

2012

# Unpacking Eugène Giraudet's Library: Dance, Books, and International Relations in Fin-de-Siècle Paris

Dominique Bourassa

Yale University, [dominique.bourassa@yale.edu](mailto:dominique.bourassa@yale.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/yul\\_staff](https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/yul_staff)



Part of the [Cataloging and Metadata Commons](#), and the [Dance Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Bourassa, Dominique, "Unpacking Eugène Giraudet's Library: Dance, Books, and International Relations in Fin-de-Siècle Paris" (2012). *Library Staff Publications*. 10.  
[https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/yul\\_staff/10](https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/yul_staff/10)

This Conference Proceeding is brought to you for free and open access by the Yale University Library at EliScholar – A Digital Platform for Scholarly Publishing at Yale. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Staff Publications by an authorized administrator of EliScholar – A Digital Platform for Scholarly Publishing at Yale. For more information, please contact [elischolar@yale.edu](mailto:elischolar@yale.edu).

# Unpacking Eugène Giraudet's Library: Dance, Books, and International Relations in Fin-de-Siècle Paris<sup>1</sup>

*Dominique Bourassa*

Yale University

## **Abstract**

*Eugène Giraudet (1861-19?) was an exceptionally prolific and influential Parisian dance teacher, choreographer, author, and bibliophile. His library catalog, published in his 1900 *Traité de la danse, Tome II, Grammaire de la danse et du bon ton*, is more than a simple record of the books he owned. It also serves as a wish list and a directory of prominent dance personalities. As a whole, it presents an unparalleled conspectus of dance teaching, book collecting, business, and international networks radiating from a major metropolis—the historical urban center of the dance world—in the late-nineteenth century.*

## **Introduction**

Eugène Giraudet, born in 1861, was an exceptionally prolific Parisian dance teacher, choreographer and author. By 1900, even while teaching dance 10 hours a day, he could claim 10 books, 784 newspaper articles, and 132 choreographed ballets among his accomplishments.<sup>2</sup> In his treatises, Giraudet tried to present an encyclopedic compendium of dance knowledge.<sup>3</sup> His 1900 *Traité de la danse*, tome II, *Grammaire de la danse et du bon ton* (see Figure 1), aims to cover no less than dance around the world and through the centuries, from the ape to the present, as you can see in the frontispiece (see Figure 2).<sup>4</sup> In order to control this vast body of information, Giraudet amassed a large private library that he describes in this book.

When I first decided to “unpack” Giraudet’s library, I thought I would be studying merely a personal dance library catalog. My assumption was that since Giraudet’s *Traité de la danse* covers dance around the world and through the centuries, his library would include a wide variety of books that would shed light on the content of his *Traité de la danse* and other works, provide the sources of his knowledge, and maybe (if I was lucky) reveal works that are unknown today.

Giraudet’s own introduction to his library not only confirms my expectation, but also reveals that his library has an unexpected physical manifestation. He writes:

My library on dance, contredanses, etc., from all times, places, and countries, treatises, handbooks, works, methods, loose pages, newspaper articles, plans, drawings, figures, engravings, illustrations, treatises on life in high society, etc. Each teacher has his compartment arranged alphabetically by the names of authors and teachers of dance, with their names and addresses, date, price, etc.<sup>5</sup>

In other words, Giraudet kept track of his library in some kind of compartmentalized furniture that functions like a traditional card catalog. Unlike an author card catalog in which many authors share a drawer, Giraudet’s catalog gives each author his or her own



compartment. As Giraudet accumulates information about a person (books written, dances choreographed, etc.), he adds it to the proper compartment. For your information, Giraudet's printed catalog includes 1,126 entries, give or take a few duplicates. Therefore the size of Giraudet's physical catalog must have been enormous, and one can easily imagine the shifting work involved when a new author had to be interfiled.

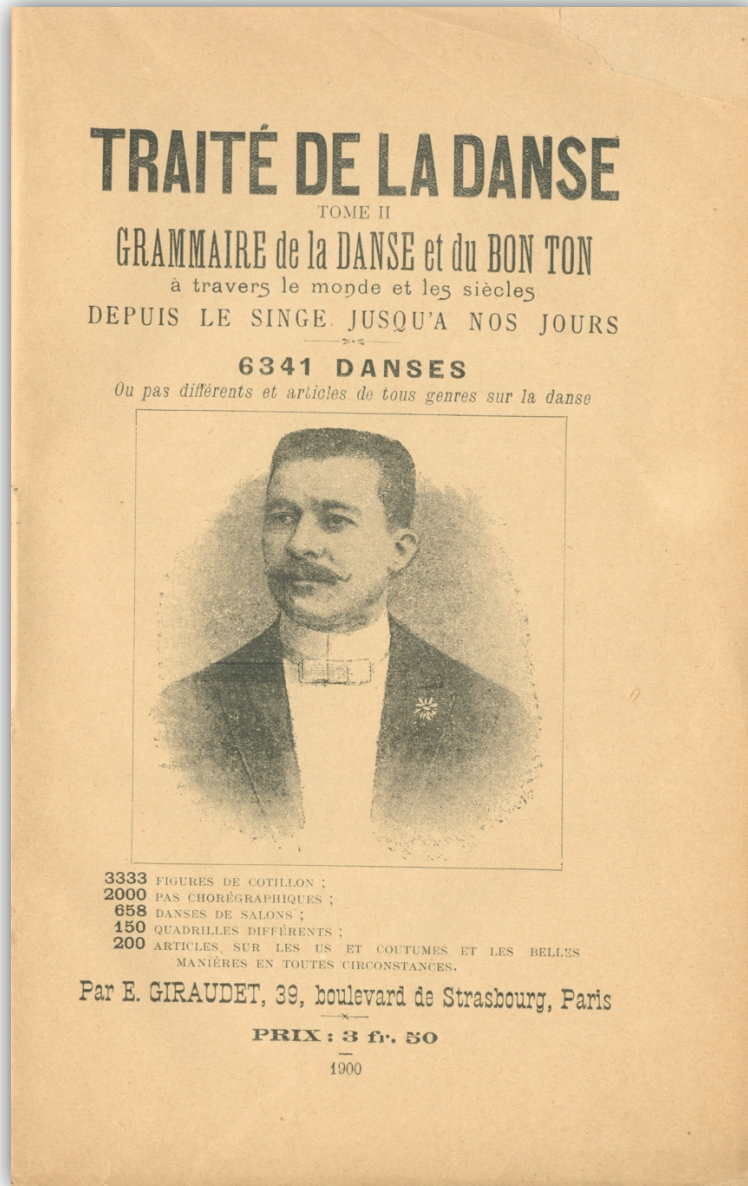


Figure 1: Eugène Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, title page (photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

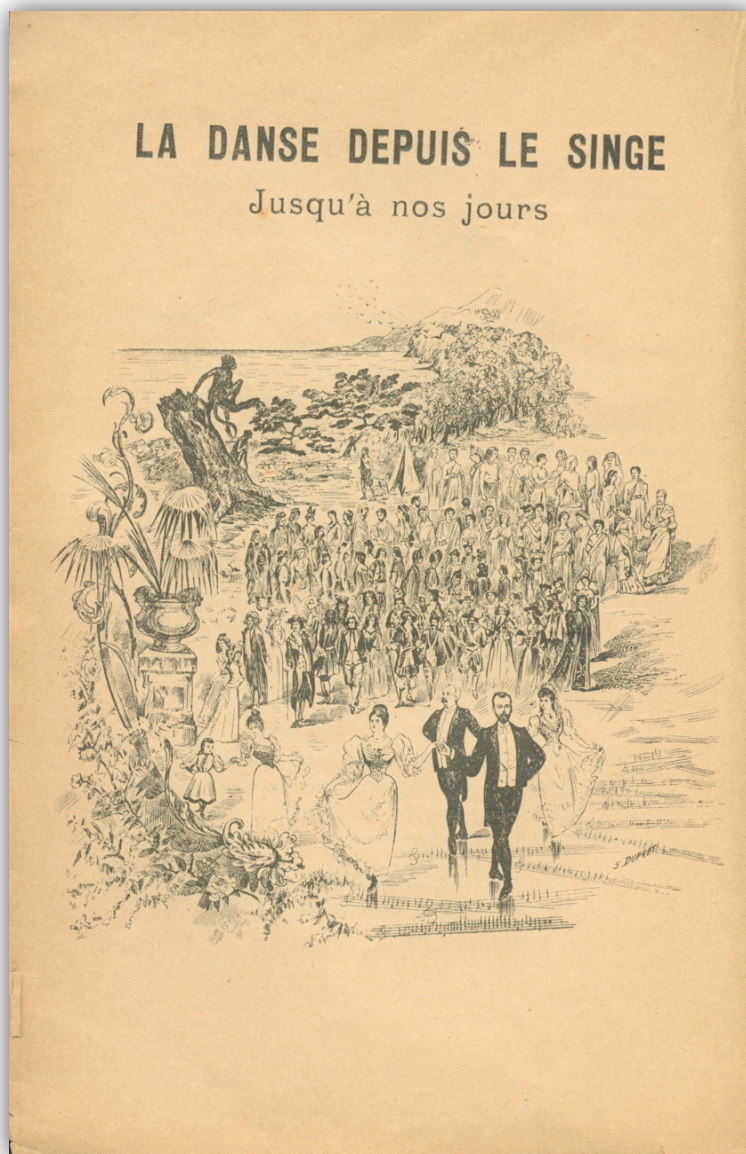


Figure 2: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, frontispiece  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

Giraudet's printed catalog does not look at first very different from other printed library catalogs of the time: a list of books organized roughly in alphabetical order by author's last name, as the first page shows (see Figure 3).<sup>6</sup>



## ABBREVIATIONS DE MA BIBLIOTHÈQUE

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| Prof. | Professeur de danse.                                 |
| Aut.  | Auteur de danse, d'articles, livres, dessins, etc.   |
| Comp. | Compositeur, de musique de danse.                    |
| Imp.  | Imprimeur de livres de danses, etc.                  |
| Ed.   | Éditeur de musique de danse.                         |
| Libr. | Libraires pour la vente.                             |
| Mar.  | Marchands de musique, de danses, livres, etc.        |
| Bouq. | Bouquiniste, vieux livres, etc.                      |
| Des.  | Dessinateur de danses, sujet, dessin, etc.           |
| E. G. | Eugène Giraudet, 39, boulevard de Strasbourg, Paris. |

\*—

- Adice** (Léopold), prof. de l'Opéra. — \* Théorie gymnastique de la danse théâtrale, avec dessins de tous les mouvements des danseurs; les crampes, les courbatures, les points, etc. Ed.-imp. Chaix, rue Bergère, Paris, 1859.
- Adolphe**, aut. — Les danseuses de l'Opéra, costumes des principaux ballets dessinés par Adolphe, au bureau du journal *Les Modes parisiennes*, 20, rue Bergère et 8, rue Garancière, Paris, 1860. — 25 fr.
- Adolphe** (Julien), aut. — Histoire du costume au théâtre, depuis les origines du théâtre en France jusqu'à nos jours, avec 27 gravures. — 40 fr. — Ed. Charpentier, 13, rue de Grenelle-Saint-Germain, Paris, 1880. — N° **127**.
- Adrien**. — Voir : *Fage*.
- Adrien** (Van der Zee), prof., — Smyrne (Turquie d'Asie), 1893.
- Ajas**, prof., 26, rue Pigalle, Paris, 1890.
- Albérie Second**. — \* Les mystères de l'Opéra, avec illustrations de Gavarni. Voir p. 94, la classe de danse de l'Opéra, id. Bernard Lotte, in-8°, 1844.
- Albert** (Descombes Fr. dit), 1<sup>er</sup> danseur 1817-1835, maître de ballet de l'Opéra de 1829 à 1831. — L'art de la danse à la ville et à la Cour, manuel à l'usage des maîtres à danser, des mères de famille et maîtresses de pension. 3 planches. Éditeur, 12, rue de la Harpe, et Collinet, 4, place du Coq, près du Louvre, Paris, 1834. — 5 fr. — N° **18**.
- Albert du Bois** (Mlle Théodore), de l'Opéra, par Albert du Bois. — Une page de la vie d'une danseuse au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, extrait de la *Revue de Belgique*. Ed. Weissenbruch, imprimeur du Roi, 45, rue Poinçon, 1896. — 2 fr. 50. — N° **125**.
- Alembert** (Encyclopédie d'), célèbre écrivain 1717-1783. — \* Voir les titres des danses, les noms de danses et tout ce qui concerne Terpsichore.
- Alerme** (E.), prof. de l'Académie royale. — De la danse considérée sous le rapport de l'éducation physique. Imp. Goetschy, rue Louis-le-Grand, 1830. — 7 fr. — In-8° 4 fr., chez Léon Sapin, 3, rue Bonaparte, Paris. — N° **96**.
- Alexandre**, professeur, 15 rue Lanterne, à Lyon (Rhône). — Manuel des danses de société, 2<sup>e</sup>, 1897. — 1 fr. 50. — Aunisienne (l'), Lyonnaise (la), Quadrille le voyageur. — N° **48**.
- Alfonzo** (d'), prof. — Voir : *Frédérico*.
- Allard** (Mlle). — 1<sup>re</sup> danseuse, demi caractère à l'Opéra, en 1761.
- Anatol** (Mlle Petit). — 1<sup>re</sup> danseuse noble de l'Opéra, en 1826.

Figure 3: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 510  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

It does not take long to realize, however, that Giraudet's catalog is much more than a simple list of books he owns:

- Yes, it does include books Giraudet owns. They are followed by numbers in bold that are, I think, call numbers that help Giraudet find his books in his real library (see Figure 4):

*siennes*, 20, rue Bergère et 8, rue Garancière, Paris, 1860. — 25 fr.  
**Adolphe** (Julien), aut. — Histoire du costume au théâtre, depuis les origines du théâtre en France jusqu'à nos jours, avec 27 gravures. — 40 fr. — Ed. Charpentier, 13, rue de Grenelle-Saint-Germain, Paris, 1880. — N° **127**.  
 Adrien. — Voir : *Fage*.

Figure 4: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 510  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

- It also shows books Giraudet would like to acquire (his wish list, as it were). Asterisks indicate these (see Figure 5).<sup>8</sup>

**Adice** (Léopold), prof. de l'Opéra. — \* Théorie gymnastique de la danse théâtrale, avec dessins de tous les mouvements des danseurs; les crampes, les courbatures, les points, etc. Ed.-imp. Chaix, rue Bergère, Paris, 1859.

Figure 5: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 510  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

- The catalog also describes the contents of some books. For instance, De la Cuisse's 3-volume *Répertoire des bals* is followed by a 1.5-page description of its contents (see Figure 6).<sup>9</sup>

BOSTON, MASS (ETATS-UNIS, AMERIQUE), 1857.

**Cuisse** (de la), maître de danse en 1762, Paris, auteur d'un bel ouvrage en 3 tomes de 92 contre-danses allemandes, françaises, anglaises, etc. Son titre est : Le Répertoire des bals ou théorie pratique de contre-danses, avec théorie; musique, dessins et chansons, 3 volumes, le 1<sup>er</sup> en 1762; le 2<sup>e</sup> en 1765; le 3<sup>e</sup> en 1769. — 200 fr. Ed. Cailleau, rue Saint-Jacques, près rue des Mathurins, Paris, 1762. Voici les danses que comportent les 3 volumes :

1<sup>o</sup> Tome I : Notes et explications des dessins et figures, etc. 1<sup>re</sup> contre-danse, La Marquise, contre-danse du sieur D... ; 2<sup>o</sup> La Mienne ; 3<sup>o</sup> La Fontaine ; 4<sup>o</sup> L'Original 5<sup>o</sup> La Victorieuse ; 6<sup>o</sup> L'Intime ; 7<sup>o</sup> Les Quatre Veuves ; 8<sup>o</sup> Le Tambourin de Daquin ; 9<sup>o</sup> La nouvelle Anglaise ; 10<sup>o</sup> La Bonne Foy ; 11<sup>o</sup> Les Quatres Cousines ; 12<sup>o</sup> Les Moulinets brisés ; 13<sup>o</sup> Les 4 doubles allemandes ; 14<sup>o</sup> La Dubois ; 15<sup>o</sup> Ma Favorite, dédiée à mon ami ; 16<sup>o</sup> Les Amusements de Clichy ; 17<sup>o</sup> Les Fêtes d'Orléans, dédiée à Mme de Cypierre, Intend. d'Orléans ; 18<sup>o</sup> L'Ortie ou l'Hôtel de l'Ortie, id. ; 19<sup>o</sup> Menuet des Festes d'Orléans, dédiée à Mme de Cypierre, Intend. d'Orléans ; 20<sup>o</sup> Les Amusements de la Loire, id. ; 21<sup>o</sup> La jolie d'Orléans, id. ; 22<sup>o</sup> Les fontaines du Loiret, id. ; 23<sup>o</sup> La Nouvelle singulière ; 24<sup>o</sup> Les Absences ; 25<sup>o</sup> La France ; 26<sup>o</sup> Les Nouvelles Etrennes ; 27<sup>o</sup> La Nouvelle Provence ; 28<sup>o</sup> La Fleury ou Amusement de Nancy. Manque la Bionni, 6<sup>e</sup> feuille après la Victorieuse, fin du tome I, dernières pages. Avec privilège du Roy, 1764, 14 juin, 49<sup>e</sup> règne du Roy.

2<sup>o</sup> Tome II : Suite du Répertoire des bals ou recueil de contre-danses, 1765. Une page pour l'explication des dessins. 1<sup>re</sup> contre-danse, La belle Georgette, par MM. Perrin et la Hante ; 2<sup>o</sup> La Rosalie, contre-danse nouvelle dédiée à Mlle Rosalie, par M. Denis, maître de danse ;

Figure 6: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 522  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

- The catalog takes at times the form of an annotated bibliography. In this example (see Figure 7), Giraudet says that Edward Scott's *Dancing as an art and pastime* includes "beautiful engravings of all dances" (actually, the illustrations are not engravings but photographs).<sup>10</sup>



**Scott** (Edward), prof., 17, Compton, avenue Brighton, London (Angleterre). — Dancing as an art and Pastime; éd. George Bell and sons, York St., covent Garden, Londres (Angleterre), 1892. Belles gravures de toutes danses. — 20 fr. — N° 146. — Chorolista, La Versa, Cracovienne.

Figure 7: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 561  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

- At other times, the catalog becomes an index of dance references. For example, Giraudet would like to own a translation of James Cook's *A voyage towards the South Pole and round the world* for the description of dances that can be found on 4 specific pages (see Figure 8).<sup>11</sup>

**Cook** (Le capitaine). 1728-1799. — \* Voyage dans l'hémisphère boréal et austral et autour du monde; traduit de l'anglais à Lausanne en 1796. 14 vol. in-8°. — T. II, p. 339, Une représentation de danse chez les habitants d'Uliéta. — T. IV, p. 251, La danse appelée la Timoi-dée. — T. V, p. 25, La danse d'un indien chez les insulaires de l'île Mauréa. — T. VI, p. 96, Théorie d'une danse guerrière dans la Nouvelle-Zélande; voir dans toutes les bibliothèques. — La danse dans

Figure 8: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 521  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

- Giraudet's catalog is also a biographical dance dictionary. Most of the subjects are dance personalities such as Noverre (see Figure 9).<sup>12</sup> But there are also others with dance accomplishments, like Louis XIV, who crop up here and there (see Figure 10).<sup>13</sup>

**Noverre** (M.), prof., 1727-1810, maître de ballet de l'Opéra de 1777 à 1779. — Lettres sur la danse et sur les ballets, par M. Noverre, maître de ballets de Son Altesse sérénissime monseigneur le duc de Wurtemberg, et ci-devant des théâtres de Paris, Lyon, Marseille, Londres, etc., imprimé chez Aimé Delaroche, aux Halles de la Grenette. 1755. — 5 fr. — Avec approbation du roi. — N° 51.

Figure 9: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 553  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

**Louis XIV** a pris des leçons de danse avec presque tous les maîtres de l'époque, mais plus particulièrement du maître Prévost; après quoi Louis XIV inventa des pas de danse, des ballets, prenant toujours part aux danses de ballet comme aux danses de la Cour, de 1650 à 1715 il dansa.

Figure 10: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 547  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

- The catalog is also a directory of dance teachers and schools, as you can see in this example (see Figure 11).<sup>14</sup> The date following an address is the most recent date Giraudet knew the person was teaching at this address.

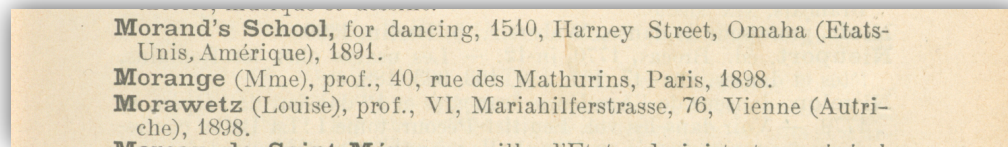


Figure 11: Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 551  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

- Finally, the catalog provides an opportunity for Giraudet to boast of his accomplishments by posting his curriculum vitae (see Figure 12).<sup>15</sup> Obviously, he gives himself the longest treatment, more than 2.5-pages worth of achievements.

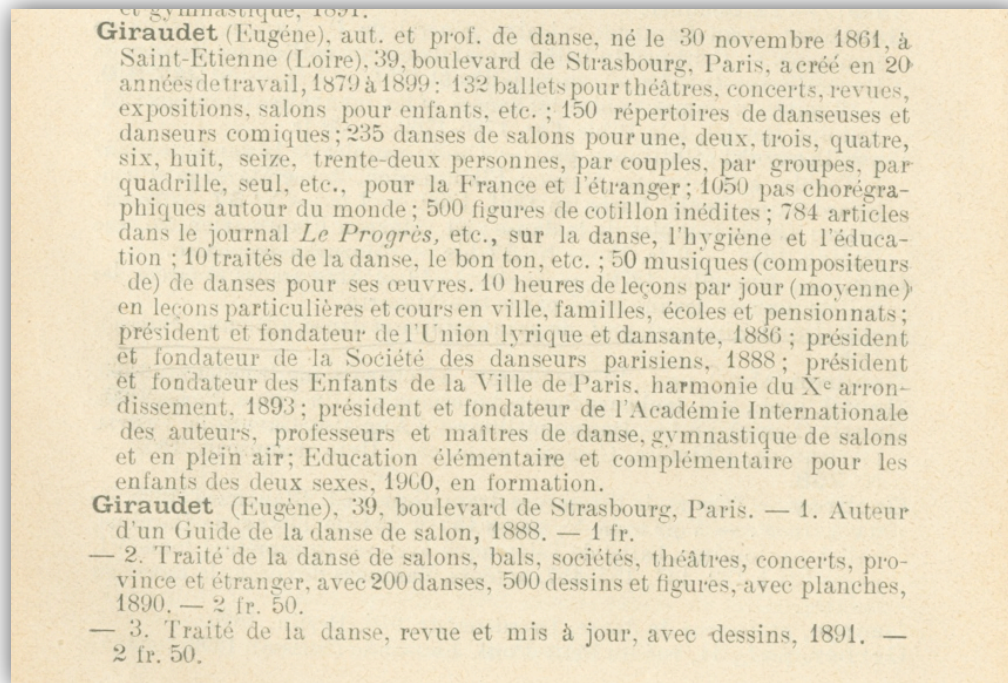


Figure 12: Giraudet's *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 534  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

My presentation today will focus on 3 aspects of Giraudet's catalog: the books he owns, the books he wishes to acquire, and the dance teachers and schools of the last 20 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that he lists.

## Giraudet's Library

In all, Giraudet's library contains 274 volumes published between 1702 and 1900, including 229 one-volume works, 11 two- or three-volume works and 8 instances of multiple copies and editions. More than half date from the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a median date of 1883 (see Figure 13).<sup>16</sup> At this point, I have been able to trace in libraries 90% of the books Giraudet owned.<sup>17</sup>

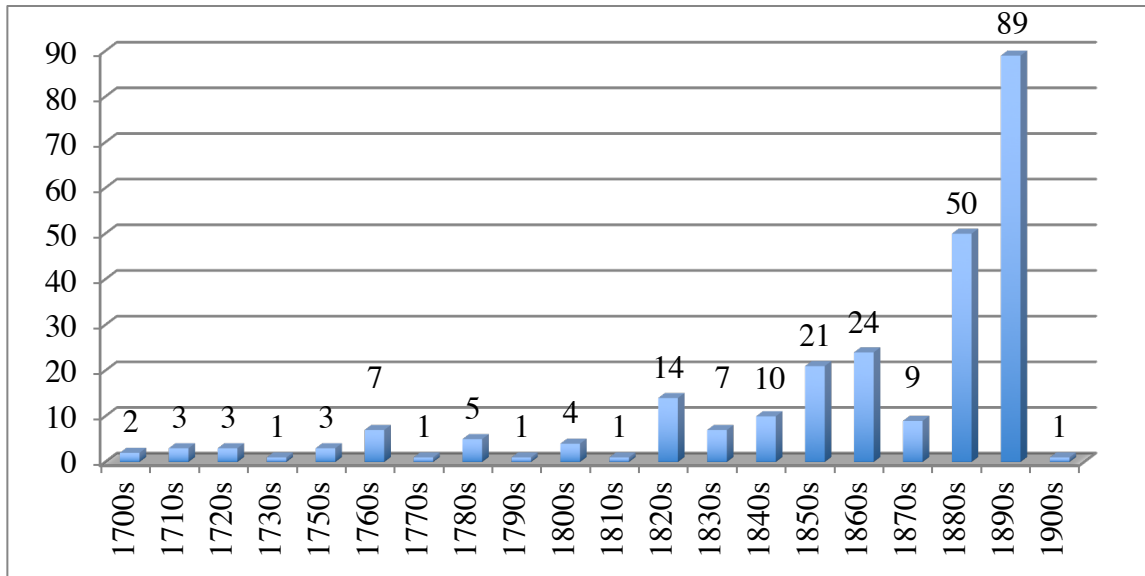


Figure 13: Number of Books by Decade

Giraudet indicates the prices of 233 books. The least he paid for a book is 10 centimes for an unidentified small dance treatise published by Quérolle in 1898; the most, 200 francs for De La Cuisse's 1768 3-volume *Répertoire des bals*. The monetary value of his library is at least 2,500 francs based on the value of the books of which Giraudet lists the price (including his own books).<sup>18</sup> Although in general "it is impossible to propose a multiplier that converts these prices (...) into actual francs or euros because they have meaning only within a given economic environment,"<sup>19</sup> the rules and regulations of Giraudet's dance school listed in his *Traité de la danse* include a very detailed price schedule for 36 services he offers that allows us to judge the value of his library in relation to his income and at the same time offers a glimpse into Giraudet's nature as a business man. To pay for all his books (see Table 1), Giraudet would have to choreograph 25 dances, sell 125 group-lesson packages of 10 lessons each, teach 500 30-minute private lessons, or have 25,074 women use the coatroom in his rooftop dance school on week nights, as shown in this engraving from his book (see Figures 14-15).



Table 1: Possible income sources for Giraudet's Library

| SELECTED SERVICES                          | PRICE IN FRANCS | QUANTITY |
|--|-----------------|----------|
| Choreograph a dance                        | 100.00          | 25       |
| 10 private lessons in 1 month              | 50.00           | 50       |
| Package of 10 group-lessons                | 20.00           | 125      |
| 1 month of group lessons at 2 lessons/week | 15.00           | 167      |
| 1 private dance lesson (30 minutes)        | 5.00            | 501      |
| Coat room fee for women on weekday nights  | 0.10            | 25,074   |



Figure 14: Location of the coatroom in Giraudet's dance school  
 Giraudet, Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. [396]  
 (photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)





Figure 15: Coatroom in Giraudet's dance school  
Giraudet, Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. [396]  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

Giraudet collects mostly books in French. Of the 14 foreign language titles found in his library, one is in Spanish, three in German, four in Italian, and six in English. The most prolific author in his library is, of course, himself with 10 works. Then comes the dance teacher Gustave Desrat (1830-19?) with 5 different works and the musicologist François-Henri-Joseph Blaze (known as Castil-Blaze, 1784-1857) with four.

As one might expect, Giraudet is an avid collector of books on dance (see Figure 16). They include books on how to dance, on dance history, notation, dancers, balls, the dance of death, etc. Many are now classics (works by Cahusac, Feuillet, Noverre, and Zorn, to name but a few). Giraudet's library also contains books on topics other than dance. They are about arts, combat (that is, boxing, fencing, canes, and sticks), education, etiquette and morals, the language of flowers, games, law, literature, music, performing arts, physical education (such as gymnastics and calisthenics), and social life and customs. Most of the books in Giraudet's library are handbooks and instruction manuals (see Figure 18).<sup>20</sup> Other types of books found are antidance tracts, *belles lettres* (novels, poems, and drama), biographies, dictionaries and encyclopedias, wit and humor books, music scores, periodicals, synopses and libretti, textbook and thesis. Giraudet's library also includes numerous newspaper articles relating to dance, and an amazing collection of dance sheet music that he lists in separate sections that I have not started to "unpack."<sup>21</sup> He advertises, by the way, that he is available to copy for a fee any of the sheet music he owns.<sup>22</sup>

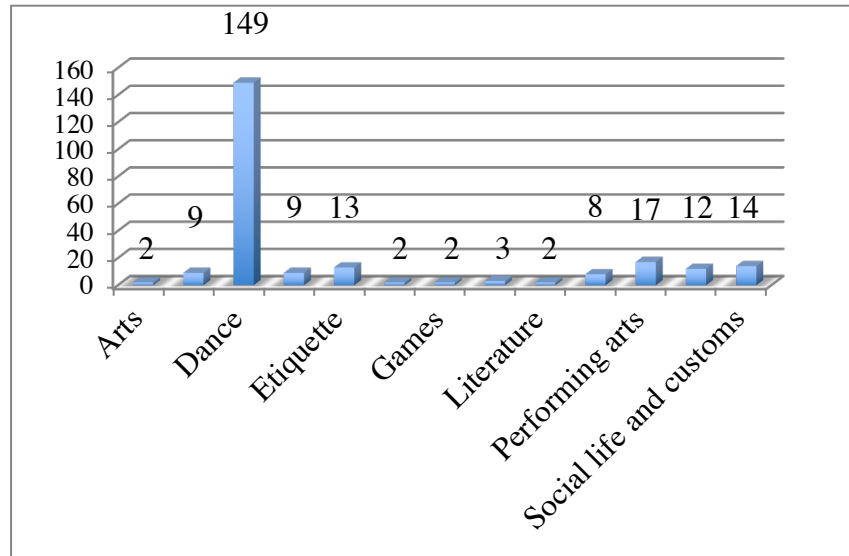


Figure 16: Topics in Giraudet's Library

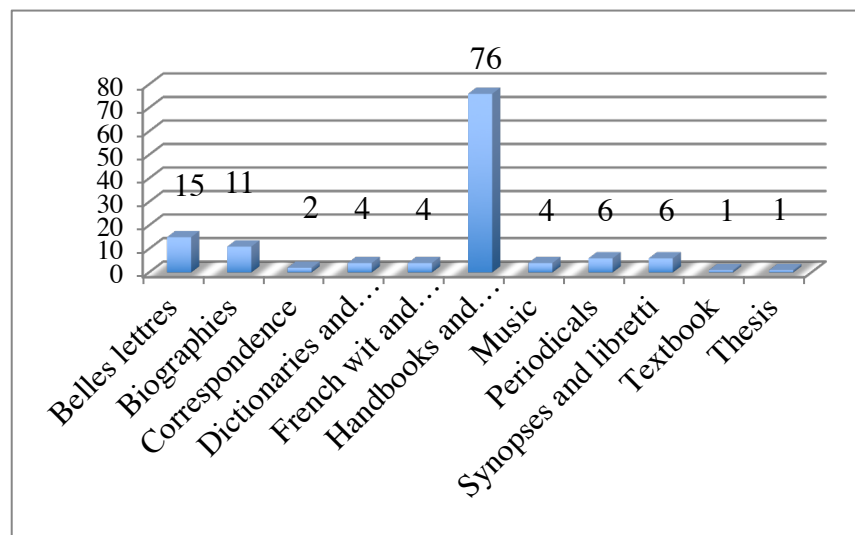


Figure 17: Genres of books in Giraudet's Library

Bold numbers following books Giraudet owned, as I said earlier, are a type of call number. At first glance, Giraudet does not seem to have a specific classification system for his books. However, the shelflist I reconstructed shows that Giraudet usually tries to keep books by the same author together by giving them consecutive call numbers. This desire for collocation means that sometimes he has to use call numbers such as “30bis” and “30ter.” Another interesting aspect is that all foreign language dance books and their translations are classed near each other in the 140 to 156 range, and all antidance tracts are classed in the 248 to 257 range.<sup>23</sup>

Giraudet's catalog remains at this time the only known example of a dance teacher's private library, making it impossible to compare his library to that of his contemporaries.<sup>24</sup> Giraudet cannot be called either a typical “bibliophile” or ‘bibliomane.’<sup>25</sup> He does not collect antiquarian books or luxurious contemporary editions

because they are beautiful, rare, expensive objects. He collects books old and new, expensive and cheap, for practical reasons. Urban dance teachers of that period typically taught current ballroom dances, fancy or demonstration dances (these could be theatrical or historical dances), etiquette and deportment, and basic fitness exercises.<sup>26</sup> That books on such topics formed nearly 75% of Giraudet's library therefore makes sense. Books about education show Giraudet's interest in learning the latest pedagogical theory; law books, his need to know the legal way to conduct business such as drawing contracts. Books on boxing can be explained in part by the fact that Giraudet is writing a book on "French boxing as mimetic dance for the parlor, and as a technique for self-defense."<sup>27</sup> Indeed, he may incorporate any works he owns into his own works. For example, compare Giraudet's image, based on Carlo Blasis' 1830 *Manuel de la danse* (see Figure 18): you will notice that Giraudet changed the costume of the dancers, but kept the figure number!<sup>28</sup> This indicates that the functions of his library include broadening his curriculum and expanding his publication output.

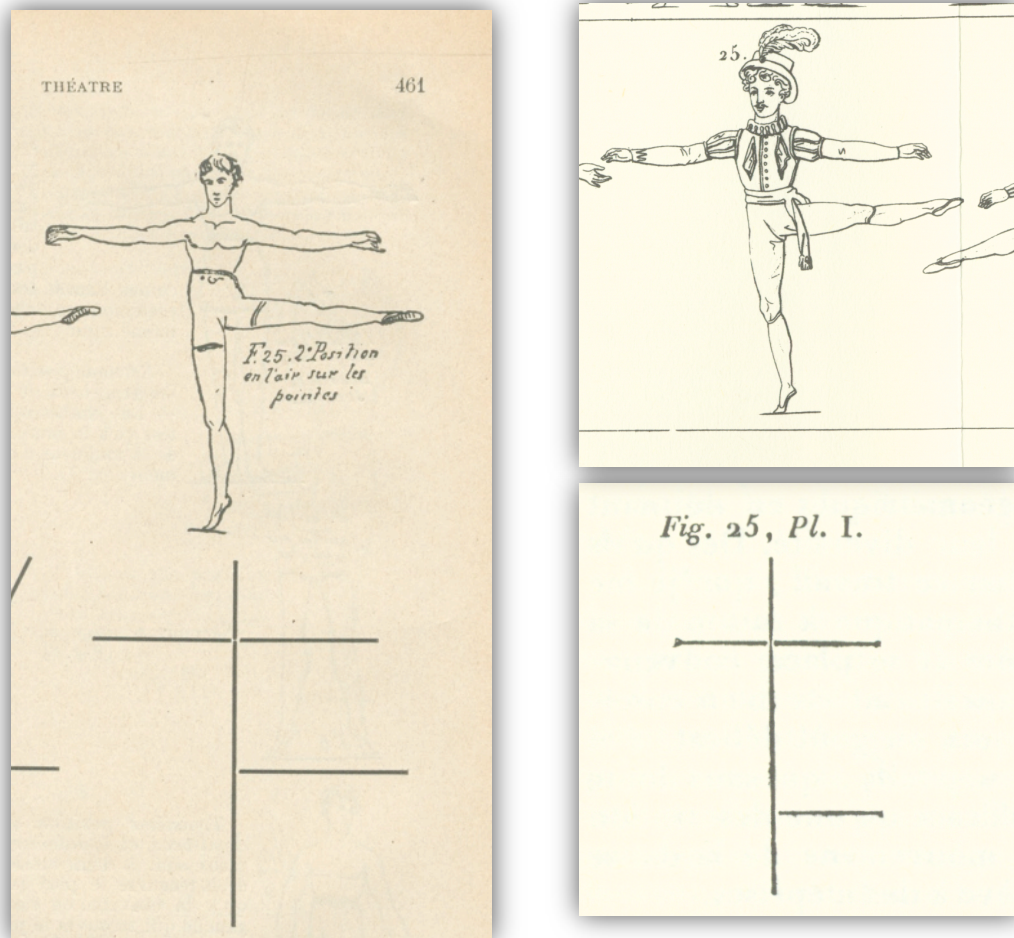


Figure 18: Comparison between (left) Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome 2, p. 461  
 Photo: Collection Dominique Bourassa  
 and (right) Carlo Blasis, *Manuel complet de la danse* (Paris, 1830);  
 facs. Ed. Paris: L. Laget, 1980) p. 104 and plate 1

## Giraudet's wish list

Turning now to the second focus of this paper, Giraudet's wish list indicates that there are 185 books he wants to acquire for his library. They date from 1498 to 1898 and include rare gems. Most are on topics similar to those he already owns: a majority (54%) are about dance (see Figure 19). Topics not already represented in Giraudet's library are language, philosophy, and religion. In the social life and customs category, travelers' diaries constitute a new genre.

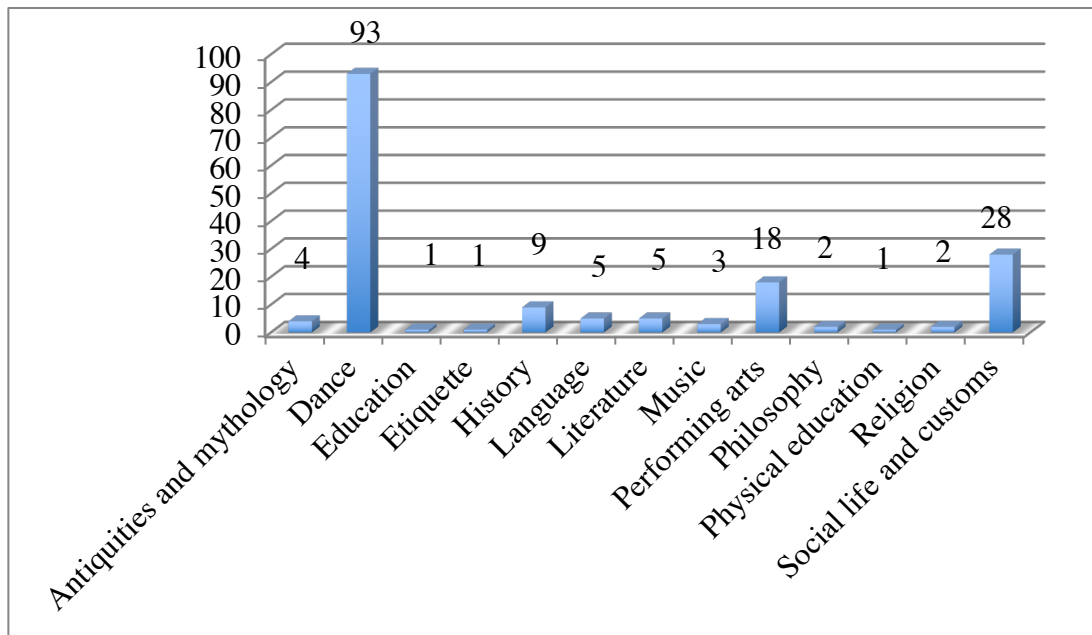


Figure 19: Topics in Giraudet's Wish List

When I first started to study Giraudet's wish list, I faced a major problem: many of the books appeared nonexistent: I could not find their titles in online public access catalogs and bibliographic utilities. Yet, Giraudet often indicates the exact page numbers where information on dance is found in these books. Could that mean that even if Giraudet did not own these books, he already had consulted them, maybe in libraries, bookstores, *cabinets de lecture*, colleagues' houses? But how could he have known about so many books that don't seem to exist today? The key to this mystery was on his own shelves, where I found the definitive source of over 60% of his wish list: Desrat's 1895 *Dictionnaire de la danse*, which contains an annotated bibliography of dance books and other books containing information about dance held at the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.<sup>29</sup> Comparing Giraudet's wish list to Desrat's annotated bibliography, I discovered that instead of giving the proper title of a book, Giraudet often quotes or paraphrases Desrat's description of the book and copies Desrat's page references. Here is an example: Giraudet says he wants to acquire Abbé Brunoy's 1730 *Études des anciennes danses théâtrales et civiles*, citing 5 particular pages (78, 310, 103, 200, and 212) (see Figure 20).<sup>30</sup> As you can see in Desrat's *Dictionnaire*, the real title of Brunoy's work is *Théâtre des Grecs* (see Figure 21). But you can also notice that the misleading title given by Giraudet and the



page references are copied from Desrat.<sup>31</sup> While it might be shocking to realize that Giraudet plagiarizes Desrat, an interesting conclusion can be drawn: Giraudet used Desrat's *Dictionnaire* to plan the growth of his library.<sup>32</sup> But one wonders if he read Desrat's work carefully. Among the books Giraudet wants to acquire is *La danse avec le Roi et au théâtre*, supposedly written in 1665 by Pierre Beauchamps, Louis XIV's dancing master. There is no other mention of this book anywhere, and Desrat says that authors who attribute dance books to Beauchamps "unscrupulously tamper with historical truth."<sup>33</sup>

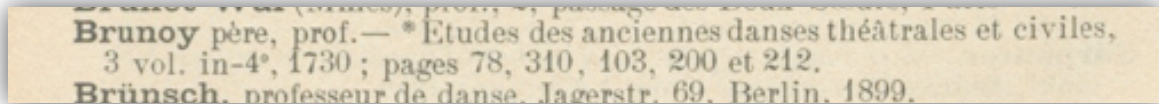


Figure 20: Giraudet, Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, p. 517  
(photo: collection Dominique Bourassa)

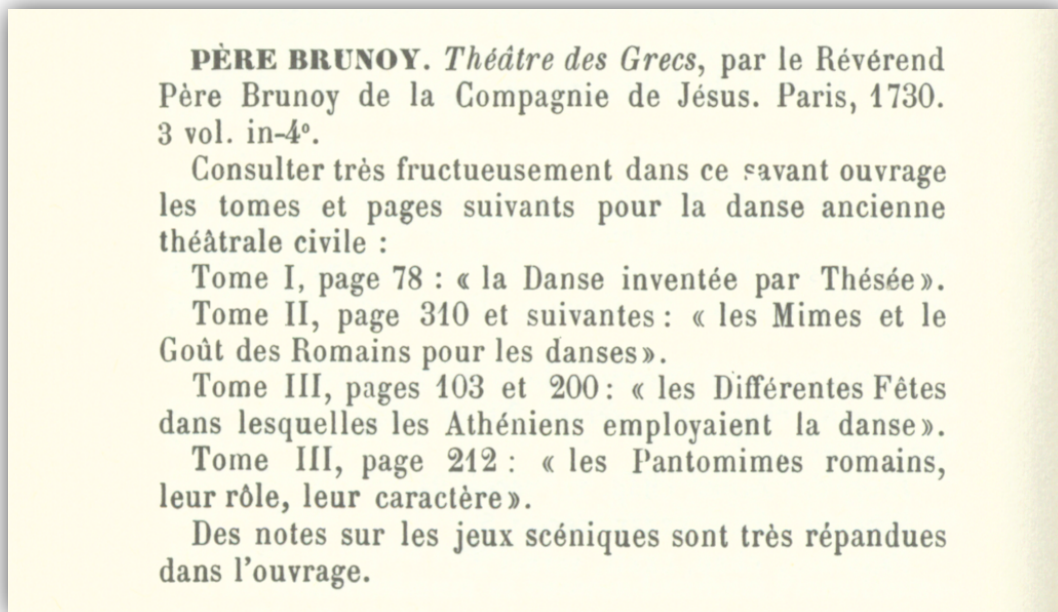


Figure 21: Gustave Desrat, *Dictionnaire de la danse historique, théorique, pratique et bibliographique* (Paris: Librairies-imprimeries réunies, 1895; facs. ed. Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1977), p. 428

One of the most interesting aspects of Giraudet's wish list is that it includes the name and address of vendors where 34 books could be purchased in 1900.<sup>34</sup> For instance, the copy of Beaujoyeux's 1582 *Ballet comique de la royne* that used to belong to the library of the Comte de Lignerolles is for sale for 1,500 francs at Damascène Morgand, 55, passage du Panorama, Paris.<sup>35</sup> The addresses Giraudet lists allow us to trace his book shopping footprints. In this map (see Figure 22), the green schoolhouse in the upper right corner shows the location of Giraudet's school on 39 Boulevard de Strasbourg. The other

locations point to bookstores where Giraudet must have shopped. You can see that they are located in two different sectors of Paris: three bookstores are on the Right Bank near the Bibliothèque nationale and four are on the Left Bank near the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts.<sup>36</sup>

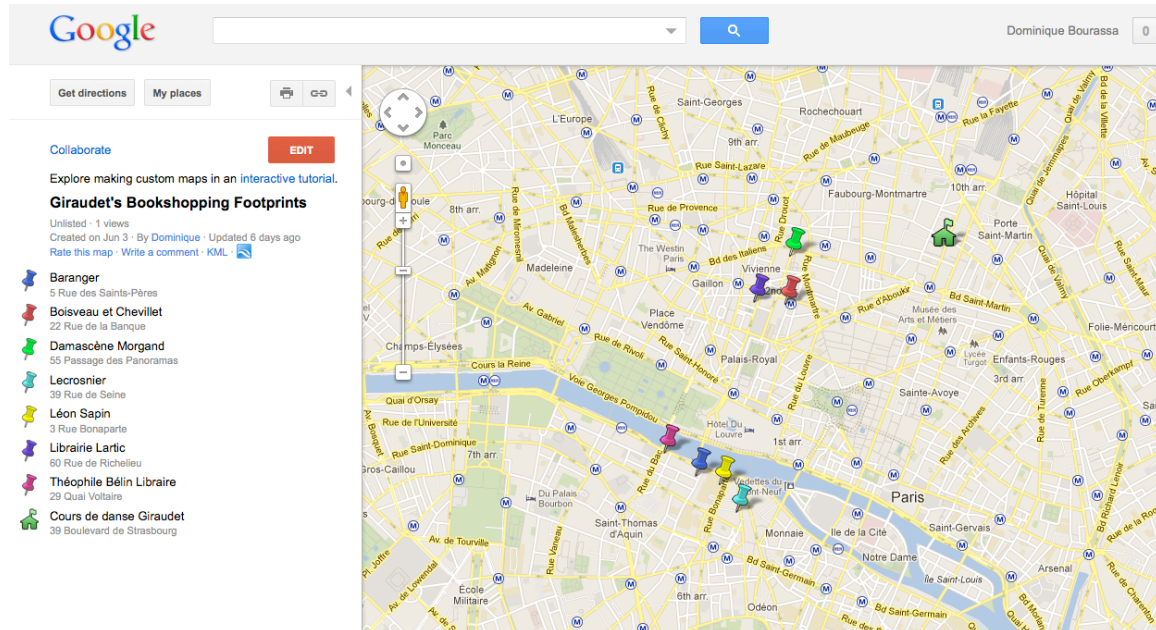


Figure 22: Giraudet’s shopping footprints. Google Maps, June 10, 2012.

### Giraudet’s directory of teachers and schools

My final focus of research is Giraudet’s professional contacts: the dance teachers and schools that were active between 1880 and 1900 whose names Giraudet incorporates in his library catalog. The list I compiled of roughly 525 dance teachers and schools,<sup>37</sup> with anecdotes scattered here and there, provides an intriguing view of the *fin-de-siècle* dance world and allows one to see interconnections between teachers (who studied with whom; who is related to whom; who teaches at another’s school; who takes over another’s school, etc.). For example, Giraudet’s former student, A. Galloux, taught 6 months in 1888-1889 in a room at the Café de la Porte-Saint-Martin, a mere 5 minute-walk from Giraudet’s school, and then, disappeared.<sup>38</sup> Mme Faroux, who was Périn’s student in 1886, not only succeeded to Mme de Grandsaigne-Montfort as teacher at the casino of Enghien-les-Bains, but also adopted her daughter, Mlle de Grandsaigne-Montfort, who in turn succeeded her when she died on March 21, 1899.<sup>39</sup>

Giraudet knows teachers in 17 countries, as distant as Egypt and Brazil. The country most represented is obviously France, with 222 teachers, followed by Germany with 127, and the United States, with 66 (see Table 2). In these 17 countries, Giraudet identifies no fewer than 175 cities and towns where 516 teachers were active (see Figures 23-25). As you can see in this table listing cities where more than 5 teachers were identified, Paris still gives the impression of being the center of the dance world with the

most teachers, 103, followed closely by Berlin with 99 teachers, and Vienna with 44 teachers. The most impressive detail, however, is that in 439 cases, Giraudet pinpoints the street addresses where his colleagues work.

Table 2: Number of Dance Teachers and Schools by Country

| <b>COUNTRY</b>   | <b>Total</b> |
|------------------|--------------|
| Austria          | 44           |
| Belgium          | 10           |
| Brazil           | 1            |
| Bulgaria         | 2            |
| Canada           | 2            |
| Egypt            | 1            |
| England          | 3            |
| France           | 222          |
| Germany          | 127          |
| Holland          | 7            |
| Hungary          | 16           |
| Italy            | 26           |
| Portugal         | 3            |
| Romania          | 3            |
| Russia [Ukraine] | 2            |
| Switzerland      | 14           |
| United States    | 66           |



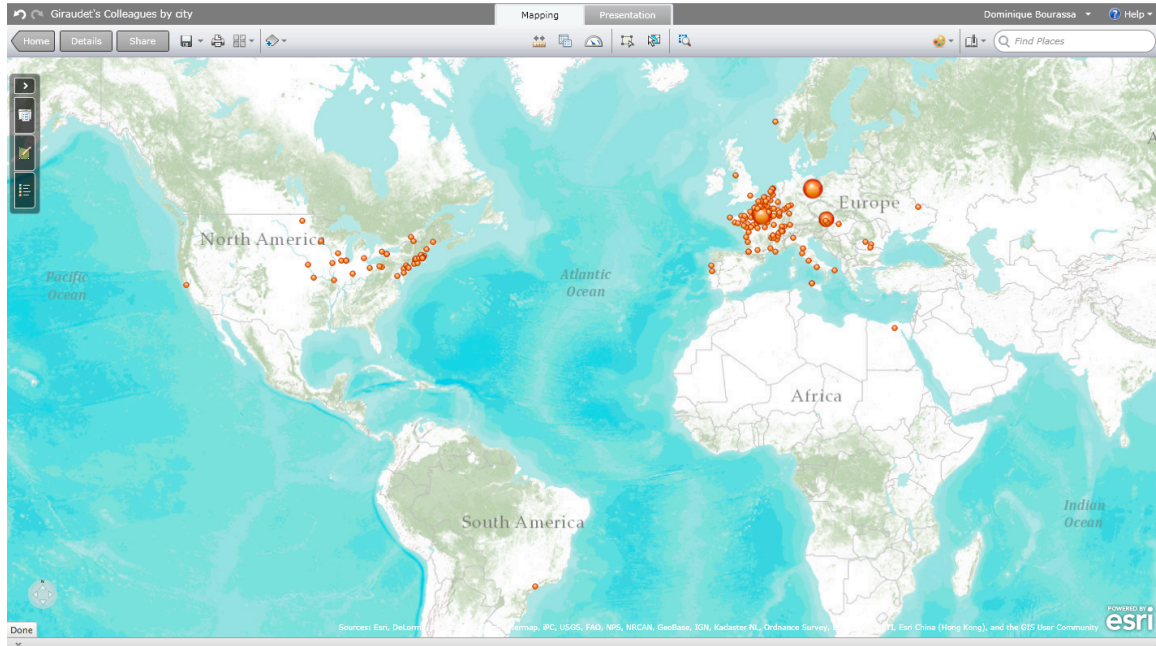


Figure 23: World View of Giraudet's Colleagues by City. ArcGIS Explorer Online, June 9, 2012

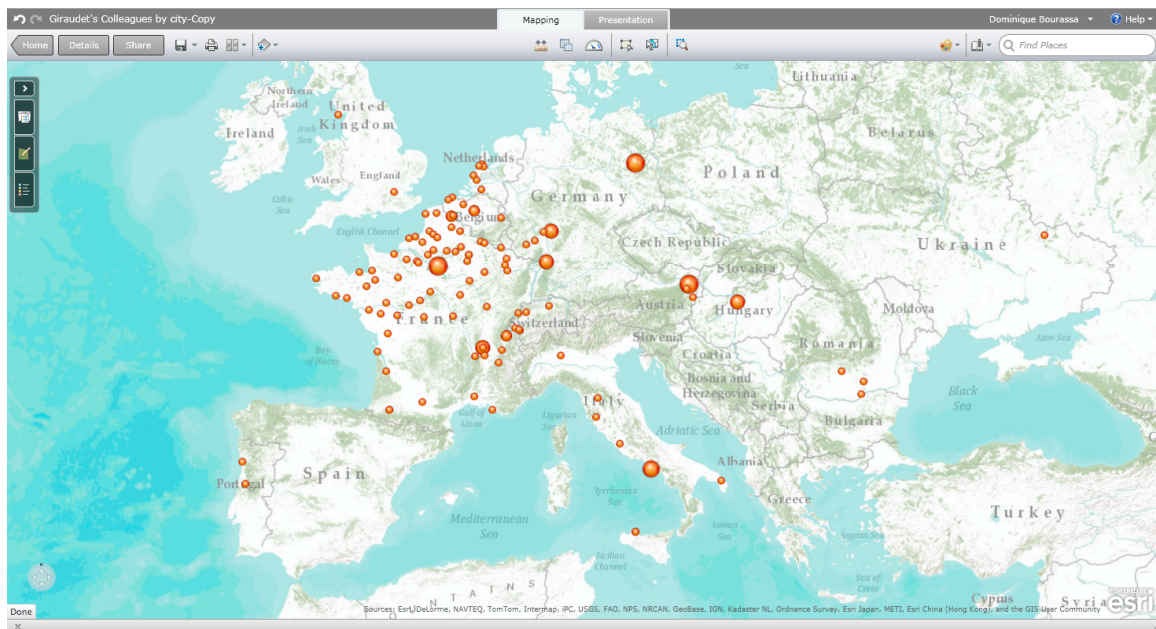


Figure 24: Giraudet's Colleagues in Europe. ArcGIS Explorer Online, June 9, 2012



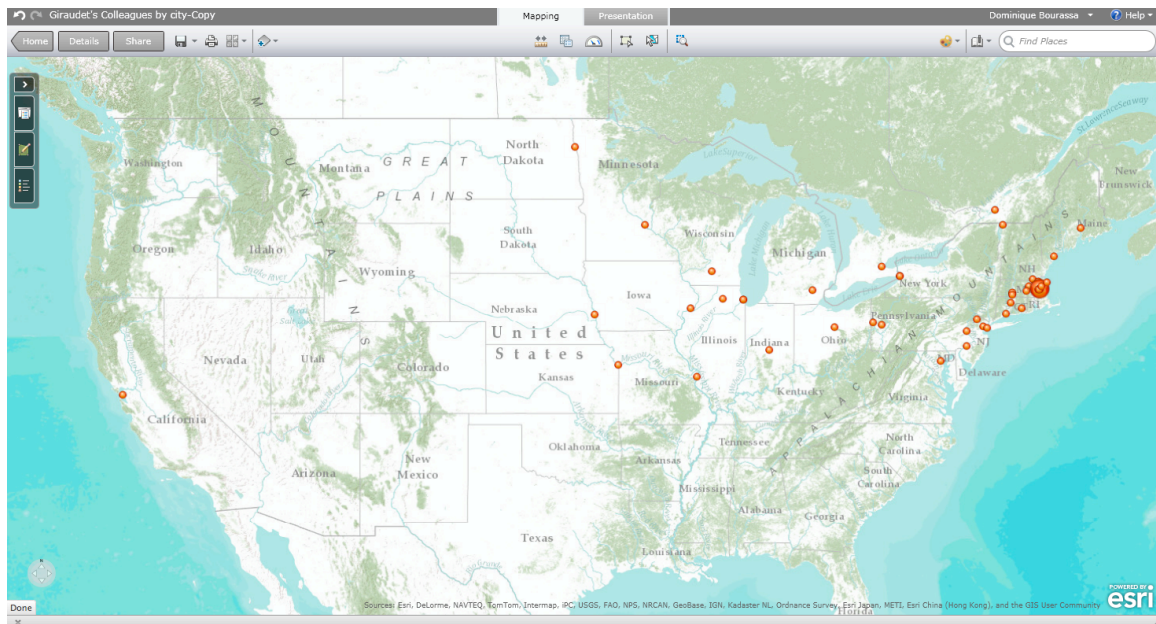


Figure 25: Giraudet's Colleagues in North America. ArcGIS Explorer Online, June 9, 2012

Table 3: Cities with more than 5 teachers and schools

| CITY              | COUNTRY       | NUMBER OF TEACHERS |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Paris             | France        | 103                |
| Berlin            | Germany       | 98                 |
| Vienna            | Austria       | 44                 |
| Naples            | Italy         | 19                 |
| Budapest          | Hungary       | 15                 |
| Karlsruhe         | Germany       | 12                 |
| Lyon              | France        | 8                  |
| Frankfurt am Main | Germany       | 8                  |
| Boston            | United States | 8                  |
| Brussels          | Belgium       | 6                  |

I was hoping that Giraudet’s directory would document the “growing feminization of the [dance teaching] profession” that occurred in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>40</sup> Giraudet does list some women in his directory. However, it is difficult to know their exact numbers because he does not always add a teacher’s first name or title such as Mrs. or Miss. Still, I was able to identify 88 women in 7 countries (see Table 4). This number includes 7 women who were active Parisian husband-and-wife teaching teams.<sup>41</sup> One of the most interesting women Giraudet mentioned is Mlle Dumur who teaches in seven different towns (see Figure 26).

Table 4: Number of Women Teachers by Country

| Country       | Total |
|---------------|-------|
| Austria       | 10    |
| England       | 1     |
| France        | 53    |
| Germany       | 2     |
| Italy         | 5     |
| Portugal      | 1     |
| United States | 16    |

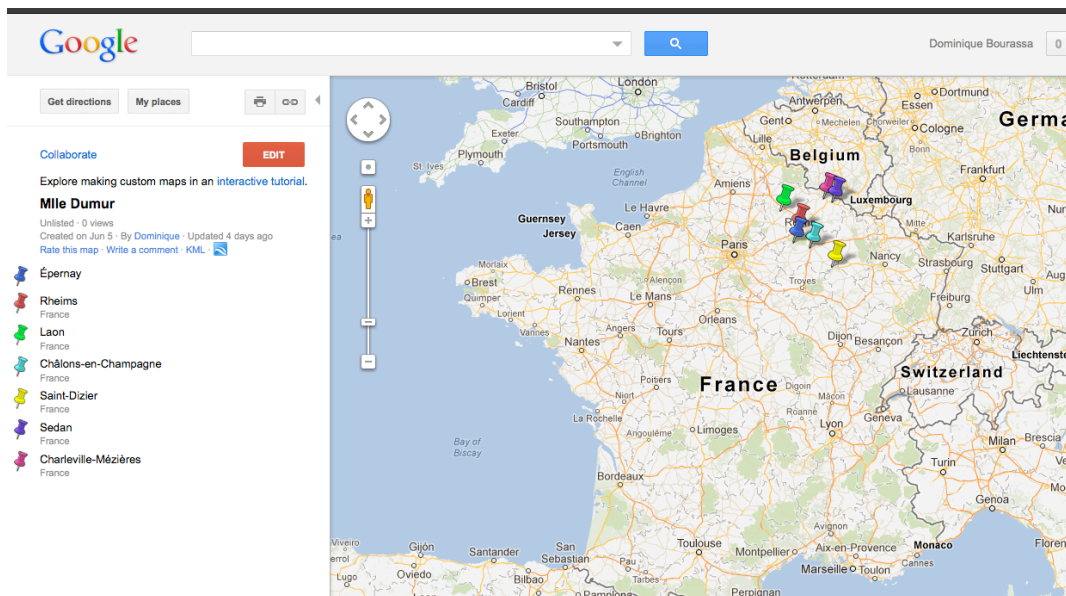


Figure 26: Mlle Dumur’s Teaching Footprints. Google Maps, June 10, 2012

Many questions come to mind: How did Giraudet compile his list of teachers and schools? Did he meet teachers at dance contests, conventions and congresses, or at world's fairs, such as the 1897 Exposition internationale de Bruxelles?<sup>42</sup> Did he use city directories or directories of dancing associations such as the Dancing Masters of America?<sup>43</sup> Since 90 of the 98 teachers listed in Berlin are said to have been working there in 1899, it seems quite probable that Giraudet had a directory handy for this city. But for small towns, in particular those in France, one could assume that teachers working there traveled to Paris where they met Giraudet<sup>44</sup> or that he traveled to cities during the summer.<sup>45</sup>

One may also wonder why Giraudet gathered such a list of names and addresses. This may be explained in part by the fact that he was trying to enlist potential members for an international society of dance teachers he aimed to create, in order to bring uniform professionalism to the field.<sup>46</sup> Another possible reason might be that Giraudet wants to acknowledge the creative spirit inherent in dance teaching: dance teachers often invent exercises, methods, and choreographies, but don't always write them down or publish them.<sup>47</sup> In his introduction to his "library," Giraudet asks dance masters and teachers to let him know not only about their new books published, but also about "the dances they created, and their future works in dance and method" in order to update his "library" in future editions of his treatise.<sup>48</sup> With its inclusion of such works, along with the works he owns and the ones he desires, Giraudet's published library is in effect an ideal virtual world library of dance knowledge.

## Conclusion

As a nosy person snooping in Giraudet's library, I was able to judge him by the content of his shelves. However, doing so leads to many unanswered questions that can become new paths to explore Giraudet's life and works. In fact, I feel I have just scratched the surface of knowing who Giraudet is as an author and a dance teacher.

Nevertheless, Giraudet's library catalog is a fascinating source of information. His library presents an unparalleled conspectus of dance teaching, book collecting, business, and international networks radiating from Paris--the historical urban center of the dance world--in the *fin-de-siècle*.

Copyright 2012, Dominique Bourassa

## Notes

1. This paper was accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation with animations. Most of the pictures from this presentation have been inserted in this paper. A preliminary report on this subject, titled "Unpacking Eugène Giraudet's Library: A Work in Progress," was presented 12 Jan. 2012 at the meeting of the Research and Planning Committee of the Western European Studies Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries held during the

- American Library Association Midwinter Meeting in Dallas.
2. Eugene Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, tome II, *Grammaire de la danse et du bon ton à travers le monde et les siècles depuis le singe jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: [author], 1900), pp. 534-536. See also, Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, pp. 1-2. Other works by Giraudet include: Eugène Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, 7th ed. (Paris: Imprimerie A. Veutin, [1894?]); Giraudet, *La danse, la tenue, le maintien l'hygiène & l'éducation*, 55th ed. (Paris: [author], [1897?]). These 3 books are available through the Library of Congress website: American Ballroom Companion: Dance Instruction Manuals, ca. 1490-1920 at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/dihtml/dihome.html>. Giraudet also published a serial: *Journal de la danse et du bon ton* (Paris: [author], 1905-1914).
  3. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. xiv, writes: "Tel qu'il est, mon ouvrage se présente au public comme l'inventaire le plus complet des choses de la danse. Mon but a été de lui offrir un guide sûr, un conseiller éclairé, une bibliothèque de la chorégraphie toujours prête à enseigner ; en un mot d'édifier sous une forme claire, facile aux recherches et accessible à toutes les intelligences, l'encyclopédie de l'art chorégraphique."
  4. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, frontispiece. The people dancing in the foreground are the late president of France, Félix François Faure (1841-1899) and his wife Berthe (1842-1920) and daughter, Lucie (1866-1913), with Tsar Nicholas II of Russia (1868-1918) and his wife, Alexandra Feodorovna Romanova (1872-1918) and daughter, princess Olga (1895-1918). Their presence celebrates the visit of the Tsar to Paris in order to lay the foundation stone of the Pont Alexandre III in commemoration of the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1894.
  5. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. [509]: "Ma bibliothèque sur la danse, contre-danse, etc., en tous temps, lieux et tous pays, traités, guide vade mecum, ouvrages, methods, feuilles, articles de journaux, plans, dessins, figures, gravures, illustrations, traités du bon ton, etc., chaque professeur à son casier par lettres alphabétiques et par noms d'auteurs et professeurs de danse, avec leurs noms et addresses, date, prix, etc."
  6. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 510.
  7. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 510.
  8. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 510.
  9. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 522-523.
  10. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 561.
  11. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 521.
  12. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 553.
  13. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 547.
  14. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 551.
  15. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, pp. 534-536.
  16. Note that some inaccurate dates have been corrected and others have been added using bibliographic tools. For instance, Giraudet's erroneous date of 1840 for Friedrich Albert Zorn's *Atlas der Tanzkunst* (Leipzig: J.J. Weber) has been corrected to 1887. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 567.
  17. The unidentified books include five manuscripts (two by Giraudet) that might be lost today. More research is needed before declaring that the others books are lost because Giraudet often makes spelling mistakes and sometimes gives generic titles for books, making it difficult to trace them.
  18. The mean is 10.76 francs per book and the median, 4 francs.
  19. Elizabeth Parinet, *Une histoire de l'édition à l'époque contemporaine (XIX-XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2004), p. 133, note 21: "Il est impossible de proposer un coefficient multiplicateur qui convertisse en francs ou en euros actuels ces prix et ces salaires, car ils

- n'ont de sens que dans un environnement économique donné.”
20. There is a huge increase in production of practical advice books during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Parinet, p. 66.
  21. See Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, pp. 573-581 and pp. [585]-614.
  22. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. [585].
  23. The book of which Giraudet owns most copies is an anti-dance tract: Brioux de Saint-Laurent's *Quelques mots sur les danses modernes*. That Giraudet owns antidance tracts is not surprising. In order to fight attacks against dance, one has to know what they are. But why he would own five different editions of Brioux's work is a mystery. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 517.
  24. According to Gustave Desrat, *Dictionnaire de la danse historique, théorique, pratique et bibliographique* (Paris: Librairies-imprimeries réunies, 1895; facs. ed. Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1977), pp. [381]-382, private libraries rarely include dance books. The catalog of the public sale on May 27, 1867 of the library of French ballet master Edouard Carré (also Carey) is one of the richest catalogs with regard to dance that Desrat ever saw. Carré was able to rescue some of his dance books and manuscripts from the private sale. After his death, Charles Truinet dit Nutter (1828-1899) acquired many of these items for the Bibliothèque nationale de l'Opéra. Unfortunately, I have not been able to trace a copy of the public sale catalog.
  25. On book collecting in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century France, see Willa Z. Silverman, *The New Bibliopolis: French Book Collectors and the Culture of Print, 1890-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 2008. Private libraries greatly varied in size. Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880) owned 756 books at his death. The catalog of his library is posted on LibraryThing. <http://www.librarything.com/legacylibraries/profile/GustaveFlaubert>
  26. On late Victorian dance teachers teaching such subjects, see Theresa Jill Buckland, *Society Dancing: Fashionable Bodies in England, 1870-1920* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 76-77.
  27. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 535: “Boxe française de fantaisie pour le salon avec danse et défensive.” It seems that this book was never published.
  28. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 461; Carlo Blasis, *Manuel complet de la danse* (Paris, 1830; facs. ed. Paris: L. Laget, 1980), p. 104 and plate 1.
  29. Desrat, pp. 379-459.
  30. Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, p. 517.
  31. Desrat, p. 428.
  32. Consulting Desrat's Dictionnaire brings Giraudet to consult Charles Nutter (1828-1899), the librarian of the Bibliothèque nationale de l'Opéra. Indeed in a letter dated May 9, 1898, Giraudet asks Nutter to give him a catalogue of books on choreography referring to Desrat's *Dictionnaire de la danse*. One may also conclude that Giraudet must have acquired Desrat's *Dictionnaire* sometime between 1895 and May 9 1898. Giraudet, [1 lettre d'E. Giraudet à Charles Nutter, 9 mai 1898], Bibliothèque nationale de France, FONDSNUTTER-309(LAS341), <ark:/12148/btv1b84199252>.
  33. Desrat, pp. 393-394.
  34. Giraudet also lists the price of 19 other books but does not give the addresses where these books are for sale.
  35. Raoul-Léonor, comte de Lignerolles (1817-1893) is said to have possessed one of the finest private libraries in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1894, his library was sold at auction for 1,136,407 francs. “La bibliothèque du comte de Vignerolles,” *Bibliothèque de l'École de Chartres*, t. 55 (1894), pp. 430-431. Retrieved Jan. 16, 2011 from Persée



[http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/bec\\_0373-](http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/bec_0373-6237_1894_num_55_1_462780)

[6237\\_1894\\_num\\_55\\_1\\_462780](http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/bec_0373-6237_1894_num_55_1_462780). *Catalogue des livres et précieux manuscrits composant la bibliothèque de feu M. le comte de Lignerolles* (Paris: Porquet, 1894).

36. All bookstores are walking-distance from Giraudet's dance school: there is approximately a 20-minute walk from Giraudet's school to the farthest bookstore on the Right Bank, the Librairie Lartic and a 37-minute walk to the farthest bookstore on the Left Bank, Théophile Bélin.
37. This number is approximate because there might be a few duplicates and some teachers are listed as "MM," "Mmes."
38. Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, p. 532.
39. Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, p. 529 and 537.
40. Buckland, p. 93.
41. Giraudet, *Traité de la danse*, p. 529 and p. 537.
42. Many dance contests took place in France in late 19<sup>th</sup> century. A Grand Concours National de Danses, for example, was held in Tours in 1892. Book number 89 in Giraudet's library contains the rules, registration form, and program of this contest: "Concours national de danses le 7 août 1892; règlement général, lettre d'adhésion, programme du concours organisé par les Sociétés Chorégraphiques et l'Union Chorégraphique de Tours" (Tours : Impr. F. Gouraud, 1892).
43. In a different section of his *Grammaire de la danse*, Giraudet (pp. 568-569) includes a list of members of the "Association nationale américaine des Maîtres de danse des États-Unis et du Canada" and the dances they created. This list seems to have been copied from one of the Association's publications. Since it does not include all the names listed in Giraudet's library catalog and does not give exact street addresses, it cannot be the main source used by Giraudet to establish the names in his library catalog. Also, this list mentions a forthcoming convention in June 1895, while 44 out of 66 American teachers in Giraudet's catalog are given a date of 1897. The only publication published by the *Dancing Masters of America* during this period I have traced in libraries so far is *The Terpsichorean: Newsy Technical Journal for Dancing Instructors, Students, Ballroom Owners* (Chicago: American Dance Pub. House, 1897 to 1935). The New York Public Library and the Library of the University of Wisconsin hold some issues of this journal. The association also published *Minutes and Directory of the Dancing Masters of America, Inc., and affiliated clubs* ([s.l.]: Dancing Masters of America, [s.d.]). The earliest surviving example I have found so far dates from 1938 and is held at the library of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
44. For example, Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 609, mentions Guiseppe Sanasi Conti's friendly visit on 12 Sept. 1899.
45. In the "Règlement du Cours de danse Giraudet," Giraudet (*Grammaire de la danse*, p. 400) writes: "Pendant l'été, le professeur se réserve également le droit de fermer son cours, ou de se faire remplacer par ses adjointes et adjoints, si le Cours ne ferme pas de l'année. En se faisant inscrire, les élèves acceptant le present règlement." On dance teachers' work schedules, Buckland (p. 76) writes, "The majority of urban teachers followed the long-established practice of regular teaching from autumn through to early summer, holding weekly classes at their own premises and traveling to schools and private homes in the vicinity. Beyond this, in a long-established practice, summer months in the dancing teacher's year were devoted to knowledge and skills refreshment, at home or abroad, the more successful teachers occasionally tutoring provincial or less informed colleagues."
46. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 609.
47. He does not claim to have choreographed ballroom dances; he writes that he has "created"

them. His generic phrase for what we would call a choreographer is “Auteur de danse.” For example, he refers to Henri Delvallée (b. 1852) as “auteur des Lanciers polkés.” Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 510 and 525.

48. Giraudet, *Grammaire de la danse*, p. 509. Giraudet’s catalog includes books without call numbers or asterisks (sign indicating books he wants to acquire). These could be books he knows exists but does not intend to purchase.

## Bibliography

American Ballroom Companion: Dance Instruction Manuals, ca. 1490-1920. Music Division, Library of Congress. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/dihtml/dihome.html>

“La bibliothèque du comte de Vignerolles,” *Bibliothèque de l’École de Chartres*, t. 55 (1894), pp. 430-431. Retrieved Jan. 16, 2011 from Persée [http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/bec\\_0373-6237\\_1894\\_num\\_55\\_1\\_462780](http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/bec_0373-6237_1894_num_55_1_462780)

Blasis, Carlo. *Manuel complet de la danse*. Paris, 1830; facs. ed. Paris: L. Laget, 1980.

Buckland, Theresa Jill. *Society Dancing: Fashionable Bodies in England, 1870-1920*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

*Dance Masters of America. The terpsichorean; newsy technical journal for dancing instructors, students, ballroom owners*. Chicago: American Dance Pub. House, 1897-1935.

Desrat, Gustave. *Dictionnaire de la danse historique, théorique, pratique et bibliographique*. Paris: Librairies-imprimeries réunies, 1895; facs. ed. Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1977.

Giraudet, Eugène. *La danse, la tenue, le maintien l'hygiène & l'education*, 55th ed. Paris: [author], [1897?].

----- . *Journal de la danse et du bon ton*. Paris: [author], 1905-1914.

----- . [1 lettre d'E. Giraudet à Charles Nutter, 9 mai 1898], Bibliothèque nationale de France, FONDSNUITTER-309(LAS341), <ark:/12148/btv1b84199252>.

----- . *Traité de la danse*, 7th ed. Paris: Imprimerie A. Veutin, [1894?]

----- . *Traité de la danse*, tome II, *Grammaire de la danse et du bon ton à travers le monde et les siècles depuis le singe jusqu’à nos jours*. Paris: [author], 1900.

LibraryThing. <http://www.librarything.com>

Parinet, Elizabeth. *Une histoire de l'édition à l'époque contemporaine (XIX-XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2004.

Silverman, Willa Z. *The New Bibliopolis: French Book Collectors and the Culture of Print, 1890-1914*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.

Zorn, Friedrich Albert. *Atlas der Tanzkunst*. Leipzig: J.J. Weber, 1887.

Address for correspondence:

Dominique Bourassa  
Catalog Librarian for French Language  
PO Box 208240  
New Haven CT 06520-8240  
[dominique.bourassa@yale.edu](mailto:dominique.bourassa@yale.edu)