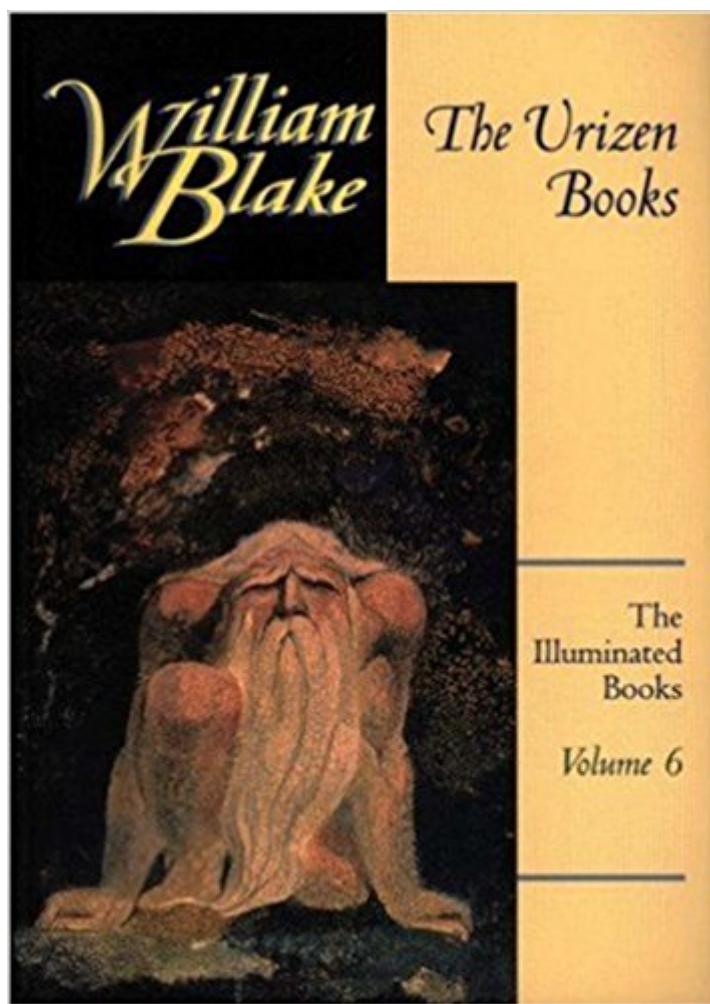


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# The Urizen Books (The Illuminated Books Of William Blake, Volume 6)



## Synopsis

The last volumes in the series of William Blake's Illuminated Books reveal the writer and artist as a prophet driven by a sense of apocalyptic urgency. Blake conceived and executed The Continental Prophecies and The Urizen Books in the early 1790s, capturing the intellectual and spiritual turmoil of the American and French revolutions. Here, for the first time, the general reader will encounter Blake's most intense vision in reproductions that do justice to the originals, accompanied by texts, comprehensive notes and commentaries, and detailed interpretations of the designs. The Urizen Books, made up of "Urizen," "The Book of Los," and "Ahania," describes the dissemination of the autocratic mythology of Urizen, Blake's inflexibly rationalist and myopic law-giver. These books stand as the author's sensible and considered response to the events of his time. The illuminated text of "Urizen" and the ten full-page illustrations from copy D in the British Museum, never before reproduced, represent a tour de force in Blake's specialist process of color printing. These volumes complete the six-part series of William Blake's Illuminated Books, including Jerusalem, Songs of Innocence and of Experience, The Early Illuminated Books, and Milton, A Poem, all published by Princeton University Press.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In Lambeth in the 1790's, against a background of war and revolution in the American colonies and in Europe, and at home the denial of civil liberties and emergent radicalism, William Blake

composed three uncompromising books in illuminated printing with which to present alternative accounts of creation and the beginning of social and religious oppression. These books are chapters from Blake's 'Bible of Hell'. Urizen, the Book of Los and Ahania set out to describe the dissemination of the autocratic mythology of Urizen, Blake's inflexibly rationalist and myopic law-giver. The message is often obscure but it is a feature of this edition that much of Blake's meaning is recovered by relating his words and images to the events and circumstances with which he and his few early readers were familiar. The works stand, more than has subsequently been thought, as Blake's sensible and considered response to the difficult times of their composition.

--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

David Worrall teaches in the English department of St. Mary's University College, Strawberry Hill, England, and is an Associate Editor of Blake Quarterly. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Un libro che un adoratore di William Blake non può farsi non avere nella propria libreria. Illustrazioni bellissime e commentate una per una. Una open window nel mondo visionario di Blake che consente anche ai non addetti ai lavori agli studiosi del grande artista inglese di penetrare le sue opere. DA COMPRARE!!!!

Excellent

These three works in some ways develop the characters Blake used in the three Continental Prophecies. But don't expect any kind of coherent development or to be able to fathom out any kind of understandable timeline. This is Blake after all. Most of this book is helpful introduction, commentary, notes, and supplementary materials. "The First Book of Urizen" is the longest of the three and the most illustrated. It has images that are absolutely unforgettable. They have a power and emotional impact that holds the viewer. I have met people who find them repulsive. I think the emotional impact makes them uncomfortable so they want to get away from the images and so push them away. "The Book of Ahania" and "The Book of Los" are much shorter and the illustrations are limited to the title page and the last plate ("The Book of Los" also has an illustration on the opening page of text.). The other pages are done in particularly fine Blake script. As with the rest of the volumes in this series the quality of reproduction is very high and these images are delightful to study. The scholarship is quite good and the writing is focused on opening these works up to the general reader - at least a general reader who enjoys studying Blake and is willing to put in the time

it takes to fathom these rather wonderfully strange works. A treasure for the shelf of any Blake lover.

I recommend that any fan of William Blake buy this volume and the other 5 in the series. The books are beautiful, large, and handsomely bound. Each book is reproduced in full color, using a six-color printing process rather than the standard four. The pages are heavy, opaque and have a gorgous lustre indicating very high quality paper. The text of each book accompanies the color reproductions in standard typeface with very competent commentary to boot.

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