Abstract: There are two approaches to study the cultural implications of globalization on national interests, one ontological and the other instrumental rationality. According to the instrumental rationality approach, national cultural factors play roles in national interests at three levels. Firstly, culture serves as the foundation for resisting cultural hegemony. Secondly, the influence of culture is basically part of the self-realization of the big powers in the world. Thirdly, political culture turns out to be the basic engine to build national interests. China is a big country with a long cultural history. To fulfill its national interests at the three levels, it should lift itself out of the national nihilism. In other words, it should face up to the cultural modernization.

In the era of globalization, the international relations have offered China many strategic opportunities to rise but also posed many challenges to China. To realize the fixed strategic goals and basic national interests, China needs to come up with approaches politically, economically, militarily and culturally. The article focuses on the cultural approach to deal with how to fulfill the national interests and the problems concerned.

I. Globalization, National Interests and Dual Perspectives on Cultural Studies

National interests refer to the prerequisites for national survival and development. They are the basic cause and supreme principle, under which every sovereign state deals with the outside word in the era
of the nation-states. The most basic and realistic national interest of modern China is to make Chinese nation’s revival and rise possible. Against two backdrops—globalization and domestic modernizations, China can grow.

Fundamentally speaking, globalization means “the history’s transformation to world history,” as Marx claimed, or nation-states’ moving to oneness after opening to the outside world. Also it means that the pioneers of the “civilized societies” expand their capital throughout the world so as to pursue their national interests by taking advantage of the comparative cost. From the perspective of the international relations, globalization is, in essence, the power competition, struggles among systems and identity changes. Globalization is the global expansion of power. Under the flag of globalization, hegemonic states make good use of the diplomatic pressure, economic sanctions and wars to polarize the international structure. As a result, the hegemonic states’ power and will are globalized. In this sense, three waves of globalization hit the modern history of international relations. The first one happened in the 18th century when the United Kingdom was at the apex of its hegemonic rule over the whole world. The second came in the 19th century when UK became the overlord of the world again after the Napoleon War. The third started at the end of the 1940s when the United States grew into the most powerful state in the world. After the Cold War ended, the US emerged as the only super power, with its power expanding globally. Globalization has turned out to be a heated topic. With the three waves of globalization moving throughout the world, systems have been globalized. The first wave established the Westphalia System and Overseas Colonization System. The second war established the gold standard, free trade and capitalism. In the third wave, the world institutions based on the United Nations, the World Trade organization and the International Monetary Fund were established. Still, globalization is the global expansion of the identity system or international political culture. In the first wave of

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