

"FATHERLESS GIRL" AND "DOMINEERING MOTHER"

TERAYAMA SHUJI'S PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In the vanguard of contemporary Japanese theatre, Terayama Shuji (1935-1983) and his company, Tenjo Sajiki¹ (1967-1983), have pervaded the Japanese consciousness with revolutionary ideas and colorful visual effects since the 1960's and continue to influence the Japanese contemporary theatre to this day. Terayama dedicated his life to creating theatre and other art forms, including poetry, film, literature and photography. He produced numerous theatrical productions through Tenjo Sajiki for fifteen years until his death from illness in 1983. His unique philosophy and unconventional artistic creations have kept him popular and extremely influential even twenty years after his death.

Tenjo Sajiki's theatrical experiments can be broadly divided into four different periods. The first phase started with The Hunchback of Aomori² (1967), the first production of Tenjo Sajiki, performed in 1967. Tenjo Sajiki began creating ritualistic and illusionary worlds on stage based on northern Japanese indigenous folk tales. In this period, Tenjo Sajiki had the idea of restoring sideshows in the theatre and used deviant characters on stage with a mixture of colorful pop art and esoteric stage sets as backdrops.

Shortly after Terayama Shuji formed Tenjo Sajiki, he began to influence on subculture, and he became an originator for a cult of disaffected youth. In 1968, Terayama attempted to create a documentary drama, or a theatre-*verite*,³ called Throw Away Your

¹ The official name of the company is Engeki Jikenshitu-Tenjo Sajiki (演劇実験室-天井棧敷): literally translated as The Experimental Theatre Laboratory - The Upper Gallery.

² The title and the play are translated by Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei. The translation is unpublished.

³ A theatre style in which everyday people (non-professional) talk of their own experiences in their own words on stage.

Books, Go Out Into the Streets⁴ (1968; film version 1971) with ordinary teenagers as performers under Terayama's direction. Ordinary nonprofessional teenage students got together and voiced their opinions about and resentments towards society. This was the second phase of Tenjo Sajiki's novel experiment.

From 1969 to 1975, Tenjo Sajiki embarked on street theatre and outdoor theatre experiments. During this period, the company advocated the destruction of conventional theatrical forms and the fomenting of a theatrical revolution. Tenjo Sajiki expanded the close-minded conventional theatre practices and gave limitless possibilities to theatrical experiments. Tenjo Sajiki's first street theatre piece, Man-Powered Airplane Solomon⁵ (1970), was performed in Tokyo, France, and Holland. The production's main attempt was to break the demarcation between reality and the fictional world, actors and audience members, and closed, private theatre environments and the street, overtly open to the public. Like the characters endeavoring to fly up freely into the air using man-powered airplanes, Tenjo Sajiki was emancipating theatre from restricted spaces, dialogue, and conventional acting styles with this production.

In the last period, Terayama and Tenjo Sajiki created theatrical productions using surrealistic plays and installations in a gigantic exhibition space in Tokyo. Direction to Servants⁶ (1978) was a highly renowned and successful production that dwelled upon the master-and-servant relationship. At the same time, the company expanded its avant-garde theatrical business into a commercial theatre that was more accessible to a wider variety of

⁴ English title of the theatre version of the play is provided by Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei. The original title is Sho Wo Suteyo Machihe Deyou (書を捨てよ、町へ出よう).

⁵ English title provided by Tenjo Sajiki. The Japanese title is Jinriki Hikouki Solomon (人力飛行機ソロモン).

⁶ English title provided by Tenjo Sajiki. The Japanese title is Nuhikun (奴婢訓).

audience members, producing plays like Bluebeard's Castle⁷ (1979) and The Miraculous Mandarin⁸ (1977) in fashionable commercial theatre in central Tokyo. By this time, numerous members of Tenjo Sajiki had been invited to perform international theatre festivals⁹ in several European countries where Terayama was highly recognized by foreign artists.

In his creation of Tenjo Sajiki performances, Terayama often attacked the notion of traditional Japanese family systems. One of the reasons for this might have been the lack of parental affection he felt in his youth. Terayama, a survivor of the post-WWII devastation, spent his youth without knowing much parental affection and domestic stability. Like many other war survivors of this period, he lost his father in the war and was raised by a foster family because his mother's working conditions made it impossible for her to keep him.

He frequently advocated the dissolution of fundamental family relationships, portraying distorted and deconstructed family structures on stage and twisting the gender roles of female family members. Within Terayama's invented family system, I categorize the female family members characters into two archetypes, a girl and a mother.

Terayama talks about his definition of a girl and a mother in one of his essay called "Shojo Tanki."¹⁰ He explains:

⁷ The original title is Aohigekou No Shiro (青ひげ公の城). The Japanese title of the play was the same as the English title of Bartok's opera. Therefore, I use the English title of Bartok's opera for Terayama's adaptation. Unless indicated, all succeeding English translations are by the author.

⁸ The original title is Chugoku No Fushigina Yakunin (中国の不思議な役人).

⁹ One such was Experiment 3, an international avant-garde theatre festival held in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1969.

¹⁰ Partial citation of the essay, "Shojo Tanki," is found in Terayama Shuji Ron - Souzou No Majin (寺山修司論—想像の魔人) by Takatori Ei.

I believe that a girl and a prostitute are basically the same creature. For me, they are uncomprehendingly mysterious creatures that have endless possibilities for their lives. They exist as the major creatures in the world that *entice male eroticism*. Because of these reasons, I think the antithesis of a girl or a prostitute is not a boy but a mother. A girl's life will be in danger at the time she is facing an awakening of the sexual impulse and a girl eventually dies when she gives birth. Ordinarily, it is the beginning of a human creation at the time a girl (a prostitute) has a baby. In my opinion, becoming a mother is the end of a girl's life (qtd. in Takatori 165).

In the same essay, Terayama adds that a girl and a prostitute are always manipulated like puppets by powerful male figures. As Terayama says, the standard gender role of a young girl (or a prostitute) is always to exist under the presence of powerful male domination. First, a girl's father or brother takes care of her; later she will pass to a husband (or for a prostitute, a patron) who supports her. However, the girl characters Terayama creates are different from his view of girls or prostitutes in society. They are not manipulated by powerful male figures, and they live independently in his theatrical world. Therefore, it can be considered that Terayama wants to create a girl character for his play that is different from what he believed in the world where he lived.

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.

CHAPTER 2
THE "FATHERLESS GIRL"

"Bluebeard's Castle" and "The Miraculous Mandarin"

Bluebeard's Castle and The Miraculous Mandarin, both adapted from Bartók's operas, are the best examples from which to analyze Terayama's girl characters since each play has a girl or a girl prostitute as the central character, as opposed to the minor appearances of this type of character in his other plays. These performances were the first collaborations of Tenjo Sajiki and Seibu Theatre, a commercial theatre. In contrast with Tenjo Sajiki, which was known as an avant-garde theatre company, Seibu Theatre was a fashionable place for commercial theatre, producing many shingeki¹¹ plays for the intellectual bourgeois. Therefore, it was a novel plan for Seibu Theatre to produce the plays of an extremely avant-garde theatre company such as Tenjo Sajiki, a company mainly embraced by denizens of the subculture of the Japanese avant-garde and one that was competing with commercial theatres with its artistic theories. To adjust to the level to the Seibu Theatre's audiences, who expected to watch intellectual and fashionable performances, Terayama used ballet dancers, TV actresses, and fashion models for some of the cast members. He also invited a world famous trendy fashion designer of the time, Koshino Junko, to design the costumes for both plays. Koshino designed colorful costumes¹² that

¹¹ Shingeki (新劇), literally translated as "new theatre" or "new drama," started in 1924 when the Tsukiji Shogekijō was established in Tokyo. In the beginning, shingeki artists performed Western plays, such as Shakespeare and Ibsen, while they were dealing with realism and naturalism. Later, Japanese playwrights began to contribute original shingeki plays.

¹² Some production images are available in Aohigekou No Shiro (青ひげ公の城), page 40.

haves images of fairy tale for Bluebeard's Castle and beautiful Chinese dresses¹³ with sexy slits for the prostitute characters of The Miraculous Mandarin. Kujo Kyoko (1935-), the chief producer of Tenjo Sajiki and Terayama's former wife, said that Terayama was looking for something new outside of the company at that time. She added that some of the company members, who were proud to be avant-garde artists, utterly disagreed with the involvement in the commercial theatre project. However, Terayama agreed to participate in the commercial theatre project to seek something new that he could not find inside the company (Kujo 2).

One of the central features of Terayama's version of Bluebeard's Castle is the absence of Bluebeard, the master of the castle who also represents the father/husband/brother figures in the family system. This creates an absence of male influence over the girl character, thus making her a "fatherless girl." The Miraculous Mandarin portrays a girl prostitute who overpowers a Chinese government officer who acts as the father figure in the play. At the end of the play, the girl metaphorically kills the powerful and wealthy officer and starts her own life as a "fatherless girl" without any male domination in her life.

"Bluebeard's Castle"

Understanding the absence of Bluebeard in Terayama's Bluebeard's Castle is an important key to unlock a secret, hidden door in a masterless castle. Only then is it possible to analyze the gender role of the girl character who stays in the castle without any protection or suppression from a powerful male. The original story of Bluebeard's Castle has been told and retold by many different authors all over the Europe. It is based on a historical figure,

¹³ The images of costume design are available in "Chugoku No Fushigina Yakunin" (中国の不思議な役人) in Gekijo (劇場).

Gilles de Rais (1404-1440), a reputable Marshal of France working for Charles VII¹⁴ (1403-1461) and known as a companion of Joan of Arc (1412-1431). After Joan's death, Gilles de Rais locked himself up in a castle and inhumanly massacred innocent children. Consequently, he was charged with the crime of murder, and eventually he was burned at the stake. Two hundred years later, Charles Perrault (1628-1703), the well-known French fairy tale writer, turned the history of Gilles de Rais's cruel murders into a fairy tale with a happy ending, called Bluebeard. The central character of the fairy tale is an authoritative, evil, murderous King who forces a beautiful village girl to marry him. As the story unfolds, the girl, soon to be the King's bride, reluctantly arrives at the castle to serve him as his wife. In the castle, she finds seven locked doors of which she is allowed to open all but the seventh. However, she cannot help secretly opening the seventh door to satisfy her curiosity. When she does, she discovers numbers of dead bodies: the King's former wives who have already been slaughtered by him. Soon, the King discovers her disobedient act and attempts to murder her. However, the girl's brave brothers rescue her and, as expected, the story ends with the conclusion of "happily ever after."

In 1812, the Brothers Grimm,¹⁵ the world-famous German fairy tale writers, published a tale also called Bluebeard. The basic plot is similar to the original story written by Perrault. Almost a hundred years later in 1911, a Hungarian composer, Béla Bartók (1881-1945), and a writer, Balazs Béla (1884-1949), collaborated on and produced an one-act opera called Bluebeard's Castle. Again, the plot of the opera is similar to that of the other

¹⁴ Charles VII ruled France from 1422 to 1461.

¹⁵ Jacob Ludwig Carl Grimm was born in 1785 and died in 1863. Wilhelm Carl Grimm was born in 1786 and died in 1859.

folk tales, except for the portrayal of the main girl character, Judith, and the story's ending. Unlike both Perrault's and the Grimm brothers' fairy tale versions, the story ends with the indication of the cruel murder of Judith, who had been willing to dedicate her life to Bluebeard, here a duke, not a king. In addition, the plot of the opera mainly focuses on the character of Bluebeard instead of on Judith's horrific sojourn in his castle. Moreover, Bluebeard is portrayed here as handsome, sexually cruel, dictatorial and exploitative rather than as the atrocious, ugly man with a shabby blue beard on his face who appears in the fairy tale versions.

The Bluebeard story has fascinated myriad artists and writers from all over the world who have adapted and created stories, films, opera, and plays. Terayama was inspired, mostly by Bartók's opera, to create his own version of Bluebeard's Castle, though he used other fairy tale versions for the basic research. Unlike other Bluebeard stories, Terayama's Bluebeard's Castle is not set in a castle and contains neither any Bluebeard character nor any secret doors to rooms where dead bodies are hidden. Instead, Terayama transforms the folk tale version of Bluebeard's Castle into an avant-garde play. Bluebeard's mysterious castle is transformed into the backstage of a theatre, a mysterious place for audience members, who are usually not allowed to visit it. Terayama also uses the style of meta-theatre to transform the fairy tale into a play in which reality and dream overlap.

In the backstage of a theatre, all production members are working on a play in the play-within-a-play also called Bluebeard's Castle. All the characters in Terayama's play are either actors or backstage crew working on the production, such as Stage Manager, Dresser, or Actor Playing Bluebeard's Second Wife. The central character of the play is called Girl,

an unknown actress who will perform the role of the Seventh Wife of Bluebeard in the play inside the play. Hereafter, Terayama's play will be called "the play" while the meta-theatrical version will be called "the play inside the play" to avoid confusion.

Terayama's Bluebeard's Castle mainly focuses on Girl's exploration of the theatre backstage and her search for a missing brother who disappeared in the same theatre several years ago. Later, she discovers that her brother is already dead. Unfortunately, Girl does not have a chance to perform her role in the play inside the play on stage until the end. Interestingly, as aforementioned, the character of Bluebeard never appears in either play.

There is not much information about the central character, Girl, in the script. Her age and status are unknown. Some information we do have with which to understand her character is that she is an actress who is supposed to perform the role of the Seventh Wife of Bluebeard, and she had an elder brother who was murdered in the theatre. To begin with, in order to understand the character of Girl, I will analyze Terayama's definition of a girl. Who is Girl and what is the meaning of a girl in Terayama's dictionary?

The "Femme Enfant"

According to Shibusawa Tatsuhiko (1928-1987), a Japanese researcher of French literature and surrealism, many male surrealists have been fascinated by innocent and beautiful young girls, frequently referred as "femmes enfants" (Shojo 12). In contrast to the "femme fatale," the beautiful and seductive women who allures and destroys a man's life with her extreme sexuality, such as *Carmen* in Georges Bizet's (1838-1875) opera of the same name, the "femme enfant" is the female child who grabs male attention and innocently

seduces the man with her pure heart. Similar to these surrealists, Terayama was also attracted by the innocence and beauty of the “femme enfant” type of girl, and he created innocent girl characters named “Girl” (or “Beautiful Girl”) in many of his plays, such as We’re All Riding on a Circus Elephant¹⁶ (1969) or The Hunchback of Aomori.

Additionally, he was fascinated with novels like Lewis Carroll’s (1832-1898) Alice in Wonderland, with shojo manga, Japanese young girls’ comic books,¹⁷ and with magazines specifically written for adolescent and even younger girls. He not only read these publications for girls, he also published many poems and short stories¹⁸ specifically written for women and girls that became popular among his female fans. These poems and short stories were full of beautiful and fantastic images that attracted the girls and women of his time.

Besides the examples above, there are many ways to explain the word “girl.” Normally, “girl” can be translated as a female child, a young unmarried woman, and a maiden. On the other hand, some people today call a single woman in her mid thirties a “girl.” Shibusawa, in contrast, defines a girl as a socially ignorant and sexually pure woman in his book, Shojo Korekushon Josetu (13).

As many writers and artists defined a “girl” in their own ways, Terayama defined her as a creature whose life will end when she gives birth and becomes a mother. “A girl’s life will be in danger at the time she is facing an awakening of the sexual impulse, and a girl

¹⁶ The play and the title are translated by Don Kenny and Aoi Yoji. The translation is unpublished.

¹⁷ Shojo manga (少女マンガ), literally translated as a young girl’s comic book, is usually written by female comic book writers and portrays a young girl’s innocent love.

¹⁸ Akaiito De Nuitojirareta Monogatari (赤糸で縫い閉じられた物語) is a book which collects some of Terayama’s poems and stories written for young girls and women.

eventually dies when she gives birth” (qtd. in Takatori 165). In short, a girl can be considered as a woman who never becomes a mother. Additionally, Terayama says that a girl is always manipulated like a puppet by a powerful male figure.

Terayama's favorite type of girl image is reflected in one of his hobbies. He was a collector of girls' magazines published from the Meiji¹⁹ to early Showa periods.²⁰ In these magazines, he was seeking an image of an everlasting virgin girl who was delicate, poetic and yet faintly erotic, similar to the image of “femme enfant.” Terayama's favorite story in these magazines was “Hana Monogatari,” which literally means “The Story of Flowers,” written by Yoshiya Nobuko (1881- 1964). This story was published in 1916 in Syojyo Gahou, “Illustrated Girl Magazine.” The story's portrayal of innocent girls' friendship and love without any sexual overtones mesmerized Terayama, who was fascinated by an ideal girl figure who wished to be innocent forever (Terayama, Fushigi 253). In the essay called “My Heart Leaping For Joy Wherever I Read,”²¹ Terayama says that he bemoans the disappearance of the innocent girls and their stories that had existed in the good old days. He claimed that contemporary novels, stories, and comic books written for girls always contained some sexual imagery courageously.

Like Terayama's favorite archaic type of girl, the central character, Girl, in Bluebeard's Castle is portrayed as a girl who is purely in love with the character of Bluebeard. Interestingly, Girl believes that she can actually marry the Bluebeard character when she performs her role of the Seventh Wife of Bluebeard on stage. In other words, she

¹⁹ The Meiji period started in 1868 and ended in 1912.

²⁰ The early Showa period started in 1926 and ended around 1945.

²¹ The Japanese title is “Dokowo Yondemo Munega Odoru” (何処を読んでも胸が躍る).

comes to the theatre to be the actual wife of an imaginary man who exists only in the theatrical world. In her mind, reality and unrealistic theatrical fantasy are intermingled. It seems that her main purpose in coming to the theatre is not to be an actress but to be the wife of *Bluebeard*.

According to Terayama's definition of a girl, the character of Girl, who is hoping for a happy marriage with *Bluebeard*, is standing on the border between the world of the girl and the world of the mother. Although Girl wants to be a wife of *Bluebeard*, she may or may not want to bear a child of *Bluebeard* and become a mother. There is no clear indication of Girl's intention of being a mother written in the play. If she wants to be a mother after the marriage, she will possibly lose her status and may be facing her death as a girl. Nevertheless, Girl's status as a girl is protected because of the nonexistence of *Bluebeard* in the play. In addition, *Bluebeard's* main residence or house, the place where the marriage would take place, the castle, also does not exist in the play. Although the title of the play is *Bluebeard's Castle*, neither *Bluebeard* nor the castle exists. What is the meaning of a non-existent *Bluebeard* and his castle, and what is the connection between the character of Girl and these missing elements?

Bluebeard: Presence and Absence

There are numbers of academically researched interpretations of various *Bluebeard* folk tales. Terayama believed one interpretation, which he mentioned in the essay titled "The

Mystery of Bluebeard's Crime and Gilles de Rais,"²² which was part of an interview with Kawamura Jyoichiro (1936-), a former professor at Hitotubashi University in Tokyo. In the interview, Terayama believed that the moral of the tale was, "Do not give in to curiosity and open the secret door. Sometimes, it is better not to see the reality hidden inside the room" (Shintai 115).

Bartók's version of Bluebeard's Castle can be broken down according to Terayama's interpretation of the fairy tale and his definition of a girl as follows. At the beginning, Judith comes to the castle to marry Bluebeard. According to Terayama's conception of a girl, this can be translated as the sign of her sexual awakening. Once she enters into the castle, she finds secret doors that she is forbidden to open. However, she cannot resist her curiosity about the locked doors, which eventually leads her to fatal danger. She finally opens them one by one with Bluebeard's guidance. Judith is accompanied by Bluebeard each time she opens a door. As she opens the doors, she encounters Bluebeard's dead wives. When she opens the last door, Judith is murdered by him.

Terayama says in "The Mystery of Bluebeard's Crime and Gilles de Rais" that opening a secret or hidden door in a fairy tale always causes great trouble for a female protagonist. He added that the female protagonist always ends up losing something very important when she opens the secret door (Shintai 121). From this perspective, the moment when Judith in Bartók's version of Bluebeard's Castle opens the last door can be considered as the time of the loss of her virginity. It can be interpreted that Judith eventually has sexual intercourse with Bluebeard. Judith must face the reality of the mature adult world when she

²² The original title of the essay is "Aohige No Hanzai To Juru Do Re Koushaku" (青ひげの犯罪の謎とジル・ド・レ公爵).

opens the last door. Not only must she lose her virginity, she may also lose her social freedom as a girl who does not have to deal with complicated, adult issues, such as being a housewife or a mother. The reality of the mature adult world is not as desirable as Judith might imagine. Realistically, after sleeping with Bluebeard, Judith might get pregnant and have to take on the enormous responsibility of child bearing and the work of serving her husband socially and domestically as a prudent and trustworthy wife.

Considering morals regarding sexual practice, as well as the lack of reliable birth control, when the original folk tale was written in the seventeenth century, a female's losing her virginity or having sexual intercourse with her husband can be interpreted as the beginning of her life as a mother. Unlike the contemporary successful and socially powerful woman who can individually make her own living and make her own decisions about procreation, it is almost impossible for Judith, the character based on the folk tale written in the seventeenth century, not to have a child. According to Wakakuwa Midori, a researcher of gender studies, the female has been considered a creature that only lives to produce an heir. For thousands of years, powerful male figures in the patriarchal society always controlled and used women's ability to procreate, locking them in houses (12-16). Therefore, Judith, who is a character from the time when all people considered that the only ability of women was the production of offspring, can be considered as having the desire to be a mother.

The absence of Bluebeard in Terayama's version indicates the author's protection of Girl from being a mother. Without having a Bluebeard in her life, she will not be a mother and will continue living her life as a girl. Terayama's Bluebeard's Castle can be interpreted as follows. Girl comes to the theatre to perform the role of the Seventh Wife of Bluebeard in

order to meet the character of, and the actor who performs, Bluebeard. She is in love with the character of Bluebeard and enthusiastically looks for him backstage, but she cannot find him anywhere. The only thing the character of Girl can do is keep looking for him in the theatre and wait for him to appear. She opens some secret doors inside the theatre and is expecting something exciting to happen. However, she finds only strange theatrical people working on the production. When she opens the secret doors of actresses' dressing rooms, she gains backstage knowledge and some lessons on how to be a good actress. At the end, the performance of the play inside the play, Bluebeard's Castle, starts without the central character, Bluebeard. Girl, who cannot find her future husband on- or offstage, remains alone onstage at the end of the play.

The absence of Bluebeard in the play creates the perfect environment for Girl to be a girl forever. Her social freedom and lack of responsibility as a girl are completely ensured by the author's decision not to have a Bluebeard in the play. Girl, who cannot even encounter the character of her husband-to-be, must wait until she finds him. Different from the folk tales and the opera version, Girl remains a girl on stage, and she will continue living as a girl forever without being a mother.

The Symbolism of the Castle

Beyond the absence of Bluebeard, the absence of his castle in the play is also an inevitable element for study in the analysis of the character of Girl. According to Shibusawa, in Western folktales the castle plays an important role in the portrayal of young female characters and their sociological background. He says many female protagonists in Western

folktales are locked in castles by their parents to keep them from any sexual experiences with men. As an example, Shibusawa mentions the story of Sleeping Beauty, who is separated from the world and falls asleep for a hundred years alone in a high tower (Shojo 16). In addition, he defines a castle as the ideal place for an autocracy, where absolute power was frequently misused by tyrants to satisfy their sexual desires. For example, Gilles de Rais, the model for Bluebeard, and the Marquis de Sade, a notorious writer and sexual deviant, both locked themselves in castles where they gave themselves up to immoral pleasure (Shibusawa, Shiro 85).

In addition to being the story of the loss of a girl's virginity, Bartók's opera is also about the cruel, murderous Bluebeard, who drenches himself in lascivious and devilish bloody wine. In the opera, Bluebeard uses Judith as a tool to fulfill his cruel sexual pleasure, and he locks her up in his castle. Although Judith is willing to become Bluebeard's wife at the beginning, she soon becomes a prisoner in his castle, without any way to escape. In order to keep her from running away, Bluebeard locks all the doors. From that moment, Judith's freedom is strictly controlled by Bluebeard's regime. She eventually becomes one of his victims. The castle metaphorically indicates the male-dominated society, and Bluebeard, the master of the house, symbolizes the socially powerful male. Once all the doors of the castle are closed, women do not have any way to go outside until the master lets them.

Instead of using the castle, Terayama uses a theatre as the setting for the residential place of the non-existent Bluebeard. As opposed to the castle, the theatre is not usually considered a place for men to fulfill their cruel sexual pleasure as Gilles de Rais did, nor it is a place to abuse one's absolute power. The theatre is a magical place to produce a dream, to

create an atmosphere to fulfill the audience's dream; and it is a place where the artist's creative desires can bloom. For example, in the play, Girl encounters a musical conductor who is floating in the air in the backstage area, and she sees a doll moving like a human. The theatre is also considered a liberated place for artistic freedom, which is the opposite of the setting of the castle. In the theatre, designers, actors and crews work together to combine their own artistic talents to create a collaborative work under a director's²³ guidance.

Family and Gender Role

In addition, the character of the brother, who played an important role in the folktale, is also missing in Terayama's play. In Perrault's version, protective brothers rescue the girl to save her from Bluebeard's attack. Therefore, the girl can avoid marrying Bluebeard and thus dying. In Terayama's play, Girl does not have a brave brother to rescue her. Girl discovers her brother's death in the middle of the play. Cast members explain to Girl that her brother was playing the role of a soldier in a battle scene when he was actually killed onstage during a performance, by the actor who was playing his enemy. In the play, reality and unreality, actors and characters, are intermingled, and none of the characters care about the murder that actually happened on stage. It is a shocking and tragic incident for Girl, who has lost not only her one remaining family member, but also the brother who had acted as a father to her. Without having an actual father in her life, Girl's sole dependence was her brother, who took care of her financially and emotionally. A brother who played a father's

²³ In the theatrical setting, dictatorial directors can possibly control their little theatrical regimes. However, there is no such "director" character who appears in Terayama's Bluebeard's Castle. All the actors and the crew in the play inside the play of Bluebeard's Castle are working on the production without having a main theatrical person in authority, a director. Therefore, Girl is also free from a director's dominion.

role in a family might have suppressed and controlled her, being the only male figure in her family. Similar to the non-existence of Bluebeard in the play, the character of brother is also eliminated.

The absence of father figures in the play is another reflection of Terayama's own childhood experiences. Terayama was raised as a fatherless child and always was ashamed of this. The young Terayama was greatly influenced by books written by a famous Japanese writer, Edogawa Ranpo (1894-1965). In one of Ranpo's books, there is a story about a group of boy detectives. In it, boys who do not have a father cannot join the group. When Terayama read this, he was extremely shocked by this discrimination against fatherless children. Later, according to Takatori, Terayama recalled the memory, and he mentioned that it was the first socially discriminatory experience of his life (Takatori 244). Although he never spoke much about his father, he might have wished to have had a father in his life for support, and he might have searched for a father figure as Girl did in the play. However, Terayama did pursue a successful career as an artist even without having paternal support.

The absence of Bluebeard and the brother in the setting of the theatre reflects Terayama's social status as a fatherless man and Girl's liberation from the paternalistic male-dominated society. It gives her the status of a "fatherless girl." Terayama deletes any powerful male figures from the play and transforms the setting of the castle into the theatre. Terayama's choice not to have these elements in the play indicates his denial of the patriarchal society where the master of the house restricts residents' freedom with his cruel exploitation.

Girl, who does not have domineering male figures in her family, such as a father, a brother, and Bluebeard, is thus able to speak up freely to continue her own play. At the end of the play, Girl says that her life itself is a theatrical play, not a script written by an author. Here, then, she is also released from the playwright's cage into the vast sky where she can use her own language to fly. Later, Girl delivers fairly long monologues to the audience to start her own play using her own words.

There is no ending... Nothing will end...I will simply switch my role...

Judith will take off her makeup and change her costume in the dressing room.

She will play the role of Yuriko Yamamoto and take the elevator of the Seibu theatre...(66).

Girl does not become a victim of either Bluebeard or other powerful male figures in the play. Instead, she creates her own world of being a girl that Terayama explains. Without being controlled by male family members, Girl can live her life freely. Without having powerful male figures in her life, Girl is allowed the chance to speak up about herself in front of the audience. Once she is free, she no longer needs to have a playwright's words or support. Hence, she quits her role as the *Seventh Wife of Bluebeard in the play inside the play* production of Bluebeard's Castle and starts to perform her own play instead. In her own play, she can say whatever she wants to say, and she can do whatever she wants to do. Girl's long monologue shows her liberation from a male-dominated family structure where she has never even had the chance for verbal freedom. In the play and the play inside the play, Terayama sets Girl free from male domination.

Breaking the rule of his patriarchal family system, Terayama liberates the character of Girl to give her own way of living not controlled by anyone. As Girl says in the end of the play, her existence as a girl will not end until she stops existing in her own theatrical world. It will continue forever without sexual intervention from a husband and without any power struggles with a brother or a father. *Terayama successfully creates an imaginary world in Bluebeard's Castle where a girl can live forever as a girl. This world might be akin to the world of Yoshiya's "Hana Monogatari," Terayama's favorite story of asexual girlhood.*

However, Girl is still under a man's control. Terayama, the playwright of Bluebeard's Castle, gives Girl a monologue and easily controls her with his words.

Terayama says that a girl is always manipulated like a puppet by powerful male figures. He adds that a girl's life is always destroyed by someone unknown (Takatori 171). Terayama, as a playwright who has an absolute power, is the unknown person someone who is able to control and destroy Girl's life. Terayama may drop a hint to the audience members that a girl's world can only exist in a theatrical setting that he creates. Terayama might have wished to create a utopia on stage where all girls could remain girls without being controlled by male family members, where they could have physical and verbal freedom.

In Terayama's Bluebeard's Castle, a girl's conventional gender role is twisted by the lack of a powerful father figure in the family system, symbolized by Bluebeard. Powerful male familial figures traditionally protect a girl from the dangers of society and give her guidance in the proper way of living. However, they sometimes oppress her and restrain her freedom. Without having a powerful male figure in her family system, Girl will not have protection, but she can live in freedom.

Terayama went beyond this and got rid of the idea of the family system entirely in this play. Instead of setting the play in the castle, which indicates the little kingdom of the master who controls the other residents, he used the setting of the theatre, backstage, to liberate the overpowered residents of the house, including the character of Girl. In this setting, there is no longer even the possibility of oppression by male family members. In a theatrical setting, Girl is no longer a puppet constantly controlled by the powerful master of the house, and she can live as a girl. She does not even have to think about responsibilities in a family system, such as being a hardworking housewife or a responsible and trustworthy mother to her children.

The Girl and the Prostitute

Terayama's prevention of a girl becoming a mother and his denial of the family system will be keys in solving the next puzzle of his theory about girls; namely, his view of prostitutes. Terayama says that essentially girls and prostitutes are the same, as opposed to mothers. Although Girl gained power and independency in her own theatrical world in Bluebeard's Castle, she is still under Terayama's control, similar to a typical prostitute who is always controlled by a powerful male figure. As Terayama says, a girl and a prostitute are always manipulated like a puppet. However, there is a contradiction in Terayama's theory about prostitutes. Sometimes a prostitute falls in love with a man and quits her job to marry him. This feeling of love keeps a prostitute from being a Girl-type girl who will never be a mother. If a prostitute finds true love, she will probably end up being a mother. Do

Terayama's prostitute characters, never becoming mothers stay girls forever? One of Terayama's plays, The Miraculous Mandarin, will be used to answer the question.

The Miraculous Mandarin

Terayama adapted The Miraculous Mandarin, a story written by Menyhert Lengyel in 1916, and produced his own play with the same title in 1977. The original story of Lengyel's The Miraculous Mandarin is about love between a young prostitute, Mimi, and an immortal Mandarin Officer who can only die when he receives true love from a girl. In Terayama's adaptation, he portrays the life of an innocent girl prostitute character named Kayou, or "beautiful flower," who begins by showing her passionate love towards her patron, the Mandarin Officer, but who later becomes a successful high-class prostitute. Terayama portrays the Mandarin Officer not only as a father figure to Kayou but also as a possible candidate to be her future husband. However, the Mandarin Officer is actually a completely immortal man. What is the meaning of the absolutely "immortal" Mandarin Officer in the play?

The original version of The Miraculous Mandarin is an opera with dance, with the subtitle, "Grotesque Pantomime." In 1926, a version also called The Miraculous Mandarin, composed by Béla Bartók, was performed in Germany for the first time, but it was cancelled the next day because of its extremely cruel depiction of a murder. Afterwards, Bartók kept revising its musical score. There are currently many different versions of The Miraculous Mandarin in terms of musical scores and dance choreography, all using the same plot.

Terayama used the Lengyel version as the basis for his adaptation; therefore, I will give a synopsis of it here.

In Lengyel's story of The Miraculous Mandarin, Mimi, a prostitute, belongs to a company of scoundrels, and her job is to lure potential victims in off the street from the window of a house. The scoundrels then rob whoever enters the room to sleep with Mimi. She lures several men in, but none of them has any money. Then, she invites a wealthy Mandarin Officer who is passing by. Mimi successfully brings him into the room, but she is terrified by his persistent requests for love. The scoundrels stab the officer to keep him silent, but he cannot die. The Officer is a mysterious person who cannot die without having true love, and he has been suffering with his immortality. Finally, Mimi sympathetically helps the Mandarin Officer escape from the cruel scoundrels and shows her love to him while she embraces him. Soon, the Officer dies peacefully in Mimi's arms.

The "Penitent Whore"

Terayama's adaptation of the The Miraculous Mandarin shares a similar plot with the original opera version up to this point, but it twists the main female character and the character of Mandarin Officer. Before going into more detail about his adaptation, the meaning of a prostitute in Terayama's world will be analyzed as compared to portrayals of prostitutes in Western theatre. Many Western playwrights have written about prostitutes in their plays. Plautus developed the stock character of the beautiful courtesan²⁴ in contrast with the character of the ugly wife in his comedies. Hroswitha, the first known female playwright,

²⁴ Plautus's stock character of the beautiful courtesan is called Meretrix. Details are available in "Marriage and Prostitution in Classical New Comedy" by David Wiles.

shows the fragility of female love in Paphnitus by using a beautiful prostitute named Thais who successfully repents of her sins in the end. A classical tragic love story of a high-class courtesan, Marguerite, also known as the Lady of Camille, and her true lover, Armand, has attracted audiences universally and timelessly. The story known as Camille, written by Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870), has continuously been revived in various different forms, from the Hollywood film Moulin Rouge (2001) to the musical La Bohème (2002).

In Acting Women, Lesley Ferris calls the archetypal Western prostitute character who appears in Western theatrical writings the “penitent whore.” According to Ferris, the “penitent whore” is a prostitute who wants to satisfy her materialistic desires, but who at the same time experiences the collision of two opposite feelings, true love for her lover and obligated love for her customer or patron. In addition, the “penitent whore” usually attempts to hide her shame at being a prostitute and at the fragility stemming from the true emotions of love. In other words, as a prostitute she cannot show or believe in her true emotions of love. However, she gradually accepts her honest feeling of love, finally quits her job and clears her blasphemous sins. Ferris argues that the best example of the “penitent whore” type of prostitute in Western theatre is Marguerite in Dumas’ Camille (79-95).

The young prostitute, Mimi, in Lengyel’s The Miraculous Mandarin roughly fits into the category of “penitent whore.” Though she believes in money and not love, she eventually falls in love with the Mandarin Officer, who shows her an honest love in return. Later, when she accepts his love and gives him her love in return, she leads him to a peaceful death.

In contrast, Kayou, the central prostitute character in Terayama's The Miraculous Mandarin, does not feel shame or guilt at being a prostitute, even at the beginning. Instead, she becomes a high-class prostitute with mesmerizing sexual appeal who enjoys her career. *Once the Mandarin Officer dies, she climbs the ladder of success and starts to have wealthier patrons at her side.* Opposite from Mimi, Kayou promotes herself as a high-class prostitute, using her talents in the business, beauty and alluring physicality. The Mandarin Officer's love and patronage end up being tools to advance her career and his death gives her a chance to meet many other powerful male customers and to be a successful prostitute with money and fame.

The Filial Prostitute

One of the reasons Terayama made the choice to portray a "never-penitent whore" like Kayou is that the idea that Ferris writes about, prostitution as blasphemous, so prevalent in Christian belief, is not a strong belief in Japanese culture and society. Historically, many Japanese girls in remote villages became prostitutes to bolster their families' economy as an act of filial piety, until the government outlawed prostitution in 1956. In Japan, there is a saying that when one would be filial, one's parents are gone. As the saying explains, being dutiful to one's parents is difficult for young children. Therefore, the girls who became prostitutes to help their families and who showed their filial duty before their parents' death tended to be proud of themselves, not guilty. Of course, some "penitent whore"-type Western prostitutes might have started their careers to solve their family's financial problems, but usually they are working instead for their own sake to survive in their society.

Though Terayama did not believe in the Western view of prostitution, neither did he accept the Japanese view. He often mentioned the lyrics from a famous song called “Yoshiwara Elegy”²⁵ in his essays. The song is all about the sadness of a Japanese girl who is sold into Yoshiwara, a famous pleasure quarter, by her parents to save the family economy. However, she is being patient about her miserable life as a prostitute because she is working for her beloved parents who are suffering under impoverished circumstances (*Iede* 17). Thus, the song portrays a sad woman who is nonetheless proud of her job as a prostitute because it helps to save her poor family’s lives. It does not show her as feeling guilty about being a prostitute or selling her body against God’s will.

Terayama questioned the portrayal of Japanese prostitutes in theatre and literature, for instance in “Yoshiwara Elegy,” as self-pitying women always crying about their miserable lives. In one of Terayama’s essays, called “Prostitution for Whom,”²⁶ he speaks out against such portrayals of Japanese prostitutes. In Terayama’s opinion, these prostitutes always had alternatives, such as running away from home or abandoning parents who could not even raise their own child financially. In addition, he mentions the Greek prostitutes who appear in the musical *Never On Sunday* (1960) in the same essay. He says that these prostitutes are portrayed as happy and cheerful woman who enjoy their careers and lives as prostitutes, and he says that he prefers them to Japanese prostitutes (*Iede* 18-19).

Simply, Terayama did not believe any prostitutes were living for someone else, especially not Japanese prostitutes who said they were working for their families and not

²⁵ The original title in Japanese is “Yoshiwara Eregi” (吉原エレジー).

²⁶ The original Japanese title of the essay is “Dare No Tame No Shofu” (だれのための娼婦).

themselves. In an essay called “A Runaway Women in A Doll’s House,²⁷” Terayama talks about Nora in Ibsen’s A Doll’s House. He says that if Nora ran away from home, she might end up living on the street and becoming a prostitute without a family’s economical support. However, he believes that Nora would at least be free from her family obligations in that case and that she would have a better life as a prostitute than living with her family (Iede 55-56). He also says that realistically it might have been difficult for a person to voice an individual opinion under the Confucian family system in old Japanese society. In addition, it might be difficult for a young girl to survive if she were to run away from home to avoid being a prostitute, at least during the time the song was written, in the early 20th century. As Terayama was against the self-pitying type of prostitute, who did not have the strength to break the social rules of her family system to pursue her own freedom and dreams, he also disapproved of the family of such a prostitute, which controlled the daughter’s freedom without giving her any choices.

Kayou: A Positive Prostitute

In keeping with the opinions about prostitutes Terayama voices in his essay, the prostitute Kayou in The Miraculous Mandarin is a positive prostitute who enjoys her career at the end of the play. Like the pathetic Japanese girls who were forced to work as prostitutes to help their parents, Kayou starts her career unwillingly. Although she has not started her career voluntarily, she neither cries over her pathetic life nor works for her family’s betterment. In addition, she shows her strength by actually running away from the

²⁷ The original Japanese title of the essay is “Ningyo No Ie No Iedenin” (「人形の家」の家出人).

brothel, in the middle of the play hoping to have a better life and more freedom. However, she returns to the brothel of her own accord shortly after she runs away. She decides to return because she wants to continue her relationship with the wealthy Mandarin Officer who has been showing a strong affection for her and who takes care of her every night. There are no other reasons for her returning to the brothel written in the play. However, it can be assumed that she wants to be a prostitute for the Mandarin Officer rather than being alone.

The important aspect of Kayou's character is that she decides by herself to live a pleasant life as a prostitute. After she returns to the brothel, Kayou turns into a happy prostitute who is willing to have the Mandarin Officer as a patron and starts to enjoy her sexual business with him. Similar to the example of the happy prostitute in Never On Sunday, Kayou enjoys being a prostitute spontaneously. Eventually, Kayou becomes one of the high-class prostitutes in the brothel due to the Mandarin Officer's social status, political power and great wealth. At the same time, Kayou becomes an important and expensive commodity in the brothel, and she starts to control her own life instead of being controlled. For example, unlike the other prostitutes in the brothel, Kayou has such a powerful patron backing her that she is allowed to choose her own customers depending on her preferences. Also, there are many strict rules and punishments of the brothel. For example, a prostitute who refuses an assigned customer has to take a serious flogging. Although Kayou breaks the rules, she is not punished because of the Mandarin Officer's patronage. Additionally, she is promised a respectable and magnificent funeral at the end of her life, in contrast to the other prostitutes, who will be thrown away into the garbage right after their deaths. Kayou, who

wins the powerful Mandarin Officer's favor, receives more freedom than anybody else in the brothel does.

Terayama's definition of a prostitute is a positive and hopeful person who, like Kayou, is not working for others but for herself. She chooses of her own volition to live as a powerful prostitute with great wealth. However, Terayama's world-view is limited, just as Girl's words of freedom are still penned by him. Kayou is still a mere prostitute who is locked in a cage by the Mandarin Officer. Like Bluebeard in Bartók's Bluebeard's Castle, the Mandarin Officer acts as a father/husband figure to young Kayou, who does not have any family except her quite useless and powerless brother, Mugi, whom she completely ignores. The Mandarin Officer not only financially protects her, he also lovingly takes care of her life, just like any father. In addition, he gives her sexual affection at night, successfully playing a husband's role. Moreover, as opposed to the original version, which ends with the death of the Mandarin Officer, Terayama keeps the Mandarin Officer as an immortal man who continues resurrecting. Why did Terayama keep him inescapably alive and therefore potentially able to dominate and control Kayou's life as a powerful figure?

The Absolutely "Immortal" Mandarin Officer

The "penitent whore," including Mimi, the prostitute in the original The Miraculous Mandarin, eventually quits her prostitution, often in order to live a normal and delightful life with her true love. Therefore, this type of prostitute can possibly hope for a happy marriage with her beloved lover and can dream of having a family. However, a tragic incident usually happens before she can satisfy her dream: the death of Marguerite at the end of Camille or

Mimi's loss of her beloved Mandarin Officer right after she shows her passionate and truthful love.

Unlike the "penitent whore," Kayou chooses to live as a prostitute forever. Although *Kayou truly loves the Mandarin Officer, she does not abandon her prostitution job, nor does she have a dream of a happy marriage.* There is no indication that either Mandarin Officer or Kayou desires marriage, as neither character talks about it in the play. Instead of hoping for a happy marriage, Kayou hopes to be a top-class prostitute with numbers of wealthy and powerful patrons and to continue her joyful career alone. What she wants out of life is not a happy marriage, but wealthy customers who can give her material pleasures. Another important aspect is that Kayou can receive honest love from the immortal Mandarin Officer. Kayou can luckily receive wealth and love at the same time without giving up her career as a prostitute and therefore the Mandarin Officer is no threat to her freedom and thus does not have to die.

From the perspective of the Mandarin Officer, there is a reason for him to be absolutely "immortal." Towards the end of the play, he exchanges truthful love with Kayou, peacefully dies and is resurrected in the next scene. There is no clear evidence as to why he resurrects, but a possible reason is lack of love from Kayou, who is still working as a prostitute and being with another beloved customer in the brothel after the Mandarin Officer's death. She actually shows her true love him once, but she seems as though she cannot stop loving other men in the brothel because of her nature as a prostitute. Therefore, the Mandarin Officer does not receive passionate and faithful love from Kayou, and must

keep coming back to life to fulfill his desire to be truly loved. When Kayou truly loves the Officer, he dies. When she loves other customers, he resurrects.

At the end of the play, the Officer says: "I was dead. Thanks to her (Kayou), I was dead twice...I cannot help thinking about when and where I can die again" (114). At the end of the line, he smiles. Now it is not the Officer who is controlling a prostitute's life, but Kayou who is controlling the man's life. At the end, his life cycle all depends on Kayou's affection for him. She can even decide when and where to kill him to end his suffering as an immortal creature, and she can as easily bring him back into the world where he must painfully suffer.

Kayou is a woman who, instead of being controlled like a puppet, becomes a puppeteer who can control her own or another's life. Now she is a wealthy prostitute who can live independently and freely. She is flying away from the cage and catches the Mandarin Officer, putting him in the cage instead. Similar to the character of Girl in Bluebeard's Castle, Kayou is also considered a "fatherless girl" who gains freedom without being dominated by powerful male figures. The only difference between Girl and Kayou is that the latter always needs to have her male patrons in order to live as a prostitute.

Love vs. Career

Kayou's career as a prostitute will never end; and like Girl in Bluebeard's Castle, she will never be a mother. The Mandarin Officer's absolute immortality can be interpreted as spelling the end of the life cycle of humanity. If all women became Terayama's definition of prostitutes, they would completely end the human race in a generation. However, she is

unique. Many of the prostitute characters in theatre that are “penitent whores” decide to be wives and, therefore, in Terayama’s view, mothers at the end of the play when they fall in love.

When the “penitent whore” type of prostitute feels true love, the first thing she must consider is whether to end her career in order to devote herself to her lover. A feeling of love is traditionally always a great obstacle for a prostitute in continuing her career, and it usually causes her to end it. For example, Marguerite in Camille suffers conflicted feelings. On one hand, she can acknowledge her true emotion of love and become a wife and a mother. On the other, she can deny it and continue to be a lonely prostitute. Realistically, there must be numerous prostitutes in the contemporary world who would choose the second option and continue to live as wealthy and independent women who are able to survive alone without needing husbands. However, as mentioned before, the “penitent whore” type of prostitute in the theatre always chooses to be a wife and a mother, dreaming of her happy marriage. Thus, it is clear that within the theatrical convention of the “penitent whore,” of which Mimi is an example, a prostitute’s feeling of love can almost uniformly be considered a feeling directly connected to the desire for marriage and, therefore, the desire to be a mother. It is generally not considered, in society as a whole, quite acceptable to be both a prostitute and a wife or a mother at the same time. Kayou, who truly loves the Mandarin Officer but does not quit her career as a prostitute, is thus in an extremely rare situation, compared to the archetypical portrayal of the “penitent whore.” Kayou’s choice not to quit her career for her true love indicates her denial of marriage.

Unlike either typical Japanese prostitute characters or Western archetypical “penitent whore” types of prostitute, Kayou is created by Terayama as a hopeful, cheerful and independent prostitute who works to fulfill her desires for love and material goods at the same time. Although she is forced into prostitution at the beginning, she carves out her own future and becomes a successful and wealthy prostitute in her own right. Instead of weeping in agony, she smiles and welcomes a wealthy patron like the Mandarin Officer, who provides her with financial security, social power and true love, unlike the Western archetypical prostitute character who quits her job as a prostitute to pursue her true love. Kayou is able to maintain a love relationship with the Mandarin Officer while continuing to have a successful career as a prostitute in the brothel. Instead of receiving redemption through love, she gains the power and ability to control the powerful Mandarin Officer. Kayou, who has an immortal officer as her best patron in the brothel, can have love and money at the same time. These unusual circumstances eventually give her the power to dominate the socially strong Mandarin Officer. Only Kayou knows how to love him and how to kill him at the same time. Therefore, the prostitute Kayou becomes a “fatherless girl” who will not be controlled by powerful male figures in society but who instead is able to dominate them herself.

Denial of the Family System

The creation of the absolutely “immortal” Mandarin Officer is also used as a tool to deny marriage and the traditional family system. Terayama creates an immortal character in order to create and emphasize the character of Kayou, to show that she can receive true love and continue to be a prostitute with wealth and affection and attention from random men. He

gives her love that fully satisfies her; therefore, she does not need to consider marriage or having a family. Numerous men can satisfy her materialistic desires, while the Mandarin Officer can comfort her loneliness or emptiness with his love always surrounding her. The Mandarin Officer, who is caught in the vicious cycle of the prostitution business and Kayou's never-ending game of love, is thrown into the pain and suffering that is usually reserved for prostitutes. Kayou, on the other hand, lives her life as the extremely rare prostitute who can have everything she wants, even true love.

Terayama creates "fatherless girl" characters who, unlike the traditional notion of a girl, reside in an environment free of male domination except the author, Terayama, who controls them in his hands all the time. The girl characters that appear in the Western plays are adapted, "Terayamanized," transformed into creatures with twisted and deconstructed gender roles in their society or family system. These creatures he called examples of the "girl (prostitute)" who dies a "natural" death when they become mothers.

As Terayama said, a girl and a prostitute are typically manipulated like puppets by male figures. However, "Terayamanized" girl characters are no longer puppets of powerful males. They are liberated from male domination and live their independent lives as "fatherless girls." At the same time, Girl and Kayou do not have a desire to be mothers. Hence, the "fatherless girl" characters not only live independently without being dominated by powerful male figures, they also have the power to stop creating families. By refusing ever to be a mother, the "fatherless girl" can possibly destroy the traditional notion of the family system. Mothers must have heirs in order to continue their families. Once Terayama said a girl (a prostitute) is the opposite of a mother. Terayama's girl characters exist as

women who will never be mothers. It could be interpreted that he created the "fatherless girl" characters as tools to deny the family system and to acknowledge the strength and independence of a fatherless child in his own writing.

CHAPTER 3 THE “DOMINEERING MOTHER”

The “Domineering Mother”

According to Terayama’s theory, a girl’s death is the beginning of a mother’s life. What will happen in the after-life of the powerful and independent “fatherless girl”? Most often, Terayama portrayed the relationship between a single mother and her son in his plays. As in the plays with the “fatherless girl” characters, a father figure is also missing in the plays that contain a mother character. If a “fatherless girl” character ever does become a mother, she starts to overpower her own son and manipulates him as though he were a puppet. When rarely the “fatherless girl” and the “domineering mother” appear together in a play, they tend to declare war on each other, vying to get possession of the man of the house, usually the mother’s son.

Mink Marie²⁸ (1967) and Jashumon (Gate of the Heretics)²⁹ (1971) are the best examples to analyze in order to understand Terayama’s portrayal of the “domineering mother.” Both plays have the “domineering mother” as the central characters, and they deal with the issues of transvestism³⁰ and cross-dressing³¹ in order to portray the gender-twisted mother characters. In addition, both plays contain the issue of war between the “domineering mother” and the “fatherless girl” type of character.

²⁸ Title translated by Carol Sorgenfrei. Terayama originally subtitled it as La Marie-Vision. The original Japanese title is Kegawa No Marie (毛皮のマリー).

²⁹ Title translated by Carol Sorgenfrei. There are several different English titles of the play provided by the company and also translators, such as Sorgenfrei. To avoid confusion, I use the original Japanese title in this paper.

³⁰ The term “transvestite” in this paper indicates a man who wears female clothing and adopts female mannerisms. Therefore, a transvestite man actually practices to become a woman with a help of female clothing and feminine physicality.

³¹ The term “cross-dresser” in this paper indicates a male actor who wears female clothing in order to portray a female character on stage. Hence, a cross-dressed actor does not necessarily mean a transvestite man.

Mink Marie

Mink Marie was adapted from Arthur Kopit's (1937-) play Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling So Sad, which portrays the relationship between domineering mother named Madame Rosepettle, who controls her own son like a puppet, and a submissive eighteen-year-old son named Jonathan, who obeys his mother's orders. Basically, the two plays share the same plot and the theme of the relationship between a domineering mother and her son. The major difference between the two is the gender of the mother. Unlike in the original play, the central character in Mink Marie, Marie, is a mother who is also a beautiful homosexual male transvestite; in fact, the role was first performed by an actual homosexual male transvestite actor. Hereafter, to avoid confusion, the character of Marie, which is actually a man, will be referenced with feminine pronouns, since she has a female name and the beautiful physical appearance of a woman.

Marie is living with her adopted son, Kinya, and her male servant. She attempts to raise her son to be homosexual, and she exercises dominion over him. Although he is eighteen years old, he wears short pants just like a little boy.³² She not only locks her son in the house, depriving him of human contact, she also totally controls Kinya as if he were a puppet. Therefore, Kinya amuses himself alone while he chases different types of butterflies in the house. Under the beautiful Marie's regime, Kinya cannot have freedom or even his own opinion. Unlike Kinya, who does not have any freedom, Marie invites many

³² In Japan, most private elementary school boy students must wear a uniform with short pants, instead of wearing long pants. In the play, Kinya refuses to wear short pants because it indicates that he is a little boy like an elementary school student. He says that he is eighteen years old, a mature man, so he does not want to wear short pants (111).

homosexual men over to her place day after day to sexually amuse herself. One day, a beautiful girl named Beautiful Girl appears in front of Kinya and tries to show him the outside world. In addition, she sexually seduces Kinya to make him a mature adult man. However, Kinya, who is scared to see the real world, intentionally kills the girl. At the end of the play, Marie tells Kinya to be the most beautiful girl in the world. Marie puts make-up on his face and gradually Kinya becomes a transvestite boy who looks like a beautiful girl.

Jashumon

Jashumon, first performed at the International Theatre Festival held in the city of Nancy, France, is another example to look at when analyzing Terayama's "domineering mother." The role of Ogin is the domineering mother, performed by a male actor using the tool of cross-dressing. The play was inspired by bunraku, a traditional Japanese puppet theatre form, and contains cultural images of the indigenous people of the northern part of Japan in the stage set, costume designs and dialogues. The production toured many different European countries and was considered one of the most successful productions of Tenjo Sajiki.

Yamataro, Ogin's son, falls in love with a beautiful former prostitute named Yamabuki. However, Yamabuki insists she will not marry Yamataro until he abandons his mother, Ogin, who lives with him. Ogin is Yamataro's only family member, as he does not have a father. In order to marry the beautiful Yamabuki, Yamataro discards Ogin in the valley, and he gets married. On the other hand, Yamabuki, who cannot believe that Yamataro has abandoned his own mother, refuses to have sex with her husband. Sadly,

Yamataro, who does not know any women besides Yamabuki and his own mother, desperately needs to sleep with a woman and he decides to go find his mother to satisfy his sexual desire. Later, he successfully finds her and brings her back home secretly. However, Yamabuki soon finds out about Ogin's existence in the house, gets furious and declares battle on Ogin, who also curses her. Yamataro tries to stop the battle and realizes that his life has been manipulated by a kuroko,³³ a stagehand in black clothing. At the end of the play, Yamataro kills the kuroko to be free from Ogin's domination and Yamabuki's sex strike. After he has killed the kuroko, the character of Yamataro reveals his true self as an actor.³⁴ However, the actor realizes that it is the author, Terayama Shuji, who has the absolute power³⁵ to dominate over his life even if he kills the kuroko. Similar to the example of Bluebeard's Castle, Terayama shows his absolute power as a playwright to conclude the play.

The Common Themes Surrounding the "Domineering Mother"

The first question that arises here is the relationship between a mother's domination and the issue of transvestism and cross-dressing as used to portray a mother's character.

³³ A kuroko (黒子) is a traditional stagehand in Japanese theatre who is dressed all in black and appears on stage working as an onstage crew. Because the kuroko wears black clothing, the audience members are supposed not to notice him/her on stage.

³⁴ In the script, the actor's name is indicated as Sasaki Hideaki. An actor who performs Yamataro must reveal himself on stage and must stop acting a character of Yamataro. After he reveals himself to the audience, he must use his own words to say something to the audience. Terayama frequently uses the technique of revealing the reality on stage at the end of the play. Terayama called this technique as "geki wo kowasu," translated as destroying the unreality of the stage and showing the reality. This technique is also found in the play called Audience Seating (1978), the Japanese title of which is Kankyaku Seki (観客席).

³⁵ Terayama uses the technique of revealing the reality on stage using his absolute power as a playwright. Terayama's dominion over the character appears in the play but is not connected to the plot of the play. Therefore, Terayama's dominion over the "domineering mother" will not be argued in the discussion of the plot of the play.

Terayama enthusiastically worked with transvestite and homosexual/lesbian actors from the first production of Tenjo Sajiki, and he utilized transvestism as a tool to create gender-twisted characters in his plays, like the female transvestite father called Ohmypapa who appears in The Little Prince.³⁶ One of the similarities between the “domineering mother” characters in Mink Marie and Jashumon is the gender confusion. Both characters are portrayed as single mothers who have only sons, the same as Terayama’s family. Marie utilizes transvestism and Ogin uses cross-dressing to develop gender-twisted mother characters. The important issue here is that both mother characters are performed by male actors, not female actors.

The second question is the reason for the cruel war between a young female character and the “domineering mother” character that frequently occurs in Terayama’s theatrical world. Terayama’s young female characters in the two plays, Beautiful Girl and Yamabuki, resemble “fatherless girls.” According to Terayama’s contention that the “fatherless girl” and the “domineering mother” are antithetical to each other, it makes sense they should be like daggers drawn against each other. In fact, a conflict between a young female, a woman who either has potential to be a wife like the Beautiful Girl or is a wife like Yamabuki, and a mother-in-law, is thought to be characteristic of Japanese households in general. Is it impossible in Terayama’s theatrical world for two female figures to live in the same house without having a battle?

The third question is the portrayal of an incestuous relationship between a mother and a son, compared with the issue of the son abandoning his mother, both of which frequently

³⁶ The original title is Hoshi No Ouji Sama (星の王子さま). The play was an adaptation of Saint-Exupery’s The Little Prince.

appear in Terayama's artistic creations. For example, Carol Sorgenfrei explains in her introduction to the English translation of the play *Inugami* that the central character in the play, Tukio, is caught in a sexual dilemma when he finds out that his bride is a reincarnation of his dead mother (165). On the other hand, Terayama agitated young people to abandon their own mothers to become socially independent in his essays. In addition, Terayama's son characters often show hatred towards their domineering mothers instead of filial piety.

What is the meaning of the transvestite or cross-dressing "domineering mother" in Terayama's theatrical world, and what is the meaning of the existence of the mother figure in Terayama's dictionary? In this section, the definition of Terayama's "domineering mother" character as performed by male actors and the relationship between the two female archetypes in a family will be discussed. In order to analyze the issue, Terayama's personal relationships with his mother and his wife will be used as tools to answer the question.

Marie in *Mink Marie* is a beautiful homosexual male transvestite character who was first performed by the homosexual male transvestite actor Miwa Akihiro (1935-). Miwa is an actor who tries to pursue his idea of female psychology and feminine appearance to act as a female character on stage. Miwa is a fashionable and beautiful homosexual transvestite who successfully plays a woman's role on- and off-stage. Although Miwa is now close to seventy, his beautiful presence as a woman on stage still attracts many Japanese audience members today.

In the play, Marie shaves her legs occasionally, wears nice female clothing, and puts on full make-up to disguise herself as a woman. In the play, Marie explains to her tattooed male lover, right after they have had some sexually intimate moments, the reason she

disguises herself as a woman. Marie's tattooed male lover asks her, "By the way, Ms. Marie. Why the hell do you disguise yourself as a woman? You have a damn good personality and great figure as a man!" Marie replies, "It is exactly the same as you, who have a tattoo on your body. Why did you get tattooed? You have naturally beautiful fair skin" (145). Marie does give a reason why she disguises herself as a woman. She says that acting like a woman is the best available role in her life. According to Marie, her own life is similar to a one-act theatrical play in which she is able to perform any role she wants. Like a man who wants to have a tattoo on his body to beautify himself, Marie wears female outfits to look gorgeous and fabulous. For Marie, her being a woman is similar to a male actor who has a versatile talent for female portrayal being a female character on stage, like the cross-dressing actor who plays Ogin.

Similar to Marie, male actors perform the mother character of Ogin in Jashumon. However, Ogin was first played by a straight male actor who had to learn how to impersonate a woman using his acting skills, like Kabuki's onnagata³⁷ actors. In the essay called "How Hairy Is a Kabuki Female Impersonator,"³⁸ Terayama explains his fascination with Kabuki's onnagata actor Utaemon VI (1928-2001), who acted both male and female characters. Terayama was not interested in Utaemon's beautiful female impersonation; rather, he was interested in his struggle with portraying a woman using a male body. In the essay, Terayama said:

Utaemon did not get right into a female role. He looked like neither a man nor a woman on stage. I saw Utaemon on stage agonizingly attempting to

³⁷ Onnagata (女形) describes a female impersonator who appears in Kabuki.

³⁸ The original title is "Onnagata No Kebukasa" (女形の毛深さ).

portray a female character using a male body and psychology...I believe that Utaemon's agonies at uniting two different genders into one body support onnagata's great theatricality (116).

In the essay, Terayama also added that Utaemon looked as if he were some type of androgynous person who tried to unite two different body types and genders using one body.

Likewise, Terayama suggested the androgynous quality of the character of Ogin in his directorial notes for the play. The notes say that the male actor who is performing the character of Ogin must use his masculinity to portray this female character. He does not need to shave his legs, to be aware of the size of his windpipe or to use female vocal quality (17). To Terayama's eyes, Utaemon did not completely look like a woman and suffered in his female portrayal. Like Utaemon, Terayama wanted the actor to be an androgynous type of character rather than a believable female character like Marie. The major reason for this was that Terayama wanted to destroy loving and caring images of the Japanese mother, in order to create a domineering, devilish mother character.

There are differences and similarities between the actors who performed Marie and Ogin in their character developments. The major difference is their portrayal of femininity: the believably beautiful and feminine transvestite Marie versus Ogin's androgynous qualities and his rather masculine appearance only partially obscured with the use of cross-dressing. Miwa, who played the role of Marie, is an actual beautiful transvestite homosexual in his real life, practicing to be a woman every day. The character of Marie also tries hard to be a beautiful woman, hiding her masculinity in order to be a complete female figure. On the other hand, actors who have performed the role of Ogin have attempted to be women only on

stage and not even entirely there, using the device of cross-dressing. By creating his characters thus, Terayama deliberately emphasizes the masculine side, in order to show the grotesqueness of the domineering mother figure.

The similarity between the two characters, transvestite Marie and cross-dressing Ogin, is that their lines and scripted movements in the plays explicitly show their masculinity and male gender qualities. Although Marie is a believably beautiful transvestite character in her physicality, she does reveal her true nature as a man. In the first scene of Mink Marie, Marie shows her hairy arm and underarm hair to the audience and asks her servant to shave it off, while she asks a mirror on the wall who's the most beautiful one of all. Although Marie has a beautiful appearance as a woman, she shows the male side of her body and reminds the audience that she is a transvestite man who is acting as if she were a woman. Similarly, the character of Ogin deliberately emphasizes her masculinity to remind audience members that she is actually a man disguised as woman. Therefore, audience members would immediately notice Ogin's male gender.

Androgyny and the Father Figure

Marie and Ogin, who physically look like mothers who have the psychological status of men, are therefore father figures, and could be said to resemble Terayama's own mother, who performed both the mother and father role at the same time in the family. Terayama's mother had to raise her only son without her husband's support after he died during WWII. Unlike in contemporary Japanese society, which welcomes female employees in a company, it was extremely difficult for Terayama's mother to make ends meet in the post-war period,

alone as a woman and a single mother. Without depending on her husband's financial support, she had to work all by herself like a man in order to survive in the devastating circumstances. At that time, most Japanese men were suffering from the lack of job opportunities in the post-war period, and the price of commodities was rising due to inflation. Therefore, it was extremely difficult for a woman to find a job (Nagao, 40). Terayama's mother supported her family economically like a father, while she supported it domestically like a mother.

For this reason, it seems likely that Terayama looked at his own mother as both father and mother to fill the emptiness of having a single parent. In "How Hairy Is a Kabuki Female Impersonator," Terayama talks about his own experience of attending the funeral of a transvestite man who disguised himself as a mother to safely bring up his own son during WWII. The transvestite man's son was Terayama's best friend. During the war, most of the young and middle-aged men had to go and fight. To keep from having to become a soldier, the man deceived the country, and he disguised himself as a mother. Terayama said that this was the first time he actually saw a transvestite, and he considered the man to be androgynous, a double figure with both mother and father inside of him.³⁹

In a theatrical setting, Terayama created mother characters with the double identity of mother and father. The creation of a mother/father character not only recalls Terayama's own mother figure, but also satisfies the dream of the single parent-child. When Terayama encountered the androgynous man at the funeral, he could not help telling his friend the truth.

³⁹ Terayama always fabricated his autobiography with a little twist; therefore, this encounter with the androgynous transvestite mother/father could be true or could possibly be his way of recognizing his own experience of having a female parent with the physical appearance of a mother and the social status of a father who economically supported the family.

Terayama said to his friend, "Your mother is actually a father." His friend replied that he had known the truth but did not want to tell his androgynous parent that he knew. The reason was that he was happy living with his father who had a mother inside of him. Terayama's friend replied, "It's better to have both parents than only one." Terayama's friend was afraid to lose the mother figure that only existed inside of his father's body when he was disguised as a mother (118).

Terayama successfully developed the single mother character with the use of transvestism or cross-dressing, both of which create the quality of the mother and the father co-existing in one body. "Androgynous parents" can satisfy the male and female gender roles in their family structures when they bring up their only sons. At the same time, the "androgynous parent" may satisfy the emptiness of children who do not otherwise have complete experience of both male and female parents, just like Terayama's friend, who saw both a mother's and a father's side in his father. Therefore, both Marie and Ogin, who are categorized as "domineering mothers," can be also called "androgynous parents."

Terayama was always looking for a non-existent father figure through his artistic creations, like *Girl in Bluebeard's Castle*. Terayama once said, "People were living in the time of the "fatherless" world, and the society was constantly demanding a father figure at its core" (Ryote 63). According to Terayama, the "fatherless society" indicates post-war Japan, where numbers of people who had lost their fathers and husbands had to survive without male support. It also indicates the period of high economic growth following the post-war period, when most men were away from home working in their companies for long hours. Therefore, the people living in the "fatherless" world must individually find alternative father

figures. Similarly, Terayama might have been seeking a non-existent father figure in the creation of “androgynous parent” characters like Marie and Ogin in order to fulfill his desire.

Mothers with Father’s Power

The only problem with creating the “androgynous parent” is that this new type of parent gains the power of domination. In Terayama’s theatrical world, the “androgynous parent” is also equivalent to the “domineering mother.” In Terayama’s own life, his own mother dominated his life even after he became financially independent. After the establishment of the theatre company, Terayama’s mother insisted on working as a waitress in the coffee shop located on the first floor of Tenjo Sajiki’s theatre building. Terayama and many of the company members used the coffee shop on several occasions for the company’s business or meetings. Therefore, it was a great place for Terayama’s mother to receive information and gossip about the company members and their work and to get familiar with Terayama’s everyday life as well as his business besides theatre, such as meetings with a magazine or book editor. In addition, she lived in a room of the same apartment building where Terayama lived from his late thirties until his death.

Maeda Rituko, one of the assistant directors in Tenjo Sajiki, describes the Terayama family’s mother-son relationship in her book, Learn Terayama By Experiences As A Freeloader⁴⁰. One day, Terayama fired a female company member because of the trouble she made with Terayama’s mother. Terayama’s mother said the woman had called her a whore and made her furious. Terayama did not even listen to the company member’s

⁴⁰ The original title is Isourou To Shiteno Terayama Taiken (居候としての寺山体験).

explanation to find out whether the story was true or not, but absolutely followed his mother's demand to fire the woman. After that incident, some other company members also became victims of Terayama's mother and had to leave the company. As Terayama was apparently afraid of his own "domineering mother," the company members were also careful not to make her angry. Maeda explains that Terayama was always under his mother's thumb and could not go against her opinion (49).

Similar to Terayama's personal relationship with his domineering mother, his mother characters also control their sons' personal lives. In Mink Marie, Marie imprisons Kinya in her house, with Marie's servants acting as though they are prison watchmen. Like Terayama's mother, who actively appeared at Terayama's workplace, a tape recorder perpetually playing Marie's voice controls and restricts Kinya's freedom even when Marie is not at home. At the age of eighteen, Kinya is continuously afraid of Marie's presence. As a result, he listens to and follows Marie's unreasonable statements and absurd demands without any hesitation. Kinya is a mere beautiful doll that Marie wants to play with. He does not have any personality, and he cannot initiate any action without Marie's guidance.

The character of Ogin in Jashumon has a personality similar to Marie's. Ogin is a mother who is constantly scolding her son, Yamataro, about trivial matters. Additionally, she believes that her son must live the way she wishes, even if it is not in his best interest. When she notices that Yamataro is deviating from the life she has prepared for him, she loses her mind and screams at him hysterically. Maeda explains that like Ogin, Terayama's mother frequently roared in anger, looking fierce and with raised hackles, in front of many company members (53).

Mother characters performed by male actors with the use of transvestism and cross-dressing help to create a mother character who also has a father's quality in her body. On the other hand, the character who has both mother and father qualities can use the father's authoritative power more than the mother's domestic role in a family. Marie and Ogin are given absolute power in the household, which is usually reserved for a father. An old Japanese saying lists the four greatest bloodcurdling things as an earthquake, thunder, fire, and a father. Therefore, in a Japanese family in the time of Terayama, from the WWII to the early 80s, a father was on top of the hierarchy, and his power was absolute. A father's domination over his son was a typical phenomenon, and many children were as terrified of their own fathers as they were of natural disasters. As Terayama's own "domineering mother" controlled her son like a puppet, Terayama's gender-twisted mother characters also dominate their own sons, privileged, like fathers, to be dictators in their families. It would seem as if after Terayama's own experience of the domineering mother, Terayama created terrifying and domineering dictatorial mother characters with the absolute power and strength of fathers.

The Mother-in-Law Battle

Although Terayama's mother characters have the social power like fathers, they are still portrayed as women. When a mother's only loving child takes his own lover, the relationship between her and the mother is on red alert. This happened in both Terayama's theatrical world and his real life. When a son welcomes his wife into the family, the war between her and her mother-in-law starts without an official declaration. The major reason

for the war is the mother's possessiveness and her jealousy of the young wife who is stealing her beloved son.

In 1963, the marriage of Terayama, at the age of twenty-four, and Kujo Kyoko, a twenty-one-year-old actress (later a producer for Tenjo Sajiki), ignited the battle⁴¹ of mother-in-law and wife. Terayama's mother, who straightforwardly showed her hatred of Kujo at their first meeting, was thoroughly against the marriage. She not only refused to attend the wedding ceremony, she criminally tried to set fire to the house of the young newly married couple. Non-fiction journalist Nagao Saburo says that if Terayama had not found the smoldering flames in time, it would have been a great fire that could have caused extreme tragedy (234-235).

In keeping with Terayama's own experiences, Mink Marie and Jashumon portray the war between a wife (or a girl who has the potential to be a wife) and a mother-in-law. In Mink Marie, Marie shows her hatred of the character called Beautiful Girl, who secretly comes to visit Kinya through the window. Beautiful Girl, who is sympathetic towards Kinya, locked in Marie's cage, attempts to rescue him by using her beauty and sexual appeal.⁴² She seduces him and agitates him to run away from home with her. However, Marie's voice, playing from the tape recorder, heaps all sorts of abuse on Beautiful Girl and tells Kinya not to listen to what Beautiful Girl says. Kinya, who cannot betray Marie's orders even when they are only coming from a tape recorder, eventually kills Beautiful Girl when she attempts

⁴¹ The great war between Kujo and Terayama's mother eventually ended in 1970 when the couple divorced. Later, Kujo continued to work as a producer until the time when the company broke up due to Terayama's death in 1983.

⁴² In the play, Beautiful Girl seduces Kinya sexually like a mature woman, but she is still a girl, according to Terayama's definition.

to make love with him. At the end of the play, Kinya acts as though he is possessed by Marie's spirit and gradually transforms from a beautiful boy to a transvestite boy who wears lipstick and a female wig and looks like a beautiful girl.

In *Jashumon*, Yamataro is in love with a beautiful prostitute named Yamabuki but encounters a great obstacle to marrying her. Yamabuki says that she cannot marry him unless he abandons his mother. According to Yamabuki's theory, two women in one household will cause a great problem. She asserts that only one woman is allowed to stay in a household. In fact, she has forced all the men in her village who are in love with her to throw their mothers into a valley. Yamataro is the last man in the village who still has his mother in his house. Later, doing as he is told, Yamataro throws his own mother out of the village and welcomes Yamabuki as his wife. However, the one problem Yamataro has in his happy marriage is that Yamabuki is not willing to sleep with him. The reason is that she believes his mother is still living secretly somewhere in the house or in the village, contrary to her orders.

Can a "Fatherless Girl" Defeat a "Domineering Mother"?

These two young female characters, Yamabuki and Beautiful Girl, a wife and a girl with the potential to be a wife, closely resemble Terayama's "fatherless girl" figures and are the opposite of "domineering mothers." Similar to former examples of "fatherless girls," beautiful and seductive Beautiful Girl and Yamabuki are not under male domination. In the play, *Beautiful Girl* is sexually stronger than Kinya and her way of forcible seduction is more

like a rape.⁴³ Different from timid Kinya, who is acting like a little puppet of Marie's and who is afraid of her voice from the tape recorder, Beautiful Girl is not afraid of Marie but bravely confronts her voice. There is no clear indication of Beautiful Girl's background, of whether she has a father or not. However, she does not have any male domination in her life in the play, until the end when Kinya dominates and kills her. Similarly, the former prostitute Yamabuki controls Yamataro's sexuality using her seductive physicality, and she overpowers his life, manipulating her husband like a puppet, like Kayou in The Miraculous Mandarin. In addition, she is brave enough to fight against the "domineering mother," Ogin.

Similar to Girl in Bluebeard's Castle, both Beautiful Girl and Yamabuki never have the chance to have sexual intercourse with men in the plays. Beautiful Girl cannot sleep with Kinya because of Marie's intervention. Yamabuki does not allow her husband to have sex with her, being cautious about Ogin's powerful existence. Marie and Ogin, "domineering mother" types of character, become great obstacles to the sexual practices of their daughters-in-law. Without having sexual intercourse with men, Beautiful Girl and Yamabuki never have a chance to be mothers in the presence of the "domineering mothers."

Because of the reasons above, the two female characters, Beautiful Girl and Yamabuki, who do not have male domination in their lives until the end of the play and who do not have the potential to be mother figures, can be categorized as "fatherless girls." The "domineering mothers" keep these two characters from being mothers because there can be

⁴³ Beautiful Girl forcibly strips off Kinya's shirts and attempts to unbutton his pants. Kinya demands that she stop, but he is too scared to move. She keeps seducing him fearlessly, but she stops her hand when Marie's voice plays from the tape recorder. However, she acts as if she does not care about the voice (125-6).

only one mother in each household. Consequently, as Yamabuki says, the “fatherless girl” and “domineering mother” cannot live in the same household.

One can conclude from these examples that the “domineering mother” figure successfully prevents the “fatherless girl” from becoming a mother. Therefore, the two different types of female characters are enemies to each other and consequently ignite the cruel war. However, the “domineering mother” figure’s power is stronger, and the “fatherless girl” type of character cannot conquer it without her lover/husband’s help. The only choice left for a “fatherless girl” type of character, if she is to survive in the battle, is to ask her lover/husband to abandon his own mother. But does he have the strength to do it?

What Can the Son Do?

In order to survive in the battle, the son has two choices. One is to capitulate and become a prisoner of war, staying in the camp under his mother’s dictatorial regime. The other is to launch an attack and metaphorically kill his mother in order to gain freedom. Yamataro abandons his own mother to have a happy married life with his wife, while Kinya gives up his relationship with the girl and obediently goes back to his domineering mother’s “jail.” Similarly, Terayama himself experienced both scenarios. Once he abandoned his own mother in order to marry Kujo and rented an apartment for his new married life with his wife. However, eventually Terayama technically went back to his mother, after he divorced his wife and started to live in the same building as his mother. As Yamabuki says and Terayama experienced, in Terayama’s theatrical world a son must choose one or the other: strike his mother to have a happy marriage, or give up his wife and simply obey his mother’s demands.

Although Terayama may have seen a prisoner of his mother's world in real life, he set himself free in the world of his art. As in Jashumon, abandoning or killing one's mother was one of the major themes Terayama portrayed in his artistic world. After the great war between his mother and his wife began, Terayama wrote a book, a compilation of his essays, called The Suggestion of Running Away From Home⁴⁴ to encourage young men to abandon their domineering mothers. Terayama's hatred of his mother was conspicuous in his artistic creations, and his portrayals of mothers were suggestive and violent. However, he had been showing his hatred for his mother through his art since he was a child. In fact, Terayama metaphorically "killed" his own mother in a tanka⁴⁵ he wrote at the age of fifteen (Nagao 18). The title of the poem was "The Death of My Mother,"⁴⁶ and it surprised all of his friends and teachers at school. After that, Terayama imaginarily killed his mother numerous times in various artistic creations. In addition, similar to Yamataro in Jashumon, Terayama frequently uses the image of discarding a mother in his art, like dumping a large-sized article in a garbage can. In Terayama's film Throw Away Your Books, Rally in the Streets⁴⁷ (1971), there is an image of a garbage collector collecting a "waste of mothers" on a street. The collector puts some useless and unwanted mothers in a garbage can and takes them away somewhere.

⁴⁴ The original title is Iede No Susume (家出のすすめ).

⁴⁵ Tanka (短歌) is a 31-syllable Japanese poetic form.

⁴⁶ The Japanese title of the poem is "Haha Iku" (母逝く).

⁴⁷ This is the English title provided by Japan ATG for American audience members. The original title is Sho Wo Suteyo Machie Deyou (書を捨てよ、町へ出よう). As it was mentioned before, the theatrical version of the film is called Throw Away Your Books, Go Out Into the Streets in English, but it shares the same title in Japanese.

In his essays, Terayama discusses a mother's egoistic love of her son, especially a single mother whose son is her only child, whom she takes care of as if he were a lover. In the essay "How To Deal With My Mom's Corpse,"⁴⁸ Terayama explains his abandonment of mother figures in his artistic creations. He said that a son who has a "domineering mother," *o tends to show feelings that resemble a lover's affection more than a parent's, must cut his emotional connection with her in order to be fully independent.* Terayama cruelly kills and discards mother figures artistically, but in his essay, he suggests that young men establish a new relationship with their mothers, similar to a friendship. The meaning of Terayama's characters' metaphorical murder (abandonment) of their mothers is translated as social and economic independence. In short, Terayama believed that a man who had a domineering mother had only one choice if he wanted to establish his own identity as an independent person and consequently gain sexual freedom in his marriage. The choice was to break the tight connection of the mother-son relationship and establish a new relationship that contained no hierarchy between the two.

Although Terayama was economically and financially independent and agitated young people to abandon their mothers in his essays, it could be argued that he never had the chance to be released from his domineering mother's prison in his own life. He once successfully gained freedom for a passing moment in his late twenties and early thirties, similar to Yamataro in Jashumon, but soon he was back in his mother's prison, being her puppet, similar to Kinya in Mink Marie. Considering Terayama's mother's unbelievably

⁴⁸ The Japanese title is "Okasan No Shitai No Shimatu" (お母さんの死体の始末).

dangerous behavior during her son's marriage and Terayama's subjugation to his mother throughout his life, it seems clear he was never truly free from his mother's despotic world.

Incest: The Logical Next Step

Terayama, who lived his life under his mother's dominion without having her official permission to have any other women, committed imaginary incest with her in his artistic dream world. Nagao points out the obscenity of sexual imagery concerning his mother in Terayama's essay "In the Melody of a Bawdy Song of My Mother"⁴⁹ (18). In the essay, Terayama recalls his memory of the day when, at the age of thirteen, he had to leave his mother's house to go live with his relatives because of his mother's inability to take care of him. On the same day, he had the opportunity to read pornographic books for the first time in his life. Nagao says that the old pornographic books could not print obscene words because of strict censorship and printed "X" marks instead of sexually indecent words. Terayama says in his essay that he wrote in his mother's first name, Hatu, over the "X" marks that were supposed to stand for the names of the male and female sexual organs and the indecent words for sexual intercourse. Keeping in mind the fact that Terayama always colored his autobiography with his imagination, the incident might or might not be true. However, Nagao analyzed this incident as a reflection of Terayama's masochistic and incestuous desires, whether or not it literally happened (18).

An example of Terayama's own hidden incestuous desires that shows up in his art is Yamataro in Jashumon, who attempts to sleep with his own mother, Ogin, because his wife

⁴⁹ The original Japanese title is "Hahakoishunkacho" (母恋春歌調).

will not sleep with him. Yamataro, who is frustrated because his own wife prohibits his touching her body, decides to sleep with his mother, whom he can fully trust. Yamataro explains his Oedipal desire in this monologue.

Now, the only one person I can depend on is Mom. Nobody will sleep with me, nobody! If nobody wants me, I will sleep with Mom! ... I was so impatient. I dumped Mom too soon. Mom is still useful! Mom can be helpful to me as yet! ... (28).

Later in the monologue, Yamataro explains his plan to the audience. He says that he will pretend to be an innocent child and coax his mother to sleep with him. Yamataro looks for his mother, whom he abandoned, and he successfully retrieves her from the valley. After the reunion, they embrace each other. At the end of the scene, Yamataro carries Ogin on his back while reciting a Buddhist chant⁵⁰ and gradually disappears into the dark. There is no visually and verbally explicit incestuous scene in the play. However, the ending is suggestive of the incest that may happen later.

Once Yamataro notices the obstacles in his marriage with his wife, he regrets abandoning his mother before and voluntarily goes back to his domineering mother's world. Similarly, Terayama also went back to his mother's dominion after his divorce. This was shortly after he imaginarily killed and abandoned his mother in a number of essays and theatrical works. As mentioned before, it would seem that Terayama's relationship with his mother was too tight to break even though he attempted to abandon her numerous times. The character of Yamataro can be seen as a reflection of Terayama himself. Shibusawa explains

⁵⁰ Yamataro recites "namuamidabutsu" (Hail to Amida Buddha).

one of the elements found in the Oedipus complex is the son's desire for and strong possessive instinct towards his mother (Shojo 130). Terayama discusses a mother who has an extreme obsession with her son and treats him as if he were a lover. However, a man who has an Oedipus complex also has the similar obsession or possessiveness towards his mother, according to the psychoanalytic perspective. *Jashumon* was performed a year after Terayama's divorce. Therefore, Terayama's strong relationship with his mother perhaps eventually led him to monopolize his mother's attention and affection, like the character of Yamataro.

Narcissism and Pride

In addition, Shibusawa says that incestuous desire in mythology or in literary works stems from narcissism. For example, a son who commits incest with his mother sees his reflection in his mother. Therefore, a son may psychologically want his own self, which he only finds in his mother (Shojo 95). It is possible to view the character of Yamataro, who has a desire for incest with his mother, as a reflection of Terayama himself. Terayama, who was seen as a narcissistic artist by several contemporary artists, might seek his own figure in his mother.

For example, unlike many avant-garde theatre artists in Terayama's time who had to pursue their artistic careers while struggling with poverty, Terayama was a popular, multi-talented, celebrity artist who was eagerly sought after by different types of media. Not only was he considered a glittering, charismatic star celebrity, he was financially successful (Senda, Nihon 138). Because of this, many other avant-garde artists both praised and blamed

him. It is known that Terayama looked down on Mishima Yukio, an internationally acclaimed writer who frequently worked as a theatrical director. Terayama was frequently seen as an artist who had too much confidence in his art and himself (Nagao 15). As Shibusawa explains, one of the reasons for his incestuous desire might be his narcissistic attitude about his own art, which was greatly admired by his society.

Considering that Terayama was such a narcissistic person, there is a possibility that he might have wanted a blood-related descendant. In fact, Terayama was eager to have a child of his own when he married Kujo. According to Nagao, Terayama went into raptures when he found out Kujo was pregnant. He bought many books about raising a child or about health care for pregnant women. Unfortunately, Terayama's dream never came true due to Kujo's miscarriage in 1965 (Nagao 289). One of the reasons Yamataro in Jashumon practices incest with his mother is that his wife, Yamabuki, does not sleep with him. The "fatherless girl" like Yamabuki is the antithesis of the "domineering mother" and will never be a mother figure. Therefore, Yamataro will not be able to have his own descendant if he depends on Yamabuki's ability to give birth, but he can depend on his sexually active mother, Ogin. The choices Yamataro has to continue his lineage are either to sleep with his mother or to kill his mother in order to sleep with his wife. In this case, Yamataro decides to perform an incestuous act with his mother. Historically, many privileged and noble people practiced incest to continue their precious lineages and to keep political stability (Shibusawa, Erosu 58). Hypothetically speaking, Terayama, a narcissistic but extremely talented artist, might have had incestuous desires so he could have a child with his talents and artistic genes. Thus, Terayama, who was like a member of rich royal family in the theatrical world in his

time, would continue to dominate the future Japanese theatrical world, similar to noble kings who desire to be reborn in their own descendants.

Free Love vs. Jealousy

Terayama and his mother's relationship is also found in the artistic photography that was one of his hobbies. Terayama looked at his mother the same way another man might look at a girl or a prostitute. For example, he took a photograph⁵¹ of her wearing a skimpy black dress and heavy make-up. In another photo, his mother is lying down on a bed in a sexy pose right next to a completely naked man, Morisaki Henriku,⁵² who was a Tenjo Sajiki member. Another photograph shows his mother and the naked Henriku embracing each other on the bed. Terayama treated Henriku as if he were a blood relative, a young brother, and he totally trusted his artistic abilities as an actor and a technical crewmember in the company. Consequently, Terayama's mother requested that Henriku be her adopted son after Terayama's death. Therefore, according to the official documents, Henriku became Terayama's brother. Terayama's sexual photographs of his mother with the naked man who later became his mother's son show Terayama's twisted relationship with his mother.

The same way that Terayama treated his own mother as a model in the sexually explicit photographs, he treated all females equally in terms of sexual pleasure. In the essay "Mom Doesn't Want to Have Sex with Me But,"⁵³ Terayama questioned why his mother was not willing to sleep with him. He explained that human beings have the freedom and the

⁵¹ See the figure on page 66.

⁵² He was mostly known as Henriku.

⁵³ The original title of the essay is "Kaasanha Bokuto Netagaranaiga" (母さんはぼくと寝たがらないが).

right to enjoy sexual pleasure, which is a great treasure to human life in any circumstances, including one-night stands and incest. According to his theory, having sexual pleasure and giving it to anyone is like touching a loved one's hair or drinking a cup of tasty coffee. He also said that he was not discussing the sexual liberation movement; he simply wanted to *satisfy his desire for sexual pleasure*. In the essay, Terayama suggests that people can sleep with their mothers if they want to, the same as they sleep with their lovers. He added that jealousy often prevents people from getting liberated from sexual taboos.

Analyzing these statements, one might argue that the incestuous theme in Terayama's art is his manifesto on the freedom to have sexual pleasure. They also explain Terayama's view that one may have sexual interest in any human being without being bound by morality and sexual taboos. In Terayama's opinion, a person should be allowed to have sexual pleasure with his mother, the same as with his wife, a random prostitute or his own daughter. Therefore, Terayama perceived the "fatherless girl" and "domineering mother" as being without social and moral classification as possible sex objects. For Terayama, incest was neither a taboo nor a problem and did not necessarily have to be prohibited by society. *People should be able to have incestuous sex the same as they are able to sleep with their husbands and wives.*

In addition, Terayama says in the essay that jealousy eventually leads people to be possessive in their sexual relationships and prevents people from liberating themselves from sexual taboos. In both Mink Marie and Jashumon, Terayama portrays the war between a mother and a wife as having only one possibility for ceasefire. However, there is another way to end the war. If the mother and wife are not jealous of each other, they can live

together under the same roof with the man they love and all have sexual pleasure. Instead of being forced to choose between abandoning his mother or his wife, Terayama might have dreamed of the ideal sexual paradise in his imaginary household.

Terayama created the “domineering mother” character, which has the quality of the “androgynous parent,” with both a father’s masculinity and authoritative power and a mother’s possessiveness towards her son. In Terayama’s theatrical world, the “domineering mother” exists as a sexually preferable but irresistibly hateful person who triggers murderous feeling in the character of a son. The “domineering mother’s” ultimate dominion over her son’s social life and personal love matters eventually leads him to find vent for his pent-up feelings in either incest or abandoning her. The character of the “domineering mother” and her relationship to the son character resemble Terayama’s own experiences with his domineering mother and her history. The son characters are similar to Terayama himself, and the entangled triangular relationships portrayed in the plays are closely tied to Terayama’s experience of unsuccessful marriage.

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Terayama, an internationally recognized Japanese theatre artist, created twisted and deconstructed female characters that can be divided into two categories, “fatherless girl” and “domineering mother.” These two character types are antithetical to each other in Terayama’s theory, and they are used as tools to break the wall of the traditional and stereotypical portrayals of the “girl” and the “mother” found in both Western and Japanese theatre. The “fatherless girl” lives freely and independently without male domination and she never grows up to become a mother. The “domineering mother” is always portrayed by a male actor and can also be called the “androgynous parent.” The creation of these characters closely derives from Terayama’s family background his having a domineering mother and being a fatherless child. Through the creation of these characters in his plays, Terayama shows a denial of the family system or the institution of marriage, but also he introduces a new type of family structure and familial relationships in his own unique theatrical world.

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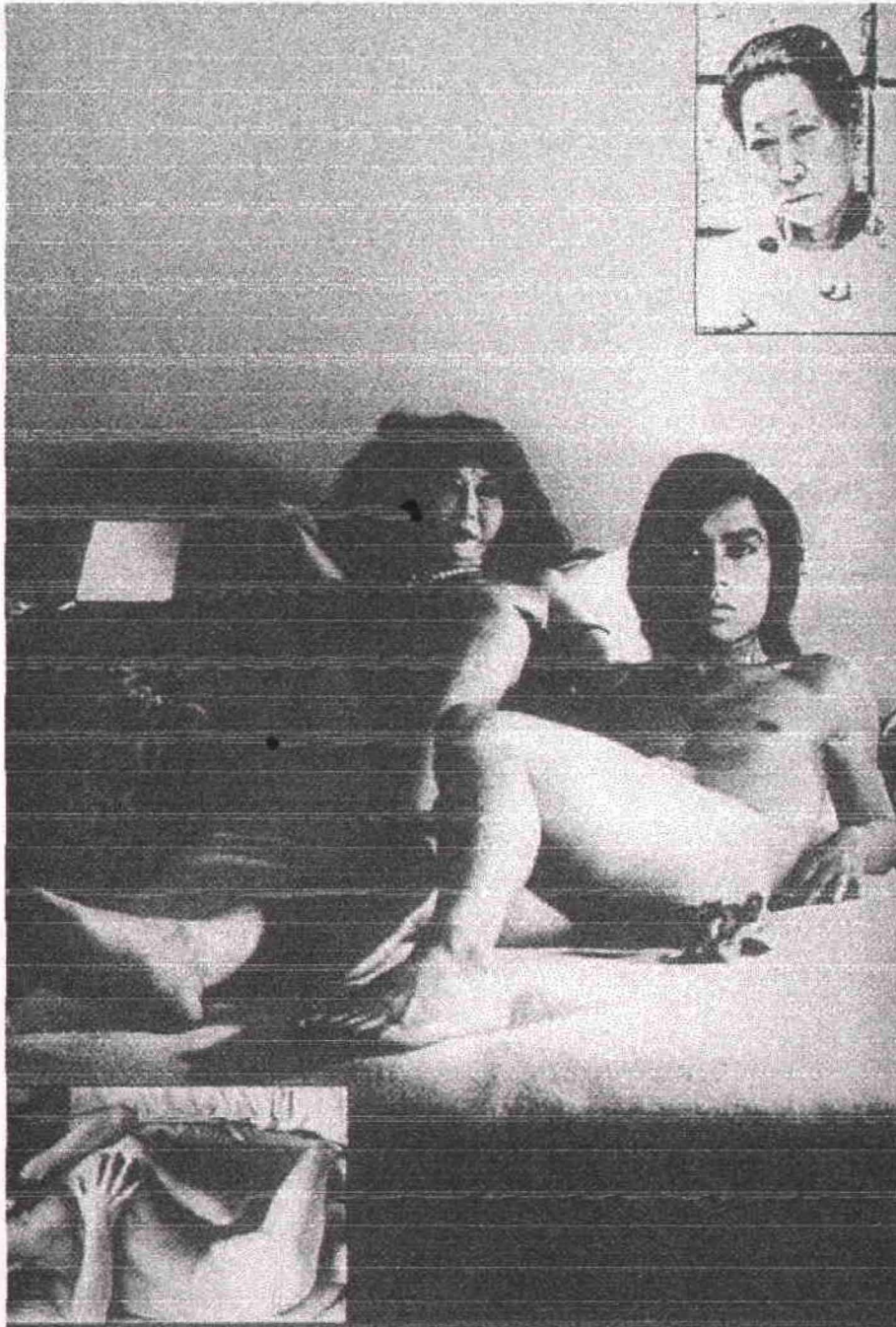


Figure. Terayama's Mother and Morisaki Henriku, Shuji Terayama Museum 1 (Tokyo: 2000) 98.

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