

# Psychological Analysis and Interpretation of the Opera “Mrs. Butterfly” Based on Ecological Feminism

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**Abstract:** “Mrs. Butterfly” is a masterpiece of the famous Italian composer Puccini. It depicts a tragedy western female tragedy with sincere emotions. In this regard, the article analyzes the creative background and artistic value of “Mrs. Butterfly”, and then interprets the psychological changes of the hero in “Mrs. Butterfly” based on ecological feminism, and analyzes the Orientalism contained in it.

**Keywords:** Madame Butterfly; Artistic value; Psychological analysis; Interpretation.

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## 1. Research Background

### 1.1 Literature review

“Mrs. Butterfly”, as one of the world’s classic operas, tells the tragedy of the marriage between Pinkerton, the Japanese garrison and Japanese woman Qiao Qiaosang. After Pinkerton left Japan, Qiao Qiaosang kept his marriage. Unfortunately, this persistence did not achieve the happiness it deserved, and Qiao Qiaosang eventually committed suicide with hate. Such tragedies were greatly welcomed in the Western world at the time. Many scholars have their own analysis of such opera interpretations. He Ying analyzed the artistic style and singing characteristics of the famous aria “A Sunny Day” in “Mrs. Butterfly”. The author starts from the aspects of breath, tone, speed, intensity and emotional changes, and deeply understands the musical image of the opera and the rich inner world of the singer (he, 2011). Han Jinsong believed that the opera “Mrs. Butterfly” created by Puccini is full of exoticism, and whether it is an exotic story, or a variety of creative techniques such as tones and orchestration, the opera reflects a strong exoticism and era (Han, 2014). From the perspective of feminism, Tan Yishuang deeply analyzed the characterization of female characters in Puccini’s opera “Mrs. Butterfly”, understood the women in the Romantic period from a different perspective, and further analyzed the feminist views reflected in the opera. Understood (tan, 2018). He Fengxian believed that the opera “Mrs. Butterfly” focused on the personal image and tragic encounters in shaping the heroine. Puccini used a large number of oriental elements such as Chinese and Japanese themes, musical tunes, and cultural backgrounds in the creation of this opera, showing the unique charm of the fusion of western opera and oriental culture. Therefore, the author explored the use of oriental elements from a musical perspective, and then analyzed the unique charm of Puccini opera (pang, 2012).

### 1.2 Purpose of research

“Mrs. Butterfly”, as a tragic story of the East under the understanding of the West, elaborates the Oriental impression of the West with its world-centered attitude. A small miniature of an opera reveals the “imaginary” East in the eyes of the Western world at the time. For the Western world at the time, the East was remote and mysterious. But the prosperity of colonialism, the western world knows nothing about Eastern culture, and it is mainly through literary and artistic works that describe oriental style stories. But to a certain extent, the West understands the culture of the party with a posture of a winner and a conqueror. The western-style Eastern tragedy described The heroine Qiao Qiaosang’s weak obedience is the inherent oriental image. Everything in the play clearly shows hegemonism and racism. This paper focuses on analyzing the social issues revealed behind “Mrs. Butterfly”, and looks forward to new thinking.

## **2. An Analysis Of The Creative Background And Artistic Value Of Madam Butterfly**

“Mrs. Butterfly” is based on a novel from a Japanese background, which was originally published in the United States’ “Century Magazine”. The original adaptation “Mrs. Butterfly” was a one-act play, and the background was selected from the “Chinese” or “Japanese” repertoire that was extremely popular at the time. At that time, exotic operas with oriental mysteries were extremely popular. Puccini was fond of “Ms. Butterfly”, a highly emotional ups and downs in Japanese love story, and later adapted it into an opera (wang, 2014). In the process of compiling “Mrs. Butterfly” music, Puccini devoted his emotions.

The opera “Mrs. Butterfly” ended in a fiasco at the beginning. There are many reasons for this, some people think that the original conservative people of Milan could not accept the novel oriental stage set and the strange music. Some people also think that the voice of the protagonist is not suitable for charming oriental style; others also think that the performer’s body is not suitable for light oriental geisha, which makes the stage effect especially ridiculous. In response to this, opera writer Puccini modified it as quickly as possible, and subsequently screened it at the Grand Opera in Brescia, this time with unprecedented success. The reason for this success is that the symphony prelude to the opera is worth mentioning. A quick fugue in the opening scene quickly brought the audience’s voice to the scene and paid attention to the plot.

“Mrs. Butterfly” is Puccini’s first exotic work, which is different from the parallel four degrees, fifth parallels, second major degrees, and subordinates used in his previous works such as Turandot and Girl in the West. Chords and other music languages.”Mrs. Butterfly” is most unique in its use of pentatonic sequences, and this musical language is a musical expression commonly used in Asian countries at that time (feng, 2010). Puccini was inspired by oriental music records and song scores, and then incorporated these musical information into the performance of the opera, and then cooperated with orchestras and other instruments to create an exotic music color different from the western style The most authentic “exotic” experience of a playwright.

## **3. Psychoanalysis Of Madame Butterfly Based On Ecofeminism**

### **3.1 Pure and innocent bride period**

Puccini’s opera hero Qiao Qiaosang belongs to an introverted lyrical role, so this also lays the tone of this work to be lyrical. The author’s lyrical way is more convenient to show the tragic fate of the women in the play. The music in “Please Listen to Me” in the first act vividly and vividly interprets the heroine Qiaoqiao Sangzhongzhen’s innocent character. At this time, Qiaoqiao Sang was innocent and pure. She told her husband about her life beliefs and would follow him for life. The lyrical music from the narrative will tell such simplicity and detail (hong, 2015). Puccini used the softest melody line music language to express Qiao Qiaosang’s psychological characteristics of following his destiny. Between the music, Qiao Qiaosang’s longing for good love and his expectations for future life can be felt. But at the same time, such lyrical minors also laid a foreshadowing for later tragedies.

### **3.2 Period of regaining dignity**

With the advancement of the content of the play, the immature and innocent Qiao Qiaosang in the beautiful melody instantly became a mother of a three-year-old child. Various rumors and rumors did not overwhelm her, she always believed in her own belief. I believe her husband will come back to reunite with her one day and take care of her for life. At this time, Qiaoqiao Sang was a steady mature woman. The use of music in the opera at an octave further demonstrates Qiao Qiaosang’s expectation of her husband returning home, and hopes to prove that her insistence on her husband is correct. In this period, in fact, Qiao Qiaosang also described the psychological changes in three different periods. In the composition of the first paragraph, the music of the track was slow, contrasting with the hero’s most emotional period in the middle period. The change in the second piece of music fully shows Qiao Qiaosang’s mood of looking forward to the party. The music melody of this period was slow and conveyed a feeling of expectation for her husband to return home. At this time, the heroine’s little love psychology is also vividly presented through music (Chen, 2010). The music changes in the third part are even hotter than the first one. She hopes that her husband will come back to reunite with her as soon as possible. Expectations are not the same as those rumors. So Qiao Qiaosang was letting out his feelings of missing her husband. The three different types of rhythmic changes throughout the composition bring to life the mood that the protagonist expects.

### **3.3 Self-sacrifice period**

The opera’s progress to this period is already the emotional burst of the hero. All kinds of blows made Qiao Qiaosang lose his courage to live. This helpless playwright emphasized with seven identical words. But when Qiao Qiaosang was determined to commit suicide, her son’s sudden appearance gave her a sense of struggle. But the following seven “you” in succession also reflected the ambivalence of the hero’s reluctance to his son, but had to do it. For love, she is willing to give everything, including life. Qiao Qiaosang, as a typical Oriental woman, did not have the right to dominate her own destiny in that era. Even if she has the right to remarry, she still chooses to adhere to her faith, not to live in the world but to choose to sacrifice, and the image of a moral heroine

jumps on the stage. Lyrical music melody is always easy to impress, and MRS. Butterfly has become Puccini's most "psychological musical" opera. From Qiao Qiaosang's initial happiness to the final despair of suicide, all show the hero's complicated mental changes.

#### **4. An Orientalist Interpretation Of Opera "Mrs. Butterfly"**

Qiao Qiaosang is a woman with oriental traditional thinking. She is humble and obedient. Even if her marriage is inexplicable, she will abide by her duties as a wife and wait blindly for her husband's return. In the end, her husband abandoned her and chose to end her life in despair. In contrast, her husband Pinkerton, from beginning to end, he knew what he wanted. In his marriage with Qiao Qiaosang, he can break the contract at any time, and can always find his freedom, his true love (chen, 2019). To a certain extent, it also reflects the differences between Eastern and Western cultures. Western cultures are open, equal, inclusive, and rational; Eastern cultures are ignorant, backward, and poor. Obviously, the great success of "Mrs. Butterfly" may be related to the novel oriental themes, but it is more to cater to the western aesthetic appreciation group.

Qiao Qiaosang's dedication and sadness in "Mrs. Butterfly" attracted the audience's tears, and also caused their sympathy. However, such sympathy is superior and condescending. At that time, the Westernist thought generally believed that the East was feminine, extremely sensual and needed to be conquered. Therefore, many Western writers take it for granted that the East is a cheerful garden of Eden and a good habitat for imperial colonialism. This has further led to "Mrs. Butterfly" achieving such a high cultural status, the key lies in the widespread dissemination of opera and the vigorous promotion of the media. For example, the impromptu performance of various well-known songs in opera has also deepened the popularity of opera. To a greater extent, "Mrs. Butterfly" is actually an allegorical treatment of an exotic background, and then in the actual editing, this allegory is derived into actual life.

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