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KARL MARX AND ENCLOSURES IN ENGLAND *

I. The Rise of Capitalism and the "Industrial Revolution"

Between about 1780 and 1830, an "industrial revolution" swept over England. In the process England emerged as the most economically advanced nation in the world, a position which it held for a good part of the 19th century. The question of why England was able to expand its productive capacities well in advance of other countries is of obvious interest to anyone who wants to understand the preconditions and mechanisms of economic development.

The question is obviously not a new one, and it is not a lack of historical investigation which poses the main problem in giving an answer. Rather, and this is the general argument of this paper, it is the manner in which conventional economic historians have gone about asking this question which limits our understanding of the meaning and importance of England's "industrial revolution." For while it is undoubtedly true that, in the actuality of social development, "Men make their own history, but do not make it just as they please,"[1] economic historians, in interpreting that history, are not necessarily bound by the constraints of social reality.

It is not surprising to find that the conventional interpretation of the rise of capitalism in England, euphemistically referred to as "industrialization"[2], is also a bourgeois interpretation. If there is a uniquely "bourgeois view of the world," it is one which regards the social process and particularly the production process as consisting of free and harmonious relations between different classes, and one which views material accumulation as not only the means but also the end of social progress. The "industrialization" interpretation of the rise of capitalism[3] exhibits these basic characteristics. For the proponents of this view, the "industrial revolution" is almost synonymous with the beginning of modern civilization, for without it how could one "explain" the technological marvels of advanced industrial society? Entranced by the very technological achievements which they are supposedly trying to explain, these bourgeois economists even borrow the jargon of modern technology to describe the rise of modern industry. Thus, between 1783 and 1802, English industry "took off"[4] -- "traditional society" is over, "industrial society" has begun.

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Marxist economists, on the other hand, analyze the period of the "industrial revolution," not as the starting point of the process of "industrialization," but as a particular, and historically explicable, outcome of a centuries-long transition from feudalism to capitalism.[5] According to the Marxist view, it was not just an unprecedented expansion of material production that took place at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century; it was an expansion based on the particular social relations of the capitalist mode of production.

The Marxists concentrate their analysis on the changing power relations between different social classes and try to explain the qualitative phenomena in economic development from which the power of one class over another derives. From this viewpoint, quantitative measurements are useful only insofar as they accurately reflect the qualitative phenomena under investigation. For example, in analyzing the development of capitalism (or any other social system), the rate of growth of the national product is seen as one possible index of economic progress, but the extent to which it really represents progress is assessed in terms of the impact of the expansion of productive activity on different social classes.

For the bourgeois economists, on the other hand, it is the quantitative measurements themselves which become primary. With them, economic history becomes the history of the accumulation of commodities and little else. The class relations which form the social basis for "industrialization" are only of secondary interest, if they are of any interest at all. They attribute the quantitative expansion of production to technological developments, but rarely seek to analyze the social relations which have made these developments possible.[6]

Regardless of whether or not the proponents of the "industrialization" view are consciously trying to obfuscate the role of class power in capitalist development, the historical interpretation which they present serves this purpose. When these economists do look at the historical contexts of economic growth in the capitalist system, they tend to minimize the role of force, i.e., the exercise of coercive class power, in bringing about economic transformations. Here, they are greatly aided by their (implicit) assumption that market transactions, e.g., the buying out of little landholders by big landholders, are, by their nature, noncoercive.* The effect is to portray capitalist development, even at those times when its deleterious effects on the working classes are most apparent, as a harmonious process; that is, development which is not the result of class conflict, but which is rather the result of "natural" (i.e. market) economic forces.[7]

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*This assumption is, of course, the fundamental ethical proposition used to legitimize both the "free" market system and neoclassical economic theory.

The very term "industrial" in all its applications serves, in the bourgeois analysis, to gloss over the most important historical definitions and distinctions. The word itself, which could legitimately be used to describe any process in which people carry out material production, gives no indication as to the nature of the work which is involved in production. Having abstracted from the social character of the production processes, it then becomes easier to portray "industrial" development as a class-neutral technological process which can be adequately assessed in quantitative terms.

The "industrial revolution-industrialization" approach seriously distorts economic history by creating the illusion that economic development consists primarily of the triumph of the advanced manufacturing or "industrial" sector over the backward agricultural or "traditional" sector. This illusion is shattered by the Marxist approach which locates the key to the rise of capitalism in the transformation of the production relations in the agricultural sector itself. Only then does the "industrial revolution" in the manufacturing sector become possible. The idea of "industrialization" is in itself historically meaningless and misleading unless we specify the historical changes in the social relations of production of both agriculture and manufacturing which permit the rapid expansion of material production.*

In the discussion that follows, we will attempt, by looking at the rise of capitalism in England, and, more specifically, at the role of enclosures in this process, to demonstrate some of the important differences between the Marxian and bourgeois approaches to the analysis of economic development. Marx, in Part VIII of Capital Vol. I, lays out his historical interpretation of the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production in England. He by no means says the last word on this transition,[8] but he does present a powerful framework of historical analysis which we can use as a basis for evaluating subsequent research and methods of analysis.

When speaking of the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production in England, we are speaking of the transition from the mode of production which forms the base of one historical epoch -- feudal society -- to the mode of production which forms the base of another historical epoch -- capitalist society. The

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*Engels himself, writing at the age of 24 with little grasp of pre-19th century English history, must share the blame for the misleading use of the term "industrial revolution." See Engels, 1969, "Introduction." See Marx, 1967a, p. 750fn. for a clarification about the use of the word "industrial."

transition itself is neither a mechanistic nor an inevitable process. It involves centuries of class conflict which bring about the dissolution of the base and superstructural elements of feudal society and create some of these elements of capitalist society. The capitalist mode of production does not simply replace the feudal mode of production. Rather, from the 14th century onwards, the feudal mode of production is dissolved by social forces which, while they are not necessarily applied by social classes who have an interest in capitalist production per se, nevertheless establish important preconditions for that production. In the 15th century, a mode of production based on independent peasant agriculture and small craft production comes into being, but it does not establish itself as the basis of a historical epoch for it does not generate a class which has the power to shape the economic, political, and cultural institutions necessary to protect the economy based on small property. It is only when the capitalist class succeeds in firmly entrenching itself in the sphere of production at the end of the 18th century that the superstructural institutions which characterize and stabilize capitalist society can be fully developed.

It is the period of transition, from the end of the 14th century to the end of the 18th century, which concerns us here. The dominant social relation of feudal production is that between lord and serf.* At the beginning of the 15th century, this social relation is disintegrating on a massive scale. By the end of that century, it is virtually non-existent. What emerges in this period is a mass of peasant landholders who, although still operating in the village economy (i.e., the open field system) of the feudal era and hence subject to its various restrictions, exercise a significant measure of independence in matters of production and distribution.[9] While, on the one hand, these peasants retain their direct access to their means of subsistence (i.e., their rights to the use of land), on the other hand, the servile relation between themselves and the feudal lords has been broken.

As we shall see, it is the fate of the peasantry, which even in the 15th century was highly differentiated within its own ranks, which is the historical key to the rise of capitalist production. As long as the mass of the people have direct ties to the soil and hence to their means of subsistence, capitalist production cannot become widespread, for the essential element of capitalist production is the existence of a mass of

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*Throughout this paper we will leave aside the question of the impact of changes in gild structure on the transition process, for it is the direct relation of the mass of people to the land and their feudal rights to appropriate their means of subsistence from the land which gives the feudal mode of production its fundamental character. For the importance of the dissolution of gild structure to the transition process, see Marx, 1967a, pp. 358-359, ch. xxx, xxxi; Marx, 1967b, ch. xx, xxxiv; Marx, 1965; Marx and Engels, 1965, pp. 14-15.

labourers who are forced to sell their labour-power to capital in order to subsist. The transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production therefore requires the separation of the mass of producers from the means of production. At the same time, however, this transition requires the development of the forces of production of agriculture itself. In the transformation of agriculture from production on a feudal basis to production on a capitalist basis, a relatively small segment of the peasantry are transformed into capitalist landowners and capitalist tenant-farmers. In analyzing the rise of capitalism in England, Marx shows how, in the agricultural sector, a proletarianized labour force is created and the fundamental social relation of capitalism, the relation between wage-labour and capital, becomes dominant. In so-doing, he lays the historical basis for the analysis of the development of capitalist production in general.

Central to Marx's analysis of the rise of capitalist production in England is his view of the role of enclosures. Broadly speaking, enclosure is a process of taking land which is either communal property or individual property operated in a system of communal agriculture, and redividing it and reallocating it in private plots or tracts which are then often literally enclosed off from one another. Generally, then, enclosure represents the extinction of communal and semi-communal forms of landholding and their replacement by purely private forms. The results of enclosures in England, which took place throughout the transition process, were, according to Marx, not only the creation of purely private property in agriculture, but also the creation of a landless labour force, an expanded food supply to feed this labour force, a home market for agricultural and manufacturing products, and the concentration of landed wealth.

Since the time that Marx wrote, the validity of his analysis and conclusions have been empirically and conceptually reinforced, especially in the writings of such historians as Tawney, Mantoux, Hill and Dobb.[10] However, in recent years, some economic historians have challenged the validity of Marx's view of the creation of the proletariat and of the role of enclosures in that process.*

This bourgeois critique of Marx relies almost wholly on factual evidence of the effects of enclosures as presented in an article by J.D. Chambers.[11] He shows that enclosures around the time of the industrial

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*The reader is referred to a Marxist critique of these historians which makes many of the same points which are made in this paper. See Saville, 1969.

revolution were not by and large depopulating, and that small farms still existed in large and sometimes even growing numbers in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The creation of the industrial proletariat was not, according to the critique, due to the expropriation of the mass of the producers from the means of production, as Marx and his followers have claimed, but due rather to a rise in England's population caused by earlier marriages and, hence, larger families.

Thus, for the bourgeois economic historians, it was autonomous population growth which above all provided the labour supply required by the enterprises of capitalist production. As we shall see, such an explanation of the rise of capitalism is no explanation at all. The bourgeois economists fail to analyze the changing social relations of production which made the capitalist mode of production and capitalist accumulation possible in the first place. These economic historians do a good job of describing relatively short-run movements of capital and labour, given an existing set of market institutions. They are incapable, however, of carrying out historical analysis outside the market framework. They are unable to perceive the role of enclosures in the context of the historical transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production, and hence they are unable to understand the role of enclosures in the development of capitalist market relations.

Therefore, Chambers et. al. fail in their attempt to refute the Marxian view of the origin of capitalism's labour force and the rise of the capitalist system itself. They fail, not because their facts are faulty or insufficient, but because they are not equipped theoretically to understand or analyze the questions which Marx posed. The bourgeois economic historians, in their critique of Marx, are entrapped by their theoretical frame of reference, which is largely that of neoclassical economics (i.e., the economics of demand and supply). They cannot refute Marx's theory of social change because they have a theoretical view of the world which does not recognize social change. Or, more simply, their historical analysis is limited by their bourgeois view of the world. They fail in their critique of Marx because they try to apply a bourgeois view of the world to an historical change which extends beyond the limits of that view.

This study of the rise of capitalism will serve to demonstrate the huge methodological gap between bourgeois and Marxian economics.[12] While bourgeois economics takes the basic institutions of capitalism -- e.g., the wage-labour system and capitalist domination over production -- as given, Marxian economics investigates the ways in which the development of these institutions is in contradiction to social development. While bourgeois economics sees a basic harmony of interests between labour and capital, Marxian economics sees a basic conflict of interests between the two classes which possess these factors of production.

In analyzing the rise of capitalism as it occurred in England, the bourgeois economists try to explain the creation of the "industrial" labour force by the free and voluntary movement of the agricultural labour force into manufacturing, supplemented by population growth. They therefore conclude that class power or force, e.g., the forcible expropriation of the mass of the people from the land by means of enclosures, was not an important factor in the creation of the labour supply.

Marx's analysis demonstrates that such a view of the creation of an "industrial" labour force both obfuscates and misunderstands the essence of the rise of capitalism. Enclosures, extending from the 15th century to the 19th century were prime instruments in the proletarianization of a significant portion of the English labouring class. And even though following enclosures, many of the newly-created proletarians remained as wage-labourers in the agricultural sector, they had become, nevertheless, dependent on capital for their subsistence. With their proletarianization, the social relations into which these labourers now entered had radically changed. The historical analysis and critique which follows centers around this fundamental point. Marx saw what his bourgeois critics fail to see -- that it mattered little to the long-run growth of capitalism's labour force whether, in the short-run, the new proletarians sold their labour-power for a wage on the agricultural labour market or on the manufacturing labour market. What mattered in terms of economic and social development was the fact that their labour-power had become a commodity.

II. The Secret of Primitive Accumulation

No economic historian would deny that this transition from a social order in which the mass of the people had direct ties to the land to a social order in which they were, by and large, proletarianized actually took place. The issues center around the more specific questions: 1) how and why did it happen? 2) what was the significance of this transition to the development of capitalist production?

In Part VIII of Capital Vol. I, Marx attempts to answer these questions. Here, Marx himself recognizes the conflicting interpretations of the rise of capitalism to which his own as opposed to the bourgeois view would lead. This recognition is embodied in the title to Part VIII: "The So-Called Primitive Accumulation"' and in the title to the first chapter of Part VIII: "The Secret of Primitive Accumulation." In Parts I-VII of Capital Vol. I, Marx explains how capital, by appropriating surplus-value from wage-labour, accumulates. But how did this relation between capital and wage-labour originate? That is, what is the origin of capital accumulation?

As Marx puts it,

> the accumulation of capital supposes surplus-value; surplus-value presupposes capitalistic production; capitalistic production presupposes the pre-existence of considerable masses of capital and of labour-power in the hands of producers of commodities. The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn in a vicious circle, out of which we can only get by supposing a primitive accumulation (previous accumulation of Adam Smith) preceding capitalistic accumulation; an accumulation not the result of the capitalist mode of production but its starting point.[13]

Here, then, Marx rejects Adam Smith's notion of previous accumulation, the fundamental reason being that it is an ahistorical construct. It abstracts from those historical developments which determined whether or not such previous accumulation would, in fact, be the starting point of capitalist accumulation, i.e., accumulation based on the capitalist mode of production.

In the Introduction to Book II of The Wealth of Nations, Smith states that

> in that rude state of society in which there is no division of labour, in which exchanges are seldom made, and in which every man provides everything for himself, it is not necessary that any stock should be accumulated or stored up beforehand, in order to carry on the business of society.[14]

Smith then goes on to say that with the division of labour, such previous accumulation is necessary and that, in fact, labour can only be more and more subdivided as this previous accumulation occurs. We therefore get the distinct impression that the presence of accumulated wealth in itself fostered the extensive division of labour characteristic of capitalist production. This is the extent of Smith's "theory of previous accumulation" which is supposed to explain the transition from "that rude state of society" to capitalist society.

For Marx, the attempt to explain the rise of capitalism solely or even primarily in terms of the accumulation of land, moneyed wealth, and commodities misses the social essence of this historic transition.[15] Although the growth of commodity and money markets played a dominant role in setting the preconditions for the capitalist mode of production, it was the creation of a market in labour which permitted capitalist production to develop. It is the transformation of the mass of peasants who acquire their subsistence through their direct relation to the soil into

a mass of wage-labourers who seek their subsistence by selling their labour-power to those who possess the means of production which is the "secret of primitive accumulation."[16]

> The process, therefore that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers. The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production.[17]

Marx, therefore, uses the term "primitive accumulation" to indicate the actual emergence of the social relations characteristic of capitalist production. Marx might have made himself clearer if he had replaced the term "primitive accumulation" by the term "original expropriation" as he suggests in his Value, Price and Profit.[18] However, the term "primitive accumulation"* emphasizes an important distinction in the historical development of capitalism: the distinction between wealth which is originally combined with free labour to form the original or primitive accumulation, and wealth which consists entirely of surplus-value and hence represents capital accumulated wholly by means of the capitalist mode of production.[19] Therefore, for Marx, primitive accumulation is primitive only with respect to and in the context of the actual emergence of the capitalist mode of production. Such primitive accumulation only becomes possible insofar as proletarianization has taken place.

Modern bourgeois economists, who, unlike Adam Smith, have had the opportunity of reading Marx, continue, however, to interpret the rise of capitalism primarily in terms of the accumulation of land, moneyed wealth, and commodities. The commoditization of labour is either taken for granted, or passed off as a "sociological" problem. For example, a well-known historian of industrialization, Alexander Gerschenkron, deftly passes over the fact that Marx's main concern in analyzing the rise of capitalism is the changing social relations of production. He therefore completely misinterprets Marx when he says,

> When the availability of capital is turned into a prerequisite it assumes the form of "original accumulation of capital," a concept given currency in Marx's

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*As Paul Sweezy points out, "original" or "primary" might be a better translation of the German "ursprünglich" which Marx actually uses. Dobb, et. al., p. 17fn.

> famous Chapter 24 in Volume One of Das Kapital. There Adam Smith's concept of previous accumulation hitched to the period of production, so matter-of-fact and so short-run, was turned into a magnificent historical generalization. It referred to an accumulation of capital continuing over long historical periods -- perhaps over several centuries -- until one day the tocsin of an industrial revolution was to summon it to the battlefields of factory construction...It matters little that Marx chose to connect his concept so intimately with early land-enclosing movements in England, to place so much emphasis upon the redistribution of existing wealth, and to allow himself to be deflected into the question of preindustrial accumulation of labor.[20]

It is clear here that Gerschenkron, with his focus firmly fixed on "industrialization," views labour merely as a commodity which might be "accumulated" in the "preindustrial" era. He attaches no great importance to the process of creating a proletariat. But for Marx, labour is not merely a commodity. As a universal category, labour is both the means and the end of social development.[21] The momentous fact in the rise of capitalism is the complete separation of control over labour from its subject, the labourer, and, what is the same thing, the transformation of labour into an object. The existence of a labour market on which this object is sold for subsistence is the essence of a particular historical epoch -- capitalism. Therefore, how a "free" labour market came into existence is the crucial issue in Marx's historical analysis of the rise of capitalism.

Joseph Schumpeter, who, unlike most bourgeois economists, is well-acquainted with the writings of Marx and recognizes the class character of society, also criticizes Marx's view of the rise of capitalism.[22] But he too fails to deal with the fundamental Marxian propositions. For Schumpeter, it is the "entrepreneur" who is the driving force of capitalism.[23] Therefore, he sees the rise of capitalism as the rise of the entrepreneur. Starting from this conception of capitalist development, Schumpeter imposes his own interpretation on Marx's analysis, and hence misinterprets that analysis.

According to Schumpeter, "the question of 'primitive accumulation' [is] the question [of] how capitalists came to be capitalists in the first instance or how they acquired that stock of goods which according to the Marxian doctrine was necessary in order to enable them to start exploiting."[24] He then accuses Marx of "contemptuously reject[ing] the bourgeois nursery tale (Kinderfibel) that some people rather than others became, and are still becoming every day, capitalists by superior intelligence and energy in working and saving."[25]

In Schumpeter's view, Marx's "guffaw" at such an interpretation of "primitive accumulation" helps "clear the road for Marx's alternative theory of primitive accumulation....Force -- robbery -- subjugation of the masses facilitating their spoilation and the results of the pillage in turn facilitating subjugation -- this was all right, of course, and admirably tallied with the ideas common among intellectuals of all types, in our day still more than in the day of Marx."[26]

It should be clear that Schumpeter, blinded by his own bourgeois notions of force and by his admiration of the capitalist entrepreneur, completely misrepresents Marx. In the first place, Marx, while not a great admirer of the capitalist entrepreneur, would not deny that those who perform this function have certain distinctive qualities. But he would certainly want to uncover the social determinants of these "entrepreneurial" qualities rather than simply ascribe them to "super-normal intelligence and energy." In any case, the personal qualities of entrepreneurs is not the subject of Marx's investigations. Rather he is analyzing the social basis for the existence of capitalist production. And he finds that social basis in the existence of a wage-labour force which capitalists can buy as commodities and from which capitalists can appropriate surplus-value and hence accumulate capital.

Second, Marx does not deny that thrift and investment played a role in the formation of the capitalist mode of production in general and the capitalist class in particular.[27] But in his theory of primitive accumulation, the original source of the wealth which enabled the capitalist entrepreneur to hire wage-labour in the first place is not Marx's primary interest. While Marx definitely sees the accumulation of wealth in the hands of an entrepreneurial class as a necessary condition for the emergence of the capitalist mode of production, it is by no means sufficient.[28] To look at the rise of capitalism from the point of view of the accumulation of wealth by a capitalist class may (and often does) lead one to neglect the historical transformation of the labouring population which makes capitalist production possible. In analyzing the rise of capitalism, this historical transformation -- the creation of a proletarianized labour force -- is Marx's main concern.

III. Enclosures and the Creation of the Proletariat*

Since Marx's time, a vast amount of historical research has been done on the relation of the transformation of agriculture to the rise of capitalism in England. In this section, I will sketch out the main conclusions of that research, focusing particularly on enclosures. Then,

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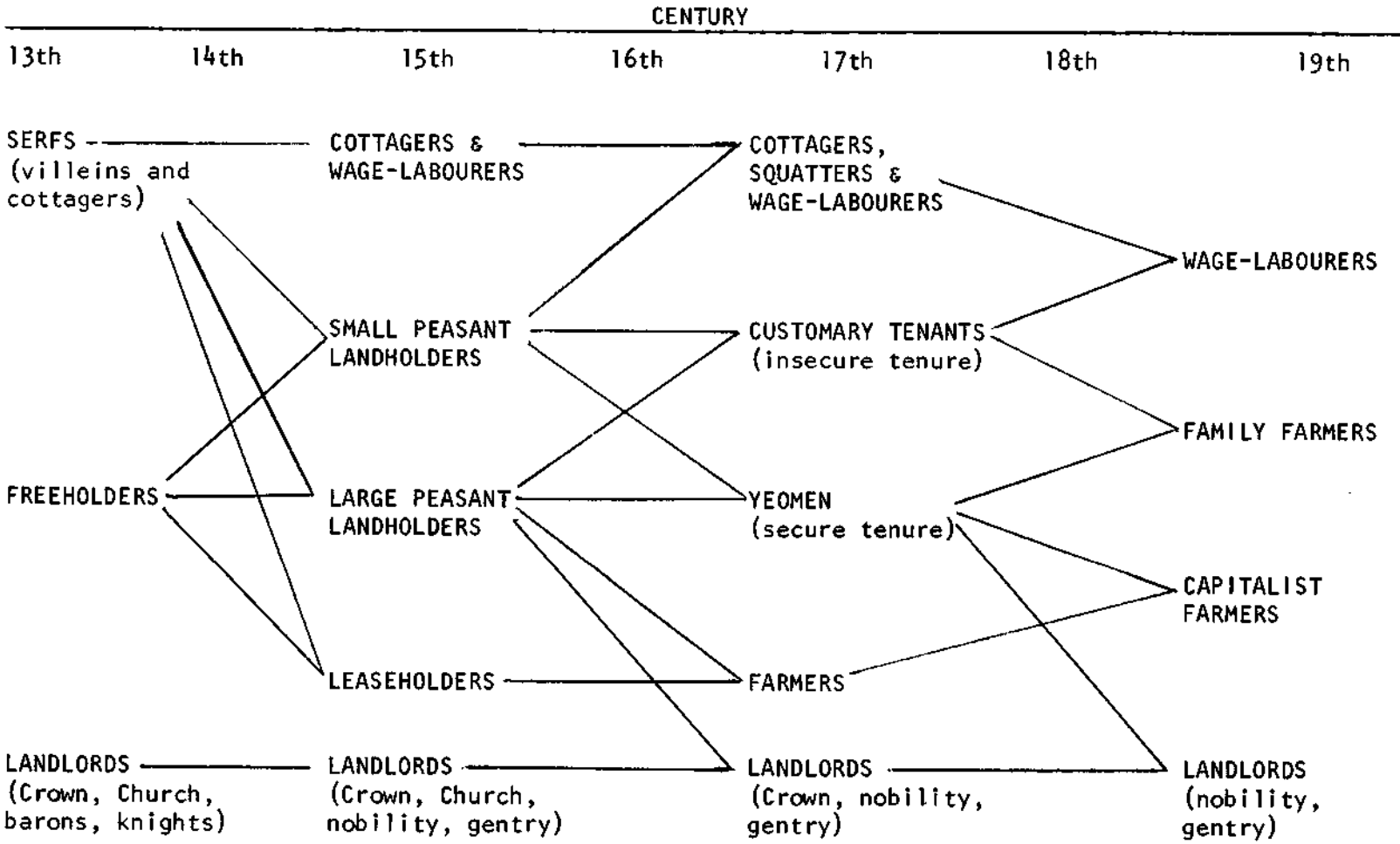
*The accompanying diagram of social classes in agrarian England refers to the text of this and the following sections.



Social classes in agrarian England from the 13th century to the 19th century and the major mobility patterns within the agricultural sector.

in the light of these conclusions, we will consider whether Marx's analysis of the role of enclosures in the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production still holds up.

While we have already given a general definition of enclosure,[29] it will be useful to place this definition in its historical context. To do this, we start with the character of agricultural organization in feudal society. At the height of feudalism in the 12th and 13th centuries, the open-field system prevailed over most of England. On a typical manor,[30] we find strips of land in the open field cultivated as individual holdings by servile tenants (villeins) and freeholders. The open fields become "open" and "common" after the harvest, as the livestock of all the tenants (and the lord) are let out to graze. In addition, those who held strips of land in the open field also held rights to the use of cultivated land which was part of the manor. On the commons or waste, the peasant could pasture livestock, gather fuel, obtain housing materials, and hunt and fish to some extent.[31] While these peasants (whether serf or free) extracted their subsistence from their small holdings (10-30 acres),[32] one-quarter to one-half (100-500 acres) of the cultivated area of the manor was controlled by the manorial lord.[33] This area, the demesne, was sometimes held as strips in the open field, but more often it had been consolidated into a large block. In either case, the demesne was cultivated by serf labour. Demesnes were often extended into what had formerly been common waste, and represent the first important type of enclosure.[34] But such enclosure, while it did infringe on the customary communal rights of the peasants, did not disrupt the open-field system in general.*

However, even at the height of the feudal era, free peasants could be found cultivating their land outside the open-field system. And within the open fields, especially from the 15th century when serfdom had disappeared, peasants could be found exchanging strips with one another or buying up adjacent strips, and thus consolidating their holdings and enclosing them off. Sometimes the stronger freeholders, as well as the lord, were in the position to encroach on the commons and bring it under cultivation as their private property.

But such consolidation and engrossment of holdings into private enclosures, carried out as they were unsystematically and on an individual basis, did not necessarily destroy the open-field character of the manorial economy. It was only when landlords started carrying out full-scale enclosures of their manors in order to convert the cultivated holdings of the peasants as well as the commons into their own private sheep pastures that the open-field agriculture of these manors was suddenly destroyed. Such enclosure was first undertaken on a significant

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*Such encroachment on the commons was serious enough however that in 1236 the Statute of Merton was enacted in an attempt to prohibit individual lords from enclosing so much of the waste that insufficient pasture was left for the freeholders. Tawney, 1912, p. 248.

scale in England in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Later, especially in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the largest landowners among the peasants would often come to an agreement with the lord to enclose the whole manor and reallocate the land into private holdings. Although arable farming often still prevailed after these enclosures by agreement, the open-field system of agriculture was wiped out. The last phase of the whole enclosure movement took place in the last half of the 18th and early 19th centuries as similar systematic transformations of open-field villages were accomplished through private acts of Parliament. But whether a whole manor was enclosed by the lord for the purpose of sheepfarming, by agreement on the part of the largest landowners, or by an act of Parliament, the result was the same -- the common rights of the peasants to the use of land were for all practical purposes extinguished.

The "enclosure movement" in England, therefore, developed from 1) individual acts of appropriation within the context of the open-field system (consolidation and engrossment); to 2) & 3) destruction of that system on the manorial level, first on the initiative of the landlord alone (conversion of arable to pasture), and then on the initiative of the largest landowners (enclosure by agreement); and finally to 4) a national policy for the transformation of agriculture (enclosure by act of Parliament). At the beginning of the enclosure movement, we have the feudal mode of production, at the end the capitalist mode of production. We will now look more closely at enclosures as an integral part of the transition from the one economy to the other.

The feudal economy, characterized by a landholding aristocracy* extracting a surplus, usually in kind and in labour services, from the peasant serfs who resided on their manors, reached its height in the 12th and 13th centuries.[35] The decline of serfdom took place largely in the 14th and 15th centuries.[36] Whereas at the beginning of the 14th century, the servile obligations of the villein were at their peak,[37] by the end of the century many of them had vanished. The problem in this period, from the point of view of the lords, was an acute shortage of labour, partly due to a dramatic decline in population (the Black Death alone wiped out perhaps ½ of the population) and partly due to an increased demand for labour.[38] At the same time, the problems of the nobility were compounded by an increased need for revenue for both military purposes and personal consumption.[39]

The lord, in trying to solve this problem of surplus appropriation, could follow one of two courses. On the one hand, he could commute the labour services and dues in kind of the peasants into fixed money rents, and hire wage-labour to work on his demesne. More likely, given the shortage of labour, he would lease out his demesne to peasants, thus

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*The nobility -- barons (tenants-in-chief) and knights -- held one or more manorial estates on feudal tenure from the monarchy, to whom they yielded material and political service.

withdrawing himself from direct connection with the process of production. This course of action was especially attractive to those lords who, being distant from the main market towns, would find it difficult to market the surplus products of the manor.

On the other hand, where the lord was close to the main markets (i.e., in the south and east of England) and where he wielded considerable power over the peasantry, he might prefer to solve his revenue problems by intensifying labour services rather than commuting them.[40] Although this method of appropriating a larger surplus doubtless yielded short-run results, it increasingly in the last half of the 14th century led to the flight of serfs to towns (exacerbating the labour shortage in the countryside) as well as to open peasant revolts.[41] By the 15th century, the strength of the peasantry was such that intensification of feudal labour services was viable only for the most powerful lords. Increasingly during the late 14th century and in the 15th century, landlords found that the only viable course was to commute labour services and rents in kind into fixed money-rents (quit-rents), and to lease out their demesnes.[42]

Concomitant to the decline in serfdom was an increased differentiation among the peasantry. Most significantly, it was the more well-to-do peasants who were able to take advantage of the situation and extend their landholdings by leasing parts of the demesne or by bringing new land under cultivation. These peasants, many of whom ended up with holdings of more than 50 acres, began to compete for the limited wage-labour supply as they often hired labour as an addition to that supplied by themselves and by their families.[43]

It was the poorest among the peasantry who performed this wage-labour. But even they derived part of their subsistence from an acre or two which they held in the open-fields or from a small plot of land which surrounded their cottage. And for these cottagers and labourers, the end of the 14th century saw not only a rise in agricultural wages[44] but also freedom from the most odious servile obligations. By the end of the 15th century, the mass of peasants were free from serfdom.[45]

However, this very freedom meant that the individual peasant could no longer necessarily look to the manor for the protection of his basic rights to the use of land. On the one hand, the freedom which the peasant exercised in his use of the land meant that he was free to lose his land (or part of it) during hard times. On the other hand, those peasants who held their land by the custom of the manor started to find that the lord had no interest in recognizing that custom.

In the 15th century, there were many factors which, to varying degrees, promoted social and economic inequality among the peasantry. Much depended, of course, on the power of different groups of peasants, both within the manor itself and within the country as a whole, vis-a-vis their lords. Differences in opportunities to market surplus product, acquire more land, and hire wage-labour were important. So too were differences in the fer-

tility of their holdings and in their abilities as cultivators. Inheritance customs sometimes differed between areas, giving rise to regional variations in size and type of peasant holdings. Within regions, differences in family size and marriage patterns resulted in inequalities in economic and social positions. And where impartible inheritance was the rule (as in most of England), younger sons were in much less secure positions than the oldest son. Finally, where social differences exist, it is always possible that the most powerful will be able, through means legal or otherwise, to improve their positions at the expense of those below them -- thus making the social differences even greater.[46]

But for the peasantry as a whole the 15th century was one of general prosperity.[47] The basis of this prosperity was a relative abundance of land and a widespread distribution of this abundance. By the last decades of the 15th century, while there were very discernible social and economic strata within the ranks of the peasantry, even the small class of agricultural labourers still retained some rights to the use of land, if not in the open-field, at least on the commons. Hence, they and their families were not wholly dependent on wages for their subsistence.[48]

But the prosperity and independence of the whole of the peasantry was already beginning to break down. In the last half of the 15th century, the growth in the trade of wool and then cloth to northwest Europe prompted the conversion of land from arable to pasture.[49] The raising of sheep required fewer labour inputs per acre than the growing of grain. Thus, while this form of enclosure, on the one hand, directed the use of land away from production of the fundamental means of subsistence to production for the market and for profit, on the other hand, due to its land-intensive technical requirements, it separated many producers from the means of production.[50]

In the first half of the 16th century, it was not only by turning their manors into sheepruns that a commercially-oriented landlord class was taking control of the land. With the Protestant Reformation in the 1530's, the property of the Catholic Church was confiscated.[51] Between 1536 and 1540, all the land of the Church passed into the hands of the Crown: and in the years and decades that followed, much of it flowed into the hands of a market-oriented landlord class.[52] This massive transfer of land greatly accelerated the enclosure movement in the century that followed, for the new lay purchasers and recipients of this land were prepared to go much further than the old ecclesiastical lords in destroying feudal social relations for the sake of greater surplus appropriation.[53]

As the result of the conversion of arable to pasture, the dissolution of the monasteries, as well as the paring down of the size of feudal households,[54] the first half of the 16th century witnessed the beginning of a true class of dispossessed people. A serious problem arose, not only because suddenly a large number of people had lost their traditional source of subsistence, but also because of the absence of capital ready to employ these proletarians at a wage.[55] Between the dissolution of the old feudal

order and the consolidation of the new capitalist order, bands of beggars, robbers, and vagabonds roamed the English countryside.[56] "The new and terrible problem" says Tawney, "is the increase in vagrancy. The 16th century lives in terror of the tramp."[57]

The dissolution of the monasteries had destroyed the chief institution of poor relief at a time when such a function was needed more than ever.[58] The movement around the country of rootless and undisciplined people who had to beg and steal in order to subsist was a menace to public order. Therefore, from 1530 on arises "bloody legislation against the expropriated"[59] -- brutal laws designed to coerce the vagabond to work. The most important outgrowth of this legislation was the national Poor Law, "a police measure the necessity for which the agrarian changes are largely responsible."[60]

This attempt by the Tudors and early Stuarts to maintain social stability was part of a much larger struggle by which they, in alliance with a section of the nobility, merchant monopolists, and the Church of England, strove to maintain the hierarchical social relations of the old order against the growing power of the country gentry and the town merchants.[61] Besides attempting to control disorderly elements among the masses, the Crown tried to control trade by protecting the monopoly privileges which it had granted,[62] to control manufacturing by maintenance of a system of apprenticeship,[63] to control ideas by controlling the form and structure of religious activity,[64] as well as to control the lords by restricting their ability to raise armies.

But most important for present purposes, the ruling class of the pre-Civil War period tried to control the use of land: the means of production most fundamental to the hierarchical order on which the power of the monarchy was based. In instituting its agrarian legislation, the Crown had four objectives in mind: 1) to maintain the military strength of the kingdom by maintaining a strong, independent peasantry; 2) to maintain the mass of the people directly on the land so as to ensure them their means of subsistence, and thus avoid the problem of vagrancy; 3) to maintain the size of the readily taxable population, which again presupposed a large independent peasantry; and 4) to ensure self-sufficiency of the nation in its supply of grain.[65] Thus, between 1489 and 1601, various Acts of Parliament were passed in an effort to halt enclosures which were depopulating (i.e., the conversion of arable to pasture).

In fact, throughout this period, and well into the last half of the 17th century, the vast majority of England's population did maintain direct ties to the soil. Let us look more closely at the social characteristics of this landholding peasantry. One way of classifying tenants is by the legal status of their holdings.[66] In the 16th century, about 1/5 of the landholding population were freeholders, 2/3 were customary tenants, and 1/8-1/9 were leaseholders.[67]

Freeholds, as the name suggests, were held by free men who performed minor services for the lord of the manor. Over the centuries, new freeholders had been created as wealthier servile tenants managed to attain their freedom[68] and as the lord attracted new settlers to cultivate wasteland and chunks of land alienated from the demesne.[69] With the commutation of feudal dues, freeholders paid a small quit rent. More important, their tenure, which could be passed on freely from generation to generation, was protected in the King's Court.[70]

Customary tenure was, in the 16th century, the usual legal status of holdings cultivated by the descendents of serfs. Copyholders were customary tenants who had documentary evidence in the manorial court roll of their customary right to the land. Tenants-at-will were also customary tenants, but they did not have such documentary evidence and usually had to rely on the records or memory of the manorial court to establish their customary right to the land.

Leaseholders started becoming a significant category from the 15th century onwards as the landlord leased out parts of the demesne for terms of years and usually at market rents. By the beginning of the 16th century, the demesne was almost always leased in large chunks, giving rise to capitalist farms.[71] Freehold and customary tenure, therefore, are forms of landholding with their roots in the feudal mode of production while the leasehold looks forward to the social relations of capitalist production.[72]

By the 16th century, the unfree origins of customary tenure had, in themselves, little social or economic significance.[73] More important to the security of the peasant were, besides the size of his holding, the longevity of his tenure and the fixity of rents and entry fines. A copyhold of inheritance with a fixed quit-rent and fixed fines was virtually as secure as a freehold. The tenant or his heirs could not legally be evicted or forced off the land by rack-rents (which might take the form of exorbitant fines). It was these copyholders along with the freeholders, their independence from arbitrary action on the part of the landlord protected by law, who were commonly referred to as the yeomanry of the 16th and 17th centuries;[74] and it was these peasant proprietors who often rose to the rank of gentry during this period.[75]

On the other hand, for those customary tenants who held their land for terms of years or even lives, and/or who were subject to variable fines, the 16th and 17th centuries represented a time of crisis. This period is marked by peasant risings and general protest against enclosures and the attack on customary tenure.[76]

Least secure among the tenants-at-will were the cottagers and squatters. This class was comprised of those tenants-at-will and small leaseholders who held no strips of arable land in the open-field, but who eked out an existence partly through hiring themselves out as day-labourers to the richer landholders and partly through their customary rights to the use of common lands. In the 15th century, and in many areas in the 16th

century, with land abundant relative to labour, the lord of the manor benefitted by having such peasants settle on his waste. They constituted an additional source of rent (for the land would not otherwise have been cultivated) as well as a supply of cheap and ever-available wage-labour.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, however, as sheep farming increased, as population grew (from less than 3 million in 1500 to over 4 million in 1600 to over 5½ million in 1700)[77] and as grain production for the market became more profitable, land ceased to be relatively abundant. When landlords enclosed the commons, the inhabitants had virtually no legal claim to continuation of their customary rights. Legally-protected rights to the use of the commons accrued only to those who held an interest in the open-field.[78] The rights to land use by cottagers and squatters were at the will of the lord; such rights could be extinguished by the will of the lord.

Cottagers, squatters, and other wage-labourers in agriculture constituted about 1/4 to 1/3 of the rural population in the 16th and early 17th centuries.[79] About 1/4 of this group possessed two or more acres of land.[80] Those who found themselves landless during this period had some options in finding their subsistence. A migrant rural labour force appeared.[81] In the 16th century, these farm-labourers worked, by and large, under social conditions which were still "intensely 'feudal' and patriarchal."[82] As this labour force grew in the 17th century, however, the labour market became increasingly characterized by more impersonal exchange relations.[83]

Others who found themselves landless migrated to those areas of England where waste was still relatively abundant; and there they resettled as squatters.*[84] Obviously, as the 17th and 18th centuries wore on and the availability of such waste diminished, the option of resettlement became less and less of a possibility for the dispossessed peasantry.

Many of those who still maintained an attachment to the land took up by-employments in rural domestic industry. Before 1640, about 1/4 of the cottagers and squatters were involved in woollen industries and almost 1/3 in the spinning and weaving of flax and hemp.[85] Meanwhile, a small but growing number of the proletariat were drifting into the cities and towns where some of them found employment in the small workshops which characterized, as Marx called it, the "manufacturing period" of the capitalist mode of production.[86]

Not all those who became permanently proletarianized in this period managed to find employment on the labour market. Labour mobility was

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*The Poor Law of 1597 sanctioned such use of the waste as a partial remedy to the problem of pauperism. Tawney, 1912, p. 277. There existed as well a common belief that a cottage erected on the waste overnight entitled its builder to undisputed possession. Thirsk, p. 445. Slater, pp. 119-20.

hampered by the slow and costly system of communication, by custom, and by legislation. For example, the Statute of Artificers, 1563, made apprenticeship compulsory in most industries, and the Act of Settlement, 1662, codified already existing customs of settlement which made it a risky matter for the unemployed to wander around the country. But much of the unemployment during these centuries was due to the failure of primitive accumulation -- the confrontation of free labour by capital -- to proceed at a fast enough rate to absorb the proletariat.

In the creation of this proletariat, the inducement to convert arable to pasture was not the only economic force at work. Between 1500 and 1640, food prices rose by about 600%. During the same period industrial prices rose by 300%.[87] This inflation was due in part, but not primarily, to the influx of American metals into England.[88] Perhaps more important was the rapid increase of England's population in the 16th century which, along with the newly created proletariat, increased the demand for marketable commodities, especially grain; while at the same time there was no general advance in cost-reducing techniques for producing these commodities.

This increase in population in combination with land-intensive agriculture significantly reduced the abundance of land relative to labour which, in the 15th century, had given security to the mass of the peasants. Many of the younger children of peasant landholders must have become cottagers, squatters, labourers, and even vagrant proletarians. Also, as the prices of agricultural products rose, landlords perceived land to be a valuable commodity. But in order to actually realize the value of their land, the landlords had to be able to extract market rents from the tenants. With the general rise in prices in the 16th century, the customary quit-rents paid by the freeholders and customary tenants became nominal, i.e., far below the rents which they would have to pay if they had to compete on the land market for the use of their land.[89]

The widening of the market in land, especially after the dissolution of the monasteries, and the high prices of agricultural products (especially wool in the first half of the 16th century, but later grain) presented attractive opportunities for landlords to extract the surplus by means of market rents and profits rather than by means of feudal rents and dues.[90] Of course, as some landlords were successful in taking advantage of these opportunities, many other more conservative, but nevertheless perceptive, landlords were not long in following suit.[91]

Enclosure for sheep-raising was just one way by which landlords could improve their ability to appropriate the surplus. After the middle of the 16th century, as land became more scarce and labour more abundant, and as grain prices rose faster than wool prices, conversion of arable to pasture subsided.[92] But even then, the profitability of agriculture gave further encouragement to landlords to encroach on the waste and engross and consolidate their holdings.[93] The result was, in many cases, to reduce the number of peasant proprietors and to diminish the area of the commons.

In addition, the economic and social conditions of the 16th and 17th centuries prompted many landlords to challenge the customary rights of the tenants. Leases for some term of years were substituted for leases for lives and copyholds of inheritance, while arbitrary fines were substituted for fixed fines wherever possible.[94] In this way, landlords were able to exact heavy fines and/or rents at the termination of the lease, forcing the customary tenants either to pay market value or get off the land.[95] Tenants-at-will and small leaseholders had little protection against such action. Nor did a substantial proportion of the copyholders. In looking at the copyholders, who constituted the bulk of the peasantry in the 16th century, Tawney finds that copyholds for life or lives appear to be more usual than copyholds of inheritance, while fixed fines were the exception and variable fines the rule.[96]

As Tawney remarks, "As soon as the time has come when it is convenient to get rid of tenants, nothing but the most unassailable title can stand against the proof that such and such a plot of land was once part of the lord's demesne or of the lord's waste."[97] For example in the 16th and 17th centuries, the development of the coal industry put the rights of customary tenants and even small freeholders in jeopardy as landlords sought access to coal found on their land.[98]

In these ways, the landlords directly confronted the remaining vestiges of the feudal mode of production. To an increasing extent, they attempted to, and they were able to, redefine the economic and social relations between themselves and the peasants. On manors where there were numerous freeholders and copyholders of inheritance, their tenant rights secured by law, the lord who wanted to make large enclosures would have to use extra-legal methods to expropriate them[99] or else buy them out.[100] It was probably more often the case in the 16th and 17th centuries that those freeholders and copyholders who were making a comfortable living out of their land, i.e., the yeomen, would not be inclined to break their direct ties to the land by selling out. Rather, they would come to an agreement with the landlords to enclose, and profit along with them in doing so. The losers would be the smaller and less secure peasantry.[101]

It was these less secure peasants -- cottagers, squatters, and especially shorter-term copy-holders and small leaseholders -- who, by the early 17th century, were the only real obstacles in the way of the enclosure movement. Although the monarchy had earlier enacted legislation to halt enclosures, by the reign of James I, such legislation was designed more to raise revenues for the Crown (in the form of fines paid by landlords who "broke the law") than to really stem the tide of agrarian transformation.[102] As Tawney expresses the basic contradiction in the land policy of the monarchy:

> Evictions could be checked only by giving tenants security, which would have meant turning customary into legal titles, and fixing judicial fines for leaseholders and immovable fines for copyholders;

> in short, the sort of interference that the peasants and their champions demanded, but on which no Government depending on the support of the landed gentry would venture except upon an extraordinary emergency.[103]

In the first decades of the 17th century, the monarchy was willing to go along with the market-oriented landlords because of fiscal considerations. But in the reign of Charles I, the deeper contradictions between the old feudal prerogatives of the Crown and the rising gentry came to a head. The confines of the feudal order could no longer accommodate or adapt to the interests and growing power of the bourgeois elements. The attempts by the bourgeois classes to appropriate the surplus in the forms of profits on capital and competitive rents ran up against the absolute monarch and his merchant monopolists trying the appropriate the surplus on the basis of divine right and special political privileges. The result was the political destruction of absolute monarchy and its feudal appendages in the Civil Wars of the 1540's and the Whig revolution of 1688.[104]

With the fall of absolute monarchy came the abolition of the special courts of the Crown -- the Court of Requests and the Court of Star Chamber; and with their abolition went the last legal institutions to even make a pretence of upholding an anti-enclosure policy.[105] In 1646, the Long Parliament, by abolishing feudal tenure and the Court of Wards, gave landowners absolute ownership of their estates, and thus made long-run planning and capital investment in the land a more secure proposition.[106] However, at the same time, we witness the failure of the left-wing parties of the Civil War period -- the Levellers and the Diggers -- to secure law reform which would protect common rights against enclosures as well as protect the tenures of copyholder and fix copyhold fines.[107]

With the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660, Parliament reconfirmed the absolute ownership of land by landlords and freeholders while leaving the copyholders at the mercy of rack-rents and variable fines. And an act of 1677 put many small freeholders in much the same position as copyholders by denying them property rights in their holding unless they could show written legal title.[108] So, a large proportion of the peasantry, including many who had been instrumental in bringing the bourgeoisie to power during the previous years of civil strife, found very little protection once that power was secure.[109]

As the masses of peasants were fighting a losing legal battle to protect their customary rights, huge amounts of Crown, Royalist and Church lands were passing into the possession of men who had every interest to extinguish those rights.[110] Some of this land was returned to its former possessors after the Restoration (Crown lands, however, continued to be sold to finance royal expenditure), but a new political order had arisen. With the bourgeoisie firmly in control after 1688, the full political power of the State as well as the economic power of the landlords was prepared to destroy the last remaining vestige of the feudal mode of production,

namely, the open-field system and the peasantry which derived its subsistence from this system. The century from the end of the Civil Wars to the middle of the 18th century was the really revolutionary period in the transformation of agricultural social relations.[111] It was in this period that the contradiction between a widespread distribution of land and individual accumulation on the basis of private property became most clear.[112] In this century prior to the widespread use of Parliamentary enclosures, it was enclosures by "agreement" which provided the mechanism for the systematic transformation of the social relations of production in agriculture.

The statistics of Gregory King provide us with a fairly reliable contemporary assessment of the class composition of the English population in 1688.[113] In a total population of 5½ million, there was an agricultural population of about 4 million.[114] Included were 180,000 "yeomen" families (King included here freeholders, copyholders, and tenants for life and lives),[115] of which 40,000 were "upper" yeomen and 140,000 were "lower" yeomen, the estate of the latter probably averaging less than 20 acres. There were also 150,000 farmer families (tenants in terms of years), 400,000 families of cottagers and paupers, and 364,000 families of labouring people and out-servants, although not all of this latter group were engaged in agriculture.[116]*

The "upper" yeomen and perhaps some of the more well-to-do "lower" yeomen were already, at the end of the 17th century, producing primarily with the idea of marketing as much surplus-value as possible as opposed to producing merely to meet their subsistence needs. As wage-labour became more available and as the land market grew, these richer peasants were leasing and buying more land and hiring more labour. They were ceasing to be independent peasants and were becoming capitalist farmers and even landlords. Where these yeomen were still producing in the open-field system at the end of the 17th century, they had, in many cases, already enclosed off part of the their land within the open-field structure. In any case, as they attempted to gear their own private production to market demand, these "bourgeoisified" yeomen had no real interest in maintaining the open-field system.

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*It should be noted that the upper yeomen had larger families than the lower yeomen (7 as against 5½), while the latter had larger families than labouring people, cottagers, paupers, and out-servants, who had only 3½ per family. This was partly because richer families could afford to have more children and were more able to keep those they did have alive, but also because they could afford to house servants and labourers under their roofs who were considered part of the family unit.

Many of the yeomen whose holdings were little more than sufficient to meet the subsistence needs of their families also found themselves compelled to produce according to market criteria as their landlords forced them to pay rack-rents (in the form of annual market rents or heavy entry fines). For these small peasants, the economic and political changes between 1650 and 1750 broke down the security offered by the village community (especially communal land rights, independence from the money lender, and independence from market competition) and confronted them with all the competitive pressures which face small tenant-farmers producing in a national system of capitalist agriculture.

As for the cottagers and squatters, their direct ties to the soil, and hence to their means of subsistence, became increasingly tenuous as more and more of the common land was enclosed. They derived an increasing share of their subsistence by selling their labour-power as a commodity and/or by producing for exchange in the putting-out system. They derived a decreasing share of their subsistence by directly appropriating it from the land. The same applies a fortiori to those agricultural labourers who managed to retain direct, if meagre, ties to the land at the end of the 17th century.

In the late 17th and early 18th century, there were many forces working to accelerate these changes. Substitution of terms of tenure and rack-renting continued.[117] Also, much of the land enclosed during the first sixty years of the 18th century involved conversion of arable to pasture for purposes of sheep-raising.[118] As in the 16th century, such enclosure had the most sudden and dramatic effects in creating a proletariat.

In addition, agricultural depression characterized the first half of the 18th century.[119] Large numbers of small landholders were unable to cope with the low prices, cold winters, loss of animals through disease, and harvest failures in this period.[120] The obverse of the plight of the small landholders was the increase in the size of the farms that remained.[121]

Thus, the weakening of the class of peasant proprietors which took place to an increasing extent in the 16th and 17th centuries became acute in the first half of the 18th century.[122] The purchase of small holdings by large landowners, often with an eye to eventual enclosure, had become quite usual in the 17th century.[123] The practice was accelerated in the earl 18th century when enclosures were typically preceded by a large-scale buying out of freeholders.[124] The decline in the number of small landholders diminished the ability of those that remained to fight off enclosures when they did come. As one early 18th century agricultural writer advised:

> A Steward should not forget to make the best Enquiry into the Disposition of any of the Freeholders within or near any of his Lord's Manors to sell their Lands,

> that he may use his best Endeavours to purchase them at as reasonable a price as may be for his lord's Advantage and Convenience...especially in such Manors where Improvements are to be made by inclosing Commons and Common fields...If the Freeholders cannot all be persuaded to sell yet at least an Agreement for Inclosing should be pushed forward by the Steward.[125]

It has already been noted that it was enclosure by agreement which typified the enclosure movement in the first half of the 18th century. Now, enclosure by agreement by no means required the consent of all the landholders affected. Rather, the agreement of the owners of 4/5 of the land, which in most cases represented a minority of the landholders, was sufficient.[126] Tenants were not a part of the decision-making process although those with holdings in the open-fields would get an allotment after enclosure. However, cottagers and squatters, with no holdings in the open-field, had neither a voice in the enclosure process nor the legal right to a post-enclosure allotment.

But even the small landholders who came through the enclosure process with the right to the use of some land as their private holding often experienced severe difficulties in the aftermath. Smaller tenants with 10-30 acres had difficulty paying the higher (on the average doubled) rents after enclosure.[127] After enclosure, improvements such as hedging and draining were necessary. If the cost of these did not force the small owner to sell out his allotment immediately, the long-run effects of the debts incurred had the same result.[128]

Such difficulties for the small owner were compounded when enclosure was by Act of Parliament. The expenses of getting the Act passed and then paying for lawyers, surveyors, and commissioners were great. In many cases, what the richer owners laid out in expenses they took back in a larger claim to land[129] or by putting the small owners in debt.[130]

In the 18th century, the yeomanry as a class of independent peasants disappeared[131] as the social relations of agricultural production were transformed. Some, more substantial peasants, retained and enlarged their holdings and became capitalist farmers and/or landlords. Smaller freeholders sold their land either before or after enclosure, and with the proceeds either emigrated or stocked a farm and became tenant-farmers. And many small peasants, especially tenants, became proletarians when they could not pay the higher rents after the terms of their leases were altered (sometimes independent of and sometimes as a result of enclosure) or when they became so deeply in debt that they lost their land. By 1790, an independent peasant class, producing their own subsistence with their own labour on their own land, was almost extinct.[132] Landlords owned about 3/4 of the land in England.[133] Occupying freeholders stilled possessed 15-20% of the land,[134] but on their holdings averaging about 50 acres, they were producing for the market on a capitalist basis.

But what happened to the cottagers, squatters, and agricultural labourers who had found all or part of their subsistence through their customary rights to the use of the commons? The law of the capitalist ruling class did not recognize such customary rights. There was therefore rarely any question of the land rights of these people when enclosure took place. In the words of the Hammonds: "The effect on the cottager can best be described by saying that before enclosure the cottager was a labourer with land, after enclosure a labourer without land. The economic basis of their independence was destroyed."[135] And according to Gregory King's statistics,[136] the cottagers and paupers along with their families constituted some 30-35% of the agricultural population and 20-25% of the total population of England and Wales in 1688. In addition, agricultural labourers and their families constituted 25-30% of the agricultural population and perhaps 20% of the total population at that date. A portion of the latter group along with 30,000 vagrants and perhaps 400,000-500,000 urban workers, sailors and soldiers and their families came into the 18th century already proletarianized. For most of the rest of the cottagers, squatters, and agricultural labourers, the enclosures of the 18th and early 19th centuries dissolved the last remnants of their direct ties to the land; and they, along with the less fortunate of the small owners and tenants, swelled the ranks of the proletariat.

The enclosure movement was elevated to the level of national policy during the 18th century. The first private Enclosures Act was passed in Parliament in 1710.[137] In the three decades between 1720 and 1750, 100 such Acts were passed. But in the decade 1750-59, 139 Acts went through Parliament; and the pace was accelerating.[138] Between 1750 and 1850, more than 4000 Acts were passed, with two particularly heavily-weighted periods: 1764-1780 when there were some 900 Acts and 1793-1815 when there were over 2000 Acts.[139] Since 70% of the Acts were passed in these two relatively short periods, the impact was bound to have been acutely felt.

We must be careful, however, to analyze parliamentary enclosures in terms of a long-run process of agricultural transformation which had been going on for centuries without direct parliamentary intervention. The statistical record of non-parliamentary enclosures is far from complete. Gay, on the basis of some hypothetical assumptions, put the total number of acres enclosed between 1455 and 1607 at 516,673 or 2.76% of the total area of England.[140] Much research attests to the widespread use of enclosures by agreement in the 17th century.[141] By 1700 only half, and perhaps less, of the agricultural land of England remained to be enclosed.[142]

About 6 million acres, comprising 1/4 of the agricultural acreage of England, were enclosed by Act of Parliament during the whole of the enclosure period.[143] It has been estimated that at least 4 million acres and perhaps as much as 7 million acres were enclosed by agreement in the 18th century.[144] Even when parliamentary enclosures were widespread, enclosure by agreement retained the significant advantages of avoiding the high expense of enclosure by Act of Parliament.[145] Hill notes that

an Act of Parliament for enclosure cost about £2000 and conjectures that the sharp increase in Enclosure Acts after 1750 was due to opposition to enclosure in the last remaining unenclosed areas which could not be overcome by less expensive means.[146]

Enclosure by parliamentary methods, therefore, represents a final stage, and just that, in the process of transforming the social relations of agricultural production; a process which took place by less visible means for centuries. By about the middle of the 18th century, the social relations of capitalist production -- landlord, tenant-farmer, and wage-labourer -- were emerging as dominant in the agricultural sector.[147] One of the vital preconditions for the further expansion of capitalist production, whether in agriculture or in manufacturing, had appeared: a mass of proletarians. By the 1780's, the "industrial revolution" was well underway.[148]

Enclosures went on in the last decades of the 18th century and well into the 19th century. 2000 parliamentary Enclosure Acts were passed between 1800 and 1844. By 1845, most of the open fields had been enclosed, but enclosure of some waste continued until 1876.[149] However, by the 1780's, we are already well into the post-revolutionary era of the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production. The accumulation of industrial capital, based on the exploitation of the proletarianized (i.e., "free") labourers, is running its own course.

About 1/3 of the acreage enclosed by Act of Parliament was common pasture and waste.[150] In 1802, the General Enclosure Act was passed to cheapen the process of enclosure, and to expedite the enclosure of waste so that it might be cleared of any remaining cottagers and squatters.[151] After their estates had been cleared, it was quite common for large landowners to demolish the cottages of these people to ensure that they (or other proletarians) would not return.[152] Meanwhile, from the last decades of the 18th century, agricultural reformers put forth land allotment plans which would provide the dispossessed with "three acres and a cow."[153] The movement met with little success. When tiny plots of land were allotted in the early 19th century, they served as expedient forms of poor relief and as devices to retain a supply of cheap labour in depressed areas. Stringent rules were attached to the holdings to ensure that the possession of a little piece of land (e.g., 1/8 acre) didn't detract from the performance of wage-labour.[154] In general, by this time, the capitalists were much too well aware of the incompatibility of a land-holding labour force with capitalist production, and they were much too powerful to permit the essential dependency of wage-labour on capital to be in any way undermined.

IV. The Bourgeois Critique of Marx

From the preceding discussion, we can see the important role which enclosures in England played in the rise of capitalism. Starting as individual acts of appropriation and developing historically into national acts of expropriation, enclosures were instrumental in dissolving the open-field system of the old feudal mode of production and in releasing important preconditions for the new capitalist mode of production. The successful attempts by the rising bourgeois elements in English agriculture to take advantage of new market opporutnities resulted in the transformation of the agricultural sector and the separation of the mass of producers from the means of production. This same transformation brought with it an increase in agricultural productivity which released the supply of food necessary to feed these new proletarians. The process was "self-feeding" in another respect as well: the growing proletariat meant a growing demand for the products of agriculture (as well as those of manufacturing) which further encouraged agricultural development.*[155] Finally, capital accumulated in the new mode of agricultural production, in addition to capital derived from trade and manufacture, had a part in ensuring that the growing proletariat would actually find employment in capitalist production.

Enclosures, in their various forms, were therefore integral to the process of economic and social reorganization out of which some of the crucial preconditions for capitalist production emerged. When these preconditions -- a large and expanding labour supply, food supply, and home market -- coalesced historically with other factors such as secure foreign markets and the concentration of wealth in the hands of entrepreneurs, the capitalist mode of production was ready to experience its "industrial revolution." How, then, do modern bourgeois economic historians analyze the effects of enclosure?

One argument put forth to refute the notion that the consequences of enclosure were devastating for the labourer is that "to some extent the loss of commons might be compensated, however, by an increase in the volume and regularity of employment after enclosure."[156] Says Ashton,

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*At the end of the 17th century, a contemporary estimated the home market in textiles to be three times that of the foreign market. The total home market was estimated to be six times larger than the foreign market in 1721 as compared to an estimate of 32 times larger, 80 years later. Hill, 1969, p. 248.

> There is no doubt whatever that the enclosure involved hardship and injustice....Some of the cottagers who had picked up a living by casual work on the commons now had to hire themselves as labourers to farmers; some had to fall back on parish relief; and yet others left the land for the towns. There is no evidence, however, of large-scale rural unemployment. As Dr. Chambers has pointed out, the new agricultural practices (including the growing of root crops and grasses and the maintenance of large dairy herds) created new demands for labour; and the hedging and ditching required provided employment in the winter for casual workers.[157]

It is entirely reasonable to assume that the favourable agricultural conditions in England from 1755 to 1815 resulted in many cases, and even generally, in higher rural employment after enclosures than before, especially in view of the fact that so much waste was being brought under cultivation in this period. But whether rural employment increased or decreased subsequent to enclosures is irrelevant to the question of the change in the social relations of production. The important effect of enclosures was the proletarianization of a mass of people. And having been reduced to proletarian status, it was of little consequence to the emergence of capitalism in general whether in the short-run they became agricultural or manufacturing proletarians -- whether they sold their labour-power for a wage on the agricultural labour market or the manufacturing labour market. They were now part of a landless labour force dependent on capital (whether agricultural or manufacturing) for their subsistence. As such they were now ready to respond to social forces which might "push" or "pull" them from one sector to the other.*

Economic historians such as Ashton, Chambers, and Mingay, in arguing that enclosures ameliorated employment conditions, are analyzing the relatively short-run functioning of an economy predominated by the social relation between wage-labour and capital. That is, they are looking at the capitalist mode of production <u>in operation</u>. They are not analyzing the transition from a pre-capitalist to a capitalist economy. As much as their analysis gives insight into the short-run functioning of the capitalist labour market subsequent to enclosures, such analysis does not deal with, and in fact leads us away from, the broader question of the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production.

These same historians go a step further in trying to avoid analyzing the social consequences of enclosures by arguing that <u>legal</u> rights to

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*So we see that there was rapid rural depopulation after 1815 when corn prices fell, and in the following decades as agriculture was mechanized, the Game Laws were enforced, the Poor Law was reformed, and the railway system was completed. See Cole & Postgate, p. 123; Chambers, 1953,

property were, by and large, protected during the process of enclosure. "Whatever may be said of enclosure by act of parliament" argues Chambers in an article expressly written as a refutation of the Marxian thesis,[158] "it represents a milestone in the recognition of the legal rights of humble men."[159] Ashton, Gonner, and Chambers & Mingay deduce from the absence of complaints from small landholders that enclosed land was divided and allotted fairly.[160] The Hammonds and Hasbach present the strong counter-argument that effective opposition to enclosure was much too expensive for small peasants to undertake.[161] Mantoux makes the comment that "counter-petitions to enclosure had results in one case only, namely when they, too, originated in the possessing and ruling classes."[162]

To analyze the effects of enclosures, however, we have to look beyond the treatment of legal rights. As Chambers himself states (quoting the 18th century writer, Arthur Young): "But of the poor without legal rights it remains true that 'by nineteen enclosure bills out of twenty they are injured, in some grossly injured.'"[163] Chambers then goes on to warn that the social consequences of the loss of commons must not be minimized: "The appropriation for their own exclusive use of practically the whole of the common waste by the legal owners meant that the curtain which separated the growing army of labourers from utter proletarianization was torn down."[164]

As was made evident in the last section, the power relations inherent in the class structure of 18th and 19th century English society were such as to render legal rights of value only to a minority of the agricultural population. As E.P. Thompson observes: "Enclosure (when all the sophistications are allowed for) was a plain enough case of class robbery, played according to fair rules of property and law laid down by a Parliament of property-owners and lawyers."[165] Even if we could accept the argument that, for those peasant proprietors who held legal rights to the use of land, justice was served, nothing is said about the majority of the agricultural population in the 18th century -- the masses of cottagers, squatters, and agricultural labourers -- who had only customary rights to the use of land. To argue that these people weren't treated unfairly because, in fact, they didn't have any legal rights is irrelevant to the fact that they were dispossessed and proletarianized by enclosures.

The contentions that rural employment stayed high after enclosures and that legal rights were recognized during the enclosing process are part of a broader argument presented by bourgeois economic historians by which they claim to disprove the Marxian thesis that enclosures played a major role in creating an "industrial" labour force. Perhaps the most explicitly anti-Marxian statement of this proposition can be found in David S. Landes' The Unbound Prometheus (1969) in which Landes considers "the relationship between the supply of labour and the extension of the new mode of production":

> For a long time the most accepted view has been that propounded by Marx and repeated and embellished by generations of socialist and even non-socialist historians. This position explains the accomplishment of so enormous a social change -- the creation of an industrial proletariat in the face of tenacious resistance -- by postulating an act of forcible expropriation: the enclosures uprooted the cottager and small peasant and drove them into the mills. Recent empirical research has invalidated this hypothesis; the data indicate that the agricultural revolution associated with the enclosures increased the demand for farm labour, that indeed those rural areas that saw the most enclosures saw the largest increase in resident population. From 1750 to 1830, Britain's agricultural counties doubled their inhabitants. Whether objective evidence of this kind will suffice, however, to do away with what has become something of an article of faith is doubtful.[166]

What is the "objective evidence" which invalidates the Marxian view? Landes refers only to an "important" article by J.D. Chambers, "Enclosure and the Labour Supply in the Industrial Revolution."[167] T.S. Ashton, in his An Economic History of England: The 18th Century (1961), also refers to this article by Chambers (as well as to a much earlier article by the same author which we need not discuss here) as "a scholarly and balanced discussion of the issues."[168] As Ashton claims:

> There was no mass eviction: the population of agricultural villages increased at a rate not much less than that of the industrial areas; and it is not impossible that the growth of numbers was a response to increased supplies of food and greater opportunities of work in the countryside. In so far as people left for the towns the relatively high wages paid there are sufficient explanation of the movement. But the notion the poor men, like rich capitalists, might respond to opportunities of personal gain seems to arouse mental resistance: the idea that the poor were driven from the land remains (and is likely to remain) firmly embedded in the textbooks.[169]

Ashton needn't have been so pessimistic about the currency of his views. Since he wrote the above lines, the Chambers article has been relied upon in several works on 18th century agriculture to confidently reject the Marxian analysis of the role of enclosures.[170] It is therefore worth taking a careful look at Chambers' argument and evidence.

Throughout his article, Chambers perceives the possible misconceptions and errors in analysis that might arise in trying to show the effect of enclosures on the labour supply. But while he seems to have an aware-

ness of the broader issues involved, he is either reluctant or unable to deal with them. Here is his statement both of the problem and the way he intends to handle it:

> Until the advance, a generation ago, in the study of the demographic aspect of the Industrial Revolution, the function of enclosure in regard to labour supply was regarded as crucial. Its special importance in recruiting the industrial labour force was developed in a series of important studies as the result of which it came to be generally regarded as a basic postulate of the new large-scale economy.* More recent examination of the growth and movement of population has done something to modify this view, but the conventional picture of catastrophic change effected by enclosure still finds its adherents. Any alternative to it, says Dobb, implies the assumption that "the appearance of a reserve army of labour was a simple product of growing population which created more than could be fed from the then cultivated soil. If this were the true story, one might have reason to speak of a proletariat as a natural rather than an institutional creation and to treat accumulation of capital and the growth of a proletariat as autonomous and independent processes. But this idyllic picture fails to accord with the facts." This formulation of the problem invites discussion on several counts, but from the angle of the regional historian (from which it is viewed here) it generalizes a process which he sees in terms of its separate parts, i.e., as actual movements of population in particular places, and he is impelled by the force of his methodology to test the abstract formula of "institutional creation" by fitting it to the local facts as he knows them. Such is the purpose of this article...[171]

Further on, we see that Chambers correctly defines Marx's "institutional creation" as "the forcible dislodging of the peasantry from the soil" and as "a response to the exercise of power by a ruling class." What he finds to be "abstract" about such "institutional creation," Chambers does not make clear.[172]

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*Here Chambers refers to Marx, Capital II (Cole, ed.) p. 793; Dobb, Studies in the Development of Capitalism (1947), p. 223; and also H. Levy, Large and Small Holdings (1911), p. 38.

He readily admits that even the earliest enclosures, i.e., from the 15th century to the 17th century, involved sizeable evictions and consequent proletarianization. He also bears witness to the widespread enclosure movement in the first half of the 18th century, despite the paucity of parliamentary enclosures. "[The period immediately preceding the era of parliamentary enclosures] was marked by the buying out of freeholds and leases for lives as a prelude to enclosure on such a scale as to give rise to the erroneous view that the yeomanry had already disappeared in 1750."[173]

He then goes on to say, "But rapid and ruthless as this process may have been, it failed to meet the labour needs of the time or to accelerate substantially the process of proletarian reproduction."[174] Thus, in the first half of the 18th century, just as in earlier times, Chambers attests to expropriation, perhaps considerable; but he suggests that the lack of subsequent rapid growth of population held back "industrialization."

Chambers then notes that up to the middle of the 18th century, reliable statistical data on enclosures are scarce; but "at this point the existence of census returns, enclosure awards and land-tax duplicates makes possible the application of more exact tests to the claims which are made for enclosure in recruiting the labour force, and to this aspect of the discussion we may now turn."[175] Nor in his empirical evidence does Chambers ever return to any enclosures prior to 1780. Chambers notes, moreover, that even for those enclosures for which records exist (mainly enclosures by Act), cottagers and squatters do not appear in enclosure awards nor in land-tax returns; and he, therefore, issues the following warning: "[T]hese landless or semi-landless workers, together with the small tenants who disappeared through consolidation, represent the real victims of enclosure, and unless they are constantly kept in mind, they may also become the victims of the statistical method."[176]

With these statistical pitfalls supposedly in mind, Chambers wants to look at the available evidence to see whether small owners and tenants are becoming labourers and whether cottagers are being stripped "of their last remaining vestiges of independence."[177] He examines population movements in Nottinghamshire and finds population rising fastest between 1801 and 1861 in those villages in which manufacturing or mining prevailed as opposed to agricultural villages,[178] supporting the hypothesis that "the extruded [by enclosures] peasantry were being transformed into a rural industrial proletariat as the first step to their recruitment in the army of urban labour."[179]

He notes that in the second half of the 18th century and in the beginning of the 19th century, agricultural conditions were conducive to the survival of the small owner. But "the small tenant was in a far worse case and contemporary opinion leaves us in no doubt that this class generally suffered in numbers heavily from enclosure."[180] The basis of the rest of Chambers' study is to show, by looking into a number of other regional studies of enclosure, that the number of small <u>owners</u> increased, or at

least did not suffer catastrophic decline, between, for the most part, 1790 and 1810, with 1780 and 1830 (except in one case) as outside limits on the period of analysis.[181]

Chambers' evidence shows that small farms still existed in large numbers in the first few decades of the 19th century. These facts are supposed to contradict Marx's statement that the independent yeoman had disappeared by 1750.[182] And from this, we are supposed to reject Marx's thesis of the important role of enclosures in giving rise to a proletarianized labour force. This argument, however, fails on many counts, and in itself reveals a gross misunderstanding of Marx's historical analysis.

Let us look again at the nature of the independent yeomen who, Marx claimed, "formed the backbone of Cromwell's strength," but who had disappeared by about 1750.[183] In the mid-17th century, these peasants held secure titles to their holdings. While the sale of surplus commodities was becoming increasingly important to them, they did not acquire their actual subsistence through the market, but rather appropriated it directly from the land. In contrast to, on the one hand, the small customary tenant whose fate was largely at the will of the lord, and, on the other hand, the larger tenant-farmer who had to adjust his productive activity to the demands of the market,[184] the yeoman led an independent existence. His secure possession of the land prompted him to be industrious, acquisitive, and forward-looking. As a class of individual petty producers (what we would now call petty bourgeoisie) whose historical origins can be traced back to the dissolution of the old feudal relations of production,[185] they epitomize the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production. It was these more secure peasant proprietors who, from the peasant uprisings in 1381[186] through the Civil Wars of the 1640's, played a key role in undermining feudal regulation of production and in finally overthrowing the feudal ruling class. At the same time, these petty producers improved the land and, in many cases, helped push forward enclosures, while on the political and ideological levels, they fought for the freedom of private property and the individual.[187]

But given this role of the yeomanry in the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production, we need not assume as Chambers does that Marx, in claiming that the yeomanry disappeared, is implying that they descended to the proletariat. We have already noted the diverse fate of the class of yeomen in the century after the Civil Wars.[188] Some became landlords, some became capitalist farmers, some emigrated. In each of these cases, the English yeoman ceases to be an English yeoman. The yeomanry disappears. It is true that at the end of the 18th century and into the 19th century, some petty proprietors continued to occupy and work their own land. But in the world of capitalist agriculture with its market fluctuations and intense competition, they were no longer a class of independent peasants. As owners of small capital in a full-blown and expanding capitalist economy, they no longer played an im-

portant role in shaping agricultural production. As a social class[189] which had any significance in shaping English history, the yeomanry had disappeared.

There is no reason to doubt that some yeomen did descend to the proletariat as commercial forces, manifested most forcefully by enclosures, pervaded the economy. However, these yeomen were not the primary source in the creation of the proletariat. From Gregory King's statistics,[190] we can estimate that cottagers, paupers, and agricultural labourers along with their families constituted 55-65% of the agricultural population and 40-45% of the total population of England and Wales in 1688. At this date, in addition, there was already a sizeable urban and migrant proletariat. There is also general agreement that the smaller tenant-farmers found life very difficult both before and after enclosure. We have an abundance of potential proletarians -- without the yeomanry.[191]

Marx nowhere implies that the yeomanry were expropriated and proletarianized on a large scale. In fact in Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, we find the following explanation:

> The process of dissolution which turns a mass of individuals in a nation, etc., into potential free wage-labourers -- individuals obliged merely by their lack of property to labour and to sell their labour -- does not presuppose the disappearance of the previous sources of income or (in part) of the previous conditions of property of these individuals. On the contrary, it assumes that only their use has been altered, that their mode of existence has been transformed, that they have passed into other people's hands as a free fund, or perhaps that they have partly remained in the same hands.[192]

Marx then adds, ironically enough, "But this much is evident."

It should also be evident that Marx did not postulate that in 1780, or for that matter in 1880, there had already been a complete dichotomization of the population into relatively few capitalists and a mass of proletarians. This extreme polarization continues as capitalist production develops into more advanced stages and as a consequence of that development.[193] It is obvious, therefore, that Marx did not consider that this process had to be anywhere near complete in order for the capitalist mode of production to emerge as the dominant mode of production. However, the disappearance of the yeomanry as a class of any social importance in the 18th century reveals a great deal about the nature of the capitalist mode of production, for it manifests the contradiction between the accumulation of capital on the basis of private ownership of the means of production on the one hand, and the widespread ownership of these means of production on the other. Here we can see the importance of Marx's historical analysis of the rise of capitalism, for it is precisely this contradiction, and the

concentration of the means of production which arises out of it, which is central to Marx's analysis of capitalist development in the 19th century.[194]

Failure on the part of the critics of Marx to grasp the social implications of the transformation of production relations, e.g., that the role of the owner-occupier in the structure of English society at the end of the 18th century was much different than the role of the owner-occupier at the end of the 17th century, leads these critics to look for irrelevant causes and effects in their efforts to refute Marx's arguments. Chambers, restricted by the ideological and theoretical limitations of bourgeois economic history, fails to see that the crucial variable is not the number of small owners existing at the end of the 18th century, but rather the social relations of production into which these small owners enter.

The fact that small landholders still existed between 1780 and 1830 is not at all inconsistent with either Marx's theory of the creation of the proletariat or his theory of capitalist production. Chambers' evidence supports the Marxian argument, if anything. His small owners bear no resemblance to the independent yeomen of times gone by, except in that their holdings are relatively small. Aside from the fact that Chambers makes no attempt to analyze the changing social position of small proprietors as a class, there are other, more technical problems with his evidence. He can't, in most cases, separate out these owners from tenant-farmers, one landholder often being both. Secondly, in two cases he refers to significant numbers of absentee owners (a euphemism for landlords or speculators), and implies that in general their numbers were usually high in enclosure awards. Thirdly, in two studies he indicates that the increase of small owners is due to the selling of land to outside purchasers. In fact, after 1750, many town merchants and manufacturers were buying small pieces of land since large estates had by this time become too expensive.[195] What genuine small-scale owner-occupiers do exist are producing for the market and are themselves subject to market forces. This picture accords well with the fact of the rapid emergence of capitalist production in the last decades of the 18th century.

The short-run character of Chambers' analysis is indicated in his book (written with Mingay), The Agricultural Revolution 1750-1880 (1966), where he says, "there was evidently a considerable decline in the land occupied by small owners in the nineteenth century after 1815, and probably even after the active enclosure of open fields and commons."[196] What Chambers has shown is that, for perhaps three decades, high grain prices and, in some cases, conditions favourable to small-scale production permitted small farmers to withstand the forces towards concentration inherent in both the enclosure movement and the capitalist economy.

Chambers' mistake is also that his period of analysis is at least one-half century too late if what he really wants to do is to test Marx's "abstract formula of 'institutional creation'." For by the beginning of

the 19th century, capitalist production was a fact, and not just an emerging fact. Capital accumulation proceeded under its own momentum; primitive accumulation derived from the "clearing of estates"[197] was of quite secondary importance. It was in roughly the first three-quarters of the 18th century that the transition process was completed and the preconditions for the predominance of capitalist production appeared. If it is the fate of the small owner one is interested in, the first half of the 18th century was when the most dramatic changes took place.[198] Even Chambers seems to agree with this proposition: "Moreover in view of the great amount of enclosure for pasture in the first half of the 18th century, a large proportion of the fall in the number of farming units had occurred before the great era of parliamentary enclosures."[199]

Chambers appears to recognize that he is just analyzing a late stage in a longer transition process when he states: "it will be seen that the enclosure acts had the effect of further reducing but not of destroying the remaining English peasants."[200] However, it is clear that he does not recognize the change in character which rural life had undergone in the transformation of agriculture. As evidence that the English peasantry had not been completely destroyed, Chambers refers to Clapham's demonstration that the ratio of labouring families to farming families rose from 1.74:1 in Gregory King's time to 2.5:1 in 1831.[201] Chambers quotes Clapham:

> The Census Figures are entirely destructive of the view that as a result of agrarian changes and class legislation, an army of labourers toiled for a relatively small farming class; we have not a proletarian army under officers;...numerically the average agricultural unit must be compared not with the factory, but with factory workshops -- master, journeyman or two, prentice or two.[202]

Chambers' use of Clapham's argument[203] epitomizes the way in which these bourgeois economic historians have abstracted completely from the issue of the rise of the proletariat. Quantitative assessments, such as the number of workers per production unit, while they can illuminate qualitative phenomena, such as the social relations of production, cannot be used to explain these phenomena. Clapham and Chambers obviously see the "result of agrarian change and class legislation" strictly in quantitative terms. Clapham's statistics themselves say nothing whatever about the changing social condition and economic status of the labouring family between 1688 and 1831.

It is not therefore surprising that these statistics are very misleading. The enumeration by families hides the fact that each labouring family in 1831, being without land, would tend to supply two or more labourers to farmers; while in 1688, even though one family member might be an agricultural labourer, other members of the family would be occupied with their small plot of land and with their livestock or would be engaged in domestic industry. Deane and Cole estimate that there were 350,000 to

400,000 farmers in Great Britain in 1831 out of a rural working population of 1.8 million -- a worker:farmer ratio of somewhere between 3.5:1 and 4.1:1.[204] Great Britain Census returns in 1851 show 306,000 farmers and 1,461,000 manual labourers in the agricultural population[205] -- a worker: farmer ratio of 4.8:1. Statistics, such as Clapham's, can't help a theoretically faulty argument -- except insofar as they hide the faults in the argument.[206]

Despite the apparent agreement that at least the masses of cottagers, squatters, and agricultural labourers were completely proletarianized by enclosures, what is Chambers' conclusion as to the most important source of the "industrial" labour force? None other than the natural increase of the labouring population, especially after 1750, the primary cause being earlier marriages. Therefore he feels that between 1780 and 1840, it was the expanding economy which called into being its own labour supply by providing incentives to early marriage.[207]

There is a certain amount of truth in this argument; but to take it for the whole truth or even for most of the truth, and to thereby present it as inconsistent with, and hence as a refutation of, the Marxian view of the creation of the proletariat is highly misleading. It imposes a narrow bourgeois methodology, which does not go much beyond the quantitative relations between "factors of production," on the much more profound and dynamic Marxian analysis, which seeks to understand the qualitative relations between different classes of people and the means of production.* This is not to say that the quantitative relation between population and material resources is not an important factor in historical development.[208] But the land:labour ratio and the capital:labour ratio are not merely ahistorical phenomena (although they are often used as such). The relative "abundance" or "scarcity" of land or capital to labour will depend in any historical period on the way in which these resources are distributed, controlled and utilized; i.e., on the relation of different classes to the means of production. It is precisely the changes in these relations which must be studied and explained if we want to understand the historical meaning of changing "factor proportions."

Likewise the population growth itself must be explained. Chambers attempts to do this by claiming that the expanding economy was providing

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*For an example of just such an uncritical use of population growth as an independent force in economic and social development, see L. Stone's introduction to Tawney, The Agrarian Problem in the 16th Century, Harper Torchbook Edition (1967), pp. xiff. Stone poses "relentless demographic growth" as the main cause of growing squatter and proletarian classes without making any attempt to examine the social forces which gave rise to the increase in population in the 16th century.

incentives to early marriages. But, this claim being accepted, we still have to answer broader and more profound questions: What historical changes permitted the economy to expand when it did? What were the characteristics of that expansion which prompted (or permitted) certain people to get married earlier (as well as to do many other things differently than before)?[209] It is to these underlying historical questions that the Marxian analysis addresses itself.

There has been much debate on the causes of the rapid population growth in England after 1750. The facts are that population did increase enormously from about 1750 onwards. Between 1701 and 1751, the population of England and Wales increased from 5½ million to only 6.1 million. By 1781, however this figure stood at 7.5 million, by 1801 at 9.2 million, and by 1831 at over 14 million. Between 1781 and 1831, therefore, the population of England nearly doubled.[210] Among demographic historians, the debate has centred on whether it was a fall in the death rate or a rise in the birth rate which was primarily responsible for this population growth.[211] Our concern here is not to enter this debate, but rather to examine briefly how population change, whether due to a falling death rate on the one hand or a rising birth rate on the other, is related to economic development.

There is good reason to believe that, in the period under discussion, the observed trend towards earlier marriages and larger families[212] was directly related to concurrent changes in the social relations of production. For many people, and particularly for the growing class of proletarians, earlier marriages became socially possible and economically advantageous. For example, consider the yeomen of the 16th and 17th centuries whose labour force consisted of the members of their families as well as hired workers who customarily lived as part of the family units. Such economic arrangements constrained wider social contacts and choices for these family members and workers, causing marriages to be deferred. Tenant-farmers and even small landowners, on the other hand, tended increasingly in the 18th century to hire workers on a more impersonal basis and without room and board.[213] At the same time, in the craft industries, the decline of apprenticeship (de facto, if not de jure), freed young workers to marry earlier.[214] Hence, as the wage-labour contract became a more strictly market transaction, some of the social constraints on earlier marriage were broken down.

Meanwhile, in the 18th century, proletarians recognized the greater economic incentives to increase the size of their families. For the small peasant of the past, large families pushed up against their limited land resources. But, for the landless proletariat, dependent on capital for their subsistence, large families meant more children who might be put to work. And from 1750 on, we see a growing demand for child labour in the factories of the new mode of production.[215] In addition, capital began to seek out women as a cheap supply of labour. The ability for women to find employment on the wage-labour market facilitated, from the economic point of view, earlier marriages. In this regard, the rise of domestic industry, with its large-scale employment of rural women was an especially important

factor.[216] And, with the rise of the factory, the practice of hiring low-wage child and female labour in preference to male labour in some areas and industries might confront the man with the economic necessity of marrying early and reproducing quickly and abundantly.[217]

The rapid population growth which accompanied the "industrial revolution" must be viewed from the dynamic framework of increasing proletarianization of labour, on the one side, and a great expansion of employment in the capitalist sector (i.e., the demand for labour), on the other. As capitalist relations of production became dominant both in agriculture and manufacturing, obstacles to population growth were swept away. Feudal customs which discouraged marriage were disregarded, the direct tie of the mass of the people to their means of production was broken, an impersonal and uncertain labour market replaced more personal and stable employer-employee contractual relations, and the economic positions of women and children were drastically altered. The new class of proletarianized wage-labourers as well as other classes in capitalist society undoubtedly responded to the particular economic incentives which the society presented. Earlier marriages and larger families were specific results of the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production in England. They must be analyzed as such.

While Chambers and others place primary emphasis on the rise in the birth rate in accounting for the population explosion, others see the fall in the death rate as being the predominant factor.[218] The application of medical advances such as smallpox inoculation, made necessary by the rise of congested cities, as well as the existence of a more secure and adequate food supply, made possible by the transformation of agriculture, undoubtedly helped to reduce infant mortality and to prolong life expectancy. In addition, however, it is important to analyze when and why the classes which possessed the means of production began to recognize the necessity of distributing these medical advances and other means of subsistence, and how this distribution was implemented (e.g., the Old and New Poor Laws).[219]

In the absence of such an analysis, the ability of capitalist England to provide subsistence to a much larger number of people than previously has often been put forward as an apology for the degradation which the working classes experienced in the "industrial revolution."*[220]

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*Such apologies conveniently fail to mention that in the Irish famine of the 1840's, 1,000,000 people died of starvation and disease on the doorstep of England. The famine was the direct result of centuries of colonial exploitation and consequent underdevelopment in the course of the rise of capitalism in England which condemned the Irish people to a precarious dependence on the potato. See Salaman, ch. 11-18. For a picture of living conditions in England in this period, see Thompson, 1963, ch. X; Engels, 1969.

It goes without saying that such arguments ignore the character of the social relations into which the increased population are born.[221] For example, F.A. Hayek, writing in a volume celebrating the historical achievements of capitalism[222] tells us:

> It was only when the larger gains from the employment of machinery provided both the means and the opportunity for their investment that what in the past had been a recurring surplus population doomed to early death was in increasing measure given the possibility of survival. Numbers which had been practically stationary for many centuries began to increase rapidly. The proletariat which capitalism can be said to have "created"...was an additional population which was enabled to grow by the new opportunities for employment which capitalism provided.[223]

This argument, just like that put forth by Chambers, starts from the viewpoint of an already existing and functioning capitalist mode of production. It neglects the historical process whereby a market in "free" wage-labour was created and it neglects the fact that the creation of a free labour supply was one of the vital preconditions for the emergence and rapid growth of capitalism. It is of little analytical importance (we are not directly concerned with ethics here) to Hayek that capitalist production is able to support an increased population only because of the social changes which have made this increased populace dependent on the means of production of the capitalists for their survival. Marx, on the other hand, does not deny that especially in terms of commodity output, the capitalist mode of production represents progress.[224] But he does deny that one can understand the development of capitalism, in its rise or in its more advanced stages, through the examination of quantitative phenomena and short-run movements which take economic as well as political and cultural institutions as given.

The crucial qualitative phenomenon in the rise of capitalism is the transformation of the labor force into a proletarianized condition. The crucial outcome of this transformation, in terms of analyzing the further development of capitalism, is the dependency relation between labour and capital. But such matters have little meaning to those whose primary purpose it is to extoll the virtues of capitalism. So Hayek goes on to say:

> Although it was certainly not from charitable motives, it was still the first time in history that one group of people found it in their interest to use their earnings on a large scale to provide new instruments of production to be operated by those who without them could not have produced their own sustenance.[225]

Here we have a good description of the relations of production which characterize capitalism. But for Hayek, as for bourgeois economists in general,

the elements of control inherent in these relations of production are of minor, if any, interest in the analysis of capitalism. But the primary purpose of Marx's historical analysis of the transition from the feudal mode of production to the capitalist mode of production is precisely to show how one group found it in their power "to provide new instruments of production," and to show how the other group came into a position of dependency such that they "could not have produced their own sustenance" except by operating these instruments. In this way, Marx lays the basis for the analysis of the capitalist mode of production itself.

V. The Pushes and Pulls and Proletarianization

In 1932 Keynes referred to Capital as "an obsolete economic textbook which I know to be not only scientifically erroneous, but without interest or application to the modern world."[226] In 1967, Samuelson wrote at the beginning of his textbook: "A billion people, one-third of the world's population, blindly regard Das Kapital as economic gospel. And yet, without the disciplined study of economic science [by which Samuelson means neoclassical and Keynesian economics, i.e., the theoretical corpus of bourgeois economics], how can anyone form a reasoned opinion about the merits or lack of merits in the classical, traditional economics?"[227] The foregoing discussion of the rise of capitalism is a good example of the dangers inherent in "the disciplined study" of an "economic science" which is out of touch with the historical realities of economic and social development. Chambers, much as he tries, is unable to break through the limitations of his own narrow theoretical preconceptions. His "followers" (e.g., Ashton, Landes, Mingay, Jones, Chaloner) don't even make the effort. They confidently reject the Marxian view as "an article of faith,"[228] as a view which "neglects long-term factors such as prices and the growing strength of large landlords" (sic), and which looks "more at the political and agrarian developments after 1760 than at the deep-seated causes which operated at an earlier period" (sic!),[229] and as a view which "was thoroughly exploded by Professor Chambers."[230]

During the 1950's and 1960's, with the study of Marxian economics all but eliminated from English-speaking academia (more so in the U.S. than elsewhere), it was all too easy and convenient to reject Marxian theories of economic development without having studied them, or by studying them with an uncritical acceptance of the reigning neoclassical paradigm. Hopefully, with the resurgence of Marxian economics in the 1970's, it will be a little more difficult for bourgeois economists to pass Marx off as "a minor post-Ricardian."[231]

But even for those who reject the bourgeois orthodoxy, the transition to a Marxist view of economic development is not a simple one. The latter requires a wholly different way of thinking. Bourgeois economics teaches us to think in terms of equilibrium conditions and harmony of interests. Marxian economics is primarily concerned with disequilibrium conditions and class conflict. This is not to say that Marxian economics

rejects the idea that different classes can engage in what appears to be harmonious development at certain stages of history. What Marxian economics says is that this harmony of interests is often more apparent than real, more ephemeral than durable.

We can take an example from our study of the rise of capitalism. According to Chaloner: "The rural population was attracted into the towns by the prospect of higher wages and better opportunities for employment, rather than expelled from the countryside by the enclosure movement."[232] From the Marxian point of view this "pull-rather-than-push" interpretation of labour mobility creates a false dichotomy, for it poses an either-or condition on a historical situation in which both "pushes" and "pulls" perform their own particular functions. Marx points out that "[a]s soon as capitalist production takes possession of agriculture...[p]art of the agricultural population is...constantly on the point of passing over into an urban or manufacturing proletariat, and on the look-out for circumstances favourable to this transformation."[233] Marx does not deny, then, that, when capitalist production became dominant in agriculture, masses of rural proletarians were "pulled" into the manufacturing sector in search of higher wages. In fact, given their proletarianized conditions, they had little else to concern them other than how to best obtain their subsistence. However, in studying the rise of capitalism and its development, this apparently voluntary and harmonious rural-urban movement of wage-labour in response to "market" (i.e., subsistence) incentives is only the result of centuries of class conflict whereby the mass of producers were separated from the means of production, and then disciplined by the ruling class to accept their new social conditions. The "push" provides the historical basis for the "pull": the rise of capitalism and the creation of the proletariat provides the historical basis for the accumulation of capital and the exploitation of "free" wage-labour.

It is, in fact, the great achievement of all Marx's writings on capitalism that he manged to see through the illusions of freedom created by the allocation of labour through the market mechanism.[234] He dug beneath the process of circulation where commodities (including labour-power) circulated through apparently free and equal exchange to find the real basis of power, and of capitalist accumulation, in the process of production. It is precisely at those stages in capitalist development when the control of the capitalist class over production is most secure that there appears to be the greatest harmony of interests between wage-labour and capital; for it is precisely at these stages that the labourers have been most inured to accepting their commoditized conditions, or, what is the same thing, to accepting the orders which capitalists (or their agents) give them and to accepting the material rewards which the capitalists are willing to offer them. It is not surprising, then, that bourgeois economic theory, in its uncritical acceptance of capitalist control over production, treats labour ("L") like any other commodity ("K" and "Q"), as an object to be allocated

and nothing more. But here bourgeois economics evades the fundamental question which Marxists confront: how stable or unstable is the capital-labour relation? An answer to this question requires a deep understanding of the historical forces (on the economic, political, and cultural levels) which have reduced labour to a commodity, and of the contradictions which arise out of this denial of labour's subjectivity (i.e., control of their own economic, political and cultural development).

I should be clear that Marx himself did not supply the definitive answer to this question. Capitalism has undergone important qualitative changes since the competitive capitalist era which Marx analyzed, and even for that period the amount of historical information available has been greatly expanded since the time Marx wrote. The problem for us, living in the era of monopoly capitalism, is to interpret and reinterpret the history of capitalist development, and to try to understand the contradictions of our own times. And here Marx's approach to analyzing social development in general, and his penetrating analysis of the essential characteristics of capitalist development in particular, are still both valid and invaluable as foundations for further study.

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58 Amory Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts

NOTES

1. Marx, 1963, p. 15.
2. See, e.g., Landes, 1969, pp. 5ff.
3. See, e.g., Landes, 1969; Rostow, 1963; Gerschenkron, 1962.
4. Rostow, 1963, p. 38.
5. See, e.g., Marx, 1967a, Pt. VIII; Dobb, 1963; Hobsbawm, 1969, Ch. 2.
6. For an elaboration of this critique, see Marglin, 1974.
7. See, e.g., Hayek, 1954; Ashton, 1961.
8. See Hobsbawm in Introduction to Marx, 1965, pp. 19ff. For a good discussion of the main issues in the transition, see Dobb, et. al.
9. Tawney, 1912, p. 136; Kosminsky, 1955, p. 26.
10. See Tawney, 1912; Mantoux, 1961; Hill, 1969; Dobb, 1963.
11. Chambers, 1953.

12. The existence and development of this gap has been outlined in Buchele and Lazonick, 1973.

13. Marx, 1967a, p. 713.

14. Smith, 1937, p. 259.

15. See, e.g., Marx, 1965, p. 113.

16. Marx, 1967a, p. 714.

17. Ibid., my emphasis.

18. p. 38.

19. Marx, 1967a, pp. 612-628.

20. 1962, pp. 33-34, my emphasis; see also Landes, 1966, "Introduction" for a typically bourgeois approach to the rise of capitalism.

21. See, e.g., Marx, 1967b, p. 820.

22. Schumpeter, 1947, pp. 16-17.

23. See Schumpeter, 1961.

24. 1947, p. 16.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., p. 17.

27. See Marx, 1967a, p. 750; 1967b, p. 799.

28. See Marx, 1967a, Ch. xxxi.

29. See above, p. 5 ; see also Slater, pp. 1-2.

30. See Kosminsky, 1962, pp. 35ff.

31. Hoskins & Stamp, 1963, p. 4.

32. Hilton & Fagan, 1950, p. 20.

33. Ibid.; Broderick, p. 8.

34. Ernle, p. 38.

35. Kosminsky, 1955, pp. 17-29; Lipson, 1937, Ch. I-III; Ernle, 1941, Ch. I.

36. Hilton, 1969; Ernle, Ch. II.

37. Hilton, 1969, p. 24; Kosminsky, 1955, p. 22.

38. Hilton, 1969, p. 32.

39. Dobb, 1963, p. 45.

40. Hilton, 1969, p. 30.

41. See Hilton & Fagan, 1950; Hilton, 1962.

42. Tawney, 1912, pp. 93-95; Abram, pp. 26-27.

43. Hilton, 1969, p. 32.

44. Ibid.

45. Abram, p. 76; For exceptions in the 16th century, see Tawney, 1912, pp. 42-43; Lipson, 1937, pp. 130-132; Campbell, 1960, p. 16fn.

46. Tawney, 1912, p. 98.

47. Kosminsky, 1955, p. 26; Tawney, 1912, p. 136; Thirsk, 1967, p. 594; Broderick, pp. 18-20.

48. Tawney, 1912, p. 99; Marx, 1967a, p. 717.

49. Bowden, 1962, p. xviii; Tawney, 1912, pp. 195-196; Storey, 1968, p. 164; Broderick, 1881, pp. 25-28; Abram, 1909, pp. 25-26; see also Marx, 1967b, p. 801.

50. Hasbach, 1908, p. 33; Johnson, 1909, p. 51; Gonner, 1912, p. 135; Tawney, 1912, pp. 6-13.

51. See Hill, 1964, Ch. 2, for an analysis of the social and economic consequences of the Reformation.

52. Ibid., p. 34.

53. Ibid., pp. 40-42; see also Broderick, pp. 29-30; Gonner, p. 119; Mantoux, p. 152; Tawney, 1938, pp. 142-154; Tawney, 1941, pp. 23ff, 35-36. According to the 18th century writer, F.M. Eden, 50,000 people were made directly destitute by the dissolution of the monasteries. Quoted in Dobb, 1963, p. 225fn.

54. Hill, 1967a, p. 279.

55. Marx, 1967a, p. 734.

56. Ibid.; see also Dobb, 1963, pp. 224-226.

57. Tawney, 1912, p. 270; see also Ernle, pp. 74ff; Leonard, 1900.

58. Tawney, 1912, p. 269; Hill, 1967a, pp. 262-263.

59. Marx, 1967a, Ch. XXVIII, especially pp. 734-736.

60. Tawney, 1912, p. 272; see also Leonard, 1900; Webb & Webb, 1963, Ch. I, II, VI; Piven & Cloward, Ch. 1.

61. See Tawney, 1941; Hill, 1964, Ch. 1.

62. Hill, 1966, pp. 28-35.

63. Heckscher, 1955, p. 233ff.

64. Hill, 1967a.

65. Bowden, p. 111; Tawney, 1912, pp. 343-345.

66. For a concise description of different land tenures, see Campbell, Ch. IV.

67. Tawney, 1912, p. 24.

68. Hilton, 1969, p. 17.

69. Ibid.

70. Lipson, p. 38.

71. Tawney, 1912, pp. 200-213; Habakkuk, 1965, pp. 650-651; see also Marx, 1967a, pp. 743-744, and Marx, 1967b, pp. 798-802.

72. See Hilton, 1969, pp. 44ff; Marx, 1967b, p. 799.

73. Campbell, p. 121; Hilton, 1969, pp. 47ff.

74. Tawney, 1912, p. 28; Broderick, pp. 32-34; Campbell, Ch. I-II; Mantoux, pp. 136-138; Hoskins, 1950, p. 132.

75. Hoskins, 1950, pp. 128, 154; Broderick, p. 33; Habakkuk, 1965, p. 657; Campbell, p. 19.

76. Tawney, 1912, pp. 318-319.

77. Hill, 1969, p. 44.

78. Lipson, pp. 80-81; Tawney, 1912, p. 247.

79. Thirsk, p. 398.

80. Ibid., p. 420.

81. Ibid., p. 399.

82. Ibid., p. 438.

83. See Hill, 1967b.

84. Tawney, 1912, p. 277; Thirsk, pp. 409, 412.

85. Thirsk, p. 425, 428.

86. Marx, 1967a, p. 336.

87. Thirsk, p. 594.

88. Brenner, 1961.

89. See Tawney, 1941, p. 32; Tawney, 1912, p. 147.

90. See Marx, 1967b, p. 802.

91. Tawney, 1941, pp. 13-16.

92. Thirsk, p. 228.

93. Tawney, 1912, pp. 87-89, 164-165, 231-280, 285-287; see also Hoskins, 1950, Ch. 5.

94. See Slater, p. 153; Campbell, pp. 83-84.

95. See Kerridge, 1953; Habakkuk, 1940, p. 17; Johnson, pp. 61-66; Tawney, 1912, pp. 281-310.

96. Tawney, 1912, p. 301; see also Kerridge, 1953, pp. 18-19.

97. Ibid., p. 287.

98. See Hill, 1969, p. 63.

99. Tawney, pp. 250-253.

100. Leonard, 1905, p. 121; Lipson, p. 154; Tawney, 1912, p. 249.

101. Tawney, 1912, p. 249.

102. Thirsk, p. 213.

103. Tawney, 1912, p. 377.

104. See Hill, 1948.

105. Moore, p. 19; Tawney, 1912, p. 397; Hill, 1969, p. 148.

106. Hill, 1969, p. 146; Perkin, 1968, p. 135; see also Marx, 1967a, p. 723.

107. Hill, 1964, p. 190; Hill, 1966, pp. 190-192; see also Ives, 1969, pp. 126-127.

108. Hill, 1969, p. 147.

109. See Hill, 1948, p. 146.

110. Hill, 1964, Ch. 5; Hill, 1966, p. 46-47, 115, 146-147, 200-201.

111. See, e.g., Hoskins, 1951.

112. See Habakkuk, 1965, p. 655.

113. Chalmers, Appendix IV, pp. 501-502.

114. Deane & Cole, p. 137.

115. Ernle, p. 146.

116. See Chambers & Mingay, p. 18; Ashton, p. 36; Toynbee, 1956, p. 32.

117. See Hill, 1969, pp. 153-154; Mingay, p. 96; Habakkuk, 1940, p. 17.

118. Johnson, p. 98; Chambers and Mingay, pp. 335-336; Mantoux, p. 173; Hill, 1969, p. 269.

119. Mingay, 1963, p. 54.

120. Chambers & Mingay, pp. 40-42.

121. Ibid., p. 42.

122. See Mingay, p. 94.

123. Leonard, 1905, p. 121.

124. Habakkuk, 1940, p. 16.

125. Quoted in Slater, p. 152.

126. Johnson, p. 102.

127. Habakkuk, 1940, p. 16; Mingay, p. 183.

128. Hasbach, p. 111; Johnson, p. 101; Mantoux, p. 170; Chambers & Mingay, pp. 88-89; Levy, p. 26.

129. Tate, 1951, pp. 264-265.

130. Johnson, p. 101.

131. See Marx, 1967a, p. 723, and below pp. 51-52.

132. See Hill, 1942; Davies.

133. Mingay, p. 15.

134. Ibid.

135. Hammond & Hammond, pp. 95-96.

136. See Page 23 above.

137. Hasbach, p. 57.

138. Deane & Cole, p. 94fn.

139. Chambers and Mingay, p. 77.

140. Johnson, p. 42; see also Ernle, p. 66.

141. Leonard, 1905; Campbell, pp. 89-90; Hoskins, 1950, p. 173; Hoskins, 1951, p. 17; Slater, 148ff; Beresford; Thirsk, pp. 237-238, 245, 254-255.

142. Ashton, 1961, p. 33; Ernle, p. 154; Kerridge, 1967, p. 24, argues that in 1700 only 1/4 of the enclosures of England and Wales remained to be undertaken.

143. Chambers & Mingay, p. 77; Johnson, p. 91.

144. Ernle, p. 163.

145. Slater, p. 151; Chambers & Mingay, p. 78; Ashton, p. 39.

146. Hill, 1969, p. 269; see also Tate, 1952, pp. 258-259.

147. Hobsbawm, 1969, p. 29.

148. Ashton, 1961, p. 125.

149. Johnson, p. 94; See Thompson, 1963, Ch. 7.

150. Slater, p. 7.

151. See Marx, 1967a, p. 728.

152. Redford, p. 128; Mingay, p. 276.

153. See Barnett.

154. See Ibid., p. 170.

155. Marx, 1967a, p. 747.

156. Chambers & Mingay, p. 98.

157. Ashton, 1961, p. 47; see also Landes, 1969, p. 115; Chambers, 1953, p. 338.

158. See below, pp.

159. Chambers, 1953, p. 327, emphasis in original; see also Mingay, p. 195.

160. Ashton, 1961, p. 39; Gonner, p. 94; Chambers & Mingay, p. 90.

161. Hammond & Hammond, p. 34; Hasbach, pp. 61-62.

162. Mantoux, p. 167.

163. Chambers, p. 327fn.

164. Ibid., p. 336.

165. Thompson, 1963, p. 218.

166. Landes, 1969, pp. 114-115, my emphasis.

167. Chambers, 1953, pp. 319-343.

168. Ashton, 1961, p. 47fn; the other article is Chambers, 1940.

169. Ashton, 1961, p. 47.

170. See Mingay, pp. 98-99; Chaloner, "Preface to the Second Edition," in Redford, p. vii; E.L. Jones quoted in Saville, p. 260; Harris, p. 24.

171. Chambers, 1953, p. 319.

172. Ibid., p. 319fn and pp. 342-343.

173. Ibid., 1953, p. 321.

174. Ibid.

175. Ibid., p. 322.

176. Ibid., p. 327.

177. Ibid., p. 323.

178. Ibid.

179. Ibid.

180. Ibid., p. 325.

181. See Appendix for a summary of Chambers' evidence

182. See Marx, 1967a, p. 723.

183. Ibid., pp. 722-723; see above, pp. 23-24

184. See Marx, 1967a, p. 723fn.

185. See above, p. 15.

186. See Hilton & Fagan, p. 28.

187. See the discussion in Dobb et. al.; see also MacPherson.

188. See above, pp. 23-25.

189. See Thompson, 1963, pp. 9-11.

190. See above, pp. 23 & 26.

191. See Saville, pp. 261-262.

192. p. 105.

193. See Marx & Engels, 1965, p. 23; Marx, 1967b, p. 885.

194. See Marx, 1967a, pp. 503, 624-628, 762-763; Marx, 1967b, pp. 241-266, 439.

195. Habakkuk, 1965, p. 662.

196. p. 92.

197. See Marx, 1967a, p. 728; see above, p. 27

198. See above pp. 23ff; Johnson, p. 147.

199. Chambers, 1953, p. 336.

200. Ibid., p. 335, my emphasis.

201. Ibid.; see Clapham, 1923; see also Chambers & Mingay, p. 103.

202. Chambers, 1953, p. 335.

203. See also Moore, pp. 514-517 where Mingay's use of Clapham's statistics is criticized.

204. Deane & Cole, p. 144.

205. Moore, p. 516.

206. See Saville, pp. 256-258, for an elaboration of the above criticism.

207. Chambers, 1953, p. 338; see also Chambers & Mingay, pp. 92-93.

208. See above, pp. 13, 19, 20.

209. See, e.g., Marx, 1967a, p. 642.

210. See Deane & Cole, p. 288.

211. See Habakkuk, 1971; Talbot, pp. v-xvii; Glass & Eversley, Pt. II.

212. See Habakkuk, 1971, pp. 35ff.

213. See Talbot, pp. 108-109.

214. Ibid., p. 112ff.

215. See Marx, 1967a, Ch. X, XV; Talbot, p. 101ff.

216. Habakkuk, 1971, pp. 43-44.

217. See, e.g., Engels, 1969, pp. 169ff; Marx, 1967a, pp. 642-643.

218. See, e.g., Talbot; Razzell.

219. Ass suggestive on the distribution of medical services, see Glass & Eversley, p. 18; George, pp. 43ff; Razzell, pp. 317ff.

220. See Thompson, p. 195.

221. See Saville, p. 263.

222. See Thompson, p. 210.

223. Hayek, 1954, p. 16.

224. See, e.g., Marx & Engels, 1965, pp. 17-18.

225. Hayek, 1954, pp. 16-17.

226. Keynes, 1932, p. 300.

227. Samuelson, 1967, p. 1. In the 1970 and 1973 editions of his textbook, Samuelson dropped the word "blindly," and substituted the word "truth" for the word "gospel."

228. See quote from Landes, 1969, above, p. 31.

229. Mingay, p. 99.

230. Jones, quoted in Saville, 1969, p. 260.

231. See Samuelson, 1957, p. 911.

232. "Preface to the Second Edition" of Redford, p. vii; see also quote by Ashton, above, p. 31.

233. Marx, 1967a, p. 642.

234. See, e.g., Ibid., p. 176.

APPENDIX

Summary of the Evidence of the Effect of Enclosures on Small Owners Presented in Chambers, J.D., "Enclosure and the Labour Supply in the Industrial Revolution," Economic History Review, 2nd Series, Volume 5, Number 3, (1953).

Drawing upon a study by Lavrovsky of 11 villages in Suffolk between 1797 and 1814, Chambers says that the number of small owners increased, although he doesn't present any figures. Nor can he say anything about the delayed effects of enclosure due to fencing and other expenses. He also points out the difficulty of distinguishing tenants from owners. [p. 325]

From another study by Lavrovsky, Chambers notes that "at the auction of land held by the Commissioners to defray expenses, nineteen small owners, who Lavrovsky thinks were new to the parish as their names were not found among those receiving allotments at the enclosure, acquired an average of three acres each." Again Chambers notes that tenants were also small owners that even though leases were temporarily suspended or annulled after enclosure, these owner-tenants did not become landless labourers. [pp. 325-326]

From a study by Swales of 70 parliamentary enclosures in Lindsay (no date), Chambers shows a large percentage of small owners after enclosure; but gives no pre-enclosure statistics. He indicates, moreover, that post-enclosure costs led to a substantial decline in small owners. With reference to this study, Chambers notes that the number of absentee owners disclosed by Enclosure Acts was usually high. He further surmises that an influx of fresh purchasers made up for those small owners who had to sell due to post-enclosure expenses. [pp. 327-328]

From a study of 12 villages in Leicestershire, he notes that there were 250 small owners in 1780 and 305 in 1830. But in 1780, 122 and in 1830, 148 of these small owners were absentee owners. Chambers also refers to the fact that "small owners were numerous where the land lent itself to small-scale production...but were at a disadvantage where the essential condition of success was large capital expenditure." [pp. 328-329]

In Rutlandshire, the "wide variety of soil in close proximity" allowed many small farmers to survive until the agricultural crisis of the 1880's. But here Chambers uses the word "farmer" so we are not sure of the owner-tenant mix. [pp. 330-331]

In the case of Queniborough, Chambers talks of tenants and owners, and only refers to a slight decline in tenancies between 1790 and 1830. [pp. 331-332]

In a number of other cases, lumped together, Chambers can only say that the fall between 1801 and 1811 was not catastrophic, but there was a slight overall increase between 1801 and 1851. But he is not here talking about owners or tenants; he is talking about the rural population in general.

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