

# 2015 Fellowship Recipient

Marie Glon

*Choreographic Enlightenment: European Dancing Masters  
at the Heart of a Publishing Phenomenon (1700-1760)*

My thesis seeks to understand the writing phenomenon which spread in Europe from 1700 to roughly 1760, about and through Chorégraphie (i.e. “the art of dancing by characters”) – following the publication of its principles in Paris, in 1700. Thanks to this scriptural art, hundreds of “dances engraven in characters and figures” were established; they pertained both to writing and to drawing, and were meant to set the user’s body into motion. These “dances in characters” reveal an entire network of exchanges: the aim was to introduce dances, but also ideas and techniques, into different geographical and social areas. Indeed, for the dancing masters who used it, Chorégraphie was becoming a kind of written lingua franca. By taking hold of the world of print, and setting the conditions for the exercise of critical and collaborative thinking, they were also redefining their own assignments and statuses. What I call Choreographic Enlightenment encompasses the various aspects of this phenomenon – the project of getting the body to move, boundaries to move, whether they were geographical, institutional or social, and thoughts to move. I focused on printed sources for my Ph.D. No printed sources produced in Austria document the use of Chorégraphie – but manuscript VAULT Case MS 5308 seems to show that a copy of the German translation of the Chorégraphie principles was established in Vienna in 1752. In Italy, few printed sources relate to the Chorégraphie – but manuscript VAULT Case MS 5310 seems to be an original translation of the Chorégraphie principles into Italian. These manuscripts and other documents from the Newberry Collections would probably reveal the entirety of the European stature of this phenomenon, which gives pause for thought in the fields of the uses of the written word, cultural exchanges, and the history of the body.

Marie Glon is on the humanities faculty at the Université de Lille and specializes in dance.