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**WORLD HERITAGE SITES:  
A CASE STUDY OF HERITAGE MANAGEMENT:**

***STRASBOURG--GRAND ÎLE  
FRANCE***

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Submitted by: Ege Yıldırım

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## 1. ON THE WHL AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES IN GENERAL

### a. The meaning of WHL

As an international body which has adopted itself the role of promoting the development and cooperation of its member countries, UNESCO also has an interest in helping the protection of the cultural wealth of countries around the world. In accordance with this mission, **the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage** was organised and adopted by the UNESCO General Conference, on 16 November 1972. The Convention is managed by **the World Heritage Committee** with assistance from the World Heritage Centre. The Committee's main goals are to identify and select **cultural and natural sites of "outstanding universal value"**, which have been nominated by States Parties for the World Heritage List, to decide on sites for the List of World Heritage in Danger, and to direct the usage of resources under the World Heritage Fund.

The nominations for World Heritage sites are made following **specific criteria** that the Committee has set out, from among a great diversity of sites around the globe, ranging from abandoned ruins to living sites, from monuments of single buildings to whole cities or landscapes, natural and/or cultural. The major criteria for selection, for monuments (type A sites), are the sites' representing unique artistic achievement, a masterpiece of creative genius, architectural influence, testimony to a disappeared civilisation or culture, illustration of significant stages of human history, association with phenomena of outstanding universal significance. For groups of urban buildings (type B sites), namely **historic towns**, three categories of sites are defined, which include **1-towns no longer inhabited but containing archeological evidence**, **2-historic towns which are presently inhabited and continue to grow**, presenting complex problems of conservation, and **3-new, twentieth century towns with recognisable original organisation and authenticity**. The criteria for their selection are the sites being outstanding examples of architectural ensembles which, again, record stages in human history, with their spatial organisation, structure and other features.

For the sites' eligibility, criteria other than their inherent cultural values mentioned above are sought by the Committee, which are related to the **successful maintenance** of the sites. World Heritage sites must also be under the full responsibility and commitment of the nominating national governments, who are ready to provide necessary funding and staffing for the sites' management and survival.

Since 1977, the World Heritage Committee has been preparing and revising **Operational Guidelines** for the Implementation of the Convention, as a guide for member states and as a working tool for the Committee activities. The effective management of sites being an important factor in their selection, and this being no easy task, such operational guidelines provide a necessary service to countries, as well as establishing some standards in the treatment of so many diverse cases.

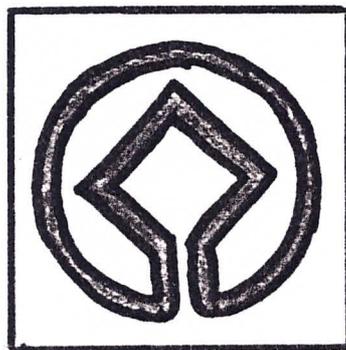
### *b. Management Principles for World Heritage Cities*

The case study taken in this report being a type B site, in other words a historic city, it may be a good idea to review some of the principles of World Heritage site management specific to this type of heritage.

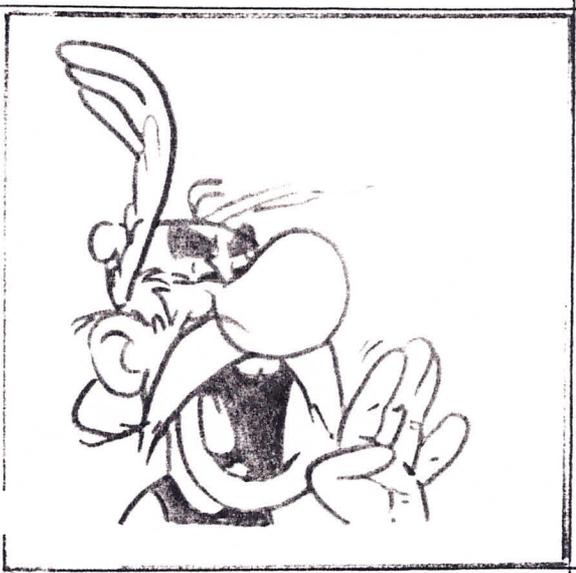
Some **basic qualities** of historic towns are their intimate, **human scale**, the subtle variation and **visual drama** in the physical environment, taking key buildings and monuments as reference, which is experienced by the pedestrian, and **the diversity of activities** lending a pleasant context for residential use. The **historical stratigraphy** of the town can be traced here. The buildings, urban fabric and infrastructure have maintained their **authenticity**, as has the overall design of the town plan. The materials, construction techniques, colors and other elements together create a harmony which gives the area its **texture and scale**. When the maintenance of a World Heritage city is to be evaluated, one can look for the continuing presence of these qualities.

However, also found in most historic quarters are **problems and dangers** like excessive demographic growth and **dilapidation** caused by **over-use**, **lack of maintenance** and conscience of functional values resulting in **decay**, the penetration of **private motor transport** along with its pollution and harmful vibration, development of **high-rise buildings** which disrupt the micro-climate and fabric of the area, and **changes in** the methods, types and scales of **functions**. The prevention or mending of these problems would also be examined to see how well the site has been protected.

As the underlying principle of conservation of a historic town, **the preservation of the urban fabric by optimum and beneficial use** is aimed, and this necessitates **economic and political approaches beside physical** treatments. The historic centre should be thought of in the **context of the larger whole, the city**, and of the **dynamics** of today's reality, which leads us to incorporate conservation practice with the other fields of urban planning, in other words, **integrated conservation**. Understanding the resource is the starting point of any planning action thus the **historical fabric** must be **identified** and analysed. Comparative studies with earlier and cadastral maps must be done, and issues like transportation capacity must be dealt with. The **urban system's rate of change** needs to be monitored, through understanding the life forces and potential causes of decay.



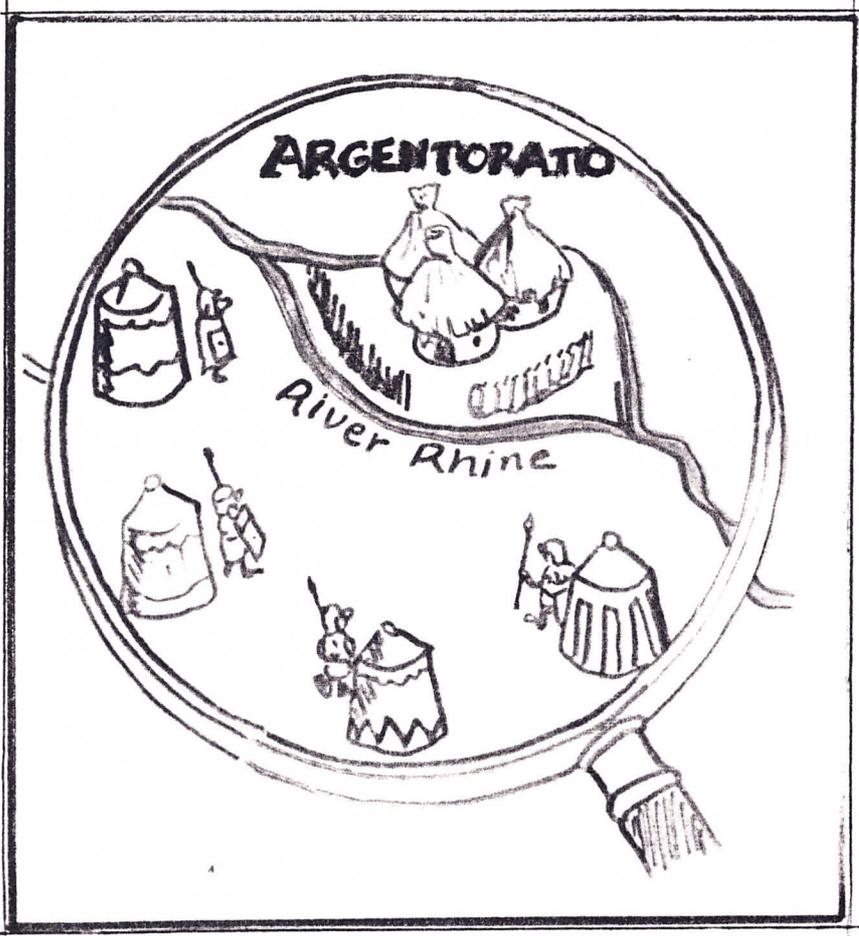
## 2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE AS A CASE STUDY



The historic city centre of Strasbourg, **Grand Île**, is one of the twenty four World Heritage Sites found in France, and was **included in the list in 1988**. It is rightly so called, because of its resemblance to a **large island in the middle of the city, separated by the arms of the River Ill on all sides, but also well-connected by bridges and roads to the "mainland"**.

The category of historic town that it falls into is the second, an old city still thriving. Strasbourg is a city with **certain historical importance, great historical stratigraphy, but new prosperity added** on top of this, with a relatively new and internationally important function- being the seat of the Council of Europe.

The **interaction of its new role with its cultural character** as a World Heritage Site would be an interesting phenomenon to observe. In this case, we may even say that the **new dynamics of the city are rivaling, maybe surpassing the older ones!**.. Although because of the European Council image, but the **urban fabric dating back to pre-this thought**, that the Grand Île is overshadowed by the Palais de l'Europe, comes to mind, we can still remember that the **reason Strasbourg was included in the list is not historical times**. As we come to the subject of the age of Strasbourg, it might be a good time to go on to the account of the city's ancient history.



(Roman invasion of  
celtic village  
Argentorato)

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The present-day **capital of the Alsace region**, in western France, and **the heart of West Europe** (suitable for the EU seat placement), Strasbourg is located at the center of a long, narrow depression resulting from the collapse of the Earth's crust in the Tertiary Period, extending from Sweden to the Mediterranean. The **Rhine** is a late host in this "**trench**", but has made an important contribution with its alluvial sedimentation. This situation has had the **primary effect on Strasbourg's significance** in history, which is related to **strategic socio-economic and military centrality**.

#### a. Historical development of Strasbourg

##### 1. The Barbarians and Rome

Strasbourg has an ancestry dating from **mythological times**, traced to the civilisation of Rhénanie which lived 700,000 years ago. With time, a **large Celtic village** flourished by the name of **Argentorate**. **Different groups of incomers from Europe, Atlantic and English Channel, Black and Aegean Seas** joined the village community, which we know by the archeological evidence left behind.

The site of the village had the **advantages of circulation, with a dense system of water canals and land paths**. On the other hand, it was a **disadvantageous location**, in that a marshy land formed by constant **flooding** was easy ground for festering diseases.

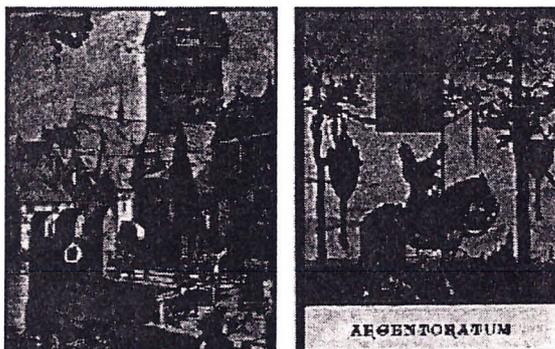
Limestone found at the foot of Vosges Mountains enabled **fertile vineyards** to be kept, and the region became known for its **excellent wine production**. **Water played dual role as communication and transportation means and as a natural defense**, and at the end it was still a location with great assets. Being at the **centre of the Rhine Trench offered easy north-south access** to Argentorato and this was the **main route of Roman penetration toward the north**. **The Rhine would be the cultural and economic backbone of Europe**, particularly in 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, or early Renaissance. **Today also, the city has become the most industrial and rapidly-populated in Europe**.

In the land surrounding Argentorato, small agrarian villages started to be established, as well as routes of hunters and travelers; but this was not a hospitable land. Among these, **only Argentorato gave birth to Argentoratum, the Roman legionary camp**.



Founded by Roman General Drusus, who constructed more than fifty forts along Rhine, 16-12 BC. With a population of around 6,000, made up mostly of **foreigners not intending to settle, an unstable and cosmopolitan character was inherent in the town's nature from the start.** As a period of **growth and wealth** began, the town remained the **most important logistical homefront base for Romans** up to 260 AD.

In **352 AD**, Argentoratum was **destroyed** by the **Alamanni and Franks**, but shortly reconquered and partially **restored by Rome**. It was definitively destroyed by **Attila and the Huns in 451 AD**. After their passage, the **Alamanni** re-established themselves, although Argentorate did not interest them and so did not develop very much. All trace of Argentoratum was to be lost in the following decades.



## 2. Strateburgo and the Middle Ages

In **496**, the city was **incorporated into the Franks' kingdom**. Argentorate was **slowly restored**, undergoing **name changes**, from **Strateburgo**, to **Stratisburgo**, to **Stradeburg**. The **"Fortified town on the road"** turned into the **"city of roads"**.

The Franks were conscious of their Christianity. Strateburgo became a **dynamic diocesan (bishop's) seat** with St. Arbogast and St. Florent. However, there was not **much belief in the city's surpassing its strategic and military character**, which held through modern times. The Franks lived in their palace at Koenigshoffen or in the countryside. During the following Merovingian rule, it was still an average small town; and as part of a Duchy after 640 AD, it was still no important city. But with the Carolingians, a **new dynamism** formed. A certain prosperity was reached with **powerful support from the Church**.

842 was the year of the **Oath of Strasbourg**, when Louis and Charles united against their brother Lothaire, in an oath using the common languages of their people, Tudesque (ancestor of German) and old French. Providing the **most ancient written documents of both the French and German languages**, this historical event marked the **establishment of Strateburg's importance as a political, economic and linguistic crossroads**. Shortly after another document, the Treaty of Meerssen of 870, attached Strateburg to Louis's kingdom, of Oriental France or Germania.

Strateburg was damaged by the Hungarians in 913, and reconstructed by the **Saxon Ottoniens**. The coronation of Otton I **consecrated the union of throne and altar, a powerful force for the next 300 years**. The quality of the ruling bishops, the efficacious episcopal administration, and the wealthy working middle class combined to produce **rapid urban growth, expansion of fortified enclosures** and the growth of importance of **circulation toward the South**, leading to the opening of **St. Gothard Passage** in 1239. Strateburg became a **busy crossroads of intense East-West and**

North-South traffic, great economic growth along with development of canal transport.

It was also a period of **religious affluence which would lead to the Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century**. The **high spiritual and intellectual quality** of the Franciscan and Dominican Orders and the erection of a **church and a convent in the city centre** by the Dominicans in **1260** marked this period. The evolution of the orders broke scholastic constraints and unleashed creative literature, philosophy, theology and interest for the common language. **Gottfried of Strasbourg** wrote his famed "**Tristan and Isolde**", inspired by the **anglo-norman poet Thomas of Brittany**, who wrote in French. This was a **sign of the bilinguality of the Strasbourgeois** and how they could already switch between the two languages.



### 3. Printing, the Reformation and Humanism

**1444** was the date of the **oldest preserved census**, recording a population of **16,000** and establishing Strasbourg as **one of the most important cities of the region, following Cologne and Nuremberg**. It had the privilege of being a "**Reichstadt**", or **City of the Empire**. **Constitutional and administrative organisation** became very assertive, with the formation of a **city council** and three **subsidiary councils**. Four "**Stettmeisters**" (**City Rulers**) were designated by Council, and an "**Ammeister**", **equivalent to a mayor**, elected by professional corporations, which were abundant in number.

The **Church** had by now started to exhibit a **decadence**, characteristic in the whole continent. There was concern for a reform. The recent introduction to the media, a fundamental innovation in communication, enabled ideas of reformation to spread with speed never before seen. In the years **1431-1444**, **Jean Gensfleisch, aka. Johannes Gutenberg**, **resided in Strasbourg**. It is agreed by historians that **1440** is the date of the **invention of the printing press**, so **Strasbourg may well be called the birthplace of printing**. The formation of ten printing workshops ushered in the development of the technique and its dissemination into the rest of Europe.

Humanism was introduced to the city through theology. The **highly developed cultural environment** formed a **good basis for the movement to flourish**. With guidance of **J.G. de Kaysersberg** in groundwork for the Reformation, with his critical-satirical speeches; other figureheads of Humanism were attracted into Strasbourg, including **Erasmus**, who came in **1514** to marvel at the city's "**aristocracy without factions, democracy without disorder, wealth without excess, happiness without arrogance**", making associations to **Plato's ideal state**.

The **Reformation sent shockwaves throughout Europe** and Strasbourg, socio-political as well as religious. A Gospel accessible to all and a Church whose power was no more elusive was the ideal of the Reformation philosophy. Preachers of the city, who made Strasbourg shine in the dissemination of these ideas and of copies of the

New Testament, also preached concepts like the liberation of man from religious and political injustices, social fraternity and justice and a personal faith rather than religious obligation. This **“Free City”** provided a **fertile ground for the Reformation and the following period**, which would be called the **“Golden Age”**, like no other city in Alsace. Strasbourg was also the **centre of refuge for those fleeing the revolts in the countryside**, including Jews, priests, landowners and nobles.

The **second part of the century was less creative, and the city faded** with the victory of Emperor Charles-Quintus over the Protestants, of which Strasbourg was comprised of. The **Cathedral** and two other churches were **restituted to the Catholic Church**. A **recession**, coupled with strong inflation, followed. Due to a **demographical regression**, the city population was at a mere 22,000 by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. There was a **loss of prestige in all aspects except the military**.

#### 4. Strasbourg in France and Napoleonic Europe

The 17<sup>th</sup> century was marked by the Thirty Years War bringing the Protestant German princes against the Catholic Empire sovereigns, the Habsburgs and ending with the Treaty of Westphalia. Strasbourg, though relatively less damaged, was shaken by severe economic crisis, and prepared incorporation into the Kingdom of France. King **Louis XIV** patiently pursued the **“Reunion” of Alsace to the Crown**. He needed to take Strasbourg, the real bastion on the Rhine, under his protection. In **1681**, his forces **attacked**. The city's **days as a “free city” were ended**, as Strasbourg became the **capital of the French province of Alsace**.



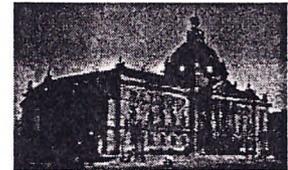
The 18<sup>th</sup> century was a kind of transition; from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment, from German to French influence, from a free city to a royal one. **Profound economic and religious changes** took place. The city **improved aesthetically**. The Kingdom of France brought an era of peace and wealth, where **local artisanal technology** combined with French creativity made Strasbourg a **crossroads of a great variety of creators and trends**.

**1789** was a **mild surprise** for the Strasbourgeois, who were prepared for the revolution; there was no big fanfare. Strasbourg become just another city in the department of the Bas-Rhin. Frédéric de Dietrich was elected mayor. There was strong Catholic opposition to the Revolution, as the Civil Constitution forced priests' allegiance to the State. The **mayor** was appointed commissioner to the Department of Bas-Rhin. Mayor Dietrich was **notorious**, but **wrongly accused** by the Jacobins to **deliver Strasbourg to the enemy (the Germans)**, and the **Reign of Terror** continued for two years. Difficult combat with exterior enemies. In 1794, Alsace was totally freed of invaders, but poor harvests, depreciation, black market brought a **crisis**, and Dietrich was guillotined for it. Meanwhile, the **Revolution** started to **degenerate**, and a sense of calm returned to Strasbourg. The **Directory Period** was marked by **recuperation**

from a poor state after the Revolution's destruction- the economy in awful shape, damage from pillages, the defacement of monuments, and the churches used as pigpens. The Cathedral was again returned to the Catholic Church. The Red Bonnet, symbol of the Revolution, which had been protecting the spire of the Cathedral, was removed.

Napoléon Bonaparte returned Strasbourg to the foreground as a European center, with the repair of roads, and of the River Rhine. Construction of a new bridge over Rhine, 400 m. long, 12 m. wide, the development of postal relations- daily service from Strasbourg to Paris, 16 postal routes toward eastern Europe, the optical telegraph facilitating quick message exchange with Paris- were activities undertaken. There was great economic growth, as early as 1809, along with a re-enhancement of the arts and sciences under Napoléon. A new architectural style celebrating Napoléon was characterised by mixing romanticism with neo-classicism, as seen in the Pavillion Josephine and the Theater.

The arrival of recession and strain, after the military defeats of Napoléon which caused blockades to French cities, brought disease (typhus) to Strasbourg, and was followed by the abdication of Emperor. There was a strange, unsympathised peace in the country of France.



### 5. Return to Germany

In 1848, a new revolution broke out, and the Second Republic proclaimed. This new regime brought peace and prosperity. 1852 saw the completion of the railroad, and the regularisation of the Rhine.

The hegemonic trend in Germany and diplomatic-military errors between France and Germany caused an atmosphere of hostility and approaching war. The Strasbourg's German-speaking aspect was interpreted as an attachment to their Germanic roots. In 1870, German forces opened fire on Strasbourg: the Cathedral was set on fire, and a three-day-and-night fire raged in the city. With the Treaty of Frankfurt, of 1871, came the annexation of Strasbourg into Germany with consent from the French National Assembly, despite Alsatian representatives' protests. This disregard and attitude of doing as they wished with Strasbourg, on the part of German and the French, caused a deep wound on the conscience of the city.

Strasbourg was once more severely damaged, after the 1870 incidents. Famine, illness, and a harsh winter gave the city a hard time. As the only solution for the suffering, even at the risk of an image of hypocrisy, Strasbourg turned toward the German State. From 1870 to 1918, the city grew from 85,000 to 180,000 inhabitants. The urban fabric and living conditions changed. Germany strived to demonstrate its powers through activities in this city: a first rate military fort, brilliant examples of German architecture and urbanism, including public health and modern circulation. Many buildings were constructed in a short time: the Kaiserpalast, 1883-1887, the current National and University Library, Post Office, Train

Station, and the St.Paul and St.Marie Churches. There were also activities of expansion, in the University Palace and the Civil Hospital. In 1915, a tramway was established.

Strasbourg transformed from an essentially commercial city to an industrial one. The new station linked Strasbourg to Germany. The regularisation of the Rhine's flow, the establishment of Austerlitz Port and the Port of the Rhine, support from important banks, the development of gas, electricity and domestic and industrial energy all helped along this process.

Great change occurred in Strasbourg's population and societal components. Part of the Strasbourgeois left the city to avoid becoming part of the German Empire. Battalions of Germans moved in, raising the German population to 40% of the total by 1900. However, this over-enthusiasm to Germanise didn't fit in naturally, giving the feeling of a transplant having been made into Strasbourg. Such a situation must have had enormous psychological effects for the city's identity.

### 6. The World Wars

Strasbourg suffered less than many other cities in the First World War. Stocks of provisions were made by mayor Schwandler, and fair prices were maintained. The end of the "Reichsland" was jubilantly celebrated. However, disquiet didn't subside, added to by France's economically poor state, the revaluation of the German mark, and socio-political effects due to a change of regime. Strasbourg went politically left. Untypically, the People's Party rose in the city. General economic events in the country such as mass strikes were not particularly followed here. As the Nazis rose and drew contempt in Strasbourg as well, this tendency toward autonomy and the Communist Party dissolved with the German-Soviet pact. In 1939, Strasbourg was evacuated. 120,000 refugees were welcomed in the cities of Dordogne and the Indre.



In 1940, Hitler's flag was flying over the Cathedral. The "Gauleiter" (City Ruler in Nazi terminology) conformed Alsace to the Reich. The "Gau Oberrhein" was intended to be made an example of the Reich's domination in the region. Most Strasbourgeois were resigned to return. Once more, Strasbourg was at the mercy of larger forces. (This situation reminds one a little of Finland, stuck in the middle between the Russian and the Swedish Powers, for most of its history.) Rapid measures were taken to re-Germanise Strasbourg: streets were rebaptised, the French language forbidden except a germanic dialect (the Elsässich), the "Reicharbeitsdienst" forced young men to labor before enlisting in the Nazi army). 3,500 young Strasbourgeois were killed. With the 1944 American bombings, part of the city centre was destroyed. The same year, the French were authorized to take

**Strasbourg.** The **French flag and cross of Lorraine** were hoisted up on the **Cathedral**, and the time began for **healing war wounds**.

Nazi collaborators were severely punished. An adherent party to the national republican party, the **MRP**, rose as a **new political force**, promoting **Christianity, Catholicism and a strong desire to defend the particularism of Alsace in its language, culture and religion**.

With the help of **economic growth ensured by the MRP and a successful mayor-** a minister and a President of the Council of France at various times- Strasbourg became one of the **most dynamic poles of the country**, and holds the **highest growth rate in Europe today**.

### 7. Comments

With the great **accumulation of events** that took place here, all of it now represented by the historic town quarter, Grand Île, Strasbourg should also be a **historical site; maybe it is. Although not on the level of the Bastille, Paris, or the site of the Magna Carta, for example, it still holds a multitude of "medium-importance" events.**

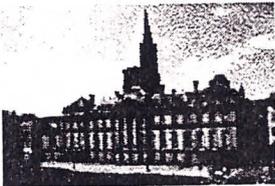
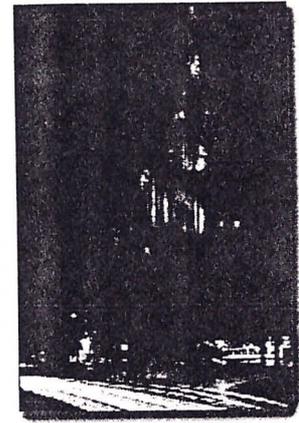


The history of Strasbourg gives one the **final impression of general unrest** for this city. A turbulent history must have given the town a **complex and intense urban memory**, full of distrust for the surrounding forces, and a **strong self-dignity**. The imprint left by Germany's and France's historical **attitude of doing as they wished with Strasbourg is very likely to have played an important part in the formation of the city's identity. This identity must be quite particular to itself, neither French or German, but taking on traits of both nations. This is actually an important point, for understanding Strasbourg's political position in Europe today, as is explained later on (in part c).**

### b. Monuments in Grand Île

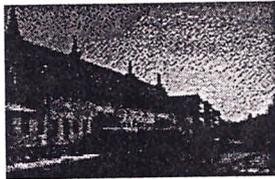
- *Cathedrale de Notre Dame*: At the heart of the historical center, it dominates the landscape over much of Alsace. Symbol of a proud and independent city, standing on the site of a Roman temple, on a mound. Early Church commissioned by the Frank king Clovis. Begun in 1015, destroyed by fire. Rebuilding at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century in Gothic style. Magnificent west front masterminded by Erwin von Steinbach. The spire supervised by Ulrich von Ensingen. Tallest building in Christendom for the next four centuries. The spire almost vanished during the French Revolution. A locksmith's idea of putting huge Phrygian cap over it saved form destruction by revolutionaries. Shellings of 1870 and 1944 caused some damage. Several restoration programs.

- \* Stendhal: "One of the most striking monuments I have ever seen."
- \* Victor Hugo: "The entire front of the church is a clever poem. [The spire] is a gigantic and delicate marvel. I have Chartres, I have seen Anvers, but I needed to see Strasbourg... From the Belfry, the view is wonderful." (1)
- Château des Rohan, or Rohan Palace: To the south of the Cathedral, an elegant 18<sup>th</sup> century palace, designed by a royal architect for a cardinal. Now houses museums. (2)



(2)

- L'Ancienne Douane, or Old Custom: At the heart of a heavy river traffic. Custom building from 1358, house of the port and taxes authorities. Now serves as restaurant. (3)



(3)

- St. Thomas Church: Commissioned by Louis XV. Enormous but delicate marble sculpture.



(4)

- Ponts-Couvertes, or Covered Bridges: Heart of Petite France Quarter. Three defensive towers. Charming view of River Ill and the Barrage Vauban, a defensive dam built on the Ill in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

- The Petite France Quarter: River Ill spreads out into five arms, largest arm flows north and takes the shape of an insular ellipse. Construction of mills. Outbreak of venereal diseases of people contaminated during the wars in Italy made the Magistrate isolate patients in a building now replaced by the covered bridges. Popular belief held that the French were responsible for the outbreak, and the hospital was called "Zum Französel" or "Little France". The district is still referred to by this name. (4)

### c. Developments in this Century and Contemporary Strasbourg, "Capital of Europe"

History stretches into today in that, having changed hands several times between France and Germany over the centuries, Strasbourg has been regarded as a **symbol of Franco-German reconciliation since the Second World War.**

**1949**, on proposal by the British Foreign Secretary, Strasbourg was **chosen as the seat of the Council of Europe.** A **Palais de l'Europe** was built; by 1952, it was serving, beside **headquarters of the Council**, as the meeting place for the Common Assembly of the **European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)**, and after 1958, for the **European Parliament.** In 1977, a **larger Palais was built** to accommodate the EP, but by the 1990's, this was also outgrown. An **even larger one** was built.

Strasbourg's status as the "parliamentary capital of Europe" is threatened by moves to concentrate main institutions in **Brussels**. Strasbourg is **determined to keep its position** and **defended** zealously by all **French** governments. **Germans** are also in favor of Strasbourg. The **Franco-German identity** is strong in the minds of many people. The city has the **obstacles** of relatively poor **communication** services to the rest of Europe, especially by air transport. In a **new project** of the French **railways** in 1993, the route to be constructed, which would link Paris to Munich, was altered so as to pass through Strasbourg, upon strong reactions and pressures.

In 1967, an **urban community** was created with 26 neighborhoods, and a population of 430,000, which developed around the Grand Île's canals and rivers. **The political size of Strasbourg is quite impressive for a city of 400,000**, and a nickname of "**La Province**" in Paris. The European Parliament is the **only European Union institution in France**. Members of Parliament meet once a month in Strasbourg. Late 1997, expected to move to new Parliament building. There is great anticipation on whether the new construction will ease the fight between Strasbourg and Brussels for European seat supremacy.

Strasbourg is also home to **European Court and Commission of Human Rights**, founded 1959. Also a new building for the Court in 1995, since it outgrew the Palace of Human Rights of 1965. All European buildings can be visited in the **area of l'Orangerie**.

*Some of the European institutions:*

**Eurocorps**. Military corps created by Franco-German summit, La Rochelle, 1992. (Still a military centre...) Five European countries are member to it.

**European Youth Centre and Fund.**

**International Human Rights Institute.**

**Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine**. Oldest European Institution, dating to 1816/

**European Observatory of Audio-visual Media.**

European cultural TV channel ARTE.

With **New York** and **Geneva**, the city shares the privilege of being a seat of **international institutions without being state capital**. Second diplomatic city of France, hosts 71 states representations and /or consulates.

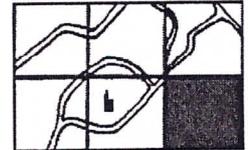
The economic and cultural appeal of the city have put pressure on the real estate market. Land scarcity is a major issue. This has arisen out of what is called the "trans-frontier phenomenon".



#### ***4. MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND THE OPAH GRAND-RUE PROJECT***

Management activities concerning the historic quarter of Grand Île have mostly been projects **preceding** the declaration of the area as a **World Heritage Site**. The city was the subject of some **housing rehabilitation projects**, carried out within the **framework of a national programme**.

Recent urban trends in Strasbourg having to do with the city's increasing appeal led to the formation of **serious pressure on the city's real estate market**, also **threatening** the central district of **Grand Île**. As a result, the initiative of the **public authority** was needed to **rehabilitate the old housing stock** and enable it to **keep pace with the land market**, while enabling **modest populations to remain** in the city centre. This policy on the housing stock is important, because a frequently encountered danger in historic town renewal activities is the "**over-upgrading**" of areas, which causes old residents who can't afford to live in the new standards to move out, thus **upsetting the social make-up of the areas**. Although the principles of the **World Heritage Convention** are not the main concern, or at least not the only one, motivating the projects, the achievements of the projects also **satisfy** many World Heritage cities' protection criteria.



##### ***a- General Interventions on Old Buildings in France***

With the **1962 Malraux Act**, a legal framework for **classification of national heritage** was set up, initiating the first interest in "old buildings" in France. Designated protection areas, called "**secteurs sauvegardés**" were also created in various historical locations in the cities. The classification of national heritage ensures the **strict regulation** of protected areas, and at the same time offers **major tax benefits** for residents.

In France, the **private housing stock has an important role**, with about 5 million units of housing as opposed to 3.2 million social housing units. The private stock is scattered among small, usually old owners with one or two houses. **Rents don't usually cover the upkeep or modernization costs** of the buildings, as they have quite modest tenants who cannot pay too high amounts. This stock is threatened by real estate trends, but is important for the **social equilibrium** in cities.

##### ***Agence Nationale pour l'Amélioration de l'Habitat (ANAH), or the National Agency for the Improvement of Housing:***

**Improvement of this stock has become a priority** for administrations, and in 1970, the **Agence Nationale pour l'Amélioration de l'Habitat (ANAH)**, or the National Agency for the Improvement of Housing has been established. The agency has the role of distributing **grants to help private owners**, and lighten the burden of rehabilitation

**investments in rental housing.** It is a public institution of an administrative nature; its resources for the grants, coming from taxes and lease rights before 1986, are now formed from **credits allocated by the State's housing budget**, which was 2.5 billion francs in 1996.

*Operation Programmée d'Amélioration de l'Habitat (OPAH), or the Programmed Operation for the Improvement of Housing*

This is a programme initiated by the ANAH as a **concentrated effort** for the global **improvement of particularly dilapidated neighborhoods** in cities. It is also part of a general national policy for the preservation and improvement of the built heritage, while making sure **tenants can keep their homes in the best possible conditions of comfort.**

The OPAH focuses on a specific area in each project, for a duration of three years. It is organised so that the **local community does preliminary studies, encourages owners to participate through its strong presence and the free-of-charge provision of expert animation teams to help with procedures.** The owners finance the works either by themselves, or with **loans from private banks.** The OPAH is based on incentives: it lets **owners decide** whether or not they will participate.

The **local context, and socio-economic changes** within it, are taken as a basis in formulating the OPAH procedure. The **social principle** of the programme is secured mainly with the **regulation of rent.** This cannot exceed the amount of rent after the completion of works, which is 20 to 40% lower than that of a new lease; so, it is in a way a temporary **transition from a public to a private plan** in the development of a private rental housing stock. The **increase of grants to owners** allows them to make a loan arrangement with regulated rents, and attain a **profitability** not too far from the free sector's. In this way, **sacrifices** on the part of any of the stakeholders' are **prevented.**

• **The sources of finance of OPAH are:**

1. **The State: Grants** to communes, **financial aid to owners-occupants** on condition that they have some degree of resources, and **personalised housing help for tenants** with few resources are what the State offers.
2. **The ANAH:** It contributes with the financing of **improvement works** on buildings.

***b-Rehabilitation, ANAH and OPAH activities in Strasbourg***

Rehabilitation activities in the City of Strasbourg have **evolved**, along with the national framework, from a simple technical procedure into a program **encompassing all aspects of neighborhood development**, with each operation able to create for itself a complementary mechanism. The steps within this advancement have included:

- An urban challenge for **extension of the historic centre and Krutenau, 1978-80;**
- An **architectural project for the historic (preserved) sector, 1981-96;**
- The **Grand-Rue urban and architectural project in the historic centre, 1982-85;**

- An urban environmental and social project concerning the **train station** project between the historic centre and the outskirts, 1988-91;
- An urban environmental and social project at **Cronembourg** and the outskirts of the City, 1991-1995;
- A project at **Koenigshoffen** for global urban-social-commercial **revitalisation**, 1996-1999 (ongoing).

The accumulation of experience in urban rehabilitation in Strasbourg points out the following points to be noted:

- **National and local means must work complementarily.**
- **Private and public financing must work together and form a synergy.**
- **The means of operation must be adapted to the context and to the political objectives of the city.**

### *The OPAH Grand-Rue, 1982-85*

In 1974, the **preserved sector of Strasbourg** was created: a 73 ha. area, in downtown Strasbourg, some parts of which were affected by the OPAH Grand-Rue (1982-1985). Grand-Rue is a street located at the western side of the Grand Île. **OPAH Grand-Rue is the only operation carried out within the preserved sector of Strasbourg**, among other OPAH projects in the city. Since the designation as a “secteur sauvegardé” according to the Malraux Act took place a good eight years before the Grand-Rue, there was a **definite awareness of the heritage aspect of**, thus the project had **conservation principles** incorporated in it to a certain extent. On the other hand, the project was already **over by the time of the World Heritage Site title**, so the project was not devised with World Heritage Convention ideas in mind. This is not a serious shortcoming, because what is achieved does not fall too far from those ideas. The purpose of ensuring the survival of the cultural property has been successfully served.

The concepts of **rehabilitation and historic preservation** have their **inherent contradiction**: The rehabilitation procedure stabilises the **market** through limitation of **rents**. As opposed to this, the provisions of the **Malraux Act** require a **high quality of workmanship** in the preserved sector which keeps the market values high.

Action decided to be taken here because of high rate of **unsatisfactory sanitation**, **high social occupancy**, and the **tensions in real estate** arising in part from the **heritage classification**. This starting point which has its roots in the heritage character has inevitably brought the **two aspects of the area face-to-face**. The operation has aimed to contribute to the **enhancement of national heritage**, but on the other hand provide conditions of **comfort to modest populations living in a dilapidated environment**.

- Actions taken were:
  1. **Land intervention** by the City (municipality). **Creation of social housing**, equipment of a social mature.
  2. **Communication**. The post, press, exhibitions, etc.
  3. **Free services** offered to owners:
    - a. Technical and financial **feasibility study** for projects

- b. **Architectural assistance to project owners** and assistance for extra architectural costs
- c. **Temporary relocation**
- d. **Administrative assistance**

Land deficits of rental housing caused by operations were deducted from owners' global revenue; the **tax incidence** was quite profitable, **erasing additional costs of architectural restrictions** and high quality conservation operations. Unfortunately, **speculative activities** arose from these conditions, and land rents became much higher than usually found in the vicinity and in most OPAH programmes.

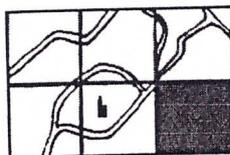
**Alterations** on buildings depend completely on **permission from the responsible architect for the "buildings of France and the City"**. Specific **grants** are also awarded to **owners who restore** facades and roofing, by the **City** of Strasbourg and the **Department** Of the Bas-Rhin.

- **Results achieved were:**

1. **Rehabilitation** of more than **500** housing units. Creation of housing stock within the private heritage.
2. **Tenants benefiting** from the same rent conditions and personalised housing help as those of **public and semi-public** operations.
3. Suggestion, to owners, of an **alternative to the sale of the neighborhood**, which showed features of **disorganisation**. (Under the Malraux Act, the new state of the neighborhood would simply raise the rent level to one which would force tenants to leave in all cases. Such a course of "**gentrification**" has thus been **prevented**.)

The success of the program depended on a **leverage effect to encourage owners** to get involved in the works. The stimulation of private initiative was achieved by **diverting the negative effects** of high quality of enhancement, and **engaging all public and private sources of finances**. Both **public space and private buildings** improved simultaneously.

The common element of OPAH and the "preserved sector": Thanks to the **synergy** between various intervention and decision levels, initially **conflicting objectives** were **harmonised** in the end. Collaboration and thorough exchanges were made. There was also **synergy** among various **players**. A **dynamism** was created which took the process beyond its operational duration.

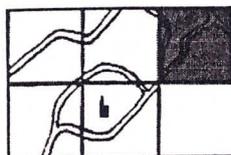


## 5. EVALUATION OF OPAH IN TERMS OF WHL MANAGEMENT CRITERIA

The OPAH is an **intersection of housing and heritage policies**. It is a good idea to address this issue with this approach, because the built heritage, much as it is essential to preserve it, is also something which is internationally agreed to be kept alive and integrated within the continuum of urban life, i.e. habitation by today's populations. The **dual nature of this kind of heritage has been recognised** and accordingly treated in this practice of the French.

- One can also see that many issues have been addressed in Grand Île:
  1. The **preservation** of cultural and architectural **qualities**: Architectural works carried out both in the 1981-86 and 82-85 projects (see pg. 15) imply a specialised treatment of the cultural property in the site.
  2. The **prevention** of unwanted elements and **threats**. The main problem of dilapidation has been eliminated with the renewal.
  3. **Integrated conservation** elements:
    - a. Local **socio-economic** situation and its maintenance. The maintenance of the resident population in the area has assured the continuity of the lifestyle, habits and therefore the cultural setting of the site.
    - b. The **economic** side of heritage and the real-estate issue: The economically sound approach to the project has lent it a realistic, solid nature; this is an important asset.
- International cultural image, the Council of Europe identity and tourism: The Council of Europe has had several **international meetings** on cultural and architectural heritage. Maybe a couple of these meetings were held in Strasbourg. A "living specimen" of history so close by might be nice for **visits on the meeting itineraries!** So this is a suggestion to put the heritage function to the service of the political function in Strasbourg.. The **two functions** may also come **together** in attracting a doubled amount of **tourists**, and sharing them with one another.

In the preserved sector, the orientation of projects has been **more toward the interests of the inhabitants** and not so much toward the presentation and management of tourists and visitors. Concerning touristic accommodation, the **international character** of the city would have caused the **establishment of accommodation infrastructure** to a certain extent, probably in the areas immediately surrounding the historical centre and l'Orangerie (see map).





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