

Enclosures in England, Genesis of Capitalism and Globalization

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Abstract: The study considers genesis of capitalism and bases for globalization from new perspective. The purpose of the research is to analyze enclosures development process as the factor of the simultaneous genesis of capitalism in England and globalization. The researcher believe that globalization and world-system capitalism originated in England, following the peculiarities of British society development in the years since William the conqueror and even before him. In this connection, the researchers challenge the universal theory of progress, formulated by Goody as well as Wallerstein's theory of world-system capitalism. As it is supposed by the researchers, capitalism genesis was caused not by Columbu's discovery of America but by the Wars of the Roses in England when in their opinion, the crisis of feudalism in England was hastened however, the researchers believe that feudalism was never strong in England. In this regard, the age of discovery is considered by the researchers as an event external to world-system capitalism genesis, contrary to the popular opinion of many researchers. The researchers consider the process of capitalism rise in Western Europe through the prism of confrontation between the peasant communities of landed aristocracy and process of destruction in land ownership rights hierarchy. Therefore, the researchers make a bold conclusion that the genesis of capitalism could not take place without the acceleration of these processes in England after the hundred year's war. In this regard, the price revolution is determined by the authors as a process which distantly related to the formation of the capitalist economy. The researcher have obtained the following results: the genesis of capitalism in the conditions of the English territorial community was shown based on the works of British historians of the late 19th the early 20th centuries; the relation between the enclosures and the increasing interest of English society to improvements in the sphere of land tenure were demonstrated; the social and political motivations of the certain groups of the English population to enclose their lands were highlighted. The study employs the methods of comparative analysis, historical concepts as well as synchronic, problem-chronological and chronological methods. The analysis of the processes in the history of England is based on secondary sources and historical documents referred to the studied ages. Many provisions of the study refer to the old debate dated by the second half of the soviet period. This debate applies to the reasons for capitalism genesis and the nature of its development in the early modern age. Today the debate is revived within the frame work of institutional analysis. The information contained in this study was discussed in the course of a number of scientific seminars and round-table conferences at the Russian academy of sciences and other organizations.

Key words: Capitalism, globalization, genesis, world-system, enclosures

INTRODUCTION

There are many works devoted to the Globalization and a reader may wonder how this study can help in the study of this phenomenon. We often talk about international trade as a matter of course but at the same time, the reason why people started actually trading with each other at a certain historic period is lost in the mass of

studies analyzing the genesis of the global economy. In general, this study puts globalization in the second place in the analysis. It is considered as a product of complex institutional processes that are unique to Western Europe and England in particular.

To some extent we are in the position of the Western civilization "unicalism", advancing the thesis that the expansive capitalism could arise only within the societies

of the Western Christianity. To a great degree, it contradicts currently trendy Eurasian universalism theories including primarily the theory of Jack Goody which one of the key provisions is that capitalism cannot be related to the West only.

Goody often refers to the comparisons of Turkey (the Ottoman Empire) to the Western Christian societies. The main emphasis should be laid on the conceptual idea of property rights hierarchy in Turkey. The fact is that the sultan was considered to be the main owner of the land in the Ottoman Empire but the land still could be expropriated, that allows, among other factors, Goody (2015) to consider the example of Turkey as a society close to the West. This in its turn, ruins the theory of the Asiatic production mode which was according to its proponents inherent in the “stiffened” East and hardly perceived by Latov (2013). These theories repeat the interpretation of capitalism genesis given by Marx and in the cultural sense by Georg Hegel and Max Weber.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used the methods of comparative analysis, historical concepts as well as synchronic, problem-chronological and chronological methods.

The study is based on the studies on enclosures of 19th and the early 20th centuries which were undertaken in England. After so many years, these studies themselves act as a tool. In addition to this, modern statistical studies on historical periods in question also served as a source for the research. The purpose of the study is to show the effect of enclosures process in its complete form on globalization, hence it is necessary to confirm the thesis above stipulating that the model of capitalism, aimed at expansion is a product of the Anglo-Saxon medieval and post-medieval society. In this regard, England is considered as a special system that existed in the frame work of the Western civilization that contradicts many modern concepts opposing the West as a kind of the whole to the East also as a kind of the whole. Therefore, we believe that we are closer to Giovanni Arrighi's costs internationalization theory which spotlighted an individual society, rather than civilization in the historical process of the world (Perroy, 2006). Solely, unlike Arrighi we believe that in addition to costs internationalization, there was transfer of costs from one type of societies to another that demonstrates us the example of modern age England.

The objectives of this study boil down to the identification of enclosures nature in England, the role of sheep breeding in this process, consideration of the price revolution period in England after the age of discovery,

tracing the demographic processes in England of 13-17th centuries in the context of their affecting internal migration and dynamics of factor and commodity prices. The Marxist interpretation of capitalism genesis in the frame work of English society in the late middle ages faces a number of objections. First, why the peasants did not stop the process of enclosures by protest actions? Given the weakness of police control in British society from the end of the Wars of the Roses and almost to the beginning of Cromwell's dictatorship, the uprising appeared to have a chance of success. At least, the royal authority in such case would have been forced to make concessions to the peasantry and to prohibit enclosures (although, the uprisings did take place, they were local and rarely large-scale and as a result, extremely unsuccessful). Second, the Marxist school did not taken into account the physical scale of the wool trade in Europe and the fact that Spain after the age of discovery, actively developed the market, forcing English merchants out of it which was to reduce their motivation to make enclosures. Third, the period of enclosures itself does not coincide with the growth of the wool trade in Britain, the latter started earlier, even before the hundred year's war, reaching the highest scale in its midst there of when the English controlled the port of Calais. Fourth, there were not taken into consideration the facts that the farming community in England did not consist 100% of peasants and that it was mainly managed by members of the clergy and the nobility while the church was not interested in the depopulation of peasants. Fifth, the price revolution effect on the economic behavior of rent recipients was exaggerated by Marxists, England remained aloof from the waves of European inflation as its industrial products, except for cloth did not have wide access to the rapidly growing industrial markets of France, Spain, Italy and Germany for a long time.

It is necessary to advance the arguments to support the above objections concerning the lead of emergence of enclosures and capitalist relations in England which are popular in Russian historiography. For a start, the scale of the wool trade and its beginning period should be considered. During the period from 1360-1379 the English controlled 53.7% of the total Western European exports of cloth and wool (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2008), Britain started fur trading before the Hundred Year's War. But the English wool export was reducing during the first half of the 16th century by 1540s, the decline amounted to 80%, compared with the end of the 15th century (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011). But the export of cloth significantly increased. By 1540, its level amounted to 800% of the early 15th century (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011). However, the sharp increase of

enclosures as is known, still fell on the periods after 1540. Moreover, under the pressure of competition on the continent in the 16th century, the English were forced to increase the exports of cloth, reducing the sales of wool (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011), the latter was the main export item of Spain. Thus, as early as in the middle ages, the focus of English export production shifted from the agricultural sector to the industry.

Wool export gained the peak value in 1281-1285 (golden age of Western continental kingdoms economies) amounting to 26, 879.20 bags of wool (old English measure used in the trading of this product) or about 116,554 units of broad clothes (another measure for determining wool trade extent in medieval England as a convenience, namely this measure will be used further because it was used for determining the volume of cloth sales). During the period from 1541-1545, quinquennium of the medieval “prosperity” of British exporters, the English transported abroad almost 137,885 “broad clothes” (peak value of the export for the period, since the end of the 18th century). Less than a fifth part of this number accounted for wool which was much less than during the first half of the previous century (Munro, 2003).

Thus in terms of “clothes”, British export of wool and cloth did not increase much in comparison with the end of the 13th century, though the area of land used for agriculture was enlarged. Therefore, if the export of wool and cloth acted as a motive for enclosures, it was minor one. In addition, during the Great Plague and the Wars of the Roses (many peasants were involved in the conflict as noblemen’s suite, besides, this civil war was accompanied by looting and increasing banditry), the population of England significantly reduced which made it possible to adapt significant areas as pastures without enclosures.

RESULTS

It can be concluded that sheep breeding could not greatly affect grain farming. Moreover, before the Great Plague and after the end of the hundred year’s War, Europe and England itself faced growing demand for grain and the process was to result in the greater motivation to appropriate common lands just as the process of cloth demand increase. In addition, the grain was a strategic commodity which manufacture was of interest to the state and the church.

As it was mentioned above, enclosure process began after the extension of mass wool trade over the English Channel. These processes were hardly interconnected indeed, i.e., the enclosures were not caused only by wool exports. Enclosures remained also in the 18th century

when the production of cloth on the continent achieved high performance, the French manufactories could already compete with the English ones. However, as it was in the previous century, enclosures were primarily destined to increase the level of grain farming and local rural communes welfare protection. The communes could no longer live according to the laws of territorial community but did not want to fully switch to market economy.

As Michael Turner stated, enclosures remained in England after the Napoleonic Wars. The fact that the English agrarian economy was disposing of the community heritage for such long period of time can be explained by the reluctance of many farmers to abandon old principles of agriculture, despite the increase in grain production efficiency after fields enlargement (Turner, 1986). The central problem of communal land tenure was that the small areas of peasant holdings were often scattered across large land areas. For example, the agreement to improve the fields in Buckinghamshire of 1777 was due to the fact that the cultivated holdings were so narrow that farmers could not plow them cross wise. In accordance with the circumstances, peasants themselves asked land lords to improve the fields. About 15 years after the Buckinghamshire fields improvement, the Enclosure act was adopted but in this case, the reason for the adoption was also the actions of one of the farmers who contrary to the established rules bought sheep and began to feed them on a communal meadow where clover had not yet fully matured (Turner, 1986).

The history of land improvements and enclosures in Buckinghamshire is revealing, the territorial peasant society was decaying from within whereas enclosures protected the interests primarily of the farms specializing in the cultivation of crops and engaged in integrated farming (the clover eaten by sheep was intended primarily for cows).

Buckinghamshire was not a kind of exception. Solely, in this case enclosures did not entail wrangles and clashes. As Michael Turner pointed out in the 18th century in the counties of middle England, enclosures were aimed both at the land liberation for grazing and agriculture improvement, however, the first motive was dominating (Turner, 1986). Although, it is evident that enclosures process, even in middle England, reached the climax after the price revolution and the peak of export expansion in Britain related to cloth trade. Nevertheless, the part of land areas exposed to enclosures preserved its grain specialization while farmers benefited from this in the form of increased productivity (Turner, 1986). As it was stated by M. Turner, improvements and enclosures took place closely not only land lords but also simple peasants were interested in them. In some cases, the share

of total area of cultivated land per farm decreased but this did not hinder the process of lands improvement (Turner, 1986) as enclosed land areas (territory assigned to parishes) provided more opportunities for crops diversification (Turner, 1986).

An interesting example was provided by Steve Hindle. His research analyzes the enclosures in Kedington shortly before the English bourgeois revolution (Hindle, 1998). It is interesting, since it shows a struggle against enclosures and motives for it, these motives were not associated with class affiliation as the both parties were represented by peasants. Certainly, the clergy was against enclosures as it would have lost its parishioners in this case. The initiative came from rich farmers who sought to protect their forests and meadows from allottees (Hindle, 1998). Kedington faced enclosures in the middle of 16th century but they were associated not only with limitations on communal pastures cultivation but also with the limited use of forest land (Hindle, 1998). However, until 17th century enclosures did not extend to such large areas (Hindle, 1998).

Hindle refers to an interesting fact. About 1587 the Earl of Kent decided to enclose 9 acres near his palace for horses grazing. In exchange for the enclosure, the local society demanded from him to abandon operation rights for 300 acres of communal land that was documented in 1604 in a special petition in the name of the Earl who ignored the demands of the peasants. After the meeting in the church in retaliation for this, the latter brought their flocks in the enclosed pasture of the Earl and he had to cede (Hindle, 1998). It is note worthy that the local "rioters" who opposed the Earl arbitrariness were shouting "for King James" (Hindle, 1998) which points to the even then existing conception proclaiming the king the chief land lord in the state. However, Hindle describes this case as an exception, however, the remarkable one.

As Hindle showed by the example of Kedington only, land in the England of 16th century was freely expropriated but as a rule, large estates of course were bought by rich men, however, very often the role of the latter played yeomen, i.e., rich peasants (Hindle, 1998). Thus by the end of the middle ages, the concept of the royal right to all the land in England became an anachronism which was not reflected in legal practice and not only lords could play the role of major land owners. In Kedington, it was yeomen who often initiated enclosures (Hindle, 1998).

At the end of the Elizabethan period, Kedington suffered the "onslaught" of agricultural migrants. Certain measures were taken against them in order to protect communal forests from unauthorized felling (Hindle, 1998). Those very measures were an important step to mass enclosures practice initiation.

The fact that in the beginning of 17th century peasants respected the right of the king to dispose the English land is apparently, due to the events of the late 15th the early 16th century when such attempt was indeed made by the monarchy in the form of just a struggle with enclosures on the part of central government. However, even then export was an insignificant motive for enclosures. It was suggested that the reason why new pastures were highly demanded among farmers and lords was associated with the general decline in grain production in England against the background of increasing demand for meat and dairy products as well as for cloth.

The events of the late 15th the early 16th century show an important feature of enclosures which started being practiced mainly in the Northern counties, remaining mainly a regional phenomenon for a long time. However, it must be borne in mind that the population of the Northern counties also played the role of a force that ensured the protection of the kingdom from the Scots invasions and that caused the Crown's concerns over the fate of the villages and towns in the Northern England. And another feature should be noted, the acts against enclosures were adopted by Parliament, the acts were likely initiated not only by the king and originally may be not even by him personally.

In the winter of 1490 the third Parliament under Henry Tudor VII adopted the Act against towns convergence. At that time, the peculiarity of rural population of England was the concentration of population in small towns. According to Parliamentarians, the increase of the areas cultivated by farms together with the enlargement of pastures (that could be just the result of the mid-size mixed farm area increase) caused depopulation in the rural areas. As a measure to deal with this phenomenon the act provided for the adoption of the regulation according to which a farm cost cannot be >10 marks (Gay, 1900). However, it is still unclear whether it was exactly about enclosures or Parliament opposed mere average farm area increase though and whether the "towns convergence" was initiated by lords or it was the result of mere land expropriation empowerment for peasants and other social strata?

The act of 1490 was adopted to improve the defense capability of the kingdom under the threat of war (Gay, 1900) so, obviously, it was primarily focused on the towns in the Northern counties located along the border with Scotland. The act of 1490 stated that all the households existing since the winter of 1487 were to be restored whereas those who took the land were to pay the fine to the King (if he was considered to be the "immediate lord" (Gay, 1900). Accordingly, the king could have a limited right to dispose land. Lord took on the role of manager rather than owner.

The act of 1490 states that, if the king is not an “immediate lord”, the fine must be paid to the local lord, though, it is known that at that time the land could be expropriated in favor of a person belonging to almost any social stratum and most likely, this also means the return of fully redeemed plots to their former owners.

Thus, it is clear that at the end of 15th century the king could not act as a sole land lord. As for the act of 1490, it was adopted by Parliament. All this points to an important fact: the late medieval England did not know the hierarchy of rights to all the land in the state that was recorded in the Ottoman Empire or in the Moscow state at the time. However, the hierarchy of rights to land still remained and apparently, it was remaining for a rather long period of time. The British still remember the good old days when the land was not expropriated so freely and the king was the guarantor of social stability, those sentiments are reflected in the written request of an old dignitary Dudley to Henry VIII which suggests returning to the old constitutional order through the reform of the Church (Reformation) (Gay, 1900). Roughly speaking in the view of the English elite, the Reformation should have become a tool for strength ening royal power and most likely, partial restoration of power-property institution.

The act of 1490 turned out to be a “dead law” which was not followed by any change (Gay, 1900), since the royal power in England after the turmoil caused by the Wars of the Roses was weak. In 1514, the counties authorities received the complaints about grain harvest reduction due to the expansion of pasture areas. The 5th February 1515 Parliament adopted the act against “towns convergence” similar to the one that was adopted in 1490 (Gay, 1900). However, significant amendments were made: the principle of farm property appraisal as a criterion for the adoption of administrative measures against the reduction of cultivated areas was not applied; local lords were obliged to fulfill Parliament’s order within 6 months (the order also provided for fines levying), otherwise the title passed to lords who had precedence in the hierarchy of aristocracy. If the latter refused to fulfill the order, the title passed to the king (Gay, 1900). Thus, we deal with the empowerment of the king as the land lord of the state that corresponds to the ideas of some of the initiators of the English Reformation. The act of 1514 banned and abolished forest and wetlands enclosures (Gay, 1900). However, as the studies of the specially established Royal Commission revealed from 40-60% of the land plots enclosed in the period between 1489 and 1517 in the counties of Berkshire and Linconshire were purposed for the pastures enlargement (Gay, 1900), respectively the other land plots were enclosed for different reasons such as cultivation improvement. Nonetheless, the analysis of

the data in the 5 largest counties of England showed that 68.08% of all the enclosures in 1511-1517 were aimed at pastures extension whereas 90.97% of all the enclosures in 1485-1490 were motivated by this factor. However, in 5 counties the area of the land enclosed was not as large either but it cannot be said that it was small a little >10,000 acres were enclosed in the period from 1511-1517 (Gay, 1900) which in general did not mean the sharp reduction in the number of peasants cultivating these lands. However, it was registered that the rural areas across the country were depopulated during this period. Therefore, the act of 1536 of Parliament empowered the King to personally annul enclosures results (Gay, 1900).

The acts of Parliament in the first quarter of 16th century partly succeeded some households were restored and some enclosures were canceled (Gay, 1900). This in our view was partly due to the decrease in exports of English wool in 16th century and transition to the export of fully processed cloth (though the behavior of wool prices was still of paramount importance (Gay, 1900). At the same time, it is evident that after all in 16th century the English peasant community was weak, since Parliament (on behalf of the King) acted as the main force in fighting against enclosures. Peasants migrated from those counties where enclosures were the most popular.

According to a researcher of the early 20th century, E.M. Leonard, the English peasantry underwent some social changes at the end of 15th century. It became more legally and economically independent of Lords. It happened largely due to the formation of the English independent judicial system in the late middle ages. It protected the rights of copy holders who in many cases, privatized their holdings and became independent of Lords, however, the lords still preserved their limited rights (stewardship). The economic mobility of land increased due to the change of copyholder’s legal status that resulted in the fact that it was concentrated in the hands of rich peasants who became yeomen (Leonard, 1905). However, the English peasants became legally free as early as in the anglo-saxon period.

At the end of 15th century yeomen began to actively expand the cultivated area of their estates, often bringing them up to 150 acres whereas the English farmer traditionally cultivated no >20 acres and land-poor farmer’s plots reached usually up to 5 acres (Leonard, 1905). It was yeomen who started evicting unnecessary peasants from land in order to increase the economic efficiency of their farms (lords were traditionally interested in the rent while economic improvement issues regarding farms were in response of peasants). This very process

formed the basis for peasant community destruction. It should also be noted that in the late 15th century, lords began selling their land to small owners actively (Leonard, 1905), though rent devaluation process had not yet begun in England because of the price revolution.

The opinion of J. Goody that Turkey and the West had very similar system of agrarian law should be contested. In England, the hierarchy of land rights was compromised in 15th century. Most likely, the process of its destruction was launched much earlier. During Anglo-Saxon monarchy (until 1066), there was a stratum of free peasants who managed to survive the reign of William the Conqueror. The peasants with such legal status appeared in England due to the wars with the Scandinavians many of them were themselves the descendants of Scandinavian settlers. Divergence between Britain and Turkey started much before 1600 identified by J. Goody as the milestone during which the West began to outpace the East, marking its significant divergence from the latter.

The case of the fight of Parliament against enclosures clearly showed which forces opposed capitalism. It was landed aristocracy and major bureaucracy. Thus, parliamentary institution has not always been the engine and even support of capitalism.

Studies showed that Britain's enclosures experience was not unique but the English were ahead of the rest of Europe but not in the legitimization of enclosures at the level of national law. In Denmark, the Act of 1769 allowed communities to enclose land on the basis of internal consensus. In 1781, enclosures in Denmark were authorized in accordance with administrative regulation upon an application of the landlord. In 1801 a similar law was passed in England but according to it a plot in an administrative unit could be enclosed with the consent of the majority of land owners only. In 1845, the enclosure procedure in England was eased from then onward it was enough that the owners of the one-third of property cost handed in an application in a particular administrative unit.

The Danish Enclosures act of 1781 was stricter than the British acts. But the German act passed by the Duke of Lauenburg was even stricter towards smallholders. According to that, land could be enclosed at any time by any land lord with all the necessary compensations paid to peasants (Grantham, 1980). In Prussia, enclosures were explicitly aimed at reducing pastures to expand arable land, judging by the content of the act of 1811 which provided for the possibility to withdraw 50% of a territorial community pastures for tillage. In 1751, enclosures were allowed in Prussia but within the royal

domain only (Grantham, 1980) whereas the English laws on the contrary, defended the Crown's holdings from enclosures.

In France, the Enclosures act was adopted in 1791, albeit in a very vague form: the land lord was entitled to enclose his plot of communal land. Apparently, this regulation was not applied successfully as the 1865 act allowed the local farms union ("syndicate") to enclose land by unanimous decision (Grantham, 1980). The French Enclosures act of 1865 turned to be the most democratic and the most antimarket one. Cost-effectiveness of French enclosures in 19th century, judging by the rental income of their land owners was lower by 40% than the English ones in the previous century (Grantham, 1980). Land in France continued being enclosed until the First World War. The Price Revolution in Europe was triggered by mostly internal factors. This is corroborated in addition to the above arguments by the fact that within the second half of the 15th the early 16th centuries wool prices rose 3-5 times in a number of continental markets (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011) that provoked the first major wave of enclosures in England with which Parliament started to struggle in 1490.

DISCUSSION

In Russia, this research is the continuation of G.G. Popov's work published in 2008. It develops the provision on capitalism genesis in England. The study is not purely debatable as capitalism genesis in the perspective which was presented in this study is discussed very seldom, unlike "peripheral" capitalism as stated above. This discussion was developed in the works of R.M. Nureyev and Yu.V. Latov, representing a continuation of the discussion of the Asiatic production mode commenced in the Soviet period as the Western development antithesis. In this context, this study makes a contribution to this discussion.

CONCLUSION

The history of enclosures and peasant communities in Europe shows that the European societies were no less different from each other than some European from non-European ones. In this sense, Prussia under Frederick the Great in our opinion was closer to the Ottoman Empire (of course Prussians and Turks were very different culturally) than to England (Rhine German states were very different from Prussia, the former were more similar to England). In this sense, it can be stated that it was the "Anglo-Saxon engine" of capitalism and modernization of

European societies by means of market economy and capitalism development that took place not some Protestant model of social development which led to the flourishing of capitalism. As it was mentioned, the destruction of feudal relations in the British agricultural sector had begun before the age of discovery. So, the link between the price revolution and seignior's incomes fall in England can't be traced, if only because these processes were not concurrent. Several years ago, Michael Postan came to the conclusion that the price fall caused by the Great Plague in 15th century occurred against the backdrop of social change almost across all Europe (for more information about the discussion around the theory of M. Postan and other demographic historians (Hatcher and Bailey, 2001). Thus, the English lords were to benefit from "black death" aftermath in the aspect of increasing actual rent cost but to lose regarding the sales of grain cultivated on their lands. Obviously, the latter advantage "outweighed" the first one. However, there were scientists who challenged the views of M. Postan. They believe that he did not consider the expansion of gold in the monetary circulation and exaggerated the demographic factor (Nightingale, 2010).

In the mid 14th century gold constituted 15-20% of currency. In 1422, the index reached 80% which led the British economy into deflation (Nightingale, 2010). The reason for the influx of gold was exported to England wool and preference of traders to sell their goods for florins (Nightingale, 2010). Admittedly, the changing nature of currency and demographic crisis played their parts. Nevertheless, it is more interesting to study the link between demography and other factors as well as the prices in the late 15-16th centuries.

Since, the beginning of 14th century the volume of silver in the English currency has been falling, people switched to gold which came from France through wool trade (Nightingale, 2010). However, in 14th century there was registered no growth of semi-capitalist farms in rural areas as it was in the late 15th century that is reflected in the English law and literature. As Pamela Nightingale stated in England, the volume of loans remained almost the same from 1360 to 1430's after 1439, it was considerably slumping and only in 1510-1519, an unprecedented increase in the number of granted loans was registered after which there was a decline in lending, the level of which in 1520's remained a little bit higher than in 1430's (Nightingale, 2010).

As an economic historian E.J. Hamilton determined at his time, even the Spaniards began receiving large revenues from their silver mines in the South America no earlier than 1550 whereas the inflation expended to it in 1540's (for more information about the discussion on the price revolution (Hamilton, 1934). But the decrease in the

actual earnings of English men (the case of the British builders) was registered, since approximately 1500 (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011). This was due to the outflow of the former minor rural tenants of enclosures to towns. As a result in England, the amount of actual earnings decreased by half in the early 1590's in comparison with 1490 (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011). However, such considerable reduction in British towns lasted for relatively long period, almost a 100 years and this process began before the price revolution in Spain. The same trend of gradual slump continued as it was in the early 16th century (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011).

The fact that the price revolution in Europe was triggered by rather internal than external factors is proved, in addition to the above arguments by the circumstance that in the second half of 15th the early 16th centuries wool prices in a number of continental markets grew 3-5 times (Popov and Sukhovskiy, 2011) which provoked the first major wave of enclosures in England. Parliament started fighting against this phenomenon as early as 1490.

This study can be useful and interesting for graduate students and professors of historical and economic departments as well as all for those who are interested in the economic history of the West in the middle ages and modern age.

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