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A debate on political choices is in the making. An interview with Daniel Cohen

The French presidential campaign has only really tackled globalization through three topics: the role of small- and medium-size entreprises, more predictable careers and a revival of research and higher education policies. Why do these topics take on a strategic nature? How can they be linked with a more systematic view of the choices required by globalization?

Lionel Fontagné
What is the optimal specialization for France?

In the international division of labour, where does France’s specific comparative advantage lie? How can she make the most of globalization? Although she cannot compete with low labour cost countries in a major part of manufacturing, its current specialization in advanced manufactured products enables her to maintain jobs while, at the same time, exposing her lack of momentum in those high-tech sectors which, as exemplified by the United States, act as the engines of economic activity.

Philippe Martin
A convergence of riches and an accumulation of handicaps: The local impact of globalization.

Accelerating trade fails to bring homogenization at local level. Indeed, a dichotomy is at work whereby on the one side some locations thrive on global trade, while on the other, peripheral areas are confined to subcontracting and cut off from innovation. How do we introduce a higher degree of consistency in this geographical dispensation?

Joël Maurice
The demand for energy and commodities: Getting closer to the limits.

Global growth increases the demand for energy and commodities. Behind higher prices, however, lurk potential shortages and irreparable damage to the environment. Therefore, any future energy policy must highlight research, since short of ‘clean’ energy our current development mode is unsustainable.

Olivier Mongin
This world is shifting off centre.
Economic approaches fall well short of accounting for the whole of globalisation. This is why the latter must be scrutinised under all its various aspects, on top of which we must take a lucid view of the historical shift off centre which globalisation effectively imposes on all Western countries.

Isabelle Rapin
The salariat up against globalization. Ethnographic remarks on a crisis-hit working class.

This investigation on an apparel factory floor shows that redundancies do not just affect those workers that are laid off but also destabilise those who stay on. Indeed, the effect of outsourcing is most felt within a workers’ community as a whole.

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