

Title: Why Asian Community Now?
CHUNG JOONKON

1. Research Problem

- ※ We should not only leap over the wall of system and institutions built by nation state but also leap over the internal wall in people’s heart created during the formation of modern nation state.
- ① Don’t be restricted by the concepts of state and nation. We should leap over the wall of institution of nation state and internal wall. Thus, we can head for the formation of new community.
 - ② Approaches regarding Asian Community from two perspectives
 - A. Structural-functionalist approach (politics, economics, security) → State
 - B. Approach from culture, society, and education perspective → Individual
 - ③ The perspective of Globalization → Identity (Central Asia • Indonesia • Japan • Korea)
 - ④ Cross-border Movement of two kinds of people → necessary for production style nowadays
 - A. Movement of talented and wealthy people
 - B. Immigrants who cross the border to escape from persecution and poverty
 - ⑤ Globalized “economic system” and “political system” which is still the foundation of nation state → dual system (friction and confrontation) → it is the direction and current situation of the world after 20th century (only presented and justified in the framework of national interests, sovereign states)
 - ⑥ Keywords are the responses to these “changes” and “limitation”: capitalism, democracy → dysfunction → it is not possible to find answers to various problems on earth (inequality, poverty, environment, energy, food, security, etc.) with the existing methods and system).
 - ⑦ Limited to problems that a single state can solve.

2. Response to “Changes” and “Limitations”

- ① Resist changes and expect to bring back the values and traditions in the good old days.
- ② Say farewell to the existing limitation and crisis and pursue changes and create new things.
- ③ Grope for the shifting direction → Back to the starting point → look at the fundamental substance of problems

⇒ Think at the starting point ⇒ In order to find the correct prescription, we should comprehend the current situation and understand the nature and purpose (reason for existence) → for example, “What is Self,” “What is a human,” “what is a nation,” “what is a state”

3. Thomas Hobbes’s understanding of State

3. Thomas Hobbes’s understanding of State → from “understanding human” → In the “state of nature” where you can only protect yourself by yourself, People have absolute liberty. While in the state of nature, in order to protect people from immediate dangers to life, people establish modern state through social contract. (『*Leviathan*』)

⇒ In other words, in the state of nature (it is possible to kill each other: it is under the circumstance that ten thousand people struggle against ten thousand people) → In order to avoid dangers to life → people gave up their own nature rights → conclude a contract (social contract) → Common Power: strongest, highest power = sovereignty → (rule of law) ⇒ from individual to society (state).

⇒ ① Beginning of society ② minimum rules for preserving society ⇒ agreement among people ⇒ establish common foundation for people ⇒ thus, state is an artificial product.

IV. Regarding to states, individual (nation), fundamental research problem (Introducing cases)?

The 2011 earthquake off the Pacific coast of Tōhoku ⇒ The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster

- ① Limitation of sovereign state
- ② Relations between state and individual, information disclosure and rights to know
- ③ Security (traditional security → nontraditional security: human security)
- ④ limitation of emphasizing market economics, industrial technology and problem of life
- ⑤ Problem of efficiency and rationality/ Problem of economy and security

A. Raise the problem with geographical and spatial perspective (cross-border perspective, necessity of regional integration).

B. Raise the problem with temporal and historical perspective (perspective that cross different periods of time, perspective of all mankind)

⇒ Hints regarding Asian Community ⇒ idea and perspective that cross different states → It is difficult for the existing system and value system that formed and maintained modern nation state to overcome and solve the problems nowadays → it is necessary to say farewell to the

existing thought, institution, system which has been functional and search for new idea of system, value system, and philosophy.

V. Another Wall of Modern Nation States: Internal Wall

- ① Nation, territory, and sovereignty (right to rule) become the center of international society after the Peace of Westphalia (1648) → Emphasize border, nation, and state
- ② Nationalism → Nationalization → Identity
- ③ Define nation states as “one community has one culture and can be shaped by one identity” → Nationalization for this purpose
- ④ “Nation is an imagined political community” (Benedict Anderson)
- ⑤ Culture → “a control mechanism for the governing of behavior” (C. Geertz) → People act and judge in their own culture → Liberty from culture and identity → coexist with the “Other”

Fluidization of identity → Liberty from culture and identity → Important conditions made the communication with the “Other” possible

VI. The Relations among Individual, State, and Nation (Internal Dimension)

- ① Fundamental understanding and cognition of people (Human Understanding) → the concept and development direction of community
- ② People did not have special sense toward state at the beginning → however, historical experience demonstrated that people transformed to next stage that their nationalized body hope to die for nation state and feel honor when their nationalized body were killed by other nations ⇒ what made people change?
- ③ Nation and State, then combined as nationalism brought experience of miserable violence and chaos to mankind in modern nation states → If we do not renounce the preference for “border” imposed upon people’s heart, it will not be easy to solve the conflict. We should refute things we cannot see and draw a new frontier of “inside” and “outside” intendedly and clearly in order to strengthen our own identity.
- ④ Universal values like human rights which should be irrelevant to borders → but in practice, these values were apply in particular people inside the border; people who are not within the border or residents with foreign nationality and without nationality were not under protection of basic human rights.
- ⑤ We should establish shared bonds of community through respecting people’s diversity.
- ⑥ Is state a “essential existence” or “necessary evil” → state is not a permanently fixed structure or system, it should transform constantly
- ⑦ The sense of “state” or “nation” is an artificial product in formation process of modern nation

state.

Constructing an Asia community not only means to cross the border geographically and spatially but also means to remove the “internal wall” (bias and preconception) toward other nations and different culture which was born in the formation process of modern nation state (This is the tolerability including understanding, consideration, and difference toward the “Other”)

Conclusion: Beyond Nation States

- ① ⇒ Asian community is not a restricted community but an open community ⇒ “ (this community) is not limited to regional concepts. This community aims to expand people’s potentials and to respect plentiful and diverse characters, tradition and culture” ⇒ This community aims to cross old “walls” created by human one by one. ⇒ Ultimately, this world will become one.
- ② In 21st century, we should not be restricted by the concepts like “state” and “nation” and have no choice but live in civil society composed of multi-nation and multi-culture.
- ③ “It is not similar people shaping a group, but a group was shaped first and people in the group decide that they are similar.” → It is an imagined community named nation ※Benedict Anderson
- ④ Identity code of members in the political community should change from “nation” to “citizen”
- ⑤ Pursue Liberty and equality, then pursue comfortable, security environment and happiness → this is the fundamental goal of the community named nation
- ⑥ Shift from “Competitive paradigm” to “coexisting paradigm”
- ⑦ “We are not forming coalitions of states, we are uniting men” (1952、 Jean Monnet)

※Forming an Asian community not only mean to integrate institutions among states but also mean to go beyond the existing institutions and values and transform to a new paradigm required for the future era.