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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

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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>

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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

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van rector magnificus prof. dr. S. de Rijcke,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op woensdag 1 juli 2026
klokke 10.00 uur

door

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geboren te Tegelen
in 1984

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This research was supported by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE, Amersfoort), the Province of Limburg (Maastricht), the Limburgs Museum (Venlo), the LVR-Amt für Bodendenkmalpflege im Rheinland (Bonn) and the LVR-LandesMuseum (Bonn).

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Preface

This dissertation is about the ceramics produced during the high medieval period (c. 900 – 1200) in the South Limburg region, that is, the region directly to the northwest of Aachen. I started working on the subject in 2017, at a time when several private collections of production waste came into view. That moment paved the way for access to a number of private collections that would otherwise have remained largely inaccessible to professional archaeologists. At first startled by the sheer volume of production waste in these collections, together with Lieke van Diepen and Jacob Schotten, I started to inventory them in 2017 and 2018. We got the level of detail all wrong and the work, which we were doing in our spare time, soon stagnated.

However, we did learn a good deal about both the research methods and the find material, and in 2020 an opportunity presented itself to study two of these collections, one of which was by that time deposited in the Provincial Archaeological Repository (*Provinciaal Depot voor Bodemvondsten Limburg*, PDBL) at Heerlen. The repository custodian, Sjeng Kusters, appreciated the complexity of, and the lack of knowledge about, the production waste collections (which also comprised the collections of the *Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek* (ROB), the predecessor of the present Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE), housed there). In need of a greater understanding of these collections, the repository therefore funded preliminary research to explore the opportunities offered by the joint collections to learn more about the excavated production sites. One of the insights gained was that the ROB excavations had to be reevaluated in detail and from several different angles, and could not be reviewed from an isolated perspective. Some commercial excavations, but especially some private collections, proved to be of immense importance when it came to developing an understanding of ceramics productions in the region. It also turned out that the published chronology was not only relevant for the small region surrounding the production sites, but carried through into other chronologies and regions beyond the South Limburg production region. These insights and the recognition of this importance paved the way for funding this study by the RCE and the Province of Limburg and facilitating it in organisational terms by the RCE and the Limburgs Museum, for which I wish to thank Jos Bazelmans, Sjeng Kusters, Bart Moonen and Anja Neskens. This study makes short shrift of the chronological discrepancies that existed between the 1960s South Limburg chronology and the chronologies of other sites in the region, in effect eliminating the chronological problems that have been so irksome for the past dozen or so years.

Including the colleagues already mentioned, I would like to thank – for their support, advice, small to large favours, facilitating organisational cooperation, sharing thoughts, just listening to me talking about the progress I was making, reading parts of the text or answering my questions – the following people: Marion Aarts, Sjoerd Aarts, Jos Bazelmans, Holger Becker, Bibi Beekman, Anne Brakman, Zomer Bruijn, Twan Daemen, Lieke van Diepen, Jan van Doesburg, Alexandra van Dongen, Aagje Feldbrugge, Wolfram Giertz, Luk van Goor, Willem-Simon van de Graaf, Anke Dallinga-Huijds, Jan de Koning, Marthe Donders, Andreas Driessen, Marjolein Haars, Danny Keijers, Christoph Keller, Peter Kleuters, Ralf Kotalla, Sjeng Kusters, Mette Langbroek, Kees Lommertzen, Renée Martens, Bert Mennings, Denes Miklós,

Bart Moonen, Ulrike Müssemeier, Anja Neskens, Elke Nieveler, Sebastiaan Ostkamp, José Peeters, Frans Penders, Marion Roehmer, Christian Röser, Marc Ruijters, Marion Sarna, Michael Schmauder, Yvonne Schoolmeesters, Jacob Schotten, Bjørn Smit, Gilbert Soeters, Thomas Spitzers, Henk Stoepker, Niels Stoffels, Petra Tensen, Frans Theuws, Melanie Vandecappelle, Hilde Vanneste, Leo Verhart, Jan Verlinden, Annette Visser, Marina Westkamp, Eric Wetzels, Annemarieke Willemsen, Jos van Wunnik and everyone who feels they should have been mentioned here but who – to my embarrassment – I have not thought of, as well as my family and friends for their enduring support.

Also, I would like to thank Frans Theuws and Jos Bazelmans in particular for allowing me to submit this work as a dissertation to the Faculty of Archaeology at Leiden University.