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Shimizu's success lay in that he did not make films merely about children; he wanted to capture the child's point of view, and hence many of his films were shot on location, the idea being that he could get a more natural reaction if he directed children in their own surroundings. In 1939 he made *Four Seasons of Children* (*Kodomo no Shiki*), about some children who, when their father dies, go to live with their grandparents. In this film he did not ignore adults as he had earlier, but the weakest moments of the film are when adults appear. It was excellent in showing the over-indulgent and absolutely blind love for children which is so much a part of Japan, but, while showing it, and engaging in it himself, Shimizu did not hesitate to criticize it. His touch was not as psychological as, say, that of Jean Benoit-Levy in a film like *La Maternelle*, but was rather much closer to the children themselves, and there was a quality about his films which a director like, say, Jean Vigo would have much admired.

It is perhaps ironic that this opening of the world of childhood should have occurred just at the time when Japan itself was again closing up for a state of protracted war. As it was, the happenings from 1941 on put an end to all such peaceful pursuits as making films about children or the middle class or creating film adaptations of *junbungaku*. War did not mean the end of realism but more of a change of direction, as the Japanese cinema again experienced an upheaval, this one so extensive that its films were never again the same.