



## IN MEMORIAM MARIETTA MESSMER



We at the International American Studies Association are heartbroken to be grieving the loss of one of the pillars of our community, Prof Dr Marietta Messmer (1966–2021).

After graduating with a Master of Arts in English and American Studies and Latin from the Catholic University of Eichstätt,

Germany, Marietta earned a PhD in American Literature at York University, Toronto, Canada in 1997. Her research focussed on vulnerable migrants and the outsourcing of immigration regimes regionally and globally; to advance migration studies, in 2018 Dr Messmer co-founded the European Network for the Study of Minor Mobilities in the Americas. She also specialized in InterAmericanism, the multi-lingual literary studies of the hemisphere, a field which she advanced as managing editor of the peer-reviewed book series *Inter-americana: Inter-American Literary History and Culture*, published by Peter Lang in Frankfurt and New York. This was only the most recent of a long list of authored, co-authored, and co-edited scholarly books by Dr Marietta Messmer.

With her leadership, Marietta shaped both InterAmerican Studies and American Studies in Europe and the world. In 2009 she co-founded the International Association for InterAmerican Studies, where she served as Executive Board Member and Treasurer until 2012. She was president

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of the Netherlands American Studies Association between 2011–2014. She also held the position of a Board Member of the of the European Association of American Studies between 2009–2016, where she served as Chair of the Organizing Committee of the conference *America: Justice, Conflict, War* in the Hague, April 2014. She has been Vice President of our International American Studies Association since 2019.

The American Studies program at the University of Groningen describes Marietta as “the historical memory, administrative anchor, and all-around rules committee of the program.” The International Association for Inter-American Studies remember her as “not only an outstanding scholar but also a great team player who always had the big picture in mind and a good friend who accompanied us many years of the way.” Her colleagues recall Dr Messmer as “combin[ing] efficiency and professionalism,” exercising “gentle leadership [with] relentless optimism,” “quietly inspiring,” and having “the most infectious laugh.” As her fellow officers at the International American Studies Association recall, it was typical of her selflessness that in 2017 she donated to our scholarly association the full honorarium for her plenary lecture at that year’s IASA world congress. She would have been our next IASA president, and we keenly feel her loss. Our wonderful colleague Marietta leaves behind her brother Ralf Messmer. Marietta is also mourned by her academic families: the American Studies program at the University of Groningen, where she worked as Associate Professor since 2004; the Netherlands American Studies Association; the International Association for InterAmerican Studies; the Center for InterAmerican Studies at Bielefeld University; and our International American Studies Association. Marietta is fondly remembered by her many former students, who were trained and inspired by her intellectually.

If all rivers run to the sea, then Marietta, you reached the ocean before us. May you rest in peace.

May 30, 2021

*Car Culture(s)  
Machines, Roads  
Mythologies*

RIAS VOL. 14, FALL-WINTER Nº 2 / 2021