Male and Female Icons in Luso-African Ivory

Student:	I.S. Moerland
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Introduction

As World Press Photo of the year 2011 a photograph was chosen of a woman from Yemen holding her son who had been injured while participating in a demonstration against the regime (ill.1). This photo, made by the Spanish photographer Samuel Aranda, shows a veiled woman holding a suffering man against her chest, an image which recalls paintings of the Virgin Mary holding Christ, such as the *Pietà* by Michelangelo. The winning photograph was therefore criticized by some, among whom James Johnson, a professor of Political Science who considered it a picture reinforcing traditional gender conventions and assimilating a scene representing Islam politics to a Christian iconographic tradition. According to Johnson the woman is depicted in a traditional passive role as supporter of a man. The active contribution of women to the 'Arab Spring' is neglected in this image. [1] One of the jury's members responded to the discussion about the resemblance of the photo to the *Pietà* by saying that she thought it was "fantastic that Christian audiences can connect in a way that is compassionate and not prejudicial with the Muslim world. And if they have to do it through their own Christian icons, then fine. That's what art is for".[2] Another comment in defense of the photo was made by Manoocher Deghati, the regional photo manager for Associated Press in the Middle East, who said: "Icons are icons. I think that's fine. I think it's eye-catching, and the fact the man is naked but the woman is completely clothed makes it even more interesting."[3] The photographer of the winning picture, Samuel Aranda, stated that the resemblance had not been intentional : "You know how it is in these situations - it was really tense and chaotic. In these situations, you just shoot photos. It is what it is. We're just photographers. I consider myself just a worker. I just witness what is going on in front of me, and shoot photos. That's it." I think it is interesting that the photographer claims he has accidentally shot a photo which others interpret as an iconic image. Did the others read too much in it? Or was the photographer aware of the reference to Christian iconography when he made the photo?

ill. 1 World Press Photo of the year 2011 by Samuel Aranda.

Although the subject of this paper is not 21st century photography, but African ivory artworks of centuries ago, I see a similarity in the interpretation of images from a Western perspective. A veiled woman holding her child is easily seen as a reference to the Virgin by Western people who recall the iconic image of Mary and Christ which they have seen numerous times and is carved in their memory.

This paper is about ivory artworks which were made for the Portuguese during the late 15th and 16th century by West African ivory carvers. Since the second decade of the 15th century the Portuguese were expanding their area of influence to Africa, first to Morocco in North Africa and during the next decades to Madeira, the Azores, the Cape Verde and Guinea Islands and West Africa. In 1482 they established a fortress at Elmina in present day Ghana to defend their trading interests in this area.[4] The Portuguese were mainly interested in obtaining gold and slaves from Africa, but also purchased animals, ivory, cloths, beads and shells. In return they sold horses, metal ware, textiles and foodstuffs.[5] Dom João II who had become king in 1481 built alliances with African rulers to prevent other European powers from interfering in his trade monopoly. One of his motifs for expansion in Africa was also to find a sea passage to India and to prevent that other European powers discovered this before the Portuguese.[6] In the second half of the 15th century many Portuguese migrated to the islands from where many also moved forward to West Africa to trade and settle.[7] This resulted in the development of a creole culture with Portuguese and African elements. In 1491 the nobility of the Kongo converted to Christianity in order to strengthen their relationship with the Portuguese. Christianity was seen as a new royal cult, but its implementation by the African king caused social and political tensions. The new Christian ideas about marriage and inheritance conflicted with traditional African ideas about succession to the throne.[8]

The ivory artworks were thus made in a period of intensive contact and migration between Portugal, the Portuguese islands in the Atlantic and West Africa and they could reflect the alliances that were created between Portuguese and African rulers and Portuguese men and African women. Around 150 objects are identified by scholars as belonging to the 'Afro-Portuguese' or 'Luso-African' corpus.[9] They are currently part of the collections of museums in the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, Nigeria, Australia, Russia, the Czech Republic and The Netherlands. The corpus consists of carved spoons and forks, two knife handles, hunting horns (called *oliphants*), a few religious vessels (pyxes) and around 56 chalices (or parts of them), which are thought to have been used as saltcellars once they had reached Europe. Salt was a valuable commodity and at medieval and Renaissance banquets the often richly elaborated saltcellar was placed in front of the ruler. The saltcellars were often shaped as ships (*nefs*) in which the cutlery and spices of the sovereign were kept to protect him from poisoning.[10] At the English court dinner guests were placed 'above' or 'below' the salt which indicated their status.[11]

Historically salt has been associated with fertility[12], preservation and permanence and with truth and wisdom[13] . In various cultures it was believed to protect from harm and to keep evil spirits away.[14] Salt represented wealth and was often used as currency.[15] It is not known whether the ivory objects described in this paper were really used as saltcellars at European tables. What we do know is that some of them were part of the collections of *Kunstkammern* of the 16th and 17th centuries.[16] A large number of the ivories that reached Europe were lost. Research of late 16th century inventories of German collections has demonstrated that only 10 percent of the ivories in these collections had been preserved.[17] As containers specifically used for keeping salt are not known in Africa, we might relate the Luso-African ivories in the African context to offering bowls and kola nut containers (ill. 2).

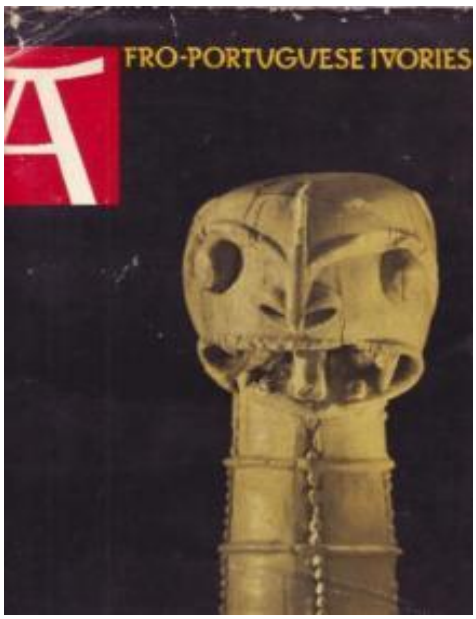
ill. 2 Wooden bowl, Olowe of Ise, Nigeria, early 20th c., National Museum of African Art Smithsonian Inst., Washington.

The ivories are generally called 'Afro-Portuguese', referring to the Portuguese patronage of their production. One scholar has suggested that to do more justice to the creation by West African artists the artworks could better be named 'Luso-African' ivories. [18] They might reflect the development of a mixed society of 'Luso-Africans' in West Africa of 16th century.[19] Because this term seems more correct it will be used in this paper, except in the cases where I cite or refer to authors who call them 'Afro-Portuguese'. Most of the ivory saltcellars were probably made by the Sapi, ancestors of the present day Bullom, Kissi and Temne people.[20] Another center of production was probably Benin, although some scholars contest this, as will be described in this paper. To discern between these two groups of objects with different styles and decorations they will be referred to as 'Sapi-Portuguese' and 'Bini-Portuguese'. Other parts of Africa can however not be excluded

as possible production places. For example the Kongo could have been a center of production, because the influence of Portuguese culture in the Kongolese kingdom was strong.[21]

The most well-known authors on the subject have dated the production of the Sierra Leone ivories to the period 1490-1530/1550.[22] They assume that the production of carved ivory objects later shifted to Benin.[23] This dating is mainly based on the European iconographic elements on the ivories.[24] The production of the carved ivories of Sierra Leone was believed to have stopped as a result of the invasion of Mane people.[25] Recent research has however demonstrated that this presumed invasion was rather a gradual process of assimilation. [26] In addition research on the history of collecting has proved that carved ivories were still being imported to Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries.[27] The production of the ivories therefore probably did not stop after 1550. There have also been found similarities by W.A. Hart in artworks made in Upper Guinea and Sierra Leone of the last century and a half to the carvings of the Sapi-Portuguese ivories. He found these parallels not in ivory but in the caryatid human figures that support stools and drums made of wood. [28] Similarities to the animal decoration of the ivories he found in Bondo/Sande masks which were made in Sierra Leone in the last century.[29] This could mean that the carving traditions of Sierra Leone which were expressed in the Sapi-Portuguese ivories continued into the 20th century.[30]

In this paper I shall focus on the human imagery which is displayed on these objects. The hunting horns, the religious vessels and the saltcellars represent images of human and animal figures. Because the images on the cutlery represent mainly animals or abstract patterns, I have left these objects out of consideration. The two knife or dagger handles depict aggressive looking figures with open mouth. A photo of one of them was used for the cover of the first publication on the ivories, *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* by William B. Fagg (ill. 3).



ill. 3 Cover of *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* by W.P. Fagg (1959)

At that time Fagg, probably bearing in mind the context of the saltcellars and cutlery, thought it was a pepper grinder. [31] The human figures on the objects have been related to soapstone figures, called *nomoli,* which have been found in Sierra Leone, and also to wooden sculptures, which were probably used in public shrines.[32] Many of these wooden figures were probably burnt by Portuguese missionaries who would have considered them heathen fetishes.[33]

Because the forms and decorations of the Luso-African ivories are derived from both African and Western artistic traditions, the subject seems very suitable to be studied from the perspective of 'World Art Studies'. According to the preface of the textbook with this title (2008), edited by Kitty Zijlmans and Wilfried van Damme, this relatively new field of investigation aims at studying art "from all times and all regions of the world in an integrative manner and from a variety of disciplinary perspectives"[34]. This approach was first suggested by John Onians in his work *Art, Culture and Nature* (1996). Onians proposed to include the study of human biology and geography in art history. The field of his research seems however confined to Classical and Renaissance Europe, Jewish history and China.[35] Zijlmans and Van Damme propose a more global approach, not only to meet the process of globalization of the recent decades, but also to rise above the fragmentation, which has resulted from the ongoing specialization within the visual arts. According to James Elkins, one of the contributors to this volume, World Art Studies could perhaps also be an answer to the Westernness of art historians who continue to interpret the art of all nations by using Western European tools such as style analysis, formalism, iconography and biography.[36] That this phenomenon also applies to the research on the Luso-African ivories is demonstrated in chapter 1 of this paper, which describes 'Eurocentric' views on the objects.

In his contribution to the volume *World Art Studies* the anthropologist Richard L. Anderson demonstrates that the influence of the 'market' does not have to be a negative factor in the production of non-Western artworks, although this influence is often depreciated by Western scholars. He points out that Western artists who work commercially sound are not reproached in the same way.[37] According to Anderson anthropologists have not been interested in the ways traditional societies adapt to the modern world, but cling to the vision of the unchanging, exotic Other. He thinks World Art Studies should pay attention to market art because this is most of the art which is produced today. [38] In his opinion the so-called hybrid art forms are even the most interesting, because they show which elements are included and which are rejected by the artist.[39]

In the same vein another contributing anthropologist, Paula D. Girshick, describes the importance of 'authenticity' in the Western appreciation of 'tribal' objects. When Western iconography is included this is seen as 'contamination' of the purity of the original object.[40] She demonstrates that this view is unrealistic, because non-Westerners have for centuries produced for foreign markets and have been active agents in

their activities.[41] She also points out the conflict of the modernist view of art's autonomy with the commodity status of art. The art world's institutions such as museums, academics and connoisseurs do not talk about money and profit.[42] These topics of hybridity and commodity status come also to the fore in relation to the Luso-African ivories in chapter 1 of this paper. They have been described as hybrids, but hybrids of a higher standard than tourist art. Interestingly, the inclusion of Western iconography in the Luso-African ivories has helped to move the objects into the realm of high art, as will be demonstrated. The provenance of the ivories which were part of royal and aristocratic collections will also have helped to designate them as prestigious objects.

One of the key topics of World Art Studies is interculturalization, the artistic influence of one culture or tradition on another. Wilfried van Damme has described the preconditions of artistic exchanges such as economic, religious, political and social factors.[43] It will be interesting to see to what extent the conditions in which the Luso-African ivories were produced relate to these preconditions.

The textbook *World Art Studies* concentrates on concepts and approaches and only a few case studies are included. For examples of interculturalization we might perhaps better turn to design history. As design history focuses on functional objects, which are mostly manufactured serially, the concepts of autonomy and authenticity are not relevant. The volume *Global Design History* (2011) [44] offers many case studies on connections, exchanges and interaction in design on a global scale. An interesting chapter in this volume describes objects such as glass beads, silk fabrics, carpets, metalwork, and ceramics, which were global commodities in the Renaissance world. Its authors Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Luca Molà have initiated a research project which is called the 'Global Renaissance'. It aims at investigating the impact of the European Renaissance on the rest of the world and the influences of other cultures on the European Renaissance in turn. The project intends to place European material culture against the background of intensifying economic and cultural connections in the period 1300-1700.[45] The Luso-African ivories could also be considered against this background of a Global Renaissance, as objects which were manufactured to satisfy the taste of European patrons who were fascinated by precious and exotic objects.

In this paper I will focus not only on the intercultural aspect of the Luso-African ivories, but also on iconic images and gender differences in the depiction of human figures on the ivories. In order to place the objects in context I shall in the first three chapters describe the different perspectives of previous authors on the subject; the perspective of Western art history, a more 'Afrocentric' view and an intercultural approach based on historical research. These different approaches are reflected in the interpretations of the iconography of the ivories. In the last two chapters I will describe and discuss the male and female iconography of the ivories in detail.

As I have not been able to examine the real objects which are spread over museums around the world, I have entirely relied on photographs and descriptions in secondary literature. I mainly used the photographs in the catalogue of *Africa and the Renaissance* (Bassani and Fagg, 1988) and the elaborate descriptions of the objects in Kathy Curnow's dissertation (1983). The subject is complicated because all artworks are different and many parts of them have been lost and sometimes restored in later years. It is therefore hard to discern between the original imagery and many later restorations. In addition, nothing is known about the artists who made these ivories. Nevertheless, I will try to answer the following question: What information do the ivories convey about male and female roles?

Chapter 1 'Eurocentric' views and scholarly disagreement

In this chapter I will describe the views of the most well-known authors on the subject and the dispute in the journal *African Arts*, which ensued from the publication of the catalogue of the exhibition *Africa and the Renaissance* (1988).

1.1 Prevailing 'Eurocentric' views

The views on Luso-African ivory have been mainly determined by two authors, William B. Fagg and Ezio Bassani. Museum websites often refer to them as main authors on this subject[46]. Fagg, in the years 1955-1974 successively deputy keeper and head of the ethnography collection of the British Museum, named the ivories in the museum's collection 'Afro-Portuguese' in 1959.[47] According to Fagg the ivories, which were regarded until then as a variety of Benin art[48], could be seen as exponents of a mixed style of native African art combined with European elements, made by African ivory workers for Portuguese customers. As production centers he proposed Sierra Leone, the Loanga coastal area/the mouth of the Kongo river and the Slave Coast at Lagos/Porto Novo.[49] Fagg raised the question whether the ivories could be compared with tourist art. In his view tourist art was mainly constructed to meet the European desire for curiosities and was nothing more than a fragmented projection of the European mind.[50] These ivories were of a higher quality. Following art-historical concepts *of Chinoiserie* and *Japonerie*, he considered Afro-Portuguese ivory as '*Nègrerie*'.[51] Referring to the function of the vessel-shaped ivories he excluded the possibility of their purpose as chalices for the Mass made for Portuguese missionaries, because most of them lack Christian visual themes. Moreover, some objects show human figures with exposed genitals which would have made liturgical use impossible. The recording by the British Museum of some of its in the mid-19th century collected objects as 'salt cellars' seemed to Fagg the most probable function of the objects. He remarked that their in some cases 'Rabelaisian' decoration would not have been inappropriate at the Renaissance dining table.[52]

In 1989 the Center for African Art (now called The Museum for African Art) staged the exhibition *Africa and the Renaissance*. *Art in Ivory*. [53] This was the first major exhibition exclusively focusing on Luso-African ivory .[54] In the cases where Luso-African ivory has been included in exhibitions, the objects have been presented mainly in the context of displaying of the culture of the conquered by the conqueror (the Portuguese) .[55] Accompanying the exhibition a vast, well-illustrated catalogue was published by Fagg, who since 1974 worked as a consultant to Christie's, and Ezio Bassani, director of the Center of African Art History in Florence.[56] Bassani previously had published several articles on African material, including ivory, in European collections.[57] In the catalogue Bassani and Fagg intended to give an 'overall picture' of the outcomes of the research of the past decades concerning dating, provenance and European influences on

the iconography of the artworks.[58] They also provided a *catalogue raisonné* of the objects. In the introductory chapters Susan Vogel, the Center's director, and Peter Mark, a specialist in the art history of West Africa[59], drew attention to the commonalities between Renaissance Europe and traditional Africa in for example the fields of art patronage and beliefs in magic and witchcraft. Europeans and West Africans interacted in this period on a relatively equal footing characterized by mutual respect. This compatibility diminished during the Enlightenment because of its anti-religious sentiment and as a result of the slave trade and colonial rule which made it necessary to consider Africans inferior to justify trading in humans and oppressing them.[60] Vogel compared African and Western design principles and concluded that the saltcellars should be considered mainly African in form and decoration. She argued that European lidded vessels are different in form from the African ivories because "sculptural decoration merges with and partly conceals the underlying form in a way seldom seen in the salts or in other African objects. The European forms are more integrated and less geometric, and the decoration is rarely figurative; the object is a complex shape, not a sphere or an ovoid (egg-shaped, sm), and the vessel is deep with a shallow lid".[61] She points to three fundamental characteristics of African aesthetics in the ivories, which are "a focus on the human figure, a clear articulation of parts and a preference for pure geometric forms".[62] According to Vogel only the bas-relief carving of the hunting horns was completely European in character.[63]

Although Vogel and Mark emphasized the mutual respect and intercultural interaction of the period, Bassani and Fagg in the following chapters mainly described the European influence in the construction of the objects. Contrary to Vogel, they proposed that the form of the saltcellars, particularly those with a conical shaped base, was copied from European cups or chalices, probably from drawings and prints brought to them by the Portuguese. The decoration with human and animal figures must have been of African origin, although European religious and heraldic motives and fantastic creatures such as the dragon, the wyvern and figures in European dress were also identifiable.[64] Bassani and Fagg assumed the ivories were produced in Sierra Leone by Sapi-artists, ancestors of the Bullom and Temne people, because of the similarities of the carvings on the objects to soapstone sculptures in the Sapi-style.[65] This group of objects were named 'Sapi-Portuguese'. Another group of objects would have been produced in Benin, the so-called 'Bini-Portuguese' ivories.[66] Regarding the African elements on the ivories, they stated that those had become mere decoration. Their original symbolic value had been lost because of their production for an alien cultural context and it had become impossible for a modern researcher "to attach even a hypothetical meaning to those motifs which are not in some way tied to European culture".[67] Bassani and Fagg called the objects 'hybrids', defining this term as "objects that as a result of cultural interaction combine iconographic and stylistic elements of two or more cultures. They differ from those produced in either of the two interacting cultures, yet refer to both, being simultaneously inside and outside the two cultures."[68] They stressed that most of the Afro-Portuguese ivories because of their 'high formal qualities and refined elegance' should

however not be seen as tourist art which is "characterized by its repetitiveness, its summary execution, and frequently by its use of strange proportions to give the piece a touch of 'primitiveness' to conform to the expectations of the buyers."[69]

1.2 Scholarly disagreement

The publication of the catalogue of *Africa and the Renaissance* resulted in a dispute in the journal *African Arts* in 1989 and 1990. Barbara W. Blackmun reproached Bassani and Fagg for not properly referring to a Ph.D. dissertation submitted at Indiana University in 1983.[70] In this dissertation of 547 pages titled *The Afro-Portuguese Ivories: Classification and Stylistic Analysis of a Hybrid Art Form,* Kathy Curnow offered many interesting hypotheses concerning the ivory objects based on a thorough stylistic analysis. She made suggestions for divisions of artists into workshops and provided many citations of documents relating to the ivories.[71] In their catalogue Bassani and Fagg referred to Curnow's dissertation once without mentioning her name . Susan Vogel responded to this by stating that when she had first discussed the possibility of an exhibition on these ivories in 1982 no one else than Fagg and Bassani had located and examined more works or was publishing as actively on the subject. She stated that without the influence of these 'pre-eminent authorities' the loans from European museums for the exhibition could not have been secured. Vogel postulated that Curnow tended "to use Bassani and Fagg's material, often without clear citations". [72] Bassani and Fagg replied to this reproach by stating that they had reached their conclusions independently and had felt no need to cite Curnow more than once because her dissertation had brought nothing new to their knowledge.[73] They also pointed out 'deep and fundamental differences in the approaches' between their publication and Curnow's dissertation. Curnow reacted to this with a lengthy rejoinder in which she acknowledged the diversity of publications of Bassani and Fagg on African material in European collections, but stated that before 1983 they had not published an in-depth study relating to this corpus of ivories. Her dissertation, on the other hand, "was the first full-length study of Afro-Portuguese ivories from both Benin and Sierra Leone. Its appendix was the first attempt at a catalogue raisonné (...) it also included comprehensive contributions of pieces to workshops and individual hands, which had not been done before". [74] However, she agreed to the differences in their approaches: Whereas *Africa and the Renaissance* reflected a Eurocentric interpretation by stressing European prototypes and motifs, she had attempted to offer a more African point of view. Curnow had examined "the interplay between African and European cultures, the historical nature of their contact, the process of compromise inherent in cross-cultural commissioning (…)". [75] These remarks are in keeping with Curnow's review of the exhibition of 1989 in which she criticized the exhibition's "preoccupation with European sources and contributions" which according to her seemed like "an apologia, a way of making these examples of African art more acceptable to Western viewers by stressing their non-African elements". [76]

1.3 Western aesthetics and collectors' interests

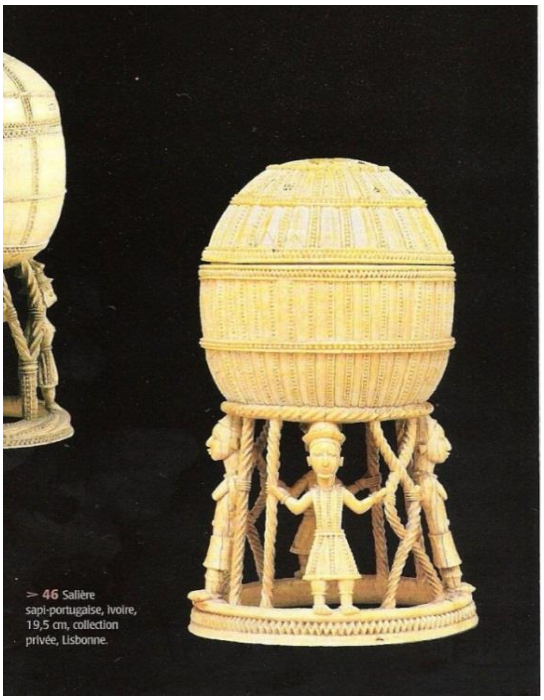
In later years Bassani has continued his research on Western sources for the decoration of the ivories. He for example discovered an image of an Indian elephant on a hunting horn (*oliphant*) in the Musée de l'Homme. In his view this image must have been provided by the patron who commissioned the horn. He hypothesized that a drawing by Raphael was the source. [77] In 2000 he published his lifework*: African Art and Artefacts in European Collections 1400-1800*.[78] In the appendix he gave 'additional notes on the Afro-Portuguese Ivories' in which he referred to Curnow's dissertation. He had discovered that one of his former hypotheses on the lost decoration of a saltcellar could be confirmed and Curnow had been wrong.[79] However, Bassani's one-sided approach has also been noticed by others. The exhibition *Africa: Masterpieces from a Continent* (Turin, 2003-2004) which he curated was criticized for representing African art according to Western aesthetics as primitive and unchanging. [80] In a review of the catalogue and exhibition *Ivoires d'Afrique dans les anciennes collections Françaises* at the Quai Branly in 2008, also curated by Bassani, Peter Mark observed its selective treatment of historical documentation. Mark states that the references to the history of the objects before they arrived in Europe are almost entirely based on Bassani's own previous writings, leaving out contesting theories on geographical attributions.[81]

I think that Curnow may have been right by assuming that the preoccupations of the 'Eurocentrics' in this debate could result from the wish to make the Luso-African ivories more acceptable to a Western public by stressing the Western influence on the African artworks. The ivories could not be considered 'authentically' African because of their hybrid nature. Instead they have been upgraded from a sort of 'early tourist art' to the realm of 'high art' by proving that the objects can keep up with examples of Western virtuosity. This has also been noticed by E.S. Martinez in relation to the exhibition *Incisive Images: Ivory and Boxwood Carvings 1450-1800* of 2007 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She states that "the situation of these Afro-Portuguese pieces among the other European small-scale but virtuosic works in ivory downplays their 'African' identity, while attesting to their ability to seamlessly meld into a 'European' context without losing any of their distinctive visual presence".[82]

In my opinion, the interests of museums and collectors are factors that have to be acknowledged. This can be illustrated by the following interesting example. On June 11, 2008 Sotheby's in Paris auctioned a '16th century ivory saltcellar' for almost 1.3 million euros. The Austrian newspaper *Der Standard* wondered if this was the same ivory that was included in the exhibition of February 19 to May 11 of the same year at the Quai Branly, which was loaned from a private collection. Sotheby's referred in its auction catalogue to the accompanying publication of the exhibition. According to *Der Standard* the descriptions and images on the photos of the object in the catalogues of Sotheby's and the Quai Branly seemed the same (ill. 4 and 5), but Sotheby's and the Musée du Quai Branly denied it was the same object. Museum and curator (Bassani) did not want to react, but the museum threatened with legal action if its ethics would be publicly questioned.

The newspaper concluded that although it was very unusual that an object was included in a museum catalogue and an auction catalogue at the same time, as a marketing tool it had been very successful.[83] Of course we do not know for sure whether it had been the same object. If it was indeed, the museum cannot help that one of the objects on loan is auctioned soon after the exhibition. However, the museum's uneasy reaction demonstrates that the relation between research and market value of artworks sometimes can become a little awkward.

The emphasis on Western influence in the Luso-African ivories resulted in a limited view on the subject. The production seemed controlled by the Portuguese patron, attaching a passive role to the African artist. This Eurocentric approach was reacted to by scholars who sought a more African perspective. In the next chapter I will describe these contrasting views.



ill. 4 (left) Photo Sotheby's of '16th-century saltcellar', taken from the website of *Der Standard.*
ill. 5 Photo in Catalogue *Ivoires d'Afrique dans les anciennes collections Françaises.*

Chapter 2 'Afrocentric' interpretations

While stressing the influence of Western sources in the Luso-African ivories, Bassani and Fagg did not pay much attention to their African elements or the historical context of their production. In this chapter I will give a survey of more 'Afrocentric' views on the ivory objects.

2.1 African imagery and structure

In an article which was published in *African Arts* in 1975 V.L. Grottanelli already rejected the hypothesis that all 'Afro-Portuguese' ivories were derived from European examples. One of his arguments was that all surviving ivories were completely different in general conception and structure from European saltcellars. Based on a thorough analysis of one example (the 'executioner' which will be discussed in Chapter 4) he concluded that it was "100 percent African in carving technique".[84] He even suggested that the ivories should not be considered as hybrids but as sixteenth century Bullom art. The depiction of European Renaissance dress on many figures on the ivories could reveal the signs of recent acculturation.[85]

In keeping with more traditional views on the ivories, Kathy Curnow in her dissertation of 1983 regarded the ivories as hybrids. Curnow's dissertation has never been published, but a copy can be ordered on the internet. Because it dates from a pre-digital era (1983), the quality of the photographs in the copy is very poor, which makes it a hard read. It is understandable that the glossy catalogue of *Africa and the Renaissance* has become more known than this scholarly paper. Curnow's findings are however very interesting. She regarded the ivories as a result of visual compromise between elements of Western and African art. Compromises were necessary to make the artwork acceptable to both the artist and the outsider. Because the ivories were made for outsiders and had probably a more commemorative than utilitarian function for them, she admits they would have to be called 'tourist art', but she rejects this term because of its pejorative meaning and because the Portuguese of course were not on vacation in West-Africa. She therefore prefers the label 'traveler's art'.[86] Curnow draws attention to the economic factors which determine art production for local and foreign markets. She discerns an 'exocentric' and an 'ethnocentric' foreign buyer. The exocentric buyer is interested in 'authentic' objects, not for their authenticity but for their exoticism. Because he seeks artworks which evoke the alien qualities of the culture, the local artists may adjust their export artworks to meet the customer's wishes. The ethnocentric buyer at the other end of the scale is interested in artworks which are valued in his own culture.[87] According to Curnow the Portuguese of the 15th and 16th century conformed to this ethnocentric pattern of behavior towards the art of the discovered lands. Although they condemned the 'heathen fetishes' they saw in Africa and Asia, they commissioned art works made of precious materials which suited their own tastes. This

resulted in visual compromise. Themes and motifs referring to polytheistic religions were avoided, at least when the Portuguese were able to recognize them. Local patrons remained the most important employers for the artists.[88] Decorative patterning often retained a local character because this was not considered offensive by the Portuguese.[89]

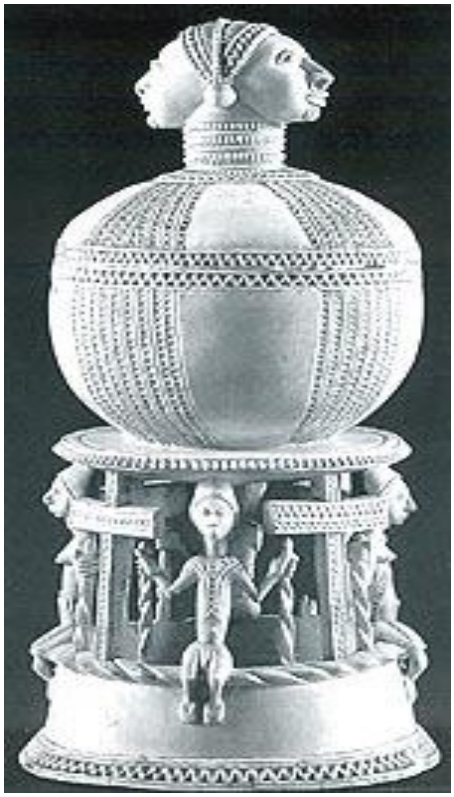
Curnow also paid attention to Portuguese acculturation in West Africa.[90] After the Portuguese colonized the uninhabited Cape Verde Islands in the 1450s, contact with Sierra Leone began 1462. King Dom Afonso V had issued trading licenses to the Cape Verde inhabitants and also to Portuguese merchants. Permanent residence in Sierra Leone was forbidden because the king feared that this would lead to evading of duty payments and smuggling. However, a number of Portuguese chose to live in Sierra Leone illegally with permission of the local rulers. These *lançados* (meaning the thrown out ones) had to conform to local law and customs and often married local women. They acted as middlemen traders for the Portuguese and the Africans, often with the help of their African wives. They integrated into local society, many adopted local dress and scarification, others kept to their Portuguese dress and crucifix to remind the community of their origin. [91] As middlemen between the Portuguese and the Africans they knew what goods were desired on the European market and where they could find them.[92]

Curnow produced a thorough stylistic analysis of the saltcellars and discerned two types, those with a conical shaped base (type A) and those with a cylindrical base (Type B). She concluded that the artists who made the saltcellars of type A freely adopted European forms and motifs, while the type B-artists, apart from incorporating Portuguese figures, mainly held on to local forms and motifs.[93]

2.2 The depiction of the 'other'

In a later article (1990) Curnow elaborated on the theme of the depiction of the Portuguese 'other' on the saltcellars. [94] She assumed that the difference in representation of the Portuguese on the Sierra Leone and the Benin objects results from the different nature of the interaction of Portuguese and Africans in these areas. Whereas on the saltcellars produced in Sierra Leone the Portuguese are depicted with the same physiognomy as the Africans, the Benin ivories portray them with accentuated foreign characteristics, straight hair, beards and sharp noses. She concluded that this reflects the difference in position the Portuguese held in these societies. While the Portuguese in Sierra Leone were socially integrated, in Benin they were perceived as strangers. But they were not satirized on the ivories. According to Curnow this reflects that the Portuguese were not a threat to the dominant culture and that the interaction took place under African control. Curnow points to the many depictions of Portuguese figures in Benin court art in bronze and ivory of the same period. She assumes that they were included in the Edo symbolic system in which they were associated with the water god Olokun.[95]

Following in Curnow's footsteps Suzanne Preston Blier has suggested that African beliefs about death and the afterworld played a major role in the perception of the Portuguese and their representation in African art of the period.[96] In Kongo, Benin and Sierra Leone it was believed that the dead travelled across the water to reach the land of the ancestors. The Portuguese who came travelling by sea were perceived as coming from the land of the spirits to the land of the living. This idea could have been reinforced by their white skin color, as this color was associated with Olokun, the wealthy god of the sea. The Portuguese also carried with them the cross, which in African belief was a sign of spiritual passage.[97] The imagery on the ivories (also of white color) is in keeping with this assumption. The identification of the Portuguese with the dead can be seen in the use of figures similar to the traditional stone figures that depicted ancestors. The seated figures on the ivories could refer to the practice of burying the dead in seated positions or in a chair. The bars or spears that are frequently depicted on the base could refer to the tradition of burying a person of high status with his weapons. [98] The Janushead on top of several saltcellars (see for example ill. 6) could refer to a person of extraordinary power possessing nighttime sight and the power of bridging the human and spiritual world.[99]

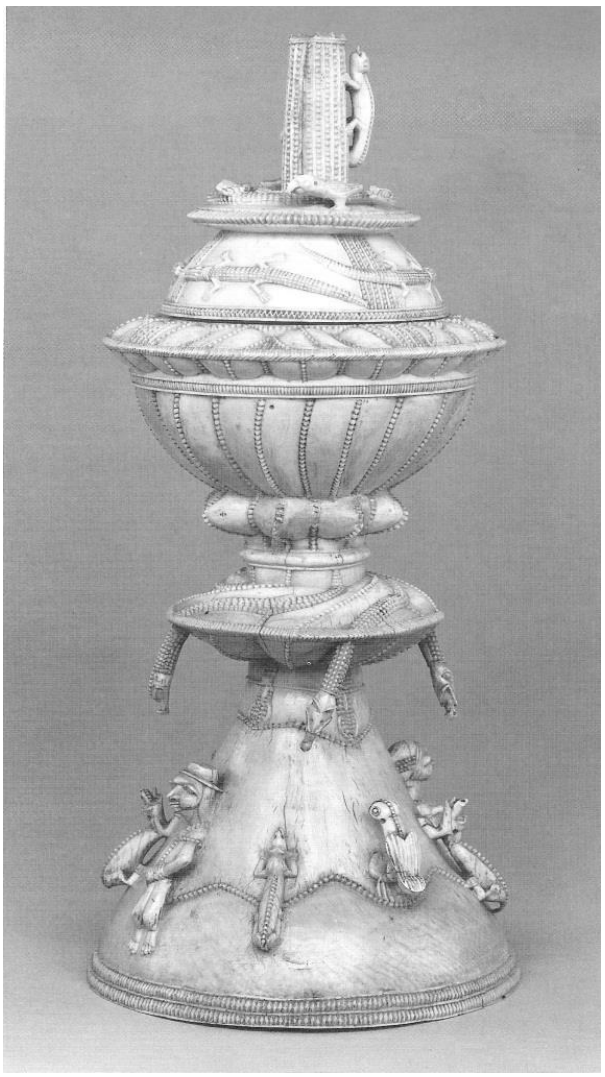


ill. 6 Saltcellar with Janushead, Museo Preistorico e Etnografico, Rome.

The serpent imagery on many saltcellars, for example the one in illustration 7, could refer to the water spirit Niniganné, which is born from a female python. Persons with supernatural sight take the egg home and after

the snake comes out it is carried by the owner to help him acquire wealth. The serpent is at the same time very dangerous and only those with extraordinary powers can avoid being killed by it.[100] Other animals on the saltcellars are often crocodiles, dogs and birds. Crocodiles were also seen as bringers of wealth. Dogs were the natural enemy of the serpent but were thought to have nighttime sight. Birds were considered communicators between the human and the divine world.[101] The egg-shaped form of the saltcellars could have suggested the primeval egg from which all life emanates.[102]

Blier did however not agree with Curnow's assumptions on the difference in depictions of the Portuguese in Sierra Leone and Benin. According to Blier the absence of distinctive European physiognomy on the Sierra Leone objects suggests that most Portuguese moved in circles removed from the local artists.[103] She concluded that "although most of the artists may have never seen the Portuguese firsthand, they created complex images of them as persons, who like local ancestors and water genies are powerful, wealthy, and blessed with supernatural sight."[104]



ill. 7 Saltcellar with animal imagery, National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Chapter 3 Intercultural encounters

Contrary to the assumption of Bassani and Fagg that the African elements on the ivories cannot be explained anymore, Blier demonstrated that they can be interpreted within the context of West African cosmology and belief systems. It seems that the Portuguese patrons did not find these African images inappropriate or disturbing. It raises the question how the Portuguese of the 15th and 16th century perceived them. Did they have any clue to their African meaning or did they see just exotic decorations? And is it possible to trace how the Africans really felt about the Portuguese?

3.1 The 'white man through native eyes'

The relations between early modern Europe and Africa have mainly been described in the light of the slave trade, colonialism and exploitation of later ages, viewing Europeans as oppressors of passive and primitive African peoples. In this spirit Julius Lips wrote *The savage hits back* (1937) in which he attempts to reconstruct the image of the white man through native eyes by looking at the art of the 'savage'.[105] Lips described the reflection in non-Western art of the 'strange things that surrounded the white man': ships, weapons, musical instruments and pipes, which spoke to the native's imagination. The material possessions of the white man enabled him to execute his power over the surrounding world. This power was transmitted to the objects themselves in the native's mind. Therefore the white man's belongings were claimed by the nobles and chiefs to enhance their own power. The fascination with these powerful, modern objects led to obsessive copying, often without understanding their practical use or mechanisms .[106] Lips stated that the 'negro' only adopted those objects he could understand, other artifacts were just imitated, often wrongly, for decorational use.[107] After the white men's ships with soldiers had arrived, missionaries, monks, merchants and officials followed and their characteristics have been reflected and often satirized in the native's art. The reconstruction of the native' reaction to the 'white man' by using his artworks was an original approach at the time, but Lips clearly based his views on a presupposed dichotomy between Western civilization and non-Western primitives that in his view existed from the beginning of their contacts. The following paragraph will demonstrate that this presumed dichotomy did not exist in the period of early contacts between the Portuguese and the West Africans.

3.2 Intercultural encounters

Research on the relations between Europe and Africa points out that the dichotomy which certainly developed in later centuries did not exist in the 15th and 16th centuries. Relations between Europe and Africa were based more on cooperation than on opposition. Fruitful alliances developed between Portugal, Rome and various African kingdoms (Kongo, Benin, Ethiopia and the Fante states) which worked to the benefit of all, as is demonstrated by Andrea Felber Seligman in a thesis of 2007.[108] She has focused on African experiences and agendas in the relationships between Africans and Europeans of that period. One of her conclusions is that "the structures of European and African societies, political ambitions, and relatively equal military powers helped each see key advantages in maintaining political partnerships with the other". [109] Although the Portuguese initially tried to conquer the West African coast by force, they soon met with African resistance and changed to a policy of cooperation with and respect for the African rulers. [110] The Portuguese had to adapt to the African standards in political, diplomatic and economic relations [111] Relations between Portuguese and Africans were varied and multifaceted; whereas the Portuguese Crown sought to maintain positive contacts with African rulers, Portuguese settlers, merchants and missionaries did not always follow the Crown's directives because they often had their own agendas in their relations with Africans.[112] In the early days of contact, the Portuguese used African captives as informants and guides. The navigational success of the Portuguese explorers depended for a great deal on the assistance of these African captives.[113] The African kingdoms also benefited from this cooperation. Trade with the Portuguese was an affirmation of the status of the African rulers. Primary sources of this period also reveal that they were interested in European lifestyle, worship, crops, and politics.[114] They also sought alliances with the Portuguese and with Rome to strengthen their kingdom's positions in relation to other African rulers.[115] Many ambassadors from Benin, Kongo and Ethiopia travelled in this period to Europe and were hosted by Portugal and Rome as equals (the earliest recorded embassy from Ethiopia arrived in 1306 in Rome). In Rome and Lisbon even two centers for lodging, religious study and collection of knowledge about Africa were created for African visitors.[116] A fundamental part of the diplomatic exchanges was the presentation of gifts between guest and ruler, which indicated the ruler's power. The Portuguese gifts to African royalty and ambassadors were for example weapons, maps, tapestry and religious books and objects. [117] Clothing suitable for noblemen was also a frequent gift of the Portuguese to the Africans. [118]

Felber Seligman also pays attention to the ivory carvings which were made for the Portuguese. She labels them as important historical documentation on African-European contacts outside the court and the artists' perspectives on the Portuguese.[119] In the use of animal and water imagery and its relation to the realm of the dead which Blier earlier pointed out, she sees the reflection of ambiguous feelings towards the Portuguese. [120]

3.3 Imperial ambitions

In keeping with this story of cooperation to gain mutual advantage are the conclusions of Mario Pereira, who researched the meaning of African art at the Portuguese court in the period 1450-1521 against the historical background of Portuguese-African relations.[121] His analysis of archival documentation and primary sources resulted in remarkable conclusions. Pereira has placed the exchange of West African ivory of the 15th and 16th centuries in the context of Portuguese court culture. He states that the Portuguese court intentionally used African art in its imperial policy towards other European powers. As a precious material ivory was associated with the hunt and the carving on the ivories reinforced mental connections with hunting, military strength and courtly love. The Portuguese perceived their early activities in Africa in the light of their crusading ideals and as a continuation of the *Reconquista* (the recovery of Spain from the Muslims). They soon met with resistance of powerful Senegambian kingdoms, which forced them to adopt a policy of diplomacy and peaceful commerce in Sub-Saharan Africa .To establish enduring bonds between the kingdoms appropriate gifts were exchanged and Portuguese representatives in the 1450s were invited to join elephant hunting expeditions in Senegambia. The elite warriors of Portugal and Senegambia seemed to share the values common to horse-owning warrior aristocracies.[122] By integrating the Portuguese into the rituals of the elephant hunt, the Senegambian rulers could show off their military and political power and the wealth of their lands. The Portuguese were impressed by this display and brought back to the Portuguese court of Infante Dom Henrique the trophies of the hunt. The Infante collected these objects to demonstrate to Europe his success in overseas expansion. He for example sent a large elephant tusk to the court of Burgundy as a present for his sister, Isabella of Portugal. [123]

In the 1480s the Portuguese made contact with the Kingdom of the Kongo. They abducted a number of Kongolese nobles. Among them was Kasuta, a member of the royal family and the chief spiritual authority (*Mani Vunda*) in the Kongo. The kidnapping of Africans was part of Portuguese policy. After hosting them for a few years in Portugal, they were used as informants and interpreters to facilitate positive relationships in Africa. During his stay at the Portuguese court, Kasuta was educated in the Portuguese language, Christian religion and courtly etiquette and became a favorite of king João II. When Kasuta returned to the Kongo the Kongolese believed he had come back from the land of the dead to the living. They believed that the Portuguese king was *Nzambi Mpungu*, the otherworldly complement of their worldly ruler, *Mani Kongo.* Kasuta introduced Christianity to the *Mani Kongo.* He was capable to translate this new religion in familiar cosmological terms. As spiritual leader Kasuta was the person to mediate between the land of the living and the dead. When the *Mani Kongo* was ready to be converted to the Christian religion, he sent Kasuta back to Portugal with gifts of royal art: ivory horns and raffia textiles, which were also considered as luxury articles. As *Mani Vunda* Kasuta invested the *Mani Kongo* with the royal regalia thereby legitimizing his rule. Pereira

argues that in a parallel ceremony Kasuta invested the Portuguese king as *Nzambi Mpungu*, meaning lord of the otherworld.[124] Pereira states that Kasuta must have explained to the Portuguese the meaning and importance of the royal regalia because that would have facilitated the appreciation for these gifts.[125] He concluded that the African objects were not only viewed as exotic and marvelous but were integrated in the imperial ideology of the Portuguese and therefore seen as embodiment of the king's power in Africa.[126] The Portuguese king mistranslated his title *Nzambi Mpungu* as 'lord of the world'. As Pereira states: "Instead the Portuguese focused on the element of highest or ultimate power without regard for the sphere in which that power was believed to be held, which was the spiritual – not the political – realm".[127] It was however a misunderstanding that suited both parties.

It has been documented that king João liked to impress his guests with his knowledge about Africa and with objects from this continent which he had obtained. [128] Specimen of African flora and fauna were also displayed at the Portuguese court, for example a snake's skin, birds, crocodiles, camels and lions.[129] Most of these animals also are depicted on the saltcellars, they must have added to the demonstration of the king's power in sub-Saharan Africa.

Pereira has also examined the role of the Luso-African ivories from Sierra Leone at the court of Manuel I who reigned from 1495 to 1521. He demonstrates that the collecting, circulation and exchange of these West African objects formed an important part of the king's artistic program. The arts were used to enhance his reputation and to promote his messianic imperial ideology to other European courts.[130] The Portuguese knew the artistic traditions of Sierra Leone. Wooden figures from Sierra Leone were for instance presented by a Portuguese noble to Charles the Bold in 1470. According to Pereira it was the appreciation for these traditional African wood and ivory carvings which inspired the Portuguese patronage of the Temne and Bullom artists.[131]

Pereira's remarkable conclusions turn the tables on the assumption that the Portuguese would have considered the African elements in the ivory objects as exotic and strange only. Portuguese and Africans interacted in this period on equal footing. The Portuguese court intentionally incorporated the African elements of the ivories in its imperial policy. Of course not all ivories were produced for the court. Production and market were multifaceted and it is impossible to trace which object was exactly made by whom and for whom. The perspective of an intercultural exchange based on equality puts the ivories however in an interesting light of a two-way relationship. Research on the relations between the Portuguese and West-African people has moreover demonstrated that in the 15th century a Luso-African society started to develop with accompanying aspects of creolization.[132] The Luso-Africans prided themselves on being 'Portuguese' which meant that they were traders. Their language developed gradually into a mixed language consisting of Portuguese and African elements. The Catholic religion was also a characteristic of their identity, but this was also a mixture of Christian, Jewish and African rituals. The Luso-

Africans built houses in Portuguese style with white exterior walls and a veranda or a porch. Taking into account this context of a 'melting pot' we could perhaps consider the ivories as an artistic reflection of this synthesis of Portuguese and African culture. In the following two chapters I will discuss the iconography of the ivories in detail. The objects are described from different perspectives. I will discern between male and female imagery to examine the information which the ivories display on gender roles.

ill. 8 *Oliphant* , West-Africa, 16th century, Museo degli Argenti, Florence.

Chapter 4 Depictions of male power

In this chapter I will examine the representation of male figures or symbols of their power on the Luso-African ivories. As described in the previous chapter the Portuguese used the ivories for enhancing the image of their overseas achievements in the eyes of other European courts. It seems likely that the imagery on the ivories would have reflected their status as rulers of the (other)world.

4.1 European and African iconologies

Before I start discussing the ivory imagery a few observations about the difference in approach of European and African iconography are in place, as have been described by Suzanne P. Blier. [133] Classical Western iconology has been concerned with identifying images and motifs of mostly Christian subject matter. It is mainly based on the relating of images to texts and on their likeness to reality. It goes back to the manuals of symbols, allegories and personifications such as Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* of the 16th century. African art can not easily be explained in terms of pure form and subject matter, because more important than realistic images are context, positioning and (hand) gestures. The same iconographies can therefore have a different iconology.[134] This does however not mean that there are no conventions in the imagery of African art. Herbert M. Cole has for example discerned five archetypal images which are widespread in African art: the male and female couple, the rider, the woman and child, the forceful male and the stranger, which occur in a great range of materials and contexts.[135] These icons usually are idealized representations of perfect behavior.[136] Cole included a Luso-African saltcellar in his chapter on the stranger in African history'.[137] This chapter in my paper and the next will illustrate that the other archetypes can also be recognized in the Luso-African ivories.

In African thought objects are 'alive' ; the chair of a chief helps to make him a leader by elevating him from the ground.[138] Art is often the expression of wealth through the use of valuable materials as ivory, metals and beads.[139] These materials are also bearers of meaning: ivory refers to the strength and endurance of the elephant it came from.[140] In medieval Europe ivory conveyed a similar meaning of luxury. In addition its whiteness and fleshiness made it the perfect material to portray Christ.[141] Christ's mother Mary was often symbolized by an ivory tower, a comparison which originated in the Biblical song of Solomon. [142]

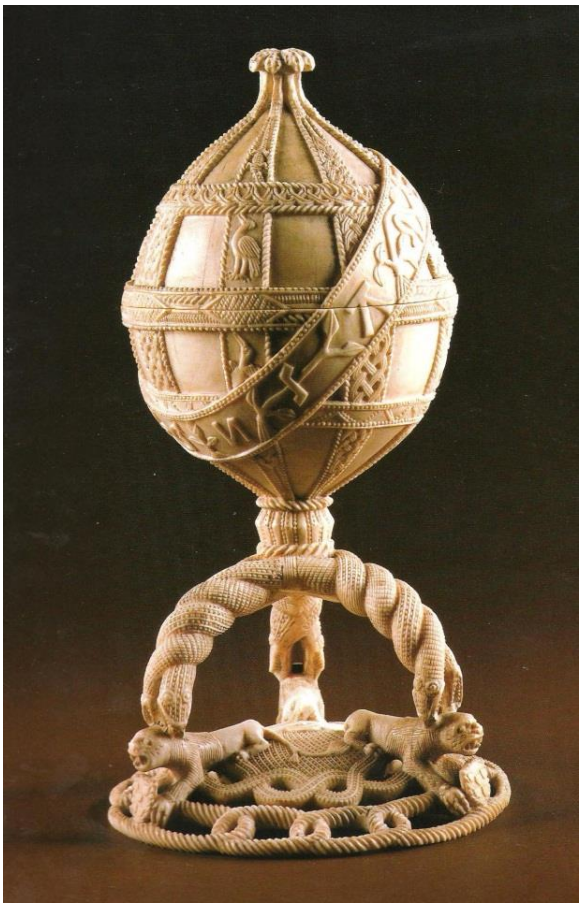
4.2 *Oliphants*: Imagery of the hunt

The group of ivories with carvings that refer to Portuguese power through a mainly Western imagery are the hunting horns, called *oliphants* (ill. 9). Around thirty horns have survived, some are cut and have become powder flasks.[143] A strong indication that they were made for Europeans is the fact that they are blown at the end, as the ones for African use are blown at the side.[144] The horns show representations of hunting male figures, the Portuguese and Spanish arms, the cross of the Military Order of Christ, and sometimes Latin inscriptions and the armillary sphere. Bassani and Fagg have related the images on the *oliphants* to late 15th century woodcuts and illustrations in the *Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis,* a book of hours which was published in Paris in 1498.[145] Pereira has demonstrated that elephant tusks (and other body parts such as skin) were already exchanged between Senegambia and Portugal during the 1450s as hunting trophies. The Portuguese were invited to take part in the hunting of elephants to create and strengthen diplomatic and social bonds .[146] The exchange of these African gifts was also intended to put the Portuguese in their debt.[147] In both Europe and Africa the hunting of big game was controlled by the rulers and a symbol of noble superiority. An animal as large as an elephant could however not be hunted in Europe. By offering these precious ivory tusks to members of other European courts, the Portuguese demonstrated their friendly bonds with African rulers and their economic and global dominance.[148] According to Pereira this connection to the elephant hunt is crucial to understanding why the Luso-African ivories of the late 15th century were carved in the form of hunting horns and carried hunting imagery.[149] The Portuguese associated the *oliphants* with a medieval Mediterranean tradition of the crusades and Christian knighthood. The hunting imagery could also refer to the hunt as an allegory of courtly love. With their patronage of Sierra Leonean ivory carvers the Portuguese were following in the footsteps of the caliphs of Islamic Spain and the crusader king Fernando el Magno.[150]

ill. 9 *Oliphant*, late 15th-early 16th century, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art.

4.3 Sapi-Portuguese saltcellars; Portuguese power and African leader figures

The saltcellar which comes to the fore prominently in this context of Portuguese power is the one which resembles an armillary sphere with the motto of Manuel I '*Espera in Deo*' encircling the container (ill. 10).[151] The shields between the lions' paws on the base bear the arms of the House of Aviz. According to Bassani and Fagg this salt's "plaited and twisted forms recall Renaissance architectural conventions, especially those of Manueline Portugal. The presence of crouching lions surmounted by what resemble elaborately ornamented colonettes reflect a European influence".[152] On the same page in Bassani and Fagg's catalogue is a photograph of a tympanum in the Royal Cloister of Batalha which is typical of Manueline architecture. Bassani and Fagg state that "the beaded and spiral colonettes (…) reflect (…) an artistic sensibility which, to a certain degree, influenced the decoration of the Sapi-Portuguese ivories".[153] In keeping with their assumptions on the ivories in general they see an object mainly influenced by European aesthetics. Pereira, who has examined this saltcellar in depth, believes it was commissioned by Manuel I's to convey his particular image of kingship and imperial ideology.[154] Lions were of course royal animals and they are depicted according to medieval heraldry in the position *couchant* with tails forked (*queue-forché*).[155] Biting the back of the lions are three pairs of entwined snakes which support the container.



ill. 10 Armillary sphere saltcellar, National Museum of Scotland.

Pereira thinks the snakes were products of the cultural beliefs of the Temne and Bullom people. He relates them to the account of Valentim Fernandes who wrote about Sierra Leone in 1506-1510.[156] He mentioned serpents which guarded the universal idol of the Temne in the woods, called *tshyntrchin*.[157] The snakes live on the blood of the offerings made to the idol and they kill and eat those who try to steal the offerings.[158] Pereira thinks the serpents on this and other ivories were meant to convey the same notion of guardians of treasures, especially because of their aggressive attitude towards other animals on the objects.[159]

Whereas the shape of the container suggests the form of an egg, the vertical and horizontal bands and diagonal ecliptic indicate its meaning of an armillary sphere. This is reinforced by the motto *Espera in Deo*, which is a Portuguese abbreviaton of Manuel I's Latin motto "*Spera in deo e fac bonitatem*". Both mottos appeared also on armillary spheres in manuscripts commissioned by the king. [160] The armillary sphere was Manuel I's personal symbol. This does not mean that this must have been the only possible association. It is possible that the container should have suggested an egg, maybe a python's egg, at the same time.[161] Pereira also noticed that the container's shape resembles a pomegranate fruit. Like the egg, this fruit carried associations of fertility.[162] According to Pereira the commissioning of the saltcellar with his personal device shows the high esteem of the king and court for the Sierra Leone artists. The saltcellar should be seen within the king's larger program of artistic patronage.[163] It represents Manuel I's celebration of his succession as designed by God and his destination for greatness in overseas expansion.[164] Regarding the relation of this object to Manueline architecture, Pereira points out that artistic influence was not one-sided.[165] Research on the taste of the Portuguese court reveals a great interest in the exotic and an active collecting and circulation of Islamic and African objects.[166] Some Portuguese scholars have seen the Manueline style as a result of the increasing interest in North African and sub-Saharan art at the Portuguese court.[167] Pereira thinks it is impossible to trace the exact nature of the artistic influences between Europe and Africa in this period. However, he points out that it would have been hard for the Sierra Leone artists to know about Manueline architecture. The principal monuments of Manueline architecture were erected in the first decades of the 16th century. The Luso-African ivories were already carved before this period. Moreover, the twisted and braided forms on the ivories can be found in the *nomoli* sculptures which are thought to have preceded the ivories. These forms could therefore be seen as a continuation of an indigenous artistic tradition.[168] According to Pereira it seems probable that Luso-African ivories contributed to the construction of Manueline architecture instead of the other way around.

The following saltcellars show a more fundamentally African imagery, although the figures are often depicted with European dress. Kathy Curnow was the first to discern two types of saltcellars, those with a conical base and those with a cylindrical base. She noticed that while the artists who made the conical-shaped ivories adopted European motifs freely, the cylindrical saltcellars show African motifs and forms. [169] Curnow sees the European dress of the figures as indication that the figures are foreigners, as the Sierra

Leonean portrayed Europeans and Africans with the same facial features. Sometimes these foreigners appear however in local guises. [170] She suggests that the African artists in those cases meant to portray a powerful man of any nationality or could have represented *lançados* who had gained respect in local society.[171] Bassani and Fagg also think that the saltcellars with a cylindrical base are of African origin, because the sculpture on the lids illustrates only African themes. They however suggested that the European figures carved on the bases were Portuguese visitors to Sierra Leone.[172]

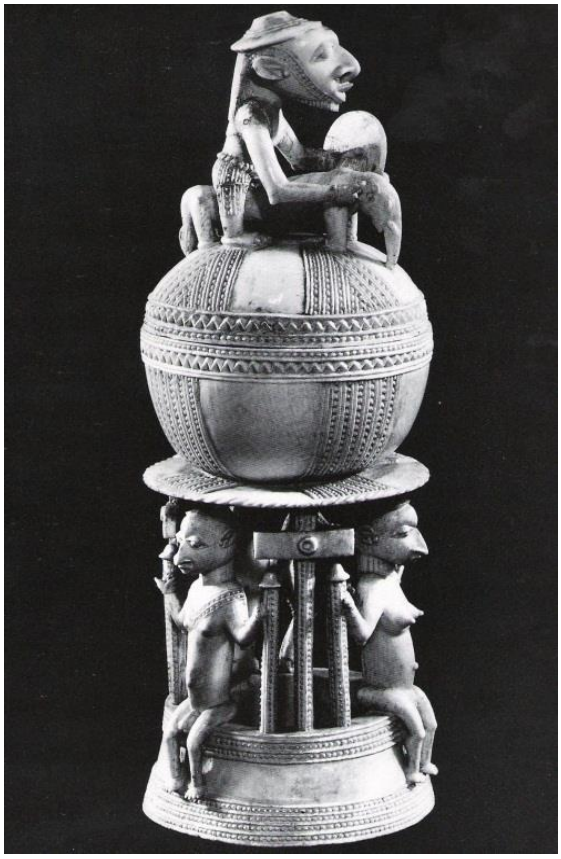
ill.11 Saltcellar Museo Nazionale Preistorico e Etnografico 'Luigi Pigorini' Rome

The first saltcellar I will discuss is the so-called 'executioner' which is part of the collection of the Museo Nazionale Preistorico e Etnografico 'Luigi Pigorini' in Rome (ill. 11). Compared to others this is a large one, measuring 17 inches (= 43 cm.). It has an openwork base with four alternating male and female figures in seated position. The men wear short shirts and knee-breeches with codpieces and flat hats. The women wear skirts and have chevron scarifications on their chest. All of the figures on the base have their arms bent at the elbow and hold on to support devices at their sides which are either elaborate knot-like forms or

vertical posts, on which crocodiles crawl with their heads pointing downwards**.** On top is a group composed of a main figure, who has a beard and wears short breeches with codpiece and a wide-brimmed hat. He holds a round shield in his left hand, and a weapon in his right. It looks as if he is about to cut the bent figure's head off. In front of them are six heads that have already been cut off.

According to Kathy Curnow the main figure could be a European in the local representation of a warrior. Bassani and Fagg interpret the main figure also as a great chief who is performing an execution: "the scene seems to illustrate an execution, as described in the chronicle of Alvarez de Almada in the seventeenth century (…). The gigantic size of the executioner compared with the victim suggests a symbolic representation of the great chief endowed with the power of life and death, as do the shield and the exotic codpiece which would surely not be attributes of an executioner."[173] However, they also point to the fact that the finial group is incomplete and has been restored, as was already demonstrated by V.L. Grottanelli in an article of 1975.[174] The right arm was broken off at the elbow and also the head of the sitting figure was missing. According to Grottanelli the form of the restored axe is improbable.[175] He states that even a non-specialist could have seen this. This means that the original pose of the figure could have been different and more in keeping with his dress and shield. According to Martinez the scene may have represented a Sapi burial custom, which is described by Valentim Fernandes in his account of Sierra Leone of 1506-1510: A deceased man is placed in a chair with a shield in his hand and a spear in his other hand. If he is a man who has killed many men in battle, they put all the skulls in front of him.[176] In West-Africa the symbolism of trophy-heads and knifes indicating men of great power is widespread.[177] The right arm is considered the arm of action.[178] Whereas Bassani and Fagg described the scene on the Rome saltcellar as a depiction of an actual moment of execution, which is of course spectacular, it seems more likely that it was meant to symbolically represent a warrior who during his life had slain many opponents. This example illustrates that when interpreted from a 'Eurocentric' perspective and by looking at a European restoration, a scene can look more cruel and 'primitive' than was originally intended by the artist.

Other examples of saltcellars with a fundamentally African imagery are the one with a seated man on a tripod chair and the one with a man riding an elephant on top. The finial representing a seated man on a tripod chair could also refer to a Sapi burial scene .[179] The figure on the lid reaches to an object which according to Curnow might have been a food bowl (ill. 12).[180] Figures in tripod chairs have also been sculptured in stone *nomoli*. The finial with the man riding an elephant (ill. 13) could represent a leader figure, as mounted men in African art are identified with superiority, no matter what they ride. Men are depicted riding horses, camels, elephants, antelopes, crocodiles, leopards, lions, oxen or even tortoises. Many images represent riding of animals which were not ridden in real life.[181] The saltcellars with leader figures on the lids and those with figures riding animals could be considered examples of the iconic images of the forceful male and the mounted leader as described by Herbert M. Cole. [182]



ill. 12 (left) Saltcellar with man in tripod chair, Seattle Art Museum.
ill 13 Saltcellar with man riding an elephant,Museum für Völkerkunde.

On a relatively large group (six) of the survived ivories a Janushead is carved at the lid (ill. 14). These saltcellars all have egg-shaped containers and are supported by cylindrical bases. In one instance where only the lid has survived, the Janushead is placed at the back of a four legged animal with a human head. According to Fagg this represents a dog depicted in a partly anthropomorphic way.[183] The Janus motif is one of the characteristic features of West African art. Images of a male and a female in a Janushead have been explained as expression of the bisexuality of a deity who can look both forwards and backwards.[184] They are also seen as signifier of persons with supernatural vision who can bridge the human and spiritual worlds. They are associated with success in farming and trading.[185] In the cases of the saltcellars the heads are of the same (male) sex. Suzanne P. Blier has related the Janus imagery on the saltcellars to the representation of the Portuguese as powerful individuals who have returned from the land of the dead.[186]

ill. 14 Saltcellar with Janushead, Seattle Art Museum.

One saltcellar shows a somewhat unusual male figure on the lid, a seated man smoking a large pipe (ill. 15). The website of the ethnographic museum in Vienna mentions that it was described in the collection of Ambras of 1596 as "*Ain helfenbaines rundes stöckhl wie ein prunnen* (a well, sm) *mit mändlen und hunden, aller schad- und manglhaft*".[187] The top figure is a later restoration.

ill. 15 Saltcellar with man smoking pipe, Ethnographic Museum Vienna.

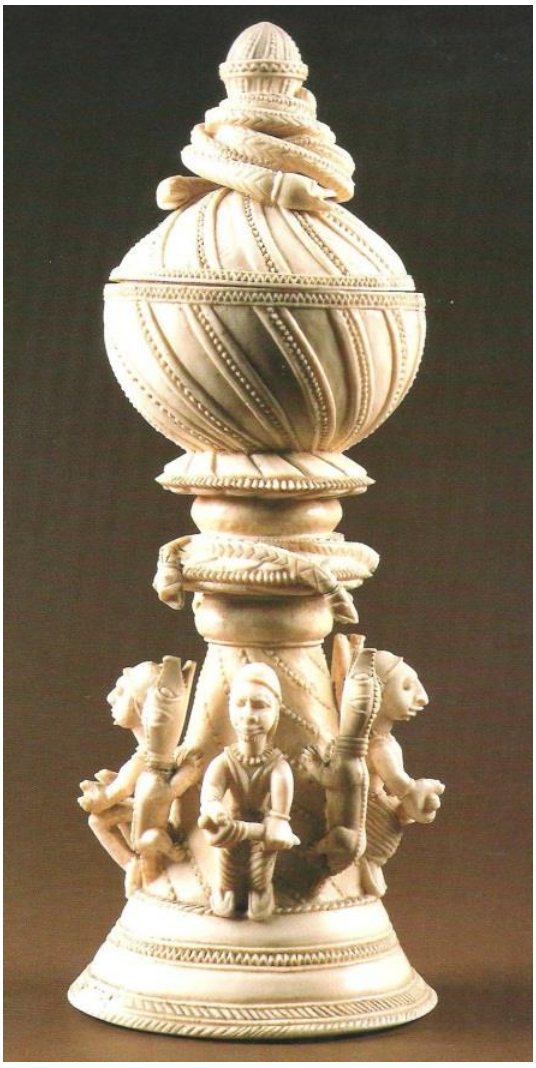
Among the remaining saltcellars there is the one we have already seen in paragraph 2.2 with on the lid a pillar on which a crocodile crawls to the top (ill. 7). The scene on the lid has been damaged. From a drawing that was made before the damaging can be deduced that a little man is scaling the pillar which carries a bird on top .[188] Similar little men climb or sit in the crow's nest of ships on the lids of 'Bini-Portuguese' saltcellars which will be described in the following paragraph.

Another salt of which we know its lid has been restored carries three seated men with shields on top.[189] Other examples of probable later restorations are the objects with a lid depicting the head of Christ (ill.16) and a standing figure looking like an acrobat or ballet dancer holding a brace (ill.17). This last example is part of the collection of the Musée des Beaux Arts in Dijon and also was displayed in the exhibition *Ivoires d 'Afrique* at the Quai Branly. Its website mentions the dress of the base figures recalling the custom of Giovanni Arnolfini painted by Jan van Eijk.[190] The figure on the lid which is dressed in another style is not mentioned at all. Martinez mentions a saltcellar with a Janushead on the lid with on one side the head of Christ crowned with thorns and on the other side a skull.[191] This object was on loan from a private collection in the exhibition *Incisive Images: Ivory and Boxwood Carvings 1450-1800* of the Metropolitan Museum in New York in 2007. Martinez thinks it is improbable that an African carver depicted a Janushead in this way, unless he would have intended to follow European conventions of depicting a *memento mori*.[192] As these last three examples are not consistent with the imagery of the rest of the corpus, these are probably also later replacements.

ill. 16 (left) Saltcellar, in 2008 part of the collection of the Entwistle Gallery, Paris/London.

ill. 17 Saltcellar, Musée des Beaux Arts, Dijon.

The human figures on the bases are depicted mainly in frontal positions. Of them the male figures show the most variation. Their hand gestures can differ. Some hold their hands in their pockets, some behind their backs, some seem to be praying and some hold shields and weapons. On the base of one saltcellar two figures carry a rounded stick in both hands. (ill.18). According to Curnow the two figures on the other side of this base hold books. She has not been able to identify the other objects. If two figures hold books, could the other two perhaps be holding written scrolls? Maybe two hold bible books and two hold bible scrolls? Of course this is just speculation.



ill. 18 Saltcellar, Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin.

On the frontispiece of William Fagg's *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* an illustration of a saltcellar which has been lost is represented (ill. 19). Fagg did not mention its source, but Kathy Curnow indicated that it was probably an illustration in an 18th century book.[193] On the base of the saltcellars four figures are depicted, three males and one female. One male figure holds a book and another bearded figure in a long dress holds a key and a feather or a quill-pen. We do not know whether this is an accurate copy of the real object, or that the

illustrator has embellished the picture by adding these details. The female figure does not hold any object. Her arms are covered by a long cloak.

ill. 19 Illustration of lost saltcellar in W.P. Fagg's *Afro-Portuguese Ivories*.

4.4. Male imagery in 'Bini-Portuguese' ivories

A separate group among the Luso-African ivories are the artworks which were supposedly made in the kingdom of Benin starting from the second quarter of 16th century.[194] They are called 'Bini-Portuguese'ivories. William B. Fagg discerned this group of ivories from the 'Sapi-Portuguese' ones in 1961-1962.[195] The Benin ivory carvers were organized in a guild controlled by the Benin king, *oba.* Sometimes they worked for other patrons but only with the king's permission.[196] Only three Benin-*oliphants* have survived. They do not show the hunting scenes based on European imagery which the 'Sapi-Portuguese' hunting horns reveal, but they represent the armillary sphere and the Portuguese coat of arms embedded in Benin-style decorative patterns.

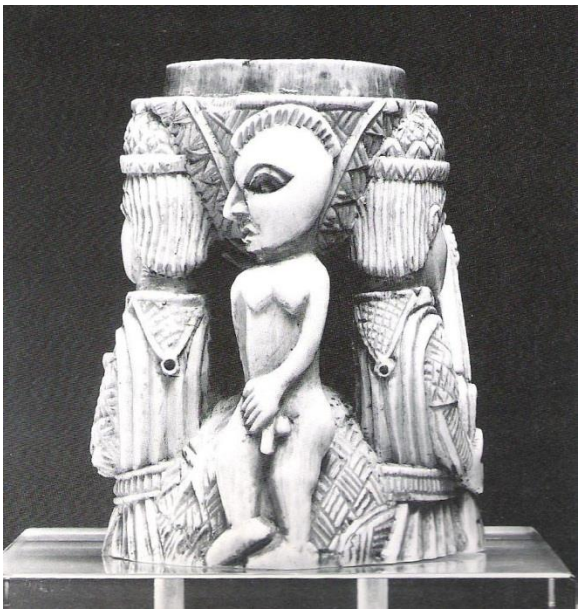
Around fifteen 'Bini-Portuguese' saltcellars have survived, but only three are complete.[197] The Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh owns a saltcellar of which the lid is restored. The figure of a standing male is put on the top. [198] This is not consistent with the rest of the Benin saltcellars which carry mounted

Portuguese men or their ships, sometimes with a head of a man in the crow's nest (ill.20).

ill. 20 'Bini-Portuguese'saltcellar, British Museum.

The depiction of ships on the lid of the saltcellars brings back in mind the description of Julius Lips of the 'strange things that surrounded the white man' (see paragraph 3.1). The astonishment of the Africans about the ships, the horses and the artifacts the Portuguese brought with them is illustrated by the account of a visit of the Portuguese trader Cadamosto to a market place in Senegal in 1455. He describes that the "blacks marvel at many things of ours, among others the ingenuity of our crossbows and even more of our bombards, for some of the blacks came to our ship and I made them see a bombard fired, at the noise of which they were terrified. (…) They also admired one of our bagpipes on which I got one of my sailors to play, since they have no knowledge of such an instrument; and seeing it covered with multicoloured cloth

and with some pieces of cloth at the top, they persuaded themselves that it was some living animal which could sing in different voices.(…) They were also astonished by the ingenuity of our ship with its equipment, its masts, sails and anchors. They also thought that the eyes that were painted on the prow of the ship were real eyes and that in this way the ship could see where it was going at sea."[199] The imagery of the saltcellars depicting Portuguese on horses, armed with weapons and ships on the top could reflect this admiration. While traditional Benin art is static, the 'Bini-Portuguese' saltcellars show human figures in motion. The imagery on the bases consists apart from Portuguese riders with weapons and wearing the cross of the Military Order of Christ of nude angels of the male sex with large genitals. Sometimes the angels hide their genitals with their hand (ill. 21). Kathy Curnow has noticed a resemblance of these nude angels to the angels which were carved on the boxes made by the Embriachi family in North Italy in the 15th century.[200] It is possible that some of these boxes were brought to Africa by the Portuguese.



ill. 21 Midsection of a saltcellar, National Museum of Australia, Canberra.

On the saltcellars the Portuguese sometimes hold 'manillas' , bronze or copper rings which were used as currency, as evidences of their wealth.[201] Bassani and Fagg have noticed that the riders sometimes carry a staff or a goad (a stick used for urging cattle). If this was intended to depict a goad they suggest the animals could have been mules instead of horses.[202] They think this is probable because horses rarely survived in south western Nigeria. Another reason for riding on mules could be that the Portuguese diplomats sent by the crown to Africa were usually of lesser nobility. Horses were considered appropriate for people of higher rank, both by the Portuguese and the Africans. The ambassador of the Kongo, Dom Pedro, who was also related to the *Manikongo*, complained in 1515 to the Portuguese king to have received as a gift a mule instead of the horse he was entitled to as a prince.[203]

The Benin origin of these artworks could be derived from their entirely male imagery, which is consistent with the male oriented culture of Benin.[204] In the art of Benin animals are depicted frequently but women only rarely. Benin art focuses on the male, which is a-typical in African art. Manhood is associated with prestige and competition. The *oba* is seen as embodiment of male perfection. Women are considered dangerous; their body fluids can contaminate a man's power. There is only one female chief, the *oba*'s mother, who is usually depicted without overtly female characteristics and not in a maternal role.[205]

The Benin provenance of these objects has however been contested by several scholars. For example by S. Eisenhofer who does not even exclude the possibility that they are of European or even Indian origin. [206] Peter Mark has also demonstrated that the Benin provenance of these ivories needs to be reconsidered.[207] He points out that there is little evidence of sixteenth-century Portuguese trade with Benin. It is therefore unlikely that Benin followed in the footsteps of Sierra Leone as production center for the Luso-African ivories. He suggests that the iconography of the saltcellars could refer to the illegal Portuguese weapon trade with 'Guiné do Cabo Verde', as the Portuguese soldiers and riders display their swords and daggers conspicuously.[208] According to Mark the Benin provenance is held on to by museums and collectors because Benin art is considered a model of African artistic achievement, an exception among other African art which shows more 'primitiveness' or abstraction. A Benin origin therefore adds cultural prestige to an object.[209] It is interesting to note that again the interests of museums and collectors seem to play an important role in the designation of the Luso-African ivories and the interpretation of their iconography.

After these examples of male imagery associated with hunting and power the question raises in what way women are represented on the Sapi-Portuguese saltcellars. Until now we have only encountered women alternating with male figures on the bases of the saltcellars. The last chapter of this paper is therefore dedicated to female imagery on the ivories and the relations between Portuguese men and African women.

Chapter 5 Female imagery in Luso-African ivory

5.1 Depictions of the Virgin

As we have already seen in paragraph 4.2 according to Bassani and Fagg the hunting imagery on the oliphants can frequently be related to scenes from European woodcuts and the French *Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis.* The catalogue of *Africa and the Renaissance* shows several comparisons of scenes from this book of hours with scenes on the hunting horns. While the *oliphants* represent mainly men during the hunt, two of them are known to depict a carving of a woman and child, probably the Madonna and Christ.[210] Among the Latin inscriptions on the *oliphants* some also refer to the Virgin: *Ave Marya* (Hail Mary), *Ave Grasia P*. or *Ave Grasia Plena* (Hail full of Grace).[211] One hunting horn carries, apart from the inscription *Ave Maria,* the motto of the noble Meneses family: *Aleo*, which had been the Portuguese battle cry at the capture of Ceuta in 1415. [212] This *oliphant* also shows the Lamentation of the Virgin in which Maria holds the dead body of Christ (ill. 22). Pereira suggested that the combination of the battle cry with the prayer *Ave Maria* and Lamentation scene was designed to invoke the support of the Virgin during battle. Flags with images of the Virgin were carried to battle during the Reconquista. These flags were believed to possess supernatural power.[213] The Portuguese sailors also prayed for the support of the Virgin when embarking on their ships. Their votive offerings such as little ship can be found in numerous chapels and churches which were built in Lissabon in the 16th century.[214]

ill. 22 Lamentation of Christ on *oliphant,* Museo Nacional de Artes Decoratives, Madrid.

The Madonna and Child appear on the lid of one of three religious vessels (pyxes) which are included in the corpus of Sapi-Portuguese ivories. Pyxes were containers for the consecrated host. This pyx (ill. 23) and another one whose figure on the lid did not survive, display scenes from the life of the Virgin. The other pyx represents the Crucifixion and the Descent from the Cross .

ill. 23 Pyx with Virgin and Child, Private Collection.

Three saltcellars also have carvings of a woman and child on the lid. The first one, which is part of the collection of the British Museum[215], tops the saltcellar which is decorated with the Biblical scenes of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace and Daniel in the Lion's Den.[216] The other imagery on this salt includes European motifs such as sirens, the arms of the House of Aviz and the Cross of Beja (the house of Aviz-Beja was the Portuguese dynasty) as well as snakes, dogs, a butterfly and a fish (ill.24).
The second and third saltcellar lack these European motifs, their depictions of the mother and child are rather unusual and do not conform to European depictions of the Virgin and Child or to African representations of a mother and child. According to Kathy Curnow the lid of the second saltcellar which sits in the Allen Memorial Art Museum in Oberlin (ill. 25) is a replacement. On the museum's website she states: "The twentieth-century Western restorer who reworked the piece altered its original style, substituting near-natural figural proportions and flattening the two faces. His efforts suggest an awareness of the saltcellar's contemporary 'exotic' value. By clothing Mary and Christ in minimal dress ('primitive' and inaccurate), he constructed a mythical 'African' version of European 'otherness', quite unlike the Sierra Leonean versions". [217] This explanation could account for the fact that the Virgin rather looks like a man holding a child. Of the third saltcellar with a woman and child on top, I have only found a picture in Bassani and Fagg's catalogue.[218] The depiction of mother and child on this saltcellar does also not resemble usual representations of the Virgin and Christ. The saltcellar's current whereabouts are unknown. [219]

ill. 24 Saltcellar, British Museum, London.

ill. 25 Saltcellar, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin.

The depiction of a woman and child appears also on the base of a saltcellar which is part of the collection of the Museum Volkenkunde in Leiden. (ill. 26 and 27) Only this fragment of the object has survived.

J. Marquart who had worked before as a curator in the Ethnographic Museum Leiden mentioned this figure in a description of the Benin collection of the museum of 1913. He thought it was probably a nun holding an ill person or a cripple.[220] The woman is flanked by two men who are probably praying. The other woman on the base is a woman with bare breasts wearing a knee-long skirt. Marquart mentions her as "ein halbnacktes Negermädchen mit starken Brüsten".[221] Her right hand covers her genitals. According to Bassani and Fagg the woman with child is also a depiction of the Virgin and Child.[222] Curnow assumed this as well although she found it odd that the Virgin would be depicted next to a half-naked woman[223]. Next to the 'Virgin' the Portuguese coat of arms is represented. Although the association of a woman holding a child with the Virgin seems obvious in the context of representations of Portuguese royal power, not all depictions of women carrying a child on the ivories may have been intended to depict the Virgin Mary. Maybe the female figure holding a child really was a depiction of a nun who had come to West Africa as a missionary.

ill. 26 and 27 Two sides of the base of a saltcellar in the Museum Volkenkunde Leiden.

Maternity images also frequently occur in African art and are one of the iconic images in African art.[224] Of course they can refer to the biological relation between mother and child. Sometimes the child is however depicted with a beard. In these cases the mothers can have a greater meaning such as 'a mother of society' or a founding ancestor. [225] In his account of the native's response in art to the white man, Julius Lips noticed that the white woman has been most frequently portrayed in West African art. He argued that this may have been due to the honour in which the indigenous women's secret societies were held. These secret societies of women had the power to decide over life and death in the community.[226] It is not clear whether the African artist in the case of the object in Leiden depicted the Virgin, a nun or an African woman holding a child. The image of a woman with child would anyway have appealed to both Europeans as Africans.
On one saltcellar's base in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Basel a man with child is represented (ill.28). This

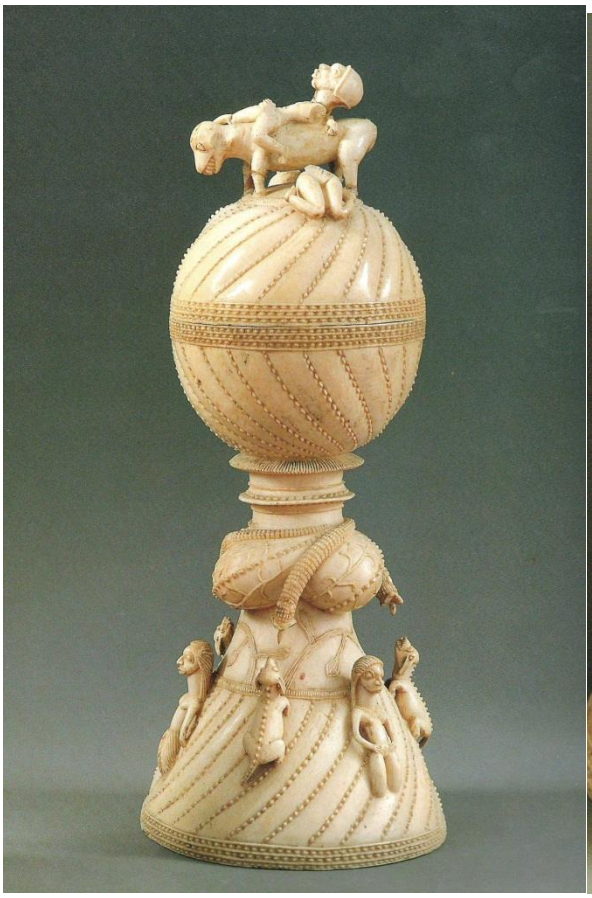
is an unusual image in both European and African art. However it does occur sometimes. In his work on iconic images Herbert Cole for example included the ivory top of a Kongolese staff which probably represents a male chief with child sitting on a leopard.[227] This object is from the 19th century. As a result of the early 'conversion' of the Kongo kings to Christianity Kongolese versions of Christian crucifixes and sculptures of saints were already made earlier. On one example St. Anthony carries with him a crucifix and a statue of Christ.[228] The man represented on the Basel saltcellar does however not look like a saint or a chief, but as a commoner. Could this image perhaps represent a scene from real life?

ill. 28 Man with child on base of a saltcellar, Museum für Völkerkunde, Basel.

5.2 Other female images and erotic connotations

On the saltcellars also other female images appear, although their femininity is not always clear. An intriguing example appears on the saltcellar in the Museo Civico Medievale in Bologna, which depicts a figure in a reclined position on a grinning animal (ill. 29). The arms have broken off. On either side of the animal lies a nude woman. According to Bassani and Fagg this scene depicts a woman riding a goat. From a fragment of the arm which is still attached to the thigh they deduced that her hands were covering her genitals.[229] On the base of this saltcellar a nude woman is depicted with her hands touching her genitals which are exposed clearly. Bassani and Fagg hypothesized that the scene on the lid represented the theme of a witch riding a goat. As incarnation of the Devil the goat transported the witch on his back to the Sabbath where they would have intercourse. They suggested that this theme could have been derived from a European print which they illustrated with prints of Albrecht Dürer and Hans Baldung Grien. [230] The combination of this theme with the naked woman on the base could be a reference to a 'magical-erotic ritual' derived from European sources.[231] However, Kathy Curnow thought this figure was a male.[232] Suzanne P. Blier has also suggested that the figure on the back of the animal is a man. The figure displays the facial

features of the Sapi people and the riding of a quadruped is in keeping with early Sapi stone carvings in which they are usually depicted with legs on each side of the animal.[233] Curnow and Blier could be right because the figure has no visible breasts. The nude female on the base displaying her genitals (ill. 30) could refer to an initiate who had undergone clitoridectomy, as Kathy Curnow had suggested.[234] This example illustrates that the interpretation of a scene can vary greatly depending on the perspective of the observer (Eurocentric versus Afrocentric, male versus female). To me neither of these explanations seems however very convincing. If the figure on the lid is a man, the scene does not resemble the upright position of the leader figure riding an animal. The relating of this depiction to a European image of a witch seems however also far-fetched, as the human figures on this object seem to be Africans. If Curnow was right in assuming that the imagery on the base of the saltcellar was related to clitoridectomy, maybe the scene on the lid can also be associated with this initiation ritual.

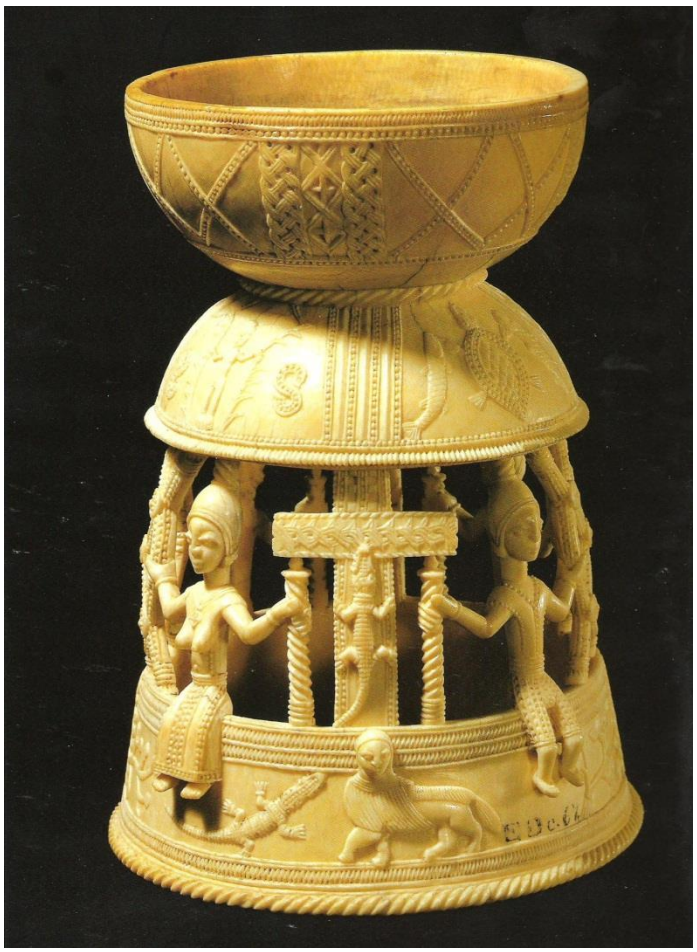


ill. 29 Saltcellar with human figure riding animal, Museo Civico Medievale, Bologna.

ill. 30 Detail of saltcellar, woman displaying genitals.

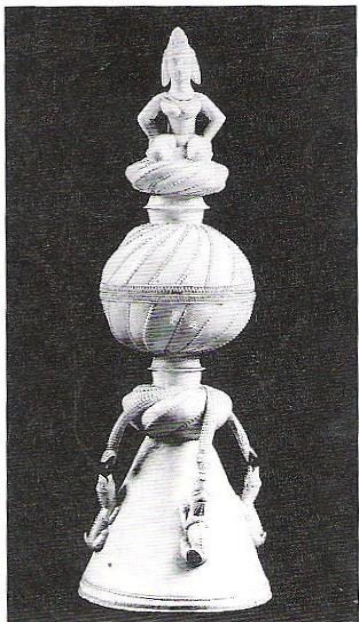
Another saltcellar's base which is part of the collection of the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen displays more obvious erotic connotations in a setting of mainly European motifs (ill. 31). The object depicts two males alternating with two female figures with prominent nude breasts, a mermaid, also with naked

breasts, and a walking sphinx. Other motifs carved in relief are floral forms, crocodiles mounting cross forms, a turtle, fish and nude men. According to Kathy Curnow these men are surrounded by flames.[235] It is quite possible that the female nudity displayed on the saltcellars strongly appealed to the Europeans of the 15th and 16th century as being both erotic and exotic. Around the 1450s the female breast in France and Spain was publicly eroticized in poetry and the nude females of the New World aroused the imagination of the Western male who was used to the adorned woman of the West.[236] The image of the mermaid could have been brought to West Africa on the figureheads of the Portuguese ships. Some believe that these mermaid images have been an influence to the development of the image of the water goddess *Mami Wata* in West Africa.[237] This water goddess is often depicted in popular culture as a mermaid or with a snake's tail and in the company of serpents. She is known for her seductive powers. It is interesting that in Portuguese folktales similar female figures occur, the *mouras encantandas* (the enchanted Moorish princesses), which are guardians of a treasure left by the Moors.[238]



ill. 31 Saltcellar, National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

On the lid of another saltcellar an Indian looking woman with prominent breasts is depicted (ill. 32). The head of this figure is according to Curnow 'an imaginative reconstruction'.[239] The reconstruction of the head in Indian style could be an indication that the restorer thought the object was of Indian provenance as the African ivories were often described as 'Indian' or 'Turkish' after their arrival in Europe.[240]



ill. 32 Saltcellar with Indian looking woman, Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin.

5.3 The Portuguese and African women

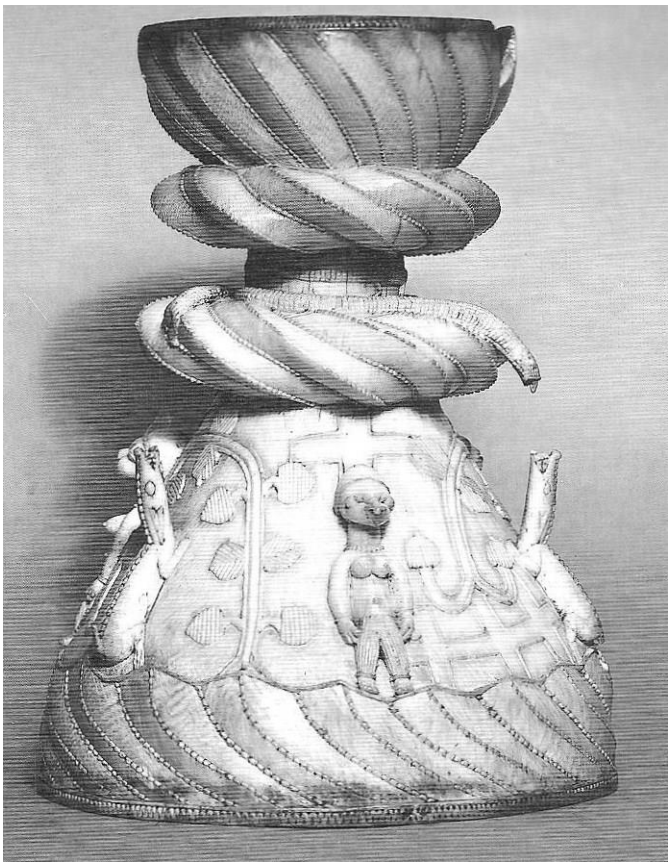
On the bases of most Sapi-Portuguese saltcellars carvings of men alternating with women can be found. Often they function as caryatids supporting the containers of the salt. The use of human figures as caryatids for stools is widespread in Africa. It indicates that the leader sitting on the stool is supported by the figures that carry him. They could represent his ancestors or his wives. As some saltcellars also depict leader figures on their lids, it may well be that the male and female figures are representing metaphorically this kind of support. The sculptural construction adds to the designation of the objects as status symbols. The portrayal of male and female couples could also refer to the primordial couple, the founders of a community, although in African art primordial couples are mostly represented as freestanding sculptures.[241] The male and female couple is another iconic image according to the typology of Herbert M. Cole.[242] In these sculptures the man and woman are usually tied to each other at the base and often the man has wrapped the woman around her neck. The male and female figures on the bases of the saltcellars are mostly standing apart. On the conical shaped ones the human figures alternate with animals, usually dogs barking at the serpents whose

heads are hanging down from the upper part of the objects. On the salts with a cylindrical base the figures usually hold on to vertical supports with sometimes openwork ovals at the center. Some vertical supports are carved in the form of a cross. On a saltcellar in the British Museum the human figures hold each other instead of holding vertical supports. This construction is possible because the vessel is supported by a stem.[243] The positions and gestures of the figures could therefore depend partly on the construction of the vessel.

The question arises whether the positions and gestures of the figures also have a meaning. On some saltcellars women are depicted holding one hand or both hands in front of their genitals. On the base of the saltcellar in the Museum Volkenkunde Leiden the half-naked women covers her genitals with her right hand. On the one in the Metropolitan Museum a half-naked women covers her genitalia with both hands (ill. 33 and 34). The male figure next to her covers his genitals with a shield and he holds a sword in his right hand. According to the museum's website this is a reference to fertility. [244] This association with fertility brings back in mind the association of salt with fertility as described in the introduction to this paper. Could there be a connection? It is possible that the African artists referred in this way to the alliances of Portuguese men with African women. Curnow thought it was impossible to attach an iconographical meaning to the figures on the bases because they occur not only as male-female couples but also as all males or all females.[245] This is complicated further by the fact that so many saltcellars are incomplete or that parts of them are restored. It is therefore very hard to relate the figures on the bases to the scenes on the lid. And we do not know whether the African artists intended to produce a work with a consistent iconography or were just creating variations on the same theme. As the example given in the introduction of this paper illustrates artists are not always consciously aware of possible symbolic meanings, they just do their job (at least that is what they claim to be doing). Suzanne P. Blier has experienced in her meetings with African artists and architects that they know much about style, technique and what is considered appropriate for a particular object or building, but they know and care less about the underlying meanings of their works.[246]

ill. 33 Saltcellar, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and ill. 34 Detail with woman covering genitals.

Curnow has analyzed the figures at the bases and concluded that nude figures are uncommon on the saltcellars with a conical base which display more European motifs. Nude figures appear more often at the ones with a cylindrical base which are more African. Some nude figures show scarification. When the figures are dressed they wear costumes which are a mixture of African and European dress, the men wear for example tight caps, knee-breeches and jerkins and the women wear knee-long skirts or long dresses (in the case of the 'Virgins'). The human figures could represent Luso-Africans wearing Portuguese customes mixed with African clothing.



ill. 35 Saltcellar with woman wearing trousers, British Museum, London.

Curnow has noticed that on a saltcellar in the British Museum three women are depicted with trousers[247] (ill.35). This is interesting, just as the man with child described in the first paragraph of this chapter. Did the artist add a comic touch to his artwork by inverting the conventions of gender? Perhaps this question results a little too much from a perspective of Western gender conventions. Maybe the boundaries between male and female social roles were not that strict in this period. Research has for example demonstrated that the dichotomy between male and female which has developed in Western societies, did not exist among the Yoruba in the precolonial period. Females were not the 'other'; the main principle of organization of society was seniority.[248] Maybe this absence of fixed male and female roles applied also to other West-African

societies of that period. The influence of women would also have depended on whether the society was patrilineal or matrilineal. This circumstance also affected the social position of the Portuguese *lançados*. In the patrilineal societies of Senegambia they were social outcasts. They were denied the right to own land and part of the wealth they acquired they had to hand over to the African rulers. The Luso-African children were excluded from participating in the power associations which educated them to adult persons before admission into society.[249] In the matrilineal societies south of the Gambia river such as Temne and Bullom, the *lançados* were given the rights to assimilate into society.[250] West-African women married Portuguese to gain privileges in trading and they acted as brokers and interpreters in African and European networks.[251] These women were called *nharas* or *signares*, which is derived from the Portuguese word *senhora*. In the second half of the 17th century they were influential in trade and many of them owned property, domestic slaves and ran households in European style. [252] In the 18th century the Luso-African women married Englishmen and Frenchmen.[253]

In the female imagery on the Luso-African ivories I have not found a reference to the involvement of women in trade. Contrary to many male figures the women hold no objects in their hands, the only hand gestures they make seem to refer to their genitals. However, maybe we could interpret the imagery as a symbolical representation of the marital and commercial involvement of Portuguese men and African women instead. Suzanne P. Blier who interpreted the saltcellars from the perspective of West African cosmology has pointed out that the Portuguese were seen as liminal beings. The imagery of local animals on the ivories from Sierra Leone placed them in the realm of water spirits. In Benin art they were associated with the water god Olokun and the mudfish[254]. The mudfish can live for a long time in a dried stream and seems to come alive when the rain starts. It seems as though the fish returns from death. The Portuguese who came from the water were also seen as coming from the land of the dead. The mudfish is in Benin also associated with women.[255] Blier thinks the Portuguese and the mudfish shared the same characteristics according to Benin symbolism. [256] By placing the Portuguese in the realm of water and the land of the dead they were given their own corner in West African cosmology where they did not interfere with the power of the African leaders who ruled over the realm of the living and the land. The association of the Portuguese with women might stem from the occupation which the Portuguese and the African women shared. The Portuguese were merchants and West-African women were also involved in trade. Their roles as mothers and wives did not limit them to the domestic sphere. In this context the male and female imagery of the Luso-African ivories could be seen as the reflection of an arrangement which suited both parties. Just as the oliphants reflect the diplomatic relations between the Portuguese and West Africa, the saltcellars could represent images of a mixed society in which the boundaries between Western and African culture and between male and female roles were not rigid, but were relatively fluid.

Conclusion

In this paper I have tried to shed some light on the human imagery on Luso-African ivories. My intention has been to look for iconic images and gender differences in the depictions of male and female figures on the objects. I have also paid attention to the intercultural aspect of the Luso-African ivories. When I relate the historical conditions in which the ivories were produced to the preconditions for interculturalization as formulated in the volume *World Art Studies* I may conclude that in the case of the Luso-African ivories economic, religious and social factors are in play. The objects were made in a period of intercultural trade, the introduction of a foreign (Christian) religion in Africa (in the Kongo) and human migration (Portuguese settlers in West Africa). The political factor is however absent as the Portuguese did not conquer West Africa, but had to adhere to African rules. They did not alter the basic structure of West African society, but were more or less included in it. The Luso-African ivories could be an artistic reflection of this: Western elements were included, but traditional African structure and elements dominate in the objects.

The ivories have been described and analyzed by scholars from different perspectives. In chapter 1 I described the views of the most well-known authors on the subject, Ezio Bassani and William Fagg, who interpreted the objects mainly from a European perspective. They were mainly preoccupied with finding European sources for the imagery on the ivories and with the question whether the ivories should be considered as tourist art or as an art form of a higher quality. The emphasis on Western influence in the Luso-African ivories resulted in a limited view on the subject. The production seemed controlled by the Portuguese patron, attaching a passive role to the African artist. Not much attention was given to the African elements on the ivories or the historical context of their production. According to Bassani and Fagg the African elements on the ivories could not be interpreted anymore by modern scholars. I have also described the dispute in the journal *African Arts* that resulted from the publication of the catalogue of the exhibition *Africa and the Renaissance* .

In chapter 2 I gave a survey of more 'Afrocentric' views on the ivory objects, as the 'Eurocentric' approach was criticized by several writers on the subject. V.L. Grottanelli considered the ivory saltcellar of the 'executioner' 100 percent African in carving technique. Kathy Curnow who had analyzed the then known corpus thoroughly also concluded that the group of saltcellars with a cylindrical base were fundamentally African. In later years the ivories have been considered as artistic comments on the Portuguese 'other'. Kathy Curnow assumed that differences in depiction of the Portuguese on the 'Sapi-Portuguese' and the 'Benin' saltcellars reflect the difference in position the Portuguese held in these societies. She also assumed that the Portuguese were not a threat to the dominant African culture as they were not satirized on the ivories. This led to the conclusion that the interaction between the Portuguese and Africans took place under African control. Suzanne P. Blier demonstrated that the imagery on the ivories can be interpreted within the context of West African cosmology and belief systems. The Portuguese were seen by the Africans as spirits

returning from the land of the dead. The animal imagery on the saltcellars placed the Portuguese in the realm of the water spirits. Whereas the most well-known authors on the subject have mainly focused on dating, provenance and the question whether the objects must be designated Western or African artworks based on stylistic analysis, historical research on the relations between the Portuguese and West-Africans indicated that the ivories can be examined from an intercultural perspective.

In chapter 3 I have described how the relations between early modern Europe and Africa have mainly been described in the light of the slave trade, colonialism and exploitation of later ages, viewing Europeans as oppressors of passive and primitive African peoples. I have used the example of *The savage hits back* written by Julius Lips in 1937 to illustrate this. Recent research on the relations between Europe and Africa in the 15th and 16th century has led to the conclusion that the dichotomy which certainly developed in later centuries did not exist in the early period of contacts between the Portuguese and Africans. Relations between Europe and Africa were generally based more on cooperation than on opposition. In the 15th and 16th century fruitful alliances developed between Portugal, Rome and various African kingdoms which worked to the benefit of all. M. Pereira has pointed out that the Portuguese court intentionally used African art in its imperial policy towards other European powers. Pereira examined the role of exotic material at the court of João II and the role of the Luso-African ivories from Sierra Leone at the court of Manuel I. He demonstrated that the collecting, circulation and exchange of these West African objects formed an important part of Manuel I's artistic program. The arts were used to enhance his reputation and to promote his imperial ideology at other European courts. The Portuguese knew the artistic traditions of Sierra Leone and their appreciation for these traditional wood and ivory carvings could have inspired the Portuguese patronage of the West African artists. Pereira's research demonstrated that the Portuguese did not consider the African elements in the ivory objects as exotic and strange only. Portuguese and Africans interacted in this period on equal footing. The Portuguese court intentionally incorporated the African elements of the ivories in its imperial policy. The perspective of an intercultural exchange based on equality places the ivories in an interesting light of a two-way relationship. The development in the 15th century of a Luso-African society with a mixture of Portuguese and African religions and language raised the question whether the ivories could be considered as an artistic reflection of this melting pot.

In chapter 4 I have first described the difference in approach of European and African iconology, based on the writings of Suzanne P. Blier. Whereas classical Western iconology has been concerned with identifying images of mostly Christian subject matter and is mainly based on the relating of images to textual documents and on their likeness to reality, African art cannot easily be explained from pure form and subject matter. Context, positioning and (hand) gestures are more important than realistic images. The same iconographies can therefore have a different iconology. This does not mean that there are no conventions in the imagery of African art. Herbert M. Cole has discerned five archetypal images which are widespread in

African art: the male and female couple, the rider, the woman and child, the forceful male and the stranger. These icons usually are idealized representations of perfect behavior. The five archetypes can also be recognized in the imagery of the Luso-African ivories. The main subject of chapter 4 is the depiction of male figures on the ivories. Whereas the hunting horns demonstrate a mainly European imagery with depictions of hunting scenes, the saltcellars display more African elements. Male power is represented mainly by African leader figures on the lids of the saltcellars. By describing the views of several authors on these objects I have demonstrated that a Western approach and an interpretation based on later restorations by Westerners can result in a limited view on these objects. The so-called 'Bini-Portuguese' ivories depict an exclusively male imagery. This could be a reflection of the male dominated society of Benin. Recent research has however cast doubt on the Benin provenance of these ivories. Peter Mark has suggested that the imagery of these saltcellars could be a depiction of the illegal Portuguese weapon trade with West Africa.

Chapter 5 described the female imagery on the ivories. Depictions of a woman with child can be found on some *oliphants*, on the pyxes and on several saltcellars. They have been interpreted by previous scholars as the Virgin carrying Christ. Whereas this explanation seems obvious in the context of the depiction of the Portuguese arms, maybe not all women with child were intended by the artists as representations of the Virgin. Whatever its original meaning, the image would have suited both Portuguese and Africans as the mother with child was an iconic image in both African as European cultures. On the ivories also other female images can be found often with overtly erotic connotations such as large breasts. The bases of the saltcellars often display males alternating with females. Sometimes the female figures cover their genitals. Perhaps they are meant to depict fertility. Among the less obvious images are women wearing trousers and a man holding a child. Maybe these figures reflect a society in which gender roles were not that strict. African women were involved in trade and saw the Portuguese men as an opportunity to widen their trade network. They often married Portuguese men and this mixture of European and African cultures led to the development of a Luso-African society. The imagery on the bases of the saltcellars could reflect these alliances. The human figures could represent Luso-Africans wearing Portuguese dress mixed with African clothing. Whereas the male figures on the ivories hold objects and show several hand gestures, some females hold children but they do not hold any objects. When they make hand gestures they seem to refer to their genitals. I have found no clear indications of the connection of women with trade. The alliances between Portuguese men and African women and the involvement of African women in trade may however have been symbolically represented. In the images on the saltcellars the Portuguese are associated with water and the land of the dead. They were also associated with wealth and with women. I think this association may stem from the occupation which the Portuguese and African women had in common, which was trade. The imagery of the Luso-African ivories could be seen as an artistic reflection on a mixed society in which the boundaries between Western and African culture and male and female roles were fluid.

Notes

[1] Jim (James) Johnson on his blog http://politicstheoryphotography.blogspot.com/2012/02/uses-of-pieta-criticisms-of-world-press.html
[2] Nina Berman on http://www.bjp-online.com/british-journal-of-photography/news/2145521/world-press-photo-winning-image-reference-michelangelos-piet
[3] Ibidem.
[4] Newitt 2010, p. 9.
[5] Idem, p. 5, 7, 13, 35.
[6] Idem, p. 10.
[7] Idem, p. 9.
[8] Idem, p. 12.
[9] Mark 2007, p. 189.
[10] Lunsingh Scheurleer 1968, p. 148.
[11] Idem, p. 153.
[12] Kurlansky 2002, p. 3.
[13] Idem, p. 7.
[14] Idem, p. 8.
[15] Idem, p. 12.
[16] Bujok 2009, 17.
[17] Citation of E. Bujok in Mark 2007, p. 201.
[18] Mark 2007, p. 189.
[19] Idem, p. 190.
[20] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 61.
[21] Ryder 1964, p. 365.
[22] Bassani/Fagg, p. 147 and Curnow 1983, p. 68.
[23] Bassani/Fagg, p. 149.
[24] Bassani/Fagg, p. 147.
[25] Curnow, p. 68.
[26] Mark 2007, p. 198.
[27] Ibidem.
[28] Hart 2007, p.82-83.
[29] Idem, p. 85.
[30] Idem, p. 86.
[31] Fagg 1959, p. 35.
[32] Idem, p. XIX and Lamp 1990, p. 52.
[33] Lamp 1990, p. 52.
[34] Zijlmans and Van Damme in the preface *of World Art Studies* 2008, p. 7.
[35] Onians 2006, Contents.
[36] Elkins 2008, p. 113.
[37] Anderson 2008, p. 212.
[38] Idem, p. 214.
[39] Idem, p. 215.
[40] Girshick 2008, p. 222.
[41] Idem, p. 225.
[42] Idem, p. 226.
[43] Van Damme 2008, p. 377-378.
[44] *Global Design History* 2011
[45] Ajmar-Wollheim and Molà 2011, p. 11.
[46] See the text on the website of the Museum Volkenkunde Leiden, www.rmv.nl regarding a base of an ivory saltcellar, inv.nr. 1131-1 and the information on the website of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/apiv/hd_apiv.htm.
[47] Fagg 1959, p. XVII.

[48] See Curnow 1983, p. 33-34. During the Punitive Expedition of Benin City launched by the British in 1897 the Benin royal art was captured and auctioned to cover the costs of the expedition. The loot contained precious ivory works. Many ivory works already present in European collections were attributed since then to Benin.
[49] Fagg 1959, p. XIX.
[50] Idem, p. XVI.
[51] Idem, p. XX.
[52] Idem, p. IX.
[53] The exhibition was also presented at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston.
[54] Exhibitions in which some of the ivories have been included are for example: *Os Descobrimentos Portugueses e a Europa do Renascimento*, Lisbon 1983*; La grande Scultura dell'Africa Nera*, Firenze 1989; *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration*, Washington 1991; *Via Orientalis*, Brussel 1991; *Exotica: Portugals Entdeckungen im Spiegel fürstlichen Kunst- und Wunderkammern der Renaissance*, Innsbruck 2000; *Incisive Images: Ivory and Boxwood Carvings 1450-1800*, New York 2007*; Ivoires d'Afrique dans les anciennes collections Françaises*. Paris 2008.
[55] Martinez 2007, p. 56.
[56] Centro di Studi de Storia delle Arti Africane, Università Internazionale dell'Arte.
[57] This survey of the articles (and one catalogue) written by Bassani is taken from his own catalogue of 1988: 'Antichi avori africani nelle collezioni Medicee 1-2.'*Critica d'Arte* 143 (1975): 69-80 and 144 (1975): 8-23; *Scultura Africana nei musei italiani*. Bologna, 1977; 'Oggetti Africani in antiche collezioni italiane 1-2.'*Critica d'Arte* 151, 153 (1977): 151-182 and 154-156 (1977): 187-202; 'Gli olifanti afro-portoghesi della Sierra Leone.'*Critica d'Arte* 163-165 (1979): 175-201; 'Trompes en ivoire du XVI siècle de la Sierra Leone.*' L'Ethnographie* 85 (1981-1982): 151-168; 'Antichi manufatti dell'Africa Nera nelle collezioni Europee del Rinascimento e dell'Eta Barocca.'*Quaderni Poro* 3 (1982): 9-34; 'A newly discovered Afro-Portuguese ivory?' *African Arts* 17, 4 (1984): 61-63; with co-author M. Mcleod: 'African Material in Early Collections.'in: *The Origins of Museums,* (O. Impey and A. MacGregor ed.), 245-250. Oxford, 1985.
[58] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 57.
[59] Nowadays Peter Mark is Professor of Art History at Wesleyan University at Middletown, Connecticut.
[60] Vogel 1988, p. 18 -20 and Mark 1988, p. 23-26.
[61] Vogel 1988, p. 14.
[62] Idem, p. 16.
[63] Idem, p. 17.
[64] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 64.
[65] Idem, p. 61.
[66] Idem, p. 150.
[67] Idem, p. 69.
[68] Idem, p. 57.
[69] Ibidem.
[70] Blackmun 1989, p. 12-20.
[71] Curnow 1983.
[72] Vogel 1990, p. 10.
[73] Bassani/Fagg 1990, p. 20.
[74] Curnow 1990, p. 18.
[75] Ibidem.
[76] Curnow 1989, p. 77.
[77] Bassani 1998, p. 1-8.
[78] Bassani 2000.
[79] Idem, p. 286.
[80] Parodi da Passano 2010.
[81] Mark 2009, p. 1.
[82] Martinez 2007, p. 58.
[83] Grimm-Weisert 2008.
[84] Grottanelli 1975, p. 23.
[85] Ibidem.
[86] Curnow 1983, p. 5-6.
[87] Idem, p. 15-16.
[88] Idem, p. 17-18.
[89] Idem, p. 19.
[90] Idem, p. 45-54.

[91] Idem, p. 52.
[92] Idem, p. 51.
[93] Idem, p. 152.
[94] Curnow 1990, p. 43.
[95] Ibidem.
[96] Blier 1993.
[97] Idem, p. 380.
[98] Idem, p. 391.
[99] Idem, p. 392.
[100] Idem, p. 393.
[101] Idem, p. 394.
[102] Idem, p. 395.
[103] Idem, p. 391.
[104] Idem, p. 396.
[105] Lips 1966.
[106] Idem, p. 139-163.
[107] Idem, p. 140.
[108] Felber Seligmann 2007, p. 1.
[109] Idem, p. 113.
[110] Idem, p. 13.
[111] Idem, p. 43.
[112] Idem, p. 5.
[113] Idem, p. 81.
[114] Idem, p. 43-44.
[115] Idem, p. 46.
[116] Idem, p. 64.
[117] Idem, p. 52.
[118] Idem, p. 54.
[119] Idem, p. 103.
[120] Idem, p. 108-110.
[121] Pereira 2010.
[122] Idem, p. 2.
[123] Idem, p. 4.
[124] Idem, p. 5.
[125] Idem, p. 120.
[126] Idem, p. 123.
[127] Idem, p. 127.
[128] Idem, p. 156.
[129] Idem, p. 158.
[130] Idem, p. 9.
[131] Idem, p. 10.
[132] Mark 1999, pp. 173-177.
[133] Blier 1988, p. 75.
[134] Idem, p. 78.
[135] Cole 1989, p. 12.
[136] Idem, p. 13.
[137] Idem, p. 144.
[138] Idem, p. 24.
[139] Idem, p. 26.
[140] Idem, p. 48.
[141] Kessler 2004, p. 27.
[142] Song of Solomon 7:4 'Your neck is like an ivory tower'.
[143] See Bassani/Fagg 1988, catalogue raisonné nrs. 77-113.
[144] Curnow 1983, p. 116.
[145] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 94-105.
[146] Pereira 2010, p. 77.

[147] Idem, p. 48.
[148] Idem, p. 78.
[149] Idem, p. 76.
[150] Idem, p. 11.
[151] This saltcellar is part of the collection of the Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin.
[152] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 128.
[153] Ibidem.
[154] Pereira 2010, p. 330.
[155] Idem, p. 331.
[156] Fernandes 1951.
[157] Idem, p. 101.
[158] Idem, p. 103.
[159] Pereira, p. 332.
[160] Idem, p. 333-334.
[161] Idem, p. 355.
[162] Idem, p. 356.
[163] Idem, p. 335.
[164] Idem, p. 338.
[165] Idem, p. 344.
[166] Idem, p. 347. This research has been done by Paulo Pereira who has published several books and articles on Manueline Architecture in the Portuguese language.
[167] For example Paulo Pereira and Fernando António Baptista Pereira.
[168] Pereira 2010, p. 350.
[169] Curnow 1983, p. 152.
[170] Curnow 1983, p. 133.
[171] Idem, p. 134.
[172] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 81.
[173] Idem, p. 80.
[174] Grottanelli 1975.
[175] Idem, p. 18.
[176] Fernandes 1951, p. 91.
[177] Cole 1989, p. 95.
[178] Idem, p. 96.
[179] Blier 1993, p. 391.
[180] Curnow 1983, p. 466.
[181] Cole 1989, p. 116.
[182] Idem, p. 92 and 116.
[183] Fagg 1959, p. 29.
[184] Von Sydow, p. 24.
[185] Blier 1993, p. 392.
[186] Idem, p. 391.
[187] < www.ethno-museum.ac.at/sammlungen/afrika-suedlich-der-sahara/objektauswahl/ >
[188] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 122.
[189] Idem, p. 227.
[190] <www.mba.dijon.fr>
[191] Martinez 2007, p. 69.
[192] Ibidem.
[193] Fagg 1959 and Curnow 1983, p. 390.
[194] Bassani/Fagg, p. 150.
[195] Ibidem.
[196] Idem, p. 154.
[197] Idem, p. 161.
[198]< www.nms.ac.uk/collections/ >
[199] Newitt 2010, p. 73.
[200] Curnow 1983, p. 221.

[201] Idem, p. 214.
[202] Bassani/Fagg, p. 165.
[203] Felber Seligmnan, p. 56-57.
[204] Curnow 1997.
[205] Idem, p. 81.
[206] Eisenhofer 1993, p. 116.
[207] Mark 2007, p. 208.
[208] Ibidem.
[209] Idem, p. 211.
[210] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 97.
[211] Idem, p. 106.
[212] Pereira, p. 363-364.
[213] Idem, p. 368.
[214] Via Orientalis 1991, p. 23.
[215] On the museum website this object is given a Benin provenance. See www.britishmuseum.org/highlights.
[216] Bassani/Fagg, p. 73.
[217] <http://www.oberlin.edu/amam/Sierra.htm>
[218] Bassani/Fagg, p. 74.
[219] Idem, p. 74-75.
[220] Marquart 1913, p. 68.
[221] Ibidem.
[222] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 75.
[223] Curnow 1983, p. 142.
[224] Cole 1989, p. 74.
[225] Ibidem.
[226] Lips 1966, p. 216.
[227] Cole 1989, p. 147.
[228] Idem, p. 145.
[229] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 72.
[230] Idem, p. 75-76.
[231] Idem, p. 75.
[232] Curnow 1983, p. 135.
[233] Blier 2009, p. 23.
[234] Curnow 1983, p. 130.
[235] Idem, p. 471.
[236] Knobler 2007, p. 242.
[237] Van Stipriaan , p. 87.
[238] Gallop 1961, p. 78.
[239] Curnow 1983, p. 427.
[240] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 53.
[241] Cole 1989, p. 53-55.
[242] Idem, p. 52.
[243] Bassani/Fagg 1988, p. 54.
[244] http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1991.435a,b
[245] Curnow 1983, p. 135.
[246] Blier 1988, p. 79.
[247] Curnow 1983, p. 433.
[248] Oyewumi 1996, p. 244.
[249] Brooks 2003, p. xxi.
[250] Idem, p. xxii.
[251] Brooks 1996, p. 213.
[252] Brooks 2003, p. 124.
[253] Idem, p. 206.
[254] Blier 1993, p. 385.
[255] Ibidem.
[256] Idem, p. 386.

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