Time	Speaker	
00:05	Joseph	Hello, this is Joseph Shaules. Welcome to the Deep Culture Podcast, where we explore culture and the science of mind. I'm here with Yvonne, my co-host. How are you doing, Yvonne?
00:17	Yvonne	I'm fine. Hi, Joseph. Good evening.
00:19	Joseph	Good morning from California. I'm supposed to be in Tokyo, but increased COVID travel restrictions have kept me here. There are wildfires burning, the sky is hazy with the a red sun. It's a very interesting and intense time to be here.
00:42	Joseph	Today, we are going to be discussing Edward Hall. Yvonne, is Edward Hall famous?
00:51	Yvonne	It probably depends to whom you ask. I know his name, and it might mean more people who know his name might mean even more people know his work. And, we are probably going to discuss that more in depth today, but for me, many more people know concepts like high and low context communication, than might know Edward T. Hall by his name.
01:13	Joseph	Right. So, some of the concepts that he came up with are now common. But, I agree. I think a lot of people don't know his name. I'm a huge fan of his. He was an intercultural pioneer. In 1959, he published "The Silent Language," and that's considered the starting point for the study of intercultural communication. I think he was way ahead of his time in his understanding of culture and unconscious mind.
01:42	Joseph	I discovered "The Silent Language" on an airplane flying to Boston. That book was on the background reading list for a graduate school. And, at that time, I had been living in Mexico and Japan, and I had these powerful experiences there. But, reading his book, he was putting into words, things that I felt, but I couldn't explain, like how in Mexico, people use time differently.
02:11	Joseph	And, he was analyzing these subtle cultural patterns, like time,

		and how we use space, and how those patterns shape our mind. It was exciting for me to discover words that could go to the things that I'd been experiencing. So, Yvonne, what image do you have of Edward Hall?
02:32	Yvonne	Well, I don't have such a clear image of you about Hall. You have this clear moment in this airplane. And, it's more that I've been knowing his work, and I was impressed by it. But, actually I do use it. People are rather often this concept about time, chronic time, polychromic time, even people who have, are having bicultural marriages, sometimes don't have this word, "presence," and they have all issues with each other.
03:00	Yvonne	And, once they understand, and really understand, and to think linearly, one thing at the time, and other person, for instance, has multi-tasking kind of way of living. Time is more elastic, can be so different. So, that's what I really find intriguing about his work. About time. It's about space, really about the fundamentals that are very useful.
03:23	Joseph	And, fundamental in that they are subtle but powerful, which is an interesting combination.
03:30	Yvonne	And, talking about obvious, there's one quote, I think it was the second book that he says, and I even have written it down. "It's frequently the most obvious and taken for granted and therefore the least studied aspect of culture that influences behavior in the deepest and most subtle ways." And, I took this quote also as a quote in my book I published myself because I think it's so powerful.
03:58	Yvonne	It's not sometimes in the large things, but it can be such small things, and we forget about them. They are blind spots, they are automatic, autopilot, and we take them for granted, but they are not, and that's meaningful.
04:13	Joseph	And, maybe that's one reason that it's the tiny little moments when we are traveling in a foreign country, or we have a foreign

		experience, tiny little moments that stick with us because they are touching some very fundamental issues. They are not actually such tiny little things.
04:38	Joseph	In today's episode, we are going to look at what makes Edward Hall's work special. It has three parts. Part one: the shape of your head.
04:56	Joseph	Hall was interested in cultural difference, but to appreciate his perspective, we need to get into our mental time machine and go back before his time, say a hundred-fifty years, to see, "How were people thinking about cultural difference?" What do you think, Yvonne?
05:19	Yvonne	People were not traveling that much and not that far. There were only a couple of people traveling. And, they brought with them these exotic goods, or coffee, or tea, and they had been taking that and carrying their stories. And maybe, it was more, talking about foreign places as exotic and strange, you know, and people made up their own stories about these strange foreign places.
05:47	Joseph	And, it's not easy to understand if you hear all these stories, and you see that people are acting in a different way, and they may look differently, and they may live in different buildings, and they may eat different food. How do you make sense of all of that? In the earlier days of this field, the 19th century, people were talking a lot about nature versus nurture. This was the starting point, I think.
06:11	Yvonne	That was the starting point. And, until today, even in training sessions, I hear people say it, you know, "It's nature," "No, it's nurture." So, you get into this debate about either-or, you know, it's either this or that. When you go back in time, it's interesting how, or maybe the paradigm has changed.
06:32	Joseph	It has. I think that, in the 19th century, for example, the idea that nature controlled behavior or influenced behavior was very,

		very common. The idea that race would affect how people behaved, or phrenology. Are you, do you know about phrenology? Phrenology was a pseudoscience, something totally disproven now, but something that many people took seriously in the 19th century.
07:00	Joseph	The idea that the shape of your head explains your character because somehow parts of your brain are developed and pushed the skull out. So, like, if you feel the back of your skull, and it's rounded, this is supposed to be the place for parental love, and if it's rounded, you have a lot of parental love. And, I'm looking at some phrenology pictures, and looking at this, I can see that my nose is a kind of pointed nose, and according to this phrenology chart, that's a feminine nose, and my pointed chin is a kind of feminine chin.
07:41	Joseph	So, this idea that the shape of our head influences our behavior was a pseudoscience in the 19th century. But, it goes together with this whole idea that biology is very closely related to behavior.
07:56	Yvonne	Yes, and we've also seen the downside of this thinking, of course, which is really why it's important to look at the history and also recent history.
08:06	Joseph	Because that's kind of thinking is at the root of a lot of racisms and prejudice.
08:12	Yvonne	But then, of course, we had those early cultural anthropologists. And, they had, took a different stance on this.
08:20	Joseph	Yeah, so, for example, the early cultural anthropologists, people like Franz Boas. They had a very different idea about this. And, so, I've actually got a quote from Franz Boas, and he was, he's considered the father of cultural anthropology, I would think, but he would have called the scientific study of culture. His quote is, "While individuals differ, biological differences are small. There is no reason to believe that one

		race is by nature so much more intelligent, endowed with great will power, or emotionally more stabled than another.”
08:57	Joseph	So, this was from 1910 in his book, “Race, Language and Culture.” And, I think this statement went against to the grain. It was against this earlier paradigm that biology determines so much.
09:10	Yvonne	Yeah, it’s really interesting. You know, talking about the history and time, in 1910, he already proposed this, and also when working with his students, one of his students was, of course, famous Margaret Mead. And, they continued working on all those topics. And actually, what she did, and I think she was a powerful lady back then. She went, at the age 23, to Samoa, and later, she wrote a book, “Coming of Age in Samoa.”
09:39	Yvonne	But actually, what she researched was on the tipping point of nature and nurture. She looked at adolescents. So, that’s the time in life of people that nature is really important, you know. It’s about sexual orientation exploration, and becoming from a girl a woman, etc. So, what happens there, and there was this notion that’s probably everywhere around the world, “youth is rebellious,” and then, you know, the puberty.
10:08	Yvonne	And, she found out, “No, it’s not,” you know. People seem rather relaxed and have a good time and there’s no rebellion. So, there was the cultural element, and that was an influential work back then.
10:25	Joseph	I think she was writing for an audience of Americans who assumed that certain things were simply universal everywhere. They were biologically built in, such as young people being rebellious. And, she found that, she was arguing that, “No, many of the things we think are universal, and perhaps biological, are actually culture, cultural influence, that we are shaped in important ways by culture.” And so, there’s that paradigm shift that you were talking about. Shifting from the

		idea that nature is important. Shifting to the idea that nurture or culture in the environment is important.
11:05	Joseph	And, of course, anthropologists were trying to understand these individual cultural communities, like Margaret Mead going to Samoa. Edward Hall was trained as an anthropologist. But, let's talk for a minute about what made Hall different.
11:33	Joseph	And, that takes us to Part two: shaking hands with Hall.
12:07	Yvonne	So, what was different about Hall? How was he ahead of his time, Joseph?
12:12	Joseph	He was an anthropologist by training, but he was very interested in what happens between cultures, and he didn't use standard anthropological methods in his research. He didn't look for an isolated cultural community and ask about genealogy or ceremonies. For him, behavior was just the tip of the iceberg because he saw culture as shaping our mind.
12:41	Joseph	He worked with native American communities, Navajo and Hopi, and he tells a story of needing to learn how to shake hands all over again. When he was working with Navajo communities, he said that an American, Anglo American handshake, and I don't know what your image, Yvonne, is of an Anglo American handshake is, but for me, it's like a very firm, like pumping, you know, like pump, pump, pump, especially kind of business handshakes. Is that the image you have of an American handshake?
13:15	Yvonne	Yeah, before you started explaining, I already had this instant moment that I sort of felt this handshake that indeed is a firm handshake. Maybe a male or masculine handshake.
13:25	Joseph	Right, exactly.
13:26	Yvonne	That is my image.
13:28	Joseph	Right. And, Hall said, you know, that an Anglo American handshake is a kind of assertion of your individuality and your self-confidence. But, he saw the handshake, as he experienced

		it with this, with the Navajo community he was working with, more as a chance to kind of ease into another person's presence, that you grasp the hand gently, and you don't make so much direct eye contact.
13:58	Joseph	So, his point was that a handshake is more than a handshake. There is a whole world of meaning behind that handshake, and that those complexities are all natural to us. He was very perceptive about these subtle but powerful cultural patterns. And, you mentioned earlier, high and low context communication.
14:26	Joseph	So, this is like nonverbal elements of communication, the study of chronemics, I guess is the technical word, the study of time, monochromic and polychronic time. I think these are pretty common ideas in intercultural field now, wouldn't you say?
14:45	Yvonne	Oh yes. I think many people talk about these things as they take it for granted, but back then, it was fairly new to distinguish that there were differences in time and space, for instance. It's interesting because sometimes I hear you said, "He was ahead of his time," and "It's also related to the brain and mind sciences." How do you see that? How does Hall connect to the brain and mind sciences?
15:12	Joseph	Well, that's bringing us to Part three, which is the brain-scan revolution.
15:49	Joseph	Yes, he does connect, I think, to the brain and mind sciences. The brain-scan revolution refers to new technology that allows us to do brain imaging of people in real time, while they do different tasks. You know the story of Phineas Gage, Yvonne?
16:10	Yvonne	Yes, I think it was rather a sad story, wasn't it?
16:14	Joseph	Yeah, it's…
16:15	Yvonne	In the end. Well, in the beginning and in the end. I'm not sure about at the time in between, but…
16:21	Joseph	Well, it wasn't pleasant for him, I don't think. He was a working,

		he was working on railroad construction. And, there was an accident, and there was an explosion, and an iron rod went through his skull, just underneath the eye, and it passed completely through his skull. But, he never lost consciousness, and it didn't kill him. But…
16:47	Yvonne	Which is amazing.
16:48	Joseph	It's, first of all, amazing that it didn't kill him, and that he remembered it. But, what was remarkable, in addition to that, was that people reported that his personality changed after this accident. This was some of the first direct evidence that different parts of the brain are associated with particular kinds of mental functions, or particular elements of behavior, or personality. This was some of that first direct evidence of that.
17:19	Joseph	And, at the time, the only way you could really study the brain was looking at the brains of dead people, and you can't see anything in real time. The technology that we have available now allows us to look at different elements of brain function in real time so that we can say, "Think of X," and we can put you in a fMRI machine, for example, and look at patterns of brain activation.
17:49	Joseph	It's important to say that these, a brain scan does not necessarily explain how things work. And, there is a lot of debate about how to interpret the kinds of results that you get from these forms of, from these kinds of technology. But, it's certainly true that we have all kinds of information and research about cognitive processes that we didn't have before.
18:22	Yvonne	No, exactly, which is intriguing in itself, you know, that human kind is, and this level of complexity, and we can do all these things. And, but then, you know, you and I were talking about culture, intercultural communication. So, how does this research, brain research relate to culture? What, so far, what does it say? Tell us.

18:44	Joseph	Well, for me, it raises a really interesting question, you know, as an intercultural educator and trainer, that there's all these, there are all these different definitions of culture. And, anthropologists, for example, argue about definitions of culture. So, that raises a question. If a neuroscientist wants to study culture, how would they even define what culture is? And…
19:11	Yvonne	Yes, what I understood is that neuroscientists have only one simple definition of culture, which is patterns.
19:19	Joseph	Yeah, that's one way to look at how neuroscientists think about culture. Culture are fundamentally patterns. They are patterns within us, they are embodied within us in our cognitive function, and so, their cognitive function can be shaped by culture. So, you can find those cultural patterns within the patterns of cognition. But, those patterns are also out in the world.
19:49	Joseph	They are embedded out in the world. And, of course, if the patterns inside of us are similar to the patterns outside of us, then we simply don't notice it because we are just functioning naturally in the familiar cultural environment. But, if the patterns inside of us, what we are familiar with, are different from what's outside of us, then we are experiencing cultural difference. And, it's that gap that is cultural difference.
19:17	Joseph	So, Edward Hall was looking for these very subtle but powerful cultural patterns. And now, brain and mind sciences are helping us learn a lot about these cultural patterns that we were not able to research before.
20:37	Yvonne	Isn't it exciting? What do you think about Hall himself, you know, he has passed away, he hasn't lived through this era of cultural neuroscience. What would he have thought about this?
20:48	Joseph	Well, he was a realist, I think, when it came to his understanding of intercultural relations. He felt that, because patterns of cultural difference are so subtle and so hard for us to become aware of, that intercultural context often brings

		misunderstanding and conflict. And, I think he would not be surprised at the level of conflict and division that we are seeing in this part of the century.
21:18	Joseph	At the same time, he was an optimist in the sense that he felt that, by understanding those patterns within us, we can really have these transformational experiences. So, I think, in that sense, he's an optimist. At the individual level, he's an optimist but not necessarily at the level of society.
21:41	Yvonne	So, what do the brain and mind sciences tell us about this important question about nature and nurture?
21:48	Joseph	Ahh, deep question. It's complex, first of all, but I think we can safely say that the mind is not simply a blank slate. It's not all nurture. We have cognitive structures, which are shaped by our evolutionary past; and therefore, there's an interaction between our cognitive structures and the environment so that there is a kind of nexus or interplay between nature and nurture.
22:24	Joseph	One example is language. We are born with a capacity to develop language. But, we need that linguistic input from the environment for that capacity to develop. So, if someone does not, is not exposed to language as a child, then they do not develop linguistic ability like everyone else.
22:50	Joseph	Also, our perceptual systems have evolved to live in this world. For example, newborn babies pay attention to faces more than they pay attention to random patterns. So, our mental systems evolved with these kind of specific features. But, of course, a baby needs to recognize its mother. So, it's very hard to call it nature or nurture.
23:19	Yvonne	No, I agree with you. It has to be, it's both. And, it's both in a very complex way. And, it's only, you make it more superficial when it's either-or question.
23:30	Joseph	And, it's something not only the scientists have to ask, but it's something that anyone who has foreign experiences needs to

		figure out. If you are in a foreign country, someone smiles at you, and you have to think to yourself, “Does this smile mean what I think it means?” Is a smile something that’s the same everywhere, or is that something that depends on culture? So, this question of nature and nurture is not simply a philosophical question. It’s something that interculturalists or anyone having foreign experience have to deal with on an everyday basis.
24:07	Yvonne	For sure.
24:08	Joseph	So, Hall was good at identifying patterns, and he understood that the unconscious mind was shaped by culture. And, we now understand unconscious cognition better than we had in the past. In this podcast, we will be talking some more about these unconscious patterns. And hopefully, we will look a little bit at some of this new research. But also, I’m looking forward to talking to individuals about their experiences with these cultural patterns.
24:42	Joseph	Finally, Yvonne, as regards to Edward Hall, what would you say is inspirational or more meaningful for you about his work?
24:52	Yvonne	Well, what is inspirational is, it’s about small things that can be so powerful and important, what you say about a smile, but it can be anything. It can be literally anything. I have a friend, and she got a baby in South Africa. She is a Dutch person herself. And, it takes a village to raise a child, and she knew that. She had been living in South Africa for a long period of time.
25:17	Yvonne	But, it’s only when she became a mom herself and had her newborn daughter in her arms, it’s the experience, “What does it mean?” And, that’s exactly what cultural difference is about, but it also can be little things that a child is being taken over for a hand to hand, from mom to mom. There are more people who take care of the child. So, the whole notion we can think about it the moment we feel it, it’s so different. And, I think that’s what’s also, what is in his work. It was not about theory, but it’s

		also about making sense of what is happening between you and I.
25:53	Joseph	Well, I really like this idea that is about making sense. And, those things can be very hard to make sense of. And, your story about child raising which just reminded me of an American woman that I know, living in Paris, who was pregnant. And, she said to me, “You know, in the United States, people touch your stomach when you’re pregnant. And, in France, nobody touches my stomach, and it feels so cold.”
26:23	Joseph	Now, that’s what she reported to me. I don’t know enough about that, to have an opinion about that, but just something small like that can feel so powerful. And, how do you make sense of that? What does that mean? I know that, for me, before I discovered Hall, I remember trying to talk to people about cultural difference, but it was not easy to talk about cultural difference.
26:50	Joseph	And, I had struggled to adapt to life in Japan and speaking Japanese, and I had these identity questions, like wondering where I belonged, and how long do I want to stay in this foreign country. But, trying to talk to people was very difficult because if you haven’t lived these kinds of experience, it’s hard to understand them. So, when I read Hall, it was very reassuring.
27:21	Yvonne	Yeah, and it also shows how difficult it is to adjust to keeping connection all the time. It takes extra effort, and it also gives additional questions also about self, and so, if there is a book like, or work like his, and that’s reassuring, it’s so helpful.
27:41	Joseph	Yes, and let’s hope that all the bridge people who are going to be listening to this podcast can also get some reassurance from each other as we share our deep culture experiences.
28:00	Joseph	I think it’s about time to wrap up this episode. So, please subscribe to the Deep Culture Podcast, rate us, write a comment, get in touch, and share your thoughts. You can write

		us at dcpodcast@japaninterculutral.org, or leave a comment on our website, www.japaninterculturalorg, or just do a web search for podcast Japan Intercultural Institute. This podcast is sponsored by the Japan Intercultural Institute and NPO that's dedicated to intercultural education and research. Our sound engineer is Robinson Fritz, and Chriss Koyama is our production assistant. So, thanks, Yvonne, for sharing this time with me today.
28:47	Yvonne	Oh yes, it was a pleasure. Thank you.
28:49	Joseph	OK. We'll see everyone next time.
28:52	Yvonne	Look forward to seeing everyone again.