

論文

The Essence of International Social Work and Nine World Maps¹⁾

—How to induct students into the secrets of ISW—

Tatsuru Akimoto, DSW

What is the essence of International Social Work? How can we pass on this essence to students? This paper is a tentative summation of the author's ten year teaching experience at Japanese schools of social work.

1. What Is International Social Work?

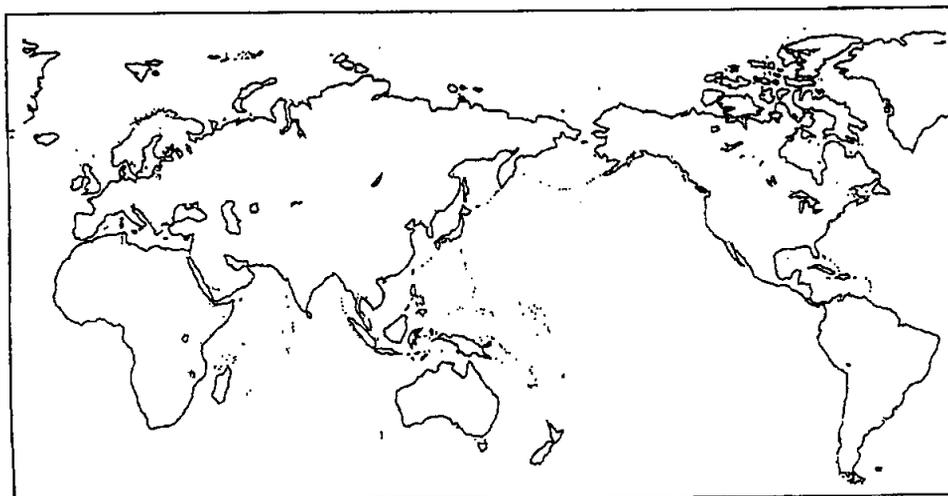
(1) What International Social Work is not

To practice or research on or in other countries is not international social work. This would be the same if you did this jointly with social work practitioners or professors of other countries. To make an international comparison is not international social work, regardless of drawing lessons for your own country. Comparative analysis is just one of the most basic research methods. To be engaged in practice or research on assistance to the Two Thirds World is not international social work. This would not change if you refer to "North-South relations." "Cross Cultural Social Work" is of course not international social work. To devote your energy and talents to international social work organizations such as IASSW, IFSW and ICSW is not international social work, either. This is "foreign affairs" activities, which are requisite to almost all kinds of organizations at the present time. These are all valuable and important but not necessarily international social work. (Akimoto, 1997: 26-27)

(2) What International Social Work is:

What is International Social Work? (1) International Social Work is that social work which is concerned with national boundaries. It is "international" social work. It deals with problems caused between or across national boundaries or efforts beyond national boundaries to solve those problems. (2) International Social Work thinks of and acts for the well-being of all people on this earth, or 6 billion 4 hundred thousand people in 200 countries and districts—not the well-being of one country or one people. It is not "national" social work. It is social work beyond the welfare state. (3) International Social Work does not attach any special meaning or importance in value to any specific country or people. It requires not egocentrism and ethnocentrism but "compound eyes". (4) Ignorance and innocence, including those of the history, will jeopardize international social work both in its practice and research.

The definition or the understanding of International Social Work has of course changed with time. Phase I occurred around the 30s,



MAP a

Source: Unknown

before World War II. Holding and attending international conferences and caring for war victims such as orphans, widows and wounded soldiers were termed international social work. These were two ways of breaking national boundaries.²⁾ Phase II lasted till the 1970s, in the case of Japan. The practice and the research on and in other countries or with people of other countries were considered as International Social Work. They were other ways to transcend national boundaries.³⁾ We are now in Phase III. (Akimoto, 1997: 33)

2. How to Convey the Essence of International Social Work

How can we convey the essence of today's International Social Work mentioned above to students in a session or two?

(0) Two blank world maps

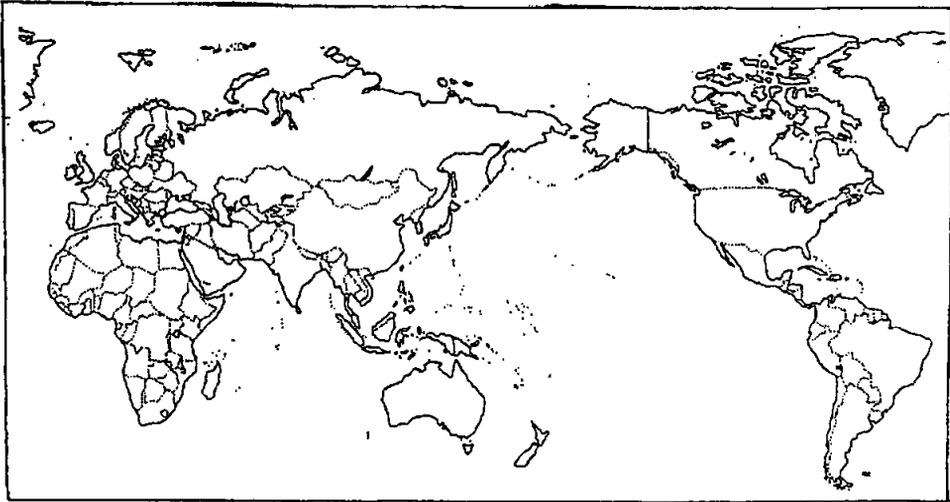
The first lecture on International Social Work

starts with a blank world map [MAPa]. The maps are handed to students and an instruction is given, "Look at the attached map and write down your feelings and thoughts (20 minutes)." Just immediately after they are turned in, another blank world map, but with dotted lines showing national boundaries on it this time [MAPb], is handed to students and the same instruction is given.

From these two maps and their comparison, almost all ingredients, or the essence, of international social work can be condensed. There are four points:

(1) The key word: National boundaries

The key word, or the core concept, of International Social Work is a national boundary. The sole difference between the two maps is the dotted lines. Because of these lines various problems happen. International Social Work



MAP b

Source: Unknown

deals with problems caused between and across and efforts beyond national boundaries to solve those problems.

Generally, for the first map, bright and positive comments tend to be made, as far as Japanese undergraduate students are concerned. For example, "Roomy," "Peaceful," "Unity," "Wholeness," "Conflicts and wars between countries seem to be absurd," "My worries seem to be trivial," and "This earth is not only for human beings but for all animals and plants." Many refer to seas and continents---their portions, shapes, and historical shifts. For the second map, dark and negative comments tend to be made. For example, "Jumble," "Conflicts and wars," "Strife and feuds," and "Competition and hatred." There are of course some opposite ideas and comments. Attached is the list of words, phrases and sentences given by students. [Appendix, pp.11~15]

International Social Work is, however, not the social work of the first map. Many practitioners and scholars seem to define International Social Work as such. They praise words and concepts such as an Earthian, a citizen⁴⁾ of the world and a crew member of the spaceship of Planet Earth. Such understanding is however "super-historical", not scientific and irresponsible, ignoring and erasing national boundaries when seeing, thinking, and acting.

We are still in the midst of nation states today although national boundaries have certainly been broken down in various ways---by goods and services, capital (or multinational corporations), people, information, etc. The first page of your passport reads:

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan requests all those whom it may concern to allow the bearer, a Japanese national, to pass

freely and without hindrance and, in case of need, to afford him or her every possible aid and protection.

The state has behaved itself as if it were your "guarantor" or "patron", while you have not asked it to do so. We cannot go anywhere outside our country without a passport.

Although it may be appropriate to have the concept of a world "citizen" as a long term goal to which we are directed, we are only somewhere on the way toward this. Seeing the past and the future, we have to know where we are now and think of what we should do. We must always carry the two maps in our minds in International Social Work. "This is the time when being a good (national) citizen, a good international man/woman and a good world 'citizen' is called for all simultaneously."

What are national boundaries? When and how were they born? They were man-made and relatively recent in the history of human beings. They are a product of modern nation states. Even today some boundaries have been newly drawn and re-drawn.⁵⁾ They may be possibly erased or eliminated tomorrow or someday in the future.

(2) The subject: All people on the earth

International Social Work cares for the well-being of all people in this world, 6 billion 4 hundred thousand people in 200 countries and districts, not the well-being of one country or one people. It sees both the Two-Thirds World

and One-Third World and their relations. International Social Work is in that sense social work beyond the welfare state, for the welfare state is not only a container of social welfare but also a wall of social welfare: (R. Pinker) International Social Work can be constructed only on the limitation of the nation state.

The second map visualizes people's lives in concrete terms. Within the space surrounded by the dotted lines, various people live their lives with and under various political, economic, social and cultural institutions and situations as well as various natural conditions.

The second map tends to emphasize these variations and differences. International Social Work begins its journey seeking for differences. The first map makes us feel the similarity and the commonality that are not partitioned. International Social Work begins a journey seeking for commonalities. International Social Work begins journeys in two opposite directions.

More interestingly, viewing the first map again after seeing the second map hints, suggests, and gives the possibility of seeing things not by a national boundary but by other criteria such as class, social strata, gender, religion, tribes and indigenous people/invaders, for analysis and practice, freeing us from the constraints of national boundaries. Not to see the world by countries does not mean to see things flat. To go beyond national boundaries does not mean to make a comparison between and among countries but rather to acquire the

way of viewing that is not influenced by national boundaries.

(3) The angle: Not egocentric and ethnocentric but “compound eyes”

International Social Work does not give any special position, meaning or importance in value to any specific country or a specific people. It requires “compound eyes”. All International Social Work practitioners and researchers are expected to view things not only with the eyes of their own country but with the eyes of other countries and eyes of the whole, or not only from the inside but also from the outside.

Almost all students used the word “Japan” or “Japanese” at least once in their answer sheets. They think only from the stance of their own country. Personal sense of belonging is natural and healthy up to a certain level. Few comments were however given from the angle of other countries or peoples.

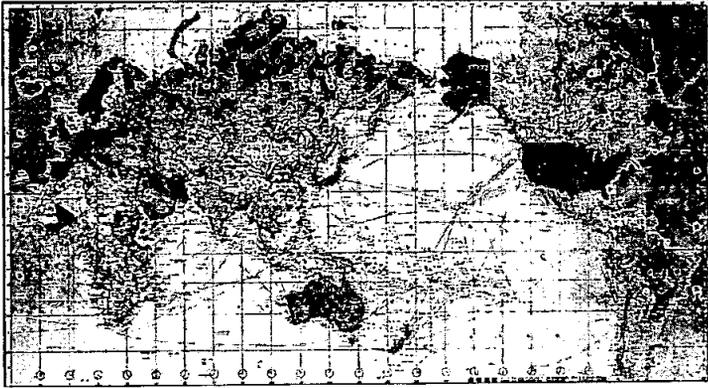
One assignment I gave in May 2004 was the following: “Three Japanese nationals have been kidnapped. Map the feelings, the understanding, the thoughts and responses of the various players or stakeholders.” The three hostages, their families, their friends, the organizations they belonged to, the Japanese government, the United States government and various other governments, NGOs, the general public in various countries, their sub-population, various segments of Iraqi people.... The question itself had a fundamental flaw. Why wasn't it phrased as “We kidnapped three Japanese”, or in the

active voice?

On the other hand, many students pointed out that the two maps were Japanese world maps because Japan was located in the center. There are typically three kinds of world maps today—the “Japanese world map [MAPc],” the authentic “European world map [MAPd],” and the “American world map [MAPe].” How “arrogant” they are! Not only that of Japan but also the other countries, too. They put their own countries in the middle. Particularly, the “American world map” bravely cuts the Eurasian Continent into half.

In addition to egocentrism, the emphasis on a theory of the elect and the superiority of one's own, e.g. Sino centrism, Zionism, the elitism and the superiority of the Germanic, the Japanese, and the Anglo-Saxon, seems to be a common character of all countries. They are on the opposite pole of International Social Work.

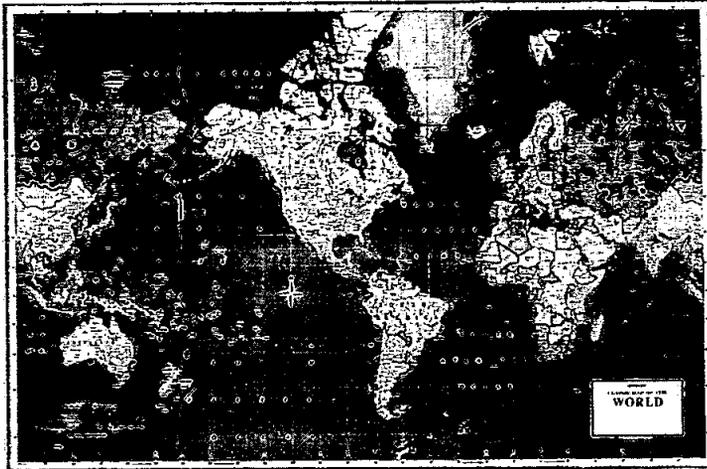
A map is a dangerous thing. It can control your way of thinking and seeing. Not only among countries but also in the North-South relations, a severe bias has been infused. The equator was not located at the center in the three maps above. The North has been unproportionally magnified. Peters' Projection [MAPf] is a challenge to this bias although still the part at the very top has been widely drawn disproportionately.⁶⁾ Both at the national level but also at the individual level, discriminatory, superior, or disdainful views are baneful.



MAP c Source: Wide World Map [*Waido Sekai Zenzu*], Tōbunsha, Tokyo

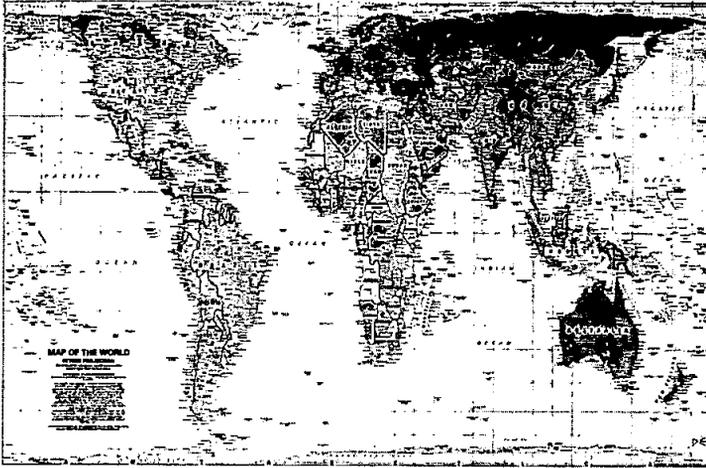


MAP d Source: LE MONDE, Projection Van der Grinten modifiée MICHELEN



MAP e Source: Classic Map of the World (HAMMOND Incorporated, Mamplewood, NJ)

※MAPc and MAPd: The original maps had national flags around them but they were trimmed away by the author.



MAP f Source: WorldView, Peters Projection Map (WorldView Publications: Oxford, UK)

(4) The preparation: Overcoming ignorance and innocence

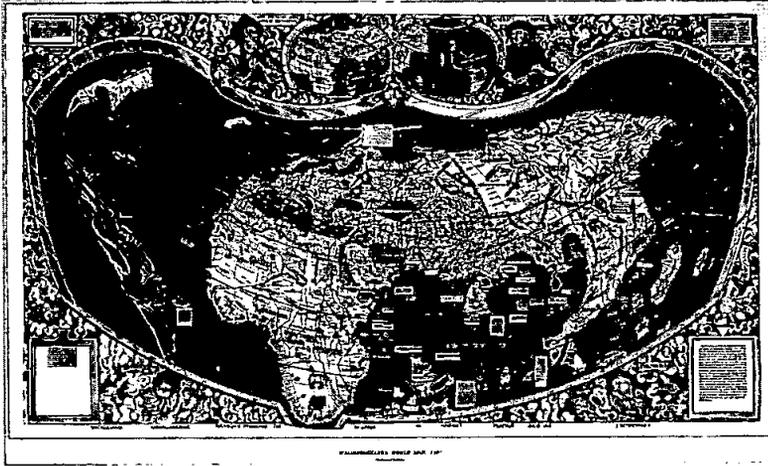
Ignorance and innocence as well as common sense are fatally detrimental to International Social Work in its practice and research. Some examples:

(a) Looking at the two blank world maps, many Japanese students start their comments with “Japan is a small island country” in their answer sheets, a notion which has been a persistently prevailing common knowledge in Japan. Is Japan small? Yes, but how small is it among all countries in the world? It is the 60th biggest among some 194 countries and districts according to a data book (Ninomiya-shoten, 2001: 18-24)—a third from the top. There are only three countries in Europe which are bigger than Japan: France, Spain and Sweden. Japan is the 9th largest in population, and 6th or 8th biggest, depending on the source, in space with the Exclusive Economic Zone considered. Can we

discuss International Social Work with this misperception?

(b) MAPg is a 1507 map obtained at the Vatican. Where can we find Japan? Nowhere? What does this mean? There are two serious implications. One, in the minds of the people who made and used this map, Japan—where millions of human beings were actually living—did not exist. Their world was different from the reality. Two, how do people feel, being ignored? Maybe not comfortable. To put it bluntly, it means a sort of a conceptual genocide. How terrible this is! Users as well as cartographers crossed out millions people’s existence.

The next assignment to students is “Simply write as many country names as possible (15 minutes).” To be shameful, the Japanese college students in my classes could write only around 60 country names on average (the maximum

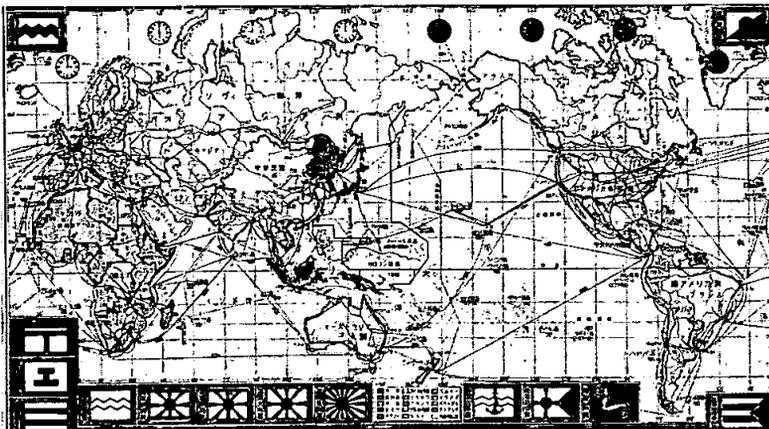


MAP g Source: Waldseemüller's World Map, 1507 (Wychwood Editions)

was 137), a third of all existing countries. What does this mean? Can you practice and study International Social Work with so little knowledge?

(c) MAPH is hard for the author to display in front of people, especially Asian colleagues.

Taiwan, Korean Peninsula, some Pacific islands are painted red as in Japan and the Northeastern part of China orange. This is a map from 1939 and proof of Japanese imperialism, colonialism, and aggression. Few students have seen this map and many do not know the historical facts with a sense of reality.



MAP h Source: Michio Moriya, New Japanese Atlas [*Shinsen Dai-chizu, Nippon-hen*] (Teikoku-shoin, Tokyo, 1939) pp.2-3

※ The original map had colors and weather signal flags around it but they were trimmed away by the author.

On the other hand, many of them do seem to have innocently no discriminatory feelings against the peoples of those countries that Japan once invaded, at least at the conscious level. They become friends without hesitation while older generations have some conflicting feeling regardless of their political or ideological position—reactionaries, conservatives, liberalists or radicals. “We had not been born during the period of aggression,” say young students, implying that thus they are not responsible for the history.⁷⁾ Is this excuse acceptable for those whose countries were once invaded? Can you practice or research International Social Work with this innocence?

“It is not only Japan that invaded, killed, and exploited” other countries, but it is a fact Japan did. It is not easy for a Japanese to work in

Asia.

(d) Asian countries are our neighbors. Is this common sense correct? MAPi (Telegeography) is a map drawn by the volume of telephone and facsimile communication in 1990-91. The proportion of the space of Japan covered by Country A (e.g. 23 % in case of the US) shows the volume of the information sent to the country among all the information sent out to all countries from Japan and the proportion of Japan in the space of Country A (e.g. 4 % in case of the US) shows the volume of the information sent to Japan among all the information the country sent out to all countries. Neighboring countries for Japan seem to be North American countries and European Community countries and not Asian countries. Most Asian countries are distantly located.⁸⁾ Are we ready for International Social Work?

There is no need to summarize this short story to this point. Please make an equivalent story, replacing “Japan” and “Japanese” with your own country and your own people, and think and practice.



MAP i Japan Communication Continent

Source: Gregory C. Staple, “The World Seen From Telegeography”, *TeleGeography*, 1994.

- 1) This paper was originally presented at the IASSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work) Board Seminar at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, on 20 January 2005.
- 2) As far as naming is concerned, conferences were first and wars second. Immigrants were a major topic in social work in those days but not classified as international social work. See early volumes of *Social*

Work Year Books (New York: Russell Sage Foundation).

- 3) Being engaged in the promotion of international exchange and foreign affairs were also termed international social work by some people.
- 4) The concept of "citizens" was constructed in the relation with a state in modern Western theories. Citizens have rights to be free from, to demand to and to be entitled to receive services from a state. From whom and to whom are those rights of "citizens of the world"?
- 5) MAPb, which was a map made before the USSR was dissolved, was intentionally used to demonstrate this point.
- 6) It cannot be helped as we use the second dimension for a globe.
- 7) "You are enjoying an affluent life as a historical inheritance. We must inherit our history as a whole."
- 8) Today Internet communication, which was not so common at the beginning of the 90s, would be even more important and the map might be significantly different.

References

Akimoto, Tatsuru, 1995. "A Voice from Japan: Questioning International Social Work/Welfare: Where Are We Now?" *Japanese Journal of Social Services*, No. 1. October, pp.23-34.

Ninomiya-shoten, 2001, *Data Book of the World*, Vol.13.

[takimoto@fc.jwu.ac.jp]

[Appendix]

Two Blank World Maps

“Look at the Map and Write Down Your Feelings and Thoughts” *

Both Maps [MAPa & MAPb]

<A Small Island Country>

1. Japan is a small island country; Japan is really small; How small Japan is!
2. Island countries are few; I feel insecure about the lack of links with other countries.
3. It's a great matter that Japan is a world economic power while it is really small.

<Japanese World Map>

4. This is a Japan-centered world map; Probably Japanese made it; It's natural to put your own country in the middle, but I sense some egocentrism—Japan supremacy; What do world maps in other countries look like?
5. But it's rather unnatural to put France or the United States in the middle while we are Japanese. It's important to love your own country.

The First Map[MAPa]

<Broad and Spacious and Peaceful >

1. Broad; spacious; open; I feel refreshed.
2. Peaceful; What trivial matters we fight over!; Wars and strife between states seem to be absurd.

<Unity and a Whole>

3. The world looks to be one; I feel intimacy with all; I feel I could go wherever, just now; I don't feel distance between countries; All countries look alike although they have been partitioned and have their own cultures and policies; Some places are now in war and others in peace and some places are poor and others are wealthy, aren't they?
4. Without national boundaries, not an end but continuity is seen between Europe and

Middle East.

<Continents>

5. Not countries but continents come to our eyes.
6. Shapes of continents are interesting; All continents fit each other to make a big continent; Once upon a time, all continents were connected with each other, say people; The phrase “All People are Brothers and Sisters” comes to my mind.
7. The earth is made of land and sea; Seas overwhelm land in space; The Pacific Ocean is huge; Is this how the Arabian Peninsular and Mediterranean Sea were always shaped?
8. Some part of today's land may disappear in the future due to global warming, and the area of seas and oceans will become larger; Environmental problems should be discussed more as the world is connected into one.

<Six Billion People and Not for Human Beings Alone >

9. Are people living on small islands in the midst of an ocean? If yes, how are they living?; In each place, many kinds of people are living different lives. How wonderful it is for those people to live at the same time on the same earth with their respective norms and standards.
10. The world population has exceeded six billion.
11. This earth belongs not only to human beings but also to animals and other life that inhabit it.
12. The world is certainly big but the universe is much bigger.

<My Existence and my Worry>

13. Here I am living in this universe, just like one little speck of dust, worrying and

struggling. The whole idea seems comical in a way; "I" could be dotted on this map only with a precision instrument. It's pitifully cute for a human being to strive over such a tiny life; My worry seems to be a very small matter.

<Part of a Whole>

14. All countries are on this one planet and connected with each other with land and seas; The world is linked together.
15. Japan is small and part of the large world.
16. This map presents only the essential framework of the world before us; Why has what used to be one come apart?

<Poverty>

17. How many people are living happy lives with sufficient living standards now?; The gap between the rich and the poor is huge while we are on the same earth; Why?
18. Japan is full of goods and there are poor countries in the same Asia; Everyday thousands of thousands starve to death.
19. Somewhere far from or very near to us there are many people on this map who have no security, not even the assurance of a daily meal; In Japan, too, there are people who are homeless and don't know where their next meals are coming from.

<Wars & Conflicts>

20. We have wars and troubles right now somewhere; Iraqi is in war and many other places I don't know have poor security; And many people have become victims.

<National Boundaries & States>

21. There might be no wars without national boundaries; Nationality changes and laws and institutions all become different once you cross a national border one centimeter.
22. There may be no need for us to have the unit of a "state". Because of a "state", nationalism sprouts and the distance between "our" country and "their" countries is born while all states are on the

same continents of the Earth. This has produced wars, discrimination, poverty, etc. In terms of the social welfare, we think of that of our own country while society is composed of all continents on this earth.

23. We call people from other countries "Gaijin" (Foreigners, strangers, aliens or outsiders). This is a discriminatory term or a carryover from 400 years of national seclusion. It sounds as if we were rejecting them.
24. It is necessary to know about Japan if we want to bring up true "international men and women".
25. "The world is one," and the Japanese, the American, the people of Africa....race is not important. I would like to say so. But it would be whitewashing. The culture and religion of each district and country, which have been built up through history till today, have become sources of troubles, produced many victims, and made the mutual understanding among people difficult. Seeing and hearing recent Iraqi-related incidents and news, I have been convinced that I, a pacifist, and those who want to "solve" the problem with war and force have no common words and could never reach a mutual understanding. The only commonality among us is a simple fact that we are all human beings who are living on this map. There is nothing else to share. Everything else is quite different.

<Perception>

26. The Japanese do not seem to be proud of being part of Asia although we are part of Asia. They yearn for the character of Europe of which the Asians share nothing, e.g. colors of skin and hair and the character, and are attracted even by the sound of the word, "Europe", itself. How about other Asian peoples? Do they also revere for Europe? How do the European perceive Asian? What does Japan, a small country, look like in their eyes?

<Modesty>

27. The world I know is just part of the whole; I only know some of tiny Japan; There are many places and countries that I don't know; With this poor knowledge can I study International Social Work?
28. There are people who live under totally different environments and customs. It's important to know of them.
29. The world is big and each country has various problems which I really know nothing about. I wish I would have taken interest in them; It's necessary to see various countries and places.
30. Watching news on Iraqi problems, I am little concerned with them, while they have happened within the distance of ten centimeters on this small scale of a map; What percentage of people in this world live while lacking nothing---clothes, food and houses?; Even now many people are involved in wars and violent incidents somewhere. But I don't know nor do try to know even where. I am only concerned with something around myself. I feel I am very a small person.

<Aspiration>

31. I live in a small city in the small country of Japan and there's a lot that I haven't seen yet. I would like to see and know more; I want to see as many people as possible.
32. I want to get out of this small Japan into the big world to have various experiences.

<Others>

33. Europe seems smaller than I thought. It is unbelievable for me that countries in such small Europe had the power to divide the world.
34. The closeness between countries does not depend on the distance.
35. All the talk about globalization seems trivial when we look at tiny maps like these.
36. Until when will Japan be ruled and

controlled by the United States even while they are located far from each other? I feel uneasy.

37. I wonder if the world will draw ruin on itself someday.

The Second Map[MAPb]

<Narrow, Cramp and Closed>

1. Jumbled; How narrow the world is!; Only with national boundaries added, the world looks smaller; I am choked with being cramped; Crowded; Closed.
2. The feeling of liberation in the first map has gone somewhere.
3. The map with national boundaries seems unnatural. The map without them seemed better.
4. I am somehow sad with this map particularly after looking at the first map.
5. Dotted lines are unpleasant; They look like a patchwork of dinosaur's skeletons.

<Piecemeal>

6. The world has been divided into small bits and each of them has been fenced; Seas are also divided as territorial waters. The world is more fragmented.
7. If people live in a smaller divided space, the world they think of also becomes smaller.
8. The world looked to be one in the first map but it's now firmly divided; The world looks like not one but an aggregate of various countries.

<National Boundaries>

9. In this map there are national boundaries; We are accustomed to this map with national boundaries that were artificially drawn; Everything would differ if we went a step beyond a national boundary; You would feel foreign unreasonably.
10. I feel the distance between countries.
11. What is a national boundary?; How was it

decided?; What was used as a basis for the decision?; What meaning was there in drawing the line?; Shapes of countries have been drawn by hands of men/women, except for island countries like Japan.

12. Why did shapes become so complicated as these?; Why aren't lines straight? It would be easier to handle this with straight lines.
13. It is apparent that straight border lines were drawn artificially by people.
14. The national boundary lines in Africa are frightening, and tell the history of competing European countries' invasions; I feel very sad; Border lines in Africa make me disconsolate; I learned in schools that many of the national boundaries in Africa were decided by European and American countries without consideration for tribal or religious relations; Thinking whose colony each country was, I feel the cruelty afresh; One nation should never rule another.
15. How different are the people on both sides near a border?
16. On one hand, there are many people who aren't convinced of the present lines and on the other hand, there are many people who don't care about them.
17. The meaning of national boundaries would be different in Japan, an island country, and in Europe and America where many countries are closely located; How do people feel in a country immediately neighboring other countries?; How do people feel with people on the other side of the border line whose language, food and buildings are different?

<A State>

18. National boundaries expel the view of continents; The world grasped by a state is presented rather than the world by a continent; The relationship between states, being good or bad, comes to the fore.
19. With national boundaries, human beings

made distances between themselves by themselves; People became unable to come and go freely any more; Always distinguishing you from others and putting them far from you, people won't walk toward each other; The strong insistence of a state drives people not to cross dotted lines and to accept what exists only within the boarder to reject all others from horror.

20. Without national boundaries, we think of "people living in the same world." With national boundaries, we distinguish people of our country and people of other countries, e.g. Japanese and foreigners.

<Wars, Conflicts, Struggles, Competitions and Hatred>

21. It's strange---Being divided by dotted lines, states now start insisting on their own rights and territories; Many countries competed, hated and repeatedly fought each other. It's too sad when they are neighbors; National boundaries remind me of many wars over land. I heard of many tragic stories about national borders.
22. Seeing wars in the past and territory disputes today, human beings seem to be creatures that always want to expand their territories. For me what's important is how more people become happier rather than how more territory is obtained. The size of a country is not the determinant of affluence.
23. Human beings have repeated wars over national boundaries for many centuries. Japan also invaded other countries before and during World War II to expand its territory, but I cannot help wondering why people stick to their national boundaries, territories and interests. People will probably continue fighting for them forever.
24. People have been afflicted by the national boundaries that they made, haven't they?; Many people have suffered with national boundaries.

25. It does not seem to be important for me which countries are strong and which countries weak; The world looks flat: I don't feel the difference between rich and poor in this map.

26. In the name of religion people killed each other. Is belief in a religion justifiable for killing people?

<The Shape and the Size of Countries>

27. Big countries, small countries and countries like particles; A country like a dot or a huge country like Russia is equally a country; The size of land does not parallel the affluence of the country.

28. I am tempted to put in colors.

29. There are many countries in Africa; There are more countries in the Southern Hemisphere; The Southern Hemisphere contains many "developing countries" in it.

30. Racial discrimination is firmly rooted but countries of Blacks, Whites and Yellows are roughly the same in number and area. It is unreasonable and unfair to discriminate against each other.

<Visualization>

31. Each country is now spending time with its own pace, way and value.

32. The actual lives of people, e.g. special products, folk costumes and animals, can be visualized; I can imagine politics, laws, cultures, religions and languages in each country; What do people eat for breakfast in each area surrounded by lines?; The difference in characters by region interests me.

33. Since cultures, races and others differ, the world may be interesting, but in reality the differences have sadly caused conflicts.

<Aspiration>

34. I have been to some countries but haven't been to many; I start thinking I want to go this country or that island; I would like to travel to many places.

<Erasing National Boundaries>

35. Lines of national boundaries are obstacles; I think national boundaries are unnecessary. Their value has been disappearing in this time of internationalization, globalization and the information society.

36. Various new phenomena beyond national boundaries have been occurring, e.g. the destruction of nature; National boundaries have reached a limit today. We have to strive for the solution of the problems on a global scale.

37. I wish all these lines would vanish someday from this world.

38. What if there were no national boundaries? I am curious; I am fearful. I have a hunch that the worst thing would happen.

39. Dotted lines can not be erased so easily. They seem to have existed from old days.

40. The problem for us is how to overcome the concept of a "state".

<Others>

41. Besides national boundaries, there are many invisible borders that have not been shown here in the world. Human beings are creatures that want to create "borders" from ancient times.

42. Many common problems exist within each dotted line such as the gap between the extremely rich and poor and wars and racial conflicts.

43. It is great that English is the common language for the world. But I wonder if it is good or not for all people to be able to speak English.

※ Comments given by 38 undergraduate students, mainly sophomores and juniors, in the 2004 International Social Work class of Japan Women's University, Tokyo, Japan. These comments are similar to those of other classes at Japan Women's University and other universities in the Tokyo area in the past ten years.