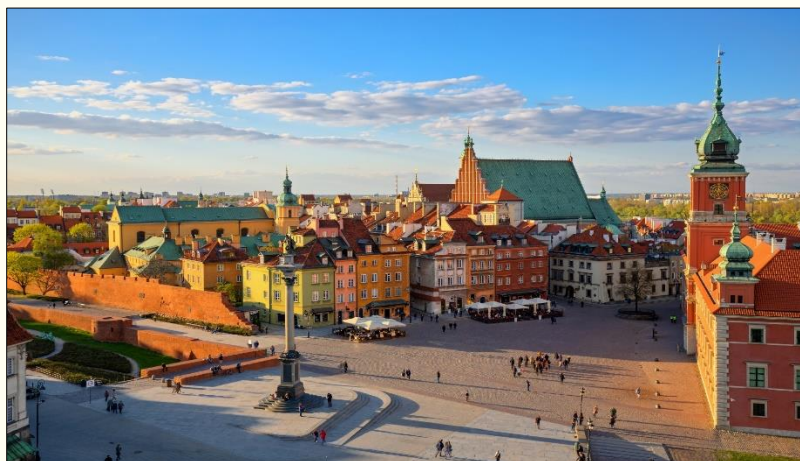


## Hitler's Germany and Germany's Hitler How People Radicalise and De-radicalise

12 – 23 May, 2025

Accompanied by Professor Thomas Weber



The Old Town of Warsaw after it was rebuilt following its destruction in WW II

*'From the battlefield of rubble and ruins, Warsaw became once more the  
old Warsaw, eternal Warsaw'*

**Leopold Tyrmand, Polish Novelist, on the rebuilding of old Warsaw after its  
destruction by Germany in World War II.**

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**T**his unique journey traces the rise and fall of Adolf Hitler and of extremism. It will track the future dictator's emergence and rise in Vienna and Munich and how he tried to inspire others and grow National Socialism from Nuremberg, his years in power in Berlin and the horrific consequences of his actions in Poland. Professor Weber will not only focus on Hitler himself but also his followers and his opponents. What drove Hitler and how he did he drive others? How did people try to stop him? Perhaps most importantly; how people became radicalised and then de-

radicalised. Through Professor Weber's research and local connections, special meetings are planned with individuals and organisations who can throw light on this phase of history, that to the present day prominently shapes who we are.

The journey begins in Vienna (the city of Hitler's adolescence) and nearby Linz (the city of Hitler's youth). Continue on to Munich – the city that gave birth to the Nazi Party. There will be visits to where Hitler lived, the sites of Nazi HQ, the location of a failed coup and the beerhalls in which he spoke and where one can still experience the beerhall's buzzing atmosphere. There will be a visit to Hitler's nearby Alpine retreat.

In Nuremberg, visit the site of the party rallies and learn more on how Hitler tried to inspire war and a commitment to a life of National Socialist action. Continue by high-speed train to Berlin and visit the sites of Hitler in power. Learn more of how tried to transform Germany and Europe from the German capital, a city that he ultimately wanted to transform into 'Germania', with visits to the Berlin Story Bunker, Haus der Wannsee Conference and the Jewish Museum. Berlin is also full of traces from the time it was divided during the Cold War and Professor Weber will explain how the Berlin of today is coming to terms with its dark past.

The journey finishes in Warsaw, where the legacy of the death of democracy, Hitler, the Third Reich, WWII, and the Holocaust are explored. Today's lessons are not just about the many moving memorials, but also the kind of political lessons for today's and future generations and how to de-radicalise and bring people together again. These themes are perhaps more important

than ever and are the basis of Professor Weber's book 'Als die Demokratie starb' ('When Democracy Died').

### **Professor Thomas Weber**

Thomas Weber is Professor of History and International Affairs as well as the founding Director of the Centre of Global Security and Governance at the University of Aberdeen. He also is a Visiting Fellow of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University; an Associate Fellow of the Centre for Advanced Security, Strategic and Integration Studies at the University of Bonn; and a Member of the Security History Network at Utrecht University. A native of Breckerfeld in Westphalia, he earned his DPhil from the University of Oxford. He also has taught or has held fellowships at Harvard, the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago, and the University of Glasgow.

His first book, [\*Lodz Ghetto Album\*](#), won a Golden Light Award and an Infinity Award. His second book, [\*Our Friend "The Enemy"\*](#) is the recipient of the 2008 Duc d'Arenberg History Prize for the best book on European History. His third book, [\*Hitler's First War\*](#) is the recipient of the 2010 Arthur Goodzeit Book Award of the New York Military Affairs Symposium for the best book on military history. His next book, [\*Becoming Hitler: The Making of a Nazi\*](#), a El Mundo Top 10 Best Seller, was shortlisted for the 2018 Elizabeth Longford Prize. He also is the editor of [\*Als die Demokratie starb: Die Machtergreifung der Nationalsozialisten\*](#).

His online course on [Hitler](#), examining his politicisation and radicalisation, and what his time in power can teach us about the nature of politics today, starts in January and is open to enrollment from anywhere in the world (<https://on.abdn.ac.uk/courses/hitler/>). [Follow Thomas Weber on X @Thomas\\_Weber](#), on Facebook and LinkedIn (and soon also on BlueSky).

## **Party Size is limited to 25 Travellers**

**Trip Price:** £3160 per person includes ten nights hotel accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis, meals as listed in the itinerary, all tours, excursions, sightseeing and entrances to all listed sites. Single Room Supplement is £580 per person.

For those who wish, it is possible to extend their stay and Distant Horizons can arrange for you to extend your hotel bookings in Vienna at the beginning of the trip and/or in Warsaw at the end of the trip.

Please note this visit has been organised for the Alumni of Aberdeen University and their friends and family.

### **ITINERARY**

(B- Breakfast, L – Lunch D- Dinner)

**Day 1. Monday. 12 May. Vienna.** Own arrangements to arrive in Vienna and transfer to *Hotel an der Oper* ([www.living-hotels.com/standorte/wien/living-hotel-an-der-oper](http://www.living-hotels.com/standorte/wien/living-hotel-an-der-oper)) in Central Vienna.

This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner at Café Central a short walk from the hotel. **D.**

**Day. 2 Tuesday. 13 May. Linz.** Vienna (1908–1913) was a formative and challenging period in Adolf Hitler's life. He moved to Vienna with aspirations of becoming an artist, applying twice to the Academy of Fine Arts but was rejected both times. Living in relative poverty, he resided in a



men's shelter and scraped by painting postcards. Vienna was a cosmopolitan hub, brimming with intellectual, artistic, and cultural vibrancy, yet it also harboured deep social divides and rising nationalist tensions.

The city's diverse population exposed Hitler to many ideologies. Vienna's flourishing arts scene and architectural grandeur, which Hitler admired, contrasted starkly with Hitler's personal struggles. Professor Weber will talk about how Hitler came of age amidst this atmosphere, how he developed a life-long animosity towards the city and about why he lied about how and when he left Austria's capital, only ever returning when he absolutely had to.



This morning, Professor Weber will lead the party on a walking tour of Hitler's Vienna and Jewish Vienna. The walking route will cover places that Hitler frequented as a young man, when he claimed to have been radicalized, and it will explore why Hitler invented a politically useful past about his Vienna years. There will be no 'inside' visits but the itinerary will take in the Homeless Hostel where Hitler lived, the Parliament which he visited as a young man and the Opera House which he regularly

visited as well as Hofburg where Hitler addressed the Austrians after the annexation of Austria.

After lunch, return to the hotel and take a coach for the short drive to Linz and on arrival transfer to *Hotel Wolfinger* in central Linz. ([www.hotelwolfinger.at/en/](http://www.hotelwolfinger.at/en/)) Later this afternoon, Professor Weber will accompany the party on a walking tour of Linz to explore the political and cultural influences to which Hitler was exposed as an adolescent in Linz. Learn more about Hitler's unrealized plans for the future of Linz as a City of Art, the city to which he also planned to retire. As this morning in Vienna, there will not be any 'inside' visits but the walking itinerary will take in the secondary school attended by both Hitler and Ludwig Wittgenstein, the building that housed the office of Eduard Bloch, the Jewish family doctor of the Hitlers and Linz Cathedral, where Hitler received his Confirmation, not long before he privately turned his back on Catholicism and Christianity.

Enjoy dinner tonight in a local restaurant in Linz. **B,L,D.**

### **Day 3. Wednesday. 14 May.**

**Obersalzberg.** This morning, depart Linz by coach and drive to Schloss Klessheim, a Baroque palace which served as a venue for some of Adolf Hitler's diplomatic activities while in power. Originally built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the palace was adapted by the Nazis and very much reflected their propaganda needs for the world of diplomacy. Hitler used Schloss Klessheim primarily for hosting high-profile meetings and negotiations with foreign leaders, such as Benito



Mussolini. Its opulent setting was intended to impress and symbolize Nazi power but it was also site of an unsuccessful assassination attempt against Hitler.



After a brief stop continue to central Salzburg and enjoy a stroll through the old town of Salzburg; a timeless blend of history, culture, and stunning architecture.

After lunch in Salzburg continue by coach to Obersalzberg, the site of Hitler's alpine retreat. Here the party will visit to the Dokumentationszentrum Obersalzberg which is an historical museum dedicated to describing

the Nazi regime and Adolf Hitler's connection to Obersalzberg. Opened in 1999, the centre occupies a site that once housed Hitler's alpine retreat. Through detailed exhibits, including artifacts, documents, photographs, and multimedia installations, the collection explores the rise of National Socialism, its propaganda, and the atrocities committed during World War II. The museum provides an insightful analysis of the region's role as a symbol of Nazi power, including its transformation into a political and military hub.

After visiting the museum continue by coach to *Hotel Alpino Ros* ([www.alpina-hotels.de/demming/](http://www.alpina-hotels.de/demming/)) in the nearby town of Berchtesgaden. **B,L,D.**

**Day 4. Thursday. 15 May. Munich.** This morning a walking tour of Hitler's mountain has been organised. Hitler's mountain retreat at Obersalzberg played a crucial role during the Nazi era, both as a personal refuge and a symbol of power. The Berghof, Hitler's residence, and surrounding structures transformed the area into a mini government hub. Key leaders of the Third Reich, including Göring and Himmler, maintained homes nearby, creating an exclusive Nazi enclave.

Unlike the leaders of other countries, such as Churchill, Hitler did not visit bombed-out cities during the war, but planned his campaign of genocide and wars of annihilation from the beauty and seclusion of the Bavarian Alps. He also staged himself on the Obersalzberg as a man of the people, who dedicated his life to the people. Nazi propaganda coffee table books of Hitler's life on the Obersalzberg adored living rooms across the nation. Furthermore, the secluded and fortified nature of Obersalzberg reinforced its mystique, cementing its place in Nazi ideology. Today's tour will finish at the Eagle's Nest (a present for Hitler's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday), perched atop the Kehlstein. Now a restaurant (image below) where the party will have lunch the site symbolized the regime's ambition, even though Hitler rarely ventured up to the Kehlsteinhaus due to his vertigo.





After lunch travel by coach to Munich, the city that gave birth to the Nazi Party, and on arrival transfer to *Hotel Europa* in central Munich. ([www.hotel-europa.de/en/](http://www.hotel-europa.de/en/)). **B,L,D.**

**Day 5. Friday. 16 May. Munich.** Perhaps of all German cities, Munich was the most pivotal in Hitler's rise to power, serving as the birthplace of the Nazi Party. It was where he joined the German Workers' Party in 1919, which soon was to be renamed National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP). Key events like the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch, Hitler's failed coup attempt, occurred there.

Munich's cultural and political climate provided fertile ground for his ideology, making the city a symbolic hub for the Nazi movement. This morning, Professor Weber will accompany a walking tour of Munich and the party will be joined by Arnulf Lüers – the son of Friedrich Lüers who served in the same World War One unit as Hitler but whose political development had a very different trajectory. Arnulf Lüers will share his father's observations and photos with the party. This morning's walking route will take in many of the places associated with Hitler's politicization and radicalization in the wake of war and revolution. These sites will include places in which Hitler lived; the site of Sterneckerbräu, where Hitler first attended a meeting of the Nazi Party; some of the beer halls in which Hitler gave his early speeches, and Odeonsplatz, where Hitler was famously photographed during the outbreak of WWI to symbolize that Hitler was supposedly Germany's unknown soldier and the place at which his 1923 Putsch failed. Learn more about how the Nazi Party grew across the city, before taking hold of all of Germany.

After the walk, lunch (with Arnulf Luers ) is planned in the Chinese Tower beer garden in the Englische Garten.



After lunch, the party will continue the walking tour and end the afternoon with a visit to the Jewish Museum, a vibrant place which showcases the diversity of Jewish history and culture in Munich as well as the wide variety of Jewish traditions and identities.

Located in the heart of Munich, the museum offers a wonderfully diverse collection of artifacts, photographs, and multimedia, shedding light on Jewish life past and present. Opened in 2007, it also

addresses the Holocaust's impact and aims perhaps above all to encourage a dialogue on tolerance and coexistence.

This evening, the party will attend a special screening of 'Führer und Verführer/Goebbels and the Führer'. This is the first serious Hitler feature film in twenty years, which premiered in the summer of 2024. After the screening, the film's director & script writer Joachim Lang will join the party via video link (and possibly even in person) to discuss with the group and Thomas Weber disinformation and demagoguery, then and now. Professor Weber served as Historical Consultant on the film.



We also hope the party will have a video chat with Michelle McKane, the great-granddaughter of the family with whom Hitler lodged as sub-tenant in Munich in 1913/1914, about the family's recollection about Hitler's turn towards antisemitism. **B,L,**

**Day 6. Saturday. 17 May.**

**Nuremberg.** This morning, check out of the hotel and visit the Munich Documentation Centre for the History of National Socialism which is a significant educational and memorial institution in Munich. Opened in 2015, the centre stands near the former Nazi Party headquarters, symbolizing critical reflection on the city's role in National Socialism. The Documentation Centre features in-depth exhibits tracing the Nazi rise to power, its propaganda, and its crimes, including the Holocaust. Through historical artifacts, photographs, and multimedia, it explores the societal conditions that enabled fascism to flourish. Above all though, the centre emphasizes remembrance and encourages dialogue on democracy, human rights, and the ongoing fight against extremism and intolerance.



After visiting the centre, Professor Weber will accompany the party on a walking tour around the city's quarter that housed the former Nazi Party's headquarters.

After lunch, visit the Alte Pinakothek, one of the oldest galleries in the world, where Professor Weber will explain how the Gallery played an indirect but significant role in shaping Hitler's worldview. Unlike Himmler and Rosenberg had little interest in Germany's claimed Nordic and mystic roots. Rather he adored Renaissance art and the Greek and Roman tradition, and he turned to the history depicted in museums such as the 'Alte Pinakothek' for inspiration on how to shape his own world. Adolf Hitler was an 'applied historian' *avant la lettre*.

Later this afternoon, return to hotel and drive to Nuremberg.

On arrival in Nuremberg, transfer to the *Park Plaza* ( [www.radissonhotels.com/en-us/hotels/park-plaza-nuremberg](http://www.radissonhotels.com/en-us/hotels/park-plaza-nuremberg)) **B,L,D.**

**Day 7. Sunday 18 May. Berlin.** For this morning, a walking tour of Nuremberg's Old Town, lying at the foot of the city's Imperial Castle, has been planned. Nuremberg was central to the development of Nazism in Germany due to its historical, cultural, and symbolic significance and due to its grassroots right-wing extremism. Known as the 'City of the Reich Party Rallies', it hosted massive Nazi rallies from 1927 to 1938, which were key for propagating Nazi ideology and power.



The city's medieval heritage as part of the Holy Roman Empire provided a backdrop which Hitler exploited to link the Third Reich to Germany's imperial past. Hitler frequently

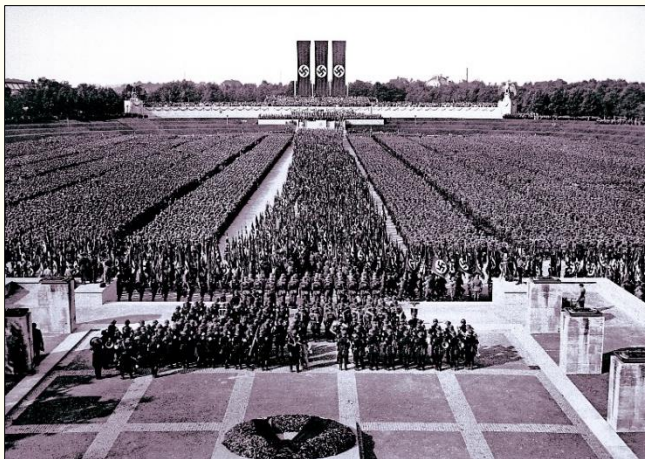


invoked the “thousand years’ Reich” of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation to indicate that his new Empire would start new a “thousand years’ Reich”.

Nuremberg’s location made it an excellent logistical hub for organizing large-scale events, and its rally grounds, designed by architect Albert Speer, became iconic for Nazi propaganda. The 1935 Nuremberg Laws, which codified antisemitism further, were proclaimed there, further solidifying the city’s association with the regime. After World War II, Nuremberg’s importance came full circle as the site of the Nuremberg Trials, where leading Nazis were prosecuted, symbolizing justice and marking a reckoning with the regime's atrocities.

This morning, the party will be joined by Ulrich Schlie, who is an historian and one of the foremost experts on the history of Nazi Germany and of global order, who currently serves as the Henry Kissinger Professor for Security and Strategic Studies at the University of Bonn. He also is the former Political Director and Head of the Policy Planning Staff of the German Ministry of Defence.

This morning’s walking route will include a visit to the Felsenkeller, the underground cave/tunnel system under the Old Town. This extensive network of rock-cut cellars beneath the city were historically used for beer storage but during World War II, they served as air raid shelters and sites for wartime production.



Later this morning, return to hotel and take a coach to visit Nazi Party Rally grounds and en route drive by the site of the Nuremberg Trials. At the Rally Grounds visit the Rally Grounds Museum which examines the rise and fall of National Socialism.

After the visit drive to Nuremberg Train Station and take the high speed-train to Berlin. On arrival transfer by taxi (5 minutes) to the boutique *Hotel Amo by Amano*.

([www.amanogroup.com/de/hotels/berlin-mitte-hotel-amo-by-amano](http://www.amanogroup.com/de/hotels/berlin-mitte-hotel-amo-by-amano))

Enjoy dinner at the the Ständige Vertretung restaurant a short walk from the hotel. The name of the restaurant is a play on the pre-1989 quasi-West German Embassy to the GDR; after reunification, someone from Bonn started the restaurant, using the name of the quasi-Embassy. A good place to understand more about reunification and the years that followed. **B,D.**

**Day 8. Monday. 19 May. Berlin.** Today the party will be joined by Wieland Giebel (the curator of the world’s most successful exhibition on how Hitler radicalized and radicalized others). Accompanied by Professor Weber and Wieland Giebel, experience a full day of visits including ‘Hitler: How Could it Happen’ and ‘Germany 1945 – Today’ exhibitions in the Berlin Story Bunker, one of the largest surviving Second World War bunkers.





**Day 9. Tuesday 20 May. Warsaw.** This morning, check out of the hotel and take coach to the House of the Wannsee Conference. The Wannsee Conference, held on January 20, 1942 was pivotal to the Nazi systematic genocide of Jews. Senior Nazi officials coordinated the "Final Solution," formalizing plans to exterminate Europe's Jewish population through industrial-scale murder. This meeting marked a chilling escalation from persecution to mass extermination and epitomizes the horrifying blend of ideology and administrative precision in Nazism.



Continue by coach to Sanssouci Palace, the summer residence of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, on which Hitler modelled himself. Built in the Rococo style in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it reflects Frederick's love of art, philosophy, and simplicity. The palace is surrounded by stunning terraced gardens, fountains, and vineyards and represents a wonderful harmony between architecture and nature. A UNESCO World

Heritage Site, Sanssouci remains a masterpiece of European royal culture, even if Frederick's intellectual and artistic legacy darkened after he became Hitler's idol. 11:30-12:00,

After lunch, transfer to Berlin Central Station and take the late afternoon train from Berlin to Warsaw. On arrival late this evening, transfer to the *Polonia Palace Hotel* ([www.poloniapalace.com/](http://www.poloniapalace.com/)) which housed the U.S. Embassy in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. **B,L.**

**Day 10. Wednesday. 21 May. Warsaw.** Warsaw epitomizes the death, destruction, and havoc that Hitler's Germany wrought in Poland and in the world at large. After the 1939 invasion of Poland, Warsaw became a symbol of Nazi Germany's oppression and genocide. Soon occupation authorities set up the Warsaw Ghetto, where hundreds of thousands of Jews were confined and later deported to extermination camps. The city also witnessed significant resistance, including the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. Wartime Warsaw epitomized the brutality of Nazi occupation and the resilience of its people.



Today's visits will focus on the destruction Hitler's Germany brought to Warsaw and the rest of Europe.

This morning, visit the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, located on the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto. The Museum chronicles 1,000 years of Jewish presence in Poland. Opened in 2013, it offers a rich, interactive experience through its

permanent exhibition, which spans medieval settlements to contemporary Jewish life. It highlights Jewish cultural, religious, and economic contributions to Polish society, while addressing the devastation of the Holocaust and its aftermath. The striking modern architecture symbolizes resilience and renewal and is an important space for education, dialogue, and reflection, of Jewish history as an integral part of Poland's heritage.

After visiting the POLIN Museum a walking tour relating to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and the Warsaw Uprising, is planned. The Warsaw Ghetto was established by Nazi Germany in 1940, confined over 400,000 Jews within its walls under inhumane conditions. Deprived of resources, residents faced starvation, disease, and deportation to extermination camps like Treblinka. It became a symbol of resilience during the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.



After lunch, visit the Warsaw Rising Museum which commemorates the 1944 Warsaw Uprising against Nazi occupation. Opened in 2004, it traces the heroic struggle through interactive exhibits, artifacts, and multimedia presentations. Here are great examples of the bravery of insurgents and the devastating consequences of the uprising, including the city's destruction. The Museum is a powerful tribute to Polish resistance

and above all to the memory of those who fought for freedom and the resilience of Warsaw's people.

Time permitting, we hope there is time for brief visit to the Warsaw Ghetto exhibition in the Jewish Historical Institute. **B,L,D.**

**Day 11. Thursday. 22 May. Warsaw.** Today's visit in Warsaw will focus on how the city rose from the ashes after the Second World War. More broadly, it will explore how repair after conflict, reconciliation, deradicalization, and disassociation from extremism works. It will also look at the dark shadows of unresolved historical injustice in today's world. And it will explore how different nations have drawn historical lessons on how to forge a future in peace and security that often compete with each other and create disunity in the face of new challenges.

The journey ends on a hopeful note, with a visit to the Fryderyk Chopin Museum, and an exploration of how Europe has turned to the legacy of Poland's most famous composer to look to the future, as epitomized in the





annual 'International Chopin and his Europe' Music Festivals in Warsaw.

For this morning, a walking tour of the Old Town of Warsaw has been planned. Devastated during World War II, the old town was meticulously rebuilt as a symbol of Polish resilience and identity. Following the city's near-total destruction by Nazi forces, reconstruction efforts began in 1945. Using pre-war photographs, paintings, and architectural plans, craftsmen and architects recreated historic buildings, blending original materials with modern techniques. The Renaissance and Baroque-style facades, cobblestone streets, and landmarks like the Royal Castle were restored to their former glory. Completed in the 1950s, the project became a remarkable example of cultural preservation. In 1980, the rebuilt Old Town was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its historical significance.



After lunch visit the Fryderyk Chopin Museum which celebrates the life and legacy of Poland's greatest composer. Housed in the Ostrogski Palace, it features manuscripts, letters, and personal artifacts, offering an intimate glimpse into Chopin's world.

Enjoy Farwell dinner this evening. **B.L.D.**

**Day 12. Friday. 23 May.** The journey finishes after breakfast this morning. **B.**

*Distant Horizons have over twenty five years' experience of organising scholar led journeys to Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa for many of the UK's major cultural societies and organisations.*

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