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Citation

Janssen, M. J. (2026, July 1). *Medieval pottery production in South Limburg: a renewed perspective on the high medieval ceramics chronology and the pottery production sites at Brunssum, Schinveld, Waubach, Nieuwenhagen and surrounding villages*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4307246>

Version: Publisher's Version

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Medieval pottery production in South Limburg

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Medieval pottery production in South Limburg

A renewed perspective on the high medieval ceramics chronology and the pottery production sites at Brunssum, Schinveld, Waubach, Nieuwenhagen and surrounding villages.

M.J. Janssen

The high medieval pottery production sites in the South Limburg region are located in a number of villages northwest of Aachen, of which the best known are Brunssum, Schinveld and Nieuwenhagen. This dissertation attempts to reproduce the field and sampling methodologies employed during the main excavations of these sites in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the chronological arguments, both relative and absolute, that detail the chronological attribution of the find groups as suggested in the 1960s. This attempt was partly prompted by a recognition of the flawed reasoning that led to the first chronological attribution of several parts of the relative ceramics chronology to historical dates assigned to a stratigraphic sequence on top of the Valkenburg Castle rock. It was also prompted by an absence of ceramic finds from much of the tenth and eleventh centuries in settlement sites in close proximity to the production sites. Coupled with the knowledge that specific morphologic and decorative ceramic features show a chronological discrepancy when their assigned date ranges in the South Limburg chronology as proposed in the 1960s are compared with well-dated, stratified sites and other production chronologies in adjacent parts of northwestern Europe, these combined observations pave the way for the main question posed in this study: How can a re-evaluation of the South Limburg pottery productions contribute to our understanding of society in the tenth and eleventh centuries?

