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When looking at the history of the 19th century, we must revisit the opium wars, which are extremely interesting. Because the Opium Wars against China, the 2 Opium Wars, resulted in the opening of the doors of China, forcing Chinese people to smoke opium, to import opium from India because the cultivation of poppy developed in India to resolve the problems of imbalance of trade and therefore the balance of payments between the Middle Kingdom and the rest of the world.

I am not a protectionist. I am not for the Portugal of Saint Lazarus which was necrosed within its borders but, from my point of view, we should stop considering the theory of free-trade as a religion that we cannot discuss, that is universally true and which would impose itself as an irrefutable dogma. And indeed we still find thought elements in the recent theory of economics, that are very important, for example, the 2004 article by Paul Anthony Samuelson, published in the United States, which revisited the neoclassical theory of international trade and the theorem he had made himself in the early 50s.

A second point, I hope that we get out from the caricatural debate between “ultraliberals and altermondialists”; to summarize, between FT and. José Bové. Let us get out of this deadlock, of this caricatural debate but let us ask the question of the theory of international trade which, I believe, is seen in a much too global way to reflect the complexity of the world as it is.

Finally a third point which is a continuation of the previous one. It is that, concerning particularly agriculture and food, we cannot let this topic be settled only by WTO negotiations. Today, depending on agricultural products, you have good years 2 to 3% of the global milk production that is concerned by international exchange. The best years, it is 10% of grain production which is the subject of international trade, so obviously the issue of trade is central. But this is not the only issue. So my dream would be that there would be a place somewhere in the world where the trade issue, the issue of agricultural development, the question of development aid, the question of the environment are worked on together and not separately. And thus, to reduce the world agricultural dimension to the sole dimension of multilateral trade negotiations in the WTO seems to me extremely simplistic.

Briefly, we know the causes of the current crisis. We have causes referred to as “temporary”. Obviously they are the climatic hazards, whether they are the floods in Ukraine or El Niño in Australia. We have the issue of biofuels, since the American Institute Ifri in Washington estimated that the problem of bio diesel contributed for 1/3, just under a third, to the increase in prices in recent years. These are circumstances. But of course there are fundamental causes that are the increased consumption of food products, including particularly meat products in the emerging world. Because it is known that the production of 1 kg of poultry needs 3 units of grain and for beef it is 6 or 7 units. So here we are in structural issues. This shows well that the only real question is how to feed the world, how to increase agricultural production. I think that one possibility, but I will say nothing because my time is up. But this will be the debate. It is in the South, particularly in Africa, that the question of what to do to make agriculture once again be a priority is being asked, and everyone should unite for this agricultural priority in the South countries.