

Populism

Back in 2016, some of us had to sit through sermons about the need to “listen” to “legitimate grievances” against “broken capitalism”.

Perhaps, at one stage, populism really was a howl for a fairer economy. That stage passed a while ago. It is now a tribalist game.

In retrospect, Johnson and Trump should never have been bunched with Putin and Erdoğan under the “strongman” tag.

They converge on tactics — rule-breaking, institutional subversion — but the difference in substance is unbridgeable.

The eastern demagogues are nationalists. If the western ones have an -ism, it is nihilism.

Janan Ganesh, Financial Times, June 20, 2023