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Julia Alekseyeva

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INTRODUCTION

Matsumoto Toshio's decades of work in intermedial and expanded media practice have recently received scholarly attention, primarily through studies by Miryam Sas, Yuriko Furuhata, Michael Raine, and others. Matsumoto is best known today for the 1969 queer avant-garde quasi-documentary *Bara no sōretsu* (薔薇の葬列, *Funeral Parade of Roses*), which transplanted the story of Oedipus Rex onto the "gayboy" culture of Tokyo. Although Matsumoto was not himself gay, his portrayal of explicitly queer (gayboy) subjects with queer (gayboy) performers, as well as the film's fervently experimental aesthetic, is as provocative today as it was at the end of the 1960s. Yet the film does not present queerness with uplifting narratives or with the inclusion of tragic, faultless martyrs. I align with Jonathan M. Hall who argues that *Bara no sōretsu*'s "aberrant" sexuality was neither "pastoral/utopian" nor "redemptive/political," "but a mode of address that shared with the political . . . tropes of repetition, claims to authority, as well as the possibility of shattering rupture."[1]

Shattering rupture is, indeed, key. Matsumoto's films and writings perform what he calls *aesthetic sadomasochism*: a criticism of the external world (usually through Marxism) as well as the internal world (through relentless self-critique). Before *Bara no sōretsu*, Matsumoto had made a name for himself by creating "neo-documentaries," his neologism for politically engaged

1. Jonathan Mark Hall, "Unwilling Subjects: Psychoanalysis and Japanese Modernity" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Cruz, 2003), 59–60.

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avant-garde documentary works; these include *Ginrin* (銀輪, *Silver Wheel*, 1955), *Anpo jōyaku* (安保条約, *US-Japan Security Treaty*, 1959), *Nishijin* (西陣, *The Weavers of Nishijin*, 1961), *Ishi no uta* (石の詩, *The Song of Stone*, 1963), and others. Matsumoto was also one of the foremost intellectuals and critics of his day, uniquely attuned to global philosophical and aesthetic trends. His favorite filmmakers were surrealist Luis Buñuel and spearhead of the nouvelle vague Left Bank Alain Resnais, both of whom merged formal experimentation with their firmly communist beliefs.

This was also the case with his most major Japanese philosophical influence, theorist of the avant-garde Hanada Kiyoteru. Matsumoto was also extremely interested in Eastern European, especially Polish, cinema from the postwar period. Philosophically, his influences were broad, ranging from existentialism to phenomenology, and included philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche, Georges Bataille, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Simone de Beauvoir. Most crucially, he grafted his Marxism to a deep concern with psychoanalysis and the unconscious through the work of Sigmund Freud. These sources, and many more, are referenced as explicit influences in his critical work.

In geographic scope, politics, and fierce attention to the formal dimensions of his craft, Matsumoto may be one of the world's foremost theorists of the politics of documentary. Yet only a single article by this titan of the neo-documentary exists in English translation, by Michael Raine in the pages of this journal.[2] My translation and introduction aim to rectify a gap in anglophone film criticism and offer a view of Matsumoto that demonstrates his belief in experimental form *as* praxis, as a shattering of a stable sense of interiority and external power structures.

Matsumoto belongs to a rare breed of filmmaker-theorists in the vein of Jean-Luc Godard, Sergei Eisenstein, Dziga Vertov, Fernando Solanas, Octavio Getino, and Harun Farocki who work at the intersection of documentary and fiction in their engagement with militant politics. Aesthetically, all these figures also align with what D. N. Rodowick describes as political modernism, whose "deeper theme involves . . . the critique of illusionism" and whose "central rhetorical feature" is "the epistemological break."[3] Viewing Matsumoto alongside these figures allows us to see him as a figure fundamentally interwoven into a transnational circuit of unorthodox communist filmmakers and thinkers whose goal was to unveil the political and ideological aspects of aesthetic technique. Like these figures, Matsumoto aimed for his art to serve a revolutionary (anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and anti-American) purpose. However, Matsumoto is original among these filmmaker-theorists in his elevation of the psychology of the individual artist. His communism is surrealist at heart. As I shall discuss, self-analysis is essential to his politics.

Matsumoto helmed *Kiroku eiga* (記録映画, Documentary film), which ran from 1958 to 1964 and might be one of the most theoretically and

2. Matsumoto Toshio, "A Theory of Avant-Garde Documentary" [Zen'ei kiroku eigaron], trans. Michael Raine, *Cinema Journal* 51, no. 4 (Summer 2012): 148–154, https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2012.0099.
3. D. N. Rodowick, *The Crisis of Political Modernism: Criticism and Ideology in Contemporary Film Theory* (University of California Press, 1994), xiv, xvi.

internationally engaged journals exclusively focused on documentary in cinema history. This journal provided an important outlet for Matsumoto to disseminate his challenging ideas—often offensively critical of his peers and outrageously diatribe-like, but always fiercely Marxist. By his own admission, his prose is also notoriously hard to understand. In Raine's introduction to the previous translation, he calls Matsumoto's often-repetitive prose "incantatory."[4] Matsumoto's films are similarly challenging. Yet their difficulty is, in fact, the point. They are meant to embody a rupture of consciousness through the process of reading itself. They demonstrate an ethos and politic through, and of, aesthetic form. As such, Matsumoto aligns with Marxist traditions that refuse the doctrine of ease of transmission and instead view criticism as an evocative art form in its own right.

Matsumoto intended to pursue a career in psychology at the prestigious University of Tokyo before abandoning those plans and joining the department of French literature.[5] His work continued to think through the psychological in relation to film and believed in its power to forcefully destabilize our conceptions of truth and fantasy. As Amy Poncher notes, Matsumoto "was intent on using the creative and experimental capacities of the moving image to continuously push both the filmmaker and the audience's sense of perception away from solidified structures of knowing and acting in society."[6] Matsumoto's experiments are as destructive as they are liberatory.

Matsumoto held a surrealist interest in unveiling what he calls the "unreality" of the quotidian, in which the everyday in capitalist imperialism held any number of seemingly invisible fascist aggressions. He also believed the avant-garde documentary was the privileged mode of filmmaking in its unique ability to express both "internal" and "external" worlds.[7] His mobilization of documentary—whether through his neo-documentaries of the early 1960s or the talking head interviews weaving through the fictional narrative of *Bara no sōretsu*—aligned with "the rejection of laws and norms" that Julian Bourg describes as integral to the 1960s spirit.[8] For Matsumoto, documentaries *must*, paradoxically, reject truth-claims and embrace the hand of the artist; he aligned a rejection of a single, capital *T* truth with the work of antifascism itself. This antifascist connection is extremely important, as Matsumoto spends significant time in his journal *Kiroku eiga* warning against a resurgence of fascism and imagining aesthetic modes that either counter or support fascist politics.

Matsumoto Toshio came to embody antifascist criticism around 1960, as a member of a new generation of artists who grappled with the trauma of the Pacific War. World War II is not just the specter haunting Matsumoto's

4. Michael Raine, "Introduction to Matsumoto Toshio: A Theory of Avant-Garde Documentary," *Cinema Journal* 51, no. 4 (Summer 2012): 147.
5. Hall, "Unwilling Subjects," 74.
6. Amy Poncher, "Experiments in Looking: On Matsumoto Toshio's 'Phenomenological Technique'" (MA thesis, California Institute of the Arts, 2023), 3.
7. Matsumoto, "Theory of Avant-Garde Documentary," 149.
8. Julian Bourg, *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 105.

work: it suffuses it fully. References to Japanese wartime fascism are relentless. Matsumoto's intention is indeed sadistic, meant to push his readers and audience into a confrontation with their own previously fascist ways of thinking and being in the world—a source of great shame. Although the application of the term *fascism* to Japanese wartime ideology is controversial, it usually refers to Japan's ultranationalist, militarist, and expansionist era during the early Showa years, from 1926 to the end of World War II in 1945.[9] Many communist critics and artists of the 1960s—including Matsumoto as well as Nagano Chiaki, Matsukawa Yasuo, Hariu Ichirō, and Kuroki Kazuo—explicitly connected fascism to Japanese wartime politics and discussed the need to prevent the reawakening of fascism within Japan. The term *fashizumu* crops up especially frequently in writings of the early 1960s, becoming less common after the early 1970s.

The year of this article's publication is crucial: 1960 saw the largest protests in modern Japanese history against the controversial US-Japan Security Treaty, known as *Anpo* (from *Nichibei Anzen Hoshō Jōyaku*, 日米安全保障条約), which allowed the United States to maintain military bases on Japanese soil. As the Cold War progressed, the United States attempted to strategically use the unique geographic position of Japan to keep communism at bay. The US leadership reinstated former war criminals into positions of power; one of these war criminals, Kishi Nobusuke, eventually became prime minister.[10] Just a few months after the publication of Matsumoto's article, on June 15, 1960, Japan would see, as Nick Kapur writes, "the climax of what were, by almost any measure, the largest and longest series of popular protests in Japan's history. . . . For fifteen months, from March 1959 through June 1960, an estimated 30 million people from across the archipelago—approximately one-third of Japan's population of 92.5 million—participated in protest activities."[11]

Matsumoto wrote this article near the climax of a highly politicized era. It was one in which everyday citizens, who still remembered the trauma of war, saw collaboration with the warmongering Americans as a potential return to a fascist past. Article IX of the 1945 Japanese constitution, drafted at the behest of the United States, prevented Japan from participating in military endeavors. Yet Japanese leftists knew that, while Japan held a global image as a "peaceful nation" in the wake of the catastrophe of World War

9. Roger Griffin argues that because in Japan "ultimate authority resided in the divinity of the Emperor," the country was not strictly fascist. See Roger Griffin, ed., *Fascism* (Oxford University Press, 1995), 238. Griffin's argument, however, is predicated on the origin of fascism in Mussolini's Italy. Although fascism in Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II had significant differences, I believe Japan's emphasis on extreme ethnonationalism and its belief in the superiority of the Yamato race, connected to a divine right to "naturally" rule Asia through the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," certainly aligns Japan with fascism during the Pacific War. Patrick G. Zander, *Fascism Through History: Culture, Ideology, and Daily Life* (ABC-CLIO, 2020), 255.
10. In a somewhat recent and perhaps not entirely unsurprising turn toward right-wing policies, Abe Shinzō, the longest-serving prime minister in Japanese history (2006–2007, 2012–2020), was the grandson of former Class A war criminal Kishi Nobusuke.
11. Nick Kapur, *Japan at the Crossroads: Conflict and Compromise After Anpo* (Harvard University Press, 2018), 1.

II, in reality, Japan was complicit in continued imperialist terror.[12] The context of Matsumoto's writing, then, is criticism of political hypocrisy and the terror of potential imperial re-militarization. He criticizes educational documentary by noting that the artist must not be a "teacher"; any alleged claim to knowledge must be denied. The true art "strikes within oneself, is knocked back, and transforms itself as well as others spontaneously." This is what Matsumoto means when he describes an "aesthetic sadomasochism" in this article's title: It is a leftist auto-critique that marries political ideology to self-analysis. Only by transforming the self can the artist then "transform . . . others spontaneously."

While Matsumoto was only one of many filmmakers associated with the Japanese political avant-garde of the 1960s who grappled with the trauma of the Pacific War, his work most explicitly ties the everyday practice of anti-fascism to art and, specifically, to the avant-garde documentary. Matsumoto argued that art must reject systematization, unity, and a single meaning for it to be antifascist; it must question reality, and it must unnerve and estrange. For documentary specifically to function as antifascist, it must include elements of the irrational: as he writes, it "must be rejected by an artistic propaganda, a politics of art, which cannot help but fundamentally transform the self and others in turn." Such techniques, primarily drawn from the surrealist experiments of the 1920s, fight against the forces of reactionary complacency that Matsumoto connects to a fascist mindset.

As Furuhata and Raine both point out, Matsumoto believed documentary films cannot ignore the filmmaker's presence, cultural perspective, and editing eye.[13] His 1963 collection of essays, *Eizō no hakken* (映像の発見), or *Discovery of the Image*, calls for a more experimental approach to nonfiction filmmaking, highlighting the transformation of the image, rather than the cinéma vérité drive to "catch it unawares," to use Edgar Morin's description.[14] As Matsumoto writes, "reality can be recorded only as the document of the filmmaker's will to 'see' it."[15] And, likewise, "A video 'taken' or 'stolen' by a split second slowly becomes a vividly drawn [or created] object [*taishō*, 対象]—and here is the problem."[16] Once recorded and edited, all documents are therefore artificial—a created object.

Matsumoto described his mode of avant-garde filmmaking in the 1960s, which he termed the "neo-documentary," as reconciling two competing tendencies of early film history. These twin tendencies were "discovery" (nonfiction), on the one hand, and "creation" (fiction), on the other.[17] As Miryam Sas writes, Matsumoto "brings the experimental, antinarrative, or antilogical

12. For an in-depth analysis of this history, see Kapur, 1–34.
13. Yuriko Furuhata, *Cinema of Actuality: Japanese Avant-Garde Filmmaking in the Season of Image Politics* (Duke University Press, 2013), 33–36; and Raine, "Introduction," 146.
14. See Edgar Morin, "Pour un nouveau 'cinéma-vérité'" [For a new cinéma vérité], *France Observateur*, no. 506 (January 14, 1960): 23.
15. See Matsumoto Toshio, *Eizō no hakken* [*Discovery of the Image*] (Tokyo: San'ichi Shobo, 1963), 74. All translations from both Japanese and French are my own unless otherwise noted.
16. Matsumoto, 10.
17. Matsumoto, 11.

visions . . . together with the documentary impulse, as the necessity to see and refract the real or larger world."[18] In *Discovery of the Image*, Matsumoto analyzes film history in the light of Hegelian dialectic: The non-fictional "discovery" of the Lumière brothers was a thesis to the fictive, avant-garde "creation" antithesis of Georges Méliès, "the dialectic of the discovery and creation of the moving image" (*ugoku eizō ni yoru hakken to sōzō ni benshōhō*, 動く映像による発見と創造に弁証法). As he writes, "[The Lumières'] camera 'finds' from among existing things, while Méliès 'creates' from those that do not exist." The outcome of their synthesis is what Matsumoto describes as a "neo-documentary" or "documentary-like avant-garde film" (*kirokuteki zen'ei eiga*, 記録的前衛映画).[19]

Matsumoto was not the first to approach film history in this mode. In the 1960s, the dialectic between the Lumière brothers and Méliès was a common thread among many 1960s global cinematic traditions and theories. This dialectic was described not only by Matsumoto but also by Georges Sadoul, Siegfried Kracauer, Jean-Luc Godard, Joris Ivens, Nakahara Yūsuke, Pascal Bonitzer, Sergei Yutkevich, and Edgar Morin, among indeed many others.[20] Many of these figures reject the assumed eternal fracture between these two genres and advocate for the embeddedness of the fictional within the document and the document within the fictional. Some of these figures, namely Godard and Ivens, also, like Matsumoto, rupture this assumed dichotomy by creating experimental documentaries. Matsumoto goes further, however, in arguing for avant-garde documentary as *the only antifascist documentary style* of the postwar period and as the only one that responds accurately to current historical conditions.

In this article, Matsumoto begins with a provocation: he practically denounces all documentary up to that point. He posits that the majority of documentary films are either "educational" or "instructional," taking their cues from Enlightenment-era positivism, or they are regressive films that "idolize the previous century's carefully preserved tailbones." Neither "fetish" nor "education" in filmmaking can suit the current "revolutionary era of the 20th century" and the "political catastrophe" (undoubtedly referring to World War II). Matsumoto criticizes the privileging of "scientific" documentary above all else. He offers "aesthetic sadomasochism" as a political

18. Miryam Sas, *Feeling Media: Potentiality and the Afterlife of Art* (Duke University Press, 2022), 8.
19. Matsumoto, *Eizō no hakken*, 11–12.
20. Georges Sadoul, *French Film* (Arno Press, 1972), 2. Original language text: Georges Sadoul, *Histoire d'un art: Le cinéma: des origines à nos jours* [History of an art cinema: From the origins to our present day] (Flammarion, 1949); Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality* (Princeton University Press, 1960), 30; Jean-Luc Godard, "Jean-Luc Godard," interview by Jean Collet et al., *Cahiers du cinéma* 23, no. 138 (December 1962): 27; Nakahara Yusuke, "Zenei eiga ni tsuite: Vertov no koto nado" [On avant-garde film: Vertov and others], in *Sekai Zenei eigasai / A Retrospective of World Avant-Garde Cinema* (Tokyo: Sōgetsu Art Center, 1966), 106; Daniel Fairfax, *The Red Years of* Cahiers du cinéma *(1968–1973)*, vol. 1, *Ideology and Politics* (Amsterdam University Press, 2021), 740; Sergei Yutkevich, "Entretien avec Serge Youtkévitch" [Interview with Sergei Youtkevich], interview by Louis Marcorelles and Eric Rohmer, *Cahiers du cinéma* 21, no. 125 (November 1961): 6; and Edgar Morin, *Le Cinéma ou l'homme imaginaire: Essai d'anthropologie sociologique* [Cinema or the imaginary man: An essay of social anthropology] (Éditions de minuit, 1956), 58.

and aesthetic praxis, a fiercely surrealist auto-critique-cum-social-critique meant to counter the scientific, positivist model of documentary filmmaking.

Matsumoto then directly likens this "sadomasochistic" work to his criticism of two examples of postwar German documentary, both released in 1958: the West German *Wieder aufgerollt: Der Nürnberger Prozess* (*The Nuremberg Trials*, Félix Podmaniczky), translated into Japanese as *13 kaidan e no michi* (Road to the thirteen steps), and the East German *Unternehmen Teutonenschwert* (*Operation Teutonic Sword*, Annelie Thorndike and Andrew Thorndike). Aesthetically the two films are far from experimental and use voice-of-God exposition alongside archival footage, joined with a bombastic soundtrack. Matsumoto's critique pairs an analysis of form and content in both films; for him, these aspects are inseparable. Despite their similar form, Matsumoto is much more critical of the West German production, writing that "[here] the problem of war responsibility and the collapse of class subjectivity is completely missing." For Matsumoto, the film needed to confront "the complicated feelings" of postwar Germans, including the feelings of the filmmaker(s).

Instead, the film avoids any "question of post-war responsibility," according to Matsumoto, even while "West German monopoly capital is rapidly resurging and re-imperializing." One need not read between the lines here to understand Matsumoto is talking about Japan—about the necessity of a transformation of consciousness and the need to grapple with the "complicated feelings" of the postwar. Matsumoto notes that Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke "has been a war criminal and fascist consistently since the very beginning of the war and remains so to this date." There is thus, in Matsumoto's view, a particular need to address wartime experiences and war responsibility in the contemporary moment.

Unsurprisingly, Matsumoto, a committed communist, prefers the East German production, which has "a more advanced critical spirit." *Unternehmen Teutonenschwert* attacks the contemporaneous commander in chief of NATO's European land forces, Hans Speidel, by investigating his past as a high-ranking Nazi official. Matsumoto claims that he "likes this vengeful, sadistic way of fighting"—"sadism and obsession are essential to the class struggle"—but it is not enough. The film is better than the West German production, according to Matsumoto, but it is still "overly rational." For Matsumoto, for documentary to overcome its roots in an outdated positivism, it must include elements of the irrational: it must be "an artistic propaganda—one that internally generates a destructive effect on everyday consciousness and that transcends categories of recognition." Experimental techniques help produce this destructive effect. Here is where sadomasochism comes in: Film must "sadistically reveal the irrationality of the external world and penetrate deep with the scalpel of criticism" while masochistically "dismantling the artist's consciousness." This, importantly, "is nothing less than a daily conversion"; without it, "the distance from here to war propaganda movies is not far." What Matsumoto calls "aesthetic sadomasochism" is a critical methodology that aims to have a destructive effect on the forces of global capital while also asking the individual subject to grapple with their own complicity. This reckoning with complicity, Matsumoto believed, is vitally connected to the work

of antifascism, for it is only through relentless self-analysis that an individual subject can prevent their own unconscious slippage into fascist ideology.

Matsumoto was not the only writer of *Kiroku eiga* who shared such thoughts, but he was certainly the most vocal. He unleashes his most vehement vitriol against works of socialist realism, such as the 1960 film *Buki naki tatakai* (*Fight Without Weapons*) by Yamamoto Satsuo, a fervent member of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP).[21] Matsumoto was part of a generation of intellectuals and artists who separated increasingly from the JCP, iconoclasts who included avant-garde documentary theorist Hanada Kiyoteru as well as political avant-garde filmmaker Ōshima Nagisa and writer Abe Kōbō. By 1960, Japanese communists were split between the Old Left, consisting of the more ideologically Stalinist generation of the 1950s, and the New Left, which tended to be younger and anti-authoritarian. This was a split similar to that in many countries in Europe and the Americas in the late 1960s, especially after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. One year after the publication of Matsumoto's article, Ōshima Nagisa released *Nihon no yoru to kiri* (日本の夜と霧, *Night and Fog in Japan*, 1960), which stages the rift between these two factions of the Japanese left as a marriage ceremony, albeit one marked by a distinct feeling of doom and failure.

Matsumoto and Ōshima both aligned ideologically with the younger generation and maintained a critical perspective toward socialist realism. Matsumoto's uniquely auto-critical perspective, however, was more fully surrealist in nature—what Donald LaCoss describes, following Michael Löwy, as a "romantic anticapitalism," an "independent, revolutionary Hegelo-Marxist dialectics barbed with strikingly original libertarian impulses" that "underscores the integral necessity of binding internal revolts of consciousness to outbursts of insurgent collective action."[22] Matsumoto's Marxism aimed to cleave individual, "internal revolt" to the project of revolution. In fact, it is revolution's prerequisite.

Individual creativity—and specifically the "dismantling" of the artist's consciousness, a fundamentally masochistic drive—is key for the project of revolution according to Matsumoto. Matsumoto fervently rejected public relations, or PR films, which cropped up after the end of World War II in Japan. As Matsumoto writes, in this excerpt translated by Marcus Nornes, "Lacking principles, [documentary filmmakers] adapted to the PR film industry in a period of retreat. Here, consistent from start to finish, there were only slavish craftsmen lacking subjectivity."[23]

In a June 1958 article from the introductory issue of *Kiroku eiga*, Matsumoto explicitly ties imperialism and fascism to the suppression of creativity witnessed by PR films. This article, "A Theory of Avant-Garde Documentary," is expertly translated by Michael Raine. Raine worked from a more structurally rigorous version of Matsumoto's article that eventually appeared in

21. Matsumoto, *Eizō no hakken*, 109–118.
22. Donald LaCoss, "Introduction: Surrealism and Romantic Anticapitalism," in *Morning Star: Surrealism, Marxism, Anarchism, Situationism, Utopia*, by Michael Löwy (University of Texas Press, 2009), vii.
23. Matsumoto Toshio, quoted in Abé Markus Nornes, *Forest of Pressure: Ogawa Shinsuke and Postwar Japanese Documentary* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 20.

the 1963 *Discovery of the Image*. Yet between 1958 and 1963 the article went through a few notable changes. In *Kiroku eiga*, Matsumoto's writing tends to follow an indeterminate logic, moving in a stream-of-consciousness style that ebbs and flows from aggressive ad hominem attacks on "reactionary" documentary filmmakers to his own entirely idiosyncratic version of post-structuralism. The 1963 writings have less of a bombastic affect, largely due to the collective feeling of failure, or *zasetsu-kan* (挫折感), in the wake of the 1960 Anpo protests. They make for a more cohesive stand-alone translation project than the original versions. However, I believe the earlier version of the article holds the key to understanding Matsumoto's avant-garde documentary form *as antifascist praxis*. In a section that does not appear in the later version, he writes:

> We can say: The outside world is that which suppresses my artistic creativity and seeks to dismantle me through the murderous mechanism of making vulgar PR films, labor intensification and low wages, exploitation and oppression, the resurrected sound of military boots, the rapid resurgence of monopoly capital dreaming of imperial independence, Okinawa, Tunisia, the dangers of Wall Street and the atomic and hydrogen bomb wars, the emasculated and fetishized many. . . . A true avant-garde fights uncompromisingly with this sick part, the energy of the masses is like a dormant volcano, it is interlocked with the self-aware organization centered on the proletariat class. It is a history of struggle, revolution, the progress of the peace movement on an international scale, the struggle for freedom and independence, and the conviction of human liberation. The inner world is my anger, sorrow, suffering, joy, etc. toward the outer world. . . . It is an ideology and a passion that seeks to achieve the emancipation of the self and the transformation of the external world, by engaging itself to the avant-garde of history. . . . When I say that I perceive and express reality subjectively, I must perceive both the outside and the interior holistically.[24]

Here, Matsumoto ties self- and world-emancipation together, noting that both are necessary for the struggle for liberation. He argues that an artist must be an avant-gardist who "fights uncompromisingly" with the "sick part" of society, in contrast to the "emasculated and fetishized many." Elsewhere in *Kiroku eiga* Matsumoto criticizes the fetishization of the masses —"for the most part, the masses . . . . They are closely tied to dogmatism, blindly enforcing the policies of authoritative leaders"—and, as we have just seen, he sees documentary filmmakers "idoliz[ing] . . . tailbones."[25] Yet Matsumoto's distrust of the "masses" should not be read as a pro-capitalist sentiment of the individual against the collective. For Matsumoto, the "masses" do not exist as a uniform organizational body. Each citizen must

24. Matsumoto Toshio, "Zen'ei kiroku eiga no hōhō ni tsuite" [On the method of avant-garde documentary], *Kiroku eiga* (Documentary film) 1, no. 1 (June 1958): 8.
25. Matsumoto Toshio, "Taishū toiu no mono kami ni tsuite" [On the fetish called mass], *Kiroku eiga* 5, no. 2 (February 1962): 19.

perform an internal transformation that is carried out into the external world through revolutionary acts. For Matsumoto, the avant-garde documentary aids the transformation of consciousness and "the emancipation of the self." It is not mere form but "an ideology and a passion" that "fights uncompromisingly" with militarization and proto-fascism.

I want to return to Matsumoto's more expansive notion of fascism, which can be productively compared to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's definition. Their definition likewise expands beyond a fascism witnessed in actually existing ultra right-wing parties (although it certainly, and necessarily, includes them).[26] Matsumoto's article describes the fascism of the Tonarigumi (隣組), or Neighborhood Associations. The Tonarigumi were created for the explicit purpose of national control and were the smallest unit of the national mobilization program during World War II. One can analyze the Tonarigumi, which continue to exist in some capacity to this day, as a fascist equivalent of mutual aid organizations: Participation was mandatory, and each unit was responsible for allocating goods, spreading propaganda, and maintaining public security. In effect, it was an organization meant to surveil and exert control over a small number of citizens from the top down. This is exactly what Deleuze and Guattari call "microfascism," the subtle dynamics of the everyday that emerge before the historical conditions of fascism manifest.[27] As Deleuze and Guattari write, "Fascism is inseparable from a proliferation of molecular focuses in interaction, which skip from point to point. . . . Rural fascism and city or neighborhood fascism, youth fascism and the war veteran's fascism . . . Every fascism is defined by a micro-black hole that stands on its own and communicates with the others."[28] The Tonarigumi mentality appears an ideal encapsulation of the microfascist mentality.

This translation aspires to bring Matsumoto into the pantheon of post-structuralist antifascists and activist-filmmakers, to align his work with others of this communist-surrealist intellectual milieu. One can productively relate Matsumoto to many other figures of his era, such as Guy Debord, whose 1952 *Hurlements en faveur de Sade* (*Howlings for Sade*) similarly mobilize the language of sadism alongside surrealist-Marxist experimentation. Matsumoto deserves, however, a rightful place in the canon of global political modernism. His unorthodox communist beliefs, concern with individual complicity, and critical rigor are profoundly relevant to our own highly politicized era.

I have retained as much of Matsumoto's ghostly, repetitive flourishes as possible while also striving for comprehensibility. The balance might strike the reader as uncanny. I hope it echoes the strange balance of creation and documentation in Matsumoto's dazzling neo-documentary work.

26. I detail a connection between Matsumoto and Deleuze/Guattari in the introduction to my monograph. Julia Alekseyeva, *Antifascism and the Avant-Garde: Radical Documentary in the 1960s* (University of California Press, 2025).
27. Jack Z. Bratich, *On Microfascism: Gender, War, and Death* (Common Notions, 2022), 23.
28. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 214.

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Consciousness of the Aesthetic Sadomasochist: Or, on the internal process of creation and its artistic utility

One day, I was leafing through the dictionary, buried somewhere under my desk gathering dust. While trying to figure out the etymological meaning of Dodeca, the Greek prefix meaning *twelve*, I suddenly came upon the word *Document* under the headline *D*. Historically, the word *document* had two meanings: one was "evidence" and the other "lesson." Recently, I learned that there are two characteristic tendencies in so-called documentary films up until now: fetishism [in Japanese: *jubutsusūhai*, 呪物崇拝] and enlightenment (also known as evidence).[29] The latter meaning is also educational, corresponding reasonably well to a naïve stage in the development of the documentary field. According to the dictionary, the meaning of *evidence* was born in the middle of the positivist era in the nineteenth century, and the

29. Matsumoto first describes this as *fetishizumu*, rendering the English term in the katakana syllabary used for loan words, and then places the Japanese specific term in parentheses; this Japanese term is associated with Shintoism and animism, as well as the cultures of Africa and the Caribbean. In the context of 1960 Japan, the English term has both Marxist and Freudian connotations.

meaning of *instruction* or *education* in the late eighteenth century, in the age of Enlightenment. Both of these eras are now obsolete. However, in this revolutionary era of the twentieth century, which began with political catastrophe, most of our documentary films have continued to idolize the previous century's carefully preserved tailbones. This anachronism is nothing less than comical.

Of course, for me, the naïve belief in factual realism is denied by the absence of, or unusual [*hinichijō*, 非日常] existence of, the most seemingly realistic object of evidence. The allegedly plausible Enlightenment that aims to educate must be rejected by an artistic propaganda, a politics of art, which cannot help but fundamentally transform the self and others in turn. That much is clear. But what is the basis for this, and where does one find an opportunity for this process of subjectivity that makes this transformation possible? The process of rendering material the structure of the artist's consciousness [*ishiki*, 意識] reveals the basic conditions that make today's artists, artists. The trajectories of this consciousness must internally wander between reality and its image.

TODAY'S ABSENCE OF CRITICISM

Let us take a documentary film called *The Nuremberg Trials*, made in West Germany. It chronicles the Nuremberg War Trials, countering the false statements of the Nazi defendants against the irrefutable factual evidence recorded between 1933 and 1945.[30] While tracing the history of the rise and fall of Nazi Germany over this thirteen-year period, the film exposes the many atrocities committed by the Nazi leaders and the realities of strategic warfare and seeks to hold Nazi leaders accountable for their crimes. However, despite the film's vivid record of the inhuman war and the strong antiwar message that pervades it, I cannot help but raise three doubts related to rather fundamental issues.

One is that this film does not phenomenologically debunk the mythical fiction of so-called German national supremacy since the enactment of the Nuremberg Race Laws at the 1935 Nazi Party Congress. Hitler's fascism, like all fascisms, rests its political and ideological foundations on the imperialist nature of highly developed state monopoly capital—even if fascism can thoroughly gouge out capitalism [and call itself National Socialism].[31] Second, although there is a harsh pursuit of accountability for the war crimes of Nazi leaders, the majority of German people are treated as victims. However, German people were also anti-human perpetrators who lost a critical view of wars of aggression and instead actively praised war, carrying out numerous acts

30. In Matsumoto's article, he uses the Japanese translation, *13 kaidan e no michi* (Road to the thirteen steps), referring to the thirteen steps leading to the gallows. The film was made in West Germany in 1958 and released in the United States in 1961 as *Hitler's Executioners*. The original title is *Wieder aufgerollt: Der Nürnberger Prozess*, or *The Nuremberg Trials*.

31. The underlying argument here is that the film avoids discussion of the alignment between fascism and capitalism and that even if fascism claims to eradicate capitalism, it is the logical next step in the logic of racial and monopoly capitalism. His arguments align with those of George Jackson and Angela Davis, as described in Alberto Toscano, "Incipient Fascism: Black Radical Perspectives," *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 23, no. 1 (March 2021).

of brutality throughout much of Europe. In the film, then, the problem of war responsibility and the collapse of class subjectivity is completely missing. Germans enthusiastically pledged allegiance to the *Hakenkreuz* [swastika]; they were excited and aroused by the expansion of the German territorial map. As a result of defeat, Germans were given standards for changing their values—but from the outside, so to speak. The German people must have faced the execution of war criminal leaders with an awareness [*ishiki*, 意識] of complicated feelings, including those who are trying to reflect on their own experiences by making this film. I couldn't help but wonder whether anything had transformed the consciousness of these people.

Third, West German monopoly capital is rapidly resurging and reimperializing, with its government seeking to expand its ambitions through relative subordination to the global policies of American imperialism. In actuality, because former Nazi leaders have openly appeared among the government personnel, military command, and judicial circles that are promoting the film, it makes criticism of the current situation almost impossible. Thus, the film doesn't have a shred of decency [lit. dirt under one's fingernails, or *tsume no aka*, 爪の垢] within it.

Naturally, this is both the result and the cause of the first and second points. The most fundamental question is why the war problem could only be approached in such a retrograde manner, without the awareness of the postwar experience of the West German people and the question of postwar responsibility. Instead, on a fundamental level, the film had no choice but to remain unyielding and uncritical.

Indeed, according to the TASS news agency from Bonn [the capital of West Germany], on January 4 [1960], swastikas and antisemitic phrases were scrawled on walls, windows, telephone poles, and pavements across West Germany, and in West Berlin, right-wing youth marched with tiki torches and sang Nazi songs.[32] If that is the case, it is necessary to sharply criticize and warn against such an overt movement to revive Nazism by vividly recalling the criminal acts of Nazi fascism during World War II that this film demonstrates. Thus, the film is by no means purposeless. However, as you can see from Japan, which is currently in a situation similar to that of West Germany, the new fascism uses extreme right-wing violent organizations to cleverly avert the eyes of the people. While chanting the name of peace, they are proudly preparing a new program of aggression. Therefore, if we were to create an international trial for Class A war criminals such as Tojo Hideki, we would use films from that time to prove the many crimes committed by them and to recall the tragedy of World War II.[33] But even if the Japanese version of *The Nuremberg Trials* was created and tried to propagate an antiwar message, it would not touch on the true nature of Emperor Hirohito as a war criminal, it would not contradict the intentions and policies of American occupation forces—forces who deliberately removed the Emperor from the

32. TASS was the telegraph agency of the Soviet Union. It was a news agency but was also the propaganda wing. Likely, the reports here are exaggerated but not entirely fabricated.

33. Tojo Hideki, prime minister of Japan from 1941 to 1944, was tried as a Class A war criminal during the Tokyo War Trials Tribunal and hanged on December 23, 1948.

list of Japanese war criminals, who made Hirohito the symbol of the country, who don't even touch the undeniable fact the war was caused by the inevitable need of Japanese monopoly capital to expand and seize the market from Western monopoly capital. Or again, unless we angrily point out that current Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke has been a war criminal and fascist consistently since the very beginning of the war and remains so to this date, that Japanese monopoly capital and its imperialist government are now reawakening, there is no doubt that it is impossible to definitively turn the audience's consciousness against itself and examine its complicity.

THE UTILITY OF POLITICS AND THE UTILITY OF ART

From that point of view, the East German documentary *Operation Teutonic Sword* is more focused on the criticism of the present and seems to possess a more advanced critical spirit. First, the main character of this film is Hans Speidel, the current commander in chief of NATO's Central European ground forces. The film mobilizes copious criminal evidence over a period of about twenty years from 1934 to the present day to reveal that Speidel was once a high-ranking Nazi official. The film fully exposes the nature of these war criminals and delves into criticism of NATO's intentions with such a man as this as commander in chief.

I like this vengeful and sadistic fighting method. And thus, although your humble author is a kind and good man, he is shunned by the young women of the world who think he is frightening and who hate him and by the sloppy humanists of the world who discredit him as a ruthless and rude man who doesn't respect his elders. Oh well. The problem is that sadism and vengefulness are essential to both class struggle and to the artistic consciousness of today's artists [lit. *sakka* 作家, or writers]. Regarding the topic of vengeance: in his book *Ghosts of Japan*, Ikeda Yasuburō classified ghosts [*yūrei*, 幽霊] into two types.[34] There is, on the one hand, a lazy and anarchic ghost that limits itself to the territory it haunts and, on the other, a ghost who sets a clear and specific target, persistently pursuing them no matter where they run and hide and finally cursing them to death. Clearly this ghost is a brutally hardcore sadist.

Ikeda-san also noted that the former ghost type is actually a specter [*yōkai*, 妖怪], but the latter's vengefulness fascinates me. Works such as Shintōhō studio's *The Ghost of Yotsuya* describe the character of Oiwa, a feudal and alienated human who vengefully curses her oppressors.[35] I couldn't help but be impressed. However, in keeping with Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, today's ghost is nothing less than the proletariat, alienated by capitalism—the last and largest oppressed group in history, whose existence is completely dehumanized. The proletariat is the most vengeful of all, uncompromisingly

34. Ikeda Yasuburō, *Nihon no yūrei* [Ghosts of Japan] (Tokyo: Chuokoron-Shinsha, 1974).

35. Nakagawa Nobuo, dir., *Tōkaidō Yotsuya Kaidan* [*The Ghost of Yotsuya*], 1959. Oiwa is the female protagonist of the aforementioned film, which is also a Kabuki play. She is forced to drink poison, her face becomes deformed, and she dies in agony while holding a grudge against her husband, Iemon Tamiya. She then becomes a ghost and seeks revenge against Iemon.

cursing its oppressor and aiming for the complete extinction of the bourgeoisie. It goes without saying that an extremely important task for contemporary artists is to take the ghostly reality of the twentieth century, ferment it, and materialize it into an image of actual unreality.

That aside, in *Operation Teutonic Sword*, even though the logic of the creator actively reconstructed the facts and thereby transformed the concept of evidence, the process of reconstruction is extremely rational. Since this process is primarily triggered by highly rationalistic logic and cognition, the numerous pieces of scattered evidence are still defined by objectivity in the real world, presented as if submitted to a court. Overall, although there are signs of trying to overcome the propaganda of Enlightenment, it cannot serve as artistic propaganda—one that internally generates a destructive effect on everyday consciousness and that transcends categories of recognition. Here I think there is a turning point where art and politics differ subtly, but decisively.

Of course, there is no promise that all films must be art. Those who criticize the use of the medium of cinema, either as a means or a form, for the purposes of politics or education, must be from the wrong school. However, those who are at least trying to participate in the world through the creation of film art tend to easily resolve artistic issues into political or educational ones. They should counter this obscene tendency. It is the responsibility of the artist to condemn this tendency fiercely. What must be made clear is that the structure of real life and the structure of art are distinct; the utility of politics or pedagogy and the utility of art are completely different. Although art can be extremely useful for politics and education, it is nothing but a secondary result, so to speak, of the utility of art itself. And from my perspective, even this usefulness of art must be subordinate to the artist's inner process of creation—one in which the image that burns and ferments inside the artist is refracted into an object that confronts reality. Of course, in reality, the sense of purpose [*mokuteki ishiki*, 目的意識] of utility and a creative consciousness that governs the internal process of creation are inseparable and mutually determined. Yet unless the latter is the decisive trigger in their dialectical unity, the utility of art will be dumbed down and vulgarized. There is no doubt that this will lead to a decline in quality. In short, when viewed from the perspective of the internal combustion process of creation and its materialization in object form, the utility of art is only a secondary result, and by no means statically determined.

When I say this, I hear stupid lines like, "As an artist, the first thing you have to consider is not, 'what should I say?' but 'to whom should I say it?'" Kawamoto Hiroyasu and other followers of the populist line casually say this.[36] Once again this makes my blood boil. If you ask me, they are like prostitutes [*inbaifu*, 淫売婦] who have given up their agency and no longer suffer.[37] From the start, this has nothing to do with being an artist. In *The Second Sex*,

36. Kawamoto Hiroyasu is the author of the book *Showa Tokyo* (*Showa hitoketa no Tokyo*) and assistant director who founded the Japan Visual Communications Center (Nihon bijuarukomyunikēshon sentā) in 1960.
37. The term *prostitute*, or *inbaifu*, is meant to sound provocative, although the term could also be translated to female sex worker.

Beauvoir repeatedly states, "A woman is a being who is required by men to live as an Other or an object, but essentially chooses to remain a subject." However, if my prostitute-craftsmen would read up on such an excellent crafted theory of women's liberation once in a while, they could see that it is uncreative and slave-like, all-too-easy to destroy yourself in favor of the Other. Look into your own desolate interior and see for yourself.

THE INTERNALIZATION OF EXPERIENCE AND METAMORPHOSIS

Once again I digress. The problem is how *The Nuremberg Trials* and *Operation Teutonic Sword* are seen as examples of Germany's war experience and war responsibility. Even though the latter is a good, even groundbreaking documentary film—one could say that it is the first made by a [postwar] German creator, with their own hands—the film showed surprisingly few examples of the filmmaker grappling with the meaning and expression of their object [*taishō*, 対象].[38] Nor could we see the extent to which this object was burned, fermented, and refracted in the artist's internal world. It demonstrates an extremely epistemologically flat record based on an assumed directness of facts, and thus the film can only be understood as propaganda that is on a real-life level directly connected to the film's political utility. However, as far as I can see, as early as immediately after Germany lost the war, a documentary art supported by a strong sense of subjectivity, and concerned with how to approach the war and the postwar period as an internal issue, may already have been budding. Yet this budding did not occur in cinema but in theater, with *The Man Outside*: the first and last play of Wolfgang Borchert, who died young.

The play is about a retired sergeant named Beckmann who returns to his house and finds another man sleeping in his wife's bed. He despairs and commits suicide by throwing himself into the Elbe River. The play starts from here. Beckmann has become a ghost; he cannot find a home to return to, instead wandering around his hometown after the war. He is strangely dressed, still donning the gray tin-rimmed gas-proof goggles he wore during wartime. Everyone he meets tells him to take them off and throw them away, but he never does. Actually, Maciek, the protagonist of [Andrzej] Wajda's much-discussed film *Ashes and Diamonds* [1958], also wears sunglasses. When Krystyna asks him, "Why do you always wear sunglasses?" he responds, "It's a testament to unrequited love." But just like Maciek's tinted glasses, engraved with memories of underground sewers, Beckmann's gas-proof goggles are souvenirs of the war that remained within him: they are the memory itself.

38. It is intriguing to note that for Matsumoto, the East German filmmakers have more freedom to create than do the West German ones—a seeming contradiction for those raised in a North American Cold War environment but one that is intentionally provocative and has significant merit in the German context. The concept of *taishō* has great significance for the Japanese documentary film communities of the period. As Abé Markus Nornes has described, for many Japanese theorists, documentary entailed the coexistence of subjectivity and objectivity, and the documentary image necessarily also documented the relationship between the filmmaker and their object of filmmaking, or *taishō*. See Nornes, *Forest of Pressure*, 20. Although both *taishō* and *kyakutai* are translated as *l'objet* in French or "object" in English, *kyakutai* emphasizes the thing-creation of documentary film, whereas *taishō* emphasizes the object as a target of analysis (or the subject of a documentary film, in English).

Thus, Beckmann had to continue wearing these goggles even after the war. Meanwhile, the ghosts of his many subordinates who died on his orders during wartime curse him day and night. Beckmann must find the murderer who was once his regiment's colonel and ask the colonel to take responsibility for the murders Beckmann himself committed:

> . . . The rotten Emperor and the dead in bloody soldier uniforms rise from the mass grave. And they rise from the sea. They emerge from the grasslands, from the roads, from the forests. They rise from the ruins, from the frozen black, scarlet rotten swamps. From the grasslands, they rise. Eyeless, toothless, armless, legless, guts torn to shreds, skull and skeleton missing, without hands, full of holes, the putrid, blind dead, a horrifying number of people are washing away! A terrifying sea of dead people, so vast that you can't see them, comes walking over the shores of the graveyard. . . . Beckmann, is what they're shouting: Sergeant Beckmann. It's always Sergeant Beckmann. And the screams get louder and louder.

The former colonel, who had so optimistically revived his petty life, had forgotten his war experiences. They were so awful they were like a nightmare. But Beckmann, who persistently internalized his own experiences and responsibilities like a masochist, is treated with some confusion, fear, and ridicule, as if he were a madman.

When I once saw this play at the Haiyuza Theater, I remember feeling like my heart was being ripped from my chest. The characters seem to be completely disconnected from each other, and their lines become a mixture of monologues, and all the conventions of classical drama, such as characters' personalities and dramatic context, are completely abandoned, and the setting is entirely located within the author's internal world. It made a tremendous first impression. And the artist's tight grasp of internal reality, which can't help but apply metamorphosis even to images of non-existence, sadistically exposes the irrationality of the external world, making it possible for the scalpel of criticism to penetrate deep within. Naturally, the world of Borchert is unimaginable without the influence of German expressionist theater since [Georg] Kaiser and [Erwin] Piscator, but as the author himself wrote, "It is a play that no theater wants to perform and no audience wants to see." Since 1947, this avant-garde work has been staged as a radio drama and stage play successively not just in Germany but all over Europe, and we must not forget that it elicited a tremendous response. The opportunity to establish communication deep within people's life experiences is discovered due to a desperate sense of alienation and disconnection between human beings. The acute grasp and expression of reality occurs through a process of internal combustion, of sado-masochistic descent and subsequent ascension, and is then materialized in an unrealistic, immediate image.[39] What is this

39. Matsumoto's use of the term *sado-masochism* is less a reference to Japanese-specific ideologies or practices and more explicitly connected to Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, whom he directly references in other work.

transparent, rational confusion, if not the spirit and method of avant-garde documentary art?

FACE THE DISMANTLING OF THE ARTIST'S CONSCIOUSNESS HEAD-ON

However, if you think about it, it may be rare for this kind of documentary ideology to take root easily in our own country. Toyota Keita, who once showed a sharp grasp of reality with *Dandanbatake no hitobito* [段々畑の人々, People of the terraced fields, 1954] and *Kujūkurihama no kodomo-tachi* [九十九里浜の子供たち, *Children of Kujukuri Beach*, 1956] recently sold his soul . . . . Looking at *Aru shufu-tachi no kiroku* [ある主婦たちの記録, Chronicle of certain housewives, 1959], which won the top prize at last year's *Kyōiku eiga-matsuri* [教育映画祭, Educational film festival], one sees he succumbed to the praise created by the evaluations of the reactionary liberal education policy. It is not that the documentary element is missing. No. Rather: poor people, if you cooperate and help each other, if you save little by little, if you ration your life, everything will turn out well, your husband will stop drinking, your household will be ever smiling, and your life will become joyful. This is the reactionary work of distracting the people from the true nature of contradictions by propagating Tonarigumi ideology. This mindset is convenient for the ruling class, giving the people the illusion of temporary and partial improvements, without any agony or struggle. Toyota pulls it off skillfully without leaving a trace, without any resistance. The distance from here to war propaganda films is not far. If the strengthening of the reactionary system becomes even more obvious through repression, there is no guarantee that Mr. Toyota will not collapse to that extent all at once. Conversion doesn't just happen on its own. For everyone, this process of dismantling the artist's consciousness, of losing one's subjectivity, is nothing less than a daily conversion. My criticism of Maruyama Shōji, titled *Haisen to sengo no fuzai* [敗戦と戦後の不在, Defeat and postwar absence], ultimately focused on such issues from the perspective of postwar responsibility.[40] In response, I get: Matsumoto is young but lazy; how come yesterday's friends are today's enemies; it's outrageous that none of my friends defend me—so went an apologia and rebuttal similar to that of a dead author. I believe that this kind of feudal consciousness and naïve approach to reality once supported the absolutist imperial system from below. All this reveals that this ideology is propping up artists' currently unproductive and sterile situation today. However, it seems that there are still people in the association who are susceptible to this bait, and various postcards of protest have been pouring in. For example: "Mr. Matsumoto Toshio, don't make yourself a standard-bearer of the revolution. You can't start a revolution alone. What on earth have you been doing? Why don't you make some [*sic*] criticism instead. You've gone too far being protected by the cover of the editorial board. You say too many selfish things. The magazine [*Kiroku eiga*, Documentary film] doesn't belong to you

40. Maruyama Shōji is the writer and director of shorts such as *Kodomo gikai* (Children's council, 1947) and *Muku no ki no hanashi* (Story of a solid wood machine, 1947) and was also an actor during World War II.

alone. I urge the editorial board to reflect." It's funny how these thugs write incoherent sentences that look like threatening letters and say strange things like, "You've gone too far," but then so quickly follow with "What on earth have you been doing?" Maybe they'd like to settle down. I have no problem presenting a record of my thoughts and actions if you wish, but most of the time, the way a person lived their past can be found in their current work and writing. Isn't this something that is deeply ingrained within them and serves as a foundation for their being? In the sentences written by a person, we can see their knowledge and practices, with all their weight and responsibilities; it is as if they are gouging out their own inner self. But if your eyes are so clouded that you can't read the nature of your thoughts, then such people should quit writing as soon as possible.

Julia Alekseyeva is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, with a secondary appointment in Cinema and Media Studies. Her first academic book, *Antifascism and the Avant-Garde: Radical Documentary in the 1960s*, was recently published by University of California Press (2025).