

## Imitate, Adapt and Reflect: Focus on the Mass Cannibalism Influenced by Christianity

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### Abstract

In the ending of the movie *Perfume: The Story of A Murderer*, there is a case of cannibalism occurred in the fish market. It is worth noting that we can find some imitations from the Bible stories by analyzing the hero's fate. Basing on the religious literature, the novel of the same name shows a writing style and influenced many art creations greatly. The scene of "cannibalism" presents the vital adaptations in the literary and art work. Focus on the mass cannibalism under the influence of Christianity, we can think deeply about the reasonable desire, the rapid development of technology and the religious concept of Original Sin. In other words, people have right to get self-emancipation and live in a healthier lifestyle with lightsome pace.

### Keywords

*Perfume: The Story of a Murderer*; Tom Tykwer; Christianity; Bible Stories; Cannibalism; Original Sin.

### 1. Introduction

Broadly speaking, *Perfume: The Story of A Murderer* has been studied by many researchers using different approaches with their own subject standpoint. Since it was on in 2007, *Perfume* has been attracting of a lot of interest. This trend provided an important opportunity to advance the understanding of Tom Tykwer's personal aesthetics style. For instance, Hu Ping explored director's creation intention and the individual and collective unconsciousness in his works (Gu Qian,2007). The author chooses choose the topic to inquire into the Partrick's spiritual growth and the creation development, so as to surmount the current circumstances (Hua Lina,2020). What needs to be addmitted is that present results still stay a mile wide and an inch deep.

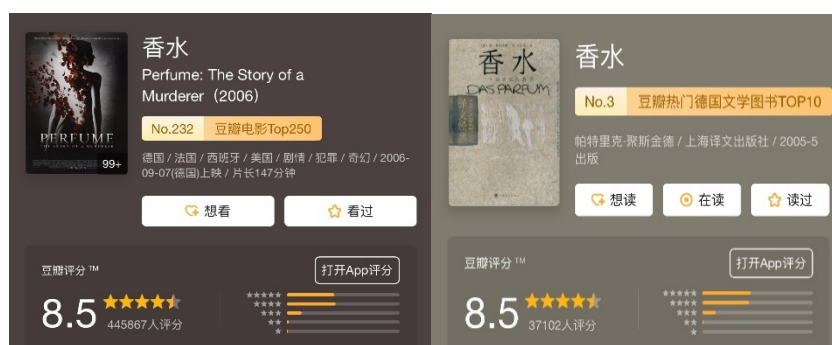


Figure 1. Scores and reviews of "Perfume" on Douban reading and movie

The past decade have seen increasingly rapid development in the field of the religious criticism. To analyze the characterization of Grenouille from the perspective of literature theory is main point innovation in this study. Why arrange the ending of the hero in this way? Are there any narrative traditions about the "cannibalism"? They are main questions which the article must solve. Based on the original literature and related theories, we come to conclusions which the

non-typical creations are the meaningful way to review history. Our aim is to more aware of the particular details, and use methods of feasibility to notice some elements and understand their connections.

As a generalization, the overall structure of this paper takes the form of five chapters, as follows: This paper first gives a brief overview of the imitation history towards Bible stories exists in the movie perfume. Chapter three begins by laying out the theoretical dimensions of the literature and movie theoretical writings , just looks at how to adapt the narrative mode of cannibalism successfully. The fourth section analyses the results of analysis and focus on the self-examination on the truth of religious beliefs over the next few years.

## 2. Literature Review: Imitations of the Bible Stories

### 2.1. Giving Examples

During the past 30 years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on religious criticism. They illustrated the development of art in different periods, but also showed the history of Christianity. On the one hand, people wanted to be closely associated with God, proved the legitimacy and rationality of their own existence. On the other hand, the extension of contemporary human subjectivity and the thinking mode of subject-object dualism are the root cause of advanced art and literary creations. The Bible is the classic works in Christianity, and it provides the literature and art with inexhaustible materials. The influence of Bible on Perfume is manifested in both the extraction of the story details and the theme in film.

- Born without one father

The pregnancy of Virgin Mary remains an unsolved mystery. Jesus was the only-begotten of God. The absence of his father is also inevitable. There was no omen of Grenouille’s birth. His mother is a fishmonger and his birthplace is the messy fish market. A lot of the emptiness comes because the lack of his father’s information, therefore, has results in the disagreement. The French scholar Louis Althusser inspired us.

Supposing a man did not inherit the name given by his father, the human should fill the gap by deliberately increasing their individuality.

Althusser Louis. Reading Capital

Jesus come to save and deliver those who fell into the trap of Sin. That is his responsibility. Grenouille spend a lifetime looking for his own scent, in order to know himself from a reference point outside of himself. There are significant similarities between the two stories.

**Table 1.** The occurrence of number 12 in Bible

Chapter in Bible	Original Text
<b>Old Testament</b>	
Genesis 35:22	Jacob has 12 sons
Exodus 28:21	12 tribes of Israel
Numbers 1:44	12 lambs of the first year
<b>New Testament</b>	
Matthew 10:1	12 saints
Luke 9:17	12 Devils
Revelation 21:12	12 Angels

- 12 bottles of essential oil and 12 saints

During the Jesus's active ministry, he traveled from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God, the twelve disciples were with him from beginning to end. The evidence of this special number can be clearly seen in the case of 12 dreadful murders. The girls died without any suffering, like the silent lambs.

What is interesting in this table is that a particular meaning is assigned to the specific number. This number in Bible stories used to mean 'absolutely' or 'completely'. Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover when he was twelve years old. He pardoned people's transgression and took away their iniquities totally. Indeed, the case of murders have all of the characteristics of addition. The murder focus on the young girls and always use his own obsession to deal with the world. The meaning of this number is the same as in abundant Bible stories.

The imitations of the Bible stories cannot be explained simply by chance. There are a lot of evidence besides the above interpretations. For instance, Jesus began his events of the early ministry when he was thirty years old, similarly, Grenouille wasn't able to speak a word until five. In addition, According to Christian belief, just after Jesus was baptized by John that he began his public ministry. John is the protagonist's childhood name at local orphanage. The explanation of this word is ' God is gracious and compassionate ' in Hebrew. Jesus has to sacrifice his life on the bitter cross. The declaration of the punishment for the criminal is the movie's climax. The audience could see a collapsed cross on the trial at the ending.

In summary, the Christian culture is closely related to the western society, and almost all the western art and literary works are greatly influenced by the Holly Bible.

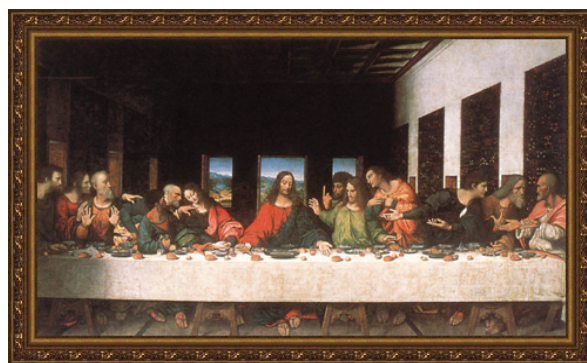
## 2.2. Bread and the Fruit of Vine

When it comes to the core of this critical paper and demonstration, the special movie plot at the ending. Grenouille went back to his birthplace and took out the left perfume overhead. Crowd said he is an angle and the first bite drew the blood, and the blood drew the crazy people. The God provide food for his followers with his own body voluntarily. In fact, this narrative strategy lies the deep cultural connotation about secularization of religion. In order to illustrate such a connection, the following are extracts from the original Bible:

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Then he took the cup (filled with the fruit of vine), gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood, which is poured out for the forgiveness of sins."

(NIV Holy Bible, Matthew 26:26-28)



**Figure 2.** The Last Supper, Leonardo da Vinci (1494-1498)

According to the interpretations in the latest religious studies, Jesus was pleased to turn himself into the food. The result is that salvation comes through faith in Christ's redemptive sacrifice. People were able to bring about an inner peace and spirituality. Grenouille was willing to

sacrifice himself just to be loved actually. The coalescence of the utility meets the needs of his chase of the pure passion and the need of affection.

The practice of the cannibalism is a representative imitation under the influence of Bible stories. This issue carried rich significance and needed to arouse our attention.

### **3. Analysis: Adaptations in the Field of Novel and Film**

The different ways to saying Christianity are in a booming development process. Those ambitious adaptations from original case of cannibalism occurred in various dimensions. Start from my own standpoint of subject, the rewriting of literary texts is an important culture phenomenon in this essay. The following two books are the key points to understanding the classical heritage in contemporary theoretical framework.

Carl Jung was a famous 20th century psychologist, the founder of the Analytical Psychology. More and more people attach importance to his thoughts. Jung focused more on the collective unconscious, maintaining that our dreams draw from shared archetypes and symbols. In his paper Background to the psychology of Christian alchemical symbolism, he explained the symbolic significance of FISH.

In the story the God assumes the form of a fish. He became a silent lamb when he died. He chose the fishermen as his followers, persuaded men and women to drop their differences. He said "Come, follow me. And I will make you fishers of men."

It happened to that Grenouille was born in a fish market and cried for the stench. After he was arrested, he put the perfume on his handkerchief in the execution. People were crazy and out of control, like the lost shoal of fish. The New God was created.

There are two similar narration modes.

Nietzsche annotated and checked this plot in Matthew in his book The Gay Science. The disciples were willing to accept communion and some churches have also begun to allow dipping bread in wine. The people gnawed the God's bone and the sharp teeth revealed by cold, gleamed through the dark. There exists a need to be forgiven by God, and gave his own spirit to his followers. Seen from a deeper level, the discussion from Nietzsche is entailed by the nature of religious studies.

Movies and literature are two different kinds of media, they combined together skillfully by the tie of personal adaptations.

#### **3.1. Characterization in the Novel**

The Patrick Suskink's masterpiece Perfume: The Story of a Murderer published in 1985, has become one of the most important novels in the 20th century. His novels breaks down the barriers between the traditional literature and popular literature, expressing modern survival status and spiritual crisis that is depression, loss, fear, anxiety and so on. This novel built a positive and progressive model hero. A lot of mythological archetype and religious imagery shaped a protagonist with dependencies between genius and devil. The author draws the complicated clues of the plot together in the final chapter and described the act of cannibalism: They rushed the Angel and threw the young boy. Everyone loved him and wanted something belonged to him. The crowd cut off his clothes, removed his skin, took out his hair, tore apart his body, like the merciless wolves and brutal dogs. They were quite naturally very proud of themselves at the ending. They thought that only do this out of the pure admire.

By rewriting the practice of cannibalism in Bible stories, this novel reveals the modern religious belief and the absurdity of the modern society. Aiming at those deformity product of modern rationality, Patrick Suskink put forward his critique and reflection.

### 3.2. Movie Perfume's Narrative Strategy and Aesthetic Inclination

The movie *Perfume: The Story of A Murder* is based on Patrick Suskind's novel of the same name. Tom Tykwer is a very talented director. Though his works not so large in number, showing superb artistic accomplishments and aesthetic value. Since it was released 13 years ago, has been widely concerned. Movie is one of the comprehensive art forms, and there is a specific regulation of its own in it.

Adaptations can be viewed from two aspects. On the one hand, the unique narrative strategy which suggests a new sort of artistic criterion is established. By the subverting tactic, the typical character's status as main body has been dispelled. On the other hand, Tom Tykwer's use of color contrast is masterly. The spotlight produces a sharp change between light and dark.

- The Experience of Circles of life

When both "An odorless man" and "A gifted boy who can distinguish all smell" conflict with each other, the development of subjectiveness becomes a contradictory proposition. In German religious services, non-scent people was considered as an unlucky monster. People smelled the perfume regarded Grenouille as an angle, an innocent hero, it was due to they are looking for the redemption and forgiveness, however, in other words, people were convicted of being a cannibal. Undoubtedly, it is a symbol of the endless cycle of life.

Just like the sun is rising from the east and setting to the west, the growth of lives on earth is also proceeding in a slow cycle repeatedly. In fact, Tom Tykwer is exploring the nature of relationship between human and religion. By recounting the fate of the stubborn murder, Tom Tykwer put us on the path toward thinking deeply into the roots of subsistence.

- Camera Angles and Dramatic Contrast



**Figure 3.** The case of cannibalism in the fish market (*Perfume*)

The contrast of Light & Dark is used here to tell the story

Generally speaking, a reasonable color match will create the aesthetic color. Nevertheless, it is not enough for Tom Tykwer's art creation. The movie *Run Lola Run* is the early representative of his work. The heroine Lola is a young girl with the bouncy, red hair. As to the scene of cannibalism in the "Perfume", It's clear that the contrast effects transform the occasional squalor and chaos of actual events into power significant images. Tom Tykwer was very particular about the colors he used, which plays an important complementary role for his narrative in the film. Through the excellent combination of color, the vision language is an extension of or a supplement to express ideas and feelings.

### 4. Reflection: 'Death of God'

The reflection of the original sin will be discussed in the following section. First of all, I begin to demonstrate the necessity of reflection by putting forward three crucial problems. They are described briefly below:

- Love desire and Asceticism:

How human beings with a strong desire should be?

- Intelligence and Technology:

What the world will be like without human mind?

- Innocent and the Original Sin:

Why we should forgive someone who repent of their original sins?

Baptism is the chief sacrament of the forgiveness of the Original Sins, it united us to Jesus, and gave us the Holy Spirit. By the time we thank Jesus, our physical self has already been born with the original sin. However, Grenouille has no sense of guilt throughout his crime. Only after he saw the scattered plums was he aware that he had committed an offence. Actually, people lived their lives in bondage to pain and desire. It is unnecessary for us to control our reasonable desires in the modern society. Otherwise, our spirits will be incomplete and be damaged and distorted by original sin. Generally, we are facing with the unyielding faith in technology’s power to improve the future. With the rapid development of technology, perfume suggests the emergence of civilization diseases and spiritual beliefs. Actually, our brains have the creativity and imagination. From lack of experience to lack of confidence, our intelligence have many novel ways to overcome the difficulties by ourselves. Most people have a blind faith in the God in churches. Just like the movie plot, ironically, the nun who believe in God was be killed.



**Figure 4.** Subtitle: “Have you no faith in the power of our holy Mother Church?” (93’01”)

As far as the cause of the Original Sins, we should admit that the repression was not something to escape from, but a part of human condition. Freud concluded that the unhappy childhood left an indelible mark for one’s stage of development. People must have reasons for their decisions and humans are rational because they act for reasons. We would better be more tolerant and peace towards the world around ourselves. It is accepted that the accusations of cannibalism have historically been much more than the cruel behavior itself. In short, people need to be the master in the life, adjust his analysis ability and look at the religion function and the view of Original Sins dialectically.

## 5. Conclusion

**Table 2.** Movie List directed by Tom Tykwer and his position in it

YEAR	TITLE	POSITION
2012	Cloud Atlas	Director/Screenwriter/Music Director
	Soul Boy	D/S/MD
2010	DREI	D/S/MD
2009	The International	D/MD
2006	Perfume: The Story of a Murder	D/S/MD
2002	Heaven	D/S
2000	Der Krieger und die Kaiserin	D/S
1998	Run Lola Run	D/S/MD
1997	Winter Schlafer	D/S/MD
1993	Todliche Maria, Die	D/S/MD

Characterization of Grenouille is important for our increased understanding of art creations influenced by Christianity, This study aims to contribute to this growing area of research by reviewing former studies on this movie, and attempt to reinterpret it from the perspective of modernity.

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