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Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- 1. The Background -- 2. Modern Beginnings: Reeling and Spinning -- 3. Silk: Poor but Independent Reelers -- 4. Silk: Tightening the Screws -- 5. Silk: Working for the Nation? -- 6. Cotton: The Reserve Army -- 7. Cotton: Recruiting in the Hinterland -- 8. Cotton: Inside the Hateful Company Gates -- 9. Comparative Perspectives: Factory and Countryside -- 10. Alternatives: The Loom and the Brothel -- Conclusion
Sommario/riassunto	Investigating the enormous contribution made by female textile workers to early industrialization in Meiji Japan, Patricia Tsurumi vividly documents not only their hardships but also their triumphs. While their skills and long hours created profits for factory owners that in turn benefited the state, the labor of these women and girls enabled their tenant farming families to continue paying high rents in the countryside. Tsurumi shows that through their experiences as Japan's first modern factory workers, these "factory girls" developed an identity that played a crucial role in the history of the Japanese working class. Much of this story is based on records the factory girls themselves left behind, including their songs. "It is a delight to receive a meticulous and comprehensive volume on the plight of women who pioneered [assembly plant] employment in Asia a century ago...."--L. L. Cornell,

The Journal of Asian Studies "Tsurumi writes of these rural women with compassion and treats them as sentient, valuable individuals.... [Many] readers will find these pages informative and thought provoking."--  
Sally Ann Hastings, Monumenta Niponica

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