



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** “I do not want my house to be walled in all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people’s houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave.” Examine. (150 words)

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### Approach

- Briefly explain the context of the statement in the introduction.
- Explain the views on cultural homogenization and globalisation with examples.
- Mention its relevance in contemporary times in the conclusion.

### Introduction

The above statement describes Gandhi's views on **cultural synthesis**, different aspects of **globalization** and its impact on Indian society. Both Gandhi and Tagore had the same profound faith in **humanism** and **openness of mind** which suggests learning best things of other cultures without undermining our own culture.

### Body

- Gandhiji **rejected cultural superiority** of western civilization. He viewed English language or any other foreign language as a source of knowledge which can be utilized for the welfare of all. However, he argued that one should not neglect his mother tongue and adopt western way of life for the sake of false pride or questionable social advantage.
- Gandhiji himself was influenced by western figures such as Jesus, Tolstoy, Thoreau and Ruskin. He translated John Ruskin's book '*Unto This Last*' in Gujarati with the title '**Sarvodaya**' which forms the basis of his philosophy of '**welfare of all**'.
- Even though he was a **critique to modernity** and hazardous impacts of environmental degradation and consumerism, he did not perceive any threat to our culture due to globalization. He believed that Indian culture is deeply rooted on the principles of **tolerance, multiculturalism and pluralism**.
- Gandhiji himself was a great believer in the preservation of the ancient Indian culture and norms of society. He believed that the mingling of cultures in India would not be a threat to India's own customs and culture.
- He supported **cultural synthesis** without neglecting **human dignity**. The **Swadeshi** Movement propagated rejection of western textile and home spinning of cotton for Indians as a symbol of **self-sufficiency and dignity of labour**.

### Conclusion

Thus, Gandhian ideas on cultural amalgamation were balanced in a way to create a modern but peaceful society, where all the cultures are welcomed, without losing one's own unique cultural identity sans any cultural superiority.

