Question: **In today’s globalized world, it is difficult for the nations to preserve their cultural heritage. What are your views?**

1. Introduction (observation, set perspectives, stand)

The conventional wisdom held by academics and politicians is that it has become more difficult for nations to preserve their cultural heritage in this era of globalization. The extensive interaction among diverse cultures of different nations has contributed to the development of a global culture which has significantly modified the perception of the citizens, influencing them to be more receptive towards the foreign cultures while they conveniently abandon what is tradition and inherited. Although nations have introduced measures to create a cultural bulwark against globalization and its homogenizing effects, not many academics are optimistic about the measures as they find the circumstances forging the globalized culture too entrenched and the impact of the globalization process too rapid and proliferated while the efforts are inept, without the essential resources and will to introduce the proper measures to maintain cultural heritage. However, I beg to differ as there are examples of nations who have successfully embraced the benefits of globalization while preserving their cultural heritage which will provide a true meaning of who they are.

1. Main Body
2. Opposing View – countries cannot preserve their cultural heritage
3. Congestion of ideas on why countries are unable to preserve their cultural heritage

It is difficult to agree with the view that cultural preservation can be achieved when we observed how globalization is creating a melting pot at a global scale that contributes to cultural erosion. Technological advancement has allowed individuals of diverse cultures within nations to interact with such convenience and ease and at a small fraction of the cost. And as a result, exchange of values and ideas among different cultures become so prevalent that individuals will find it hard to hold onto traditions which were once considered meaningful to them. Furthermore, the technological advancement is carefully used by the multinational corporations to satisfy their global commercial gain as these commercial enterprises furiously attempt to curve out an international market and in the process, ‘commodifying’ the diverse cultures into one large common consumption culture. And, if such commercialization fails, the process of politicization through the development of international institutions will forge the platform of a common entity that shares common values, very often cited for being too westernized, which will tend to ignore the presence of diverse values that exist in other parts of the world. But, most of all, the fatal assumption that a common culture is crucial for the development of a more stable international environment will subtly sideline cultural diversity, undermining cultural heritage.

1. Rebuttal – prove why the opposing view is wrong

However, such observation holds a modicum of truths. As observed by Joseph S. Nye, from Project Syndicate, technological advancement via the use of the internet has preserved the use of local languages such as Welsh in Great Britain and Gaelic in Ireland for those who are interested in local languages. Similarly in Singapore, ‘Ge-tai’, a form of local street performance has been made popular by a group of enthusiasts who uses technology to preserve this distinctive local cultural activity. Furthermore, most of these local cultural communities have also introduced measures to uphold their cultural heritages to counter the institutional measures that are used to undermine local cultures. These would also include recent dialect classes conducted by community centers in an effort to preserve our spoken dialects.

**Supporting view**

Having understood the adverse influences of globalization on cultural heritage, many nations have made tremendous efforts to preserve their cultural heritages. The conscientious and institutional attempts are likely to prevent cultural erosion as these plans to preserve cultural heritage are more systematic and organized, ensuring that the youths are given adequate exposure to their cultural activities to educate them about their cultural heritages. In Taiwan, cultural villages with educational centres are set up to organize cultural activities for the children and youths that provide an understanding of the various traditional arts and crafts while in Singapore, our recent set up of the cultural village at Joo Chiat to promote local Peranakan culture. Furthermore, these cultural heritage centres are used as tourist attractions and they will provide commercial gains to make the campaign for cultural preservation economically viable and sustainable.

Cultural preservation can be achieved as our cultural heritage is deeply entrenched and rooted in the way we live our lives; how we eat, socialize, conduct our rituals and behave according to our cultural customs and norms. As long as the family entity is functional, our cultural heritage will be rooted as the family education at the infant stage of our lives shape the way we will behave and think in the future. This explains why most societies place an emphasis in creating an environment that supports the development of the family as cultural values, customs and norms can be passed on to the next generations. In recent years, there were many cultural cooking recipes being set up on-line and sold through publications in Singapore, evidently suggesting that cultural preservation can be achieved by maintaining our cultural status quos through our family education.

Besides the family, cultural heritage can be preserved more effectively in communities where religion plays a significant role in determining the values, norms and rituals of the culture. In some cultures like the Malay community where religion has a strong influence on the cultural characteristics, it will be easier for the nations to prevent cultural erosion as individuals are likely to abide by the divine values that uphold the cultures. Individuals are less likely to succumb to the influences of foreign cultures as the cultural values influenced by religious teachings must be abided as it is based on divine authority. In the countries which are non-secular, there will be greater focus on cultural and religious activities which ensure that the values of the community is accepted by the members of the nation as seen in most Islamic nations and thus, cultural heritages can be preserved easily despite the influx of modern values due to globalization.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is not difficult for nations to preserve their cultural heritage while successfully embracing the benefits of globalization at the same time. Cultural preservation is effective and possible when the cultural heritage is so strongly entrenched and rooted in the way people live their lives. People’s way of life is difficult to eradicate and change even amidst the rapid changes caused by globalisation.