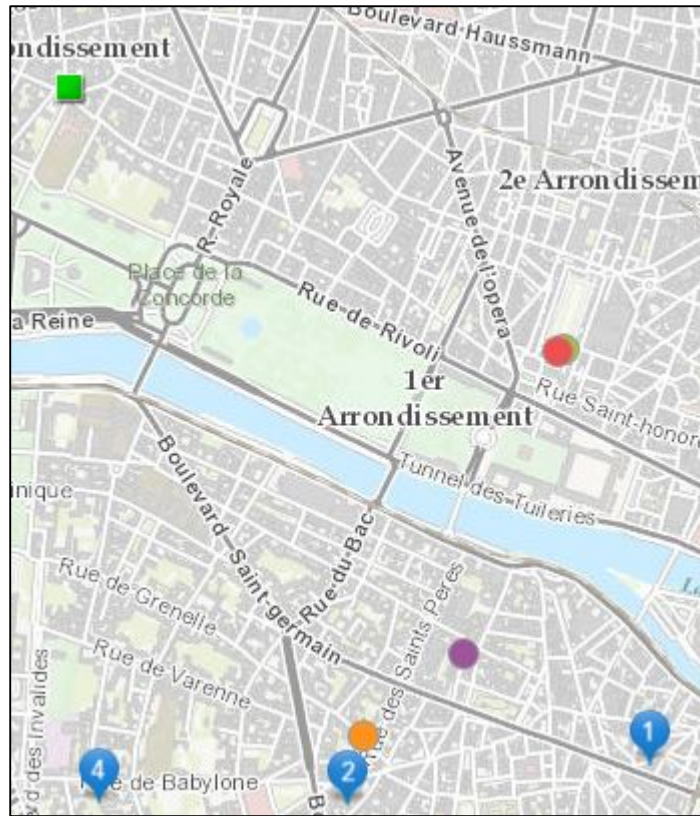
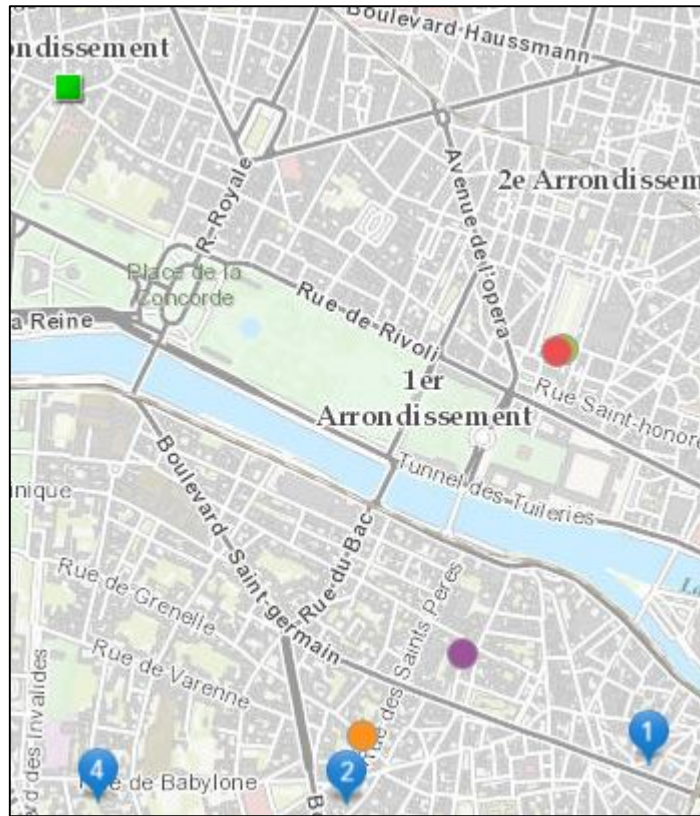


Joris-Karl Huysmans deeply loved “his own quartier,” as scholar James Laver notes, “the little square of earth enclosed by the Rue St. Jacques, the Boulevard St. Germain, the Rue du Bac and the river” (1955: 49). Indeed, in Paris, Huysmans lived exclusively on the left bank of the Seine, mostly in the 7th arrondissement. In fact, as we can see from the map, his addresses over the years formed a small rectangle centered on the 7th. The locations of his publishers, however, were scattered more widely throughout the city.

Laver, James. 1955. *The First Decadent. Being The Strange Life of J. K. Huysmans*. New York: Citadel Press.

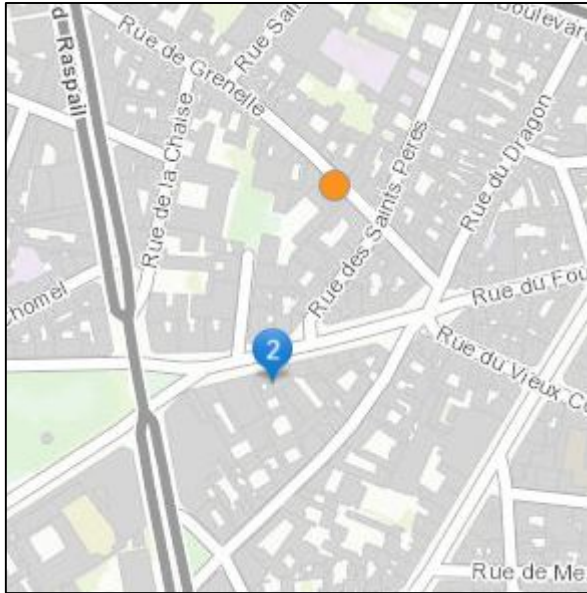


The map shows that Huysmans's career started thanks to his work with a publisher located near his workplace. In the early 1870s, Huysmans was working as a civil servant at the Ministère de l'Intérieur et des Cultes (*green square*), place Beauveau, in the 8th arrondissement, when he started searching for a publisher for his first book, *Le Drageoir aux épices*. But finding someone was not easy. One publisher in particular, Hetzel, was so horrified by what he had read that he categorically refused to work with Huysmans (Laver, 1955: 55).

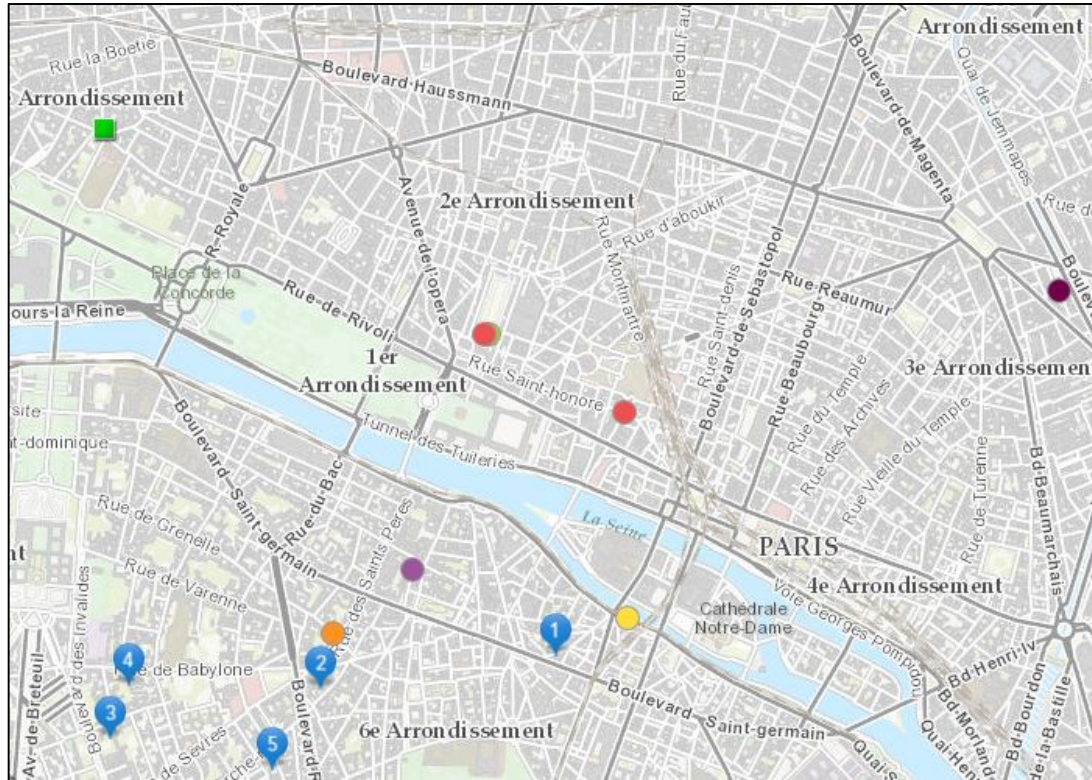


Eventually, in 1874, Huysmans found someone who was willing to put his name on the cover, as long as the writer was paying for the copies to be printed: Edouard Dentu (*green circle*), who was also Rachilde's first publisher. Dentu was located in the Palais-Royal, along with many other publishers Huysmans may have solicited. Although he was not exactly a neighbor, he was likely on Huysmans' way to work (*from circle number 2*), and in a very desirable area for anyone wanting to start a literary career. Dentu, however, was not very supportive of the writer's style, as Huysmans explained in a letter to his friend Théodore Hannon in 1877: "Revu aussi cette grosse brute d'éditeur qui a nom Dentu. Il est de plus en plus décidé à ne prendre aucun roman sous le prétexte très curieux que j'écris une langue qui n'amuse pas les lecteurs de ses livres" (Cogny et Berg, 1985: 56-57). Huysmans therefore needed to find another person willing to work with him.

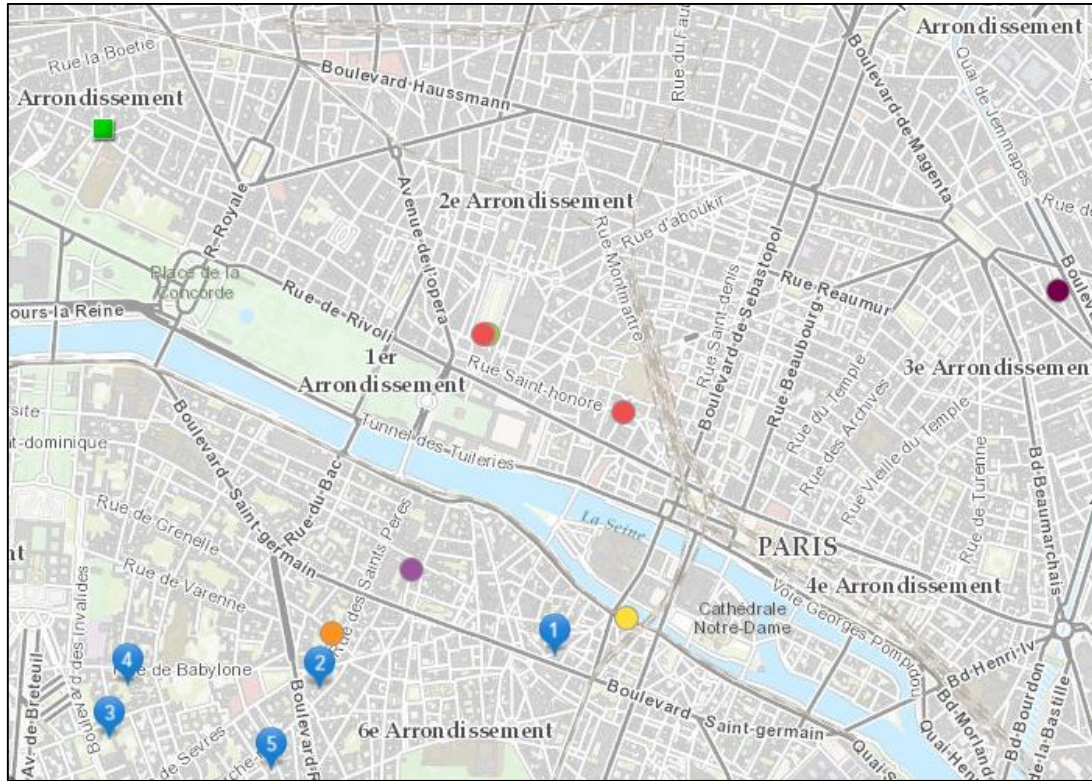
J.-K. Huysmans. *Lettres à Théodore Hannon (1876-1886)*. 1985. Eds Pierre Cogny et Christian Berg. Saint-Cyr-sur-Loire: Christian Pirot.



In 1879, Huysmans started collaborating with the publisher of the *Naturalists*, Georges Charpentier (*orange circle*), whose offices were less than two-hundred meters from his house (*circle number 2*). Huysmans had met the publisher thanks to his friend and mentor Emile Zola. Not only was Charpentier the publisher to the *Naturalists* – the school in which Huysmans began his career – but he was also, as noted above, conveniently located. Yet, after *A Rebours*, Huysmans's breviary of Decadent tastes, was released in 1884, the author began to steer away from Naturalism and therefore, needed to find a new publisher that would help him move his career in a new direction.



In 1887, Huysmans started working with Pierre-Victor Stock (*red circle*), who would later be known as a Dreyfusard publisher, and who, like Dentu, was located on Huysmans' way to work, in the galleries of the Palais-Royal. Stock was only sixteen years old when he became the head of the publishing house Tresse & Stock, which he had inherited in 1877. He was always looking for new writers to publish, as he saw himself as a risk-taker. Two of the writers he was publishing recommended that he meet Huysmans and try to sign the author to his publishing house. The meeting went well as Huysmans signed a ten-year contract with Stock, and worked with him almost exclusively for much of his life.



As his career advanced, Huysmans changed residence several times, but always remained in his beloved 7th arrondissement. He also collaborated with other publishers, especially to publish books in which Stock was not interested, such as *La Bièvre*, published in 1890 by Léon Genonceaux (*purple circle*). Yet, Huysmans would always go back to Stock, and not simply because of their ten-year contract, which turned into a twenty-year collaboration, but also because of their longtime friendship. Despite moving (*circles number 1-5*), Huysmans always remained in the same neighborhood in Paris and, despite working with other publishers, Huysmans remained loyal to Stock. Huysmans, it appears, liked to be surrounded by what he knew best, be it a place or a man.