

Laurence Senelick

# Ballroom Frenzy and the Clodoche Quadrille

For all the lip-service French culture pays to reason and logic, it undergoes periodic eruptions of *déraison* or unreason. In the wake of Napoleon's defeat, ballroom dancing began to be infiltrated by such unbridled popular dances as the *cancan* and the *chahut*. Exuberant, even bacchanalian physical display served as a safety-valve in a heavily censored society. In the Second Empire, four working-class amateurs introduced the high-kicking, parodic Clodoche quadrille at the Paris Opéra. A non-verbal equivalent of the Marx Brothers, they became bywords through the Western hemisphere of zany, comic demonstrations of the hysteric convulsions described by the medical establishment. Laurence Senelick is Fletcher Professor Emeritus of Drama and Oratory at Tufts University, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a contributor to the *International Encyclopedia of Dance*. His many books include *British Music Hall: A Bibliography* (1981), *The Age and Stage of George L. Fox* (1999), and *Cabaret Performance 1890–1940* (2001–2005).

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ON A PARISIAN spring night in the late 1850s, the crowd of holiday merrymakers at the Paris Opéra ball was startled by the invasion of a grotesque quartet. As the intruders took the floor, the spectators wondered at their outrageous get-ups and frenzied dance moves. The male pair was comprised of a fireman in an outsized helmet, his jacket too short, his trousers too baggy, and a kilted Highlander adorned with a bulbous nose, bushy side-whiskers, and two prominent buck teeth. Their 'female' partners, in extravagant drag, were a Norman wet-nurse, coiffed by a gigantic bonnet, and a mussel harvester sporting a creel on her back. The Highlander was named Clodoche, the fireman Flageolet, the wet-nurse La Normande, and the fishwife La Comète.<sup>1</sup> Collectively, they would come to be known as Les Clodoches. Their zany seduction parodies, spring-heeled antics, and dizzying convolutions became a byword for eccentric dance, and influenced a generation of variety performers (Figure 1).

## Unreason and Balls

Michel Foucault may have entitled his study of madness in eighteenth-century France *Folie*

*et déraison* because in the French intellectual system 'unreason' may be regarded as a form of insanity. The traditional allegiance to Cartesian logic favours an orderly and rational way of thinking. Although this may be the general impression of French conventions in literature and art, it ignores the strain of unruly, mentally subversive, and irrational phenomena that erupts into the mainstream from Rabelais to Oulipo. In the Age of Reason itself, the Convulsionaries of the St Médard churchyard, the hoaxes of Cagliostro, Mesmer, and the Comte de St-Germain, and the scatological farces of the fairground show-booths undermined claims of Enlightenment triumphant. The nineteenth century, for all its positivist belief in progress, embraced spiritualism and occultism. At the *fin de siècle*, the poker-faced *fumistes* played insulting jokes on the audiences of the *cabaret artistique*. Jarry and his 'Pataphysics, 'the science of exceptions', followed by the Dadaists and Surrealists, promoted black humour and 'Anglo-Saxon' nonsense. This seems to have culminated in the oft-derided French appreciation of Jerry Lewis. Yet, as one modern commentator insists, 'Jerry Lewis connects the French with their past in a profound way.'<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 1.** The Bal de l'Opéra, Paris, featuring the Clodoche Quadrille. Drawn and lithographed by A. Morlon; published by Becquet. Author's collection.

A physical manifestation of 'unreason', serving as a useful safety-valve for social pressures, has always been dance. The more intricate and regimented the forms of social and theatrical dance became, the more unbridled and exuberant the alternatives, even when licensed. In Paris, after the downfall of Napoleon, this meant the public balls and dance halls, which exulted in high kicking, acrobatic and sensual gyrations, frantic velocity, and bacchanalian licence. One observer concluded that this paroxysmal movement was a natural but otherwise repressed impulse, 'an instinctive dance to be found among all peoples, and which is only a sort of unspoken testimony of the erotic passions a man hypocritically dissimulates beneath the customary decorum of his life'.<sup>3</sup>

Social dancing became unpopular with French men during the 1820s; it required too much instruction and training, and its patrician finesse was out of keeping with the martial

tone of the times. Under the *ancien régime*, dancing had been one of the traditional accomplishments of the nobly born and those who emulated them. The *embourgeoisement* of post-Revolutionary manners made a show of scorning the aristocratic origins of ballroom dancing:

He . . . who would today bring to the practice of dance the same pretensions and the same refinement as in the past would be more ridiculous than admirable because dance has changed character; it has ceased to be an exceptional and difficult art and become a general amusement within reach of all. Henceforth dance has assumed, if one may say so, a truly social demeanour, in the sense that it addresses indiscriminately all classes of society.<sup>4</sup>

This alleged democratization of dance greatly affected the execution of the standard figures. The most frequently performed ballroom dance was the quadrille, in which eight to sixteen dancers, in two sets, sketched a pattern

of steps resembling a country dance. It was considered the French dance *par excellence*, 'the lot of a nation which admits to restraint in pleasure, that conceives it only under certain conditions of order, propriety, and which always wishes to reserve a place for wit'.<sup>5</sup> This vaunted order and propriety were under siege as soon as Louis Philippe mounted the throne in 1830.

The July monarchy admitted members of the National Guard into court balls; a 'careless running style' was thereby introduced, and the finesse of those who had attended dancing classes was mocked. The measured monotony of the quadrille was suddenly infiltrated by loose-limbed and extravagant motions. It is no coincidence that the word *cancan* first appears in print in this regard in 1830: 'This name has been given to a sort of dance of epilepsy or *delirium tremens*'.<sup>6</sup> The clinical imagery, as we shall see, would stick.

What had been a show of French civility began to take on the attributes of physical display and intimacy hitherto associated with foreign or even savage practices. As often happens in such cases, what was once a participatory recreation assumed performative elements, with certain dancers displaying spectacular virtuosity.<sup>7</sup> This was cultivated chiefly in the *bals publiques* or open-entry dance halls.

These *bals* proliferated in the poorer neighbourhoods of Paris, their habitués students, working-men, and grisettes. As early as November 1830, soon after Louis Philippe's ascendancy, the Paris Prefecture issued an ordinance that required the organizers of public balls to furnish proof of their 'moral' character and to pay guardians of public order to be present. This applied both to elite balls at the Opéra and to the *guinguettes* (honky-tonks). Further regulations fixed days on which dances could be held and restricted costumes, masks, and cross-dressing to the period of Carnival. Article 330 of the French penal code, which criminalized affronts to public *pudeur* or decency, was cited as authority for policing 'immoral dances', specified as the *cancan* and the *chahut*.<sup>8</sup>

'The *cancan* is the art of lifting one's skirt, the *chahut* the art of lifting one's leg.'<sup>9</sup> This definition comes from later in the century, and constituted a distinction without a difference in the eyes of the authorities. Both dances

began as a masculine display of agility, startling but morally innocuous. The expressive nature of the music encouraged extreme corporeal expression associated not with middle-class decorum, but with the covert insurgency of the proletariat. At first, youths dominated with athletic displays of high kicking. In the Goncourt brothers' novel *Germinie Lacerteux*, Jupillon, the lover of the housemaid heroine, publicly demonstrates his virility by kicking above his head. Gradually women moved centre-stage. Since female undergarments of the period, infrequently worn, were split, the *chahut*'s display became more blatant, and the *cancan* a more frequent substitute. (The two were soon merged.) The authorities were scandalized by women indulging in unruly behaviour associated with males. They claimed it conduced to public disorder, a recurrent ploy of municipal governments to shut down popular entertainments (bans on early kabuki and Elizabethan theatre reflect similar concerns). Disturbances were duly reported in the legal periodical the *Gazette des tribunaux*.<sup>10</sup>

The exuberant displays in these low dives percolated upward to affect – in the view of some, to contaminate – the Opéra balls. Originally a diversion for the ruling class, they no longer enjoyed government subsidies and needed funding. So they were offered to a paying crowd every Saturday in Carnival, with the clientele urged to attend in fancy dress at ten francs a ticket. To recover its popularity, the Opéra hired the celebrity conductor Philippe Musard, allowing him to take charge both of the dancing and of an orchestra increased to gigantic proportions. Musard helped to raise the hysteria quotient by introducing such Spike Jones-like stunts as breaking chairs in rhythm, making the dancers imitate a locomotive, and shooting off a gun to signal the final *galop* in the quadrille.<sup>11</sup>

From 1841 on, outdoor carnival masquerades were eclipsed by these balls: merry-makers saved their energy for dancing in the evening. This suited the authorities, who assumed, erroneously, that indoor social cohesion could be better imposed on the miscellaneous crowd of 'laughing students, serious journalists, hirsute painters, get-rich-quick industrialists, gleeful counter-jumpers,



startled strangers, fantastical literati, dancing notary's clerks'.<sup>12</sup> As Charles Bernheimer puts it, the Opéra Ball was an event 'where classes and sexes mixed in a mad transgressive medley, [and] was notorious as a stage for the alluring exhibition of bodies actually or potentially for sale (the uncertainty was part of the intrigue)'.<sup>13</sup> Balzac was only one of the writers and artists who exploited it as the setting for promiscuous social encounters. The Goncourts in their novel *Henriette Maréchale* (1865) typically went further in identifying the Bal de l'Opéra as the hub of Parisian corruption.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, as one essayist noted, the presence of a police superintendent stationed at the Bal Musard caused 'the most ungainly and unbridled *Cachucha* instantly to become contained and virginal'.<sup>15</sup>

A change in costuming also served to intensify the grotesque element of carnival as celebrated at the Opéra balls. The officially sanctioned dress code was black tailcoat and white tie for gentlemen and the all-encompassing domino for women.<sup>16</sup> These rules began to be relaxed, allowing for the increasingly popular *débardeur* or stevedore outfit. Available to both men and women, but much more favoured by the latter (as Gavarni's drawings testify), it consisted of a loose blouse, velvet trousers roomy in the leg but tight in the seat, a cummerbund, and a policeman's cap worn back-to-front. Outside of Carnival, women needed special authorization from the Prefect of Police to wear trousers or breeches. As one dance historian has noted: 'In the social space of the bals de l'Opéra, those dressed in dominos were afforded access because of their pre-existing social status. The behaviours accessible to them while *en travestie* [sic] would, without their costume, have carried severe social penalty, and yet in costume these behaviours were allowed – even encouraged'.<sup>17</sup>

### Chicard

Over time, however, even these disguises became commonplace, 'monotonous and voiceless'.<sup>18</sup> A new type of carnival costume was devised when Alexandre Lévêque, a wholesale leather merchant in the rue

Saint-Denis, transformed himself into Chicard (Figure 2). One foot was shod in a long ragged boot, the other in a brand-new polished pump with a silver buckle. Trousers legs and sleeves on his workman's smock were capacious, the latter adorned with large Pierrot pompoms. The tailcoat of a *petit marquis* was worn over it. Chicard's headgear was an oversized bronze helmet of cardboard, topped by a battered feather. This asymmetry of the tattered and the stylish, the obsolete and the up-to-date, recalled the pied motley of jesters and the exaggerated fashions of court dwarves. To be *chicard* came to mean sporting a 'strange, impossible, conspicuous costume, a bizarre, astonishing, incredible outfit', more tatterdemalion than elegant.<sup>19</sup> Like Petruccio's wedding outfit, it was a deliberate affront to convention.

Chicard's dancing was equally outlandish: 'frightening assemblages of strident cries, convulsive laughs, guttural dissonances, unimaginable contortions'.<sup>20</sup> A middle-aged tradesman was giving himself over to



**Figure 2.** Chicard. Wood engraving from a drawing by Gavarni. From *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* (1841). Author's collection.

shameless exhibitionism. This donning of rags, display of boneless postures, and general unbuttoning revived the popularity of participation in Carnival events. Chicard invigorated and rejuvenated the Opéra Ball and its epigones:

He's the type of the Parisian carnival, so gay, so noisy, so winning, so filled with go and gaiety. Before Chicard the carnival had no soul, no thought, no character, no style, in short: carnival was a few pallid musicians, then people absurdly accoutred, or else dominos, dark and gloomy, accompanied by men in black.<sup>21</sup>

Former dandies now attended the balls in ribboned hats, huge fuzzy wigs, and similarly mismatched ensembles, as titled aristocrats mingled anonymously with artists and labourers.<sup>22</sup> It was unfashionable to wear the same costume two years in a row, and inspiration was often found in topical literature or politics. Men favoured the picturesque garb of Polish lancers or Neapolitan fishermen. By the end of Louis Philippe's reign in 1848, two million false noses were sold in Paris annually, with the remainder going to the provinces and for export. The politician Guizot considered entertaining bids for a monopoly in false noses.<sup>23</sup>

Chicard's example inspired certain strata of society to emulate the choreographic high-jinks at home. In his novel *L'Éducation sentimentale*, Flaubert describes a masquerade party in the *hôtel particulier* of a kept woman, where the musicians play like automata set in motion by forces beyond their control:

Deslaurier flung himself about among the dancers like a big marionette . . . The piano was pulled from the entrance hall into the drawing-room. La Vamaz sat down at it, and accompanied by the Choir Boy who was beating the tambourine, she furiously launched into a quadrille, pounding the keys like a horse pawing the ground, and swaying from the waist, the better to mark the time. The Marshal's Lady dragged Frédéric, Hussonnet strutted about, the She-*Débardeur* went double-jointed like a clown, the Pierrot behaved like an orang-utan, and the Wild Woman, arms outstretched, imitated the rocking of a long-boat. Finally, they all stopped, exhausted, and someone opened a window.<sup>24</sup>

Although journalists proclaimed a new Golden Age for the Opéra Ball, the authorities had other views; for them 'the emphasis on

freedom of movement and a lack of control signified the potential for revolution and political chaos'.<sup>25</sup> A report from the chief of police in 1841 specified that 'the first ball was extremely disorderly: we had to expel some forty persons'.<sup>26</sup> In the following year: 'The dances have been very animated, generally quite indecent; we expelled whatever went to extremes, the style accepted in a *guingette*.' By 1846 the scandal had metastasized:

The enormities which the dancers of both sexes of a quadrille permit themselves excite continual laughter and applause which are not slow in attracting the attention of the entire house. It was the singular and the most monstrous thing to which the disguised persons gave themselves over. In particular, a young woman, disguised in a Marquise de Pompadour style, was of revolting cynicism.<sup>27</sup>

The police arrested her, escorting her home to change before being taken to prison. She threw herself out of her bedroom window.

Despite the reference to 'dancers of both sexes', as the Chicard fad faded, males began to recede into the background, and, as the police reports indicate, stars arose from the demi-monde. Céleste Mogador, la Reine Pomaré, and Rigolboche became the idols of the crowd, making the connection between sensuality and hyperactive dance all the more conspicuous. By the 1850s, the cancan was seen increasingly as a female speciality, and, with its display of undergarments and perhaps more, sexually arousing and morally reprehensible.<sup>28</sup>

At the Opéra Ball, which now began at midnight, the quadrille, danced as a chahut or cancan, took on a violent and improvisatory character, with Musard borne in triumph. The ball would end as the dancers took hands in an immense farandole which broke like a wave, re-formed, and finally dissolved outdoors at dawn.<sup>29</sup> That the Opéra balls were sites of 'anything goes' is suggested by a note made by the conservative journalist Charles Maurice in 1848:

Today I ask of the Opéra balls that no one come in wearing the horrible rags allowed there; that drunks not be admitted; that insults do not stand in for licensed familiarity; especially that obscene words and acts be severely banished from these

gatherings in which prevail bad manners, the corruption of youth, and the shame of a country which seems to care as little for public decency as for its reputation abroad.<sup>30</sup>

Foreign observers gaped at dancers 'moving like a worm on a hook, shaking so much that their clothes, if not their muscles, would burst'.<sup>31</sup> Such spasmodic movement was commonly characterized as an anomaly. The much-resorted-to simile throughout the century was clinical: the dancers were not possessed (a religious term), but convulsive. Recall the reference to Chicard's 'convulsive laughter'. Gautier wondered at the torrent of Pierrots and she-*débardeurs* shaking the floor-boards like a charge of cavalry:

This is what it costs to have fun these days: one needs, by dint of frisking about, cutting capers, extravagant dislocations, tossing the head, disjuncting the neck, to bring on a kind of cerebral congestion: this kinetic inebriation or gymnastic delirium has something strange and supernatural about it. You think you're watching the afflicted attacked by chorea or St Vitus's dance. We have been present at Blidah and in the Haousch of Ben-Kaddour, at the epileptic somersaults of the Aissaoua, those terrible convulsives. We have seen at Constantine the dance to conjure up the djinns, but all that is tame in comparison with the Parisian cachucha.<sup>32</sup>

Twenty years later Edmond de Goncourt compared a woman dancing at the Eldorado with a patient from the Salpêtrière hospital. Twenty years after that, Dr Charcot gave public demonstrations there of the second stage of hysteria, which he labelled acrobatic contortions 'clownism'. Throughout the early 1880s, *bals des folles* ('madwomen's balls') were held at the hospital annually.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, the French equivalent of the music hall, the *caf' conc'*, featured what was called 'the epileptic style' of dancing and gesticulation.<sup>34</sup>

With the *coup d'état* of 1851 and Louis-Napoléon's ascension to monarchy, decorum was newly imposed on the Opéra balls. Isaac Strauss was appointed *chef des bals* in 1853 with a mandate to re-institute good taste. Opening time was moved to 10 p.m. and prices of admission raised. As a journalist observed: 'All informal outfits will be rigorously turned away at the door', ladies will be 'admitted only in dominos or male dress' and their escorts 'in evening dress, black coat and

trousers'.<sup>35</sup> No more men got up as foreigners or derelicts; refined waltzes replaced the holiday pandemonium. This sobriety proved unpopular and affected revenues; by the mid-1850s political and social stability had led to a general relaxation of manners. Strauss did away with the dress code, replaced Mozart and Verdi with Offenbach, and, to the dismay of the management, programmed the Clodoche quadrille (Figure 3).

### Les Clodoches

When they first invaded the Opéra Ball, it was their outlandish costumes that distinguished the Clodoches from the conventional Pierrots, Harlequins and dominos. A circle was made around them, the onlookers clapping and laughing. Once they had gone into their dancing, however, mirth turned to stupefaction. The velocity, extension, and variety of their moves left onlookers panting with laughter and amazement. It was especially the figure of the *cavalier seul*, with its foot-stamping and contortions, splits and leaps, that provoked the greatest enthusiasm. As it happened, the Clodoches were performing beneath the 'loge infernal' leased by the aristocratic Jockey Club; its members applauded uproariously and the Duc de Grammont-Caderousse invited them to supper at the elegant Maison d'Or, thus launching them as a fashion.<sup>36</sup>

Clodoche was the brain-child of a wood-engraver and joiner named Clodomir Ricart, who was making twenty francs a day in the rue Popincourt and who later registered for classes at the École de Médecine. His partners at the workbench had artistic aspirations: Aléxis Bouver would write novels, and Luc become the actor Luce of the Folies-Dramatiques. Already nicknamed Clodoche, Ricart was so skinny that Aurélien Scholl later called him 'delirihomo tremens'.<sup>37</sup> His one diversion was dancing, which he performed solo every Saturday in neighbourhood dance halls; his indefatigable muscles and exuberance enabled him to meet the female star Rigolboche, who introduced him to her wealthy patrons. Ricart teamed up with fellow craftsmen Liard, a medal founder, Michallet, a carver of cane handles, and Lord,





**Figure 3.** Isaac Strauss framed by the Clodoches. Caricature by André Gill, *La Lune* (6 January 1867). Author's collection.

a shoe salesman, who met every Saturday in the local venues (Figure 4).<sup>38</sup> Their first appearances as an eccentric foursome were at the Salle Barthémély, the Salle Ventadour, the Casino Cadet, the Château des Fleurs, and the Casino d'Asnières. After their debut at the Opéra, in costumes they had devised and sewn themselves, they performed there for a year, dancing beneath whichever box made a request, but for free. The first money they earned was when the Emperor invited them to the Tuileries and, after their performance, presented Clodoche with twenty-five louis in an envelope stamped with the imperial arms.

According to legend, one night they discovered that self-designated 'female partners' had been collecting more than forty louis a

night from the Opéra Ball spectators. Newly aware, they demanded money from the management; after a month's lay-off, they got it. Over time, their nightly fee rose from twenty francs to three hundred. A number of lucrative theatrical engagements as a speciality act began in 1864 in a revival of an 1842 melodrama, *Paris la nuit*, at the Théâtre de la Gaîté for 200 francs a performance.<sup>39</sup>

The Clodoches performed on numerous special occasions: at the Bal des Grisettes, the Bal des Carrotiers, and a Fête des Parapluies organized by Bernard Latte.<sup>40</sup> Engaged in Lyons for a week, they were held over for a month. They even played Barcelona and puritanical Geneva. A disdainful reporter for London's *Vanity Fair* reported seeing them at



**Figure 4.** Clodoche. Carte-de-visite photograph by Charlet & Jacotin, Paris. Author's collection.

the Opéra during a *Bal des Allemandes*, which twitted the Prussian foe: 'They're not amusing but it's a spectacle that must be seen once.'<sup>41</sup> The Clodoches reminded him of lunatics at Bedlam or Charenton, but he shrewdly noted that, in the Paris of Napoleon III, 'freedom to dance replaces freedom of the press'.<sup>42</sup>

As is common with fads, Clodoche became a ubiquitous speciality act and a brand. In *La Revue pour rien, ou Roland à Ronge Veau* by Clairville, Girardin, and Ernest Blum, with music by Hervé, which opened at the Bouffes-Parisiens on 27 December 1864, a character named Nini Clodoche claims to have danced at the Gaîté next to her brother, a mussel farmer. The original foursome was featured in another end-of-year revue by Clairville and Blum, this one with music by

Victor Chéri (*La Lanterne Magique*, Le Châtelet, 8 December 1865); its fifteenth tableau opened with a cancan of the future, 'La Danse du progrès'. In this international ballet, 'all the characters of ancient times who first had averted their eyes in scorn, mix enthusiastically in the final cancan'.

In 1866, another Clairville and Blum year-end revue, *Le Diable boiteux*, featured the Clodoches, and the following year they constituted the finale of *Le Bal du sauvage* at the Théâtre Montcarvel in Toulouse. The Belgian Martens Trio replicated the quadrille with children at the Paris Eldorado that same year.<sup>43</sup> Two one-act operettas, both titled *Clodoche et Normande*, appeared in 1867.<sup>44</sup> A series of stereographic slides, purporting to show life in Second Empire hell, had to include a tableau of 'Les Clodoches dans l'enfer'. They were replicated as metal figurines and even pipe bowls. *Les Clodoches*, a cheapjack pamphlet of 'new puns and witticisms performed on our stage by the leading comedians', was issued by one Torvic [i.e., Victor], 'escaped from Charenton' (Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7).

Legend soon attached to their name. It was reported that they were professional mutes who worked for a funeral parlour. Clodoche himself was rumoured to have travelled to Crete, to have fallen wounded by a Turkish bullet, to have married a rich Athenian woman. His name was said to be Dutilleul. The original troupe continued to vary their dances and costumes, which they carefully kept secret until revealed in performance. Ricart wrote and staged their scenarios, which came to grow into comic ballets: *Les Pompiers de Nanterre*, *Les Gendarmes de Landureau*, *Les Gommeux* ('The Dudes'), *Une Noce à Pouilly-les-Pucerons* ('A wedding party in Bugs-cum-Fleatown').<sup>45</sup> The characters – 'the stormy tulip', the 'Swiss admiral', and 'the Polish immigrant' – had something surrealistic about them (although the Swiss admiral had appeared in Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne*). *Les Pompiers de Nanterre* was featured in a one-act operetta parodying both Hervé and Offenbach, *Chilpérichole* by Louis Housset, staged at the Alcazar in January 1869.





**Figure 5.** Flageolet. Carte-de-visite photograph by Charlet & Jacotin, Paris. Author's collection.



**Figure 6.** La Comète. Carte-de-visite photograph by Charlet & Jacotin, Paris. Author's collection.

### Discovering a New World

After tours in the French provinces and Spain, the Clodoches decided to try their luck overseas. They made their first appearance at Niblo's Garden in New York City on 29 May 1869 as a speciality act inserted into Lydia Thompson's burlesque *Sindbad the Sailor* (Figure 8).<sup>46</sup> The *New York Clipper* reported that they were 'accorded such applause as is seldom accorded any performance'.<sup>47</sup> A Clodoche songster quickly went on sale. When the Niblo's run ended, they reprised their quadrille on 3 January 1870 at the French Theatre at the lofty price of five dollars, and continued to have success at Booth's and the Bowery Theatres (11 April 1870).<sup>48</sup> In July they travelled to Montreal.

The Clodoches had been preceded in New York by the Hungarian-born Kiralfy Troupe, brought over to enliven the long-

running pantomime *Humpty Dumpty*. The Kiralfys were expert at the limber extensions known as 'legmania' and it was only logical that reviewers would want to compare the newcomers with them. One reporter noted: 'The object of the Clodoche band is to be as funny as possible – of the Kiralfies, to learn nothing to be required in the way of sensational and saltational feats.'<sup>49</sup> In simpler terms, the French troupe was all about raising a laugh, the Hungarians all about physical dexterity.

When the Franco-Prussian War broke out in September 1870, the Clodoches returned home to serve as privates on the frontier; after the defeat, they returned to Paris. Their absence in no way diminished their American vogue. Parodies by blackface minstrel troupes became endemic, although it cannot have been easy to exaggerate what was already an extravagant exaggeration. The Clodhopper



**Figure 7.** La Normandie. Carte-de-visite photograph by Charlet & Jacotin, Paris. Author's collection.

Troupe could be seen at Kelly and Leon's; at Tammany Hall, John Wild and three associates took them off. The San Francisco Minstrels and Bryant's Minstrels continued the lampoons into 1872.<sup>50</sup> What enabled the longevity of this kind of satire was the piracy of the Clodoche brand to advertise any eccentric dance in variety. The Théâtre Comique was among the first offenders; on 21 February 1870 it staged a fairy pantomime called *Jocrisse, or Harlequin and the Genius of Plenty*. Its harlequinade was billed as featuring Dorst Clodoche as Clown, Semeli Clodoche as Pantaloon, Cholet Clodoche as Harlequin, and Constant Clodoche as Loreli. The following year the Globe Theatre offered *Clodoche and Freemason Exposed*.<sup>51</sup>

Soon, just as *Humpty Dumpty* had become the generic name for comic pantomimes played throughout the USA, so Clodoche was the label slapped on any number of acrobatic dance teams eager to cash in on a New York success. Throughout the early 1870s, 'Clodoche Quadrilles' were featured at Cole & Tooley's, the Olympia, Tony Pastors's, and the London Theatre, Bowery. That these were epigones is clear from the billing for one such quadrille at the Volksgarten in 1875, whose stars are listed as Zanfretta and John Kane. Another group calling itself the Four High Kickers played the Théâtre Comique in 1876. Even Amitié, Société de Secours mutuel de garçons restaurateurs de New York, a mutual-aid society for French waiters, staged a Grand Quadrille des Clodoches at the Teutonic Assembly Hall on 6 March 1874.<sup>52</sup>

A Clodoche troupe appeared as far afield as Terre Haute, Indiana, in February 1872. *Fascination*, featuring Annie Daisy and her troupe, was offering Clodoche dances in Brooklyn six years later.<sup>53</sup> In 1879, Jean, Carl, et Julian, a trio of 'Grotesque dancers and highkickers Les Vampiers' [sic], exhibited 'their original act Les Clodoches' at Woodward's Garden, San Francisco.<sup>54</sup> They may have been the same who appeared when the California Theatre attempted to stage a Parisian-style public 'Grand Bal Masqué' inspired by the presence in town of Marie Aimée's Opéra Bouffe troupe. A female columnist reported:

A man, dancing with the lady habited as a rider, was a gymnast evidently, for every now and then one of his long, black, spider legs went straight up like shot, as calmly as though he were shaking hands . . . Many of the setts [sic] ceased dancing and gathered round a quartette which formed a quadrille alone, dancing heads and sides, their feet going the whole time. It was what one would call 'loud'. They were 'clodoche' dancers, being a burlesque upon the dancing of French peasantry with two dressed as soldiers of an extremely improbably and exaggerated type. The other two wore calico dresses low-necked and short-sleeved, waists under their arms and skirts above the knees, rough muslin caps were on their heads, and one had a dreadful moustache. I never before witnessed such stepping, bounding, somersaulting, kicking, gesturing. It Was Disgusting. Their hideous man arms





**Figure 8.** Sheet music for *Sindbad the Sailor*. Note that the Scotsman has been replaced by a fanciful apothecary. Robert Cushman Butler Collection, Washington State University.

around each other's necks, such loose limbed motions, such suggestive winkings and beckonings and challenging, and they keeping up their steps till one wondered they didn't drop in their tracks.<sup>55</sup>

The all-male courtship rituals, which had rendered the movements anodyne in Paris, made them obscene in the Far West. Still, if objection was voiced to males dancing together in a shameless fashion, even greater umbrage was taken at females similarly engaged. In Louisiana law, *clodoche* became the standard term for indecent dances performed by women; the so-called Storyville Ordinance banned collectively 'cancan, clodoche, and similar female dancing'.<sup>56</sup>

### Across the Pond

The Clodoches had first appeared in London when the actor-manager George Vining brought them over to enliven his production of Watts Phillips's melodrama *The Huguenot Captain*,

which ran at the Princess's Theatre in the summer of 1866. They opened the second act as 'A Callot Dance', costumed as the figures in that artist's *Balli di Sfessania*. Rather than performing their usual quadrille on a decorous English stage, they executed a 'Ballet of the Bohemians', solo variations on a modified cancan (Figure 9). According to a reporter, 'these dancers, far from exciting disgust . . . were the success of the piece'.<sup>57</sup> *The Era* believed their performances

were best described by explaining them as indescribable. Their odd, fantastic movements, in which the limbs are thrown into every possible position with unprecedented flexibility, and their bizarre action, which is pervaded by a graphic power giving a significant meaning to every turn, kept the house roaring with laughter, and elicited one universal demand for repetition. With these dancers alone, the piece would become the talk of the town.<sup>58</sup>

This opinion was seconded by every newspaper and magazine that covered the





**Figure 9.** Clodoche and La Comète as Callot dancers in *The Huguenot Captain*. Photograph by S. A. Walker, London. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

performance.<sup>59</sup> All of which suggests that they had tempered their exuberance to suit the requirements of a stage monitored by the Lord Chamberlain's office. The play ran for months and the domesticated cancan became the rage of London.

The Clodoches were such a byword that W. S. Gilbert could allude to them in one of the 'Bab Ballads' he contributed to the humour magazine *Fun*. In 'John and Freddy', two suitors vie for a lady's hand by dancing. Freddy practises ballet steps, whereas

John tries the maiden's taste to strike  
With gay, grotesque, outrageous dresses,  
And dances comically, like  
CLODOCHE AND CO., at the Princess's.<sup>60</sup>

A later attempt to recreate their success was made in the first scene of Andrew Halliday's

*Notre Dame; or, The Gypsy Girl of Paris*, which opened at the Adelphi on 10 April 1871; the Feast of Fools celebration featured 'grotesque characters of Callot (costume of the Clodoche dancers)'.<sup>61</sup> Since the dancers in this case served chiefly as supernumeraries, no one paid much attention. This was not the case when Augustus Harris, manager of the Philharmonic Theatre, Islington, brought the Clodoche troupe back to London on Boxing Day of that year as an added attraction to Offenbach's *Geneviève de Brabant* at £320 a week, and followed it up with a quadrille in Hervé's *L'Œil crevé*.<sup>62</sup>

Their return to London had been prompted exclusively by financial concerns. Clodoche had savings of 80,000 francs in crisp banknotes which he foolishly kept beneath a stove lid. In the early days of the Commune, which occupied Paris from March to May 1871, he was summoned to the Masonic lodge in Rue Cadet to authenticate his papers, and in his absence, his stove was stolen.<sup>63</sup> While in London, Clodoche rented a house in Chelsea and occupied his spare time purchasing plain furniture and carving it ornately. Not taking the trouble to learn English, he communicated with his landlady by drawing pictures on a specially whitewashed panel, especially to order steaks and chops.<sup>64</sup>

To cover their high fee, the Clodoches' contract was shared by Charles Morton, lessee of the Cambridge Music Hall, where they performed after the comic operas' run was completed. Since that venue had no dancing licence, in 1872 rival music-hall managers paid the comedian Robert Young to attend for four nights and then prosecute manager J. C. Nugent in the Court of Common Pleas. The case rested on whether the cancan as performed by the Clodoches was a dance. Young testified that on one night the much-applauded twelve-minute number included singing and the splits. To explicate the latter, the defence counsel described it as 'capering'. The learned judge, showing off his Latin, commented that 'to caper' is 'to dance as if he were a goat'.<sup>65</sup>

The clown and ballet master John Ward was then called to testify as an expert, although he had seen the Clodoches only at

the Ambigu-Comique in Paris. His testimony is significant in its inability to describe what they did; he called it 'more a contortion business than dancing. It is a kind of pantomime action, knees and toes turned in . . . They jump, as Stead, the Cure, would jump . . . The Clodoches do no steps whatever. They pay no regard to the music.'<sup>66</sup> The jury found for the defendant, determining the cancan to be no sort of dancing, especially since it was unaccompanied by music.<sup>67</sup> The Clodoches were considered to be inoffensive clowns.

Yet the previous year, when Morton inserted the Colonna troupe to perform a cancan in a one-act abridgement of *La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein* at the Islington, he had been taken to task by the press. The difference was that the Colonnas were a quartet of women, so that 'vulgarly kicking up their heels' evoked, not riotous comedy, but sexual provocation.<sup>68</sup>

## Oblivion

After the defeat of France in the war with Prussia, and the excesses of the Commune and its bloody repression, the mood in Paris altered and heedless exuberance fell out of fashion. The Clodoches continued to tour, chiefly in the Low Countries, Germany, and Vienna, earning fees fit for a prima donna and familiarizing Europe with Clodoche as a brand-name for zaniness.<sup>69</sup>

At The Hague, after playing the pantomime *Une Noce à Pouilly-les-Poucerons*, they were invited to appear before the Crown Prince after their regular performance, sleeping in the carriages that took them to the castle.<sup>70</sup> The quartet was immortalized in wax at a Flemish fair where 'Bible scenes and the death of the Duke of Burgundy are elbowed by Clodoche dancers and the disaster of Sedan'.<sup>71</sup> The Clodoches even had currency in Russia. Their name was adopted by a French troupe consisting of 'West, Marius, and Mlles. Rougat and Pepita which travelled to Moscow'.<sup>72</sup>

A rising music-hall comic named Paulin Habans had seen the Clodoches at the Alcazar and Eldorado. When, in 1869, he was introduced at the Jardin Oriental in Toulouse,

singing the old favourite 'Les Pompiers de Nanterre', he imitated Flageolet, stuffed with a pillow and flailing about wildly. Accompanied by a chorus similarly costumed, his number ended with a 'monster quadrille, *cahuté*' in imitation of the Clodoches. Under the name Paulus, he soon became the leading male star of the *café concert*, and his Clodoche-inspired wriggling a characteristic of his performance. It launched a neologism to describe the style: *gambillard*, or legging it.<sup>73</sup>

In the realm of popular entertainment, new media rapidly efface pre-existing forms. The rise of the *café concert*, or *caf' conc'*, did not spell the immediate decline of dance halls, but, by turning participants into spectators, it forced them to compete. Earlier, the public had been fluid, both observing and taking part; now a schism occurred between audience and performer. Dance halls salaried a staff to furnish, at so much a lesson, the movement and 'go' needed for success. A similar process could be observed in the development of the English music hall. Tavern sing-songs and catch-clubs at tables, open to all consumers to contribute a tune, evolved raised platforms with singers who passed the hat and later were paid by lessees. Legislation forced them to become true theatres, and in time the tables were replaced by rows of seats and tiers of boxes. So too with the Parisian dance hall, whose popularity was definitely effaced by the *caf' conc'*. The carnival aspect, which had vestigially survived when celebrations moved indoors, evaporated.

The period 1861 to 1864 had seen the heyday of the Opéra Ball under Strauss, but the defecation of the Clodoches to more lucrative engagements was a blow it could not easily survive. Strauss paid for masqueraders in rags and tatters to replace them and imitate the Clodoches. According to an English visitor: 'The dancers are chiefly shop-boys and girls, barbers, clerks, etc.: they get a franc and then supper, and are compelled to dance every dance from midnight until 4 a.m.'<sup>74</sup> The orchestra was amplified with harmoniums and orpheons. Nevertheless, the Clodoches were in effect the last successful innovation Strauss introduced, and after they decamped, the Bal de l'Opéra lost most of its appeal and continued to be offered

only out of fidelity to tradition. Its final transfer to the elegant Palais Garnier in 1874 erased what was left of its 'popular' appeal and led to its demise in 1889.<sup>75</sup>

Other dance-hall managements booked eccentric acts as attractions: around 1868 the one-legged dancer Donato appeared at the Wauxhall for two louis to dance a quadrille at ten o'clock.<sup>76</sup> Such novelties as these were meant to highlight the ball's spectacular aspect, and, more insidiously, laid emphasis on the professional status of the dancers. Chicard, Rigolboche, and her sisters had all begun as amateurs, who stepped out of the crowd and gained fame (and occasionally fortune) by their originality and virtuosity.<sup>77</sup> So had the Clodoches, volunteering their performances; they quickly won professional status and demanded fees accordingly. The whole genre of eccentric dancing evolved into a speciality act in variety, leading to the 'legmania' craze of the late 1860s and 1870s. On the Anglo-American stage, Frederick Vokes, the Girards, and the Majiltons naturalized the high-kicking, splits, and gyrations popularized by the Clodoches, usually in service to a pantomime or burlesque. In other words, what had begun as an exercise in chaos became domesticated.

The international popularity of the Clodoches had also been affected by the inoffensiveness of their act. Despite the grotesque antics and unbridled animation, because they were an all-male troupe, their display of limbs and lubricity caused no scandal. This is analogous to blackface minstrelsy in the United States, popular with those who would not attend playhouses precisely because minstrelsy's personnel were exclusively male. Other teams who specialized in 'legmania', such as the Majiltons and the Girards, always included a shapely woman in tights, thus inviting censure. In the 1890s, when the *quadrille naturaliste* served as the prime attraction at the dance halls of Montmartre, its display of frothy petticoats, stockinged legs, and glimpses of something more turned the spectator into a voyeur. (At the Lyon Eden-Concert one of the females in such a quadrille was called 'Clodoche'.) Valentin le Désossé, whose hatchet-faced profile appears in the posters of Toulouse-Lautrec, was a unique

survival of the grotesque male dancer, his angular antics used to set off the florid charms of his female partners.

The Clodoche troupe formally retired in 1884. Liard (La Normande) married a laundress and kept an inn; he had antiquarian tastes and collected old coins. Although ridiculed by his companions, he made money in speculations and died around 1890. Ruined by bad business deals, Michallet (La Comète) lived off a meagre salary as stage manager at the Folies-Bergère du Havre. He ended as a rope-maker in St Denis. Lord (Flageollet) retired to La Varenne, where he invested wisely, served in the municipal government, and was reputed to be one of the wealthiest of local landowners.<sup>78</sup>

As for Clodoche himself, he had purchased property at Chenevières la Varenne on the banks of the Marne. He retired there with wife and child, and turned a black-painted chalet under some poplars into an inn, 'Aux vieux Clodoche'. It became a gathering-place for artists and journalists.<sup>79</sup> There he carved quaint furniture, surrounded by trophies and photographs of his triumphs, while his wife, a Cordon bleu, served up tasty fish stews and fried whitebait. In 1905 Fernand Samuel, manager of the Théâtre des Variétés, offered him an engagement to interpolate a nostalgic Clodoche quadrille into the second act of André Messager's operetta *Les Dragons de l'Impératrice*. He turned it down, as he did a seat on the town council.<sup>80</sup>

Clodoche rarely returned to Paris. In 1902 he visited the Moulin Rouge, and was quoted as saying, '*Le chahut d'aujourd'hui est sale* [The *chahut* nowadays is filthy].'<sup>81</sup> Further: 'What I beheld made me tremble. Men no longer dance, monsieur; the women dance with each other. It's monstrous! And what dances! Horrible leg-shaking, uncontrolled, offending both decency and rhythm.'<sup>82</sup> Forgetting the provocative eroticism of Rigolboche, he was embittered that American cakewalks and *quadrilles naturalistes* had supplanted the inoffensive high-jinks of his quartet. He wrote to the director of the Opéra offering to attend a ball in his Highlander costume, which the Boer War had made timely, but received no answer. 'To refuse admission to the Opéra ball to Clodoche, the successor of Chicard, the



rival of Brididi!' he sputtered.<sup>83</sup> Clodomir Ricart died in July 1907.

By then, as obituary articles pointed out, the Clodoches could be remembered only by the oldest inhabitants. What traces remained were generic uses of their name. The Belgian composer Heyman wrote a 'Les Clodoches' polka played at a Socialist Party Holiday in Brussels on 25 August 1896.<sup>84</sup> A dance hall – La Joyeux 'Clodoche' – at La Varenne St Hilaire hosted the music of the jazz virtuoso Django Reinhardt, his father, and seven brothers.<sup>85</sup> The film *Clodoche, ou Sous les ponts de Paris* (1938) by Raymond Lamy and Claude Orval, later refashioned into a ballet by Louis Orlandi, has nothing at all to do with the famous foursome.

W. H. Auden characterized his own time as the 'age of anxiety'.<sup>86</sup> He had been pre-empted, however, by the *Grand Dictionnaire du XIXe Siècle*, which declared the mood of the late 1860s and early 1870s to be embodied by the frantic gyrations of the Clodoche troupe: 'And if we recognize that our era is distinguished by a nervous anxiety and a cerebral over-excitation which destroys the equilibrium of our faculties, we will also recognize that the frenetic dance and epileptic contortions of Clodoche and his gang marvellously translate that febrile state of our generation.'<sup>87</sup>

## Notes and References

1. *Clodo* is French slang for 'tramp'. The date of their Opéra debut varies in the reports between 1856, 1857, and 1858.
2. Agnès C. Poirier, 'Why France understood Jerry Lewis as America never did', *New York Times* (21 August 2017). The apotheosis of this attitude is Robert Benayoun's six-hour mini-series *Bonjour, Monsieur Lewis* (1982), later issued as a book (1989). See also Rae Beth Gordon, *Why the French Love Jerry Lewis. From Cabaret to Early Cinema* (Stanford University Press, 2002), which explores many of these connections in detail.
3. Pierre de Lano, *Nos Parisiennes (celles qui dansent)* (Paris: H. Simonis Empis, n.d.), p. 24.
4. Brunet, professeur à Paris, *Théorie-pratique du Danseur du société, comprenant les plans descriptifs de la contredanse et de la valse* (Paris: Chaumerot, 1839), p. 9–10; quoted in Maribeth Clark, 'The Quadrille as Embodied Musical Experience in 19th-Century Paris', *Journal of Musicology*, XIX, 3 (Summer 2002), p. 507–8. All translations, unless otherwise noted, are the author's.
5. Paul Smith [Edouard Monnais], 'Danses prohibées', *Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*, VIII (21 February 1841), p. 114; quoted in Clark, 'The Quadrille', p. 510.

6. G. Desrad, *Le dictionnaire de la danse, historique, théorique, pratique* (Paris: Imprimeries réunies, 1895), p. 72.
7. François Gasnault, *Guinguettes et lorettes: Bals publics et danse sociale à Paris entre 1830 et 1870* (Paris: Aubier, 1986), p. 47–56.
8. Gasnault, *Guinguettes*, p. 23.
9. [A. Vermorel], *Ces Dames*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Charles Noblet [1860]), p. 61.
10. Judith Surkis, 'Carnival Balls and Penal Codes', *History of the Present*, I, 1 (Summer 2011), p. 62.
11. A Cham cartoon shows him breaking crockery and ringing a huge bell as he writes a quadrille.
12. A. Privat d'Anglemont, *Paris-anecdote* (repr. Paris: Éditions de Paris, 1984), p. 219.
13. Charles Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute: Representing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 40.
14. Painters also conveyed this impression. See Linda Nochlin, 'A Thoroughly Modern Masked Ball: Manet's *Masked Ball at the Opera*', *Art in America*, LXXI (November 1983), p. 187–201.
15. Alexandre Duval, 'Le commissaire de police', *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*, 9 vols (Paris: L. Curmer, 1840–2), Vol. 3 (1841), p. 547 ('un commissaire de police du bal Musard, à la vue duquel se règle et se viriginise instantanément la plus dégingandée et dévergondée *Cachucha*').
16. *L'Illustration* (24 March 1843). As Théophile Gautier put it, 'even women we know and who are notoriously pretty, become suspect as soon as they put on a domino' (*La Presse*, 29 December 1845, p. 2).
17. Fenella Kennedy, 'Rethinking the Travesty Dancer: Questions of Reading and Representation in the Paris Opera', *Dance Chronicle*, XL, 2 (2017), p. 206. Other aspects of this phenomenon have been covered by Lynn Garafola, 'The Travesty Dancer in Nineteenth-Century Ballet', *Dance Research Journal*, XVIII, 1 (1985–6), p. 35–40; and Judith Lynne Hanna, *Dance, Sex, and Gender: Signs of Identity, Dominance, Defiance, and Desire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).
18. In early 1844 *Le Journal des artistes* complained that all the annual balls were clones of Musard's, teeming with *chicandards* and *débardeurs*, and inevitably ending with a cancan accompanied by outrageous gestures. See 'Chronique théâtrale', *Journal des artistes* XVIII, 1 (7 January 1844), p. 11.
19. Charles Marchal, *Physiologie du Chicard* (Paris: Lachapelle, Fiquet, 1842), p. 27. Similar slang terms such as *chicocandard* and *chicandard* were coined to mean 'ultra-chic'.
20. Taxile Delord, 'Le Chicard', in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*, Vol. 2, p. 370.
21. Marchal, *Physiologie*, 25–6.
22. Frédéric Soulié, 'Bal Musard', *La Presse* (13 February 1837), p. 1.
23. Gaston Vuillier, *La Danse* (Paris: Hachette, 1898), p. 140. The choice of a false nose for a masquerade ball is a plot point in Victor Hugo's play *Mille francs de récompense* (1866), set in the Paris of the 1820s.
24. Gustave Flaubert, *L'Éducation sentimentale*, Part II, Ch. 1. Although the novel was published in 1869, this scene is supposed to take place in 1845.
25. Clark, 'The Quadrille', p. 513.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Gazette des tribunaux* (5 January 1846), quoted in Gasnault, *Guinguettes*, p. 163.

28. Wagner saw it as typically French sexual provocation: 'the immediate act of procreation is symbolically consummated' ('Reminiscences of Auber', in Richard Wagner, *Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (New York: Broude Brothers, 1966) Vol. 5, p. 45).
29. Gasnault, *Guinguettes*, p. 163–4, 167–8.
30. 20 January 1848, in Charles Maurice, *Histoire anecdotique du théâtre* (1856), Vol. 2, p. 304–5.
31. James Jackson Jerves, *Parisian Sights and French Principles* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1855), p. 180–1.
32. Gautier, loc. cit. Jules Claretie also cited the Algerian trance dancers, 'ces Aïssaoua', to characterize the 'bestialité humaine' in manic dancing: *La Vie à Paris* (Paris: V. Havard, 1880), p. 521.
33. Sarah Davies Cordova, *Paris Dances: Textual Choreographies in the Nineteenth-Century French Novel* (San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1999), p. 147–48. See also Rae Beth Gordon, *Dances with Darwin 1875–1910: Vernacular Modernity in France* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), esp. p. 52–7.
34. See Rae Beth Gordon, 'Le caf' conc' et l'hystérie', *Romantisme*, LXIV, 2 (1989), p. 53–67, as well as her previously cited work of 2001.
35. *Gazette des tribunaux* (26 January 1855 and 29 February 1856); 'Bulletin des théâtres', *Journal des débats* (9 February 1858), p. 3.
36. 'Clodoche et son quadrille', *Grand Dictionnaire du XIXe Siècle* (Paris: Larousse, 1869), Vol. 4, p. 463. Clodoche claims to have taken the Duc slumming, at his request, in disguise at 'rag-pickers' dance halls.
37. *Le Gaulois* (7 August 1907), p. 4.
38. Authentic biographical details are hard to come by. The most reliable account, upon which most writers based their stories, is an interview with Ricart in his old age: Adolphe Brisson, 'M. Clodomir', *Portraits intimes* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1901), Vol. 5, p. 319–26. See also *L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux*, 972 (30 June 1902), p. 1002–3; Vuillier, *La Danse*; and 'Masked Balls: Some Old Reminiscences', *West Gippsland Gazette* (Warragul, Victoria) (1 December 1903), p. 5.
39. G. de Maizière, 'Le quadrille Clodoche', *Le Gaulois*, 9909 (30 November 1904).
40. *Le Monde illustré*, 12 (11 January 1868), p. 561.
41. 'Querens', *Vanity Fair* (23 January 1869), p. 143–4.
42. Ibid. The *Grand Dictionnaire du XIXe Siècle*, referring to his 'epileptic contortions', claimed that Clodoche was deliberately copying the *convulsionnaires* of St Médard.
43. Paulus [Jean-Paulin Habans], *Trente ans de café concert: Souvenirs recueillis par Octave Pradels* (Paris: Société des Éditions et de publications, 1908), p. 157–8.
44. Both were staged at *cafés chantants*, rather than at regular opera theatres. That by Beaumaine and Charles Blondelet with music by Auguste de Villebichot opened at the Alcazar on 30 October 1867. Hervé's was produced at the Eldorado on 16 December 1867.
45. Charles Founaulx, 'Clodoche', *Le Figaro*, 39 (30 January 1892), p. 1.
46. T. Allston Brown, *A History of the New York Stage from the First Performance in 1732 to 1901* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1903), I, 206.
47. Quoted in Kurt Gänzl, *Lydia Thompson: Queen of Burlesque* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 119.
48. George C. D. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage*, 15 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927–49), Vol. 8, p. 602, 608.
49. 'New Yorkisms', *Philadelphia Daily Evening Telegraph* (2 June 1869), p. 4. For the Kiralfys, see Laurence Senelick, *The Age and Stage of George L. Fox 1825–1877* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1988), p. 155–6; and Barbara M. Barker, ed., *Bolossy Kiralfy: Creator of Great Musical Spectacles. An Autobiography* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Press, 1988).
50. *New York Clipper* (14 May 1870), p. 46; Odell, *Annals*, Vol. 13, p. 638, Vol. 9, p. 76, 192–3, 472.
51. Odell, *Annals*, Vol. 13, p. 656; Vol. 9, p. 196. Eugene A. Condrier, an American Clodoche known as Frenchy, noted for his grotesque dancing in *Geneviève de Brabant* in 1869, died at Long Branch, New Jersey, 22 March 1890, aged 44.
52. Odell, *Annals*, Vol. 9, p. 454; Vol. 10, p. 38, 737.
53. Odell, *Annals*, Vol. 10, p. 737.
54. *Daily Alta* (San Francisco), XXXI, No. 10527 (7 February 1879).
55. Kate Heath, 'Golden Gate Gossip', *Sacramento Daily Union*, VIII, No. 136 (16 August 1879). A clodoche quadrille danced by Emerson, Clark, and the Daly Brothers was a speciality in *Pour Prendre Congé or Seeing Switzerland* (Boston Theatre 1881), a show sued for plagiarizing the Hanlon Brothers' *Voyage en Suisse: New York Court of Appeals, Records & Briefs* (New York, 1881). 'Clodoche troupes' continued to play US vaudeville circuits throughout the 1890s.
56. Walter H. Rogers, *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Court of Louisiana 1895* (St Paul: West Publishing Co., 1907), p. 1317–21.
57. 'The Antiquity of the Cancan', *The Mask* (London), I (March 1868).
58. *The Era*, quoted in W. S. Gilbert, *The Bab Ballads*, ed. James Ellis (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 329.
59. See, for example, *The Anti-teapot Review*, I (1866), p. 208; *The Anglo-American Times* (28 June 1866), p. 6; *The World of Fashion* (August 1866), p. 8; and *The London and Paris Ladies' Magazine of Fashion*, XXXIX, p. 429 (September 1866), p. 107. The Clodoches later appeared in a play called *The Huguenot* in New York on 14 June 1870, which may have been an effort to capitalize on their earlier hit (Odell, *Annals*, VIII, p. 570).
60. W. S. Gilbert, 'John and Freddy', *Fun*, n.s. V (3 August 1867), p. 222.
61. Andrew Halliday, *Notre Dame; or, The Gypsy Girl of Paris* (New York and Chicago: Dramatic Publishing Co., 1871), p. 6.
62. H. G. Hibbert, *A Playgoer's Memories* (London: Grant Richards, 1903), p. 75.
63. De Maizière, 'Le quadrille Clodoche'; W.H. Morton and H. Chance Newton, *Sixty Years' Stage Service: Being a Record of the Life of Charles Morton, 'The Father of the Halls'* (London: Gale & Polder, 1905), p. 86.
64. 'Death of Famous Dancer. The "Can-can"', *New Zealand Herald*, XLV, No. 13534 (4 September 1907). He had an English-speaking personal attendant named Charles Alias who had left France to avoid becoming a doctor as his father wished. Alias remained in England to marry a costumer, and become a costume designer with a European reputation. See Emily Soldene, *My Theatrical and Musical Recollections*, 2nd ed. (London: Downey & Co., 1897).
65. 'Action Against the Proprietor of a Music Hall', *The Era* (10 June 1872), p. 2a.
66. Ibid. James Hurst Stead, the 'Perfect Cure' (1827–86), was an English music-hall singer who bounced up and down as he sang, wearing a dunce cap.
67. Jonathan Conlin, *Tales of Two Cities: Paris, London, and the Birth of the Modern City* (London: Atlantic Books, 2013), p. 156–9.

68. *The Hornet* (15 March 1871), p. 304a. After the Colonnas had danced at the Alhambra music hall in 1870, the Middlesex magistrates refused to renew the theatre's dancing licence. See Tracy C. Davis, *Actresses as Working Women* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 116–17. Yet when Charles Morton brought Clodoche back to London in 1875, he was accompanied by two female dancers.
69. *Le Moniteur de Puy-de-Dôme* (29 August 1869), n.p. When the handicapped performer Unthan saw them at the Carl Schultze Theatre in Hamburg, a people's playhouse, he was annoyed by 'the frantic applause': 'to my thinking their performance exceeded the bonds of decency.' See C. M. Unthan, *The Armless Fiddler: A Pediscript, Being the Life Story of a Vaudeville Man* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1935), p. 81–2.
70. After being served a lavish supper, they were sent back to their hotel and told to await the royal summons to perform until 5 p.m. the next day. They did not take it seriously and went for a walk, but the prince forgave them: *Les Annales Politiques et Littéraires*, No. 1255 (14 July 1907), p. 28.
71. 'A Flemish Fair', *All the Year Round* (20 August 1874), p. 468.
72. Elena A. Sarieva, 'Gorodskaya razvekatel'naya kul'tura proreformskaya Moskvyy', unpublished PhD dissertation (Moscow University, 2000).
73. Paulus, *Trente ans de café concert*, p. 39–40. For the further development of the genre, see the two books by Rae Beth Gordon cited above.
74. 'What's What in Paris', *Barclay's Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, XII, (November 1866), p. 190.
75. Gustave Geffroy, 'Au Bal de l'Opéra: 24 février 1884 et 7 mars 1886', *Notes d'un journaliste* (Paris: Charpentier, 1887), p. 55–61.
76. Gasnault, *Guinguettes*, p. 262, 265–66.
77. [Vermorel] *Ces Dames*, p. 62.
78. *Le Stéphanois* (22 January 1893); Vuillier, *La Danse*, p. 342; De Maizière, 'La quadrille Clodoche'; 'Death of Famous Dancer', *New Zealand Herald*.
79. It still exists as a restaurant, Le Maison du Cabouillet, on the corner of rue de la Capitainerie et rue de Pâtis, L'Isle-Adam.
80. Instead, a Chicard impersonator appeared in the Jardin Mabille scene. See De Maizière, 'La quadrille Clodoche'; *Les Annales Politiques et Littéraires*, No. 1255 (14 July 1907), p. 28.
81. G. Desrad, *Le dictionnaire de la danse, historique, théorique, pratique* (Paris: Imprimeries réunies, 1895), p. 73.
82. Brisson, 'M. Clodomir', p. 325–6.
83. *Ibid.*
84. Brussels *Vooirut* (20 August 1896).
85. Michael Dregni, *Gypsy Jazz: In Search of Django Reinhardt and the Soul of Gypsy Swing* (London: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 28.
86. W. H. Auden, *The Age of Anxiety: A Baroque Eclogue* (New York: Random House, 1947). He had first used the term in 1944.
87. *Grand Dictionnaire du XIXe Siècle*, loc. cit.