



ALTMAN'S PRIVACY

A Review by: Mohamed Radwan

Irwin Altman

Know the writer

The Author

**Ph.D. in Psychology from
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Irwin Altman, is a social psychologist who is active in many groups and associations including the International Association of Applied Psychology, American Psychological Association, American Environmental Design Research Association, and the Western Psychological Association. He is currently an emeritus faculty member at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

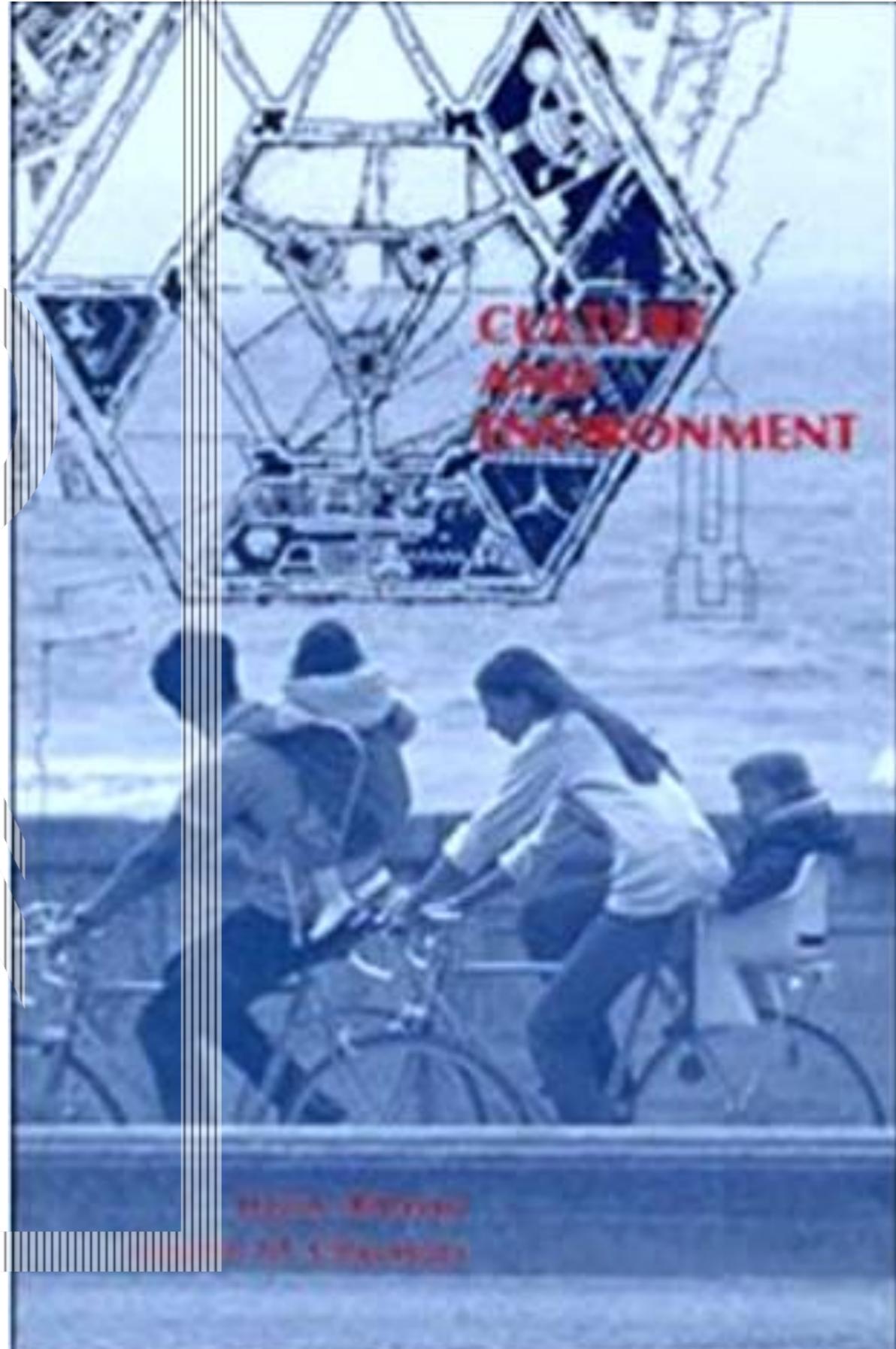


The BOOK

Know the text

Culture and Environment

Culture and Environment is a provocative analysis of the complex relationship between people and their environments from a cross-cultural perspective. Drawing on work in anthropology, psychology, sociology, geography, architecture and urban planning, Altman and Chemers show that different societies and cultures have different senses of the ways in which their physical environments should look and function.

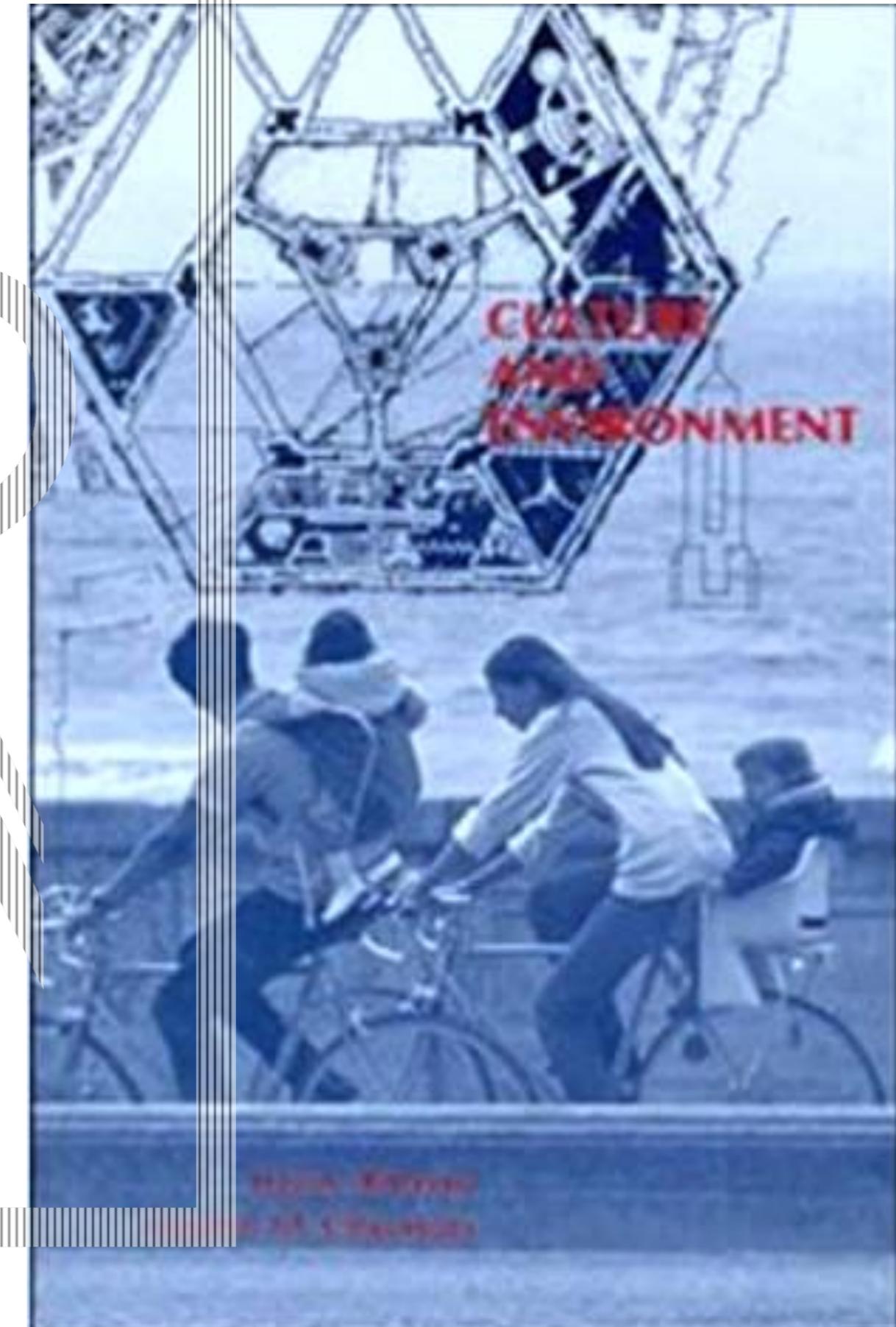


CH4: Privacy

Know the text

Research Methodology

Altman follows a deductive approach whereby he tests a hypothesis that was formulated in his older writings. In order to do so he uses a Historical Research method where he analyzes and reinterprets Ethnographic researches conducted by other scholars





What is
Privacy?

Altman's Hypothesis

Towards a definition

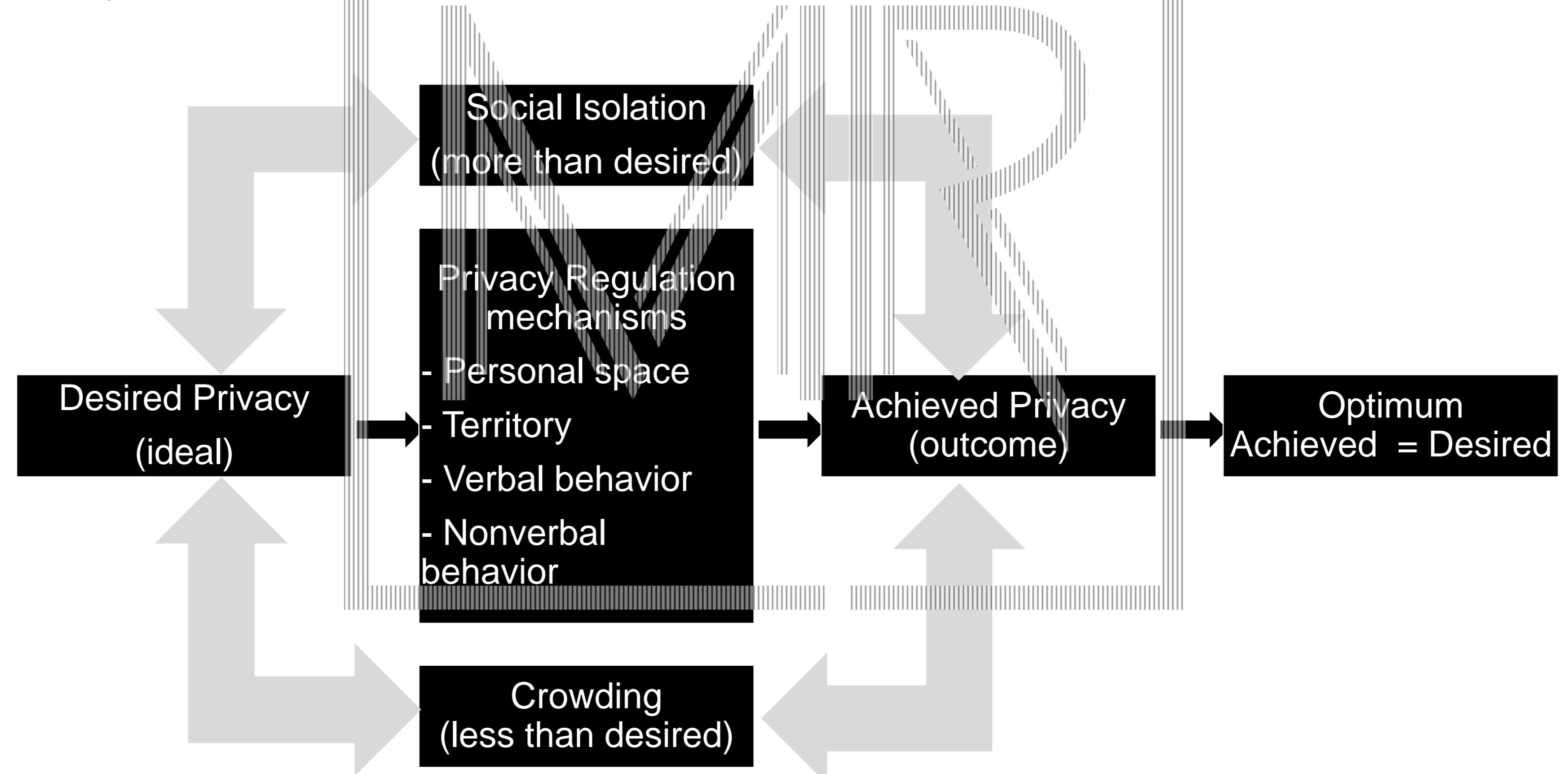
Privacy is a state in which one is not observed or disturbed by other people

Privacy according to Altman is a changing process whereby people attempt to regulate their openness/closedness to others

Altman's Hypothesis

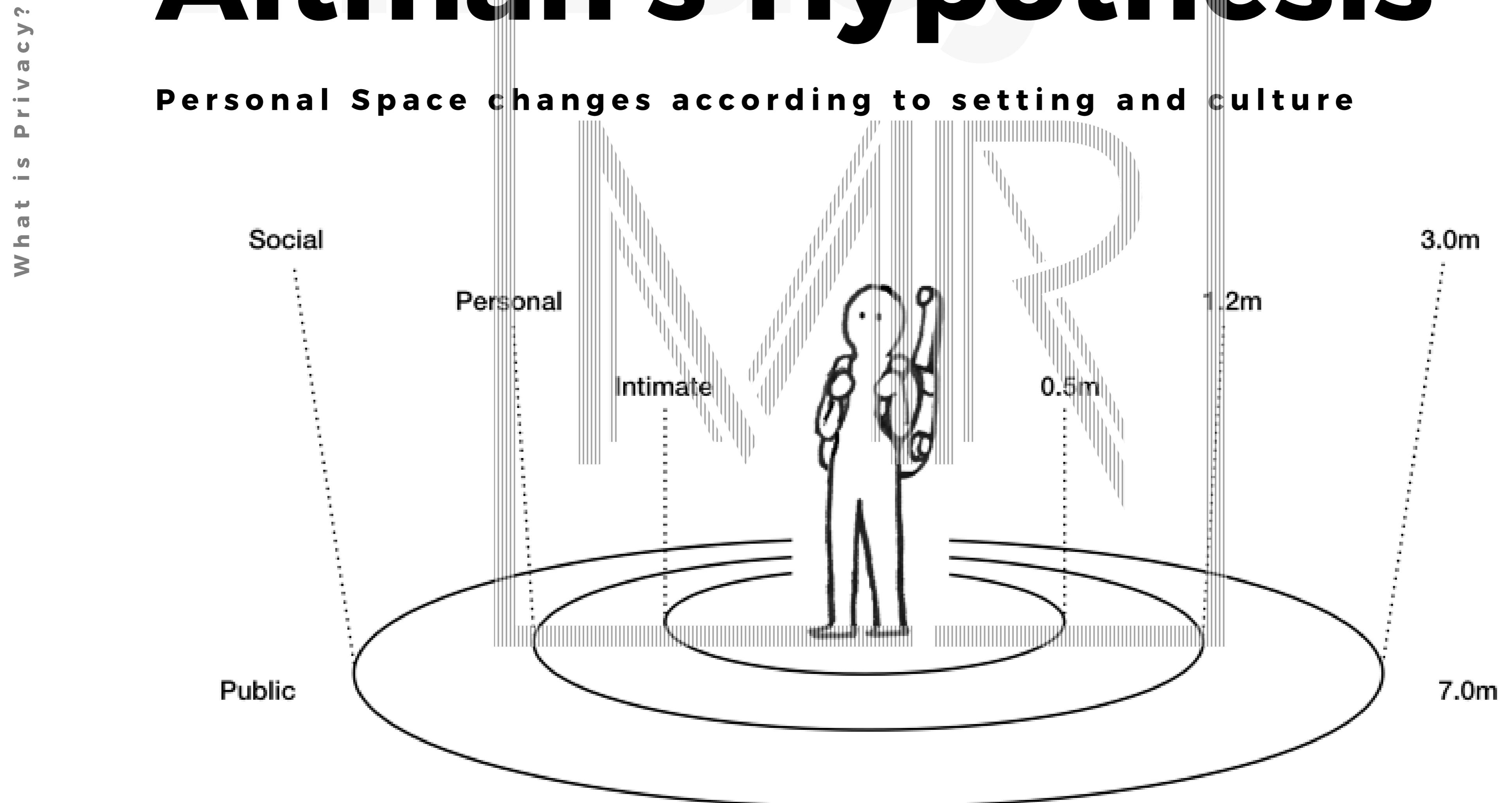
What is Privacy?

Privacy Relations Model



Altman's Hypothesis

Personal Space changes according to setting and culture

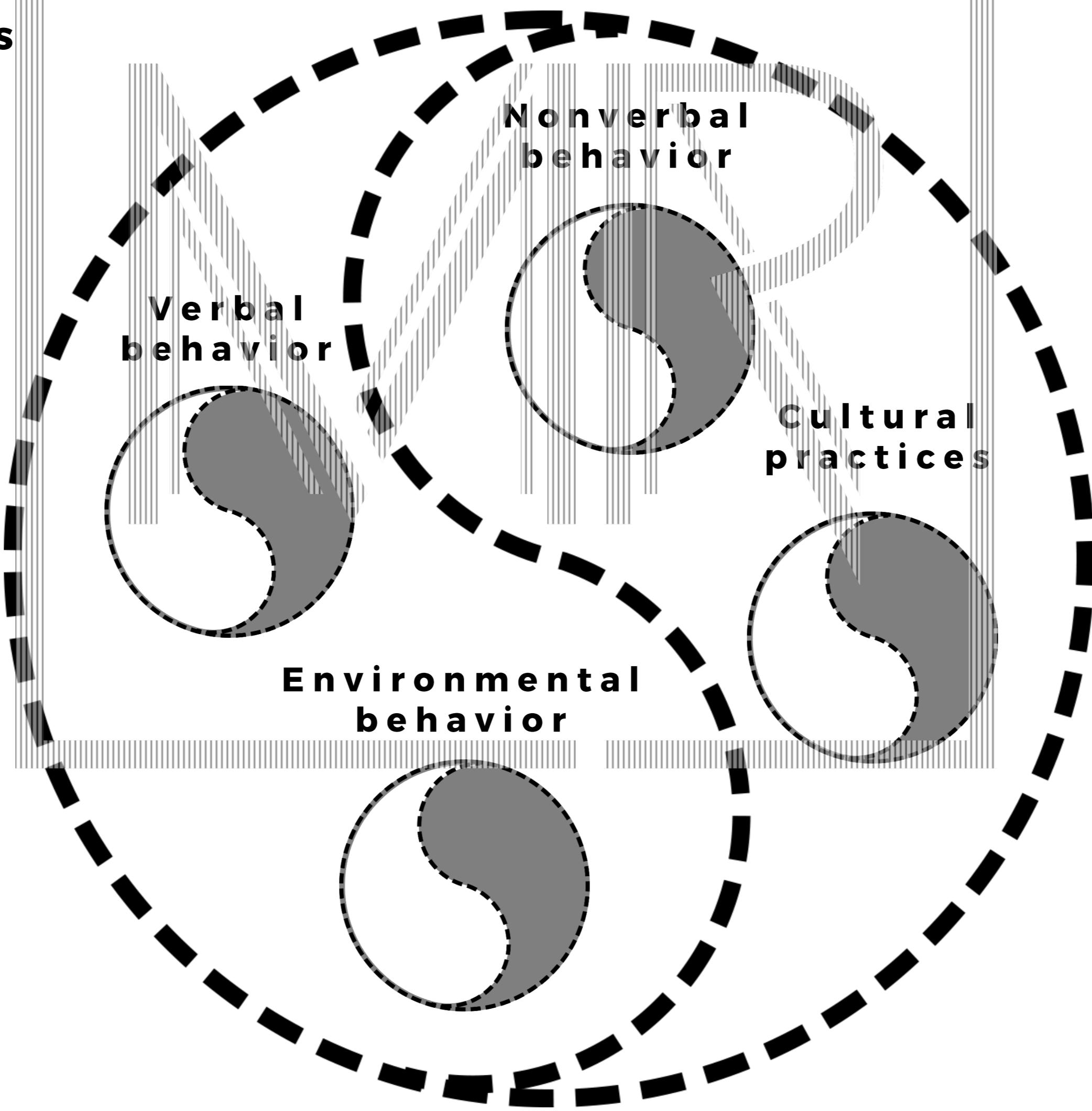


Privacy

Altman's Hypothesis

What is Privacy?

**Selective access
to ones self**



WHAT IS PRIVACY FOR?

**Well-being of people and groups
centers on the successful
management of privacy.**

**Self identity, includes persons knowing
where they begin and where they end.**



Privacy as a cultural universal

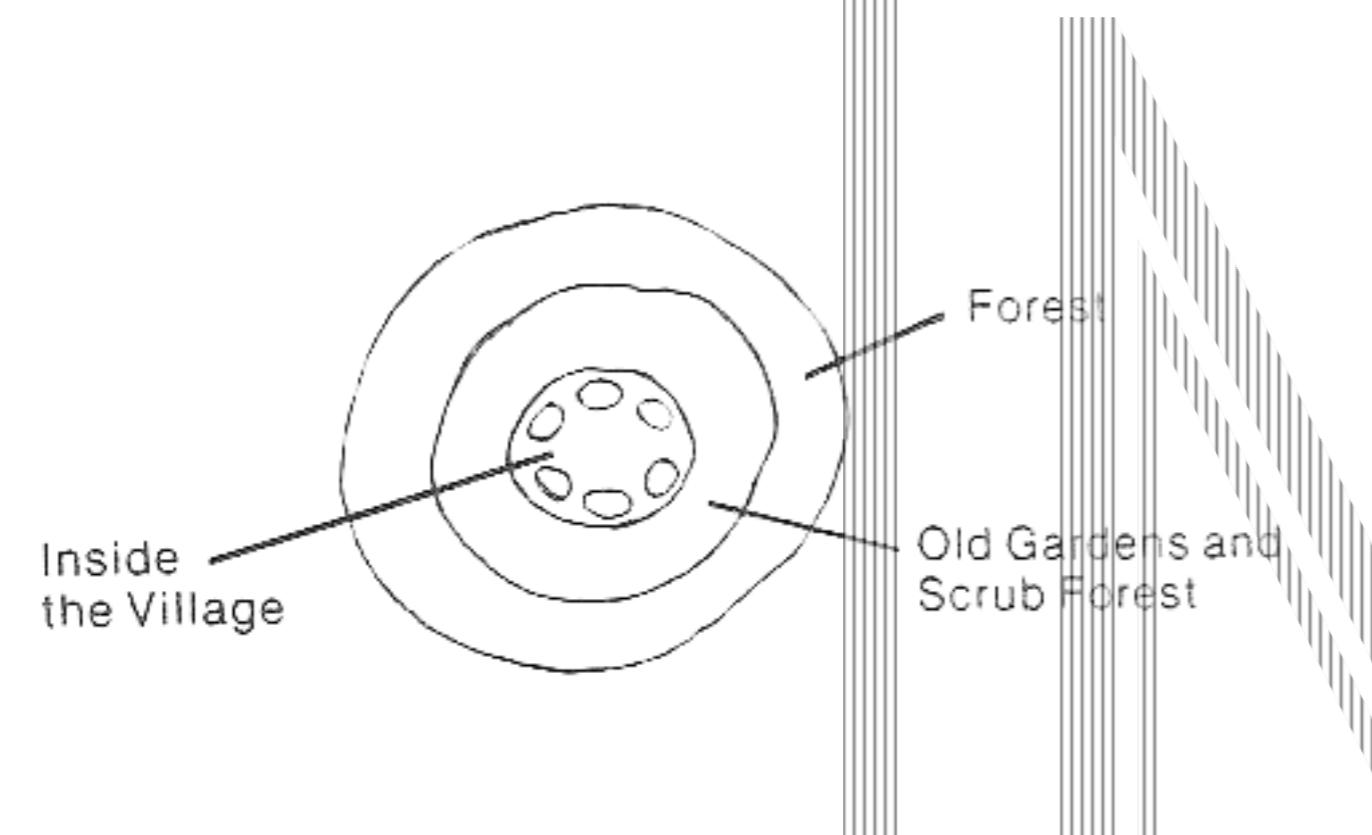
- **Cultures are unique and must be understood in their own right**
- **There is utility in searching for communalities across cultures**



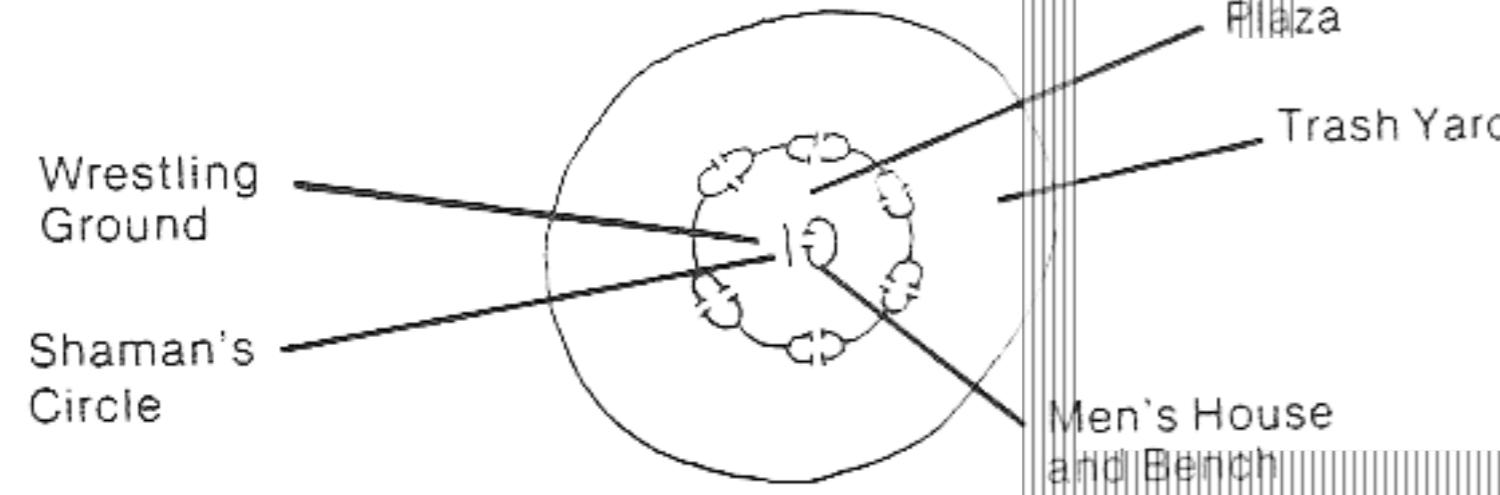
Mehinaku villages

Maximum Social Contact

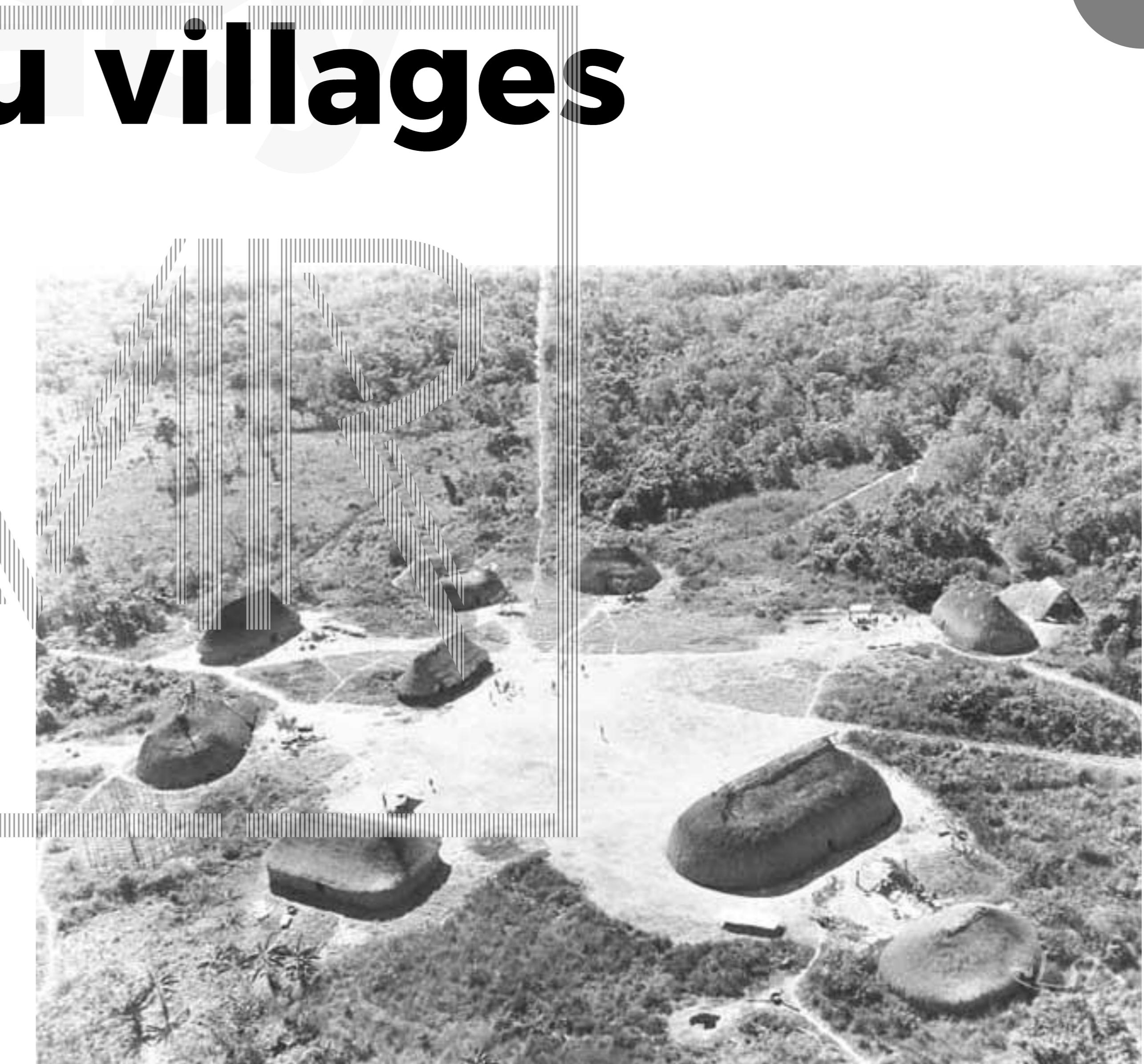
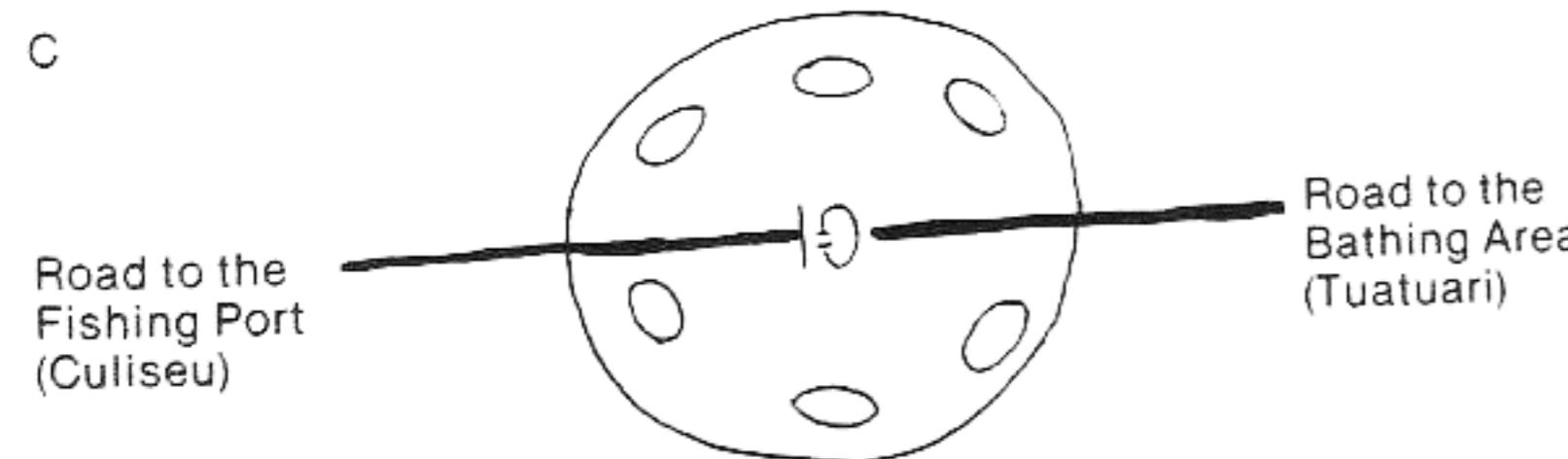
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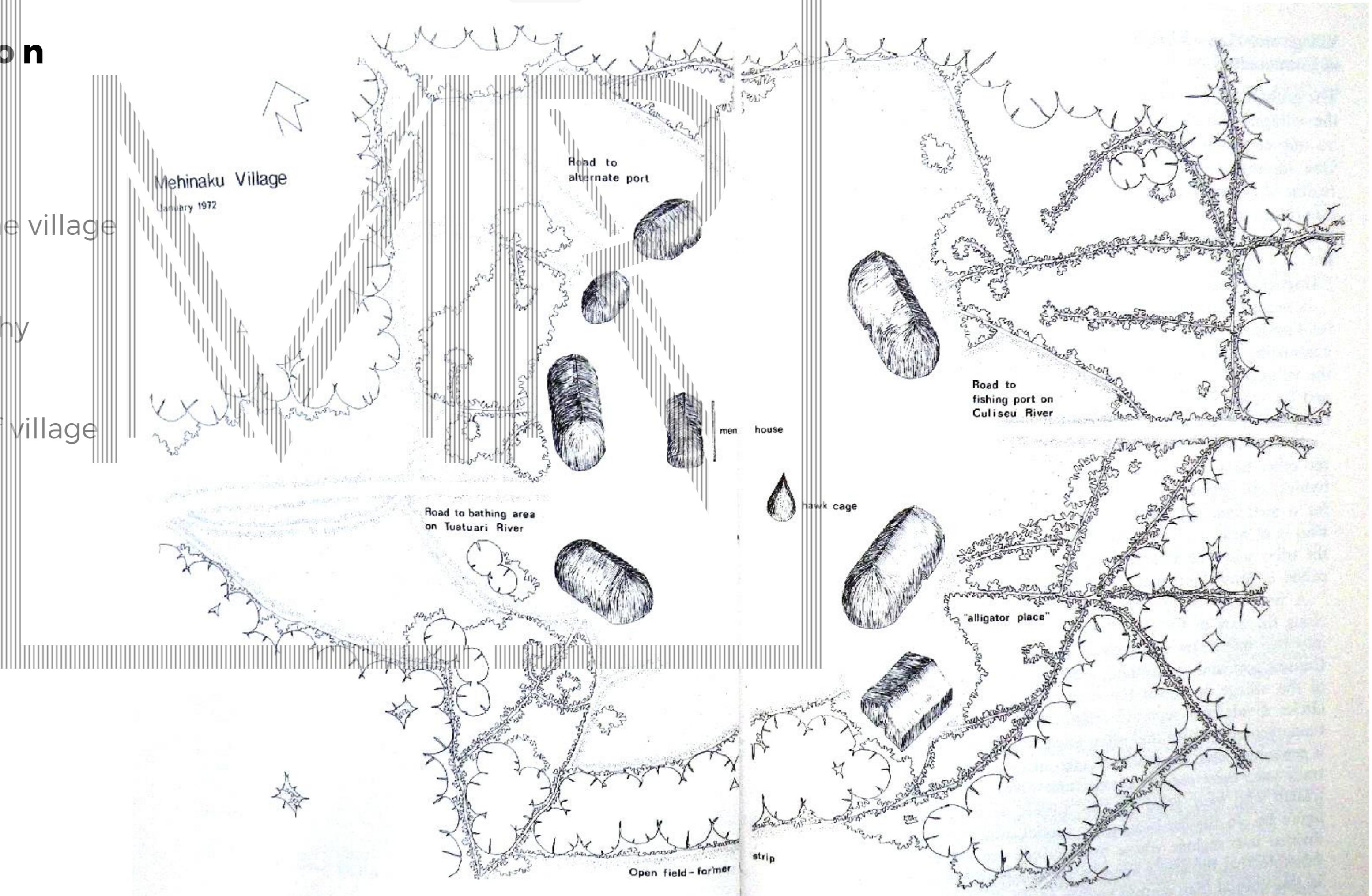


Mehinaku villages

Privacy regulation mechanisms

Environmental behaviors:

- Winding paths beyond the village
- secret clearings
- leave the village for lengthy
- Periods
- Retreat houses outside of village

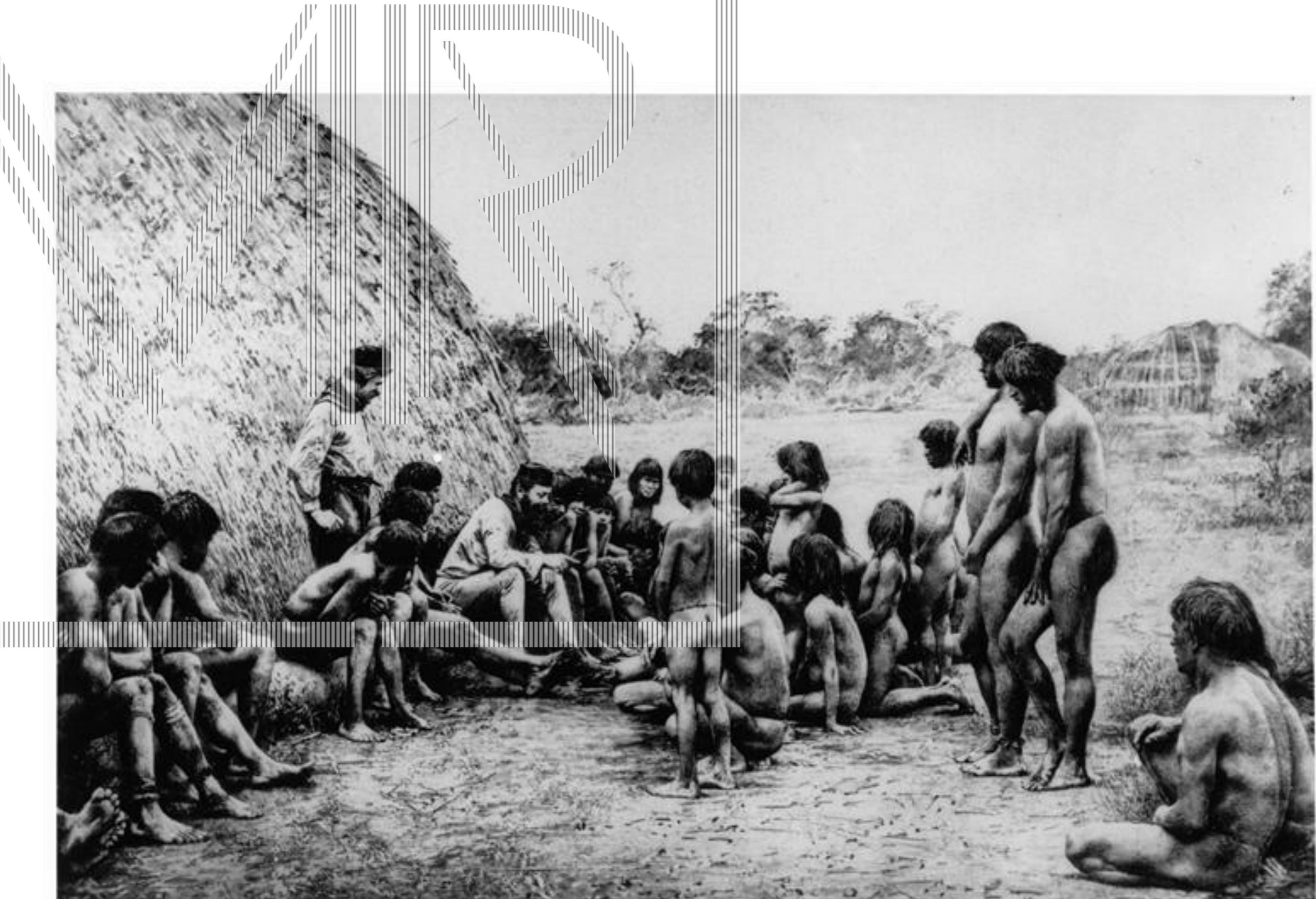


Mehinaku villages

Privacy regulation mechanisms

Cultural practices:

- Women were not permitted access to men's House!
- Permission enter others' dwellings
- Families do NOT intrude on another family's space.
- Avoided exposing others' misconduct,
- Did not ask embarrassing questions



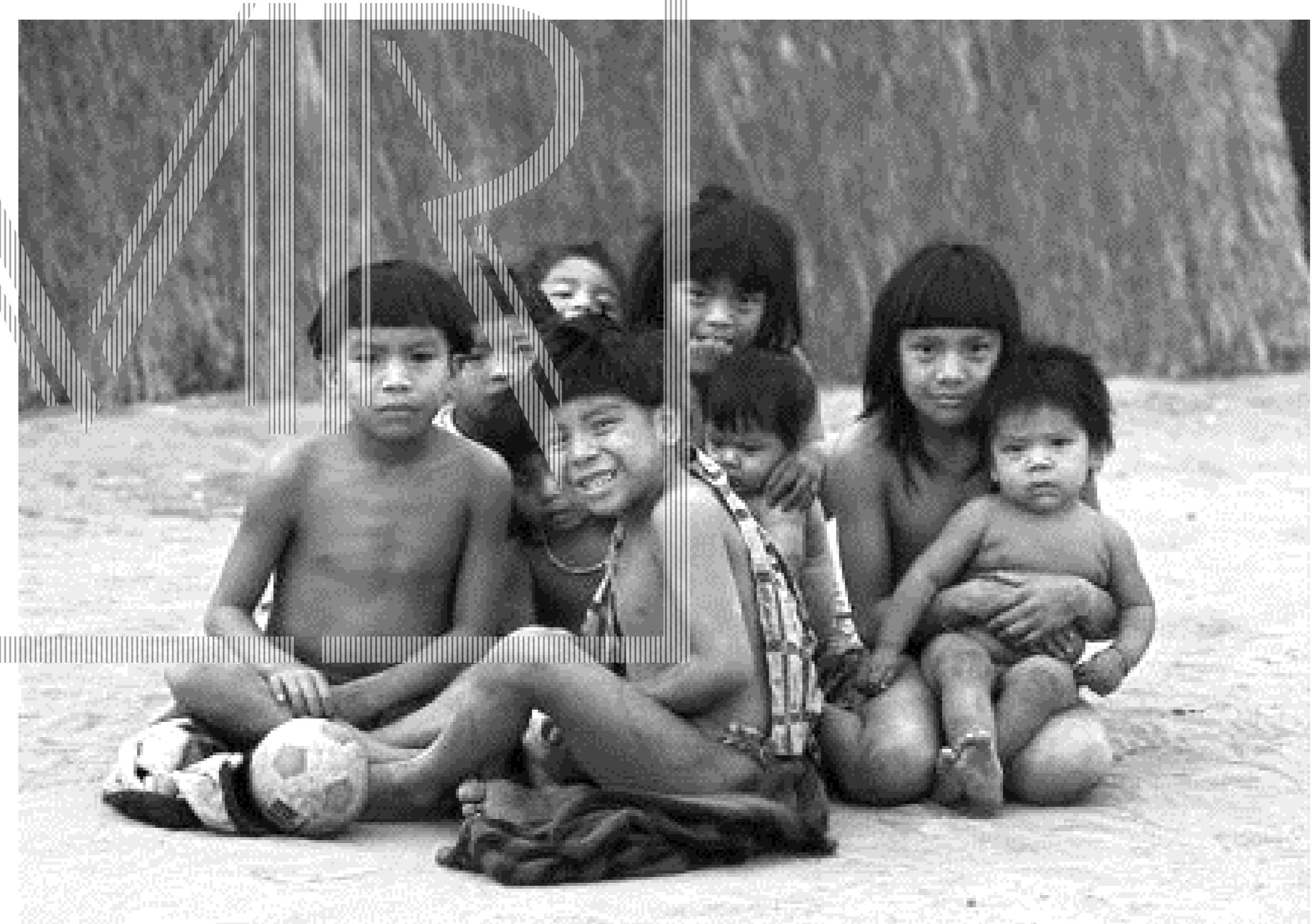
Mehinaku villages

Privacy regulation mechanisms

Social Isolation

- When a couple had its first child, for several weeks.
- when boys reached 9 or 10 years of age, for 2 years.
- When Girls reach puberty
- On the death of a spouse

Mehinacu villager may spend up to 8 years of life in seclusion



Pygmies of Zaire

Privacy regulation mechanisms

Environmental behaviors:

- Change of door location
- spite fences
- constant shifting and modifying of the environment

Social Isolation

- Oscillate between periods of separateness and togetherness



Tuareg

Minimum Social Contact

Environmental behaviors:

- veil does not remain in one position but is ever so slightly raised and lowered to fit various social relationships
- veil serves as a kind of literal boundary-regulation mechanism



Pantelleria

Cultural Practice

- an annual, week-long carnival that serves to bind the people together and operates as a counterforce to the noncooperative life-style that prevails most of the year.



Peripheral relationships

Relationships with strangers, acquaintances, and neighbors

Pygmies of Zaire, have an friendly relationship with Bantu Negroes, the two cultures often share

Pygmies permit the Bantu Negroes villagers to join in feasts and stay as long as they desire. But to rid themselves of their now unwanted guests, the Pygmies engage the villagers in gambling games.

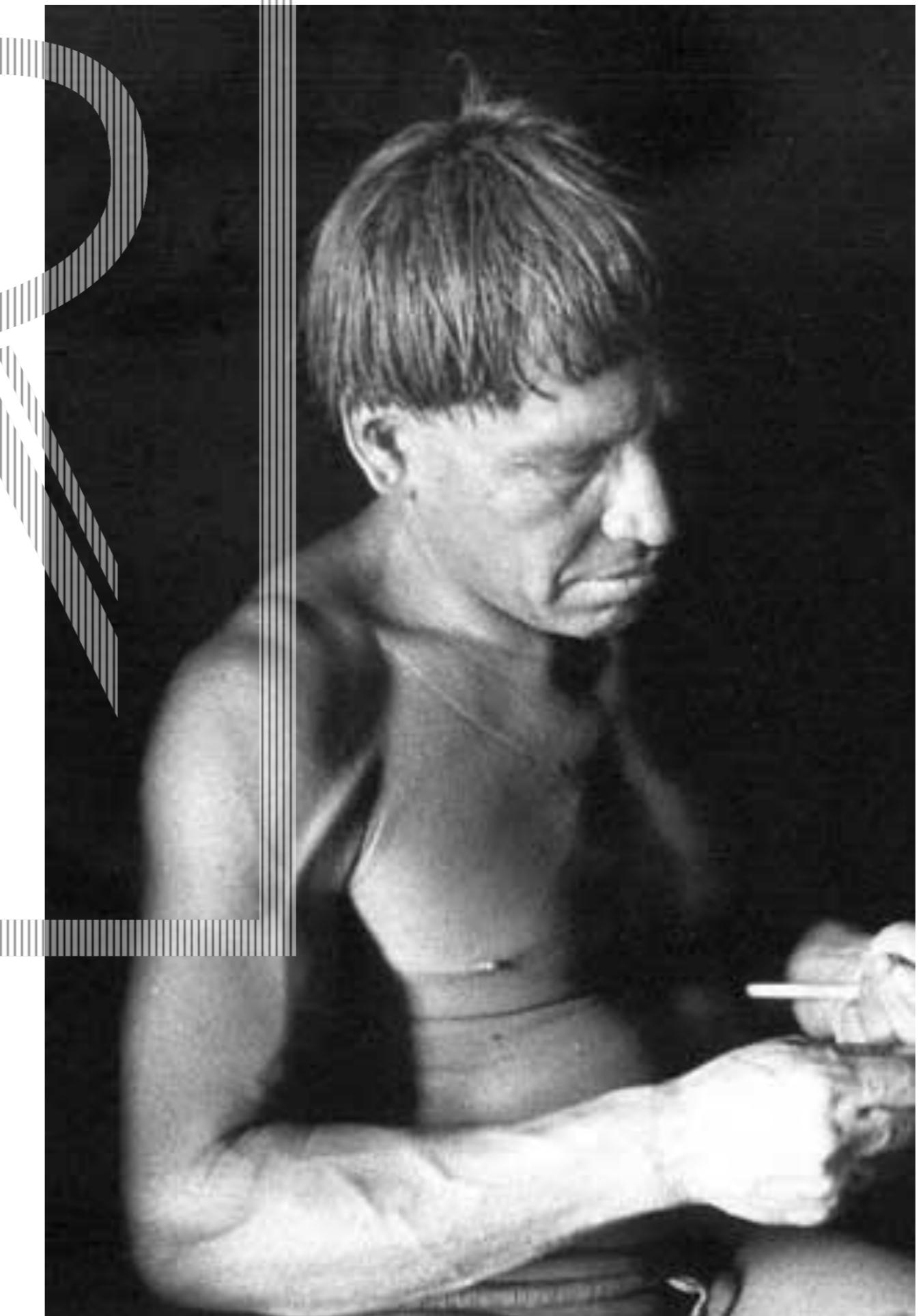


Closer social relationships

Relationships between in-laws

Mehinacu in-laws can not:

- Touch each other's sleeping hammocks
- Have face-to-face encounters in the entranceways to the home or if they happen to meet on a path.
- Pass food directly, but place an item on the ground near the other person.
- Mehinacu in-laws never mention each other's names.
- They speak only briefly to each other, about important issues,
- Son-in-law speaks to his father-in-law through his wife.



Intimate relationships

Relationships within families

- Mehinacu, couples generally bathe together publicly several times a day, walk side by side, and eat from a common bowl—all reflecting considerable mutual openness and accessibility.
- Husband and wife hang their hammocks from the same pole. But if they are angry with each other, hammocks might be mounted on different poles, several feet apart.



The Topic

Conclusions

The Takeout

Privacy is a dialectic, boundary control process

Privacy regulation involves management, pacing, and regulation of exchange with the world.

Privacy regulation involves: verbal behavior, nonverbal behavior, environmentally oriented behavior, and cultural practices

Privacy operates as a “social system.”

The ability to regulate and control privacy is essential to people's well-being, viability, and self-identity

Privacy regulation as a culturally pervasive process.

The capability of people to regulate privacy is a cultural universal.

What differs among cultures is the particular set of behavioral mechanisms used to regulate privacy.

The End!

Thank You

