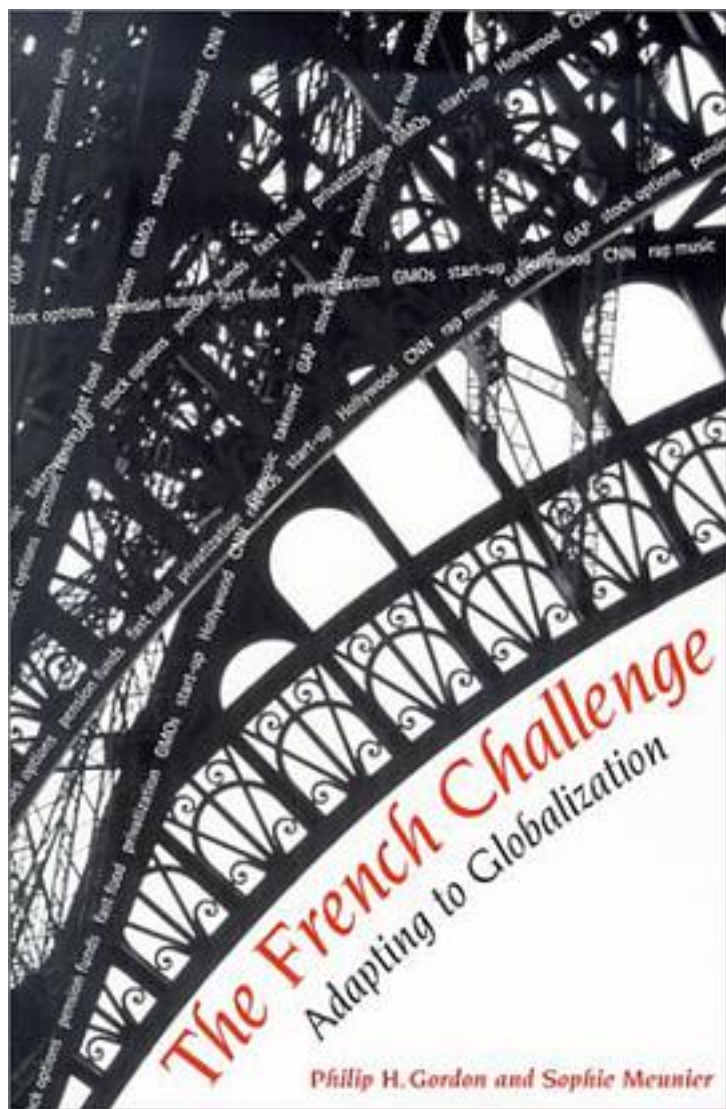


The French Challenge



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In August 1999 a forty-six-year-old sheep farmer name Jose Bove was arrested for dismantling the construction site of a new McDonald's restaurant in the south of France. A few months later Bove built on his fame by smuggling huge chunks of Roquefort cheese into Seattle, where he was among the leaders of the antiglobalization protests against the World Trade Organization summit. Bove's crusade against globalization helped provoke a debate both within France and beyond about the pros and cons of a world in which financial, commercial, human, cultural, and technology flows move faster and more extensively than ever before. As the French struggle to preserve the country's identity, heritage, and distinctiveness, they are nonetheless adapting to a new economy and an interdependent world. This book deals with France's effort to adapt to globalization and its consequences for France's economy, cultural identity, domestic politics, and foreign relations. The authors begin by analyzing the structural transformation of the French economy, driven first by liberalization within the European Union and more recently by globalization. By examining a wide variety of possible measures of globalization and liberalization, the authors conclude that the French economy's adaptation has been far reaching and largely successful, even if French leaders prefer to downplay the extent of these changes in response to political pressures and public opinion. They call this adaptation "globalization by stealth." The authors also examine the relationship between trade, culture, and identity and explain why globalization has rendered the three inseparable. They show how globalization is contributing to the restructuring of the traditional French political spectrum and blurring the traditional differences between left and right. Finally, they explore France's effort to tame globalization --maîtriser la mondialisation --and the possible consequences and lessons of the French stance for the rest of the world.

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