

***Tukiliit: The Stone People Who Live in the Wind. An Introduction to Inuksuit and Other Stone Figures of the North.* By Norman Hallendy. Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2009. 128 pp. 90 colour photographs.**

Norman Hallendy, who has already gained acclaim as an expert on *inuksuit*, has produced yet another book on the subject, this one illustrated with a truly exceptional array of his own photographs. *Tukiliit: The Stone People Who Live in the Wind* goes far beyond a description of the various forms of these unique stone markers to compare their use in ancient times through to the present. And whereas *inuksuit* means “to act in the capacity of a human,” Hallendy uses the broader term *tukiliit* (have meaning), in his title to signal the wider scope of his most recent work

At the outset, Hallendy attempts to place *tukiliit* in context by comparing them with other stone figures found in Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands, suggesting that they might represent links to the Viking colony on Greenland dating back to 1000 BCE. But then he points to other ancient stone cairns built in Tibet and Mongolia, honoured even today by Buddhists, and a stone figure that resembles a human at Lake Baikal in Siberia. He also photographs a large pile of stones built by the Moapi Indians in the Nevada desert, one of the many markers along the Palute trails that extended from Oregon to California. The use of stones in ancient times to act as navigational aids or to mark sacred places appears to be a widespread practice among cultures with no written language. Hallendy then documents nature’s own masterpieces of stone carved into dramatic forms by receding glaciers. To suggest that these formations are thought provoking is an understatement.

For the most part, however, the book focuses on the *tukiliit* of the Canadian Arctic to provide insight into the material culture of the remarkable people who made them. These “silent messengers” have multiple purposes, ranging from navigation to marking danger, favourite hunting grounds, or wind direction. Some even point to the pole star or mid-winter moon. Others have spiritual meaning, marking a sacred place or standing as memorials to a tragic event, perhaps honouring the death of a loved one. Some are said to contain a spirit and must never be touched. Then there are those in the form of a doorway through which shamans pass into the spirit world.

Hallendy also describes in words and photographs the largest and most impressive site for viewing *tukiliit* in the Canadian Arctic, a place called *Inuksugulait* on the southwest Baffin coast. Here an estimated 200

stone figures are found in all shapes and sizes—some over two meters high—and no two alike.

This is a striking book of lasting significance, a must-read for any hiker planning a trip across the Arctic tundra; it might even be carried in one's backpack as a guide. The singular importance of *Tukiliit: The Stone People Who Live in the Wind*, however, is the inspiration it imparts. For the casual visitor to the Arctic, it may simply trigger the impulse to take a second look at that mound of stone on the horizon. For the photographer, it is a reminder of the endless opportunities to seek deeper meaning beyond the landscape.

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***After the Ice: Life, Death, and Geopolitics in the New Arctic.* By Alun Anderson. New York: Smithsonian Books, 2009. 298 pp.**

According to Alun Anderson, the aim of his book, *After the Ice: Life, Death, and Geopolitics in the New Arctic*, is to provide a broad sketch of political developments across the entire Arctic. His reason for taking on this project is that even though there are numerous academic experts in a variety of disciplines who deal with a tiny region of the Arctic (or a narrow topical area related to it) there are no experts on the entire Arctic who have a vision of the whole region. He admits that his goal is ambitious. He began his career as a research biologist but has more recently become a science journalist and editor, making him well positioned to take on the task of drawing together scientific findings about the Arctic from a wide variety of human and physical science disciplines. Anderson does an excellent job of giving voice to experts in these disciplines.

A strength of the book is that it is well written and quite readable. Its style is accessible, journalistic, in parts almost lyrical. Anderson is a keen observer who has travelled extensively throughout the Arctic and has spoken at length with numerous experts on the region—or at least parts or aspects of the region. He does not have an agenda other than to lay out the basic facts about climate change and its impacts on the Arctic. He admirably admits gaps in his knowledge and draws rather extensively on the research of those who have dedicated their careers to understanding the region. He has attended a number of key conferences where Arctic researchers have presented their work. He successfully integrates findings