Masks of the Author in Dazai Osamu’s Fiction

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The present article reexamines the work of Japanese modern writer Dazai Osamu (1909-1948) in an attempt to revisit its conventional placement within the tradition of the modern Japanese literary category of the *shishōsetsu* (approximately, 1-novel). By briefly exploring the very elements and definitions of the category itself, as well as Dazai’s literary evolution, the article endeavors to understand what led to the works of his final years life and to the change in narrative techniques that makes those works Dazai’s best writings and some of the most accomplished in modern Japanese literature.

KEYWORDS: Dazai Osamu, Authenticity, Author-Function, Michel Foucault, Modern Japanese Fiction, *Shishōsetsu*.

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2 Japanese names follow the traditional order, Last name First name.

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