

Portugal's long association with African ivory

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Abstract

Retail outlets in Lisbon, Portugal, have more ivory items than other much larger cities in southern Europe. There were 626 ivory objects counted in 2008, with 150 of these originating in Africa. The most numerous items counted were antique figurines from Europe and Asia, followed by busts and figurines carved in the 1970s from Angola, and antique crucifixes from India, Europe and Ceylon (renamed Sri Lanka in 1972). There were only 14 new ivory items counted in the survey for sale in three retail outlets: 12 from China and only 2 from Africa. Ivory is easily smuggled out of Africa into Portugal. The Portuguese authorities intercept several hundred pieces of ivory (both raw and worked) each year, almost all from Africa, especially Angola, Mozambique and Senegal. Much ivory, new and old, however, is successfully smuggled into Portugal, often hand-carried through the airports. But very little of this ivory is found in retail outlets; instead it is kept as personal possessions at home. Another source of ivory is the Internet, which also enables new ivory items to be smuggled into Portugal, but again nearly all of it is for personal use and not for sale. There is a large quantity of ivory in Portugal, with at least 20 tonnes of registered tusks alone, due to the long-standing colonial connections with Africa. Nearly all the ivory items seen for sale were made before the CITES ban. Some, however, were being sold illegally because Portuguese law requires that ivory pieces be registered. Since 2004, privately owned ivory is required to be registered as well, but most has not been recorded.

Key words: Portugal, Angola, Mozambique, ivory trade, Indo-Portuguese ivory.

Résumé

Les points de vente au détail à Lisbonne, au Portugal, ont plus d'articles en ivoire que d'autres villes beaucoup plus grandes en Europe du sud. Il y avait 626 objets en ivoire dénombrés en 2008, dont 150 provenaient d'Afrique. Les articles comptés les plus nombreux étaient des figurines antiques d'Europe et d'Asie, suivis par des bustes et des figurines sculptées dans les années 1970 en Angola, et les crucifix antiques d'Inde, d'Europe et du Ceylan (il a été renommé Sri Lanka en 1972). On a dénombré dans l'étude seulement 14 nouveaux articles en ivoire à vendre dans trois points de vente au détail: 12 venant de Chine et seulement 2 d'Afrique. L'ivoire passe facilement en contrebande de l'Afrique vers le Portugal. Chaque année, les autorités portugaises interceptent plusieurs centaines de pièces d'ivoire (brut et travaillé), presque toutes venant de l'Afrique, surtout de l'Angola, du Mozambique et du Sénégal. Cependant beaucoup d'ivoire, nouveau et vieux, passe avec succès en contrebande au Portugal, souvent dans les bagages à main à travers les aéroports. Mais très peu de cet ivoire se trouve dans les points de vente au détail; on le garde plutôt comme possessions personnelles à la maison. Une autre source d'ivoire est l'Internet qui permet aussi aux nouveaux articles en ivoire de passer en contrebande au Portugal mais encore presque tout cet ivoire est destiné à l'usage personnel et pas à la vente. Il y a une grande quantité d'ivoire au Portugal, avec au moins 20 tonnes de défenses enregistrées, à cause des rapports coloniaux de longue date avec l'Afrique. Presque tous les articles en ivoire vus en vente avaient été faits avant l'interdiction de la CITES. Cependant, certains articles se vendaient illégalement parce que la loi portugaise exige que les pièces en ivoire soient enregistrées. Depuis 2004, l'ivoire entre les mains des privés doit être aussi enregistré, mais la plus grande partie n'en a pas été enregistré.

Introduction

Up until this survey, studies had been conducted on the ivory trade in most countries of western Europe, but not in Portugal. Perhaps this was because most scholars believed that Portuguese craftsmen did not produce ivory items, as there are almost no references to them in the published literature. Conservationists believed that Portugal, being a small country, was less important to study. We learned, however, that unlike most European countries, Portugal still has ivory craftsmen working today. There was also more ivory for sale in Lisbon—both old and new—than in the larger cities of Barcelona, Madrid, Milan or Rome (Martin and Stiles 2005).

Methodology

Most of our fieldwork was carried out in Lisbon, the capital and largest city in Portugal, in September and October 2008. We collected data on the history, legal status, ivory seizures, ivory craftsmen, retail outlets, and on ivory substitutes. We surveyed the retail outlets and collected information from vendors. We counted ivory items for sale in Lisbon's outlets. We tried to determine the age of and place at which an item had been manufactured by collecting information from vendors and historians as well as examining the condition and style. Sometimes we returned to important outlets for more information. There were 14 new ivory items counted in the survey, but 3 different ones appeared later, making 17 referred to in Table 4. We interviewed government officers, and visited museums and libraries, such as the Gulbenkian Library in central Lisbon to learn about Portuguese ivory carving.

Results

The history of Portuguese ivory craftsmanship

There is very little information, even in Portuguese, on ivory carving in Portugal or on the sale of ivory items within the country. One of the few English language sources states, 'Representations of the Good Shepherd, Madonnas, and crucifixes were produced in quantity in both Goa and Portugal' (Woodhouse 1976). There are, however, many publications on the carving in Asia of Portuguese-style religious items, especially those produced in India and Ceylon (for example, Dias 2006 and Felgueiras 1991). The main reason is that, although some ivory items were

produced in Portugal, the colonists preferred to have these copied in large numbers in Asia, where there was much ivory and many good craftsmen requiring lower wages. There is no evidence of Asians crafting ivory in Portugal (Manuel Murteira Martins, art historian and antique dealer, pers. comm. December 2008).

Antique ivory items carved in Portugal, as referred to in the Portuguese sources, include a miniature boat (Reis 1995), a rosary from the 15th or 16th century and a religious staff from the 16th century (Dias 2004). Dias also refers to a chest from the Azores with wooden drawers inlaid with ivory made in the 18th or 19th century. In a 1998 exhibition catalogue for the Transport and Communications Museum in Oporto, 123 of 130 ivory items on display were referred to as 'Indo-Portuguese' (carved in India with Portuguese influences). Only three pieces were probably made in Portugal: statuettes of Jesus, dating from the 18th century (Museu dos Transportes 1998). Auctions in Portugal rarely mention ivory items for sale, least of all those of Portuguese origin. One of the larger sales in Lisbon took place in 1993 with 61 ivory objects on auction, nearly all Indo-Portuguese, with five at most carved in Portugal. All but one were religious sculptures (Palacio do Correio-Velho 1993).

In Lisbon's museums were hundreds of ivory items, mostly Indo-Portuguese, with again just a few items carved in Portugal. The Museum Nacional de Arte Antique displayed three mortars with pestles, an oratory, a ring and a miniature painting, most of them from the 17th and 18th centuries. A fan, cutlery case, sewing kit and backgammon table from the 18th century were in the Museu-Escola de Artes Decorativas. The Funcacao Medeiros e Almeida Museum had on view a table with ivory inlay and three religious statuettes from the 18th and 19th centuries.

In Lisbon's antique shops were many Indo-Portuguese items and other pieces, but only 16 likely to have been carved in Portugal (according to the style): nine religious statuettes and a box from the 17th and 18th centuries, one 1785 mandolin inlaid with ivory, a writing desk with ivory marquetry, three seals from the late 19th century and one needle container from the early 20th century.

Portuguese-carved ivory sample items, mostly of religious figurines, were first made in the late 15th and early 16th centuries for their Asian colonies to copy (St Aubyn 1987). Most samples were taken to Goa, Gujarat and Ceylon (as it was then called), and some to Macao, mainland China and the Philippines. The Asian



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Figure 1. Most vendors in Lisbon selling ivory items are Portuguese; no African sellers were seen. This Angolan ivory bridge carved in the early 1970s was priced at USD 284 in the Feira da Ladra Saturday Market.

artists added their own techniques and styles, blending the Portuguese and Asian schools of craftsmanship (Castilho 1999). The majority were made in the 17th and 18th centuries, frequently on consignment; they were then shipped to Portugal, the larger pieces to decorate churches and the smaller ones for private homes. There was a catastrophic earthquake in 1755 in Lisbon which marked the start of Portugal's decline in both its economy and its political importance. By the 19th century far fewer ivory items were being made in the Asian colonies for Portugal, and the quality of pieces declined. Religious statuettes, most of which had been made in Asia but some in Portugal, went out of fashion in the 19th century. Ivory craftsmen in Portugal then made items such as cabinets, armoires and writing tables with inlaid ivory, mostly in the 19th century.

Afro-Portuguese ivory was another unique blend of craftsmanship that Portuguese traders encouraged. In the 15th century, Portuguese explorers arrived on the West African coast and the Sapi people of Sierra Leone made the first pieces of ivory for the Portuguese: salt cellars, spoons, forks, oliphants (musical horns) and powder flasks (Bassani and Fagg 1988). These Sapi objects are rarely seen nowadays in Portugal's museums and antique shops and they are very expensive. In Angola, the Portuguese had a growing variety of ivory items

made for them from the late 19th century. According to antique dealers, Portuguese living in Mozambique also supported the local ivory trade, although they did not commission as many items as in Angola because there were fewer Portuguese there.

The legal status of ivory in Portugal

In 1981 Portugal joined CITES. In 1989 the EU banned ivory imports and exports for EU countries, including Portugal. This excluded ivory items made before 1 June 1947, which are considered antiques and are exempt from this ban within EU countries (with proof). In 1990 CITES prohibited all commercial imports and exports of new ivory items world-wide for CITES member states. Only pre-CITES ban ivory items are legal to import and export for non-commercial purposes (along with hunting trophies that are exempt). These ivory items can be imported and exported if evidence proving their age is presented to authorities and permits are granted, both within the EU and with other countries.

The Portuguese CITES authorities started to register ivory tusks in the country in 1986. By the end of that year, the authorities had marked 1089 tusks weighing 14,392 kg from all over the country. In 1989 they marked another 298 tusks with a total weight of 2124 kg. By 2008 the government had marked 1614 tusks weighing 19,679 kg

with an average weight of 12.2 kg (see Table 1). The main reason for this large quantity was that there were many Portuguese who lived in Angola and Mozambique prior to 1975 who brought tusks back home (Portuguese CITES Management Authority, pers. comm. September 2008).

In 2004 all ivory items, including personal effects, whether commercial or not, had to be registered with the government. From 2006 to 2008 the Portuguese CITES authorities issued about 1000 certificates each year, but some of these recorded more than one item (Jao Loureiro, Chief of Division, CITES Management Authority, Instituto de Conservacao da Natureza (ICN), pers. comm. September 2008). Many people have not yet registered.

In 2004 the government started to check regularly many shops to see if they had proper CITES documents and found that most did not, especially for worked tusks and furniture with ivory inlay. The problem is that there are so many shops it is not possible to inspect them all, especially since there are only three inspectors remaining today who are based in Lisbon; two others who had been based in Oporto were made redundant for economic reasons.

Before 2007 it was not a serious crime to trade in protected species and their products within the country. Judges did not allow government officers to enter private houses in order to check for illegal wildlife products. In 2007, this penal law changed, and became stricter, allowing wildlife inspectors to enter private residences. Some judges, however, are still reluctant to implement this new law (Loureiro and Ana Zuquete, CITES Management Authority, ICN, pers. comm. September 2008).

Trophy tusks have always been allowed into Portugal, as these are considered non-commercial. For 2006 and 2007, the most recent years recorded, sportsmen who hunted elephants in Mozambique brought home to Portugal 20 tusks, followed by Botswana with 8, Namibia with 5, Zimbabwe with 4 and Tanzania with 2 tusks.

It is of course possible to export legally a genuine pre-CITES ban ivory piece commercially or privately. The following steps are required for a non-EU country: the Ministry of Culture needs to give permission in writing, an EU certificate must be obtained and the Portuguese CITES authority needs to issue a CITES export permit. The CITES Authority must issue their permit within 30 days if there is an EU certificate, but can do it in as little as 48 hours. If there is no EU certificate, the CITES Authority can still issue their permit, but it takes up to two months (Loureiro, pers. comm. September 2008). For example, many of the ivory items for sale

Table 1. Legal, privately-owned ivory tusks officially marked in Portugal from 1986 to 2008

Year	Number of tusks	Weight (kg)
1986	1089	14,392
1988	9	186
1989	298	2123.5
1990	42	788.5
1991	35	590.8
1992	10	2.31
1993	2	47.2
1994	3	111.9
1998	12	74.675
1999	5	28.15
2000	19	161.5
2001	7	144.7
2002	2	40.75
2003	8	88.78
2004	15	101.55
2005	22	195.9
2006	17	247.5
2007	14	312.215
2008*	5	41.3
Totals	1614	19,679.24

* 1 January to 31 August

in Lisbon were carved in the 1960s and 1970s. These items, according to EC Regulation 338/97, would need a CITES re-export certificate to be shipped out of the EU or an intra-community certificate if the buyer of the item is an EU resident (Martin and Stiles 2005).

Ivory seizures in Portugal

According to the Portuguese CITES Authority's official seizure figures, which differ from those of the Elephant Trade Information System, from 2003 (the first year of data) to 2007, the government seized 925 ivory items plus 6.5 kg of ivory in 108 separate seizures (see Table 2). Most seizures of ivory items, 40 of them, were in 2007, of which 22 seizures (76 items plus 0.8 kg of raw ivory) were from Angola (statistics from the Portuguese Management Authority, pers. comm. September 2008). Some of these objects were crafted before 1975 when Angola was a colony. At that time, many Portuguese living in Angola lost their wealth when the new government nationalized their properties and businesses. Those who returned to Portugal were not allowed to take with them most of

their possessions, including ivory carvings and tusks. In recent years, some have returned to work on short-term contracts and have collected some of their old possessions that they had left with friends, including ivory, while others have bought both old and new ivory items to take home. Angola is not a member of CITES, thus most people find it too complicated to get permits, although without proper documentation, the items are liable to seizure in Portugal. There are thousands of new ivory items for sale in the Luanda area, mostly from ivory originating in the Congo region (Milliken et al. 2006) and some are smuggled into Portugal and kept as personal souvenirs. Very few appear in the shops and street markets.

In 2007 there were nine ivory seizures in Portugal consisting of 72 items from Mozambique. Unlike Angola, most were new items; this is because Mozambique has far fewer older items because after independence in 1975, when the Portuguese settlers had their possessions confiscated, many drove across the border to live in South Africa, making it easier to take their small possessions with them. Therefore, scarcely any old ivory is left in Mozambique compared with Angola. Mozambique has several thousand new ivory items available in the capital, Maputo, and visitors sometimes buy these items and try to smuggle them back into Portugal, not with CITES papers, as the ivory is new so papers would not be granted (Martin and Stiles 2000; Milliken 2002; Milliken et al. 2006). Ivory figurines, busts and jewellery that are sometimes hidden inside wooden statuettes are popular (Loureiro, pers. comm. September 2008).

Portugal had a third African colony, Portuguese Guinea, which gained independence in 1974 and was re-named Guinea-Bissau. This country has

Table 2. Official seizures of raw and worked ivory in Portugal, 2003–2007

Country of origin	No. of pieces and/or weights	No. of seizures
Senegal	357	1
Mozambique	250	
30		
Angola	185	
	1.53 kg	43
Other	133	
	5 kg	34
Total	925	
	6.53 kg	108



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Figure 2. A jewellery shop in Lisbon displays an elephant skull with tusks. Also in the picture is a 20 kg Angolan-carved tusk (bridge) from the 1960s for USD 42,600, the most expensive piece of worked ivory seen from Africa.

no recently recorded elephants, and it implements CITES regulations very effectively on ivory, thus this country is not involved in the Portuguese ivory trade (Loureiro, pers. comm. September 2008).

The Portuguese and Africans usually bring back just a few ivory items at a time (generally for personal use) from Africa to Portugal in order to reduce the chance of detection. Sometimes they get caught, mostly at Lisbon airport and sometimes at Oporto airport. When there are just one or two pieces, the authorities merely confiscate them, but if there are more, police may take action and a fine may be imposed. Since the early 1990s the government has only seized one large consignment: 357 items from Senegal in 2003. Overall, perhaps 20% of seizures from all countries are new ivory objects, the rest being pre-CITES ban (Loureiro, pers. comm. September 2008). A few individuals regularly bring ivory items into the country. For example, a known Portuguese man goes to Thailand routinely and illegally brings back worked ivory; some of his consignments have been seized while others will have slipped through. At the time of the survey, his Thai

items were not seen for sale in Lisbon.

Some items seized at the airports are from Internet sources. These Internet pieces are almost all new and thus without permits. The major supplier is Thailand followed by Cambodia and then China. When officials detect such an item, they ask the importer to get an export permit from the seller, but this is never provided. Occasionally the exporter will reply that it is carved from mammoth ivory (Loureiro, pers. comm. September 2008). Usually the officials will realize this is a cover up and not let the item through. It is not known how many of these items are kept for personal use versus how many are sold.

The Portuguese government never finds ivory items that are being exported illegally. The government says that if ivory is being smuggled out of Portugal, they are unaware of it.

In total, since 1989/90, the government has confiscated tonnes of ivory within the country: raw, worked, old and new. Some has been loaned to museums and zoos for exhibition. In 1989 the government sold some of its stock to China: 282 tusks weighing 1747 kg; this was before the CITES ivory trade ban on imports and exports amongst CITES member states (Zuquete, pers. comm. November 2008).

Ivory artisans working in Portugal in 2008

After the Revolution in Portugal in 1974–1975 that overthrew a dictatorship for a socialist government, and following the granting of Independence to Portugal's African colonies, a businessman from Angola, Joao A. Veiga, returned to Portugal and set up a jewellery shop in Lisbon. He imported tusks from Angola and Mozambique and he employed an African ivory carver from Angola to work in his shop. The craftsman worked until the late 1980s when he decided to return to Angola, but the jewellery shop continues and is managed by the Portuguese owner's son. Ivory dealers and CITES officials knew of no other African or Asian ivory carvers working in Portugal in recent years.

There are, however, at least four Portuguese artisans crafting ivory part time. Three young women make jewellery, sometimes using ivory, in Lisbon. An antique shop displayed some of their work made in 2007: a 6-cm rectangular ivory broach selling for USD 852, a 5-cm circular ivory broach for USD 682 and a 5-cm-high ring for USD 1136. The shop owner would not reveal the identity of the women for business reasons. The fourth artisan is in the Oporto area; he makes bracelets, necklaces and rings. According to the CITES



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Figure 3. An ivory craftsman in Maputo makes an ivory beaded necklace, popular with Portuguese buyers.

Management Authority, he obtains his raw ivory from northern Portugal where there are many privately owned pre-CITES ban tusks. For example, he recently bought some tusks (with proper documents) from a Portuguese who had purchased them in Africa before 1974.

Antique dealers said that Portuguese craftsmen have, in the past, carved ivory into fake antique Indo-Portuguese religious figurines and crucifixes, pretending they were from the 18th century. The dealers could not give more information on this, but it is unlikely that this practice continues today. The items are not as good as original antiques and usually sell for less.

Retail outlets in Lisbon selling ivory

In an extensive survey of retail outlets in Lisbon, we counted 626 ivory items in 59 outlets (see Table 3). Of these, 490 were in antique shops (78%), 82 were in jewellery shops (13%), and 42 in the city's three flea markets (7%). There were 12 other items found in a gift shop, a watch shop and a silver shop. No ivory items were found for sale in department stores or in the 83 tourist and hotel shops visited.

Of the 626 ivory items counted in the survey, only an estimated 14 were crafted since the CITES ban on international ivory trade, or 2.2% of the total. This is a minimum figure as some items are extremely difficult to date. The 14 new ivory items counted in the survey were found in four outlets. There were seven Chinese-made items counted for sale in a Chinese gift shop; three were Portuguese-made jewellery items in an antique shop; three others (two African-made and a Chinese magic ball) were in a second antique shop; and a Chinese erotic figurine was in a third antique shop (see Table 4). The vendor in the Chinese gift shop said she had all her ivory on display; four days later she had obtained from China

Table 3. Types of retail outlets and number of ivory items in Lisbon, 2008

Type	No. of outlets	% of total outlets	No. of items	Total av. no of items/outlets
Antique shop	40	68	490	12
3 Markets' stalls	13	22	42	3
Jewellery shop	3	5	82	27
Gift shop	1	2	7	7
Watch shop	1	2	4	4
Silver shop	1	2	1	1
Totals	59	–	626	11

Table 4. Minimum number of new (post 1989) ivory items seen for retail sale in Lisbon, 2008

Item	No. of items	Size in cm	Where made	Price in USD
Human bust, female	1	10	Africa	99
Hair ornament	1	9	Africa	43
Monkey figurine	1	15	China	3692
Virgin Mary	1	18	China	3124
Madonna and child	1	18	China	2840
Animal figurine	3	15	China	2556
Cabbage	1	13	China	1278
Human figurine	3	3	China	195
Erotic human figurine pair	1	6	China	185
Magic ball	1	3	China	114
Ring	1	5	Portugal	1136
Broach	2	6	Portugal	767

NB: There were 14 new ivory items counted in the survey and 3 more were found later in the Chinese gift shop making a total of 17.

some more items that were displayed: another animal figurine and two religious figurines. To make space for these items, two animal figurines and a human figurine that had been counted earlier were removed. All these items are listed in Table 4.

The new ivory items seen for sale were made in Portugal, Africa and China. Portuguese and Africans smuggle in new African ivory objects, mostly from Angola and Mozambique, sometimes mixed in with older items. A Chinese ivory dealer based in Lisbon imports the new Chinese items that were seen for sale.

Antique dealers buy their ivory items mostly from private individuals in Portugal. They also buy at auctions and house sales within the country. Dealers rarely bring in ivory antiques from other countries, although other people do perhaps bring in ivory items from the Internet to sell. There are more antique shops in Portugal today than there were in 1990, according to antique dealers. These are found, especially in Oporto, Estoril, Cascais and Evora. Most, by far, are in Lisbon, located along Rua D. Pedro V, Rua de S. Bento, Rua Augusto Rosa and Rua de Escola Politecnica. These are small outlets selling antique furniture, paintings, ornaments and wooden sculptures. Small antiques, including old ivory items that are usually displayed together on a shelf, are found in vitrine cases. At

least a quarter of the antique shops displayed ivory, on average about a dozen items in each, usually high quality antiques. All but one of the ivory antiques seen for sale in Lisbon were in antique shops. There was new ivory seen in three antique shops, one selling the three pieces of Portuguese-made jewellery mentioned above. The other was a small antique shop with the newly made Chinese erotic couple (the only ivory item in this shop). Another small shop had three new items: two from Africa and the magic ball from China. These three items were with 14 older ivory items made in the mid-20th century, both European (utilitarian) and African (ornamental) objects.

There were three jewellery shops with ivory in central Lisbon. One had a couple of old cross pendants, the second had two old portraits painted on slices of ivory made in Germany. The third jewellery shop, the biggest, displayed 78 worked ivory items, mostly Angolan, carved between the 1950s and the early 1970s. Some of these were in a vitrine case in the front main section of the shop, while others were on shelves in another room behind. The shop manager, the son of the owner mentioned earlier, knew the prices of the ivory items in the front area, but had to check about the ones in the back room that was essentially closed to customers. There were a couple of carved tusks on the floor. This shop also had for sale an Angolan elephant skull, with tusks of 40 kg each.

We visited three markets. Two markets were held in the Feira da Ladra, located at Campo de Santa Clara, one on a Saturday and one on a Tuesday. These markets consist of temporary stalls, sometimes with folding tables or items displayed on the ground, almost entirely outdoors. They sell a great assortment of objects, mostly second-hand, such as car parts, books, clothes, kitchenware, broken furniture and old computers. There were also wildlife products for sale in these two markets (an antelope skin, bone carvings, crocodile skin, fox skin, hippo tusk, leopard skin handbags three ostrich eggs, a starfish, two warthog tusks and zebra skins). There were 425 stalls counted at the Saturday market with 11 ivory items, mostly figurines and small polished tusks from Africa. The Tuesday market, with about half the number of customers, had 303 stalls with 26 different ivory items. These were inexpensive, mostly African-carved figurines, such as 12 small elephants. The third market is located off Rua da Preta and opens on Sundays. It is located under the arches running alongside an old building close to the waterfront. There were 38 temporary stalls counted on the day of the survey with five inexpensive ivory items

seen: three African female busts, a Chinese Buddha and an African carved tusk with animals.

There was one gift shop selling Chinese items that were not old (such as boxes, jewellery, screens and clothes). There were ivory items and mammoth items kept together in vitrine cases at the back of the shop. On our first visit, the day of our survey-count, we observed seven ivory objects: a monkey, two other animals, a cabbage and three human sculptures. On a later visit three of these items were replaced by a cat figurine and by two religious figurines. These were a Virgin Mary and a Madonna and Child that were made of blackwood, with hands and head of ivory, carved in Guangzhou. All 10 of the ivory items seen in total were new.

The watch shop displayed three African pieces that, according to the vendor, were carved before the import ban: a bridge with animals carved on it, an African head and a thin carved 25-cm elephant made from part of a tusk base. These three ivory items were displayed in the window. There was also an old ivory comb of European origin. The final shop that displayed ivory items, a silver shop, sold one Indo-Portuguese antique figurine. There was a sign nearby on the wall



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Figure 4. This unusual bust carved in Angola in the late 1960s was priced at USD 8520.

for another shop that read, in Portuguese, 'We buy gold, silver, jewellery, ivory etc', but this shop remained closed during our visit.

Overall, there was a great variety of ivory items for sale in the outlets. Most frequently for sale were antique European and Asian figurines (29%), excluding crucifixes, which were mostly religious. These were of high quality from the 17th to 19th centuries designed for people's homes. The most recently-made Portuguese religious figurine we saw was a 10-cm tall Jesus statue that had been carved around 1900 in the Casa Leitao workshop, then famous for its goldsmiths and other master craftsmen.

The next most common items were African-carved figurines and busts (14%), mostly from Angola. The oldest pieces for sale were small human figurines made by the coastal Pinda people of Angola in the 19th century, used for their own religious beliefs. In the late 19th century they started to make busts and religious items for tourists and Portuguese residents in Angola. Most Angolan ivory objects seen today for sale in Lisbon were carved in the 1960s and early 1970s. These included 33 Angolan table decorations of female busts.

The third most common items seen (7%) were crucifixes, of which over half were made in the 17th and 18th century in India (especially Goa), Europe and Ceylon. Three were Portuguese-made. Nearly all were of very high quality, especially the Indo-Portuguese pieces. An item from the Philippines that portrayed the uncovered buttocks of Jesus Christ was the rarest; it was triple the price of other crucifixes seen, being a collector's item.

Boxes, mostly with ivory inlay, comprised 6% of the items found in the shops. These came to Portugal over the centuries from Africa (pure ivory boxes), Europe and Asia (usually wood inlaid with ivory). Made in the 16th century were a rare box made in Ceylon, 22-cm long, and a round communion box, 7 cm in diameter from Goa.

Other items were needle containers (4%), African-carved animals (4%), netsukes (2%), African-carved tusks, toothpicks, writing pens, broaches, European-made seals, page holders, plaques, bangles and pairs of candlesticks (1% each).

Regarding the origin of ivory items for retail sale in Lisbon, 29% were made in India. Most were Indo-Portuguese from the Goan region: religious statuettes, boxes and inlaid chests. Items from European countries, excluding Portugal, followed (24%): mainly human figurines and needle containers. African items, mostly figurines and carved tusks, were also 24%, usually from Angola. This is the second highest percentage (after Brussels) of African

ivory items seen for sale in any city surveyed, excluding those in Africa (Martin and Stiles 2002, 2003, 2005, 2008). China followed (11%) with netsukes and human figurines. Portuguese-made items were next (4%), especially religious statuettes and seals. There were Ceylon carvings (4%), but they were all antiques and of exquisite quality; religious statuettes and inlaid boxes were their speciality. Even fewer (2%) were Japanese (human figurines and boxes), unlike Europe and the USA where there were many more. There were also several South American items (1% of the total surveyed).

The retail prices for ivory items in Lisbon depend on the item's age, condition, workmanship, rarity, size and type of outlet. The new ivory items were not as expensive as the old items. A new African bust of mediocre quality was priced at USD 99, while a similar one made in the 1960s or '70s (of which many were available) was USD 241. New, unique ivory items were expensive, however, such as the new ring at USD 1136, as it is considered an art piece, having not been mass-produced. The new figurines imported from China are much more expensive than in mainland China due to the much higher overheads in the Portuguese outlets and because they are rare in Lisbon. In Hong Kong their prices are similar to Lisbon, again because of the high rents and overheads.

For older items, the most expensive was a very large, exquisite, 60-cm Virgin Mary from the 17th century for USD 312,400. It was highly priced as it was a large, early Philippine piece in the Hispanic style; these are rare in private collections compared with items from Goa or Ceylon. The second most expensive piece was the elephant skull with tusks described earlier, 200,000 Euros (USD 284,000). The least expensive were the African ivory animal figurines, human busts and bangles from the mid-20th century before the Portuguese Revolution. Small utilitarian objects, such as needle holders and paper knives made in northern Europe in the early 20th century were also inexpensive. A paper knife in a flea market cost USD 85, although in an antique shop it was more than double the price at USD 213.

Before the 1990 CITES ivory ban the main customers for ivory were Americans. In 2008 most of the buyers were Portuguese. They were followed by other Europeans (mainly French, Italians and Germans), and then Americans and Brazilians.

Table 5 shows the retail prices for ivory items seen in Lisbon in September 2008.

Table 5. Retail prices for ivory items seen in Lisbon in September/October 2008

Item	Size in cm	Where made	Price range in USD	Av. price In USD
JEWELLERY				
Bangle	1	Africa	89	89
	2.5	Africa	178	178
Broach	5	Europe	682–1704	1147
FIGURINES				
Animal	2.5	Africa	21–114	38
Busts	4	Africa	28–227	99
	7.5	Africa	36–852	138
	10	Asia	99–923	349
	18	Africa	426–568	497
Crucifixes	4	Asia, Europe	192–554	320
	18	Asia, Europe	2485–2840	2722
	35	Asia, Europe	1775–21,300	8077
Human	5–10	Asia, Europe	213–9230	1761
	11–15	Asia, Europe	2485–25,560	8311
	20	Asia, Europe	3550–127,800	16,823
Netsuke	6	China	369–398	379
TUSKS				
Carved	45–50	Africa	284–3550	2,110
Polished	40 (0.5kg)	Africa	320	320
MISC.				
Box	2.5	Africa	109–1278	694
	7.5	Asia, Europe	5538–22,720	11,265
	30	Asia, Europe	17,040–49,700	28,163
Cigarette holder	13	China	112–178	156
Needle holder	10	Europe	21–71	45
Paper knife	27	Europe	170–256	213

Exchange rate: USD 1 = 1.42 Euros

Fake ivory antiques and substitutes for ivory

Portuguese craftsmen have in the recent past used ivory to make fake antiques, mostly Indo-Portuguese religious items. This is because of the very high prices for antiques. It is not clear if this still may occasionally occur, but there were a few fake antique crucifixes for sale in the antique shops during our survey. The Chinese make certain fake antiques out of ivory for the international market, but they do not imitate the Indo-Portuguese style, according to Lisbon's antique dealers. Several antique dealers warned us of fake ivory antiques for sale in Lisbon. We were shown a box of antique crucifixes and the dealer was suspicious that one was fake—it was clearly more crudely carved than the others and was a slightly different style.

The most common animal-based substitute for ivory seen was mammoth ivory, which we saw in the Chinese gift shop. Amongst the few new ivory objects were 21 items made from mammoth tusks. There were 15 4-cm human figurines, typical of mammoth ivory in that the brown streaks had been camouflaged with brown straining. There were also three carved tusks (the biggest was 35 cm for USD 6532), a 35-cm landscape of trees and people and a 20-cm Buddha carved from a thick mammoth tusk. Although Portuguese officials say they can tell the difference between mammoth and elephant ivory, small items, stained brown like mammoth ivory or kept white to look like elephant ivory are both very hard to identify. The shop manager told us that over a 10-day period in September she had sold one mammoth ivory object to a French man. We saw no other mammoth ivory items in Lisbon as it is a

new business. It was not until restrictions on elephant ivory occurred in 1990 that the trade in mammoth ivory items, which is legal in most countries, picked up.

There were some inexpensive ivory substitute items for sale in the flea markets, sometimes mixed in with ivory pieces, but a fraction of the cost and of poor workmanship. There were at least 100 items made of bone, including human figurines, and one 7-cm female bust from Senegal carved from a pig tooth that was priced USD 71, more expensive than the bone items.

Vendors' views on the ivory trade

According to the vendors, the turnover for newer ivory items has declined sharply in Portugal since the 1990 CITES ban on international ivory trade. The vendors consulted in this study were nearly all European, there were no indigenous Africans seen. Vendors selling ivory objects from the mid-20th century do not expect sales of these items to recover. The trader selling the most of such items still has stock he imported from Africa in the 1970s so his turnover is very low. 'Whites from Mozambique and Angola still come to me to sell raw ivory, but I do not buy; blacks do not bring tusks to me.' He longs to sell his entire stock of ivory items, but his asking prices are too high compared with African items in other shops. Lisbon has proportionately more African ivory items for sale compared with other cities (excluding African cities) due to the tight connections between Africa and Portugal in the past.

All new ivory items carved since the CITES ban are illegal to import and export and demand for such items is low in Lisbon. Items made between 1947 and the CITES ban are legal to import and export non-commercially, but only with special permits. Those with proof that they were carved before 1 June 1947 are legal to import and export without special permits (Tom de Meulenaer, MIKE Co-ordinator, CITES Secretariat, pers. comm. October 2009). Most new items that we saw were carved in China and sold in the Chinese gift shop. The Chinese manager of that shop said, however, that she planned to import a few more ivory figurines from China. She showed pictures from a sales catalogue of items she planned to bring in. Buyers find the prices too high, however, and tourists cannot export them easily, although she did not admit to this. She never mentioned that she had difficulties bringing these illegal items into the country either. She has never had any of her items confiscated, according to officials. The bulk of her business is in other Chinese-

made consumer goods.

In the antique shop selling the two new pieces of African worked ivory, there were signs on the windows reading, 'stock to be liquidated'. The vendor was also offering a 30% discount on her ivory and other items as she could not sell her stock easily. The ivory was moving especially slowly. As for the antique shop selling modern ivory jewellery crafted in Portugal, the vendor said she will buy more of such items as they are unique and interesting, and despite their high prices, the Portuguese buy them.

No shopkeepers believe that they will ever go back to the old days when they could sell a lot of new ivory as they do not see the ban on new ivory objects being lifted. But for old ivory items, the prices have been going up as demand remains strong, especially for antique religious pieces. Antique shops have increased in number and vendors say there are many collectors in Portugal for antique ivory objects. Vendors see a reasonable future for ivory antiques but no future for other ivory items.

The main complaint of the ivory sellers is the bureaucracy, especially since 2004 when the trade was 'regularized', i.e. requiring compulsory registration, and in the tedious paperwork needed for exporting ivory antiques. One dealer kept his antiques at home to try to avoid the hassle of registering his ivory. He showed us items for sale on a computer in his shop. Many Portuguese citizens do not bother with the paperwork for privately-owned ivory items, but shopkeepers of course have to be more careful, they say, as shops are more likely to be inspected and they could even be put out of business if their ivory is not registered.

Conclusion

We know that several hundred pieces of worked ivory and some tusks are being seized annually by the Portuguese authorities. There is a lot that gets through unnoticed as very few people are checked at the airports. Officials say at least 20% of the ivory they confiscate is new. The latest threat is the growing number of new ivory items that arrive illegally—by post or courier service purchased on the Internet, almost all by private individuals, presumably—as this ivory is not seen in the shops. (There is no information whether people in Portugal are selling on the Internet.) Other new ivory items, no doubt, are bought abroad by holiday-makers, contract workers and businessmen who like to take small souvenirs and trinkets home with them, especially from Angola and Mozambique.

Such items are kept privately and are not put up for sale. This survey showed that very few new ivory items are ending up for sale in outlets within Lisbon. It is too risky for vendors to sell new worked ivory, all of which is illegal, but visitors abroad will take the chance, as being caught for one or two items is unusual and penalties insignificant.

Many Portuguese are uninformed regarding the ivory trade today and what the restrictions presently are. Education is key. Airline magazines and landing cards at international airports should update people on the situation, that buying new ivory and importing it into Portugal is illegal and it encourages the poaching of elephants. The need to register privately owned ivory pieces requires more attention.

The Lisbon antique ivory trade, which is much larger compared with cities in Spain and Italy, could be a loophole for new ivory if craftsmen make fake ivory antiques; but antique dealers themselves monitor this so it is unlikely to grow. Otherwise, the only artisans in Portugal, numbering four, known to be crafting pieces of ivory are jewellers; this business does not presently pose a threat to elephants as the amount of ivory used is extremely small, and there are old stocks of legal ivory in the country they can use. Apart from just a few other new items for sale in Lisbon from China that were surveyed and even fewer new items from Africa for sale, most ivory was antique, with a number of items crafted also in the mid-20th century from Africa and Europe.

In conclusion, it is very encouraging that the trade in new ivory items within Portugal is so small. But it is regrettable to say that Portuguese demand for new ivory items still exists, mainly by private individuals buying items abroad or on the Internet, and this is fuelling the illicit trade. The Portuguese authorities are too concerned with larger wildlife trade issues to put a major focus on the ivory problem.

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