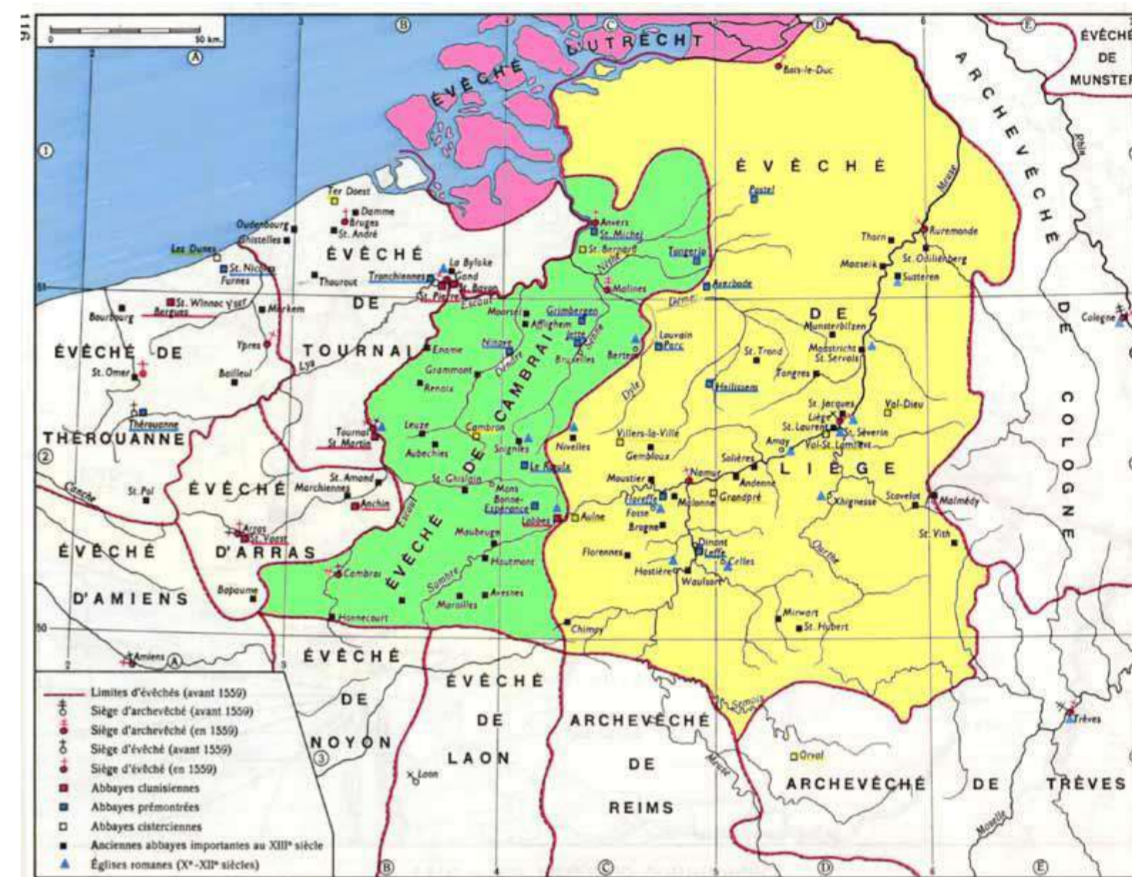


TERRA MOSANA

We draw the past

Religious Infrastructure

Christianity grew into being the leading religion in the Euregio Meuse Rhine from the middle Roman period onwards. In late Roman times and the Merovingian period, Christianity became the settled power. During Carolingian times this religion was completely dominant and defined state-capitals. Churches and cloisters were built in mayor cities like Aachen, Tongeren, Maastricht and Liège, as were important and large monastic communities in the surrounding environment (Malmedy-Stavelot, St. Truiden, Aldeneijk, Munsterbilzen).



Icons and Artisans

Well-known names are Servatius, Lambertus, Hubertus and Remaclus. They were all bishops, but from Lambertus on, they combined religious and secular power, given to them by their successive emperors. Their influence was great and their death mostly violent. Religion was also ordering a lot of beautiful and rich artisanal object for cults, churches and monasteries, well-known as Mosan and Rhenan art-objects of copper, bronze, silver or gold (f.i. shrines). High quality schools were founded in Liège (“Athens of the North”), collegial churches were build all over the Euregio (12th c.). The leading principles of religion are also visible in church architecture (Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque styles).



Reorganization, Reform and Reorganization

As a result of economical, social and cultural changes and in response of their growing power, the religious structure was reorganized in the 16th c. Growing cities took over power and combatted each other. The reformation of Luther (1517) had great influence (visible in Hasselt). Goal was to reduce secular power, but above all to combat the extreme wealth of the Roman Catholic clerus. After the French revolution the reorganization was complete: abolishment of Catholic orders and collegial communities and closing of churches. But also liberty and equality for the civilians, including liberty of religion. New dioceses were created: Roermond, Aachen, Eupen-Malmedy, Hasselt. New cathedrals were defined: Liège, Aachen, Malmedy, Hasselt. Also a “rebirth” of ancient reformed communities (f.i. Verviers-Hodimont).

