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# TRANSDISCIPLINARY THINKING FOR A BETTER REGIONAL INTEGRATION

14-15 November 2019, Université Abdelmalek Essaâdi,  
Tangier, Morocco

**Transdisciplinary thinking for a better  
regional integration**

Jorge Sousa Brito





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## THE SEMINAR ON “CRITICAL THINKING, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY”

### OBJECTIVES OF THIS SEMINAR

- **To pave the way for the acquisition of a critical and transdisciplinary vision of knowledge, within the scope of the scientific, artistic and cultural evolution of man in contemporary society.**
- **Foster a transdisciplinary approach to problem solving by multidisciplinary work teams.**
- **Awaken and encourage critical thinking to raise personal and collective levels of discernment.**



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## THE SEMINAR ON “CRITICAL THINKING, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY”

- The trainees of this seminar also learn techniques of **critical thinking**, **lateral thinking** and **transdisciplinary thinking**.
- This seminar could be adapted and enhanced to enable citizens to promote international relations, from a knowledge economy perspective



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## THE BOLOGNA CONVENTION AND THE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

- Skills building through education had a conceptual twist in the late twentieth century with contributions from Jacques Delors and his team.
- The focus of training became more on the student's work and effort (“learning”) than on the teacher's classroom work (“teaching”). These skills are called competencies.
- The buzz of reflections on these issues that took place in Europe at the end of the century, known as the Bologna Process, came to an end in 1999, when 45 countries signed the so-called Bologna Convention





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## **EDUCATION FOR PROBLEM SOLVING IS INSUFFICIENT IN THE GLOBALIZATION CONTEXT**

Globalization makes competitiveness and innovation, the key elements of today's economic and social development.

Competitiveness requires:

- Improving the quality of goods and services offered;
- Creation of new products;
- Improvement in distribution channels, business procedures, policy agreements and studies of consumer needs and preferences.



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## **EDUCATION FOR PROBLEM SOLVING IS INSUFFICIENT IN THE GLOBALIZATION CONTEXT**

In a competitive environment it is necessary:

- to anticipate needs of consumers and the potential responses of competitors to those needs;
- to be aware of the implications of launching products and services on the environment
- to think about the ability to “creating problems” in order to slow down competition, and to stimulate the finding of solutions to them



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## **EDUCATION FOR PROBLEM SOLVING IS INSUFFICIENT IN THE GLOBALIZATION CONTEXT**

- Innovating and anticipating problems requires a strengthened use of mental capacities, where the intermingling of rational and emotional aspects creates a new vision of things.
- innovative and extraordinary solutions and ideas will emerge in a contextual and complex thinking, capable of jumping to new levels of reality.

This has a name: **Transdisciplinarity**



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## TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AS A LEVER FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY



Transdisciplinarity was introduced in 1970 by **Jean Piaget** during a colloquium in Nice.



Basarab NICOLESCU defines as: “Transdisciplinarity refers to what is inside disciplines, lies between disciplines, across disciplines and beyond disciplines”



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## **TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AS A LEVER FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY**

In the globalization context, most jobs require specialized skills. Skilled workers use knowledge to create goods and services, using a lot of thinking and manipulating information. This approach, called

### **knowledge economy**

“Production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance, as well as rapid obsolescence. The key component of a knowledge economy is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical inputs or natural resources” (POWELL and SNELLMAN, 2004)



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## TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AS A LEVER FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

Some authors like (CHUGH, 2015) consider two types of knowledge:

- **explicit knowledge** (dealing with facts, figures, data) and
- **tacit knowledge** (concerning how things work, experience, judgement, intuition, the way of dealing with people)

A large part of the knowledge economy comes from learning by doing. **Transdisciplinary training is a serious tool to achieve** this goal, because, by enhancing the interaction of the two cerebral hemispheres, it rises the levels of **tacit knowledge** and therefore, the levels of expertise needed to **knowledge economy**





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## **TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AS A LEVER FOR THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY**

Transdisciplinary thinking uses a lot of integrative tools and procedures, going from formal abstraction to living experience, or from a level of reality to another. Therefore, its practice allows a networking of skills, ideas, and synergetic strategies among African countries and cultures, toward a better understanding and a useful dialogue with the European Union





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## **GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES ON INTEGRATION OF AFRICAN, MEDITERRANEAN, AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIES**

USA, EU and CHINA are interested in relations with the African countries, seeking to strengthen the ties that unite them. The dose between economic, commercial and military interests is not the same between these blocs and the African continent.

Cultural and historical interests, have greater strength in Europe-Africa-Mediterranean relations. So we can move towards a network economy, giving clear advantage for rebalancing, perhaps creating an imbalance in favor of this axis of relations.



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## **GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES ON INTEGRATION OF AFRICAN, MEDITERRANEAN, AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIES**

Transdisciplinarity is capable of integrating and evolving tacit knowledge, as it incorporates emotions, sympathies and emotional intelligence in the dialogues between the different countries of the African, Mediterranean, and European economies, as they have a common history and a more humanistic philosophy.



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# CONCLUSIONS

The preparation of citizens to be active agents for the leverage of African, Mediterranean, and European relations should be seriously taken into account.

New skills needed to anticipate problems and to create problems are at stakes. This training leads to creation of high level of experts integrated in knowledge economy teams, needed to endeavor better network, economic and cultural ties among African, Mediterranean, and European countries.

Transdisciplinary approaches are able to improve tacit knowledge of phenomena and to create intercultural synergies needed to jump to the new era of *human economy*.



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# THANK YOU

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