

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

WORLD HERITAGE LIST

N° 379

A) IDENTIFICATION

Nomination : The city of Toledo

Location : Province of Toledo

State Party : Spain

Date : December 30, 1985

B) ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria I, II, III and IV.

C) JUSTIFICATION

Built upon a steep rock skirted by the Tago River, Toledo, highlighted against a stormy sky and reminiscent of one of El Greco's visions or blazing with a canicular sun beating down upon it and scorching the bare hills of the surrounding countryside, still retains the essential features of an incomparable cityscape in 1986. Apart from the tragic siege of the Alcazar in 1936 the city, which has been shaped by eighteen centuries of history, has escaped the upheaval of contemporary times. The urbanization of the outskirts, which up until now has been held to tolerable limits (population growth remains low with 23,000 inhabitants in 1500 and 44,000 in 1980) has since November 28, 1985 been the focus of a more comprehensive planning policy.

As is the case with Rome (included on the World Heritage List in 1980) and Florence (included in 1982), any attempt to make a survey of the monumental heritage of Toledo would be an impossible undertaking and a derisive justification. It is enough to recall that more than two millenia of history live within the walls of a city which was successively a Roman municipium, the capital of the Visigothic kingdom, a fortress of the Emirate of Cordoba, an outpost of the Christian kingdoms fighting the Moors and the temporary seat of the supreme power under Charles V, who endowed it with the status of imperial and crowned city (the two-headed eagle and the closed crown on the city's coat of arms).

The irreversible economic and political decadence of Toledo after 1561, when Phillip II chose Madrid as his capital once and for all, miraculously spared this museum-city, whose destiny prefigured that of Venice, which became isolated after 1797. All of the civilisations which contributed to the grandeur of Toledo left there amazing masterpieces which expressed both the original beauty of a

highly characteristic style and the paradoxical syncretism of the hybrid forms of the Mudejar style which sprang from the contact of heterogeneous civilisations in an environment where for a long time the existence of three major religions -Judaism, Christianity and Islam- was a leading feature.

ICOMOS recommends the inclusion of Toledo on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria I, II, III and IV.

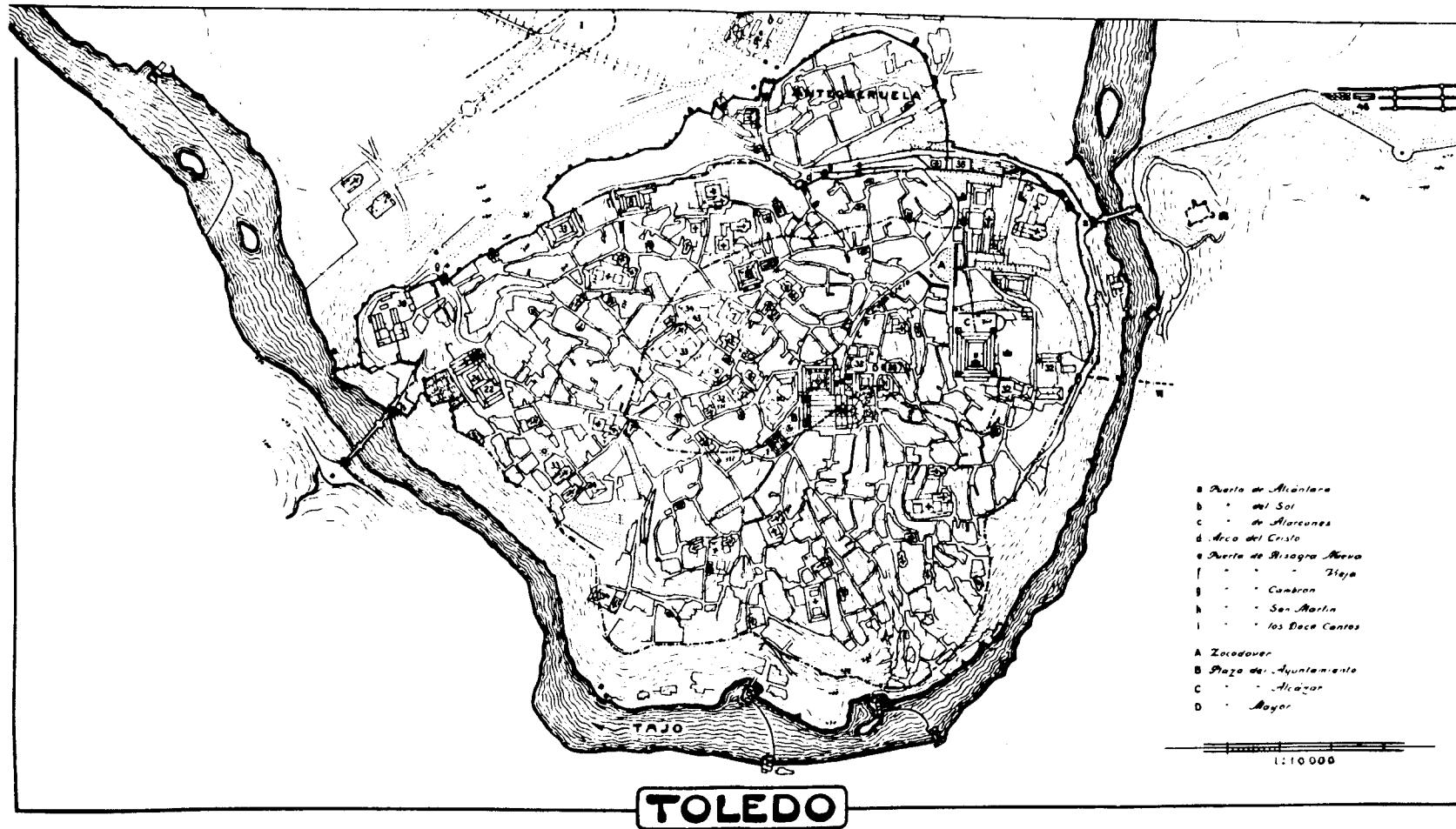
Criterion I. The city of Toledo in its entirety represents a unique artistic achievement and an uninterrupted succession of remarkable achievements, from the Visigothic churches to the Baroque ensembles of the early 18th century.

Criterion II. Toledo exerted considerable influence, both during the Visigothic period, when it was the capital of a kingdom which stretched all the way to the Narbonnese region, and during the Renaissance when it became one of the most important artistic centres in Spain.

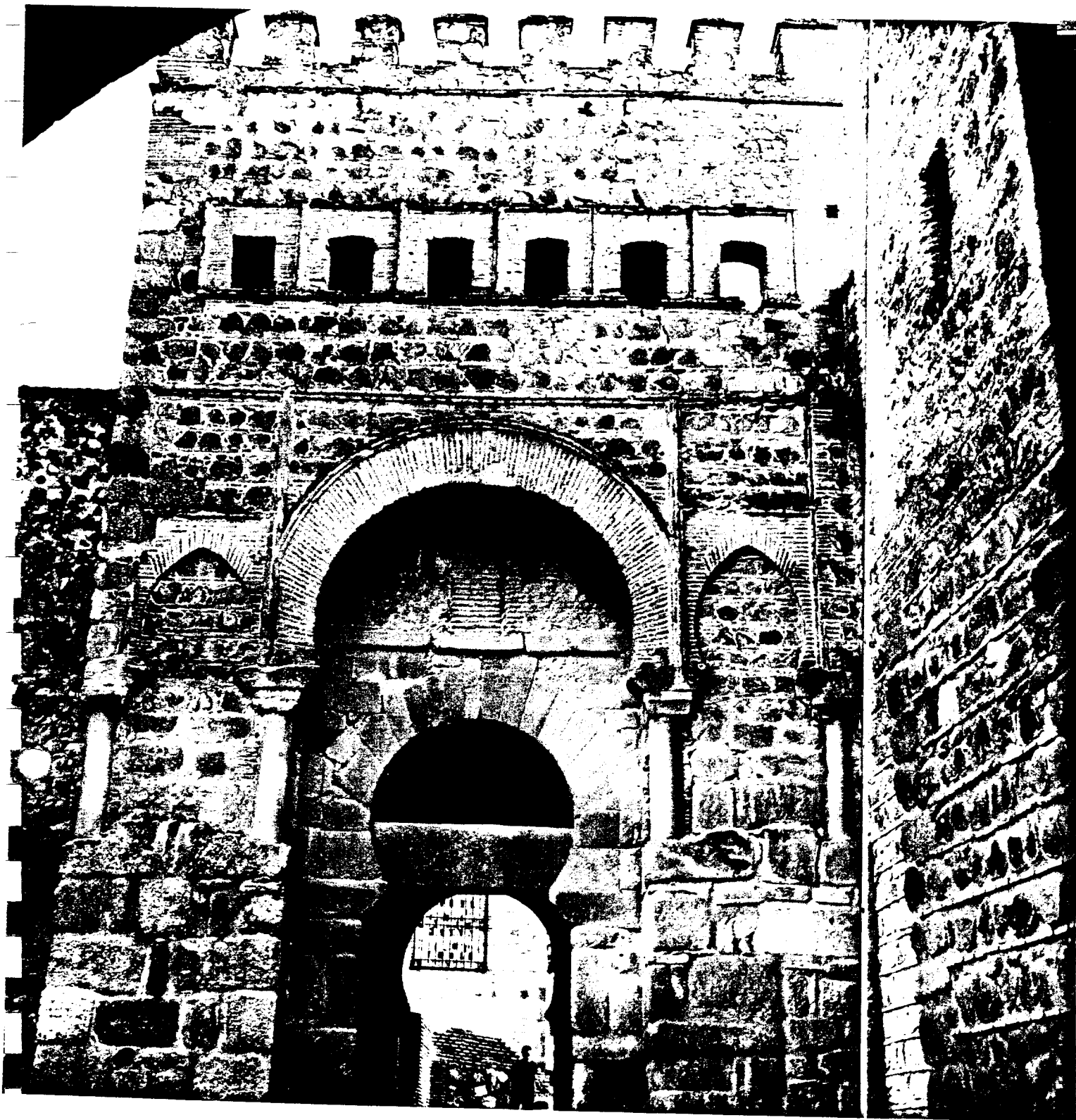
Criterion III. Toledo bears exceptional testimony to several civilisations which have disappeared : Rome, with vestiges of the circus, the aqueduct and the sewer; the Visigoths, with the remains of the walls of king Wamba and the artefacts conserved in the Santa Cruz Museum. The civilisation of the Emirate of Cordoba built a great many Islamic art monuments: the piers of the destroyed Bano de la Cava Bridge, Puerta Vieja de Bisagra, Las Tornerias Mosque, Bib Mardum Mosque (a private oratory completed in 999), Hammams in the calle Del Angel and calle Pozo Amargo, etc. After the reconquest in 1085 remarkable Jewish religious monuments such as Santa Maria la Blanca Synagogue (1180) and El Transito Synagogue (1366) were built at the same time as churches, either on the very location of earlier foundations (the Cathedral, founded in the 6th century by Saint Eugene, was converted into a mosque), or ex nihilo (San Roman, Santiago, San Pedro Martir, etc.). Furthermore, Toledo possesses a broad spectrum of structures from the medieval period : walls and fortified buildings, such as San Servando Castle, bridges, houses and entire streets.

Criterion IV. Toledo retains a series of outstanding examples of 15th- and 16th-century constructions : the church of San Juan de los Reyes and the Cathedral, San Juan Bautista and Santa Cruz hospitals, the Puerta Nueva de Bisagra, etc. Each of these monuments is a perfect example of a particular type of architecture of the Spanish golden age, whether religious, hospital or military. Moreover, Toledo witnessed the emergence, starting in the Middle Ages, of a Mudejar style which combined the structural and decorative elements of Visigothic and Moslem art, adapting them, thereafter, into successive styles : Santiago del Arrabal (13th century), the Moor's workshop and Puerta del Sol (14th century), wainscot of Santa Cruz Hospital and the chapter house of the Cathedral (15th and 16th centuries), etc.

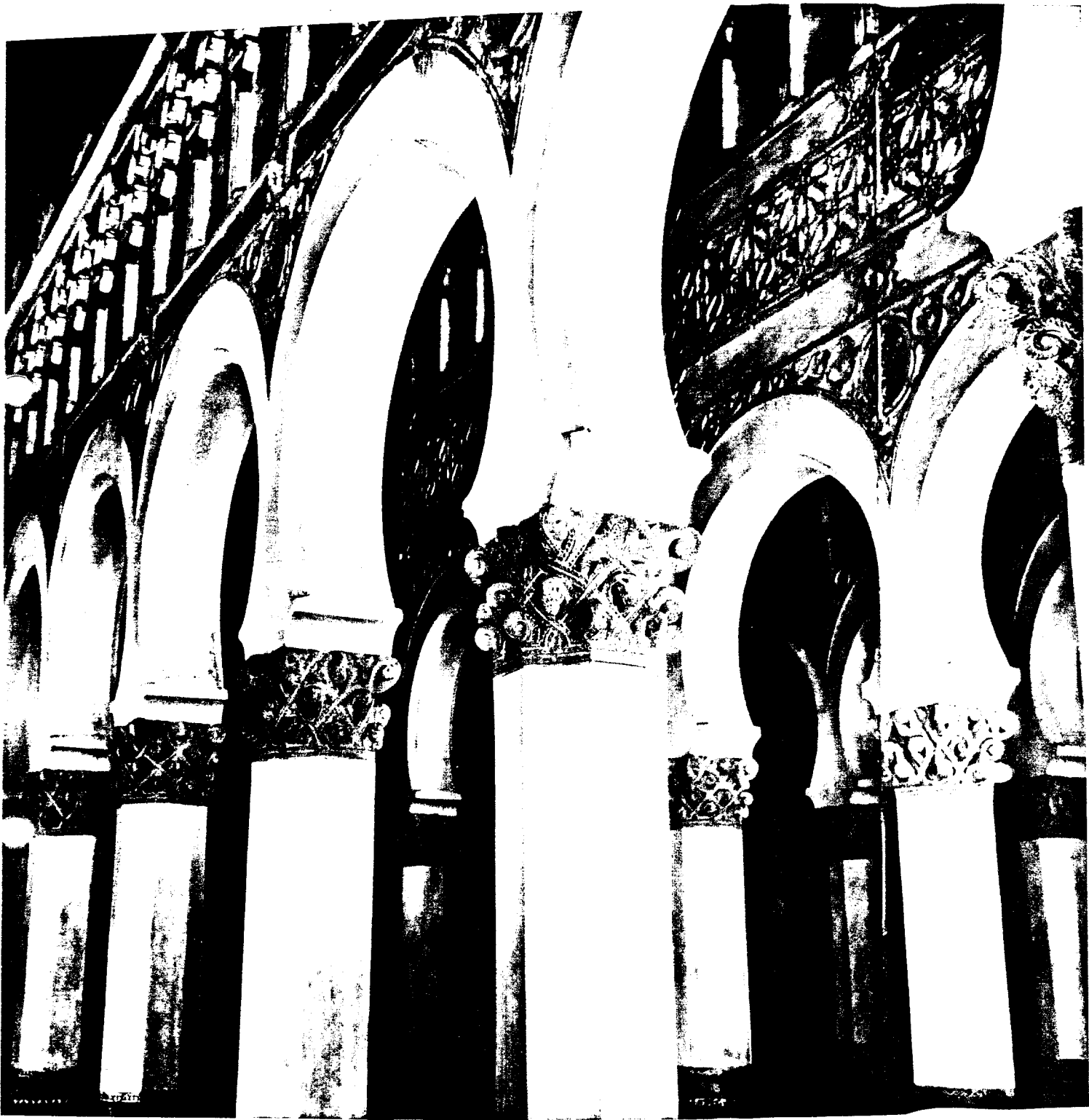
ICOMOS, April 1986.



Toledo (1926).



TOLEDE : Vieille porte de Bisagra



TOLEDE : Synagogue de Ste Marie la
Blanche