

Foreword

The main aim of this source edition is to present the hitherto unpublished sources associated with Count Lagnasco's porcelain acquisitions for Augustus the Strong in Holland between 1716 and 1718. The letters, invoices and specifications presented here illustrate the efforts that were invested in these purchase plans. Furthermore, it aims to demonstrate the extent of the private networks consisting of informants, private dealers and moneylenders that were required for the extensive acquisition of porcelain objects for the Saxon Elector-King.

Document character

The transcribed sources in this edition are all preserved in the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv, Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden (Saxon State Archives Dresden). With the exception of one document, the sources consist of handwritten letters, invoices, specifications and travel documents that were generated between May 1716 and April 1718.¹ Of the 104 documents included in this source edition, one document is written in Dutch, six are in German, and the rest are in French.

Document selection

For the research into Count Lagnasco's porcelain acquisitions for Augustus the Strong, three files were partially transcribed: Firstly, the file 10026 Geheimes Kabinett, Loc. 00380/03, *Papiers, concernant les emplettes des porcelaines en Hollande, minutes des rapports au Roi du Comte de Lagnasce lorsqu'il fut en*

¹ Document I. 62 – an insurance paper – consists of a printed leaflet, to which the respective names were added by hand. See letter I. 62, dated 4 May 1717, SächsStA-D, 13472 Schatullenkasse, vol. 35, fol. 56r.

Hollande pour ses propres affaires, ou sont joints les ordres de Sa Majesté les emplettes de vases de Delft Porcelaines, toiles, pintes et vaisseaux armes en guerre pour le service du Roi avec les minutes des lettres écrites à diverses personnes par le dit Comte Lagnasce. It constitutes the most extensive collection of documents relating to Count Lagnasco's activities in Holland. The file consists of the letters and specifications sent by Lagnasco, the answers he received from the king, as well as correspondence with several dealers and moneylenders. The documents from this file make up the bulk of this source edition.

Secondly, this source edition includes selected documents from file 10026 Geheimes Kabinett, Loc. 00662/07, *Lettres du Comte de Lagnasc*. Some of these letters and specifications are identical to those of Loc. 00380/03, but are neatly transcribed copies produced by Lagnasco's secretary François de Perozat. These copies differ minimally from the original documents in that they occasionally offer additional information such as prices, quantities or values. Therefore, the selection of material for this source edition required a systematic comparison of both files. The documents containing more data were prioritised when deciding whether the original or copy should be transcribed.

Several documents from the file 13472 Schatullenkasse, vol. 35, were selected to complement the findings of Loc. 00380/03 and Loc. 00662/07. The records of the *Schatullenkasse* (literally "casket purse") contain invoices and receipts for payments made from the king's private funds. Of the *Schatullenkasse* records kept in the Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, only volume 35 was relevant for the research project, as it contains invoices and shipping lists connected to the first acquisition organised by the Dutch trader and Lagnasco's main contact, Egidius van den Bempden in 1717.

Although documents surrounding the porcelain acquisitions between 1716 and 1718 are also included in volumes 34 and 36 of the *Schatullenkasse*, they were not incorporated in this source edition. Their content consists mostly of payment instructions to porcelain dealers, without any further information about object types or quantities. The amounts named in these payment instructions are moreover identical to the invoices of Loc. 00380/03 and Loc. 00662/07. As the latter were already selected for publication, the documents of volumes 34 and 36 of the *Schatullenkasse* were therefore not included in this source edition.

Selection by author and contents

All the sources were selected for transcription by authorship and contents. Only documents from or to direct or indirect participants in the acquisition plans were considered. The chief protagonists include Augustus the Strong, Count Lagnasco (and, as his representatives, Countess Lagnasco, and Count Lagnasco's secretary

François de Perozat), the merchant Egidius van den Bempden, as well as the dealers Madame and Monsieur St. Martin. The moneylenders Jean Scherenberg and Chitty & Sons, as well as French correspondent David Laurent form a group of agents who indirectly affected the acquisition plans by either providing the funding, or by supplying information about the availability of artworks. Their letters are consequently incorporated in this source edition as well.

Count Lagnasco was a diligent correspondent, but not all the letters of Loc. 00380/03 that are addressed to Augustus the Strong deal with porcelain acquisitions. The Count's writings can be roughly divided into four groups: 1. letters that discuss only porcelain purchases, 2. letters containing only political information, 3. letters in which he reports on political events and available artworks, 4. specifications that were drawn up separately. In order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary circumstances surrounding the porcelain acquisitions, Lagnasco's letters dealing exclusively with politics are also included. After all, gathering information on the prevailing political climate at the time was one of the main reasons for Lagnasco's stay in the Netherlands. Since the "political" letters contain numerous cross-references to his other correspondence, by including of all of his letters, eventual thematic gaps in the communication between the protagonists are avoided.

Order

After selecting and transcribing the relevant sources, the documents were classified by type. All letters and the associated travel and shipping documents are compiled in chapter I, "Letters". The specifications published with this source edition have been separately grouped in chapters II and III. Here, a distinction was made between dated (chapter II) and undated specifications (chapter III). However, acquisition lists that are included within the running text or, due to the brevity of their content, were attached as a postscript to a letter, remain in chapter I.

All transcribed sources are arranged in a strictly chronological order and numbered consecutively. In this way, it was possible to create an overview of the different topics and requests regarding the availability of porcelain. Also, the numbering facilitates the identification of cross-references found throughout the entire correspondence.

Presentation of sources

Each document is listed with a brief explanatory header, which indicates the source type and, if applicable, the sender, addressee, and date. The archive

signature, including the file's short title, is specified between the header and document text. If a document exists in multiple versions, the respective archive signatures are added as well.

Footnotes are used to comment on the sources. They supply cross-references to other letters, or information on discrepancies between the originals and their transcriptions. If applicable, the footnotes provide further explanations of the sources' contents, and offer bibliographic information. Usually, with each new document, a brief description is given in the footnotes when a person is mentioned for the first time. However, in order to make the footnotes as clear as possible and to avoid repetition, the brief biographies of the main authors of the documents – Augustus the Strong, Count Lagnasco, Egidius van den Bempden and the St. Martin couple – have been omitted.

A specific characteristic of the documents is the numerous different spellings of personal names. These were transcribed according to their notation in the original source, but referenced with a footnote and standardised in the comments and in the attached index of persons. Numbers in this index refer to page numbers in this publication, not the source number.

General remarks about the transcription

All the sources were edited according to the recommendations of the *Edition frühneuzeitlicher Texte* of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft historischer Forschungseinrichtungen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e. V.*² The lack of standardised spelling in early 18th-century French, Dutch or German becomes particularly apparent when we review letters written by several different people. All the documents were carefully edited to improve the readability of the letters and specifications, while ensuring that the original writing was disturbed as little as possible. Line breaks were removed in the letters, but the original layout has been largely maintained for documents in list format (specifications, acquisition lists, invoices).

Some orthographic peculiarities in the French sources were left untouched, contrary to the recommendations of the *Edition*:

2 "Empfehlungen zur Edition frühneuzeitlicher Texte des Arbeitskreises 'Editionsprobleme der Frühen Neuzeit' der Arbeitsgemeinschaft historischer Forschungseinrichtungen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e. V.," (2013), in *WIKIa Szlachta*, accessed 4 February 2019, https://szlachta.fandom.com/de/wiki/Edition_fr%C3%BChneuzeitlicher_Texte.

- In the case of the letter “y” – if written as “i” in modern French – the original spelling was unaltered. This concerns for example the words *roy* instead of *roi*, *aussy* instead of *aussi*, or *aujourd’huy* instead of *aujourd’hui*. This does not affect the readability of the documents.
- In the original letters and specifications, currency subunits are sometimes omitted or replaced by one or two dashes. This was standardised using a space and an en dash after the first currency unit (for example: florins 1000 –).
- Currencies such as florins, francs and thaler are always written in small letters, except at the beginning of a sentence or line.
- *Accent aigu*, *accent grave* and *accent circonflex* were added according to modern orthography. The historic use of *accent circonflex* for several words in *participe passé*, such as *peut*, *vu* or *cru*, was removed. This does not apply to the *accent circonflex* of the *subjonctif imparfait*.
- Uppercase and lowercase letters have been adjusted to modern orthography.
- Titles such as *monsieur*, *madame*, *monseigneur*, *duc*, etc. were written in lower case, except when used as a direct form of address or at the beginning of a letter. The frequently used indirect salutation *votre majesté* or *votre excellence*, however, was kept in lower case.
- The beginnings (date) and ends (closing words, date) of letters were kept in lower case.
- Commas before *et* were removed. If a sentence was too long, it was reasonably separated into shorter sentences.
- Conforming with modern orthography, the letter “j” was changed into “i”.
- The letters “c” and “s” were adapted according to modern orthography. In cases of strong deviations from modern French, the respective words were added in square brackets []. The strongest deviation from modern French orthography can be found in the letters of the St. Martins. Here, words that strayed too far from modern spelling were added in square brackets [].

- A peculiarity of the St. Martin letters is the use of the ending *-és* for verbs in the second person plural. This was changed into the modern form *-ez*. Likewise, the spelling of *assés* was changed into the modern form *assez*, and *ches* was changed into *chez*.
- In a few cases, the original *participe passé* ending *-ez* or *-ées* was kept instead of the modern spelling *-é*.
- Modern spelling is used for *confédéré*, *sûreté* and *réussir*. A mix of old and new spellings would have been too confusing.
- The following words were adapted according to modern orthography: *acheter*, *almanach*, *apprendre*, *approuver*, *assiette*, *balle*, *buffet*, *café*, *chandelier*, *dès* and *dès que*, *différent* (as well as other words with the word stem „diff-“), *effet*, *étouffe*, *galerie*, *modèle*, *panier*, *porcelaine*, *quittance*, *semaine*, *soucoupe*, *temps*.
- Hyphens and dashes are used according to modern orthography.
- Some passages in the letters written by Count Lagnasco himself (instead of his secretary Perozat) are almost illegible. In these cases, a reasonable separation of sentences using punctuation was almost impossible.
- Illegible words, phrases or sentences are mentioned in a footnote.
- All the numbers were transcribed according to the original way of writing. No periods were used after cardinal numbers.

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