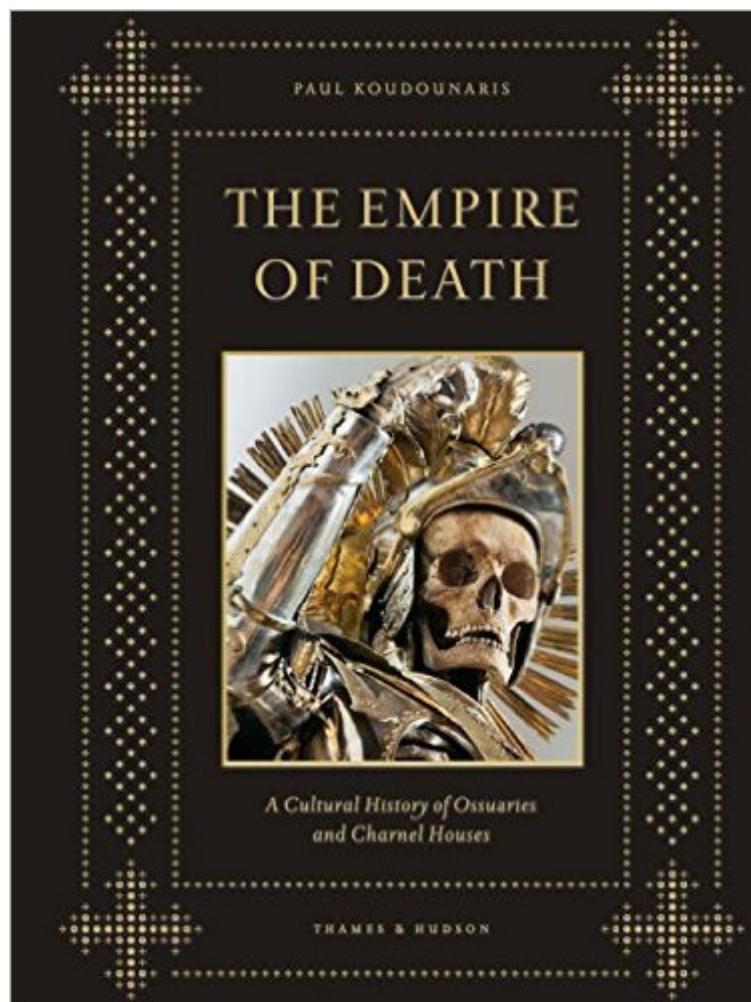


The book was found

# The Empire Of Death: A Cultural History Of Ossuaries And Charnel Houses



## Synopsis

From bone fetishism in the ancient world to painted skulls in Austria and Bavaria: an unusual and compelling work of cultural history. It is sometimes said that death is the last taboo, but it was not always so. For centuries, religious establishments constructed decorated ossuaries and charnel houses that stand as masterpieces of art created from human bone. These unique structures have been pushed into the footnotes of history; they were part of a dialogue with death that is now silent. The sites in this specially photographed and brilliantly original study range from the Monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Palermo, where the living would visit mummified or skeletal remains and lovingly dress them; to the Paris catacombs; to fantastic bone-encrusted creations in Austria, Cambodia, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Italy, Peru, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, and elsewhere. Paul Koudounaris photographed more than seventy sites for this book. He analyzes the role of these remarkable memorials within the cultures that created them, as well as the mythology and folklore that developed around them, and skillfully traces a remarkable human endeavor. 290 photographs, 260 in color

## Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Thames & Hudson; First Edition edition (October 24, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0500251789

ISBN-13: 979-0500251781

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 1.1 x 12.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (38 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #153,519 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 inÂ  Books > Arts & Photography > Other Media > Conceptual #65 inÂ  Books > Arts & Photography > History & Criticism > Themes > Religious #405 inÂ  Books > Religion & Spirituality > Religious Studies > History

## Customer Reviews

As has been testified elsewhere, Paul Koudanaris' exploration of the historical anachronism known as the 'Ossuary' is, firstly, a work of exceptional beauty. His photographs of these places that are entirely morbid to many Western eyes, evincing second & third hand impressions of the Black Death & two World Wars (both times the Horseman of War is followed closely by Death, Plague and

famine: the scarlet fever showing no mercy to the already ravaged nations who fought in the Great War: the terrifying industrialized killing machines employed by the Nazi's to make quick pitiless work of genocide), have far more significance than mere shock. His anthropological investigation into the origins of the Ossuary suggest a deep cultural disconnect that only a small and curious portion of the Western World have managed to plug themselves into. Until the 19th & 20th centuries, the average person had a familiarity with death that was unavoidable. The skull was seen as a symbol of one's resignation to his own mortality. From the late Gothic to the Renaissance to the Baroque, the 'Vanitas' theme of the living man studying the dead to remind himself of life's transience is a constant. The Ossuary can be seen as an architectural and sculptural progression of the Vanitas theme, as well as a solution to a very real problem of city-planning. As plagues and battles raged, and cities continued to grow through the late medieval age, places to bury the dead became harder to find. Graveyards were stacking graves two - three coffins deep. As the distances one was forced to travel in order to bury the dead became untenable, the catacombs were opened and expanded, and the Ossuary was born.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

The Empire of Death: A Cultural History of Ossuaries and Charnel Houses J. D. Robb CD Collection 2: Rapture in Death, Ceremony in Death, Vengeance in Death (In Death Series) The Romans: From Village to Empire: A History of Rome from Earliest Times to the End of the Western Empire Alexander: The Great Leader and Hero of Macedonia and Ancient Greece (European History, Ancient History, Ancient Rome, Ancient Greece, Egyptian History, Roman Empire, Roman History) Who Built That? Modern Houses: An Introduction to Modern Houses and Their Architects Microshelters: 59 Creative Cabins, Tiny Houses, Tree Houses, and Other Small Structures Tiny Houses: Tiny House Plans, Woodworking on a Tiny House and Living Mortgage Free (Tiny Houses, Tiny House Living, Tiny House Plans, Small Homes, Woodworking Book 1) Tiny Houses: Constructing A Tiny House On A Budget And Living Mortgage Free (REVISED & UPDATED) (Tiny Houses, Tiny House Living, Tiny House, Small Home) Real Estate: 25 Best Strategies for Real Estate Investing, Home Buying and Flipping Houses (Real Estate, Real Estate Investing, home buying, flipping houses, ... income, investing, entrepreneurship) Victorian Houses: 22 Original Interior and Exterior Designs to Walk You through Beautiful Victorian Houses (Stress-Relief & Imagination Boost) Small Houses (Great Houses) English Houses: Inspirational Interiors from City Apartments to Country Manor Houses Tiny Houses: Tiny Houses with Example Plans & Tiny Homes for Beginners - Two Books in One Making Great Gingerbread Houses: Delicious Designs from Cabins to Castles, from Lighthouses to Tree Houses Tiny Houses: Everything You Need to

Know before Buying a Tiny House (Tiny Houses, Tiny House Living, Tiny Homes, Tiny House) The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective (Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology) Cataloging Cultural Objects: A Guide to Describing Cultural Works and Their Images Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Trends (Cultural Exegesis) Desiring the Kingdom (Cultural Liturgies): Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation (Cultural Liturgies)

[Dmca](#)