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> "Fatherless girl and "Domineering mother" : Terayama Shuji's portrayal of women

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Item Summary

Title: "Fatherless girl and "Domineering mother" : Terayama Shuji's portrayal of women

Authors: [Sadakari, Rei](#)

Keywords: [Terayama, Shūji -- Characters -- Women](#)
[Women in literature](#)
[Sex role in literature](#)

Date Issued: 2004

Abstract: When a girl gives birth, she starts her new life as a mother. In Terayama's theatrical world, a mother, an antithesis of a girl (prostitute), always dominates her own child. Similar to Terayama's own family history, his mother characters always have an only son without having a father figure in the family. In addition, the mother figures always control their sons' lives and dominate them. In addition to the absence of a father figure, the issue of a son who abandons his domineering mother and the images of incest between mother and son frequently show up in Terayama's plays. His portrayals of fatherless or husbandless girls and domineering mothers are especially unconventional compared to the stereotypical portrayals of these figures in many Japanese and Western plays. These two elements, the absence of a father figure and the reign of a ruling mother, are the most important factors and the core themes for the development of Terayama's unique theatrical world. In this essay, I categorize a girl who does not have any such domineering and powerful male figures as the "fatherless girl" and Terayama's powerful and dictatorial mother figure as the "domineering mother." Through these archetypes, I will examine how Terayama assails the traditional notion of female gender roles and their relationships to the male family members' roles.

Description: Thesis (M.A.)--University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2004.
 Includes bibliographical references (leaves 66-72).
 ii, 72 leaves, bound ill. 29 cm

URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/10125/11970>

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