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| Itami, Mansaku (1900-1946) |
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| Itami Mansaku (2 January 1900-21 September 1946) was a Japanese film director, screenwriter, and essayist, known for bringing contemporary social issues into Japanese period films in the 1930s. He made his debut as a director in 1928 and went on to direct twenty-two films, many of them samurai dramas with modern psychology and a wry touch. In *Akanishi Kakita* (1936), perhaps the most famous of these, the title character is a samurai who makes his way in the world through wit alone. Together with German director Arnold Fanck, Itami directed *Atarashiki tsuchi* [*The New Earth*] (1937) (German: *Die Tochter des Samurai* [*The Daughter of the Samurai*]), but the liberal Itami disagreed with Fanck over the direction of the film, and they produced two different versions. During World War II, Itami was privately and publicly critical of the jingoism he perceived in his own culture. After the war, Itami was equally critical of those too quick to adjust to postwar democracy under the Allied occupation. In his famous 1946 essay ‘Concerning War Responsibility’, Itami remarks that everyone is willing to proclaim that they were the ‘deceived’ during the war, but none are willing to admit that they were themselves ‘deceivers.’ He is the father of Itami Jūzō, the director of *Tanpopo* (*Tampopo* 1985) and other rambunctious comedies of the 1980s and 1990s. |
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| Further reading:  (Hirano) |