



PR-07-NM-1-E

Synopsis of the research project (Head : Nicolas Mollard)

Starting Date : Autumn 2007

The Emergence of Japanese Modern Author

Whilst it is not uncommon nowadays to hear about the “end of literature”, it appears more and more clearly that the century of modern Japanese literature (*circa* 1890-1990) was a peculiar period during which writers played a major role in the social and intellectual life of their time.

Just a step away from approaching the chronicle of this desacralization, the present study aims to shed light on the emergence of the all-mighty modern writer’s figure during the long 19th century. This will be accomplished by blending various approaches (sociological, aesthetical, philosophical, juridical...).

We must first of all consider the professionalization of fiction writers. Their increasing visibility in the media. Also important is the evolution of the legal system, which protects the publisher’s investments, to the ratification of the Berne Convention, an international agreement governing copyright. We also have the emergence of the concept of originality within a system of artistic creation which favors the art of quotation and remakes. Finally, the rise of individuality must be taken into account.

These are all significant events that need to be analyzed. These elements converging together enable to create an image of the modern writer that is considered as creator of a personal work and has become the subject of a kind of worship by readers and the media.