Q.: What are the intra or extra-European borders considered as places of separation and / or encounter telling us about Europe today and its inhabitants?

**Title of the paper:**
Finding a *Heimat Europa* in the frontier: Lithuania’s *Memelland*

Borderlands as sites of memory, identity and multi-valent cultural heritages are notoriously difficult to comprehend, requiring inter- and indeed transdisciplinary dialogues across varied fields, and ‘critical imagination’ (Watson and Waterton 2013) on the researcher’s part. Taking the multiple ethnic frontier of Lithuania Minor as an example, this paper explores the complex interplay between planned and unplanned heritage spaces in a region of historically dislocated and partially re-placed identities. The popular *Memel Dampfboot* and the more academic *Annaberger Annalen* offer a media background to the analysis of more or less spontaneous memorialisations and diasporic engagements based on ethnographic fieldwork.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, new heritage spaces have emerged in the region, including the UNESCO WHS Curonian Spit, straddling the Lithuanian-Russian border. Located within the site are a range of heritage places, such as the publicly-run international cultural centre *Thomas-Mann-Haus*, the privately-owned *Hotel Bode Museum*, and the curiously named *Ethnographi G raveyard*, developed by the local community and visitors following an initiative by a resident artist, manifesting as ‘loose places’ that have been emerging through the performances of people. Significant actors as well as commercial targets in this context, German *Heimwehtouristen* [homesickness-tourists], who trace their cultural roots to this region before 1945, have shaped these heritage performances both directly and through local perceptions of which aspects of German culture and history should be designated as local ‘heritage’ through events and material displays. As a region that has suffered multiple displacements and where many of the locals are such only in the second or third generation, homelands are continuously lost and found - and often contested. Local planners have tried, collaborating with various interested groups, to negotiate such contested heritage in interesting ways, such as the recreation of a destroyed German military cemetery in the city of Klaipėda as a work of public landscape art. Sites like this illustrate a gradual retelling of the local story and a repositioning of the different communities of belonging vis-à-vis received narratives. Feeding into that storytelling is the growing popularity of claiming German heritage, while the local German minority, which some say no longer exists, is well able to sustain a secondary school of its own - just some of the contradictions that constitute *Memelland* heritage today.

The paper, based on recent ethnographic field research as part of the Horizon2020-funded CoHERE project, also draws on the author’s work on the Curonian Spit WHS (Kockel 2012) and his theoretical research on different forms of performing identities in heritage contexts (Kockel 2007; 2010), and queries whether a *Heimat Europa*[homeland Europe] is indeed being created, as some interviewees claim, by performative discovery of lost homelands in this historic European frontier.