

# The 16<sup>th</sup> International Numismatic Congress

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The 16th International Numismatic Congress (INC) was held in Warsaw from the 11th to 16th September 2022. Thanks to the generosity of the British Numismatic Society, myself, and several other early career numismatists, were able to attend!

Prior to my arrival in Warsaw, I hadn't given much thought to the INC other than 'getting there'. The conference began on Sunday afternoon with a welcome event, a keynote lecture by Alan Stahl on the coinage of Antioch and a (very glitzy) reception at the Royal Castle. From the beginning I was overwhelmed by the warmth that our Polish colleagues and the INC Organising Committee showed us. Not only did the hospitality we received feel like a treat (!), but it did enable lots of us to get to know one other.

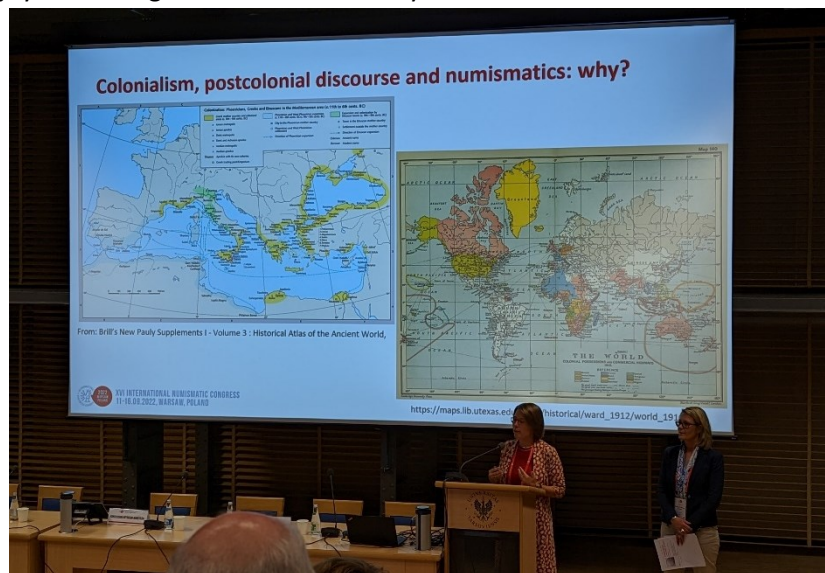
The sessions began in earnest on Monday and the first papers I went to examined monetisation in medieval eastern Europe, as well as the importance of historiography for numismatic researchers with case studies from Scandinavia. It was a bit of a culture shock! In what feels now like a quite basic realisation, I truly hadn't realised how Anglo-centric and limited my knowledge on medieval coinage was! Bearing this realisation in mind, spending a week not just listening to, but talking with and questioning, scholars from across the world, was fantastic.

As part of attending the conference, I also presented a poster on my in-progress PhD research. This can be quite a nerve-wracking experience - you always wonder whether people will be interested, and even if they are, will they stop and chat? Fortunately for me lots of people came by and all were encouraging. My PhD is re-examining Northumbrian pennies (more familiar to people as 'stycas') in the light of new evidence from metal detected finds as well as from sites related to the Viking Great Army. I'm especially interested in what derivative issues can tell us about monetisation in Northumbria in the ninth century, building on the work of Elizabeth Pirie and Stewart Lyon. I left with useful ideas, interesting contacts and a boost to my confidence.



Highlights amongst the sessions (for me) included papers on Viking-Age coinage, decolonisation, art (medallic or otherwise), monetisation and some theoretical approaches, as well as museums and digital resources. I really enjoyed a paper by Alexandra Hylla on monetisation and visual arts, as well as a session that considered women and medallic art with speakers Yva Haidenthaller, Thomas Cocano and Anna Loernitzo.

Papers on Viking-age coinage were especially interesting, as there is an intersection with some context for my research. I really enjoyed hearing from Lubosi Polansky about the Mlada Boleslav-Podlavsky mixed hoard, Mateuz Bogucki on the Biskupiec hoard, as well as Dorota Malaczyk on single finds of dinars from Lesser Poland. Another highlight was a double session convened by Fleur Kemmers and Nanouschka Myrberg Burström entitled 'Entangled Exchanges', which really opened up discussion for the field about colonial histories, postcolonial theory and decolonisation, with a focus on how this is relevant across time periods.



I'm also interested in digital solutions for numismatics, and saw some great papers from those creating them. They included Zac Taylor on Computer-Aided Die Study, as well as Xavier Rogé on numismatic crowd-sourcing as citizen science, and Frida Ehrnsten on Finland's proposal to consolidate numismatic data to feed into a single platform. There was also a session convened by Elina Screen on access and sustainability in cataloguing, which was very thought-provoking. It was great to also hear from colleagues not able to be there in person, including Dmytro Yanov who introduced us to the Asian coins held in the collection of Odesa Archaeological Museum. There was a



*Conference Venue*

really interesting session on numismatics and museology, which highlighted different approaches made by Yale University Art Gallery, the Historical Museum, Frankfurt, and at the Smithsonian.

What is really special about being immersed in an environment about this is that so many of us share the same context: we all want to understand money, and how it affected people in the past, better. I have left the conference with so many more questions about my own research than when I started, which is surely the sign of a successful event!

Special thanks are also due to how the grant was administered. Successful applicants got the money “up front” - for someone who is a part-time PhD student, the fact I didn’t have to try to save the money up before claiming it back took a large weight off my mind. The generosity of the grant meant that flights, accommodation, conference fees and food were all covered through some judicious planning.

Overall, I left the INC with new friends in the field, proposals for new projects (post-PhD), theories to read up on, digital tools to try and reinvigorated ideas for my research. Attending the INC was a fantastic gift to receive and I am truly grateful.

