



# **The Stories Clothes Tell: Voices of Working-Class Japan (Asian Voices)**

*Tatsuichi Horikiri*

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## **The Stories Clothes Tell: Voices of Working-Class Japan (Asian Voices)** Tatsuichi Horikiri

Spanning decades of research, this compelling social history tells the stories of ordinary people in modern Japan. Tatsuichi Horikiri spent a lifetime searching out old items of clothing—ranging from everyday kimono, work clothes, uniforms, and futons to actor's costumes, diapers, hats, aprons, and bags.

Simultaneously he collected oral history accounts to shed light on those who used these items. Horikiri reveals not only the difficult and sometimes desperate lives of these people, most from the lower strata in early twentieth-century Japan, he illuminates their hopes, aspirations, and human values. He also explores such topics as textile techniques, the history of fashion, and the ethnography of clothing and related cultural phenomena.

Having been wrongly accused and tortured by the Japanese military police in China during World War II, Horikiri takes a deeply empathetic view of all those who struggle—from peasants and coal miners to traveling salesmen and itinerant performers. This personal connection sets his account apart, giving his writing great power and immediacy. Students and scholars of Japanese history, as well those interested in material culture, labor history, and feminist history, will find this book deeply illuminating.

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