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The Philosophy of Existence in Osamu Dazai's No Longer Human (1948)

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in Literature and Civilization.

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

Date:

Name:

signature

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my mother who ~~has~~ provided me with her encouragement, love, and understanding

To my wonderful sisters for their whole-hearted support

To all my extended family

To my two best friends and teachers at the University of Saida

To all who were there for me, thank you for your help and encouragement

To all those who have been supportive, caring, and patient

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I want to express my utmost gratitude to Almighty Allah for my life, it has been full of blessings despite the numerous ups and downs, Allah has always, put everything in place. I am grateful for this life and what my journey has led me to. It brings me immense joy and it is an honor to be able to begin and finish this journey with my wonderful professor and supervisor Prof. Berrezoug Hanaa whose contribution to this work considerably added to this experience and laid the basis for everything.

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Abstract

This paper examines the interplay between nihilistic practices of the self, existentialism, alienation, estrangement, and Asian literature. Understanding Asian literature, and the works of Japanese author Osamu Dazai, has become increasingly important in recent years. Examining existentialism as a literary phenomenon can help us understand the long-standing tradition of combining philosophy and literature. In an attempt to provide more dimensions to further the purpose of this paper, we will be analyzing Osamu Dazai's novel "**No Longer Human**" while exploring the complex philosophy of existence through the protagonist's struggle to find meaning and purpose in life. As we delve deep into the human psyche, examining themes of isolation, emptiness, and despair. Through the protagonist's existential crisis, Dazai offers a deep exploration of humanity's search for identity and belonging, ultimately questioning the purpose of life itself.

Keywords: Alienation, Asian literature, Existentialism Osamu Dazai.

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General introduction

In the realm of literature and philosophy, Osamu Dazai's masterpiece "**No Longer Human**" stands as a haunting exploration of the human psyche and the complexities of existence. Through the protagonist's harrowing journey and existential crisis, ultimately questions the purpose of life itself and particularly focuses on Dazai's influence on popular, Chinese, and Japanese cultures. The novel has become a classic in Japanese literature and continues to resonate with readers worldwide prompting contemplation and self-reflection. The novel delves deep into profound philosophical themes, including nihilism, alienation, estrangement, and the development of the human personality. This thesis aims to dissect the rich tapestry of ideas presented in the novel, uncovering its underlying motivations, and seeking to shed light on the existential questions it raises.

The motivation behind this research is to unravel the philosophical underpinnings of "**No Longer Human**" and understand how these elements contribute to its enduring significance as a literary work. By analyzing the novel's themes and characters, we hope to gain insights into the human condition, the existential struggle, and the dynamics of personality development under adverse circumstances. This thesis seeks to answer the following primary research question:

To what extent do existential nihilism, absurdity, and self-collapse in no longer human by Osamu Dazai?

It is hypothesized that "**No Longer Human**" serves as a profound allegory for the human experience, reflecting the author's contemplation on the fundamental questions of existence. The novel's portrayal of nihilism, alienation, estrangement, and the development of the protagonist's personality can offer valuable philosophical

insights, ultimately revealing a profound commentary on the human condition and the complexities of self-discovery.

This thesis will adopt a qualitative research approach, utilizing literary analysis as the primary method. The method will involve a deep reading and interpretation of key passages, characters, and themes in "**No Longer Human**" to discern the underlying philosophical concepts. Additionally, secondary sources, including scholarly articles, literary critiques, and philosophical works, will be examined to supplement the analysis and provide a broader context.

Despite the enthusiasm for exploring the philosophical depths of "**No Longer Human**," this research acknowledges certain limitations. Firstly, as with any literary analysis, interpretations may vary, and it is essential to recognize the subjectivity involved. Secondly, while extensive efforts will be made to gather a comprehensive range of secondary sources, some materials may not be accessible due to constraints such as language barriers or restricted availability. Lastly, this research will focus exclusively on "**No Longer Human**" and may not encompass the entire scope of Osamu Dazai's oeuvre or other related literary works. To sum up, this thesis aims to contribute to the broader understanding of the philosophy of existence, nihilism, alienation, estrangement, and personality development as depicted in "**No Longer Human**." By unraveling the novel's enigmatic themes, the researcher aspires to shed light on the human condition and offer fresh perspectives on the intricate facets of the human psyche and the quest for meaning in an uncertain world.

Chapter One

**Exploring existentialism,
Alienation, and
Estrangement: A critical
Analysis**

Introduction

This paper examines the interplay between nihilistic practices of the self, existentialism, alienation, estrangement, and Asian literature. Focusing on Osamu Dazai's novel, **No Longer Human**, the study delves into the protagonist's internal struggles with his own identity and his attempt to find meaning and purpose in life. By analyzing the text through the lens of existentialism and the concept of alienation, this research also explores Dazai's work addresses these universal human experiences and sheds light on the nature of the human condition, alongside exploring the concept of nihilism within the scope of various theories on personality development, and the ways Dazai employs his nihilistic motif to construct the protagonist's identity and struggles with existential crisis.

Nihilistic practices of the self

According to (Bourdieu, 1980) nihilism is a complex concept, especially when looking at how it applies to different societies and cultural environments. The term nihilism was first coined by Friedrich Jacobi (1743-1819); an influential German composer and philosopher, who described nihilism as a state of extreme rationality where one's beliefs and actions no longer follow any conventional or logical grounds. Nihilism was seen as a contradiction to God's perspective and the cultural conventions of the time. According to Jacobi's thought, nihilism would take away the meaning behind any action and thus render it meaningless. He argued that nihilism was the ultimate consequence of relying purely on rationality, which could lead to a spiritual emptiness. many people found Jacobi's nihilistic outlook controversial, his ideas remain relevant today, as we have seen the use of nihilism play out in popular culture and-broader society.

Ultimately, Jacobi's nihilism had a heavy impact on people at the time and it remains as memorable as ever today. People can certainly still draw insight from his thought-provoking ideas, which still offer guidance in how to think about the world. Jacobi's nihilism stands as a reminder to always think critically and to enjoy life without becoming overly-dependent on rationality.

Throughout the nineteenth century, philosophers and thinkers alike were interested in nihilism as a philosophy. Among them are some outstanding names like Nikolai Tchernychevski, Leo Strauss, and Max Stirner. One of the most influential philosophers of nihilism is Friedrich Nietzsche whose thought-provoking ideas are still relevant to society today. Nietzsche defined it as stripping people of their natural purpose. To Nietzsche, the consequence of this was a lack of meaning, faith and hope. But Nietzsche didn't just focus on nihilism; he also sought to address moral nihilism. This was a concept that he felt was prevalent in Christianity, and he argued that it made people feel less responsible for their actions and ultimately gave them an excuse to not live life to its fullest. He also encouraged people to question their faith and beliefs and to use reason and self-reflection before arriving at any definitive answers. Nietzsche's writing has had a lasting impact on Western society, inspiring generations to think critically about the values and practices of their community. His legacy will certainly continue to influence the way we live, think, and act for decades to come.

Nietzsche believed that nihilism stemmed from the establishment of values by Socrates and Plato, but this definition might not fit all cultures. While nihilism has often been observed in the West, its existence is often questioned in other cultures, such as East Asia. It might be assumed that nihilism is based on Western ideas and is

thus absent in parts of the world. But in reality, nihilism has been observed even in Japan, which shows that it is a universal phenomenon.

However, it would still be interesting to explore whether nihilism is a historical phenomenon, and if it is subject to cultural and historical contingencies. Examining how other societies and cultures have dealt with nihilism could give us a better understanding of this concept, and allow us to look at it from new and different perspectives.

(Nietzsche, 1968) stated that it might be challenging to understand Nietzsche's idea of nihilism and how it relates to post-industrial countries like Japan. Karl Löwith, a German philosopher, believed that nihilism is a European phenomenon and, as such, it can only be understood within the context of European intellectual history. He argued that the Japanese misunderstood nihilism and instead focused on-material and technological advancements, refusing to engage with European civilization and its spirit. Furthermore, in his opinion, the Japanese were almost completely lacking in any self-criticism and instead followed social conventions. When looking at nihilism from a cross-cultural perspective, it's important to consider the historical contingencies and to determine whether it can be seen as a universal 'spiritual category' or not. Weighing up these ideas can help provide a greater understanding of the concept.

After all, exploring perspectives and ideas outside of the scope of one's own culture can open up new opportunities to learn and grow.

According to (Kasulis, 2009) Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) argued that nihilism was nothing but an insidious path of destruction. He referred to nihilism as

“leveling” and saw it as a dangerous force that would crush individuality and deprive human existence of its intrinsic purpose.

Kierkegaard's definition of nihilism is one of the earliest examples of existentialist thought, and his writings on the subject are incredibly important in any serious study of philosophy. He feared that nihilism could lead to a world devoid of meaning, and sought to warn people of its dangers. At its core, Kierkegaard saw nihilism as an extreme state of apathy and indifference toward life, where any sense of purpose is abandoned. He saw it as a great threat to self-actualization and encouraged people to stay vigilant against its allure. Kierkegaard's teachings laid the groundwork for later existentialist thinkers and remain as relevant as ever in today's ever-changing world. With his warning in mind, it's important to be conscious of nihilism's dangers and stay true to ourselves in the search for personal fulfillment.

Albert Camus was also a prominent figure of French existentialism. Camus questioned the value of life if one were to ultimately die. It is a question that has been pondered throughout the ages, and one that can still spark debate to this day. Both nihilism and absurdism have similar ideals and concepts, so it makes sense that Camus' question is relevant to both. To a nihilist, life has no ultimate meaning or purpose. As such, life itself is meaningless, and has no real point. Death is inevitable, so life is ultimately futile and meaningless. To an absurdist, life may have little to no meaning, but living it is still crucial. Life is a journey, full of turns and unexpected challenges, and through it, we can find purpose and meaning. This is why some absurdist believes it is worth living life despite knowing it will ultimately end in death. Camus' question can be interpreted differently by each school of thought. To one, it's a query of whether life is worth living in the face of death and despair. To the

other, it's a question of whether it's worth seeking out meaning in life despite its ultimate lack of purpose. Either way, it remains a thought-provoking query that will continue to spark debate for quite some time.

The Core Tenets of Nihilism:

The most significant tenet of nihilism is that the world is meaningless and that life has no inherent value. As such, nihilists believe that we should focus on making the most of the present moment, instead of hoping for or dreaming of a future that may not happen. It's about appreciating the here and now and accepting that no matter how hard we try, nothing truly lasts, a lot of people often wonder – what purpose does existence serve, if any? Nihilism is all about the idea that existence is almost completely pointless. A nihilist views life through a lens of futility, believing that nothing has eternal value and that any beliefs and ideals we possess have no real purpose.

(Foucault, 1988) observed that nihilists reject any attempt to ascribe meaning or morality to life, and argue that no one can be sure of what is right and what is wrong. They argue that having a particular set of beliefs or ideals can be restrictive and can prevent people from truly enjoying life.

Three main principles form the basis of nihilism:

- 1) There is no such thing as truth.
- 2) Nothing has inherent value or meaning.
- 3) Life is without ultimate purpose.

This means that, according to nihilism, truth is unfounded and meaningless, so there are no reasons to preserve moral values for our own or anybody else's benefit. In

fact, nihilism suggests that morality doesn't exist and that one's identity and values are assigned arbitrarily, not based on any kind of deeper meaning.

Existentialism, Alienation and Estrangement:

Existentialism:

Existentialism is an intriguing way of thinking about our human existence. The term was coined by Søren Kierkegaard, who argued that the individual is solely responsible for determining the meaning of their life. This is against many obstacles, such as angst, boredom, and death. In the wake of World War II, the ideas of existentialism became popular, and since then, philosophers have come to disagree with one another on the best way to live a meaningful life.

Existentialism goes beyond traditional philosophies and scientific methods to evaluate and categorize life. It emphasizes human individuality and freedom, and many philosophers have rejected the notion to avoid being labeled with a predetermined idea of what it means to be an existentialist. Every existential philosopher has their unique perspective on what it means to live a fulfilling life and take responsibility for their existence. There's no one-size-fits-all answer, but existentialism encourages us to constantly question, explore, and live authentically.

The main question that is addressed in this work is the following: to what extent does existentialism constitute a literary rather than a primarily philosophical

phenomenon? What form does existentialism take when it is viewed as literature rather than as philosophy?

Existentialism as a literary phenomenon has been debated since its emergence in the late 1930s. It's often viewed as a philosophical movement, but its influence on literature has been significant. From Jean-Paul Sartre's "Nausea" to Albert Camus' "The Outsider," many great works of literature have drawn on existentialist themes. In addition, many renowned figures within the existentialist tradition such as Camus and Beckett are better known for their literary works rather than for their philosophical contributions. But what exactly does it mean for existentialism to be a literary phenomenon?

Existentialism is often seen as a narrow movement, focused primarily on the philosophical writings of French authors like Sartre and de Beauvoir. But when considered through a literary lens, the definition of existentialism expands greatly. In this case, many great works of literature can fall under the existentialist umbrella, such as Shakespeare's plays and the poetry of many modern writers.

Examining existentialism as a literary phenomenon can also help us to understand the long-standing tradition of combining philosophy and literature in French culture. Figures such as Voltaire and Rousseau have often melded the two, and the works of existentialist authors continued the trend. Seeing existentialism through the lens of literature can help us to appreciate this relationship and the quality of the works it has produced.

Nevertheless, Existential philosophy is a way of looking at life that emphasizes the existence of the person, their emotions, experiences, and the choices they make. This philosophy is focused on understanding the meaning of life and our purpose in it.

Existentialism explores topics such as the nature of existence, freedom, and the meaning of life and death. Moreover, existential philosophy is often seen as a pessimistic outlook on life, as it can leave us feeling rather powerless in the face of our fragility and mortality. But this philosophy can actually be quite empowering and liberating. Existentialism encourages us to take control of our lives and acknowledge our feelings and emotions. It encourages us to make our choices and to find our path, despite the feeling of loneliness or alienation.

Existentialism can be further broken down into different forms, such as the phenomenological tradition, the absurdist tradition, and the existentialist-psychoanalytic tradition. Each of these traditions has its own interpretations of the meaning of life and our place in it. Regardless of which tradition you consider, existentialism emphasizes our responsibility for making choices and working to understand our own unique, subjective experiences.

Alienation:

A state of isolation or loneliness is commonly referred to as alienation. The concept of alienation arose from several social, economic, and religious accompaniments. In other words, a person believes himself to be disassociated from himself or a community. The phrase has been employed by various classical, modern, and current ideologies. As time passed and civilizations changed, many arguments arose over the nature of alienation and its true influence on the individual and community of human beings. The existentialist approach is a reaction against individuality, subjectivity, introspection, and emotion. It is a philosophy of human situations rather than a philosophy of things. The primary argument of existentialists is that "existence precedes essence; it is beyond physical proclamation." (Sartre, 1990,

p.4). While the conventional idea of essence coming before existence means "essence first, then existence," Human nature, according to existentialists, is determined more by the path of life than by human nature itself. (Paulsen, 2011) stated that part of human nature is alienation; anything man does, whether individually or collectively, bears the stamp of alienation. According to Dr. Naushaba Anjum, alienation is primarily perceived inwardly. It is the estrangement of the human being from himself. He is not himself, but rather a thing. He exists solely in the collective consciousness of a crowd. Several existential philosophers, psychologists, and sociologists explore the concept of alienation from their points of view. They refer to their own extreme sort of psycho-social disease, which includes a loss of self-status or self-disgust, meaninglessness, impotence, automatization, and pessimism, as well as a loss of morals, beliefs, and ideals. Psychoanalysts work to help people or patients return from the realm of illusion to the world of reality. The primary concept of alienation is when a person loses his or her sense of self-identity and self-hood.

Many theorists (Karl Marx 1844, Melvin Seeman 1970, Robert K. Merton 1938) established that the problem of self-alienation claims that each of us has a true self that we are unable to achieve. But if one obtains self-identity by committing the other through a specific language, then anxiety about the loss of self-love is both an individual and a universal problem. It indicates that a person not only feels estranged from himself but also fails to establish decent and wrathful relationships with others.

(Erich Fromm, 1955), who has had a significant impact on current philosophy, sociology, and humanists in both Western and Eastern nations, proclaimed in his key works *Man for Himself* (1947) and *Fear of Freedom* (1941) in the twentieth century that man cannot be himself. He is distinct in his desire to remain an outsider in the

world in which he lives. The term alienation is used in philosophy to denote the aspect of separating two things with tentativeness and frustration. In other words, it is inferred as a precise scientific phrase referring to some particular aspect of separation. Hegel employs the word "alienation" in his writings ~~about~~ his concept of becoming an alien.

To put it another way, man, as a species, is foreign, alone, unfriendly, and physically and psychologically deprived in this created world. Fromm defines alienation as "a form of experience in which a person experiences himself as an alien or more fully." "Alienation is defined as a state of experience in which a person perceives himself as being alien." (Erich Fromm; *Man for the Modern World*; p.66) He has grown estranged from himself as the creator of the universe and the maker of his own deeds, but his acts and their consequences have become his masters, whom he obeys or even worships. He is unaware of his originality and disconnected from his own personality, feelings, willingness, love, care, and so on. He considers himself to be a machine. He never feels like he is the creator of his own act. His creation must be strange since his essence is alien. Finally, his activity has become a power, a god whom he obeys, worships and considers always superior to the entire universe. The majority of the time, an alienated individual is cut off from the outside world. In several of his writings, he emphasized man's isolation not just from himself but also from his body, fellowmen, and temporal institutions. The crux of alienation is separation. Man is considered strange not just to God but also to nature, his neighbor, and all other beings, both communal and individual. Human essence may be defined as the sum of social relationships. His relationship shows that he is entirely estranged from society.

One must look at Marx's treatment of the topic to develop an understanding of alienation. Marx wrote in the context of the early nineteenth-century socioeconomic system in Europe, which he perceived as being incredibly exploitative. His socialist ideas were then followed by a discussion of labor, the role of the individual worker in labor's work, and the things that workers produced. In his "Economic and Philosophical Draft 1844," he stressed alienation rather than exploitation. According to Marx, the current economic system causes employees to be alienated from their own selves. In a capitalist society, alienation was the result of the processes involved in the production and consumption of goods. Marx stated this through four points of alienation about the man and his work.

Estrangement

Paul Tillich, a German-American theologian and philosopher, is known for his contributions to the existentialist movement. One of his key concepts is estrangement, which he believed was a fundamental aspect of human existence. We will explore Tillich's ideas on estrangement and how they relate to our modern world.

For Tillich, estrangement refers to the feeling of being separated from oneself, others, and the world at large. It is a pervasive sense of alienation that can lead to feelings of anxiety, despair, and hopelessness. According to Tillich, estrangement is an inherent part of the human condition, stemming from our finite nature and inability to fully grasp the infinite. It is a result of our awareness of the gap between what we are and what we long to be, as well as the distance between ourselves and others.

Tillich believed that religion could provide a way to overcome estrangement by connecting us to something greater than ourselves. He argued that religious symbols

and myths could help us transcend our limitations and connect with the infinite; However, Tillich also recognized that religion itself could be a source of estrangement if it became too rigid or dogmatic. He emphasized the importance of maintaining an open and dynamic relationship with religious symbols, rather than treating them as fixed and unchanging.

Tillich also saw estrangement as a product of cultural norms and values that prioritize individualism and materialism over community and spirituality. He believed that modern society had become increasingly fragmented and disconnected, leading to a sense of meaninglessness and despair. To combat this, Tillich advocated for a renewed emphasis on spiritual and ethical values that could unite individuals and communities. He saw art and literature as potential avenues for creating shared meanings and bridging the gap between individuals and cultures.

Finally, (Paul Tillich, 1886) recognized the role of politics in perpetuating estrangement. He argued that political systems that prioritize power and control over justice and compassion only serve to reinforce the sense of separation and division that characterizes modern society. Instead, Tillich called for a political system that prioritized the common good and recognized the inherent interconnectedness of all people and things. He believed that such a system would help to alleviate the sense of estrangement that plagues our world. Furthermore, his theory of estrangement, which he developed against the background of his interpretation of existentialism, is a key aspect of his philosophical thought.

Tillich's theory of estrangement provides a unique perspective on the human condition, emphasizing the importance of confronting the ultimate questions of existence. (Paul Tillich, 1957) concluded that by embracing our finitude and accepting

our limitations, we can overcome estrangement and find meaning and purpose in our lives. Paul Tillich's approach to estrangement and reconciliation is based on his arrangement of existentialist philosophy and the associated philosophers. He sees connections and commonalities among the diverse thinkers he associates with existential thought, which leads him to believe that estrangement and reconciliation are important components of most of these authors' existentialist philosophies. These concepts are fundamental in Tillich's own existentialist perspective. By exploring the themes of estrangement and reconciliation, Tillich seeks to understand the human condition and how people can find meaning and purpose in life. His approach is rooted in a deep understanding of the complexity of human existence and the challenges that people face as they navigate their lives. Through his work, Tillich provides a unique perspective on some of the most important questions in philosophy and offers insights into how individuals can find meaning, purpose, and fulfillment in their lives.

In conclusion, Paul Tillich's concept of estrangement offers a powerful lens through which to view the challenges of modern life. By recognizing the pervasive sense of alienation that characterizes our world, we can begin to work towards overcoming it. Whether through religion, culture, or politics, Tillich believed that we can transcend our limitations and connect with something greater than ourselves. It is up to us to embrace this challenge and strive toward a more connected and meaningful existence.

On the other hand, (Viktor Shklovskii, Tetiva, 1970) stipulated in one of the foremost theorists of literary estrangement that estrangement theory is a literary technique that aims to make the familiar seem unfamiliar, and thus, force readers to

see things in a new light. This theory has been applied in various works of literature, including Osamu Dazai's **No Longer Human**. The researcher will explore how Shklovsky's estrangement theory is used in '**No Longer Human**' and how it contributes to the overall impact of the novel.

One of the central themes in **No Longer Human** is the sense of alienation felt by the protagonist, Yozo. Throughout the novel, he struggles to connect with others and feels like an outsider in society. Shklovsky's estrangement theory is employed in the novel to emphasize this feeling of alienation. By using unconventional narrative techniques, such as fragmented storytelling and disjointed timelines, the reader is forced to experience Yozo's confusion and disorientation firsthand.

Another way in which Shklovsky's estrangement theory is utilized in '**No Longer Human**' is through the use of metaphor. In the novel, Yozo often compares himself to a puppet or a machine, emphasizing his feelings of detachment and lack of control over his own life. These metaphors are deliberately jarring and unexpected, forcing the reader to pause and reconsider their assumptions about the character. By making the familiar seem unfamiliar, the reader can empathize more deeply with Yozo's struggles.

Language is another important element in Shklovsky's estrangement theory, and it is used effectively in '**No Longer Human**' to create a sense of distance between the reader and the characters. For example, Yozo often speaks in a detached and impersonal tone, using formal language even in casual situations.

(Viktor Shklovsky, 1970) stated that this deliberate use of language serves to highlight the character's emotional distance from others and creates a sense of unease for the reader. By using language in unexpected ways, the reader is forced to pay

closer attention to the text and engage more deeply with the story. By employing Shklovsky's estrangement theory in '**No Longer Human**,' Dazai to create a powerful and impactful reading experience. The use of unconventional narrative techniques, metaphor, and language all contribute to a sense of alienation and disorientation for the reader.

In conclusion, Viktor Shklovsky's estrangement theory is a powerful tool for creating impactful and memorable literature. When applied effectively, as in '**No Longer Human**,' it can force readers to see things in a new light and engage more deeply with the text. Through the use of unconventional narrative techniques, metaphor, and language, Dazai ~~can create~~ a powerful and emotionally resonant story that lingers long after the final page is turned.

Asian Literature and the Canon: Dazai in Context:

Asian literature has been a part of the literary canon for centuries, but it was not wanted until recently that writers from the continent started receiving the recognition they deserve. One of the most prominent figures in modern Asian literature is Osamu Dazai (1909-1948), one of Japan's most celebrated authors. Dazai was a major figure in the post-World War II literature movement, known for his introspective and melancholic works that often explore themes of alienation, suicide, and existentialism. His most famous novel, **No Longer Human**, has been widely praised for its insightful depiction of a troubled individual's inner struggles. Dazai's writing style was highly influential and is often compared to that of Franz Kafka and Fyodor Dostoevsky. His works have been adapted into several successful films and television series, and his influence on the Asian literary scene can still be felt today.

Understanding Asian literature, and specifically the works of Japanese author Osamu Dazai, has become increasingly important in recent years as we further examine and discuss the role of culture and context in all literature. Dazai wrote extensively and provocatively about human relationships and the effects of society, as well as personal and romantic relationships. His works provide an invaluable insight into the cultural and social values of Japan at the time and how they were interpreted, as well as how he may have felt about them.

For example, in his novel **No Longer Human**, Dazai examines the effects of extreme loneliness, isolation, and depression that lead to the protagonist's eventual suicide. The novel follows the protagonist, Oba Yozo, as he attempts to find love, security, and acceptance in the face of society's rejection. This story can be seen as a reflection of the many people in Japan during the time who felt ostracized and alone, and it is a powerful reminder of the importance of showing love, compassion, and a willingness to understand those who may come from different backgrounds and experiences. In Dazai's other works, he explores other topics such as the roles of men and women in society, the effects of war, the importance of family, and the moral conflicts that can arise when one's beliefs differ from society's conventions. (Orbaugh 186)

Furthermore, (Chow, and Rey, 1990) declared that the concept of world literature and comparative literature, which includes literary works from countries other than one's own, is relatively new. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe first used the term "world literature" in the late 1820s and the study of comparative literature was introduced by Madame de Stael. Goethe felt that world literature was a genre of works from different countries, encouraging nations to learn to understand and accept each

other, even if they did not necessarily agree. Literature from non-Western countries has been greatly influenced by their geographical and cultural neighbors. In the case of Japan, the language and many of the literary standards were directly inspired by China. However, this sense of elitism has become outdated as literature and art have shifted from a place of exclusivity to one of production and consumption in a capitalist society. We need to recognize the changes in literature and art from non-Western countries and understand how this has affected their culture over time.

World literature is distinct from literature in that it takes into account various aspects of language, taking into account the indigenous context of the work. This gave people the opportunity to read and learn about other countries' literature and understand different cultures. Unfortunately, American literature was not initially prioritized and Asian literature was not included in the literary canon.

In the case of Japan, the dominant language is spoken in Chinese characters and many of the concepts and norms of literature were heavily shaped by Chinese culture. However, the emergence of imperialism brought with it a Eurocentric way of thinking and a reduction of the importance of literature from other countries. The popularity of written works such as novels was a product of the concept of nationalism propagated by European imperialism.

For many English-speaking countries, there is a reliance on the European language of English or French to access works of literature outside of the Western world. This has created a wide-ranging approach to understanding different cultures and literature, where some prioritize authenticity while others agree with European principles. Japanese author Osamu Dazai has been both harshly criticized and

applauded for his work and for highlighting the difficulty of assessing non-Western literature about the existing canon.

Surprisingly, there are still many issues surrounding the perception of world literature and comparative literature, particularly when it comes to non-Western works. Barriers are necessary in order to learn more about other cultures and gain a better understanding of different literary works from countries around the world.

This has been the case with Osamu Dazai, whose books have received both harsh and enthusiastic criticism. Where does Dazai fit into the canon of literature despite being one of Japan's most renowned authors? Dazai receives a lot of flak for the Western influences in his Novels that portray it as a copy of a few specific Western artists. The translator's note by **No Longer Human's** most notable translator, Donald Keene, states the following:

(Brudnoy, David, 1968) viewed that from Dazai's childhood days, he was familiar with European literature, American Movies, reproductions of modern paintings and sculpture, and much else of our Civilization. These became such important parts of his own experience that he could not help being influenced by them, he mentioned them quite as freely as any author in Europe or America. In reading his works, however, we are sometimes made aware that Dazai's understanding or use of these elements of the West is not always the Same as ours. It is easy to conclude from this that Dazai had half-digested them, or even that the Japanese as a whole have somehow misappropriated our culture.

When this is claimed about Dazai's writings right when one opens the novel, it immediately gives the idea that he is "half-digested." Keene is accurate in saying that Japanese society has to some extent appropriated Western culture, nevertheless. It is

challenging for one culture to fully comprehend or assimilate another; instead, we adapt in order to meet our needs. Japanese society was very exposed to Western arts and culture at that period. Although it had previously been a highly isolated country, Japan opened up to outside influences, particularly Western ones, in the late 19th century during the Meiji Era. “The dominant foreign model for Japanese aesthetics in the Showa era was European, both avant-garde and Traditional. Japanese arts remained strong, but their significance fluctuated greatly as the Nation experienced periods of nationalism, war, and defeat” (Hermann Hesse, 1898, p.26) Students attentively studied the writings of German academics like Nietzsche, Kant, Hegel, and many others because Japanese institutions were largely based on German models. With the American occupation of Japan following its defeat in the war, the exposure to and study of Western culture increased to the point where translated works were not only available through university textbooks but were also published in regional newspapers like Asahi Newspaper and were made available for general consumption. Since Dazai came from an aristocratic family from a northern town and had wider access, as Keene pointed out, he was unavoidably impacted by Western views. (Pilling, 2011)

This was the case for many authors, including Dazai, who struggled to understand and portray European knowledge as it was perceived in Europe. While many may criticize Dazai for how he incorporated Western characteristics, this was true of many of his peers as well, not just Dazai as an individual author.

Universities provided courses based on Western models and authors being products of the era, and studied Western ideals that ultimately had an impact on their books even though it was not a dominating factor. In their undergraduate years,

Shohei Ooka, Hiroshi Noma, and Dazai all studied French literature. The genre of modern Japanese literature is heavily reliant on Western conceptions, such as the novel itself, which is why analyzing Dazai's works should not be primarily concerned with evaluating his borrowing from or use of European artists.

To see the redeeming aspects that make Dazai (and other authors) notable writers respected by Japanese society, one needs to have an in-depth understanding of modern Japanese literature. This goes with every author being read from a Western perspective. Overall, Dazai's works are an essential addition to the canon of Asian literature, and they provide insight into the cultural and social values of the time and how they may have been interpreted and experienced.

In understanding and appreciating Dazai's works, it is also essential to understand the social and cultural context in which they were written as well as the emotions he put into them.

The Theory of Personality Development:

Personality development refers to the process by which an individual's personality is shaped and molded throughout their life. This process begins in childhood and continues into adulthood, with various factors influencing the development of one's personality. Some of the key factors that contribute to personality development include genetics, environment, culture, and personal experiences. The study of personality development can help individuals gain a better understanding of themselves and others, as well as provide insight into how different personalities interact with one another.

There are several theories of personality development, each with its own perspective on how personality is formed and influenced. One of the most well-known theories is Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes the role of unconscious thoughts and feelings in shaping personality.

Other theories include the humanistic approach, which focuses on personal growth and self-actualization, and the social-cognitive approach, which emphasizes the interaction between individuals and their environment in shaping personality.

Definitions of Personality have often been elusive, with most definitions being both too broad and ambiguous or too abstract to relate to specific behaviors in practice. Earlier definitions focused on inner, psychic, and monotonous states or properties that avoided the specific. For example, how do we differentiate between 'self,' 'identity,' 'person,' 'personality,' or more esoteric terms like ego, self-esteem, and self-concept? Even if we could distinguish these terms, how would we associate them with distinctly different behaviors? Endler's (1983) conclusions are even sharper than those reached here. However, it is merely a model masquerading as a theory. According to Pervin's review of personality theory and research, recent reviews have been largely pessimistic. "We are making progress, but not as quickly as some would like." (L'Abate Luciano, 1928, p. 265-294) So, why has progress fallen short of realistic expectations? It doesn't address any of the definitional issues. This viewpoint is supported by personality assessments and a critical review of the theoretical literature. Beginning with Allport (1968), Kleinmuntz (1967), Mischel (1968), McReynolds (1968, 1971), Pervin (1990), and Vernon (1964), most of the classical references on personality assessment are focused on a vacuum abstracted from the natural environment in which personality development, experiences, expressions, and

abilities occur. As a result, these theories and practices are situational and avoid considering individuality in the contexts in which it is expressed. Many character dilemmas involve conflicts between states and traits.

The distinction between objective and projective methods of personality assessment emphasizes questionable, useful, and generally uncertain traits or conditions, such as anxiety and the difficulty in measuring personality changes as a result of psychotherapeutic interventions, and focuses on specifics.

Examining your selfhood and self-concept is an important part of understanding who you are and how you interact with the world. Knowing yourself better can lead to greater confidence, resilience, and overall well-being. These concepts can seem complex, but by taking the time to reflect and be mindful of your thoughts, feelings, and behavior, you can take steps toward understanding yourself. It's all about actively engaging with your own selfhood and self-concept, being aware of how you feel, and how your potential beliefs and values shape your identity. It may be helpful to think of selfhood and self-concept as a two-way street. While your own beliefs, values, and identity shape your self-concept, the way you think of yourself also affects your selfhood. By actively engaging with your thoughts and feelings and striving to develop a more positive self-concept, you can begin to understand yourself in a more meaningful way.

When it comes to developing a stronger sense of self and a more positive self-concept, it all starts with understanding yourself and your beliefs, values, and identity. Taking the time to reflect and actively engaging with your thoughts and feelings can help you find clarity and progress towards greater well-being. Furthermore, if you need support or guidance, many professionals are happy and able to assist.

(Rosenberg, 1989) emphasized that social labeling is a powerful tool for classifying people; however, it holds significance to comprehend the intricacies of the process through which social identity takes shape. Enter social psychologist Sidney Rosenberg's exploration of the self-concept and the complexities involved in constructing a sense of identity. According to Rosenberg, nine components make up the structure of self-concept: content, direction, intensity, salience, consistency, stability, clarity, accuracy, and verifiability.

Furthermore, self-confidence and individuality, as well as individuals' concern with the opinions of "significant others," play a major role. Rosenberg also established four principles related to and beyond self-esteem: distracted appraisal, psychological centrality, self-attribution, and the social comparison process. Understanding social identity requires taking all variants into account.

Moreover, Luciano Labate's theory of personality development is a comprehensive approach to understanding how individuals develop and change over time. According to Labate, personality is not fixed or static but rather dynamic and constantly evolving. Labate's theory emphasizes the importance of both nature and nurture in shaping personality. While genetics play a role in determining certain traits, environmental factors such as upbringing, culture, and life experiences also have a significant impact on personality development. According to Labate, childhood experiences are crucial in shaping personality. He argues that early relationships with caregivers and family members can have a lasting impact on an individual's sense of self and their ability to form healthy relationships later in life. Labate also emphasizes the importance of play and exploration during childhood. Through play, children

develop important social and cognitive skills that lay the foundation for future development.

(Luciano, 1994) reported that during adolescence, Labate argued that individuals begin to develop a more complex sense of self and identity. This process is often marked by a period of exploration and experimentation as individuals try out different roles and identities.

Labate also notes that adolescence can be a challenging time, as individuals navigate the pressures of peer groups, societal expectations, and their own internal struggles. However, he believes that this period of growth and change is essential for healthy personality development.

As individuals move into adulthood, Labate argues that personality continues to evolve and change. He suggests that major life events such as marriage, parenthood, and career changes can have a significant impact on personality development.

Labate also notes that older adults may experience a shift in priorities and values, as they reflect on their life experiences and consider their legacy. This process of reflection and introspection can lead to continued growth and development throughout the lifespan.

While Labate's theory of personality development has been influential in the field of psychology, it is not without its critiques and limitations. Some critics argue that the theory places too much emphasis on individual agency and ignores the role of larger societal forces such as poverty and discrimination.

Others, like (Sigmund Freud, 1923) pointed out that the theory may not may not apply to all cultures and contexts, as personality development is shaped by a variety of

cultural and historical factors. Despite its limitations, Luciano Labate's theory of personality development provides a valuable framework for understanding how individuals grow and change over time. By emphasizing the dynamic and evolving nature of personality, the theory highlights the importance of ongoing self-reflection and personal growth. Ultimately, Labate's theory suggests that personality development is a lifelong process that is shaped by a variety of factors, including genetics, environment, and personal experiences. "By understanding these factors, individuals can better understand themselves and work towards personal growth and fulfillment". (Stangor, C., &Walinga, J. 2010, p.47)

In conclusion, the study of personality development has many practical applications, such as in the fields of education, psychology, and business. Understanding personality development can help educators tailor their teaching methods to better suit the needs of individual students, while psychologists can use this knowledge to develop effective interventions for individuals struggling with mental health issues. In the business world, personality development theory can be used to improve team dynamics and communication, as well as to identify individuals who may be best suited for certain roles or positions within an organization.

Conclusion

In conclusion, nihilistic practices of the self and existentialism are prevalent themes in both Asian literature and the canon. These themes are often explored through characters who struggle with finding purpose and meaning in life. Osamu Dazai, a prominent Japanese author, also delves into these themes in his works, portraying the struggles and consequences of living in a society that emphasizes conformity and tradition. Through Dazai's portrayal of these themes, readers can answer to question their own beliefs and values, ultimately leading to a deeper understanding of the human experience.

Chapter Two

Deconstructing the Protagonist: A critical analysis of the main character

Introduction:

In this paper, the persona of the protagonist is analyzed through a Jungian perspective. This analysis explores the various masks and roles that Yozo Kawashima wears to fit into society, revealing that his "true self" is a fragmented and unidentifiable entity. The persona, according to Jung, is the public face that one presents to the world and is a necessary aspect of the human psyche for social interaction. However, the constant performance of these roles can lead to a disconnection from one's true identity, ultimately resulting in a state of emotional isolation and despair.

Analyzing the protagonist in **NO LONGER HUMAN**

The tragic journey of a lost soul, the poignant and fascinating story of a young man who is caught between the breakup of the traditions of a northern Japanese aristocratic family and the impact of Western ideas. Portraying himself as a failure, the protagonist of Osamu Dazai's **No Longer Human** narrates a seemingly normal life even while he feels himself incapable of understanding human beings, Oba Yozo's attempts to reconcile himself to the world around him begin in early childhood, continue through high school, where he becomes a "clown" to mask his alienation, and eventually lead to a failed suicide attempt as an adult. Without sentimentality, he records the casual cruelties of life and its fleeting moments of human connection and tenderness.

Semi-autobiographical, **No Longer Human** is the final completed work of one of Japan's most important writers, Osamu Dazai (1909-1948). The novel has come to "echo the sentiments of youth" from post-war Japan to the postmodern society of technology. Still one of the ten bestselling books in Japan, **No Longer Human** is a powerful exploration of an individual's alienation from society.

To have read **No Longer Human** imparts a certain alteration in the way you look at others, and regardless of the protagonist's repulsive lifestyle. Dazai creates a deeply conflicted character and builds an enduring indifference around him, modernity advances.

It is intense because he throws you into this bottomless pit where, as you fall, everything that defines your being-ness of being is stripped and snatched away from you. What is left is a ghostly face and a shadow of a body.

The book consists of several notebooks that give the reader detached, revelatory perspective of the protagonist's life. He depicts every aspect of the tale, including family, women, friendship, love, and the cracks in between, with a ghostly and wounded light, making it objective in part due to the realistic depictions of mental illness. This just serves to highlight how chaotic, deceptive, and desperate human nature is, as well as how absurd it is to attempt to understand it. The story shows how utterly powerless we are in the face of what we think makes us human. Words like "social outcast," "wounds of a guilty conscience," and "hellish dread of the realities of life" exhibit the dead weight one carries as a response to the indifference, despair, and adversity of human life. "As I read Camus's Lyrical and Critical Essays, I'm reminded of the hellish maxims that the protagonist in *No Longer Human* invents only to contradict this artificial and bottomless façade of society"(Dazai, 1948, p. 48-94-104) . What makes this even more grotesque is the fact that Osamu Dazai drowned himself with a woman before his thirty-ninth birthday

"I was frightened even by God. I could not believe in His love, only in His punishment. Faith. That, I felt, was the act of facing the tribunal of justice with one's head bowed to receive the scourge of God. I could believe in hell, but it was impossible for me to believe in the existence of heaven." (Dazai, 1984, p.80)

The protagonist experiences a profound fear of God. This fear is partly rooted in his sense of moral failings and partly influenced by societal expectations and religious beliefs. Yozo feels that he is unworthy of divine love and that God will inevitably

punish him for his sins. This fear drives him to behave in increasingly self-destructive ways, ultimately contributing to his downward spiral into madness and despair.

Yozo's character breakdown:

As the main character and the center of the story, Dazai describes Yozo as kind and complex with his chaotic and messy character, mentally depressed and always covering up his shortcomings. Osamu Dazai always explicitly describes the important point of Yozo's character who has a face and a figure with a smile that is so fake and has no facial expression at all. In other words, someone with an easily forgotten face without any personal quirks, like looking at a wall. Dazai managed to describe the figure of human interiority that is so empty. Psychological novels such as **No Longer Human** Novel are considered literary works that are opposed to “socialist realism” because they talk more about personal mental conflicts than discussing explicit socio-political issues.

Yozo's sensitivity:

Every time Yozo hears something strange about himself from someone else he starts doubting himself and he ~~would feel~~ sad, His society makes him sensitive to his surroundings because it is easy for him to feel that because he always feels different from everyone. “Again, I never once answered back anything said to me by my family. The last word of reproof stuck me with the force of thunderbolt and drove me almost out of my head. Answer back!” (Dazai, 1984, p.22) He will take others' complements about him seriously. Moreover, if he gets criticism, this will affect him deeply because he translates it as a human failure. “Whenever anyone criticized me, I felt certain that I had been living under the most dreadful misapprehension. I always

accepted the attack in silence, though inwardly so terrified as almost to be out of my mind.” (Dazai, 1984, p.22) So, in conclusion it is valid to mention that he is indeed a sensitive person.

Yozo's cleverness:

Yozo had something we call aptitude he never had to study hard to get any subject in school even when he skipped classes many times. He always becomes the first in his class, and he would always say that he has” brains” ... “I was always first in my class, thanks to my brains, I never studied even when I was well” (Dazai, 1984, p.26). He always gets good scores for all subjects except for deportment “My report card was all as except for deportment where it was never better than a C or a D.” (Dazai, 1984, p.27) Therefore it is evident that he was smart through his manner and speech. Also, the protagonist Yozo employs his intelligence in various cunning and manipulative ways. He can to charm and deceive others into giving him money or escaping punishment for his misdeeds. Yozo's cleverness is also evident in his ability to navigate social situations and fit into different circles of society. However, his intelligence ultimately becomes a tool to mask his deep feelings of alienation and inadequacy, as he struggles to find meaning and purpose in his life.

Yozo the introvert:

Yozo never tells the truth to anybody, he just keeps his feelings inward and to himself only whether good or bad. It is extremely hard for Yozo to open up, every time he meets someone new he never seems to care to try to know deeper about the people.

Yozo chooses to be silent and quiet when people say something to him even to his family, so it is difficult to fathom what he truly likes and wants with his life.

He is portrayed as an introvert who is unable to connect with society and constantly struggles to find meaning and purpose in his life. Throughout the novel, Yozo's mental health deteriorates as he becomes increasingly isolated and disconnected from those around him. The story offers a powerful commentary on the struggles of mental illness and the challenges of trying to find one's place in the world.

Yozo the artistic:

Yozo's interest in art specifically painting symbolizes his desire to somehow express his feelings of horror and revulsion in response to everyday life. Yozo suddenly realizes that art doesn't always have to depict beautiful, pleasant things. On the contrary, art can be challenging and disturbing, and Yozo takes comfort in the idea that many of history's most successful painters must have seen the world as a wretched place and then decided to depict that wretchedness in their art. The paintings come to represent his gravitation toward self-expression, ultimately suggesting that even the most private people find themselves drawn to anything that helps them make sense of their worldview.

Yozo's timidity:

It is mentioned by the protagonist himself the way his timidity is a part of his personality, with everyone around him, especially women, and that when it comes to them, he prefers to stay distant because he cannot understand them completely, through his reactions, manner and speech we can conclude that he is timid. "For

someone like myself in whom the ability to trust others is so cracked and broken that I am wretchedly timid and am forever trying to read the expression on people's faces. “(Dazai, 1948, p,101.)

Yozo's Timidity reached a point where it was no longer tied to his humanity. It became a separate entity, a manifestation of his fears and anxieties that controlled him. He was no longer in control of his actions and thoughts. It was as if his timidity had taken on a life of its own, dictating how he should live his life. He felt trapped and isolated, unable to break free from the grip of his fears. It was a lonely existence, one that he longed to escape but didn't know how.

A Jungian analysis of Yozo’s persona:

(C.G.Jung, 1943) defined the persona as the social mask that people wear in public to conform to social norms and expectations. The persona allows people to navigate society and is necessary for personal and professional interactions. On the other hand, the shadow represents the unconscious aspects of an individual's personality that they may reject or deny. These repressed qualities and traits can include negative emotions and behaviors that are not accepted or acknowledged by society. Jung believed that acknowledging and integrating the shadow into one's personality is necessary for personal growth and development.

Every individual has two sides of personality which can be referred to as the Persona and the Shadow. The Jungian conflict between the persona “the mask of the soul” and the shadow (a sort of “counter-persona”) is, from a philosophical perspective, akin to the dialectic between appearance and essence or, in a more existential fashion, similar to the difference between falseness and authenticity. If the

persona were a mask mediating between the Ego and the external world, the shadow would be an interface between the Self and the Ego. Using Jung's theory and structuralism, it's evident that Yozo's Persona and Shadow are two opposite personalities and they grow along with him throughout his childhood to adulthood. However, as he gets older, he goes through an individuation crisis where the Shadow in him becomes stronger than his Persona.

(Stein, 1998) stated that every person has two sides. The side that they show to society and the hidden side that they do not know exists. The persona is the side that we show to society. It is the face that we wear to meet the social world around us. According to Carl Jung, it is a functional complex whose job is both to conceal and to reveal an individual's conscious thoughts and feelings to others. On the other hand, the hidden side is called the shadow. We often hide some of our traits in order to get accepted in society. The shadow has traits and personalities that are not suitable for the conscious ego and the persona. In general, the shadow contains a person's characteristics that are contrary to the customs and moral conventions of society.

Yozo's childhood:

The plot begins with Yozo's childhood in the first part of the book, titled The First Notebook. Being a troubled kid, he regularly spends his time sitting in bed and skipping school. During those moments, he frequently considers human understanding. Even yet, Yozo finds humans difficult to comprehend. He comes to fear other people and believes that he is different. "All I feel are the assaults of apprehension and terror at the thought that I am the only one who is entirely unlike threats. It is almost impossible for me to converse with other people." (Dazai, 1973, p. 21)

Feeling that he is different from other people, Yozo decides to wear a mask that he calls a clown. This mask is what Carl Jung refers to as the Persona. There are two sources of the Persona: the first source involves the expectations from the society; while the second source includes the individual's social ambitions. Yozo wears a mask to cover the fact that he is afraid of human beings and in order to survive in society.

“It was the last quest for love I was to direct at human beings. Although I had a mortal dread of human beings I seemed quite unable to renounce their society. I managed to maintain on the surface a smile which never deserted my lips; this was the accommodation I offered to others; a most precarious achievement performed by me only at the cost of excruciating efforts within”.
(Dazai, 1973, pp. 21)

This passage demonstrates that, as much as Yozo despises humans, he is unable to escape them. As a result, he decides to wear a mask as part of his final quest to love humans. This portrayal is consistent with Persona functions, which are to make informal social engagement easier by covering aspects that may create discomfort.

Carl Jung believed that anxiety and social discomfort arise when a person struggles to reconcile their shadow and persona. The shadow represents the unconscious parts of the self that are suppressed or denied, while the persona is the public image a person presents to the world. When there is a disconnect between the two, a person may experience anxiety and discomfort in social situations. Jung believed that the key to resolving this is to integrate the shadow, acknowledging and accepting all aspects of the self, and creating a more authentic persona.

His immediate social group is his family. Yozo is afraid of disappointing his father. One night before his father leaves on a business trip, he asks his children, including Yozo, what they want for Christmas. His father is irritated when Yozo remains silent. Yozo feels guilty for disappointing his father.

“(…) I crept out of bed, tiptoed down to the parlor, and opened the drawer of the desk where my father had most likely put his notebook. I found the book and took it out. I riffled through the pages until I came to the place where he had jotted down our requests for presents. I licked the notebook pencil and wrote in big letters LION MASK. This accomplished I returned to my bed. I had not the faintest wish for a lion mask. In fact, I would actually have preferred a book. But It was obvious that Father wanted to buy me a mask, and my frantic desire to cater to his wishes and restore his good humor had emboldened me to sneak into the parlor in the dead of night”. (Dazai, 1973, p. 24)

This particular quote shows that Yozo secretly writes a present that his father would want to buy for him. Eventually, the lion mask represents his father's expectations of him. Yozo truly prefers a book to a lion mask, but he does not want to irritate his father any further. After doing so, Yozo is relieved that he has met his father's expectations. Also, as the second source of Persona, by fulfilling his father's expectations, Yozo may satisfy his societal aspiration to be a decent son.

The second micro society he must deal with is the school or classroom. Yozo does not attend class most of the time, but when he does, all he does is draw cartoons and write humorous stories. He wishes to seem naughty while also making his friends and

professors laugh. And, while Yozo tries to keep himself behind the mask, there is a side to him that he conceals. The shadow is the name given to the hidden aspect. According to Stein, a person does not want other people to realize that they are self-centered and selfish. People attempt to show that they are caring, attentive, and sympathetic rather than their Shadow.

Yozo's adolescence:

In the novel's second part, titled *The Second Notebook*, Yozo attends college in Tokyo. He wants to go to art school, but his father is opposed. As a result, Yozo resolves to obey his father in order to fulfill both his social desire and his father's expectations. Apart from the art class, he rarely attends the other classes. There, he encounters a guy named Masao Horiki. Horiki introduces him to a secret communist gathering, and they eventually become members of that group. This community is the third social group in which Yozo is associated. This community is larger than the previous two social groupings. According to Murray Stein, the masks we wear are often shaped by our experiences. It begins with the nuclear family, then spreads to society outside the family, and eventually encompasses the surrounding culture as a whole.

“(...) Strange to say, however, neither Horiki nor I ever came close to being expelled. On the contrary, I felt so much more relaxed in this irrational world than in the world of rational gentlemen that I was able to do what was expected of me in a "sound" manner. I was therefore considered a promising comrade and entrusted with various jobs fraught with a ludicrous degree of secrecy. As a matter of fact, I never once refused any of their jobs. Curiously docile, I performed

whatever they asked of me with such unruffled assurance that the "dogs" (that was the name by which the comrades referred to the police) suspected nothing, and I was never so much as picked up for questioning". (Dazai,1973, p.49)

According to the passage above, Yozo's Persona is regarded as promising by society, and he is given several tasks. As time passes, he is chosen as the community's leader, something he did not anticipate at all. He chooses to resign after experiencing so much pressure and frustration. Persona is simply a hollow mask full of falsehoods and ridiculous posturing, to be ridiculed and humiliated when the soul looks out from its position of submersion in the depths of the liminal experience, as Jung has noted. Yozo is bored of being involved in the community and decides to leave. By doing so, he may let go of his old self and begin a new one. Yozo's experience with Horiki exposes him to alcohol, cigarettes, and prostitutes. Women provide him with so much security and comfort. The Shadow, according to Harry A. Wilmer, comprises everything we despise, reject, and repress: power, greed, cruel and homicidal ideas, unacceptable desires, and morally and ethically incorrect deeds. In Yozo's instance, he spends so much money impulsively on alcohol, cigarettes, and prostitutes.

I had stopped attending classes and no longer devoted a minute of study to my courses; amazingly enough I seemed nevertheless to be able to give sensible answers in the examinations, and I managed somehow to keep my family under the delusion that all was well. But my poor attendance finally caused the school to send my father a confidential report. My elder brother, acting on behalf of my father, thereupon addressed me a long, sternly phrased letter, warning me to

change my ways. More pressing causes of grief to me were my lack of money and the jobs required of me by the movement, which had become so frequent and frenetic that I could no longer perform them half in the spirit of fun. (Dazai, 1973, p. 51)

As stated in the previous quote, Yozo is criticized by his brother for his poor attendance in class, which causes him anxiety. He also lacks the money to buy cigarettes and drinks. Anything that can help him relax is taken away. Not only that, but he faces increased pressure as the community's leader. Leaving the role of leader and the community does not provide him with enough joy and satisfaction, so he commits double suicide with a lady he encounters at a bar.

“We threw ourselves into the sea at Kamakura that night. She untied her sash, saying she had borrowed it from a friend at the café, and left it folded neatly on a rock. I removed my coat and put it in the same spot. We entered the water together. She died. I was saved”.
(Dazai, 1973, p. 61)

The preceding paragraph depicts how he and the lady attempt suicide, even though only the woman dies. Yozo wakes up in a hospital and is escorted to the police station after receiving treatment. He is accused of being an accomplice in a suicide. This incident demonstrates how Yozo's Shadow takes control of him. He attempts suicide, which is both morally and ethically incorrect. Not only that, but he also harms the woman by encouraging her to commit a double suicide with him.

Yozo's adulthood:

Yozo's journey as an adult begins in the novel's third and final chapters, named *The Third Notebook: Part One* and *The Third Notebook: Part Two*. After a failed suicide attempt, Yozo begins living with his uncle in *The Third Notebook: Part One*. Because he could not afford cigarettes or liquor, he would spend days lying in his cubicle reading old magazines. He is also prevented from going outside by his uncle.

Ever since he lived in that house, he has no energy to wear the mask that he always calls the clown. Ever since coming to this house, I had lacked all incentive even to play the clown; I had merely lain prostrate under the contemptuous glances of Flatfish and the boy. Flatfish himself seemed disinclined to indulge in long, heart-to-heart talks, and for my part and desire stirred within me torn after him with complaints. (Dazai, 1973, p. 69)

In line with the passage above, Yozo believes that he does not need to work hard at hiding himself because the only person he encounters and interacts with is his uncle. If it only include him and his uncle, this may be the smallest social circle he is a part of. As a result, Yozo's Persona as a college student who is also a communist community leader has faded.

In contrast to the Persona, Yozo's hidden self becomes increasingly apparent as he grows older. The days pass till he has a conversation with his uncle concerning his future. His uncle does not appear to comprehend Yozo's desire to be a painter. As a result, Yozo chooses to escape the house the next morning. He feels terrible about becoming a burden to his uncle. Yozo encounters Shizuko, a lady, in Horiki's house. Shizuko, who works as a journalist in a monthly children's magazine, offers Yozo a

job drawing cartoons. He accepts the offer since it will provide him with money to purchase cigarettes and liquor.

“Thanks also to Shizuko's efforts; my cartoons began to produce a surprising amount of money. I bought liquor and cigarettes, as I had planned, with the proceeds, but my gloom and depression grew only the more intense. I had sunk to the bottom: sometimes when I was drawing "The Adventures of Kinta and Ota," the monthly comic strip for Shizuko's magazine, I would suddenly think of home, and this made me feel so miserable that my pen would stop moving, and I looked down, through brimming tears”. (Dazai, 1973, p. 79) As indicated in the passage above, when Yozo earns more money to buy the things he desires, he becomes more depressed than before. The worry, fear, and despair he has been carrying have grown heavier with time, and the Shadow within him has grown deeper.

In light of the passage above, he is not only scared of others but also of God, which makes his existence even more miserable. Yozo is terrified and has lost faith in God. All he could think of was how God would punish him. His fear of God is part of his Shadow as well. His terror of God contradicts Japanese culture, in which people trust God.

At the beginning of *The Third Notebook: Part Two*, Yozo lives as a married couple with a woman named Yoshiko. On their way home, he would take her to see a movie and give her flower pots. He develops into a man who enjoys making his wife happy.

“I gave up drinking and devoted my energies to drawing cartoons.

After dinner we would go out together to see a movie, and on the

way back we would stop at a milk bar or buy pots of flowers”.

(Dazai,1973, p.110)

The previous section depicts Yozo’s transformation into a husband in love with his wife. He rarely drinks, which has been his routine since he began college. Not only that, but he returns to drawing, something he has done since he was a child. He takes on the personas of a nice husband and painter.

Conclusion:

In summary, a Jungian analysis of Yozo's Persona reveals a complex and troubled individual struggling with his sense of identity, expectations of society, and deep-seated psychological wounds from childhood. Yozo, whose personality we've discussed in this chapter, constructs a fake self to deal with his fears and fear of rejection, but this persona ultimately causes him to become isolated and exhibit self-destructive behaviors. Through the exploration of his dreams and unconscious desires, Yozo is able to confront and integrate his shadow self, finding a sense of wholeness and authenticity. This analysis highlights the importance of understanding the role of the psyche in shaping and influencing one's behavior and decisions.

Chapter Three

**The convergence of the
themes and Self-
representation in No
Longer Human**

Introduction

In his novel "**No Longer Human**," Osamu Dazai explores the collision of existential nihilism, absurdity, and the self. The protagonist's struggle with his identity in the face of an indifferent world highlights the absurdity of existence and the concept of a meaningless universe. Existential nihilism is pervasive throughout the novel, as the protagonist discovers that his existence holds no inherent value. Dazai confronts the reader with the harsh reality of the human condition, emphasizing the fragility of the self and its inability to fully comprehend the world around it.

In this chapter, we will be tackling the research question presented in regards to this thesis, by following the key steps outlined in this presentation that contributed to the existing body of knowledge in my thesis.

Collision of Themes

No Longer Human by Osamu Dazai is a novel that explores the themes of existential nihilism, absurdity, and the self. The protagonist, Yozo, struggles to find meaning in his life and feels disconnected from society. His experiences highlight the collision between these philosophical concepts and the human experience. The novel has been praised for its honest portrayal of mental illness and the human condition. It has also been criticized for its bleak outlook on life and the lack of hope it offers. However, the novel's exploration of these themes remains relevant today and continues to resonate with readers.

The self is just as central of a theme in **No Longer Human** as well, as Yozo struggles to define his identity. He feels like he is a hollow shell, incapable of feeling genuine emotions or connecting with others. This sense of emptiness leads him to engage in self-destructive behavior, such as alcoholism and promiscuity. Yozo's struggle with the self is also reflected in his relationships with other characters. He feels like he is constantly wearing a mask and cannot reveal his true self to anyone. This contributes to his sense of loneliness and isolation. Ultimately, Yozo's journey toward self-discovery is a key aspect of the novel's exploration of the human condition.

No Longer Human also delves into the complexities of the human condition, exploring how societal pressures and expectations can shape our identities and sense of self. Yozo struggles to reconcile his desires and beliefs with the expectations of those around him, leading to a sense of alienation and disconnection. Dazai's portrayal of the human condition is nuanced and thought-provoking, highlighting how we are all shaped by the world around us, and the struggle to find our place within it.

The collision of existential nihilism, absurdity, and the self is a key aspect of **No Longer Human**. These themes intersect and overlap throughout the novel, contributing to Yozo's sense of despair and hopelessness. The novel's exploration of these themes highlights the difficulty of finding meaning in a world that seems inherently meaningless. What makes **No Longer Human** such a powerful work of literature is the way in which Dazai weaves together these existential themes to create a complex and multifaceted narrative. He creates a narrative that is both intellectually stimulating and emotionally resonant. And it creates a rich tapestry of ideas and emotions, challenging readers to confront their beliefs and assumptions. Ultimately, **No Longer Human** is a meditation on the nature of existence itself, and the search for meaning and purpose in a world that often seems devoid of both.

However, the novel also suggests that there is a way out of this existential crisis. Yozo's experiences with art and literature offer a glimmer of hope, as he discovers a way to express himself and connect with others. This suggests that even in the face of overwhelming despair, there is still the possibility of finding meaning and connection in the world. **No Longer Human** by Osamu Dazai is a powerful exploration of the human condition. The protagonist struggles with his identity and purpose in life, leading him to question the very essence of existence. Dazai delves into philosophical concepts, creating a poignant and thought-provoking work of literature, and through its depiction of existential nihilism, absurdity, and the self, the novel offers a searing critique of modern society and the struggle to find meaning in a world that seems devoid of it. However, the novel also suggests that there is still hope to be found, even in the face of overwhelming despair.

The novel's relevance today is a testament to its enduring power and its ability to resonate with readers across generations. **No Longer Human** remains a haunting and thought-provoking work of literature that continues to challenge and inspire readers to this day. And in many ways, **No Longer Human** is a testament to the human tendency to naturally gravitate toward self-expression. Even though Yozo goes to great lengths in his everyday life to conceal his inner thoughts and feelings, he's still drawn to certain modes of self-expression that allow him to represent his "true nature." It is clear in the Novel how it examines societal perceptions surrounding depression and the unfortunate stigma that is often attached to mental health struggles. Almost everyone in Yozo's life fails to show genuine sympathy for depression. And though he does have people who technically support him in times of hardship, they still seem to look down on him for his apparent inability to live like everyone else.

Representation of the self in Japanese literature:

(Hutchinson & Williams, 2006) stated that the self in literature refers to the concept of identity as explored through the written word. Often characterized as a multifaceted construct, literature uses the self to illuminate the intricacies of the human experience. Literature explores the many layers of the self, examining the unique intersection of personality, environment, culture, and history. From the perspective of the reader, the self in literature offers insight into the human condition and provides a means through which we can explore the complexities of our identities.

According to (Lebra, 2004); the representation of the self in literature is a complex and dynamic concept, with authors using a variety of literary techniques to convey the inner worlds of their characters. Self-reflection, introspection, and stream-

of-consciousness are common techniques employed to reveal the internal thoughts and emotions of characters. The use of symbolism, metaphors, and allegories also allows authors to explore the complexities of the human psyche. Ultimately, the representation of the self in literature serves to illuminate the nature of human experience, offering insight into the complexities of identity, and the struggles and triumphs that define us as individuals.

Moreover, we must examine the concept of the self and investigate some of its other definitions by different philosophers to have a better comprehension. According to Kegan (1982), the self is an intrapersonal matrix in which events are received, interpreted, and responded to in "the zone of mediation where meaning is made". Kegan states that the development of the self begins at birth, and even the fetal experience may be significant in terms of predisposition.

On the other hand, for Jung (1983), the self is the virtual point between the conscious and the unconscious from which decisions are made and guidance is received. Furthermore, according to Kierkegaard, the process of individuation, the birth of the self, begins when an individual begins to make decisions. However, Outler (1987) saw the self as a unique being that the individual must transcend in order to fully unfold. Considering these points, we can say that the self is the focal point of the individual, processing and evaluating information and experiences and guiding the individual in the formation of meaning, Decision making and attribution to the self and others. Personality and identity emerge from this central core of self. Self-awareness and inquiry are necessary for the subtle processes of distinguishing humans from lower animals (Bennett, 1984) and acquiring self-esteem. Self-

awareness depends on an individual's ability to distinguish himself from others (Jung, 1954).

Because of this, Japanese literature has a long and rich tradition of portraying characters and their sense of identity. Even as society evolved, authors found ways to capture the essence of human nature in their works. More particularly, Dazai's work and literary style enabled readers to identify with struggles of identity, through his realistic yet poetic prose Dazai expressed deep human emotions with sensitivity allowing readers to connect with his characters in powerful ways. His works have had a lasting influence on Japanese modern culture. The representation of the self in Japanese literature is a complex and often contradictory one. On the one hand, there is a strong tradition of individualism and self-reliance in Japanese culture, which is reflected in many works of literature. On the other hand, Japanese society is also very group-oriented, and the self is often seen as being subordinate to the needs of the group. This ambivalence towards the self is reflected in many works of Japanese literature, which often portray the self as being torn between individual desires and the demands of society.

Furthermore, the concept of the self in Japanese literature is deeply rooted in the belief in interconnectedness between individuals and nature. The concept of *yūgen*, or the mysterious and profound beauty of the universe, represents a sense of oneness with nature. In addition, the idea of *giri*, or social obligation and duty, often conflicts with individual desires and highlights the balance between personal identity and societal expectations. Many works of literature, such as Murasaki Shikibu's "The Tale of Genji" (1008) and Natsume Soseki's "Kokoro," (1914) explore the complex and multifaceted nature of the self in Japanese culture.

However, in the novel "**No Longer Human**" by Osamu Dazai, (Lyons, 1981) viewed that the representation of the self is deeply rooted in the main character's struggle with his identity. Yozo, the protagonist, feels alienated from society due to his inability to conform to social norms and expectations. He becomes consumed by a sense of emptiness and detachment, leading to a spiral of self-destructive behavior. Through Yozo's journey, the novel portrays the complexities of the human condition and the lasting effects of societal pressures on individual identity. Overall, "**No Longer Human**" offers a poignant reflection on the search for meaning and belonging in modern Japanese society.

Through metaphor and nuance, Japanese authors have created unforgettable portraits of people navigating the complex realities of self and society. Their stories continue to resonate because of the universal themes of identity, intimacy, and the lives we lead behind the faces we choose to show the world.

Literary Works of Dazai Osamu:

Readers can see versatility in Dazai's writing style as he takes on the persona of a female character with ease. Exploring his works takes a reader into a world of different perspectives as the writer walks the reader through the point of view of different characters. Dazai's work clarifies a man who is comfortable with his sexuality as he approaches both sexes with respect. There is no gender bias present in his writings, as he seems to value female characters and treats them with a level of reverence in his writings. The use of a female character as the story's main protagonist shows the writer's versatility and his level of empathy. Dazai effectively develops the character while using the first person. The ability to take on different personas and effectively develop them makes Dazai a compelling storyteller. He can

walk a reader through the struggles of different characters making his stories richer. By taking on the persona of a female character, Dazai demonstrates his empathy for his female readers and that he has a grasp of what they have to contend with. Using creativity to depict a female character's life shows the writer's vivid imagination and how it comes into play in telling his stories. Multidimensional writers are more compelling to readers since they share many perspectives. Dazai has capitalized on versatility, which can be seen in the different themes he pursues in his literary works. The writer uses this as a strength and shares the stories of different characters while maintaining his personal touch. This has helped his audience identify with his writing style as it is unique. In *Onna No Ketto* (Women's Duel), Dazai appears unexpectedly in the book. Appearing in his novel is unconventional and is part of the literary flair of Dazai. This unique style shows how comfortable Dazai is in his writing and his bold and experimental approach to writing. In his storytelling, the writer does not work with a conventional approach that ties him strictly to a world of fiction. He effectively borrows from his personal life and experiences to develop his stories. This style of blending experience and fiction gives his stories an edge of sincerity. By appearing in the novel, He introduces his readers to a chaotic plot that blends fiction and reality. This adds to the thrill of reading his stories because they have a refreshing approach that is not tied to the rules of conventional storytelling. A flexible approach to writing has made it possible for Dazai to maintain a fresh approach when developing the plot for his stories. The disregard for conventional approaches towards developing the theme is part of the appeal of Dazai's literary works. He takes on the guise of a cultural rebel when telling his stories. By posing as a cultural rebel, Dazai has the platform to challenge cultural norms and start a conversation around existing social challenges. In *Doke No Hana* (A Clown Star), Dazai uses similar expressions to

ground the readers' imagination. By using similar expressions, Dazai establishes a rhythm with his readers. The easy breakdown of his prose gives his work a poetic touch making it more powerful and memorable to the readers. Dazai sticks to using plain and witty language to connect with the reader. This approach makes his work more appealing as it comes off as light literature that is more entertaining than informative. As a writer, Dazai does a spectacular job in engaging his audience through lighthearted remarks and good humor to develop his stories. Using a repetitive expression to build rhythm in narration shows that Dazai takes on a flexible approach when telling his stories and is not affixed to writing a series of events that follow a chronological pattern as the standard for developing his plots. In Dazai's work, the protagonists speak directly to readers in his novels written in the first person. By speaking directly to his audience, the stories are viewed with more authenticity as the writer is keen on honesty and sincerity in his depiction of events as they unfold in the stories. While Dazai was born into a well-off family, this does not mean he did not have his fair share of challenges weighing him down. The literary works of Dazai go to prove that problems go beyond material needs. Despite being born into a wealthy family, the writer has to struggle to find his happiness. The writer uses his stories to explore human nature and takes a simple approach that borrows heavily from his experiences. At the offset of his career, Dazai went through a series of tragic events that drove him to suicide four times. His struggle with mental health can be seen in his earlier writings which are gloomy and reflective of a reflection of his struggle. Due to his guilt over the tragic death of his lover in an attempted double suicide, he referred to the Bible in many of his works written immediately after the incident. Biblical allusion shows a reflective phase during the writer's life and diverges from widespread practice by Eastern writers. Unlike other Eastern writers

who borrow heavily from Buddhism and Taoism, Dazai chose to make Biblical allusions in his storytelling as part of his writing style.

However, (Horiguchi, 2015) concluded that Dazai's life stabilized when he married. This enabled the writer to work on encouraging stories of hope, such as *Fugaku Hyakkei* (Changing Scenery of Mt. Fuji). Dazai's stories reflect what he was going through in his personal life. The most significant contribution that Dazai has to offer is an honest insight into human nature and the lessons the writer has drawn from his experiences. The later books are full of hope and virtues such as kindness. They reinforce the belief of the writer that life is a beautiful experience that ought to be enjoyed. These books mark a transition into a happier phase that sees Dazai write more positive books from his renewed faith in humanity and the possibility of a happier life. Dazai's books can be used as a self-help guide that aids the readers in rediscovering themselves and what life means to them. The later additions in Dazai's literary works carry a more positive outlook on life and touch on hope and the pursuit of happiness as the main themes covered.

After WW2, the economy of Japan took a massive blow after it lost against the Allies. The years after the war were marked by financial struggle. By impersonating a one-hundred-yen bill, Dazai effectively discusses socio-economic challenges that plague Japanese society from a satirical point of view that gives the story its witty appeal. Impersonating money is a creative twist that shows Dazai as a writer employing all the storytelling tools at his disposal in telling his stories. Impersonating an inanimate object is a catchy way of writing fiction that tosses the readers into an exciting world of make-belief where infinite possibilities exist. *Ningen Shikkaku* (**No Longer Human**), Dazai uses decadence to woe readers. Throughout his works, Dazai

shows a keen mastery of a dark image that he has carefully grown as part of his artistic expression. In the stories, Dazai uses language flamboyantly and shows a rich, unique style. This element in his writing is referred to as decadence. Through decadence, Dazai creates a personal style of writing that makes his work exciting to read as it has a unique individual touch that was masterfully applied. Dazai's mastery of words helped him play around with his plot and how he told his story to avoid becoming a boring writer. Dazai viewed his use of decadence as his way of showing readers affection as a writer.

Dazai's influence on popular, Chinese and Japanese culture:

The emergence of the self-awareness movement has been the most significant effect of Dazai's literary works on pop culture. Individualism is more appealing to millennial and younger generations than group thought. Individualism would be difficult to encourage if writers like Dazai did not set the pace for such transformation. Pop culture is constructed around the drive to create one's identity; Dazai's writings serve as a type of blueprint, providing remarkable insight into self-enlightenment and its path. In his works, Dazai promotes personalized thinking via protagonists who challenge the current quo in pursuit of personal progress. Individualism was considered a selfish means of identifying oneself in Eastern culture. Individualism is already taking root in Japan as more individuals aspire to shape their unique identities on their terms in order to discover what makes them happy and content.

(Baldwin, 2009) stated that Dazai rejects the notion that accumulating material possessions leads to pleasure. The author sees capitalism as a vain culture that seeks to satisfy its surface desires while disregarding more fundamental requirements.

Dazai's stories examine the significance of happiness and emphasize the world's beauty. As a writer, he is truly interested in entertaining his readers while also encouraging them to become more self-aware by delving into the importance of qualities such as compassion and honesty. Dazai creates an image of a good man for his readers to imitate through his social commentary. His impact can be seen in the works of contemporary Chinese writers, such as Yu Hua and MurongXuecun, who also explore similar themes. Overall, his legacy has contributed to the cross-cultural exchange and appreciation between Japan and China.

Dazai's stories reveal his obsession with luxurious actions such as drinking. He like to employ this method of developing his characters into the villains of his novels by delving into their deeper desires and motivations. Dazai sparked popular outrage by praising drinking, as drinking is considered a retrogressive habit in Japanese society. Dazai's art was seen as immoral by his audience since it glorified vices like as drinking. his characters closely resemble his drinking habits when he introduces them. He does not see excess as an addiction, but rather as a part of the character's personality. Dazai considers social drinking as a pleasurable activity in his creative works. This rebellious portrayal of his characters questioned the concept of what was culturally acceptable. In his works, he envisions a more liberal counterculture that is not too bound to mainstream norms of behavior. His novels present the reader with carefree individuals who are liberal in their views and full of independence. By having his primary characters free thinkers who follow after what thrills them, and question the status quo on uniqueness versus society's expectations.

Parallel between Self-Deception, the Pursuit of Authenticity and mental health awareness

In the novel "No Longer Human" by Osamu Dazai, there is a notable parallel between self-deception, the pursuit of authenticity, and mental health awareness in the protagonist's life, which provides insights into the complexities of human psychology and the challenges individuals face in trying to understand and accept themselves.

1. **Self-Deception:** The protagonist, Yozo Oba, is plagued by feelings of emptiness and alienation from a young age. To cope with this inner turmoil, he resorts to self-deception as a defense mechanism. Yozo wears different masks in front of others, presenting himself as a carefree and humorous person, while internally struggling with self-hatred and a sense of worthlessness. This self-deceptive behavior not only alienates him further from others but also distances him from his true emotions and authentic self.
2. **Pursuit of Authenticity:** Throughout the novel, Yozo longs to find his authentic self and to establish genuine connections with others. He seeks authenticity as a means to break free from the suffocating sense of detachment and loneliness he experiences. However, the pursuit of authenticity proves to be elusive and overwhelming for him, as his self-deceptive habits have become deeply ingrained. His attempts to be genuine often fail, exacerbating his feelings of alienation and driving him further into a state of despair.
3. **Mental Health Awareness:** "No Longer Human" delves into themes of mental health and the impact of society's expectations on an individual's psyche. Yozo's struggle with depression, anxiety, and an existential crisis is a reflection of the challenges faced by individuals dealing with mental health issues. The novel highlights how a lack of awareness and understanding about mental health can lead to a downward spiral for those who suffer in silence, trying to conform to societal norms and expectations.

The parallel between self-deception, the pursuit of authenticity, and mental health awareness in the novel underscores the importance of recognizing and addressing mental health issues openly. Yozo's inability to confront his feelings and seek help for his mental anguish contributes to his tragic fate. The novel serves as a poignant reminder of the significance of mental health awareness in society, urging us to be more empathetic and supportive to those struggling with their inner demons.

In summary, "No Longer Human" by Osamu Dazai weaves a profound narrative exploring the interplay between self-deception, the longing for authenticity, and mental health awareness. The novel serves as both a cautionary tale and a call for greater understanding and compassion towards individuals grappling with their inner turmoil.

Depictions of Women and Gender Roles in the novel

As we investigate the representation of female characters in the novel, we can observe how societal norms and gender roles during that time influenced their interactions and perceptions.

1. Lack of agency and submissiveness: In "No Longer Human," female characters often conform to traditional gender roles, emphasizing submissiveness and passivity. They are portrayed as nurturing and supportive figures for the male protagonists, especially Yozo. Women like Yozo's mother and mistress play a significant role in his life but remain secondary characters, defined primarily by their relationships with the male lead.
2. Traditional roles in domestic settings: The novel depicts women primarily in domestic settings, reflecting the traditional view that their place is within the household, tending to the needs of the family. The expectations for women to be caretakers, homemakers, and maintainers of family harmony are prevalent throughout the story.
3. Sacrifice and self-denial: The female characters often sacrifice their happiness and well-being for the sake of the male characters. Yozo's wife, for instance, endures hardships and infidelity, accepting her role as a dutiful wife, mirroring societal norms that expect women to endure personal suffering for the greater good of the family unit.
4. Limited opportunities and social expectations: In early 20th-century Japan, women faced limited opportunities for personal growth and education, and this is reflected in the novel. Female characters in "No Longer Human" are not

portrayed as seeking ambitious goals or independent lives outside of their designated roles.

5. Objectification and objectifying language: Throughout the novel, women are sometimes objectified or described using objectifying language. Their worth and value are often linked to their physical appearance or their ability to fulfill societal expectations of femininity.
6. Silent suffering the societal pressure: The novel delves into the theme of silent suffering and societal pressure that women experienced during that time. The female characters often bear the burden of societal expectations without expressing their inner turmoil or discontent openly.

Overall, "No Longer Human" reflects prevailing gender attitudes in early 20th-century Japan, portraying female characters through the lens of traditional gender roles and societal expectations. Women are depicted as passive, self-sacrificing, and confined to domestic roles, reflecting the prevailing patriarchal norms of the time. The novel emphasizes the limited agency and opportunities available to women during that era, as well as the pressure they faced to conform to societal expectations.

It is important to note that while the novel accurately reflects the gender attitudes of its historical context, it does not necessarily endorse or condone these attitudes. Instead, it serves as a portrayal of the gender dynamics and societal norms of the time, offering valuable insights into the challenges faced by women in early 20th-century Japan.

Conclusion:

Overall, the collision of themes and the representation of the self in Japanese literature is aptly demonstrated in Osamu Dazai's "**No Longer Human**". The protagonist's inner turmoil and societal pressure to conform highlight the struggle for identity in a complex and constantly shifting cultural landscape. The themes of alienation, individualism, and detachment are explored in a poignant and introspective manner, providing insight into the human experience as it pertains to Japanese cultural values. The novel's powerful prose and emotional resonance continue to captivate readers, solidifying its place as a masterpiece of Japanese literature.

General conclusion

General conclusion

In the novel "No Longer Human" by Osamu Dazai, the concepts of existential nihilism, absurdity, and the self-collide profoundly

. The protagonist, Yozo Oba, embodies the existential struggle of an individual who grapples with the meaning of existence, the absurdity of life, and the disintegration of the self. Throughout the novel, Dazai masterfully explores these philosophical themes and portrays the human condition as one filled with despair, alienation, and the constant search for identity. Existential nihilism is evident in Yozo's perception of the world as devoid of inherent meaning and value. He struggles to find purpose in life and perceives human existence as ultimately futile and meaningless. This nihilistic outlook pushes Yozo towards a state of detachment from society and a self-destructive path, as he seeks to escape the absurdity of existence. Also, the theme of absurdity is prominent in Yozo's experiences, as he finds himself trapped in a world that appears chaotic and senseless. His actions and decisions, driven by his inability to comprehend societal norms and human emotions, exemplify the absurdity of life. Dazai emphasizes that the search for meaning and coherence in an inherently chaotic world can lead to a sense of existential anguish. The collision of existential nihilism, absurdity, and the self becomes most apparent in Yozo's fractured sense of self-identity. He struggles to establish a stable and authentic self, leading him to don various masks and personas to fit into society's expectations. This fragmented self-image highlights the alienation and disconnection Yozo feels from himself and the world around him.

The messages that can be revealed through this study are the importance of positive support for a person from people around them, in order to have a healthy personality and psychology, a person needs intense love and attention especially from family to help increase the sense of self-worth. The result of the process of self-

General conclusion

identity establishment can affect the person's personality. Other factors outside of oneself such as family, friends or a lover can influence one's development of personality, existence in this world and behavior.

Recommendations for Future Research:

1. **Comparative Analysis:** Conduct a comparative analysis of "No Longer Human" with other existentialist works or literary pieces that delve into similar philosophical themes. This comparison could provide deeper insights into the uniqueness of Dazai's portrayal of existential struggles.
2. **Psychological Analysis:** Explore the psychological aspects of Yozo's character to understand the roots of his existential crisis. Analyze his past traumas, upbringing, and relationships to shed light on the factors contributing to his nihilistic perspective.
3. **Influence of Japanese Culture:** Investigate how Japanese cultural and societal elements impact the portrayal of existential themes in the novel. Examine how Eastern philosophical concepts interact with Western existentialism to shape the narrative and character development.

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