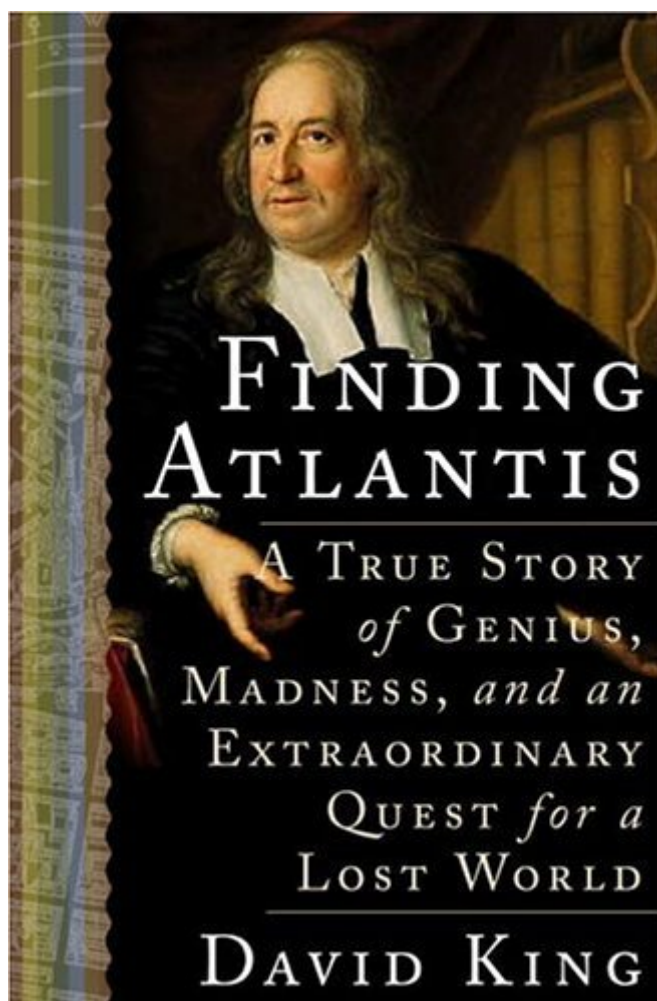


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# Finding Atlantis: A True Story Of Genius, Madness, And An Extraordinary Quest For A Lost World



## Synopsis

The untold story of a fascinating Renaissance man on an adventurous hunt for a lost civilization—•an epic quest through castles, courts, mythologies, and the spectacular world of the imagination. What do Zeus, Apollo, and the gods of Mount Olympus have in common with Odin, Thor, and the gods of Valhalla? What do these, in turn, have to do with the shades of Hades, the pharaohs of Egypt, and the glories of fabled Atlantis? In 1679, Olof Rudbeck stunned the world with the answer: They could all be traced to an ancient lost civilization that once thrived in the far north of Rudbeck's native Sweden. He would spend the last thirty years of his life hunting for the evidence that would prove this extraordinary theory. Chasing down clues to that lost golden age, Rudbeck combined the reasoning of Sherlock Holmes with the daring of Indiana Jones. He excavated what he thought was the acropolis of Atlantis, retraced the journeys of classical heroes, opened countless burial mounds, and consulted rich collections of manuscripts and artifacts. He eventually published his findings in a 2,500-page tome titled *Atlantica*, a remarkable work replete with heroic quests, exotic lands, and fabulous creatures. Three hundred years later, the story of Rudbeck's adventures appears in English for the first time. It is a thrilling narrative of discovery as well as a cautionary tale about the dangerous dance of genius and madness. From the Hardcover edition.

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## Customer Reviews

This is one of the most fascinating books I have ever read. I was engrossed in this true story from the minute I started reading until the last page. Olaf Rudbeck was a true visionary. A completely original thinker bogged down in the petty rivalries and vendettas of conventional academia. Everything about this story, although it takes place during the 1600's in Sweden, is also completely contemporary. It is a timeless tale of a great person at odds with the rigid thinking all around him. Yet Rudbeck triumphed. No matter what his foes threw at him, he came back stronger and better every time. His essential theory is that ancient Sweden was the location of Plato's story of Atlantis. Rudbeck used astoundingly original dating methods as well as a kind of finely attuned awareness one associates with real genius, to back up his ideas. He undoubtedly found remnants of a lost, high civilization. While doing so, he added immeasurably to our overall knowledge of ancient cultures and historical Sweden, as well as giving us new ways to date ancient sites. Did he actually find Atlantis? My major gripe with David King is that at the end of the book he sort of slams or at least somewhat discredits, Rudbeck's theories. Perhaps at the time he wrote it, he was afraid of the same kind of criticism that Rudbeck himself underwent. King is a wonderful writer. Not a boring page in the book. It is delightful, informative and highly readable for anyone. But he missed an opportunity however, to have some the courage Mr. Rudbeck displayed. While he may or may not have found Atlantis, Rudbeck most certainly found a culture directly related to it. He found Hyperborea which was probably either a precursor to, or an off-shoot of Atlantis. Instead of taking the chance on being bold, King backs off at the end, almost agreeing with some of Rudbeck malicious critics. I, for one, believe Rudbeck discovered part of a much greater, world-wide high culture of very ancient antiquity, that almost all historians are ignorant of today. This culture WAS part of Atlantis. Nevertheless, if you have any interest in this topic, this is a great book. Highly recommended.

I am sure Mr King could write a fine scholarly work on Olof Rudbeck, but he or his publisher decided to aim for a wider market and the book strives to be 'popular'. Maybe this is a good idea, but it will annoy some readers. I confess I was disappointed. Talk of 'Apollo's dad' seems inappropriate to me, and I did not want events such as Columbus' discovery of the Americas explained so carefully.

There is interesting material here, but you have to decide whether the packaging suits you before you read this book.

look forward to read this book! Read two other books by David King, he is writing history in a most entertaining way.

You would think that if a seller were listing a book on .com and it didn't come with the dust jacket that the seller would be obligated to mention that tiny little fact.

Kudos to David King for bringing us the fascinating, bizarre tale of Olof Rudbeck, who took Swedish patriotism to dizzying extremes. I must say, Rudbeck's theories, his reasoning and conclusions are strangely convincing, and King does a terrific job of laying them out for us. I couldn't help but think, however, that what would have been a few interesting chapters of a broader study on the many off-the-wall theories on Atlantis had been padded unnecessarily into a full-length book. It's a short book, certainly, but not one without its dry patches. The lengthy digressions into Swedish politics (as well as those at Rudbeck's university) can get a trifle boring. But when King sticks to Rudbeck's obsession with proving that Sweden was, among other things, what the ancient Greeks referred to as Atlantis and Hades (!), this is a mesmerizing study of a quirky, delightfully eccentric individual.

If you are interested in history, or at least curious about the subject, you'll want to give this book a read. It really does a good job of highlighting the fine line between genius and insanity. Upon starting the book I knew nothing of Olof Rudbeck, the subject of the text. I'd thought I was going to be reading something about a crazy old dude who thought Atlantis was in Sweden. The book, though, demonstrates that Rudbeck wasn't just some crackpot. He was actually quite brilliant. He just got a little obsessed with something. That said, some of his developments and observations during his Atlantis quest are still being applied to this day. The dynamics of Swedish politics during the 17th century is an interesting background element of the story. Also, the internal conflicts of the university at which Rudbeck was a faculty member were quite entertaining, as much as I see the same things today through a professor friend of mine. I'm not going to call this an enrapturing read, but it was certainly a worthwhile one from my perspective.

Olof Rudbeck was some kind of seventeenth century wonderful, according to author David King in *Finding Atlantis, A True Story of Genius, Madness, and an Extraordinary Quest for a Lost World*.

Rudbeck comes across more self-delusional than either the mad or genius of the subtitle but either way it is an interesting story. He found Atlantis in ancient Sweden, which also became the birthplace for all language, mythology, and culture known throughout classical Europe (and later stretched to the Indus River itself by Rudbeck). There was nothing this man could not interpret to meet his needs for fitting into a particular hypothesis. At times, the reader may even feel a little embarrassed for Rudbeck and a little shocked that less scholars were not laughing at him. The author gives a good glimpse into post Renaissance, pre-Enlightenment Sweden, a country not much discussed in most histories. Sweden was at the height of its power and maybe from so high up it was easy to imagine that everything glorious that was once existed there first. An interesting footnote in history.

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