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We turn now to a final view from abroad. We turn to our friend Mr Wang Jisi. At various conferences that I have been to over the past few years, he has proved to be a very reliable guide to what China is likely to think about something and do about something. The floor is yours sir.

Jisi WANG

Never in recent history has a U.S. presidential election been so distressing—or captivating, depending on which side you took—as the one in 2016. The election was probably the most controversial and divisive even in China, a country that is politically remote from and dissimilar to America.

Well before the U.S. election in November, China's official media had carried numerous editorials and commentaries that struck a familiar tone. In the *People's Daily*, the most authoritative newspaper of the Communist Party, a few simple words were frequently used to describe the election process: "nasty," "chaotic," "bad," "low," "conspiracy," "vote buying," "corruption," "demonizing," "unpopularity," and so on. A commentary published in the *People's Daily* on November 8 argued, "Whoever wins the U.S. presidential election, it will by no means be the victory of democracy." The message to Chinese people is clear: America's political system and values provide nothing for China to admire.

Unlike in most other countries, the majority of China's media and political elites appeared to tilt toward Donald Trump rather than Hillary Clinton during the campaign. They correctly predicted Trump's victory. One young professor of political science based in the city of Guangzhou did wonderful scholarly work to forecast the election result. But most of those sympathetic to Trump have no direct access to the American press (because of the Internet firewall and the language barrier) and get information only from Chinese media, including social media. Those Chinese scholars and analysts—including myself—who watched the presidential campaign closely by way of following U.S. media and talking to their American friends and counterparts generally got their predictions wrong.

Three reasons can be found to explain why many Chinese people preferred Trump. First, some liked Trump's ideas of protecting indigenous industries and trade protectionism, or were fond of his expressions of defiance against "political correctness" in America related to feminism, homosexuality, multiculturalism, ethnic and religious diversity, and so forth. These Chinese noticed that Trump tended to speak on behalf of the older, blue-collar workers in rural areas, and China also has populations suffering from similar gap between rich and poor, and between cosmopolitan cities and the countryside. They argue that China should learn something from Trump's insistence on protecting manufacturing capacities and preventing financial assets from going out of the country. They loathe what is known as LGBT, as the LGBT phenomenon is against Chinese traditional values. According to their understanding, China should resist the tide of immigration from Africa and the Middle East into China at a time when a large number of Africans now reside in Guangzhou and many merchants from the Middle East have found their homes in southeast China. In addition, some Chinese argue that national minorities in China, like American blacks and new immigrants, have enjoyed too many privileges at the expense of the mainstay of the population. To put it simply, Trump's supporters in China are using his ideas and slogans in the presidential campaign in reference to China.



The second grouping of Trump supporters in China took note of his ideological color in comparison with Hillary Clinton's emphasis on promoting U.S. values in the world. Trump's "America first" slogan sounded inward-looking, unlike Clinton's internationalism. What is more, Trump said he liked the Russian leader Vladimir Putin, who is arguably the most popular foreign leader in China. Trump's statements during the campaign seemed to indicate that he might be less committed to U.S. security alliances with Japan and South Korea and would rescind the TPP negotiations, making the President-elect likely to depart from U.S. security and economic policies toward Asia as carried out in the past eight years. Therefore, many Chinese believe a Trump Administration will be less hostile, if not more friendly, to China. On top of all these considerations, as these Chinese understand it, Trump is a tycoon who loves money, and China has a lot of money, thus it must be easier to make a deal with Trump than with Clinton.

Some other Chinese hailed Trump's victory not because they like him, but because they dislike the United States. It is their expectation that a Trump Administration, with a Republican Congress, may do a lot of harm to the U.S. by making it less unified, less powerful, and more isolated in the world. A weakened United States, they hope, would not be able to interfere forcefully in China's domestic affairs and constrain China's international space.

Most of those Chinese who did not express delight at Trump's triumph also looked at U.S. presidential election's implications for China. Some in business circles are concerned that a new surge of protectionism in America might hurt Chinese business interests. More broadly, as a few leading Chinese economists argue, the world after the U.S. election and Brexit will witness increased resistance to globalization in different regions, especially in Europe. China has been one of the largest beneficiaries of economic globalization, and the next step of reform and opening will continue to depend on open markets and free interflow of capital. Any reversal of globalization may impede China's economic growth. It is noted among Chinese analysts that uneven distribution of wealth, reflected in higher Gini indexes everywhere in the world, has been a root cause of rising populism. But they see no imaginable solution to this inequality, and there is not much the Republicans in the United States can do to ease the popular anger and anxieties. On the political side of the Trump phenomenon, sober-minded scholars in China point to the possibility of the world moving into a renewed period of "strong man politics," which could result in more strident control of society and information.

As a veteran "U.S. watcher" in China over the past three decades, I was numbed on November 9 at noontime in Beijing when I got the news that Trump had won. It shattered my confidence in analyzing U.S. politics, as the vast majority of U.S. media, as well as all the Americans I had talked to about the election during the campaign, had been misleading one way or another. What stunned me was not only the outcome of the election but, more importantly, how the United States has been politically divided and wounded in different dimensions—cultural, ethnic, racial, social class, religious, gender, age, and partisan. I used to be consistently confident that the United States, despite all its problems and pitfalls, would not be a declining power. But I am much less sure of it today. Will November 8, 2016, be the birthday of a Disunited States of America, or will it mark the making of a nation that will be "Great Again"? Only a fortune-teller could give me a certain answer.

Jim HOAGLAND

It would not surprise you to know that Henry Kissinger would agree with your closing remarks absolutely. China will take at least six months to study what you have outlined, quite perceptively, as probably an opportunity for China.