

## Editorial

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It has been almost twelve years since the last issue of *Convergence* was published. Attempts to find a publisher, since NIACE could no longer oblige in this regard, proved unsuccessful. It seemed as though this journal, founded by J. Roby Kidd, on behalf of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), had been taken to its final berth. It had been part of the patrimony of Adult Education (AE) - a flagship journal produced in a style that appealed to a whole range of people involved in the education and learning of adults. In the meantime, new academic journals had emerged and consolidated their presence in the vast and amorphous area of AE. There were those who felt that something had to be done to salvage such an important part of the AE heritage. The University of Malta through a couple of persons connected with the field sought permission from the then ICAE President, Sir Alan Tuckett, to seek to revive the journal. This proposed initiative was welcomed after discussions with key figures in the Council's history, including Professor Budd Hall who fittingly co-writes the first article in this 'revival' issue. The occasion to work earnestly on reviving *Convergence* presented itself when UNESCO accepted the University of Malta's application to establish a UNESCO Chair in Global Adult Education. Reviving *Convergence* became an important component of the 'work package' for this Chair. After all, what better way was there to tackle AE in its global dimension? What even better way was there to reach Adult educators on as wide a scale possible than through producing it electronically and in open access, with the usual caveats concerning the global digital divide?

Needless to say, we need to go on exploring more effective ways to reach people in contexts not characterised by connectivity. This is however a start or, more appropriately, a restart. The University of Malta, through its Faculty of Education, has taken the initiative to carry this project further forward and to cover the financial costs involved, apart from providing the editorial drive in collaboration with the International Council for Adult Education, for whom Professor Katarina Popovic has proved an admirable partner. We are attempting to stick to the principles governing *Convergence* throughout its interrupted life. We observe ICAE's established linguistic policy by accepting articles in any of its three languages, English, French and Spanish, with abstracts available for each article in all three. The ICAE is responsible for the abstract translations.

There is a slight deviation from previous issues in that we provide an abstract also in the language in which the article is written. Authors for the first volume, in its relaunched form, have been invited on the basis of their previous contributions to the field. The journal, however, restarts at Vol. 43 No. 1 to maintain a sense of continuity. We try to be as inclusive as possible in terms of social difference and regional/ country provenance. We will try to reflect this in all the work of the journal which is still a work in progress. This is not an easy task as we also want to avoid tokenism.

This 'relaunched' journal's first issue includes original articles by Darlene Clover and Budd Hall, currently based in Victoria, BC and by Leona English, also in Canada but in Nova Scotia and especially in that distinguished context in Canada's Adult Education history, Antigonish, with its echoes of the Antigonish Movement, the Reverend Jimmy Tompkins and the Reverend Moses Coady. Leona English co-writes the article with Veronica McKay from South Africa, scene of great struggles against apartheid also involving adult learning struggles. We also feature an article outlining the histories of the ICAE and *Convergence* as well as the different UNESCO AE conferences (CONFINTEA) leading up to the one taking place in Marrakesh this year. We hope that, through *Convergence*, we can bring you material from this gathering. This article is penned by a mainstay in the international AE scene, Heribert Hinzen, a person very much present in the history of ICAE (former Vice-President), DVV (its former Director) and in Global AE in general. The next issue, also part of the inaugural volume (we are committed to publishing two issues per volume), continues in the same vein. It will include a piece by another stalwart in the global AE scene, namely Sir Alan Tuckett, former director of the UK umbrella organisation, NIACE (National Institute for Adult Continuing Education), besides serving as former Treasurer and later President of ICAE.

We also have a contribution from another eminent Adult educator, Rajesh Tandon, a key contemporary figure, like Budd Hall, in participatory action research and community higher education; the two share a UNESCO Chair in the latter area. He co-writes the piece with Yashvi Sharma. It concerns work on popular education in India, especially tackling violence against women. Yashvi Sharma is, like Rajesh Tandon, very much involved in Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA). She is a training specialist, having carried out workshops, internationally, over the last seven years.

The final paper is by two authors, Colin Kirkwood with Gerri Kirkwood, famed for their collaborative work in community development especially in their native Scotland. They are well known in the AE firmament, partly because of their classic, *Living Adult Education. Freire in Scotland*, a favourite text with students and practitioners in adult community education in my native country Malta, and I suspect, elsewhere. Colin writes the piece which also sheds light on the work of and insights from his wife and partner, Gerri. It is autobiographical, an odyssey, against the background of wider struggles in the Labour Party and trade union movement in the UK and the Scottish National Party. The proposals made are intended to take our thinking forward in progressive education for greater and genuine democratisation. These are as inspirational as were the many other proposals and galvanising talks, teachings and writings of the Kirkwood's kindred spirit and similar 'traveller', Lalage

Bown who sadly passed away towards the end of 2021. Among many other accomplishments, she served as Editor of *Convergence*. I am convinced she will serve as a source of inspiration to me as I seek to follow in her footsteps in this task. I vividly recall my first meeting with her in Reading in 1993, at a conference on 'Sustaining literacies' organised by Education for Development. She was impressive in the way she pulled the strings together at the end. I would later meet her in a pre-CHOGM conference in Malta in 2005 when she came over to our university and addressed our M. Ed students in adult education and she seems to have left a mark on them. I would have lunch with her in Valletta, together with an old acquaintance of hers from their Africa days, my late good friend and University companion, Paul Clough, from the then Anthropology programme, who passed away while swimming in 2019. She will be sorely missed by all who got to know her, colleagues and her many former students in different parts of the world, including Africa. Her immense contribution to AE is scoured in the rich tribute to her, in this issue, penned by Robert Hamilton. May she rest in peace.

The various forward looking articles in this issue should help lift spirits in a disturbing time. Readers need little reminding that we face multipolar imperialisms bringing us potentially close to a Third World War. We are still reeling from a global pandemic and witnessing wider environmental degradation. Climate change is wreaking and will continue to wreak havoc especially in the Geographical Global South leading to constant mass migration flows. It is against this ominous global scenario that this journal is being resuscitated. The call for socially engaged adult educators strikes me as being ever so urgent. I hope that *Convergence* will help us keep track of and engage critically and responsibly with responses to this call.