

Jour fixe  
Kulturwissenschaften

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### **Framing the Nation and Collective Identities: Analyzing Commemorative Practices in Contemporary Croatia**

Commemorations and other political rituals are key components of a nation's cultural memory, crucial for the construction and reinforcement of ideological, ethnic, economic, sexual, and other identities. The modern-day Republic of Croatia gained independence at the end of the twentieth century after three major wars, numerous territorial changes, and experiments with political systems from parliamentary democracy and monarchism to fascist dictatorship and state socialism. The contested histories of World War Two and the still-living memories of the war in the 1990s permeate both domestic and foreign politics, and became flash points during various election campaigns in the last several years.

War, with its heroes and victims, plays a central role in the construction of the Croatian nation. This lecture will present the activities and initial results of the FRAMNAT project, financed from Croatian science foundation (HRZZ). This project seeks to analyze both top-down and bottom-up strategies of framing the nation and collective identities through commemorative practices of World War Two and the Homeland War in Croatia. The Bleiburg commemoration, which is held annually in southern Austria, will be given particular attention since this year it provoked controversies in Austria due to the presence of pro-fascist symbols and discourse. There will also be an overview of similar memory studies projects in other former Yugoslav countries.

Project website: [www.framnat.eu](http://www.framnat.eu)