There are a number of best times to come to Onomichi. April 20 and 21 are Hana-kuyo, a festival of flowers at Saikokuji Temple begun by a rich merchant's daughter who offered flowers in commemoration of the death of Kobo-daishi. Onomichi is as proud of its flowers as it is of its writers and artists; so, according to reliable sources, all of April and May are breathtakingly beautiful.

Several festivals take place in the fall too, including Onomichi's unique Beccha festival on November 3 that features the local children running for their lives from three terrifying demons. And it is said that Mt. Senkoji becomes almost crowded on Sundays in October and November because of the spectacular chrysanthemum display.

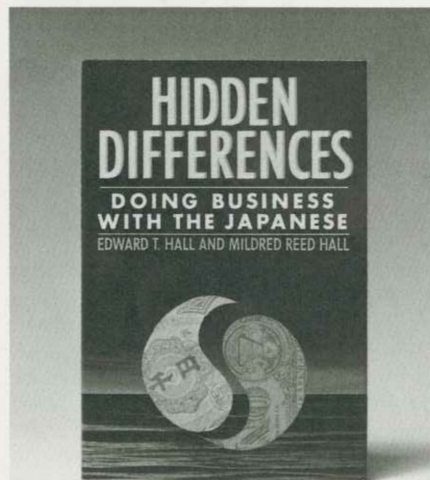
However, since you are on your way to windsurfing off Shikoku, you will probably want to drop by during the summer. At the end of July, you can attend the Gion festival, a treasured remnant of the days when Onomichi and Kyoto were the pinnacles of Japanese civilization. And every other year—this is an off year—you can attend the Yoshiwa Taiko-odori, a 600 year-old festival featuring 170 men and women dancing to the beat of drums tied around their waists. Besides, summer is the best time for a port town. It's the best time for envying the crew on tall ships in green water, and it's the best time for standing in the cool breeze on the tops of mountains. It must be noted that there is almost no level ground in Onomichi. This is no place for weak hearts or bad backs, especially in summer. But since you're going windsurfing, it'll be good for you.

Steve Leeper
Editor/translator/consultant
for Transnet, a Hiroshima-based company

Bookshelf

Hidden Differences: Doing Business with the Japanese

By Edward T. Hall & Mildred Reed Hall
Published by Anchor Press/Doubleday
1987, New York
172 pages; $16.95



Believing in the need to maintain free trade, I would like to see U.S. manufacturers making a greater effort to export. Yet with a land area 25 times as large as Japan's and with double Japan's population, the United States is itself a major market, and it is understandable that manufacturers should be content to sell in the 50 states. However, the deluge of foreign products flooding the American market has made it imperative that American companies stop being satisfied with just the home market and open their eyes and broaden their horizons to include the world export market.

This is especially true of the need to look at the Japanese market—the second largest national market in the free world—and to make a greater effort here. The possibilities in Japan are infinite, but they are largely unexploited. Thus the main cause of the trade friction between Japan and the United States lies not in the Japanese surplus but in the American deficit, and I very much hope that U.S. exporters will be more aggressive in selling in Japan. Unfortunately, too many American businessmen who come to Japan believing in the potential for growth here find it difficult to adapt to Japanese social customs and commercial practices and, failing to make a profit as quickly as they had hoped, leave Japan bitter or disheartened. This will never do.

If you are a businessman hoping to do business in Japan, *Hidden Differences* is one of the books that you should read before you get on the plane—and even before you get very far along in your thinking. The authors are the world-famous cultural anthropologist Edward T. Hall and his wife Mildred Reed Hall, who specializes in the application of anthropology to intercultural problems. For the past 30 years, the Halls have worked in the field of intercultural communication, designing programs for the selection and training of foreign service personnel assigned to work in foreign cultures, consulting for international business and writing extensively on this subject. They are, very

simply, the foremost authorities in their field.

In writing *Hidden Differences*, they conducted numerous interviews with hundreds of Japanese and American businessmen. They drew upon this wealth of hands-on experience and the reams of material that have already been written to generate this treasure trove of practical advice. As a result, they have produced not an abstract theory of behavior but penetrating analyses of actual real-life situations.

The authors waste no words. Their book is short by design, and underlying it is the admonition that anyone wanting to do business in Japan must first study Japanese business. Study the language, study the culture and get a good grasp on the way business is done in Japan—before you start.

This may appear to be simple common sense. If you want to come to Japan and do business with Japan, it is only natural that you should be expected to speak the local language. Just as it is unimaginable that a Japanese businessman doing business in the United States should not make an effort to learn English, so is it only reasonable that Americans doing business in Japan should learn the language. Yet it is common sense that is all too often ignored.

Of course, the authors are well aware of the difficulties Americans face in trying to learn Japanese and are sympathetic to the businessman's plight, but they still emphasize the importance of learning the language. It is, as they note, impossible to fully understand a nation's culture, to pick up its social and lifestyle patterns and to adapt to the society and develop close affinities unless you speak the language.

The Halls are firm in stating that human relations are the key to succeeding in Japan. Before the Japanese examine the pros and cons of a given business deal, they want to make sure they are comfortable with the people they will be dealing with. It is only after trustful human relations have been established that any business can be conducted. Non-Japanese are often referred to with the catch-all sobriquet "*gaijin-san*." When this *gaijin-san* becomes a friend, the Japanese are both pleased and proud. Perhaps the reverse side of the famed Japanese inferiority complex, this is an important point for the businessman to remember. Friendships—human relations—are crucial, and the authors admonish readers to make time for after-hours socializing. This may be very difficult for Americans accustomed to drawing a clear line between their private and public selves, but it is indispensable to succeeding in Japan, and the authors say that this is simply something the rest of the family will have to learn to put up with.

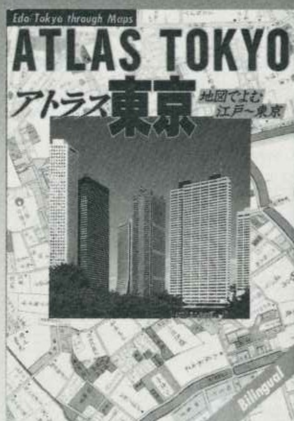
As would be expected of communication theory specialists, the Halls are astute observers of Japanese patterns of communication. They rightly advise Americans to be patient in the face of the Japanese disinclination to give a clear yes or no and the preference for ambiguous answers. When in Japan, wait as the Japanese do.

This book is an excellent reference work for anyone wanting to do business in Japan. For just as it provides practical advice on doing business in Japan, it is also full of insights into Japanese culture and society. There have been many books and articles written on Japan and Japanese business—*Hidden Differences* itself includes a six-page bibliography—but this is one of the best. I very much hope that the Halls' *Hidden Differences* will be read, reread and reread again. For it is only when foreign businessmen approach the Japanese market with understanding and respect for its intrinsic mechanisms that they will be able to succeed in Japan.

Tatsumi Otani
Lecturer
Kanto Gakuin Women's Junior College

Atlas Tokyo:
Edo/Tokyo through Maps

Edited by Yasuo Masai
Published by Heibonsha Ltd.
1986, Tokyo
160 pages; ¥5,800



Heibonsha, publisher of the best bilingual maps of Japan, has come out with a wonderful bilingual book for map lovers who also love Tokyo. *Atlas Tokyo: Edo/Tokyo through Maps* will give you hours of enjoyment. It is a delightful combination of maps, text, photos and graphs, all intended to provide answers to the question, What is it about Tokyo that makes this giant, multifarious city so attractive?

This large format (21.0cm × 29.7cm) book will show you aspects of Tokyo that you never saw before. To begin with, there is a double-page, color spread of the city taken from a satellite 705 kilometers above the earth. Then, the book focuses on other aspects of the city, such as the concentration of universities (over 100) and junior colleges (over 80).

We are shown where the city's fruits and vegetables come from and what the basis is for the city's water supply. Water and fire have been a constant preoccupation of the inhabitants of Edo/Tokyo. There was sometimes not enough of the former and often too much of the latter. The Great Fire of 1657 destroyed much of the city because houses and shops were in such close proximity and because the standard building material was wood. Fires, referred to as *Edo no hana*, or the symbol of Edo were thus greatly feared, and in 1719, the city was divided up into 64 neighborhood fire-fighting brigades. Each brigade had its own distinctive uniform, and these are shown in *Atlas Tokyo*, along with each brigade's standard. When an alarm was sounded, the brigades rushed to the fire, each one hoping to get there first and plant its standard on the spot.

The book also contains a map showing the extent of the two major disasters after Edo became known as Tokyo: the earthquake of 1923 and the air raids of 1945. On the following page is a map showing plans for reconstructing the city after the 1923 earthquake. All of the major streets in the downtown area on both sides of the Sumida River were widened so they could serve as firebreaks.

Tokyo was a crowded city even in the Edo period. By the mid-18th century, it had over one million inhabitants; in contrast, London, as of 1801, had only 850,000. About half of Edo's citizens lived in unbelievably overcrowded conditions: population density was some 67,000 people per square kilometer.

Edo's most densely populated section was Shitamachi, the low-lying area near Tokyo Bay where the merchant class lived. An interesting map titled "Edo under the Shogun" shows the population distribution during the rule of the Tokugawas. In the center, of course, was the shogun's castle, and surrounding it—in the fashionable Yamanote, or high (hilly) land—were the mansions of the *daimyo*, the retainers of the shogun. The *daimyo* and the people in their service accounted for some half a million or so of the city's 1.3 million. Yet they took up about 60% of the city's land.

Another 20% of Edo's land was taken up by shrines and temples. Shrines were everywhere because each neighborhood had its own shrine and its own guardian god. There were over 1,000 shrines, a sizable number of temples and some 50,000 to 60,000 people in their service. The population density in these areas was the city's lowest.

No wonder Shitamachi was so crowded. Over half the city's population was squeezed into 20% of its land. And no wonder fires were such a hazard. The No. 1 fire-fighting brigade was in Fukagawa, the heart of Shitamachi.

Another section of this fascinating book takes a close-up look at different neighborhoods of Tokyo. I turned first to Fukagawa, where I live, and was treated to three different maps of the area: one dated 1852, one 1909 and one 1986. The 1852 map showed me that the canal which stops one block short of my home, and which I have always assumed was filled in in modern times due to "progress," was in fact not filled in at all. It apparently always stopped exactly right where it stops now. Perhaps the reason is that a large temple complex stood where I now live.

If you live in Azabu, turn to that section and you will discover that Japan's standard coordinates of latitude and longitude are fixed at a point just behind the Soviet Embassy, where the Tokyo Observatory used to be.

Shinjuku, we learn, was notorious for its illicit pleasures in the Edo period, just as it is now. New inns (*shin-juku*) were established along the highway leading west out of Edo, at a point near Lord Naito's mansion. These inns had a reputation for catering to *all* of the needs of the men who passed through here, and it wasn't long before the entire area around Lord Naito's mansion came to be known as Naito-cho, a district with a savory reputation. Poor Lord Naito—long after he and his mansion were gone, the reputation lived on. Today, finally, his name is cleared; we know the area where his beautiful estate once stood as Shinjuku Gyoen (Garden), and the illicit pleasures have moved northward to the Kabuki-cho district of Shinjuku Ward.

Another aspect of Tokyo that this book introduces is the outlying districts that are not part of the city's 23 contiguous wards. The greater Tokyo metropolitan area encompasses districts as far away as 1,000 kilometers. The Izu Islands and the Ogasawara Islands, lying almost due south in the Pacific Ocean, are administered by the Tokyo government. Thus, when the volcano erupted on Oshima Island last year, the inhabitants—tax-paying citizens of greater Tokyo—were evacuated to mainland Tokyo. The book shows some of the lovely subtropical scenery on these islands and gives a bit of their history. We are also shown the lush, green mountainous district of Okutama—about 100 kilometers west of Tokyo—which is also administratively part of the city.

There's lots more in this book. A lengthy section on the transportation systems of Edo and Tokyo is included, the mountains visible from Tokyo's skyscrapers are identified, the amount of Tokyo Bay that has been reclaimed over the centuries is shown. A series of charts and maps shows the industrial areas of Tokyo and the relative values of the industrial output. We learn that the largest of Tokyo's industries in terms of annual revenue is publishing and printing.

Hooray for the energy and imagination of Tokyo's publishing industry, if it can give us books such as this one. Let us hope that many more of these fine bilingual efforts follow.

Anne G. Pepper
Tokyo-based journalist

Taste of Tokyo

Nanban-tei

Residents of Tokyo, living on the most expensive land in the world and eating the planet's most expensive rice and meat, are classic victims of poor governing. In most other countries, it would only be natural for a furious consumer movement to erupt in outraged protest. Yet in Japan, such movements are a rarity. Even if someone, like the tiny Salaried Men's party, should attempt to whip up support, not many people are likely to join. In Japan, consumerism is often regarded as synonymous with leftist labor movements. Japanese dread being labeled "pink," much less "red."

Indeed, should a foreign resident in Tokyo who is suffering from the strong yen rise up and start a consumers' movement, he might be surprised by his success. The Japanese people would join a foreign-led campaign without fear. Eventually, the movement might even compel the government to get serious about remedial measures.

Okonomi-yaki/teppan-yaki restaurants, a uniquely Japanese tradition, live on in this country because they perfectly meet the needs of ordinary people who are suffering from high prices without any avenue for effective protest. *Okonomi-yaki* is a kind of spicy pancake stuffed with seafood and vegetables and fried by the customer on a hot plate set into the table or counter. In an *okonomi-yaki* restaurant, two, four or even six people sit around a hot plate, stirring chopped vegetables, shrimp and other ingredients into a batter of flour. They then pour spoonfuls of the mixture onto the hot plate and flavor the finished pancakes with *shoyu* (soy sauce) and *okonomi-yaki* sauce, a kind of sweet Worcestershire sauce.

In *teppan-yaki*, prawns, cuttlefish, salmon, shellfish and vegetables are broiled on a hot plate and spiced with butter, salt and pepper to the diner's own taste. Both *okonomi-yaki* and *teppan-yaki* are especially delicious because they are eaten piping hot, straight from the griddle. Food tastes best when you eat it immediately after it has been made right in front of your eyes. And then there is the spirit of camaraderie born when friends sit around a hot plate, chatting gaily with each other as each person cooks away to his or her heart's content.

To best enjoy this delightful eating experience, I for one instantly recommend the Nanban-tei restaurant, five minutes' walk from Shimokitazawa station at the intersection of the Odakyu and Inokashira railway lines running out of Shinjuku and Shibuya, respectively. Nanban-tei is a typical (and moderately priced) *okonomi-yaki/teppan-yaki* restaurant where the bill won't damage your wallet even if you drink and eat heartily all evening. The charge per person is ¥4,000 at most—unless you have an exceptionally large stomach. The restaurant also has a good stock of rough and ready liquor, including Tokachi wine, the best in Japan, *shochu* liquor, beer and whiskey. The restaurant, which offers both table and tatami, can seat about 40 people.

(Yoshimichi Hori, editor-in-chief)

Address: 2nd Floor, Ishikawa Bldg.,
2-12-3 Kitazawa, Setagaya-ku
Telephone: (03) 419-6938
Business hours: 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
Open year-round