

Title	The horse in early modern Europe and the threat of 'driving'
Sub Title	近世ヨーロッパにおける「馬車」の衝撃と乗馬社会
Author	光田, 達矢(Mitsuda, Tatsuya)
Publisher	慶應義塾大学日吉紀要刊行委員会
Publication year	2010
Jtitle	慶應義塾大学日吉紀要. 人文科学 (The Hiyoshi review of the humanities). No.25 (2010.), p.209- 224
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	
Genre	Departmental Bulletin Paper
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=AN10065043-20100531-0209

慶應義塾大学学術情報リポジトリ(KOARA)に掲載されているコンテンツの著作権は、それぞれの著作者、学会または出版社/発行者に帰属し、その権利は著作権法によって保護されています。引用にあたっては、著作権法を遵守してご利用ください。

The copyrights of content available on the KeiO Associated Repository of Academic resources (KOARA) belong to the respective authors, academic societies, or publishers/issuers, and these rights are protected by the Japanese Copyright Act. When quoting the content, please follow the Japanese copyright act.

The Horse in Early Modern Europe and the Threat of ‘Driving’

Tatsuya Mitsuda

For a long time historians of Europe neglected animals as serious subjects of study. The likes of Éric Baratay, Harriet Ritvo, and Keith Thomas, however, have in recent years gradually corrected this omission and their works have in turn inspired research that properly integrates animals into the narrative of the human past.⁽¹⁾ Perhaps the most obvious yet still under-researched example of an animal which has consistently featured alongside man’s endeavour is the horse. Many studies have in fact shown how man’s reliance on the creature, both physical and symbolic, was so marked that it is only recently that Europe has emerged from what Reinhard Koselleck has memorably termed the ‘equine age’.⁽²⁾ Up until now little

(1) Éric Baratay and Élisabeth Hardouin-Fugier, *Zoos: histoire des jardins zoologiques en Occident, XVIe XXe siècle* (Paris, 1998); Harriet Ritvo, *The animal estate: the English and other creatures in the Victorian age* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987); Keith Thomas, *Man and the natural world: a history of the modern sensibility* (London, 1983).

(2) For the most striking and seminal examples of this kind of work, see: Reinhart Koselleck, ‘Das Ende des Pferdezeitalters’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (25 September, 2003); Karen Raber and Treva J. Tucker (eds), *The culture of the horse: status, discipline, and identity in the early modern world* (New York, 2005); Daniel Roche, ‘Le cheval et ses élevages: perspectives de recherche’, *Cahiers d’histoire* 42/3–4 (1997), 511–20; idem. (ed), *Les écuries royales du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1998); idem. (ed), *Voitures, chevaux et attelages du XVIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 2000); F.M.L. Thompson, *Victorian England: the horse-drawn society* (London, 1970); idem., ‘Nineteenth century horse sense’, *Economic history review* 29 (1976), 60–81; idem. (ed), *Horses in European economic history: a preliminary canter* (Reading, 1983).

attempt has been made to elaborate on Koselleck's imaginative conceptualization. Yet when and how the equine age begun, peaked and ended are obvious questions that historians could productively pursue. Within this narrative further questions about the protagonists could be posed as well as why they attached so much importance – or otherwise – to the horse, and with what consequences. Since such an undertaking is ambitious this short article will necessarily focus on developing Koselleck's concept as it relates to seventeenth century England and France, a period that one can safely characterize as the equine age. By asserting that the essence to equine society at the time can best be understood in terms of the conflict between 'riding' and 'driving', this article will suggest that equine society changed fundamentally in the seventeenth century because of the arrival of coach and carriage as an alternative to horseback riding. Since this sparked fears that horsemen might be converted into passengers, concerns were expressed that a decline in the skills of horsemanship would have disastrous consequences not only on the morality of the rider, but also on the strength of countries to defend themselves in the event of war.

In 1623, John Taylor – English water-poet, wit, traveller and eccentric – published a searing invective against the coach and carriage. '[N]ever since Phaeton broke his neck', he fulminated colourfully, 'no land has endured more trouble and molestation than this has, by the continual rumbling of these upstart four wheeled tortoises.'⁽³⁾ Convinced that 'these coaches are one of the greatest mischiefs that of late years have happened to the Kingdoms', Taylor likened wheeled passenger transport to 'grasshoppers and caterpillars of Egypt' which gathered so much popularity that they threatened to 'over-run the land that we can get no living upon the water.' Replicating this sentiment in a petition to parliament a few decades later,

(3) John Taylor, *The world runnes on wheeles: or oddes, betwixt carts and coaches* (London 1623), 7. For a useful biography on Taylor, see Wallace Notestein, *Four worthies* (London, 1956), 169–210.

Jon Cresset, who clearly appropriated much of the language employed by Taylor, urged authority to curb the proliferation of hackney carriages in the capital.⁽⁴⁾ Taken together the publications represent two of the first, most extensive and lucid diatribes decrying the advent of wheeled passenger transport to have appeared in the English language. To Taylor, in particular, the coach and carriage posed a threat to his trade. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, London watermen conducted a lucrative business in ferrying passengers, letters and bundles across the Thames, especially for those travelling to the Globe Theatre on the Bank side, but also to more distant places down the river such as Windsor and Maidenhead.⁽⁵⁾ Wheeled passenger transport was impacting hard on this monopoly. In Taylor's own estimation 'every day in any term (especially if the Court be at Whitehall) they do rob us of our livings, and carry 560 fares daily from us, which numbers of passengers were wont to supply our necessities, and enable us sufficiently with means to do our Prince and Country service'.⁽⁶⁾ In order to put a halt to this trend, Taylor had to take a stand or face financial ruin.

By the time Taylor came to write his polemic, it would be right to say that the coach and carriage, as a new form of passenger transportation, had firmly established a foothold. Disagreement reigns over the precise year in which coaches and carriages arrived on the scene, not least because of confusion as to what went into constituting one. For the purposes of this investigation, the carriage will be understood as 'wheeled-private-passenger-transport' while the coach will be regarded as 'wheeled-public-passenger-transport'. But the difference between the two is slight: in practice contemporaries referred to them interchangeably as two

(4) [Jon Cresset], *Reasons humbly offered to the consideration of Parliament, for the suppressing such of the stage-coaches and caravans now upon the roads of England, as are unnecessary, and regulating such as shall be thought fit to be continued* (London, 1672).

(5) Taylor, *The world runnes on wheelles*; *Reasons humbly offered*, 3.

(6) Taylor, *The world runnes on wheelles*, 15–16

components of one same force, and so it will be the case here. Most importantly, the novelty common to both coach and carriage lay in the fact that men, as well as women, were now being driven in wheeled vehicles on a day-to-day basis for the purposes of their enjoyment, protection and convenience.⁽⁷⁾ Based on this definition, transport historians are in general agreement that the years between 1550 and 1650 approximated to the hundred years in which wheeled passenger transportation first made its major breakthrough. In the case of France, Alfred Martin observed it was between 1575 and 1580 that the suspended coach or ‘coche’ first made its appearance when used for the purposes of promenading around town. This was quickly followed, in 1584, by the carriage or ‘caroche’ which, while used in the main by the wife of Henry III, was also made use of by the king himself when he travelled to Vincennes.⁽⁸⁾ Equally, in the case of England, the eminent transport historian W.T. Jackman estimated that while their debuts could be traced back to the early sixteenth century, it was the period between 1536 and 1580 in which, to him, the coach and carriage made their indelible mark on English soil.⁽⁹⁾ More specific has been the German art historian Rudolf Wackernagel, who, writing much later, traced the vehicles’ appearance to 1553, when the Dutch coach-maker Willem Boonen sent Elizabeth I a coach.⁽¹⁰⁾ By the end of the century, helped by Dutch protestant émigrés who had fled the religious wars, England managed, it seems, to have nurtured what approximated to a fledgling coach-manufacturing industry. So much so, in fact, that it was now capable of delivering products for export, as attested to when Sir Thomas

(7) Herbert Haupt, ‘Der Wagen im Mittelalter’, in Wilhelm Treue (ed), *Achse, Rad und Wagen: Fünftausend Jahre Kultur- und Technikgeschichte* (Göttingen, 1986), 196.

(8) Alfred Martin, *Étude historique et statistique sur les moyens de transport dans Paris* (Paris, 1894), 9.

(9) W.T. Jackman, *The development of transportation in modern England* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1916), I, 111–2.

(10) Rudolf H. Wackernagel, ‘Zur Geschichte der Kutsche bis zum Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts’, in Wilhelm Treue (ed), *Achse, Rad und Wagen: Fünftausend Jahre Kultur- und Technikgeschichte* (Göttingen, 1986), 219.

Smith sent an English-crafted coach, replete with strong Dutch styles, to the Russian court of Boris Godunov in 1604.⁽¹¹⁾

By all accounts, the take-up of four-wheeled passenger transport was quick; but it does seem that its popularity reached substantial levels only in the first half of the seventeenth century. As one English contemporary put it, shortly after their introduction, the lords 'hastened to buy coaches, and quickly lost the habit of walking on foot in the streets' but that it was only by '1636 [that] coaches blocked the streets.'⁽¹²⁾ Similar to the situation in London, which had already deliberated in parliament to restrain the excessive patronage of public passenger vehicles as early as 1601, the problem associated with vehicle travel in Paris had reached such heights that a petition was put forward, in 1637, in an effort to resolve the issue of passenger transportation.⁽¹³⁾ Such calls for regulation arose, because by the early to mid seventeenth century, urban public coach hire services – called 'fiacres' in Paris and 'hackney carriages' in London – had taken off as a business for those who chose – and could afford – to move around in the towns.⁽¹⁴⁾ Equally, stagecoach services, which operated inter-urban connections, had sprung up at this time. In the case of England, there were now long-distance services that linked far-flung parts of the kingdom such as York, Chester and Exeter to London. Shorter services, catering for travel to and from environs such as Middlesex, Kent and Surrey, were also burgeoning in popularity.⁽¹⁵⁾ Looking beyond 1650, moves widened to institute services designed to cater for a much broader travelling clientele. For example, the

(11) Wackernagel, 'Zur Geschichte der Kutsche', 219.

(12) Cited in Joan Thirsk, *The rural economy of England* (London, 1984), 376–7.

(13) Jackman, *Transportation in modern England*, I, 115; *A proclamation to restrain the abuses of hackney coaches in the cities of London, and Westminster, and the suburbs thereof* (London 1660); *Les Plaintes générales faites au roi contre la confusion et incommodité des carrosses* (Paris 1637).

(14) Bernard Causse, *Les Fiacres de Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1972), 14–5; Jackman, *Transportation in modern England*, I, 115–6.

(15) *Reasons humbly offered* (1672), 2.

famous *cinq sols*, which fixed five routes ‘for the comfort of the citizens of Paris’ in 1662, represented the genesis of what was to later morph into the omnibus.⁽¹⁶⁾ Differing from its vehicular predecessors in that it lumped together total strangers of various classes in one cramped vehicle, this French invention was to mark a critical watershed in the development of wheeled passenger transport. Such preference for moving about in vehicles seemed on an inexorable rise: it was hardly surprising why conservatives fretted over whether ‘walking’ and ‘riding’ would ever regain their places as preferred modes of movement.⁽¹⁷⁾

What was historically significant about the emergence of the coach and carriage between 1550 and 1650 becomes apparent when one understands that the landscape into which ‘driving’ entered was a two-dimensional one. Prior to the appearance of wheeled passenger transport, only two forms of ‘going’ had ever mattered.⁽¹⁸⁾ Either ‘riding’ in which horsemen were engaged or ‘walking’ in which pedestrians were engaged had been the only (in the case of walking) and the preferred (in the case of riding) means by which man could move about. Of course, one might also choose to include ‘carting’ – as represented by carmen or draymen – as part of this landscape. But strictly-speaking, the cart, which exclusively aided in the transport of goods, did not enter into the paradigm, since it did not in general cater for passengers. Exceptionally, the travelling poor and weak would make use of the cart because, rather like hitchhikers today, they could neither afford the coach nor bear the exertions of long journeys on foot, especially when lumbered with

(16) Octave Uzanne, *La Locomotion à travers l’histoire et les mœurs* (Paris, 1900), 108; Nicholas Papayanis, *Horse-drawn cabs and omnibuses in Paris: the idea of circulation and the business of public transit* (Baton Rouge and London, 1996), 17–8.

(17) For an eloquent illustration of this fear, see ‘The damaging economic effects of stage coaches, 1673’ in Joan Thirsk and J.P. Cooper (eds), *Seventeenth-century economic documents* (Oxford, 1972), 380.

(18) The concept of ‘going’ has been adapted and developed from the otherwise disappointing anthropological work of Wolfgang Wehapp, *Gehkultur. Mobilität und Fortschritt seit der Industrialisierung aus fußläufiger Sicht* (Frankfurt/Main 1997).

heavy luggage and accompanied by crying infants, and who often had to make do huddled among vegetables and other produce. Yet as a force capable of upsetting the duopoly of 'riding' and 'walking', 'carting' had little clout. By contrast, what had emerged to break this duopoly was a third force – 'driving' – which, with the advent of the coach and carriage as viable alternatives to 'riding' and 'walking', threatened to re-configure the two-dimensional paradigm in which movement had previously been conducted.

What undoubtedly concerned those who looked on at the rise of vehicles with horror was – quite unsurprisingly – the extent to which incidents and accidents on streets and thoroughfares were in alarming ascendancy. Placing the blame squarely at the door of coaches and carriages, John Taylor noted disapprovingly: 'Coaches [are] cumbersome by their rumbling and rutting, as they are by their standing still, and damning up the streets and lanes, as the Blackfriars, and other diverse places one witnesses ... the streets are so pestered and clogged with them, that neither man, horse, or cart can pass for them.'⁽¹⁹⁾ Their increase blocked narrow streets of towns and cities, placed burdens on urban infrastructure which, up until this time, had not planned for spaces for wheeled passenger transport, and contributed to frequent road accidents as pedestrians and vehicles jostled and tussled for position within a changing urban environment. 'The mischiefs that has been done by them are not to be numbered', he exclaimed, 'as break of legs and arms, overthrowing down hills, over bridges, running over children, lame and old people' had come to present real dangers to what one might term today 'public safety'.⁽²⁰⁾ Not only did he stop at wheeled passenger transport in terms of the nuisances and dangers they caused the general public, but he also warned that even passengers – presumed safe because they were the ones instigating all the chaos and accidents – were placed under considerable danger. Citing the example of the French king, Henry IV, who

(19) Taylor, *The world runnes on wheelles*, 17.

(20) *Ibid.*, 27.

had, together with his wife, nearly drowned after their coach was overthrown from a bridge, Taylor cautioned against the excessive patronage of four-wheeled passenger vehicles.⁽²¹⁾

But Taylor's arguments did not confine themselves to the immediate harm vehicles undoubtedly visited upon both pedestrians and passengers. They also captured a perspective that transport and urban historians interested narrowly on issues of technology and traffic would surely miss. For believing that the fashion in wheeled passenger transport, if allowed to spread, portended a decline in horsemanship, Taylor looked on with grave concern at the multitude of men who were now dispensing with riding *on* horses and converting to riding *in* vehicles. Lamenting what the stagecoach had wrought, Cresset, for example, pointed to how driving had almost comprehensively won round riders in and around London who would have previously relied upon saddle horses for conducting their day-to-day affairs. As he put it:

There are stage-coaches that go almost every town within 20 or 25 miles of London, wherein passengers are carried, so that ... gentlemen, merchants, and other traders that have occasion to ride, make use of them, some to keep fairs and markets; others to visit friends, and to, and from their country-houses, or about other business, who before these coaches did set up, kept a horse or two of their own, but now have given over keeping the same.⁽²²⁾

What upset Cresset even more was the apparent ease with which horsemen were dismounting from their saddles. Of course, the sick, the aged as well as children, he accepted, 'may ride in the long waggon-coaches, which were those that first were set up, and are not now opposed, because they do little or no hurt.' But for gentlemen

(21) Ibid. In a further twist, Henry IV was assassinated in a carriage.

(22) *Reasons humbly offered* (1672), 2–3.

'that are able to ride on horseback', he continued, to own or to hire coaches amounted to a 'sordid' affront which had to be prevented at all costs.⁽²³⁾ The fact that grown-up men, who should know better, were deciding to do so, surprised and angered Cresset, who accused them of acting like wimps, so concerned they were about keeping their clothes clean and who would 'endure all inconveniences of that manner of travelling rather than ride on horseback'.⁽²⁴⁾

Such a move from 'ridden' to 'driven', however, was not only about a change in technology or men dispensing with their masculinity. Since 'driving' deprived them of a major source of exercise, the shift from 'riding' to 'driving' gave rise to accusations of laziness, which, in its extreme manifestations, led to fears of a decline in moral standards of behaviour. Importantly, values and virtues which went into constructing equine society had been garnered on horseback. To be forced to dismount from the horse meant men had to relinquish the very moral standards on which this society had been based. Losing the taste for how horses should be ridden had a knock-on effect too, since children could no longer be taught the basics of horsemanship in a world where very few rode – in turn making them incapable of serving their country on horseback in the future.⁽²⁵⁾ Pushing this scenario to its logical conclusion, Cresset warned that such a state of affairs would inevitably discourage incentives to breed quality saddle horses: 'By destroying the breed of good horses, the strength of the nation, and making men careless of attaining good horsemanship, a thing so useful and commendable in a gentleman.'⁽²⁶⁾ This would, in turn, severely compromise the strength of the cavalry to defend the nation in the event of war. If coaches were allowed to expand at its present pace, Cresset then went on to predict with gloom, the type of horses that would be bred specifically for

(23) [Jon Cresset], 'The grand concern of England' (1673) reprinted in *The Harleian Miscellany* (London 1809), VIII, 546.

(24) *Reasons humbly offered* (1672), 1.

(25) Thirsk and Cooper, 379.

(26) *Reasons humbly offered*, 1.

the purpose of the horseman would simply cease to exist, wiping out a quarter of the most valuable part of the equine population.⁽²⁷⁾ Exactly this argument had been brought forward in 1601 when a bill called for the coaches to be suppressed: ‘because of the greater use of horses among the common people, the Government would find it difficult to get enough horses for the army’.⁽²⁸⁾ To halt this slippery slope, it was thus necessary for incentives to be given to gentlemen for holding on to ‘good’ horses. Linked as it was to both military and national interests, this argument about the need to breed, whatever the circumstance, saddle horses of calibre held an abiding attraction. In fact, as an ‘ideology’, it survived the onslaught first of wheeled passenger transport and then later of wheeled goods transport, so long as the cavalry remained an important and prestigious arm of the military.

What had to be done, to put a halt to this malaise, was to stop princes, nobles and gentlemen from dismounting their horses. During 1634, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Francis Cottington, called for legislation to do just this and he put before the Committee of the Council deliberating the issue of hackney carriages that ‘[n]o sons of noblemen, nor gentlemen unmarried, shall go in the streets in coaches, except in company of their parents, after the age of ten, eleven or thirteen’.⁽²⁹⁾ Equally important was to prevent the taste for vehicles spreading to infect those lower down the social order, whose associations with the saddle horse were perhaps not as important to their identities. If this tactic were to fail Taylor was in no doubt about the kind of social consequences that would follow:

[W]hen every Gill Turntripe, Mrs. Fumkins, Madame Polecat, and my Lady Trash, Froth the Tapster, Bill the Taylor, Lauender the broker, Whiff the tobacco seller, with their companion Trugs, must be coached to S. Albones,

(27) Ibid., 2.

(28) Jackman, *Transportation in modern England*, I, 113.

(29) Quoted in Jackman, *Transportation in modern England*, I, 116.

Burntwood, Hockley in the Hole, Croydon, Windsor, Uxbridge, and many other places, like wild haggards prancing up and down, that what they get by cheating, swearing, and lying at home, they spend in riot, whoring, and drunkenness abroad.⁽³⁰⁾

So it should come as no surprise that when Taylor went in search for coaches' analogical cousins, he would alight on the comparison with whores to illustrate how morally indefensible and socially corruptible they were:

[A] coach is common, so is a whore: a coach is costly, so is a whore; a coach is drawn with beasts, a whore is drawn away with beastly knaves. A coach has loose curtains, a whore has a loose gown, a coach is laced and fringed, so is a whore: a coach may be turned any way, so may a whore: a coach has bosses, studs, and gilded nails to adorn it: a whore has Owches, brooches, bracelets, chains and jewels to set her forth: a coach is always out of reparations, so is a whore: a coach has need of mending still, so has a whore: a coach is unprofitable, so is a whore: a coach is superfluous, so is a whore.⁽³¹⁾

Utter contempt Taylor had for wheeled passenger transport did not necessarily translate into a blanket critique of all forms of wheeled transport. In fact it was quite the reverse – if the coach was a 'whore' then the cart was a 'saint'. As an indispensable means of carrying stones and timber from the woods to the towns as well as corn, wine and beer from the fields to the markets – necessary because they are 'dead things and cannot go on foot' – the cart served an invaluable purpose.⁽³²⁾ Equally, Taylor held in high regard the role the cart played in carrying the luggage of kings

⁽³⁰⁾ Taylor, *The world runnes on wheeles*, 18.

⁽³¹⁾ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁽³²⁾ *Ibid.*, 9.

and queens without which their entourage could not have moved from place to place as was so common for sovereigns to do at the time.⁽³³⁾ The services the cart provided in ferrying the infirm, elderly and sick were also laudable, while its presence at executions and funerals provided convicted criminals and the recently deceased with an honourable means of taking them to their places of rest.⁽³⁴⁾ From cradle to grave man simply could not do without carts. Their paramount importance was beyond reproach. By contrast, Taylor found nothing to commend in coaches and carriages. Bedecked as they were with ostentatious and needless display, passenger vehicles were, in his eyes, all talk and no action, whose destiny should have been to play second fiddle to the cart; but instead, to his horror, he found them punching above their station, with the coach driver, riding atop the vehicle and shouting down at the minions below him, embodying all that was pretentious and grotesque about the coach. As he put it:

A cart (by the judgement of an honourable and grave Lawyer) is elder brother to a coach for antiquity; and for utility and profit, all the world knows which is which, yet so unnatural and unmannerly a brother the coach is, that it will give no way to the cart, but with pride, contempt bitter curses and execrations, the coachman wishes all the carts on fire, or at the duel, and that carmen were all hanged, when they cannot pass at their pleasures, quite forgetting themselves to be ... unprofitable intruders, upstarts, and innovators.⁽³⁵⁾

Such juxtapositions, which involved associating vehicles with those who operated them, had the effect of casting doubt over the moral credibility of coach drivers which reflected, in turn, on how they treated those in their charge. Contrasting

(33) Ibid., 24.

(34) Ibid., 25.

(35) Ibid.

once again the attitude of the cabman who, finding his 'horse be melancholy or dull with hard and heavy labour' would then 'like a kind piper whistle him a fit of mirth, to any tune from above Eela to below Gammoth', Taylor came down heavily on the coachman's cruelty 'for he never whistles, but all his music is to rap out an oath, or blurt out a curse against his team.'⁽³⁶⁾ Significantly, this mode of thinking, with its references to animal cruelty, was to have powerful consequences on how the relationship between horse, man and vehicle was to unfold in later centuries.⁽³⁷⁾

Why did coach and carriage attain popularity and who was responsible for this upsurge in interest in vehicular transport? To uncover definitive answers would require further study, including painstaking research into various diaries that contemporaries kept, which this present investigation has neither time nor space to undertake. Nonetheless, it would be both easy and wrong, as Jean-Baptiste Bullet quickly did, to believe that the chief factor in the take-up of the coach and carriage lay in technological change which, in turn, made it possible for passengers to travel in relative comfort.⁽³⁸⁾ Given the poor state of the roads at the time, comfort would not have been an overriding factor in why men chose to be driven in vehicles. Certainly, technology seems to have improved not least because suspension had been added. Yet, as Germain Brice acidly noted in the case of Paris, 'these vehicles could be made more comfortable and less expensive if one only paid more heed to public demand'.⁽³⁹⁾ This was a sentiment shared by Montaigne whose experiences of negotiating one left him thoroughly unimpressed, leading him to quip memorably: 'I hate all vehicles apart from the horse'.⁽⁴⁰⁾ As with Montaigne, who refused to

⁽³⁶⁾ Ibid., 9–10.

⁽³⁷⁾ See Tatsuya Mitsuda, "The Horse in European History, 1550–1900" (Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2007), chap. 5.

⁽³⁸⁾ Jean-Baptiste Bullet, *Dissertation sur la mythologie française et sur plusieurs points curieux de l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1771), 497.

⁽³⁹⁾ Germain Brice, *Description de la ville de Paris: et de tout ce qu'elle contient de plus remarquable* (3 vols., 9th edition (1752), Paris, 1971), III, 161.

dismount ‘whether I am ill or well’, the overall experience of being knocked about without being able to predict or have control over when bumps and jolts threw passengers off their seats, particularly over long distances, could not have aided in keeping down the food for very long.⁽⁴¹⁾ In fact, one might share in the sentiment expressed by Taylor who was genuinely puzzled as to why men chose ‘driving’ over ‘riding’ given all its side-effects:

It is a most uneasy kind of passage in coaches on the paved streets in London wherein men and women are so tossed, tumbled, jumbled, rumbled, and crossing of kennels, dunghills, and uneven-ways, which is enough to put all the guts in their bellies out of joint, to make them have the palsey or megrum, or to cast their gorges with continual rocking and wallowing.⁽⁴²⁾

Even advocates and defendants of the coach and carriage, who were rare voices of accent among a chorus of dissent in the early seventeenth century, were far from quick to refer to the comfort of the coach so as to justify its public utility. Compared to walking or riding, the *Apologie des carrosses*, for example, shied away from citing comfort as one of the reasons why driving should attract support and patronage – a curious omission. Nor did the pamphlet choose to appeal to convenience when it was widely known that the coach was as slow as it was to walk. In fact, the only time in which it came close to referring to either its comfort or convenience was when it mentioned that the merit of coaches and carriages lay in the way in which dignitaries, such as ambassadors and civil servants, who were transported in them, could respectfully shield themselves from the weather.⁽⁴³⁾

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Quoted in Majorie Nice Boyer, ‘Mediaeval suspended carriages,’ *Speculum* 34/3 (July 1959), 359–66, 366.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Quoted in Thirsk, *Rural economy*, 375.

⁽⁴²⁾ Taylor, *The world runnes on wheeles*, 30–1.

⁽⁴³⁾ *Apologie des carrosses: contenant la réponse à leurs calomnieux* (Paris, 1625).

Problematic in any investigation that considers the historical significance of passenger transportation is that it is easy to overestimate the kind of impact coaches and carriages had. The novelty of 'driving' was of course real not least because it introduced a third element in how people chose to move, alongside 'riding' and 'walking'. But it would be misleading to suppose, together with contemporaries who had an interest in whipping up fear, that the conflict between 'driving' and 'riding' had already been settled in favour of the coach and carriage in the period between 1550 and 1650.

When viewed from the *longue durée*, the proliferation of wheeled passenger transportation, during these hundred years, was far from all-encompassing. In the case of Paris, following the first breakthrough, the number of wheeled passenger vehicles stood at a modest 310–320 in 1685.⁽⁴⁴⁾ By contrast, some forty years later, that figure exploded to 15,000 and by 1765 to 20,000.⁽⁴⁵⁾ In the case of London, too, the trend was similar: from a similarly modest number, conservatively-estimated figures reached 1,900 by 1694 and by 1754 there were in excess of 8,000 vehicles.⁽⁴⁶⁾ More importantly, the number making use of public wheeled passenger transportation, such as stagecoaches, remained insignificant. So low had been the number of these coaches, which linked up the various parts of the kingdom to London, that Jackman was compelled to conclude that, even as late as the mid-eighteenth century, 'most travelling was done on horseback rather than wheeled carriages.'⁽⁴⁷⁾

Given what one can surely describe as an explosion, which took place after the breakthrough period, and the sluggish take-up of coach services in the period under review, one should bear in mind that 'driving' – at least during the course of the

(44) Bullet, *La mythologie française*, 507.

(45) Annik Pardailhé-Galabrun, 'Les déplacements des parisiens dans la ville aux XVIIème et XVIIIème siècles', *Histoire, économie et société* 2/2 (1983), 205–53, 224

(46) Jackman, *Transportation in modern England*, I, 130.

(47) *Ibid.*, 125.

seventeenth century – remained by far from a position of outright preference as a mode of movement. The impact of ‘driving’ one might say, was more symbolic than real, one limited to certain sections of the population rather than one devouring all. Of course, as a story the tussle between ‘riding’ and ‘driving’ did not cease but continued to escalate, and it would be correct to attribute the genesis of this clash to the period between 1550 and 1650. But the outcome of this conflict, for the moment, still hung in the balance. Even so, it is important to note the gradual shift of power that was set in motion during this period: to ask who was involved in the proliferation of coach and carriage and why rulers, aristocrats as well as women eventually came to accept ‘driving’.⁽⁴⁸⁾

(48) For discussion on this theme, see Mitsuda, “The Horse”, 26–36.