 2008, Red Shirt mob against prime minister Abhisit Vejjajiva in 2010, *People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC)* against amnesty law by Yingluck's government in 2013, etc. We can see that Thailand has been struggling with conflicts until nowadays. This implies that under democracy regime, it is impossible to have no conflict in the society. Any changes due to conflicts do not actually create sustainability but it is just power transitions among the upper-class people of the society and most of changes come with bloodshed of lower-class people.