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In the River's Footsteps

Paris and the Seine (1750-1850)

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The Seine: a shared, central space for 18th-century Parisian life.

This historical inquiry highlights the tremendously varied roles the Seine played in 18th-century Paris. Vital to commoners and nobility alike, the river was a place for trade and leisure, a shared yet also contested and remodeled site of decisive influence for the urban future.

The Seine slowly drifted from these roles to become a national waterway ever more removed from life in the capital, a monumental yet disembodied presence. This Parisian history of the Seine provides fertile ground for understanding urban possibilities and the shifting relationship between humans and cities.

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