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THE SILENT LANGUAGE. By *Edward T. Hall*. (New York: Doubleday. 1959. Pp. 240. \$3.95.)

Practically everyone in and out of government is full of ideas for practical steps to make U.S. representatives abroad more effective. Dr. Hall's book seeks to lay a theoretical basis for these practical efforts, to the extent that they are directed toward minimizing the reaction that takes place when one moves into the area of a foreign culture. Some people have chosen to call this reaction a "culture shock." Hall explains it as the "removal or distortion of many of the familiar cues one encounters at home and the substitution for them of other cues which are strange." Proceeding from the proposition that "most people's difficulties with each other can be traced to distortions in communication," *The Silent Language* "treats culture in its entirety as a form of communication" as it seeks to outline "a theory of culture and a theory of how culture came into being" and to present "the technical tools for probing the secrets of culture."

The author is in a position to know what he is writing about. He is an anthropologist who has travelled and worked abroad to develop principles and concepts for teaching U.S. representatives how to be more effective. He has done such teaching in the State Department, the Strategic Intelligence School, and elsewhere. He now makes this subject his business.

The study points out basic differences in languages and ways of speaking, but emphasizes the actions which speak louder than words, and particularly the kind of communication that takes place "out of awareness." "This notion," it says, "that there are significant portions of the personality that exist

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out of one's own awareness but which are there for everyone else to see may seem frightening. The point, however, is a crucial one and will grow in importance as men begin to grasp its implications." Another subtle complication in the communications process of particular significance for anyone who anticipates service abroad is brought out in elaborating the fact that "people reared in different cultures *learn to learn differently.*"

Some readers may not be persuaded of the validity of the author's conceptual construction. His *time, space, and order* as communications media seem unnecessarily abstruse. His "map of culture" may be over-billed as "a mathematics of cultures." His classification of behavior patterns as formal, informal, and technical is an effort toward unattainable precision. He uses a great many words in a specialized sense when it seems that a garden variety of meaning would serve the purpose just as well.

But dissatisfactions such as these only serve to point up Dr. Hall's own contention that there is much work to be done in this field. The understanding of foreign cultures is critical to intelligence operations and to intelligence analysis; and such a considerable contribution of new thinking as *The Silent Language* makes can but stimulate more progress toward this understanding.