

***Trump, Kim, Macron,
Putin, MBS (plus Xi and
Erdogan) – From
Leadership to Disruption***

***1. Cometh the hour, cometh
the man – Opportunity makes
the man***

***From Disruption to
Leadership***

Trump – Presidency a product of
years of –

Stagnant wages,

Jobs lost to globalization,

Perceived ***immigration threats,***

Disillusion and consternation at ***rise
of China threatening American
Greatness***

***Popular among African peoples
used to “bombastic” presidents
(The Economist, 24 October)***

2. Kim –

Decades of ***dire poverty***

Decades of ***fruitless talks***

***Untrustworthy and unpredictable
US*** under Trump

***Lesson from Chairman Mao -
Need to possess trump card of
nuclear capability first***

Knows ultimately, *regime longevity depends on economic success* with livelihood improvements *aka China*

Learns how to play *the public perception game*

3. *Macron* –

Lack-luster economic performance amidst challenges of globalization

Technocrat-turned -President – banker and minister of economy with sartorial style to convey *VIGOR and CHARM* – forsakes expensive silk-linings and hand-stitched buttonholes

Holds out hope of *restoring French glory*

Pushes through pro-business reforms, including more flexible labor market, instead of reliance on government largess

But popularity has plummeted to 29% as France's *left-behind are increasingly anxious*

4. *Putin* –

Russians unhappy with *decades of decline after USSR collapse*

Flames of Russian former glory

St Petersburg connection harks back to *Peter the Great* and the grandeur of heydays of the Romanovs

Spy-master and Machiavellian – a bare-chest black-belt judo fighter to restore Russia greatness

Now some talks begin to emerge about amending Constitution to prolong his hold on power

5. MBS -

Dynastic infighting

Concerns about the *future of hydrocarbon and Saudi Arabia's long-term sustainability and competitiveness*

Oil price stability in global transition to greener economies

Saudi Vision 2030 – imaginative diversification into renewable energy, biotechnology, robotics and advanced manufacturing.

Opens up society e.g. women in politics, driving and admission to sports and entertainment

Talent development *e.g. education and youth*

Fight against *vested interests* meet with considerable opposition

Streak of absolute authoritarianism - US journalist Jamal Khashoggi's disappearance and rumored gruesome murder

6. Xi -

Built-up of systemic corruption
threatening *regime stability*

Well-tested capable son of honored
once-persecuted founding
revolutionary

Ancien Regime & The French
Revolution

China Dream resonates with
psyche of ***century of national***
humiliation – The Two
Centenaries – 2021 – CPC
(Moderately well-off nation); **2049**
– ***PRC*** (A great world power and a
"strong, democratic, civilized,
harmonious, and modern socialist
country")

7. *Erdogan* –

One of fastest emerging economies,
set to dominate world ***by 2050***:
Turkey no.11, ahead of France –
Developing world - six of top seven
largest economies (China, India,
US, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia,
Mexico, Japan, Germany, UK,
Turkey, France)

Heritage of ***Ataturk***, Father of
Modern Turkey 1923

Aspirations for ***leadership in Islam***
World

Vision of grandeur harking back to
the Ottoman Empire

Wants to play pivotal role in
region

Balancing act between national integrity (*Kurdish question*) v. domestic affinity for the US, modernism and *Islamic conservatism*, Saudi Arabia and *Iran, Muslim Brotherhood/Qatar* and Saudi Arabia.

Changed constitution to prolong grip on power