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## Season's Greetings and a New Chapter at CARMAH

In our last newsletter of the year, we are happy to announce the launch of a new transnational research project at CARMAH. The project [Challenging Populist Truth-Making in Europe \(CHAPTER\): The Role of Museums in a Digital 'Post-Truth' European Society](#), funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and led by CARMAH's Prof. Dr. Christoph Bareither and Prof. Dr. Sharon Macdonald, kicked off in October.

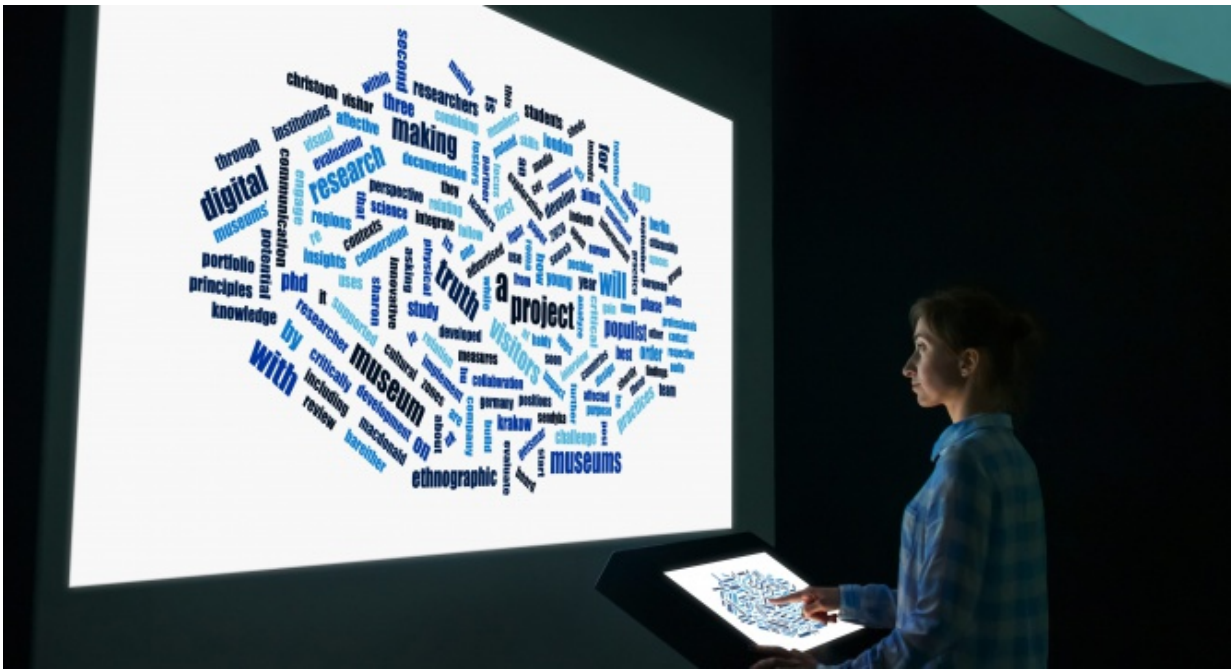
The transfer of the two-day kick-off workshop to the online realm was symptomatic of the year 2020 in general. The pandemic has had a profound effect on our personal, professional and academic lives. Nevertheless, experimenting with online formats made events such as our [Museum Lab](#) more internationally accessible. CHAPTER builds on this very potential of digital innovation in order to challenge populist truth-making in museum spaces.

Besides wishing you the very best for the festive season and hopefully a less challenging new year, we would like to take this newsletter as an occasion to introduce the project, warmly welcome its (affiliated) researchers at CARMAH and celebrate the beginning of a new CARMAH chapter.

We are looking forward to four years of exciting research on museums, populism and digital innovation. We invite you to learn more about the project [here](#) and follow its activities which will of course also be covered in the upcoming [CARMAH newsletters](#).

Stay tuned!

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## Challenging Populist Truth-Making in Europe (CHAPTER): The Role of Museums in a Digital 'Post-Truth' European Society

Challenging Populist Truth-Making in Europe: The Role of Museums in a Digital 'Post-Truth' European Society (CHAPTER) is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. Through ethnographic research and digital innovation, it develops approaches and best practice examples to support museums in challenging the growing influence of populist discourse in Europe.

The project is a collaboration of researchers in Berlin (project leaders: [Christoph Bareither](#) and [Sharon Macdonald](#)), London ([Haidy Geismar](#)) and Krakow ([Roma Sendyka](#)) and museums in the respective countries. The advisory board has members from six European countries. The project will also cooperate with software developer [Fluxguide](#) in Vienna, with whom the team will develop and co-design a museum app together with young visitors from three European countries.

The project brings together a broad range of anthropological fields, including digital and media anthropology, museum anthropology, political anthropology and the anthropology of emotions/affects. Based at the [Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage \(CARMAH\)](#) at the [Humboldt University of Berlin](#), together with the [Jagiellonian University \(JU\)](#) in Krakow and [University College London \(UCL\)](#), the project aims to develop a European perspective on how museums can challenge populist truth-making in contemporary digital societies.

Read more about the project's work areas [here](#).

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### New People

As part of the CHAPTER project, we welcome new people at CARMAH.

**Dr. Julia Leser (Postdoc researcher, Humboldt University of Berlin)**

Julia Leser is a political anthropologist and postdoctoral researcher in



the CHAPTER project. Her research is concerned with the role of emotions in knowledge production processes, in particular in political realms. Her fields of interest include political anthropology, political ethnography, and affect studies, and further include national security and migration control, nationalism, populism, and political theory. Her prior research affiliations include the BMBF-funded project 'Strangers in Their Own Land?' (Leipzig University), the BMBF-funded project 'Beyond the Glass Ceiling' (TU Darmstadt, HAWK Hildesheim/Holzminden/Göttingen), and the DFG-funded project 'Institutionalizing Human Trafficking – A French-German Comparison' (Leipzig University). In the CHAPTER project, she will have a coordinating role (starting January 2021).

### **Helena Kieß (PhD researcher, Humboldt University of Berlin)**



Helena Kieß is a CHAPTER researcher and doctoral candidate at CARMAH. Before joining the centre in October 2020, she studied 'Visual, Material and Museum Anthropology' (MSc) at the University of Oxford and cultural anthropology and Islamic studies (BA) in Heidelberg, Beirut and Frankfurt am Main. She also worked as curatorial assistant for an exhibition project on anthropological perspectives on age(ing). As part of the CHAPTER project, she is now probing questions of digital innovation and visitor engagement in museum spaces.

### **Alice Millar (PhD researcher, University College London)**



Alice Millar is a CHAPTER researcher focusing on digital solutions to political problems in museums. Her research will focus on how British museums are affected by populism (and vice versa), dealing with issues of truth-making, authenticity and authority. She will conduct her research at a London museum in 2021-2022. Her master's dissertation 'Sonic systems of knowledge: an ethnographic study of the use and value of sound in museums' (University of Oxford), focused on sound and affect in British museums and exhibitions. Before her master's, she worked at a range of museums and heritage sites in London including the Barbican Arts Centre, the National Trust and Strawberry Hill House.

### **Marlena Nikody (PhD researcher, Jagiellonian University Krakow)**



Marlena Nikody is a CHAPTER researcher and PhD student at the Doctoral School of the Humanities at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Her research focusses on reparative educational practices in Poland's historical museums in the face of the growing populist turn in Polish museum practice. Before joining the project, she worked in the Art Knowledge Department at MOCAM Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow, where she was responsible for co-creating the educational program.

### **Pia Schramm (student assistant, Humboldt University of Berlin)**

Pia Schramm is the student assistant of the CHAPTER project. Within the project, she supports the team in organizational and research matters. She will also conduct a small fieldwork in digital spaces. As a



graduate student at the Institute for European Ethnology at Humboldt University, she is interested in digital anthropology and political discourses online. She previously conducted research on populist communities on Twitter and co-tutors a peer-group located at the Bologna-Lab.

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## CARMAH Museum Lab

Due to the global pandemic and heightened safety measures, the upcoming sessions of this winter semester's CARMAH Museum Lab will be held via Zoom. The sessions are open to practitioners, students, researchers and those working at the intersection of theory and practice.

Time: 1.30 – 3 pm (usually Wednesdays)

Location: **Zoom Meeting**

Passcode: No code required

### Jan 13th, 2021

Presentation by Laurence Douny (research associate within the project Weaving) and Yoonha Kim (PhD candidate in the project Object Space Agency) of the Cluster of Excellence Matters of Activity – Image Space Material, moderated by Magdalena Buchczyk (CARMAH).

### Jan 27th, 2021

Presentations by Nina Samuel (research associate within the project Object Space Agency) and Maxime Le Calvé (research associate within the projects Cutting and Object Space Agency) of the Cluster of Excellence Matters of Activity – Image Space Material.

For more information about the Museum Lab, past and upcoming events, please visit our [website!](#)

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Images included in this email have been provided by: Fluxguide, Julia Leser, Helena Kieß, Alice Millar, Marlena Nikody, Pia Schramm.

Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage

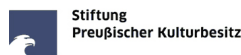
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