

Scientist who connected Atlantis with Ireland: “No criticism so far has been valid”

Dr. Ulf Erlingsson visited Ireland in mid-August, amid a “storm of criticism” according to some media reports. Having now returned home and had a chance to review the criticism, his conclusion is that there is still no valid argument against his hypothesis. On the contrary, the Irish archaeology he saw on his visit strongly supports the hypothesis.

When landing on Ireland, he got the question what he had to say to his critics, and responded, “I am expecting criticism. A hypothesis only survives until proven wrong. It is part of the scientific method, so I am welcoming a vivid debate.”*

Dr. Ulf Erlingsson presents his hypothesis in the book *Atlantis from a Geographer’s Perspective: Mapping the Fairy Land* (URL: lindorm.com/atlantis). It will be released in about a month.

Here are some of the critical voices that have appeared in media in the UK and Ireland, together with Dr. Erlingsson’s replies:

In the Guardian: Mark Hennessy, a geographer from Trinity College Dublin, said the theory was “extremely far-fetched”.

Erlingsson’s reply: Quite the contrary, I’d say. It is right under his nose. Now, the Antarctic, or Indonesia, *that* is far-fetched. Seriously, though, it is only his personal opinion, and opinions are irrelevant as far as science is concerned.

In the Guardian: Colin Breen, a lecturer in maritime archaeology at the University of Ulster, said: “We know what the seabed around Ireland looks like. If there was a lost city there, we would know about it.”

Erlingsson’s reply: As an expert in underwater mapping with 20+ years of experience, and having conducted mapping for marine archaeologists in the excavation of Birka in Sweden, this is my primary field of expertise. It would have been illogical for me to suggest such a thing without first having carried out a scientific expedition to the place, with side-scan sonar, sub-bottom profiler, and deep sea diving.

In the Irish Examiner: But a University College Galway academic [Geography Department head Prof Ulf Strohmayer] dismissed Dr Erlingsson’s theories as “bizarre” and added that it was “impossible to compare a mythical planet which may never have existed with a living, breathing country”.

Erlingsson’s reply: Planet? What is bizarre is his choice of word, since Plato described an island, not a planet. Furthermore, the criticism is irrelevant for my hypothesis, since I am not

* This was erroneously quoted as “I expect to have my knockers. But we must assume that I am right until others can prove I am wrong.” That rephrasing is of course unacceptable, since it implies disrespect both for the scientific method and for academic colleagues.

suggesting that Plato's utopia was for real—only that it was based on a real place, just as Plato himself wrote. Irrelevant comments are so predictable that I dismissed them already in the book itself; I quote from page 84: “Hypotheses must be formulated and tested properly, without irrelevant arguments. [...] You may think that something is science fiction, but keep that to yourself—instead, show with valid and relevant arguments why it is not correct, and treat your colleagues with respect.”

In the Guardian: Ulf Strohmayer, the head of geography at University College Galway, described it as wishful thinking to satisfy longing for a past utopia.

Erlingsson's reply: Prof. Strohmayer here questions my motive for advancing the hypothesis, while not discussing the benefits or shortfalls of the hypothesis itself. It is yet an irrelevant argument as defined by the old Greeks.

In Ireland Online: The National Museum of Ireland ... director Dr Patrick Wallace said today that there was no archaeological basis to associate Ireland with the utopian land. Dr Wallace explained: “We can say that we know of no archaeological evidence which would support Dr Erlingsson's theory.”

Erlingsson's reply: Dr Wallace's response is clever but misleading. It is true that they know of no archaeological evidence which would support the hypothesis—however, this is not because the evidence is absent, but simply because they are not familiar with the hypothesis!

Allow me to elaborate. Newgrange, Knowth and Tara obviously exist. However, when I came up with my hypothesis (which implies that the megalith culture had its centre on Ireland) I did not know that Ireland had unique megalithic monuments. Therefore, the archaeological evidence is independent data in relation to the hypothesis, and thus, **the Irish archaeology strongly supports the hypothesis**. But *Dr Wallace* could impossibly know that—just as he said.

For more information on the issue of Ireland's Stone Age archaeology, we suggest to interview the professor in archaeology Göran Burenhult, Gotland University (www.hgo.se; +46-498-299901). He has excavated some of the oldest megalithic fields in the northwest of Ireland, and points out the importance of Ireland during the megalithic age in his book *Arkeologi i Norden* ('Archaeology in Scandinavia'; in Swedish). For instance, on page 284 he writes “**Ireland exhibits the by far largest concentration of megalithic tombs in Europe in relation to the surface area of the island.**”

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