Iberian expansion in the sixteenth century was driven by commerce but accompanied by assiduous missionary activity by the Jesuits, Dominicans, Augustinians and Franciscans. The effects of this transplant of people and ideas had wide-ranging effects that still reverberate today. One such realm is ivory carving. Through missionary activity, ivory spread to many places that previously had no elephants, no history of production or nor any traditional demand in ways that would almost certainly not have occurred. Why was ivory a corollary of the spread of faith? Where did it and just what were these impacts? This talk will explore these issues as a way to better understand the early modern world.

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