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Hachi: The Truth of The Life and Legend of the Most Famous Dog in Japan

Mayumi Itoh

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An Akita-inu, Hachi (November 1923–March 1935), waited for his master at Shibuya Train Station, Tokyo, for almost ten years after his master's death and until his own death, and became a living legend. Unfortunately, his life is shrouded in mysteries and misunderstandings. Examining all the available documents on Hachi, this book assesses generally-believed stories of his life and presents an accurate and true life of the most famous dog in Japan, which was full of twists and turns and was "stranger than fiction."

"Hachiko is the most famous dog in the world. Two movies starring two of the most famous actors in the world (Richard Gere and Tatsuya Nakadai) have chronicled the dog's story: the dog who faithfully went to the Shibuya (Tokyo) train station for years to meet his master long after he had died at his office at Tokyo University. I remember seeing the 1987 Japanese movie in Japan with my wife and young daughter. Never have so many tears been shed by an audience while watching a movie. Now, Mayumi Itoh, the author of six previous books on Japan and the groundbreaking book on Japanese wartime zoo policy, meticulously examines the story of Hachiko and exposes the lies and distortions of the story that every Japanese knows. This book really helps us understand Japanese traditions and society. It is another piece of highly original, excellent research by one of the best scholars on Japan." —Dr. Ronald J. Hrebenar, Professor of Political Science, University of Utah

"Finally! Everything you ever wanted to know about Hachiko. Mayumi Itoh reveals fascinating, little known facts about Japan's most beloved dog. You will be riveted!" —Vicki Shigekuni Wong, film producer, "Hachi: A Dog's Tale" starring Richard Gere, VickiWongandHachi.com

Mayumi Itoh is a former Professor of Political Science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She has also taught at Princeton University and Queens College, City University of New York. She is the author of several books and has written extensively on Japanese foreign policy and domestic politics in academic journals.

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