

In Memoriam Angeline van Achterberg

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On February 18, 2020, Angeline van Achterberg (1949) suddenly passed away. Angeline was a LOVA member from the moment



LOVA was founded, in 1979, which was also the year that she started studying Cultural Anthropology and Non-Western Sociology at the University of Amsterdam. Angeline had been trained as a primary school teacher, but soon found out that this was not at all what she wanted to do. Interested in folklore and textiles, she went to the Rietveld Academy, one of the art academies in the

Netherlands. During her studies, she spent three months in Yogyakarta, a city in Indonesia, where she made an in-depth study of batik. Then she decided to study anthropology.

Interested in gender relations she followed a course in feminist anthropology taught by Anna Aalten, who was at that moment one of the few feminist anthropologists at the University of Amsterdam. Angeline became interested in the Tuareg, a nomadic people living in the Sahara, because it was a matrilineal society and she expected gender relations there to be more equitable. In 1984 Angeline went for a year on fieldwork to Tamanrasset, a city in southern Algeria, to which she would regularly return in the following years. She graduated in 1988 with a thesis entitled: *Van geiten naar goederen: Veranderingen in de sociaal-economische positie van Toeareg-vrouwen in Tamanrasset* (From goats to goods: Changes in the socio-

economic position of Tuareg women in Tamanrasset). During her fieldwork, she had met her future husband, and after her marriage in 1988, she divided her time between Tamanrasset and Amsterdam. Together with her husband, she ran a tourist agency that organized trips in the Sahara.

Unfortunately, the political situation in Algeria changed in the early 1990s when a civil war began between the Algerian government and the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS). Her marriage ended as well, and Angeline settled again in Amsterdam. Two years later, together with the traveller, photographer and biologist Arita Baaijens, Angeline founded The Sahara Society, which aimed at sharing knowledge about the Sahara and its inhabitants, through regular lectures and a magazine. In 1995 she co-edited the book *De Geur van Kamelen* (*The Smell of Camels*), with short articles written by Dutch experts on, and lovers of, camels. Angeline started working for the Dutch Centre for Indigenous People (Nederlands Centrum voor Inheemse Volken) where she was mainly responsible for indigenous women in Africa. In 1998 she organized the first African Indigenous Women's Conference in Agadir, Morocco. Representatives of indigenous women's groups from all over Africa, including Tuareg women, discussed how they could strengthen their position. This conference also led to a publication: *Out of the Shadows: The First African Indigenous Women's Conference* (1999), which included articles about violence against indigenous women, their legal position, traditional health care and other topics.

Angeline continued to travel, mainly to North and West Africa. In the past ten years of her life, she developed a passion for Italy. She learned Italian and visited Venice every year in May, a city she fell in love with. She had retired and enjoyed reading, classical music and art, which she also made herself. Her collection of paper vases will be exhibited in the CODA museum in Apeldoorn. Angeline passed away after a simple knee operation, which was supposed to make her life easier. She will be missed thoroughly.