

## **International Collaborations 2016**

**Valentina Zovko**

### **‘Dubrovnik’s Diplomacy in the Context of Political and Cultural Processes in the Fifteenth Century’**



The ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions is committed to creating and enhancing international collaboration. Since 2015, CHE has been pleased to host visiting scholars while they undertake international research fellowships. Visiting fellows share their research and participate in CHE seminars and conferences, to deepen or develop their own approaches to the history of emotions. By engaging in discussions with members of the Centre, visiting scholars make a vital contribution to the intellectual life of CHE and create new opportunities for collaborative research.

Valentina Zovko is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department for Medieval History at the University of Zadar in Croatia. In 2016 Valentina held an Endeavour Fellowship and was hosted at the UWA node of CHE from February until September.

Valentina’s research focuses on issues of medieval and early modern diplomacy, medieval centres of power, identity, prosopography, emotions and perceptions in the Middle Ages. She completed a PhD in 2012 at the University of Zagreb, Croatia, with a thesis titled ‘The Role of the Ambassadors of the Republic of Dubrovnik in the Expansion of the Borders into the Hinterland (at the Turn of the Fourteenth to the Fifteenth Century)’, a work which began her main interest in the political and socio-cultural issues visible through the sphere of Dubrovnik’s late medieval diplomacy. Valentina has been a guest professor at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia and Institute of History in Warsaw, Poland.

Valentina reflects on her time with the Centre, below.

As an Endeavour Postdoctoral Fellow I conducted a research project titled 'Dubrovnik's Diplomacy in the Context of Political and Cultural Processes in the Fifteenth Century' with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (CHE), based at The University of Western Australia (UWA), for a period of six months (February–September 2016). Collaboration with my mentor, Professor Susan Broomhall, as well as other scholars from UWA and visiting fellows, was of great assistance in carrying out my research and addressing the main issues I wanted to examine in this project. Cooperation, conversation and the exchange of ideas significantly contributed to the quality of the project, which has resulted in four papers:

1. 'Gift-Giving in the First Dubrovnik's Diplomatic Contacts with the Sublime Porte'
2. 'The Social Network of the First Ambassadors of Dubrovnik to the Sublime Porte'
3. 'Negative Emotions in Action: Two Examples from Fifteenth-Century Ragusan Diplomacy'
4. 'Acting From the Shadows: Women and Diplomacy in the Late Medieval Dubrovnik'.

In Perth I delivered a talk, 'The Use of the Term "Freedom" in Diplomatic Discourse of Renaissance Dubrovnik', as a part of a 'What's New in the Medieval' public lecture series hosted by the Institute of Advanced Studies at UWA. Moreover, I talked about my research project and current work in progress at UWA (CHE/CMEMS work-in-progress seminar, 3 June 2016) and familiarised relevant professors and other experts with the focus of my research.

Thanks to the generosity of Professor Andrew Lynch, Director of the Centre, I was supported to conduct internal travel in Australia with funds made available by CHE. This meant that I was able to extend collaborations beyond my host university to those scholars and institutions with which my host institution works within Australia. I was a visiting scholar at The University of Melbourne (UMelb), where I participated in discussions and seminars with many staff and visiting scholars. At Monash University, where I was welcomed by Peter Howard, I delivered a talk titled 'Dubrovnik's Independence: from Late Medieval Value to Current Purposes', and convened a workshop "'Identity": Category of Practice and Category of Analysis – Theoretical and Methodological Challenges' for postgraduate students.

During my Fellowship, I attended many conferences, public talks, presentations, workshops and seminars at UWA and exchanged ideas with the speakers both during discussion time at the event and in private afterwards. These contacts are essential to the production of our research and collaborative partnership development. The connections I have established with prominent scholars at UWA, UMelb and Monash University have already proven to be very fruitful and mutually beneficial. Just recently, a collaborative agreement has been signed between UWA and the University of Zadar. The first steps towards forming the Croatian node of the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions have been made.

My research results and success in achieving the main proposal objectives with the Australian host institution represent a starting point for further projects. I look forward to ongoing collaboration in the future and I am grateful for the opportunities provided by the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions.