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| Imamura, Taihei (1911-1986) |
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| Imamura Taihei was one of Japan’s most influential film critics and theorists. His work is far-reaching and encompasses critical theories of documentary film, war cinema, art cinema, film theory, Japanese national cinema, and a ground-breaking theory of animation. While the zenith of his career occurred during the Pacific War (1941-45), Imamura remained exceptionally prolific even after the war. He not only published monographs on Japanese and other national films, such as the cinema of Italy, but also on literature, most notably on Japanese novelist Shiga Naoya (1883-1971). In addition, Imamura continued to publish articles on various topics, and even served as an editor of several journals. Although he was a member of the Japanese Communist Party prior to the war, he was forced to leave after a series of debates with several other party members led by film critic Iwasaki Akira. The most heated of these debates was over the idea of realism in film. Similar to French film theorist André Bazin, Imamura expressed faith in the true value of recorded moving images. He believed in the camera’s capability to capture glimpses of life as it is, and the powerful effect this produces for the viewers. |
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| Further reading:  (Decentering Theory: Reconsidering the History of Japanese Film Theory) |