

Harvard University removed the human skin used as a book cover

After the book's human skin cover is removed, interested people can still read the book's content directly at the Harvard library or online.



The book "Des Destinées de l'Âme" has a human skin cover. Photo: Ethics Alarms.

On March 27, after years of criticism and debate, Harvard University announced that it had removed the human skin covering the book *Des Destinées de l'Âme* (roughly translated: The Fate of the Soul), which was archived. kept in the school library for 90 years.

The school said its management practices related to the book "did not meet the level of ethical standards set by the school," according to *The New York Times*.

With the recent removal of this skin, Harvard said it will consider options to respectfully handle this remaining body part. The school also noted past failures in the management and care of the book and sometimes used some inappropriate tones to promote coverage in international media.

Des Destinées de l'Âme is a book by French author Arsène Houssaye, explaining and reflecting on the soul and life after death. In the mid-1880s, Houssaye gave the book to his close friend Dr. Ludovic Bouland, a famous American medical doctor.

Bouland said he wrapped the book in human skin taken from the unclaimed body of a female patient who died of a stroke. He also inserted a note in the book that "a book about the human soul deserves to be covered with

human skin". The book was donated to the Harvard library in 1934. For many years the authenticity of the claim that the book was bound in human skin was also debated.

In 2014, Harvard University attracted attention from around the world when it announced that it had conducted DNA testing on the book and confirmed that the book was bound with human skin at a rate of 99.9%.

Now that the book has had its human skin cover removed, interested people can still read this book both at the library and online.

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