

Contrepoints

le nivellement par le haut

The end of extreme poverty

Thanks to the industrial revolution and trade, economic growth in the West has accelerated to historically unprecedented levels.

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As explained by the World Bank for the first time in the history of humanity, "*less than 10% of the world population lives in extreme poverty since the end of 2015*".

The bank "*used a new income of \$ 1.90 per day to define extreme poverty, against \$ 1.25 previously. It estimated that the proportion of the world's population in this category rose from 12.8% in 2012 to 9.6%*".

As known to researchers, historically speaking, extreme poverty was the norm for most ordinary people. Even in the most economically advanced regions of the world, life was miserable.

To give an example, at the end of the eighteenth century, ten million of the twenty-three million French depended on a kind of public or private charity to survive, and three million were full-time beggars.

Industrial revolution unprecedented in history

With the industrial revolution and trade, economic growth in the West has accelerated at historically unprecedented levels. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, real incomes increased by fifteen. But the abyss that opened up following the take-off of the West is now over.

The rise of the non-western world is unambiguously the result of economic growth stimulated by the abandonment of central planning and the integration of many non-western countries into the world economy. To give an example, after economic liberalization in China in 1978, real incomes increased by thirteen times.

As the Professor Angus Deaton of Princeton University in his book *The Great Escape* :

"The rapid growth in average incomes, particularly in China and India, and particularly after 1975, has greatly contributed to reducing extreme poverty in the world. Especially in China, but also in India, the escape of hundreds of millions of people from traditional and established poverty is the greatest escape of all. "

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