

**Ivory carving with multiple figures, Pont Spencer, Seward Peninsula, Alaska. Thule culture, 6.5 cm**

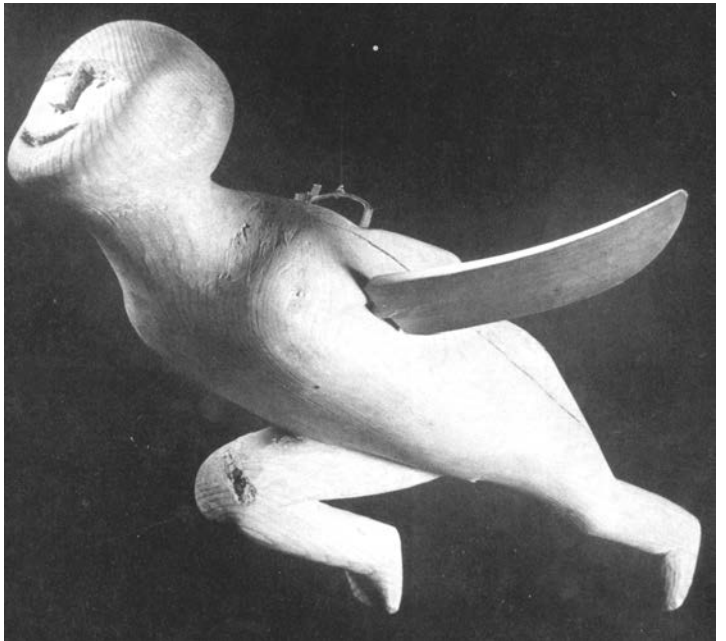
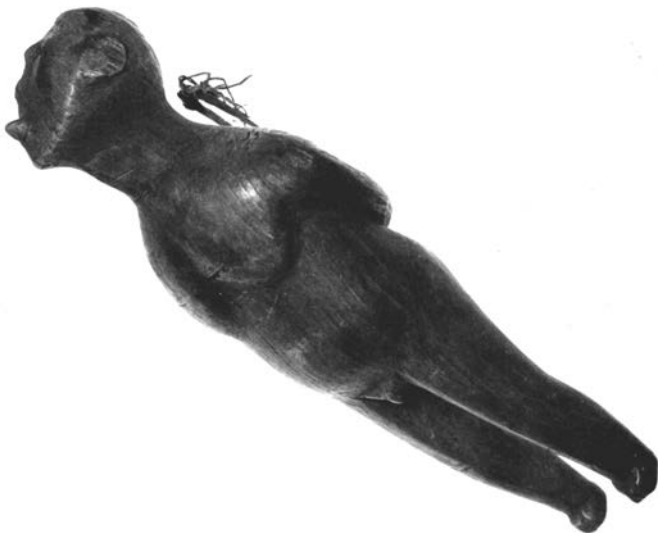




Bruce White photos

This object typifies the Eskimo playfulness in making ivory carvings that take different forms depending on the angle from which they are viewed. In this case, on one side there is a small human head, below which is a large human face and the top surface of dog or caribou head at the bottom. The reverse side shows a large human face that occupies most of the length, and a small human face on the flat surface at the bottom and in the opposite orientation. Looked at from the side and with the more flat surface facing down, one sees the eyes and mouth of a dog or caribou head at one end.

Turned on its side in the opposite orientation it appears to represent a “flying shaman” with the small head facing down. The two light color ivory ridges on the top (which form the “cheeks” of the large face on this side) would represent the folded wings of the flying shaman (see below).



### Shamans in flight

Left: Point Hope, Alaska, pre-1916, 23 cm (American Museum of Natural History, New York, 2594.77). Right: Point Hope, pre-1940, 21.6 cm (University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks)