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Q6

You cannot step twice in the same river.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · Essay · 125 marks · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Philosophical and ethical quotes

Core demand of the question

- **Name Heraclitus:** you cannot step twice in the same river
- **One stand:** the world and the self are flow; law and identity must learn to wade, not to freeze
- Move through person, society, constitution, ecology. Keep one honest counter
- Close on a living order, not a snapshot

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with a ghat in two seasons. Stand:** wade; do not govern a photograph.
- **Headings:** self, caste/city, constitution, **climate**, then one counter.

Earn **Heraclitus** once; **Ambedkar** once.

Close on bank plus flow.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

A ghat in June and the same ghat in September are not the same water. A man who returns after a decade is not the same foot. **Heraclitus** is not a riddle for the exam. He is a warning against governing a photograph.

One stand

Change is the given. Write institutions that can update - and still keep a bank that does not wash away the weak. Flux is not an excuse for broken promises.

Heading map**What the line is asking**

- **River:** time, a market, a technology, a monsoon, a generation.
- **Cannot step twice:** identity, policy, a 'civilisation unchanged' boast.
- The foot also changes - humility.

Self

- Forgiveness assumes a new foot. Grudge governs a photograph.

Society

- **Caste pretends the river is stone. Ambedkar:** annihilate the freeze.
- **Language, cities, a youth bulge:** the water is already elsewhere.

State

- A living constitution (**Art. 21**'s journey) vs originalism as a dry ghat.
- **Census, delimitation, a sunset clause:** wading tools.
- **Farm laws, a platform regulation:** the river of tech outruns the Act.

Ecology

- A 'same' monsoon that is not; a glacier that will not return as the old river.

The counter

- **Some things must feel the same:** a fair trial, a kilogram, a promise to a pensioner.
Heraclitus is not a licence to move the goalposts on the poor. The bank is ethics; the water is history.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** write law for a river, keep faith with the bank. Expand - this is only the map.

Facts & figures

Heraclitus

You cannot step twice into the same river - flux as the given. One earned use.

Ambedkar

A constitution as a living instrument against frozen birth-law.

Art. 21

Dignity's meaning widened in time - a legal river.

Census

A periodic wetting of the map - if it is allowed to happen.

Climate

The 'same' monsoon already is not - ecology as Heraclitus with a bill.