

Q1 Watch the movie 'Agora' (2009).

- A) Explain the difference in 'paradigms' according to the movie and its impacts on the society.**
- B) Analyze the phenomena in the movie with some paradigm frameworks in social sciences.**

Humans, unlike other animals, we create our own world from nothing: religious, money, economy and politics. Although these things are all intangible and created from human's thought, we all view these as an important factors of living because we 'believe' in these things no matter we could see them from our own eyes or not. What values that people will choose to determine their life are shaped by social factors, demography and etc. as there are so many people in this world we have different set of beliefs so as 'paradigm'. The movie "Agora" shows the contradiction of paradigm among humans, just because of that we could cause such a huge chaos. Each important characters: Hypatia, Davus, Orestes, Christian, Jews and Pagans are the representatives of the different set of belief and this movie shows that what could happen if these people shows up in the same society.

The movie took place in Alexandria, where there are contradict of religious, people in are willing to fight for their god even though that mean sacrificing their life. the phrase "my god are better than your god" and the scene that Christians and Pagans stand in the opposite side to each other show that people are so confident about their religious, they believe that if they keep praying, they will be safe. The belief of god in the movie causes a huge tangle, only the strong belief in religious could cause the change in politics and how people will live their life, for example, many people that believe in other god were killed and the remaining can not pray or even look at other gods. The one of the most important scene in this movie is Christians destroying the main library and turn it to be church which is the representative of the knowledge is easily replaced by the religious, this lead to conclusion that when there are huge amount of people that share the same paradigm anything unexpected could happen.

Among the social chaos between the difference of religious between Christians, Jews and Pagans. There is one character that separate herself from the religious that is Hypatia, the main character, she believes in only what can be proven. In the movie, Hypatia devotes herself to the science and mathematical experiments and she is always questioning about everything but what she will believe must studied scientifically. This is the representative of 'Positivism' that the idea that there is are the natural laws and mechanisms that could explain about what happen in this world. the scene that Hypatia had hypothesis but she did not devote herself to the that idea until she sailed the boat and did the bag drop experiment proving whether her

thought is correct or not. Hypatia is the only character who stand for what she believed that is philosophy until the end of her last breath. Toward the end of the movie, the bishop asked her to agree with Christian's set of rules, but her answer was "you don't question what you believe. you cannot. I must" this scene shows the complete difference between two paradigms, philosophers would believe in what can be proven scientifically only, on the other hands, Christians in the movie believe in god fully with no doubt.

There is shift in paradigms happens in this movie, after Christians rule Alexandria, every people in town were forced to believe in the Christian's god, so the whole society have common paradigms. The reason shifting paradigms may vary according to a person, some change what they believe to gain higher position in the society but some change in order to stay alive. Davus, the slave that only be on Hypatia side but after he got fired, he betrayed her by being one of the Christians, people that killed her. Orestes, one of Hypatia's students, have a Postmodernism paradigm as he is always questioning whether existed knowledges were true or not, however, at the end of the movie he had to shift his belief in order to survive by being one of the Christians. This is what happen in the present as well, paradigms of the minority were always forced to change to be the same as the one with the majority of the society, if not, that person could be eliminated and treated unfairly.

In conclusion, this movie shows the contradiction among humans which the main cause is the difference in paradigms, whether there are religious, gender, nationality or belief. There are many scenes show humans from the father away view so that looks just like ants, this shows how small we are and how we thought we know everything but actually we know only just little. In the past there was religious that drive paradigms of a society, however, nowadays there were different paradigms such as human right and democracy but we could not tell whether there is the person use these people's paradigms to gain self advantage or not, for the reason that paradigms is what drive people do what they do, sometime people could just fight for what they value fully without questioning.

Q2 A) Explain how the discourse of ‘development’ had been constructed differently in different societies and what common definition of ‘development’

According to the the book and the documentary film, the concept of development are vary in each society due to the fact that each country values different thing, and they aim to develop toward their own goal. The movie “where to invade next” shows the different thought and culture of country across Europe, and show what made each country to be what it is now and what goal of development in each country is different.

Form the documentary films, we could see that Italy and Germany have many laws and regulations that protect employees such as long vacation break, less than 8 hour of working, employees’s voice are important and numerous employee benefits, that because these countries value the labor’ quality of life. As people in the country, both employers and employees, feel that not only economic outputs is not the only thing that important but also labours welfare too, all of the interviewees in the movie seems satisfy with their jobs.

Some country like Finland and Slovenia view education as the major key of development, everyone should be able to access to education equally. They tell their student that everything is the process of learning, include playing, so they let students to have freedom in education. To sum up, Finland values education as the path of to live life happily not as a method to make money, as a result, the idea of development in Finland is aim toward better education.

Compare to countries above, some countries in Asia such as Japan and South Korea have quit high number of working hour as South Korea has an average annual hours actually worked per worker of 1993 hours in 2019 compare to Italy that has only 1730 hours, most people in the country think that working hard would lead to life success. Moreover, the education systems these countries are considered highly competitive, there also have long school hour compare to European countries and United States. We can see that most developed countries in Asia such as Singapore China South Korea and Japan are aim toward improvement of economics activities.

In conclusion, each country in the movie interpret ‘development’ in their own way, but what we see clearly is these European country are not focus only on economic development such as increasing in GDP, increasing in national income and change in economics factors, but these countries are also concern about population’s welfare and freedom. In contrary, some countries in the world aim to increase only economic activities and out puts. The common definition of development in all countries are aim to be better, but again the word ‘better’ in each society could be interpret differently, Italian workers are happy with long vacation break but

successful in work might be the goal of Japanese workers, as each society value different thing.

B) Explain which hypothesis (from the class) could explain best the determinant of development level in each society

Hypotheses of development are evolved over time, at the beginning development is all involve with industrialisation, we concern about economics activities and outputs that each countries could produce, so we focus on the factors of production: labours, machines and technologies like the Dual-sector model that focus on the change of agriculture sector to industrial sector. But later on, the idea of development is shifted, it is not only about how much outputs and income that the country could generate, as the idea of social welfare had been introduced and environmental problems are become more concerned.

there are many educators that determine how developed the country is, which the most common one is gross domestic products (GDP), it tells the market value of all goods and services that produced within the country. In my opinion, GDP alone is not enough to measure the level of development for the reasons that it only show the economics activities of the country not including other factors that important such as social welfare, education, environmental problems and inequality, which for the modern idea of development, these factors are important.

From my standpoint, to determine the level of development in each society is good to use GDP along with other indicators. For example, some country might have high GDP but only high class people in the economy gain the advantage not the society as a whole, so the measurement of economics inequity by Max O. Lorenz should be involved as development should widely spread benefit everyone in the country. In addition, we could see in the real world that developing country like Thailand has high number of wealth inequality compare to developed country like Norway that has very small number is the perfect example of Kuznets Curve hypothesis that said as economy develops, market forces first increases and then decreases economic inequity.

Another good determinant of development in each country that challenging the idea of gross domestic product is 'freedom', which Amartya Sen is the person that highlight this topic from the idea that money and wealth is not always equal to freedom, and when every people have their own choice that is the development. Apart from the Sen's idea, Club of Rome said that development should be thought more about 'the limit' as human have unlimited needs but all resources are limited, as a

result, the idea of sustainable development is introduced, this approach force us to think more about the future, society and environment.

According my way of thinking, it is important to use several hypotheses to explain the determinant of development level in each society including industrialisation, Zen's idea and sustainable development, for the reason that these elements could enhance standard living of people and that should be the goal of development that every society should concern.

C) Discuss do you believe that development is conceivable without economic growth?

Like in the previous paragraph development should not considered only economics growth alone, as in my view of development, the happiness of the people in the society should be the primary thing to consider, as a result, other factors should be included in the process of development including equality, population's welfare, education, freedom, justice and environment. All in all, development is not possible without economics growth in my opinion, as it is the source of found of the countries without that the society would not be able to finance the investment in other things that improve people welfare such as educations, public healthcare and national security.

Q3. Watch the documentary film, ‘*American Factory*’ (2019). Explain the debates between Adam Smith and Karl Marx portrayed in the movie regarding these concepts of 1) division of labours 2) labor union and 3) technological development.

the movie *American factory* shows the different ways of working between Americans and Chinese. Because these two countries have totally contrast mind set, working together would create huge chaos such as labour protesting, unsatisfied employer and replacement of labour. Adam Smith and Karl Marx both wrote about capitalism, but they have completely different view of capitalism toward economy and the society. Adam smith thought that capitalism is the most ideal economic system, where everyone could maximise their own self interest and that result in economics equilibrium. However, Karl Marx criticised the idea of Adam Smith, as he looked through the smaller detail and saw that capitalism would not generate the benefit to everyone in the society equally especially the working class. The situation in the factory are the a small model of capitalism, which the contradiction between two ideas are clearly shown.

Firstly, the idea of Adam Smith in division of labours are quite positive, he thought that if every labour choose job that they interested and specialise this would result in greater outputs and according to market mechanism, the price would be reduced. As this kind of division of labours happen in larger size, economy would grow bigger and the surplus will share to everyone more. However, Karl Marx were inspired by the past philosophy, G.W.F. Hegel, especially the concept of ‘alienation’ that it is the concept that how the person have to separate true self when they becomes one of the labour force. For Marx, the concept of ‘alienate’ associate with deviation of labours as labours do not get to choose what their specialise freely like Adam Smith said, people would pick work base on ‘money’ which money is what alienate the person from the mind. From the movie, American workers do not have a choice much as their wage were controlled by chairman, it illustrated the worker’s limited freedom.

Secondly, Adam Smith’s idea suggested that the best economics model is free market, he said that markets have their own mechanism according to the law of supply and demand, so we should leave the markets work and reduce intervention as much as possible including labor market that the wage is driven labour demand and labour supply, when the markets as a whole are in the equilibrium then everyone in the society will share the highest benefits equally. In contrast, Labours in the movie were treated unfairly, after the coming of Fuyao company, labours get much lower wage compare to before, so that labour union were established. In the eyes of Adam Smith, labour union against market mechanisms because its try the force labour market to be at higher wage with intervention. However, Marx would support the

idea of labour union as he thought that labours aren't get benefit as much as they should in the free market.

Lastly, toward the end of the movie, technologies were replaced labours as technologies have much higher productivity therefore many labours were fired carelessly. Adam Smith would agree with is concept as he believe that higher productivity would help economy as a whole. Nevertheless, Marx would disagree with this situation because he think labours shouldn't be treated unfairly like this. Additionally, Marx highlight in the point that in the eyes of capitalists they were just one factor of productions, if other factors of production could produce more, another one could be reduced. As capitalists would think only the way to maximise profit only, they care only how much out puts the labour could produce and ignoring humanity.

In conclusion, this movie clearly shows the difference between two thoughts, Adam Smith think that the free market will lead to growing economy that that will benefit everyone. However, Karl Marx pointed out the flaws of Adam Smith concept, he focused on worker's welfare. American way of working lean toward Marx idea that it se the important of human, Americans are working in order to gain better standard of living but Chineses workers are devote themselves to the company fully like what CEO of the company said "I live to work". However, we cannot say that whose idea are right Chinese way of working could be the reason why China is one of the developed country today but that might not be the kind of development that Americans want.

Q4. Read *Baker and Phongpaichit (2014)* [chapter 6-9] and watch a Thai documentary movie: ‘*Paradoxocracy*’ (2013).

Write a short synthetic essay how applicable the framework of ‘Marxist historical development’ [keyword: class struggle] could be in the context of Thai modern history.

Karl Marx, the important philosophers who influenced world’s political and economic way of organising society, later the Marx’s ideas were developed to be communist that quite distort to the ordinary Marxist. Thailand was ruled by absolute monarchy systems, where the monarch maintain the absolute power. Social class in those days was separated clearly, Thai population has no right to say on anything and monarchs have full control in the country so the benefits will only lie on the higher class, therefore this related to what Marx criticise on the class struggle.

People’s party or Khana Ratsadon, leading by Pridi Banomyong, were influenced by western ideas of democracy from the western world where the power is owned by population themselves. They tried to highlight the class conflict that caused by absolute monarchy and later start the revolution. People’s party introduced six principles which are 1. to maintain the supreme power of the Thai people 2. to maintain national security 3. to maintain the economic welfare of the Thai people in accordance with the National Economic Project 4. to protect the equality of the Thai people and 5. to maintain the people’s rights and liberties, insofar as they. Sadly everyone think that Pridi Banomyong along with the party were communism, however, if we look through every principal without bias, these ideas are really related to the core of Marx’s idea that benefits and freedom should be given to the citizens in the society equally, where communism is what people from later period use Marx’s ideas in different way.

After Thailand changed from absolute monarchy to democracy, it was not easy to give the right and freedom to the people as the rulers did not want to lose their power. With democracy, the power of ruling is now shift to prime minister, but in order to give the absolute right to Thai people, the prime minister should be elected by Thai people as well. Therefore, in 14 October 1973 was the huge protest in the era of Thanom Kittikachorn, when Thai citizens’ freedom were taken away again. The next event is Thammasat University massacre, where many students were killed because people thought that students wanted to get rid of monarchy systems. This event showed that the power were not given to Thai people fully, the group of students in that events did not have a chance to protect themselves and at the end the huge amount of them were killed because the misunderstanding.

Thaksin Shinawatra seems to be the prime minister who saw the important of the lower class most, he see that everyone were not treated equally in Thai society so

he opposed policy that help lower class to be able to access to the benefits like all other classes get, for example 30 bath health program and subsidy the local organisations. As a result these policies increase the standard living of working class more than ever before. This would lower the class struggle that Marx saw as the problem in the modern world.

In conclusion, the core idea of Marx is to lower the gap between the classes, often the benefits were given to the ruler of the society. The idea of democracy are some part linked to the Marxist as it want to lower the inequity that happen in the society. For Thailand, even though we have democracy that it claims that the power were given to 'people' but we still could not answer the question that are there the way that we could give people's freedom to everyone like Marx's idea in reality? As we still see the class struggle happen today. But in practice, in order to run the country, we must have the people who are ruler and ruled, once the power be with the ruler we cannot confirm that the benefits will share to everyone fairly, because humans are deeply selfish so we would often take all the benefits if we have a chance to do so.