

## WORLD HERITAGE LIST

### Routes of Santiago de Compostela (France)

No 868

#### Identification

<i>Nomination</i>	The Routes of Santiago de Compostela in France
<i>Location</i>	Regions of Aquitaine, Auvergne, Basse-Normandie, Bourgogne, Centre, Champagne-Ardenne, Ile-de-France, Languedoc-Roussillon, Limousin, Midi-Pyrénées, Picardie, Poitou-Charentes, and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur
<i>State Party</i>	France
<i>Date</i>	27 June 1997

#### Justification by State Party

Three buildings included in the present dossier (Sainte-Foy at Conques, Saint-Pierre at Moissac, and Saint-Sernin at Toulouse) are undeniably masterpieces of human creative genius.

Sainte-Foy is one of the most beautiful Romanesque churches in France. The tympanum of the great portal, which shows the Last Judgement (from around 1140), is one of the masterpieces of Romanesque sculpture in southern France. The proportions of the spacious interior, intended to receive large numbers of pilgrims, are harmonious. The treasury contains an exceptional collection of goldsmiths' work from the 11th to 14th centuries, including the famous *Majesté* of Sainte-Foy.

The portal and the cloister of the church of Saint-Pierre at Moissac, formerly a Benedictine abbey church, are also among the masterpieces of Romanesque art. The portal of 1110-15 was one of the earliest manifestations of the monumental Romanesque sculpture of Languedoc; its tympanum depicts the apocalyptic vision of the Supreme Judge enthroned in clouds and surrounded by symbols of the Evangelists and twenty-four old men.

The basilical Saint-Sernin (late 11th to mid 12th century) is one of the most beautiful Romanesque churches in France. Its architectural structure illustrates the characteristics of the pilgrimage church. Brick

dominating stone, which is used only for sculpture and some architectural details, is typical of the Romanesque art of Languedoc. **Criterion i**

There is no longer a debate as to which was the earliest home of western Romanesque sculpture. It is now agreed that towards the end of the 11th century artists were employing a monumental order inspired by ancient Rome on large projects, such as Santiago de Compostela or Saint-Sernin in Toulouse. Very similar architectural and iconographic programmes were being put into effect on either side of the Pyrenees. At Saint-Sernin there was Bernard Gilduin, the sculptor who signed the altar consecrated by Pope Urban II in 1096. At the end of the 11th century work was being carried out in Spain that was so similar that the capitals of Saint-Sernin are sometimes considered the same as those of San Isidoro in León.

Similar comparisons can be made of the iconographic subjects of the new monumental sculpture, raising the possibility of the pilgrimage routes of Santiago de Compostela having had their own iconography. Although this cannot be confirmed, it is nevertheless possible to see that it was from these routes that most of the aspects of Romanesque sculpture that were to be disseminated during the 12th century were to emerge.

The role of these pilgrimage routes in cultural exchanges between the Iberian peninsula, France, and western Europe is not restricted to monuments. At the same time they favoured the flow of Islamic influences northwards, as demonstrated by all the hastily Christianized objects of gold and silver coming from Al-Andalus that found their way into the treasuries of French churches. There was a counterflow back into Spain of a whole range of precious objects, formerly known as Limousin but now recognized to have been produced in a very wide geographical area between the Loire and the Duero.

It should finally be recalled that, in non-tangible terms, the routes of Santiago were the main vectors for a north-south dialogue that is typified in particular by the production and diffusion of the *chansons de geste* in the 11th and 12th centuries. Epic cycles such as that of Roland were written, using historical material brought to life in the light of recent events of the Reconquista, in the monasteries that performed the function of staging posts along the routes of Santiago. The *Chanson de Roland* can thus be seen to be implanted in "stations" such as Angoulême, Blaye, or Bordeaux on the route leading to Compostela through the Roncevaux pass. **Criterion ii**

Pilgrim churches, hospitals, bridges, and wayside crosses testify to a practice that has nowadays fallen into disuse. In order to understand the importance of Christian pilgrimage in the Middle Ages it is essential to preserve the rare material evidence that survives. **Criterion iii**

In addition to the examples quoted above, one building (Neuvy-Saint-Sépulchre) and one architectural group (Rocamadour) should be quoted because of their special qualities.

The collegiate church of Neuvy-Saint-Sépulchre is one of the most interesting structures built in the Middle Ages. The church was laid out in imitation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and before the Revolution was dedicated to St James. Its foundation is attributed to Eudes de Déols, who went to the Holy Land in 1026-28 with Guillaume Taillefer, Count of Angoulême, in company with humble pilgrims. On his return to Berry around 1045, Eudes put his plan of building a church in the image of the Holy Sepulchre into action.

Rocamadour is one of the best known sites in France. The village is in the narrow Alzou gorge, at the foot of an enormous rock covered with sanctuaries. A single street flanked by old houses runs through the village, which retains several fortified gates. A large stairway leads to the Fort, from which sanctuaries at different levels can be reached: the crypt of Saint-Amador (mid 12th century) beneath the church of Saint-Sauveur (11th-13th century) and the 12th century chapel of Saint-Michel with wall paintings from the 13th century.

#### **Criterion iv**

#### **Category of property**

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *group of buildings*. It may also be a *linear cultural landscape*, as indicated in paragraph 40 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

#### **History and Description**

##### *History*

After Jerusalem was captured by the Caliph Omar in 638, Christians were hesitant about going to the Holy City as pilgrims. Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, where the tomb of the apostle St James the Great, who brought Christianity to the Iberian peninsula, had been found around 800, benefited from the decline of Jerusalem as a pilgrimage centre.

Santiago had begun as a local religious centre, which became the see of a bishopric around 900, but its renown grew rapidly after the visit in 951 of Godescalc, Bishop of Le Puy and one of the first foreign pilgrims to be recorded. At this time, however, the roads were not safe from brigandry and the threat of Moslem raids, such as that in 997 led by Al-Mansour, vizier of the Caliph of Córdoba, when Compostela was looted and burned.

With the start of the Reconquista during the early decades of the 11th century, the shrine became a centre to which goods of all kinds flowed. In this way the cathedral was endowed with immense treasures, making it capable of underwriting the needs of Rome and of the rulers of León and Castille. It was from this time onwards that pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela reached its apogee. Thousands of pilgrims, among them kings and bishops, travelled long

distances to pray at the tomb of one of Christ's closest companions.

This flowering coincided with that of the Cluniac Order, which encouraged the worship of relics by publishing *Lives of the Saints* and *Collections of Miracles*. As a result other sanctuaries of less importance developed at this time, but without eclipsing the splendour of Santiago de Compostela. From the 11th to the 13th century "staging post" churches developed along the pilgrimage route, and in particular in France. Each of these was proud to house holy relics; indeed, the cult of relics was the mainstay of medieval pilgrimage.

At the same time there was renewed fervour for the cult of the Virgin Mary. Pilgrimages to shrines such as Notre-Dame du Puy, Notre-Dame de Chartres, and Notre-Dame de Boulogne, which had been renowned since the early Middle Ages, experienced a spectacular renaissance in the 12th century as a result of the growth of pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Of the three churches, that at Le Puy in the Auvergne was most closely linked with Santiago. It was identified in Book V of the *Codex Calixtinus*, the description of the pilgrimage routes prepared around 1139 for Pope Calixtus II by Aymeric Picaud, as the starting point of one of the four routes in France. It was, of course, the episcopal see of Godescalc, one of the first foreign pilgrims in Santiago de Compostela, and so was probably the first to be established.

##### *Description*

The four main pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela in France began at Paris, Vézelay, Le Puy, and Arles respectively, and each of these was fed by a number of subsidiary routes. Thus, the start of the Paris route saw the convergence of routes from Boulogne, Tournai, and the Low Countries, whilst routes from Caen, Mont-Saint-Michel, and Brittany joined it at intermediate points such as Tours, Poitiers, Saint-Jean-d'Angély, and Bordeaux (which also served as the port for pilgrims coming by sea from England and coastal areas of Brittany and Normandy). Le Puy was the link with the Rhône valley, whilst those coming from Italy passed through Arles. The three western routes converged at Ostabat, crossing the Pyrenees by means of the Ibaneta pass, whilst the eastern route from Arles used the Somport pass; the two routes joined in Spain at Puente-la-Reina. The total length identified as being associated with the pilgrimage is over 5000km, but only seven short sections on the Le Puy route (the *via podensis* of the *Codex*) are coherent enough for inclusion in the nomination.

The national survey of Santiago de Compostela routes in France has identified some 800 properties of all kinds that have associations with the pilgrimage. For the present nomination, 69 properties have been selected. The criteria for selection were that properties should:

- demonstrate the geographical reality of each of the routes by marking out its course at intervals;

- by means of significant examples illustrate the chronological development of the pilgrimage between the 11th and 15th centuries;
- illustrate certain essential functions of the architecture along the routes, namely prayer (churches and monasteries), rest and care (hostelries and hospitals), and travel (crosses and bridges).

In alphabetical order of *Région*, the present nomination consists of the following properties (those marked \* are already inscribed on the World Heritage List as individual monuments or as components of historic towns or town centres):

<i>Aquitaine</i>	Périgueux: Saint-Front Cathedral Bazas: Old Cathedral Bordeaux: Basilica of Saint-Sernin Bordeaux: Basilica of Saint-Michel Bordeaux: Saint-André Cathedral La Sauveur-Majeure: Abbey La Sauveur-Majeure: Church of Saint-Pierre Soulac: Church of Notre-Dame-de-la-Fin-des-Terres Aire-sur-l'Adour: Church of Sainte-Quitterie Mimizan: Bell tower Sorde-l'Abbaye: Abbey of Saint-Jean Saint-Sever: Abbey Agen: Saint-Caprais Cathedral Bayonne: Sainte-Marie Cathedral L'Hopital-Saint-Blaise: Church Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port: Porte Saint-Jacques
<i>Auvergne</i>	Clermond-Ferrand: Church of Notre-Dame-du-Port Le-Puy-en-Velay: Cathedral Le-Puy-en-Velay: Hôtel-Dieu Saint-Jacques
<i>Basse-Normandie</i>	Mont-Saint-Michel*
<i>Bourgogne</i>	La -Charité-sur-Loire: Priory Church of Sainte-Croix Notre-Dame Vézelay: Saint-Jacques d' Astins Church Vézelay: Old abbey church of Sainte-Madeleine*
<i>Centre</i>	Neuvy-Saint-Sépulchre: Collegiate Church of Saint-Etienne (formerly Saint-Jacques) Bourges: Saint-Etienne Cathedral*
<i>Champagne-Ardenne</i>	L'Epine: Basilica of Notre-Dame Châlons-en-Champagne: Church of Notre-Dame-en-Vaux
<i>Ile-de-France</i>	Paris: Church of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie

#### *Languedoc-Roussillon*

Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert: Former Abbey of Gellone  
Aniane/Saint-Jean-de-Fos: Pont du Diable  
Saint-Gilles-du-Gard: Former abbey church

#### *Limousin*

Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat: Church of Saint-Léonard

#### *Midi-Pyrénées*

Audressin: Church of Tramesaygues  
Saint-Lizier: Old cathedral and cloister, Notre-Dame-de-la-Sède Cathedral, Bishop's Palace, ramparts  
Conques: Abbey Church of Sainte-Foy  
Conques: Bridge over the Dourdou  
Espalion: Pont-Vieux  
Estaing: Bridge over the Lot  
Saint-Chély-d' Aubrac: So-called "Pilgrims Bridge" over the Borade  
Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges: Former Cathedral of Notre-Dame  
Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges: Palaeochristian basilica, Chapel of Saint-Julien  
Toulouse: Basilica of Saint-Sernin  
Toulouse: Hôtel-Dieu Saint-Jacques  
Valcabrière: Church of Saint-Just  
Auch: Sainte-Marie Cathedral  
Baumont-sur-l'Osse et Larresingue: Pont d' Artigue or Lartigue  
La Romieu: Collegiate church of Saint-Pierre  
Cahors: Saint-Etienne Cathedral  
Cahors: Valentré Bridge  
Gréalou: Dolmen of Pech-Laglaire  
Figeac: Hôpital Saint-Jacques  
Rocamadour: Church of Saint-Sauveur and Crypt of Saint-Amadour  
Aragnoet: Hospice du Plan and Chapel of Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption, known as the Chapel of the Templars  
Gavernie: Parish Church\*  
Jezeau: Church of Saint-Laurent  
Ourdis-Cotdussan: Cotdussan Church  
Rabastens: Church of Notre-Dame-du-Bourg  
Moissac: Abbey Church and Cloister of Saint-Pierre

#### *Picardie*

Amiens: Notre-Dame Cathedral\*  
Folleville: Parish Church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste  
Compiègne: Parish Church of Saint-Jacques

#### *Poitou-Charentes*

Saintes: Church of Sainte-Eutrope

Saint-Jean-d'Angély: Royal Abbey of  
Saint-Jean-Baptiste  
Melle: Church of Saint-Hilaire  
Aulnay: Church of Saint-Pierre  
Poitiers: Church of Saint-Hilaire-le-  
Grand  
Pons: Former Hôpital des Pèlerins

*Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur*  
Arles\*

In addition, seven stretches of the Chemin du Puy are included in the nomination - between Nasbinals and Saint-Chély-d'Aubrac (Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées: 17km), Saint-Côme-d'Olt and Estaing (17km), Montredon and Figeac (18km), Faycelles and Cajarc (22.5km), Bach and Cahors (26km), Lectoure and Condom (35km: all Midi-Pyrénées), and Aroue and Ostabat (Aquitaine: 22km).

It would clearly be impracticable for a description of each of these properties to be given in this evaluation. In any case they should be treated as a group or serial nomination. The following notes on categories of monument included in the nominated properties are based on information provided in the summary nomination dossier provided by the State Party.

- The churches

The places of worship along the pilgrimage routes in France range from great structures such as Saint-Sernin at Toulouse or Amiens Cathedral to modest parish churches. All are included either because they figure on the guide produced by Aymeric Picaud (eg Saint-Front Cathedral at Périgueux or the Church of Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat) or because they contain important relics and other material that connect them directly with the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

Certain churches exhibit architectural characteristics that permit them to be given the appellation of "pilgrimage churches." Sainte-Foy at Conques, Saint-Sernin at Toulouse, and the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela itself in particular have in common large transepts and apsidal chapels ranged round a spacious ambulatory, designed to meet the special liturgical needs of pilgrims.

- The hospitals

The length and rigours of pilgrimages in the Middle Ages imposed considerable hardships on the pilgrims, such that they were often in need of medical treatment and care. Few of these survive intact on the French sections of the route; these are included in the present nomination.

- The bridges

A number of bridges are known as "pilgrims' bridges, and that over the Borade at Saint-Chély-d'Aubrac even has the figure of a pilgrim carved on it. Of especial importance are the Pont du Diable over the Hérault at Aniane, one of the oldest medieval bridges in France, and the magnificent 14th century fortified Pont Valentré over the Lot at Cahors.

- Wayside crosses

A handful of crosses associated with the pilgrimage are known along the routes. One particularly fine example stands in front of the church of Estaing. Other more simple crosses are to be found along the sections of the route proposed for inscription (see below).

- The routes

Whilst the course of the different routes is generally known, very little of them survive in anything approaching their original form. The seven stretches included in the nomination are all on the Le Puy route, and cover 157.5km, a little over 20% of its total length of 762km. These are relatively minor roads (*routes départementales* or rural tracks) whose course has not changed significantly since the Middle Ages; they are also lined with monuments associated with the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, such as crosses and modest places of worship.

### Management and Protection

#### *Legal status*

All the properties that make up this nomination are monuments of different categories that are protected under the French historic monuments and urban planning legislation and regulations. The seven stretches of the Le Puy route are protected by plans at *Département* level.

#### *Management*

Ownership is spread over government authorities and agencies at national, regional, departmental, and commune level, church authorities, and private institutions and individuals.

The protected monuments are subject to planned maintenance and conservation programmes, under the direction of the respective Regional Directorates of Cultural Affairs (*Directions régionales des affaires culturelles* - DRAC) of the Ministry of Culture, working through their architecture and heritage branches.

The National Office for Historic Monuments and Sites (*Caisse nationale des monuments historiques et des sites*) collaborates in this work.

### Conservation and Authenticity

#### *Conservation history*

It is not possible to give an overview of the conservation history of the 69 properties included in this nomination because of the diversity of their nature, protection, and ownership. However, it may be said that overall they have been conserved to an acceptable standard by virtue of the conditions resulting from listing (*classement*) as historic monuments and sites.

#### *Authenticity*

The authenticity of the totality of the nomination is high, since research has shown the 69 properties to be associated in different ways with the pilgrimage route

of Santiago de Compostela, which is the subject of this nomination.

## Evaluation

### *Action by ICOMOS*

An ICOMOS expert mission visited the great majority of the properties included in the nomination in February 1998.

### *Qualities*

There can be no doubt about the quality of the pilgrimage route of Santiago de Compostela. In its evaluation of the Spanish section, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1993, ICOMOS commented that "In addition to its enormous historical and spiritual value, it ... represents a remarkably complete cross-section of European artistic and architectural evolution over several centuries." This comment holds equally good for the French sections that are the subject of the present nomination.

### *Comparative analysis*

Again, the ICOMOS evaluation of the Spanish section in 1993 is equally valid for the French: "There is no comparable Christian pilgrimage route of such extent and continuity anywhere in Europe."

### *ICOMOS comments for future action*

This is an unusual nomination, since it differs in one important particular from that of the Spanish section. The Spanish World Heritage site is a continuous linear cultural landscape, running from the passes in the Pyrenees to the city of Santiago de Compostela itself. The French nomination, on the other hand, consists of a string of individual monuments of high quality and historical significance that define the pilgrimage routes in France but do not constitute continuous routes.

The reasons for this lie in the different historical and economic trajectories that have been followed by France and Spain since the end of the Middle Ages and the decline of pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. The routes themselves have been preserved to a greater degree of visibility and coherence in Spain than in France.

The French nomination dossier is a remarkable compilation, the fruit of intensive collaboration by historians, archaeologists, and heritage managers in no fewer than thirteen *Régions*. The result is an archive of great scientific as well as managerial importance, and ICOMOS wishes to express its admiration of the work of the State Party in compiling it.

The report of the ICOMOS expert mission made some proposals for the enlargement of the properties that should be included in the nomination, relating to other structures associated with the properties nominated and to larger urban areas. ICOMOS has given serious consideration to this proposal, which has considerable merit. However, it feels that the case made by the State Party for the selection of the 69 properties included in the dossier is a convincing one. The three criteria

utilized in the selection procedure (see *Description* above) are self-consistent and fully valid, and any proposal for extension or revision would entail an in-depth reassessment that would in all probability end in the same result.

In its 1993 evaluation of the successful Spanish nomination, ICOMOS commented on the Council of Europe designation of the Route of Santiago de Compostela, which extended beyond the frontiers of Spain into other European countries. It went on: "ICOMOS suggests therefore that consideration be given by the relevant States Parties to the possibility of an eventual extension of the property to other lengths of the Route outside Spain." The wishes of States Parties in such matters are, of course, sovereign, and it is not within the remit of ICOMOS to propose any kind of joint inscription as a condition of inscription. It hopes, however, that the two States Parties concerned (France and Spain) will give serious consideration to combining their respective stretches of the Route in a single inscription, comparable with the joint Franco-Spanish inscription of the cultural landscape of Pyrénées-Mount Perdu in 1997.

## Brief description

Santiago de Compostela was the greatest of all goals for countless thousands of pious pilgrims from all over Europe throughout the Middle Ages. To reach Spain pilgrims had to pass through France, and the group of important historical monuments that constitute this inscription on the World Heritage List mark out the four routes by which they did so.

## Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of *criteria ii, iv, and vi*:

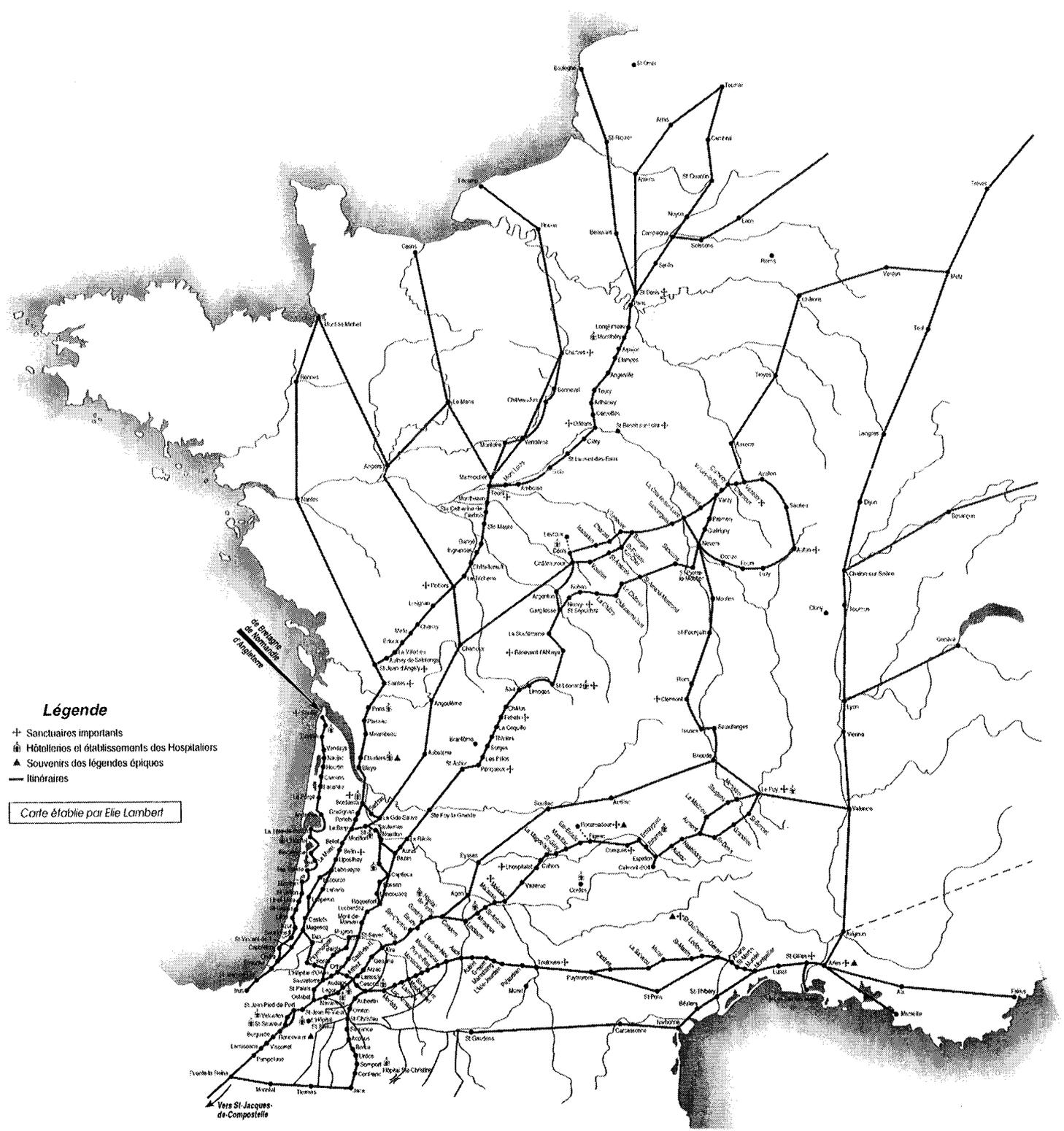
**Criterion ii:** The Pilgrimage Route of Santiago de Compostela played a key role in religious and cultural exchange and development during the later Middle Ages, and this is admirably illustrated by the carefully selected monuments on the routes followed by pilgrims in France.

**Criterion iv:** The spiritual and physical needs of pilgrims travelling to Santiago de Compostela were met by the development of a number of specialized types of edifice, many of which originated or were further developed on the French sections.

**Criterion vi:** The Pilgrimage Route of Santiago de Compostela bears exceptional witness to the power and influence of Christian faith among people of all classes and countries in Europe during the Middle Ages.

ICOMOS, October 1998

# LES CHEMINS DE SAINT JACQUES ET LEURS SANCTUAIRES DE PÈLERINAGES À L'ÉTRANGER



Les Chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle en France / The Routes of Santiago de Compostela in France :  
Les chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle / The Routes of Santiago de Compostela

# Les Chemins de St-Jacques-de-Compostelle en France

Sites jacquaires majeurs proposés  
pour une inscription sur la liste du patrimoine mondial



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">Villeneuve</span> : Sites déjà inscrits sur la liste du patrimoine mondial</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">Villeneuve</span> : Sites proposés à l'inscription</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">Villeneuve</span> : Autres villes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 2px solid black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> : Chemins de St-Jacques-de-Compostelle</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> : Limites départementales</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 3px double black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> : Frontières</li> </ul> |
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Les Chemins de Saint-Jacques-de-Compostelle en France / The Routes of Santiago de Compostela in France :  
Sites principaux / Principal sites