

ARTYKUŁ

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## How to challenge the Tribalist Zeitgeist?

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In a research on populist attitudes in Hungary and Poland, we found that »tribalism« describes the phenomenon way better. While we started to study populist attitudes, we found something more dangerous and malevolent: the combination of Manichean, black and white narratives that divide the world between good and evil and authoritarianism that puts trust in a strong leader, which makes a dangerous combination. We labelled it tribalism: a mentality which is about rallying around the leader of the tribe and fighting against the other tribe with every tools possible. What to do against tribalism?

- More debates. Debate culture is traditionally weak in both Hungary and Poland, and it has been weakened further in recent years. This provides a fertile ground for tribalism and polarisation
- Stepping out of bubbles. Good debates can be organized only if the participants are willing to step out of their comfort zone and get out of their bubbles. Debates outside the capital are especially important. The events we organized were very important for these groups as well to get recognized by their local authorities and gain more visibility among the inhabitants.
- Bridging the 'populist gap'. The most successful events are the ones where the speaker-audience divide can be diminished, creating an environment where status differences does not determine the discussion.
- Going offline. As Timothy Snyder puts it: "Within the two-dimensional internet world, new collectivities have arisen, invisible by the light of day— tribes with distinct worldviews, beholden to manipulations." To counter this tendency, there is a need for more debates in the offline space. More discussions outside the online platforms

are necessary for reducing the echo chamber effect: the driver of tribalism.

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