

The above quote (from plate 3 of *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*, 1804–1820), reflects Blake’s belief that humanity’s original state was one of integrated knowledge, creative expression, and understanding. Blake saw the fall of humanity as a separation of imagination from intellect, leading to a fragmented existence. In his view, the “Primeval State” represents the original wholeness before this fall, where wisdom, art, and science were not separate disciplines but integrated facets of the human imagination.

If we take the fall of humanity from the paradisiacal Garden to be an event in the evolution of human consciousness and culture (not a “fall” from some otherworldly plane of existence into this material world), then Blake’s vision of the “Primeval State of Man” can be interpreted as situated in the prehistoric period, of which little is known about the condition of mankind, except the assumption that it was a barbarous existence for so-called “hunter-gatherers.” (This cosmic fall could be recapitulated in the mental development from the state of childhood to the state of adulthood, as in the biological theory “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny;” i.e., an organism’s development [ontogeny] replays its evolutionary history [phylogeny]. Here, new neurological evidence of The Default Mode Network (DMN) that limits the sense of self in later childhood brain development is applicable. [DMN is a brain network active during rest, involved self-reflection, future planning, integrating memories, thoughts, and emotions to form our sense of self.] If all this is so, then Blake’s own “fall” from the paradisiacal state of childhood state into the rational-minded state of egoic adulthood [as noted in one biography] would make sense of his early “Songs of Innocence” followed by the later “Songs of Experience.”) This kind of interpretation would fit in with Blake’s heretical contention. By linking wisdom, art, and science in a unified primeval state, Blake can be understood as implicitly criticizing the scientific view of his time and the later specialization of knowledge that he saw as leading to a diminished human experience; i.e., basically, a denial of the Imagination.

(Today, with new discoveries in the fields of anthropology and archeology, the establishment scientific assumption of humankind’s early state was crude and barbaric is being challenged by independent researchers. Indeed, according to

some new, groundbreaking theories in these fields of research [oftentimes involved in the search for “Lost Civilizations”], it may well have been a situation where early humankind was in an advanced state both mentally and technologically and devolved—instead of the official paradigm of evolution to a higher state of existence. Thus, it may well turn out that Blake’s crazy idea of humankind’s true origins may be vindicated by modern science! Unfortunately, in the meantime, little has changed in the establishment scientific view based on archeological evidence. This is so despite the paradigm-challenging discoveries of more outside-the-box scientific researchers, whose findings keep pushing back the dating of mankind’s cultural achievements that are formerly believed to be of the Neolithic or New Stone Age period, beginning around 10,000 BCE. This was a transformative era characterized by the invention of agriculture, the domestication of plants and animals, and the establishment of permanent settlements. Technically called the “Neolithic Revolution,” it saw human societies transition from nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyles to sedentary farming communities, laying the foundation for later civilizations and leading to innovations in crafts like pottery and weaving. Before this age was the Stone Age, which is contemporaneous with the evolution of the genus Homo. The Stone Age is the first period in the three-age system frequently used in archaeology to divide the timeline of human technological prehistory, especially in Europe and western Asia, into functional periods, with the next two being the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, respectively. The Stone Age is also commonly divided into three distinct periods: the earliest and most primitive being the Paleolithic era; a transitional period with finer tools known as the Mesolithic era; and the final stage known as the Neolithic era.)

Being that Blake was interested to a great degree in the mythologized ancient history of Britain (and further mythologized it in his poetry), take for example the famous prehistoric megalithic structure of Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire, England. It’s Neolithic date of construction now has been moved back to 3000 BCE, and some date it even earlier. Thus, Stonehenge serves as a starting point of a 2018 documentary that challenges the establishment science view of prehistory and its peoples. The title of this documentary is “The First Britons”

(Britons was a name Blake knew well as it is a subject of his prophetic mythology, as related to “Albion.”)

The opening commentary of “The First Britons” is presented here in order to demonstrate the latest scientific discoveries that lend credence to Blake’s *“The Primeval State of Man, was Wisdom, Art, and Science.”*

“Historians and archaeologists have long thought that the story of the earliest Britons was lost to the mists of time. Stone Age settlers of ancient Britain had always been thought of as simple folk, living a brutal hand-to-mouth existence. An itinerant people, leaving almost no trace of their nomadic evidence. But now, evidence is emerging that turns those assumptions upside-down. Traditionally, the view of the hunter-gatherer has been that they’ve really just been sort of running through the landscape, chasing after the latest big animal. But, in fact, what we have here is something much more complicated. Archaeological sites all over the UK and Northern Europe are producing evidence that paints these people in a very different light. It’s become clear over time that people are thinking ahead and planning for the future. And that is really quite a sophisticated way to interact with the environment. And scientific technologies are bringing prehistory into sharp focus in a way unimaginable just a few decades ago. We produced a life story, a life history; what they were eating, and the climate was like. We could reach back into the past and reconstruct their childhoods. But perhaps the most surprising of all is the discovery in an ancient cave that completely confounds our preconceptions about who our ancestors actually were. When we got the isotope analysis results, our whole picture that we had before just crumbled in a second. Thanks to science, we now have an increasingly clear picture of prehistory and the sophisticated people who were the first Britons. . . . We have to start rethinking about how we imagine groups which we call simple [not sophisticated but “primitive”] . . . . It’s only occasionally that an archaeologist finds something that you think may be a complete game changer.”